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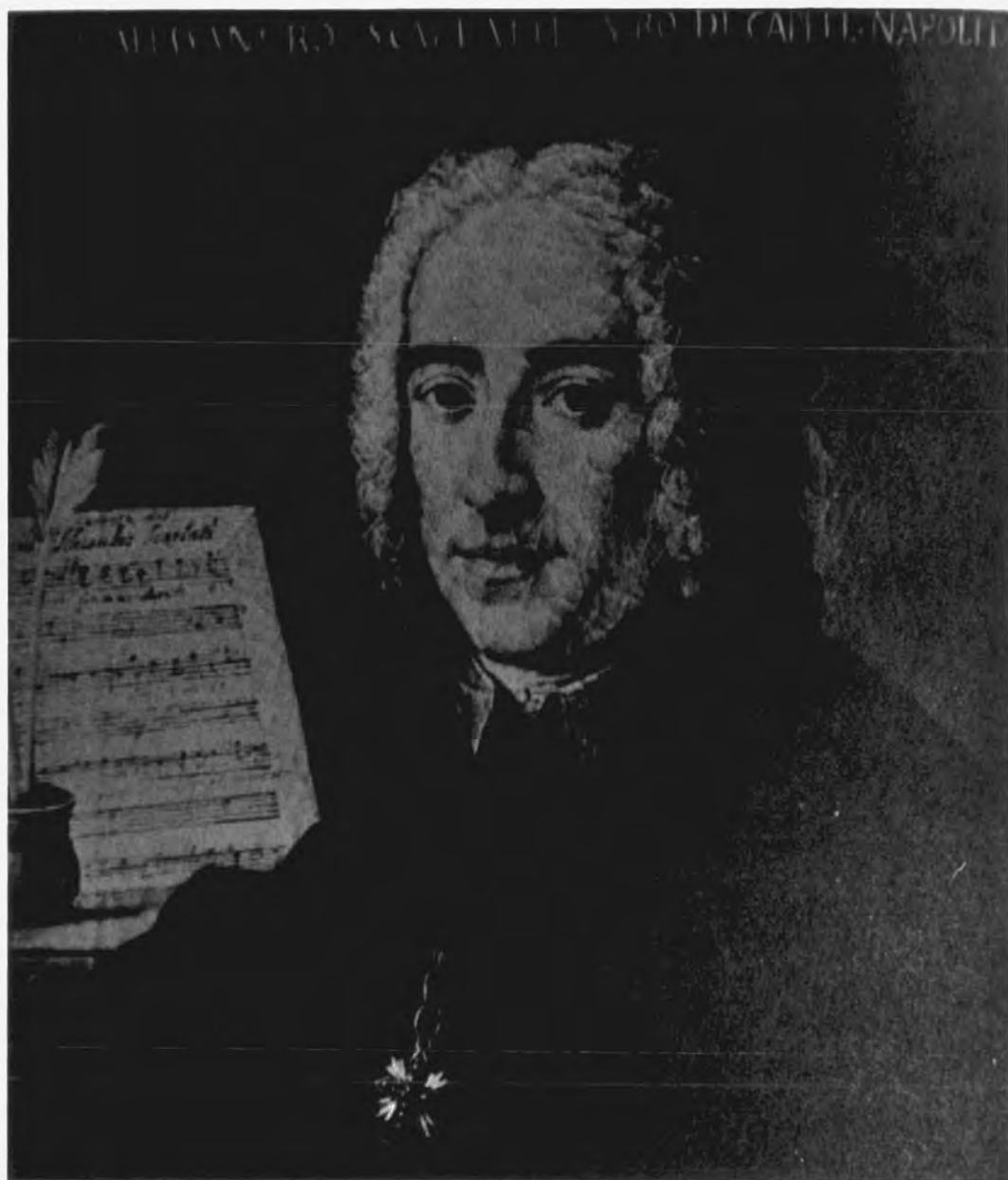
I T A L I A N C H A M B E R C A N T A T A

by

M A L C O L M B O Y D

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Submitted for the degree of Master of Arts
in the University of Durham, June 1962



Frontispiece: Alessandro Scarlatti, by an unknown artist.
(Conservatorio G. B. Martini, Bologna)

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Alessandro Scarlatti, by an unknown painter	frontispiece
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* * *

"Ainsi avec une seule voix, un clavecin,
et une basse de violle, on peut aisément
faire une musique de chambre."

— J.B.Morin, in the preface to
his 'Cantates Françaises' (1706)

P R E F A C E

The evolutionary theory of music history, which flourished in the second half of the nineteenth and the early part of the twentieth centuries, is happily becoming a thing of the past. We are now able to hear in performance works by many composers who not more than a generation ago were no more than names in the pages of the history books, and the musical language of the older periods is no longer regarded as "quaint" or "crude" merely because it is less familiar to us than that of, say, Bach or Mozart. Complete or near-complete editions of the works of minor composers, and the activity of scholars who are themselves gifted as performers or as conductors, have done much to enable us to appreciate the intrinsic merit of music which has too long been regarded only as of historical interest. Particularly is this true of the music written between Palestrina and Bach.

Has this apparently healthy state of affairs gone too far? Is the favour of our attention (and our purse) too often requested for works which fail to justify our spending of time and money? Not yet, perhaps, but already the situation is such that the practising musician, interested in the development of his art, cannot hope to keep up with even the more important publications of the professional musicologists, while the writer of an M.A. thesis, unable to compete with the professional in the more rewarding fields, is being gradually forced into the consideration of trivialities.

Alessandro Scarlatti has never been neglected by the historians, but only Dent, Parry, and a few other writers have betrayed a genuine knowledge of more than a handful of his numerous works. The chamber cantata, likewise, has not received the attention which it deserves as one of the universal art-forms of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. No comprehensive study has appeared in the English language, or indeed in any language except for Eugen Schmitz's "Geschichte der Weltlichen Solokantate"

published at Leipzig in 1914. Although invaluable to the student, Schmitz's book suffers through the typically German kind of thoroughness which compels him to record the existence of every cantata publication known to him, and a fair number of manuscript sources as well. The result is a certain lack of balance, and a tendency to obscure the outlines with a mass of detail. One regrets that Dent never wrote a full account of the chamber cantata, for he certainly had the equipment to do it.

If Scarlatti has always been honoured by the historians, he has so far escaped the attentions of the publishers. Works available to-day in modern editions are the unrepresentative "Sinfonie di Concerto Grosso" and a handful of cantatas (not the best) and operatic arias. The tercentenary of his birth in 1960 brought with it some noble revivals of the operas, notably by Professor Anthony Lewis at Birmingham and (in 1961) by Professor Sir Jack Westrup at Oxford, but much spade work remains to be done if Scarlatti's operas are to become widely accepted. Operas are costly to stage and there are special difficulties which stand in the way of productions of Neapolitan opera seria. The cantatas, since the quality of the music is as good and often superior, should fare better, but in fact have remained unjustly neglected. By their comparative obscurity and, if it can be demonstrated, their intrinsic quality and historical importance, they therefore qualify for the dubious distinction of an M.A. thesis.

In order to understand better the achievements of Scarlatti in vocal chamber music, some account of the cantata both before and after his period will be given. The chief difficulty facing the student in this field lies in the very abundance of the material available. The number of extant chamber cantatas, most of them of only temporary interest, must run into many thousands, and one needs the clear eye of a Dent to keep one's critical faculties alert in face of such an 'embarras de médiocrités'. It is possible that the present writer will be forced to revise many of the estimates of particular works and composers given here; nevertheless it is important that such estimates be made.

* * *

CHAPTER ONE

THE CHAMBER CANTATA -- ITS NATURE AND SCOPE

The cantata da camera may be regarded as the third major offshoot of the monodic revival which took place in Italy towards the end of the sixteenth century. The circumstances leading to the growth of this new music have been well documented in numerous books dealing with the beginnings of opera and oratorio, and there is no need to give an account of them here. It is important, however, to correct at once a notion, which still persists, that the cantata originated as an operatic extract or in direct imitation of the opera. No doubt the design of alternate recitative and aria associated with the eighteenth-century cantata has led some writers to this supposition. Thus Keiser, in the preface to his "Gemüths-Ergötzung, bestehend in einigen sing-Gedichten" (Hamburg 1698) speaks of the cantata as "von der Oper hergekommenen", and J.E. Galliard, in the preface to his "Six English Cantatas" (London c.1716), writes:

"After the Theatrical Style grew more refin'd, the Lovers of Musick, who wanted some such-like Composition for their private diversion, probably made Use of some particular Scene out of them: (for from that Time Madrigals began to be left off;) but this being very unsatisfactory as to the Sense, the Connection being interrupted, Poets, in favour of Musick, invented a new sort of Drama, if I may so call it, as an Epitome of the Former, mix'd with Recitative and Air..."

That the cantata originated independently of the opera will be shown in the next chapter, but there are some who would still maintain that it was the opera which made possible the birth of the cantata (and not the cantata alone). They will point to the experiments

of the Camerata in Florence and say that it was the desire to present drama in music that made necessary the formation of a new musical language -- that of recitative and monody in general -- and that without this new musical language the cantata and other vocal forms could not have come into being. It cannot be denied that the example of opera hastened the development of the cantata, but to say that the cantata was dependent on opera for its existence is untrue. A study of the Italian madrigal in decline is enough to convince us that composers would in any case have turned to monody as the only satisfactory path to further development; and the decline of the madrigal is, as we shall see, of supreme importance in the rise of the cantata.

The opera and the cantata were, then, brother and sister rather than father and son, but they grew up together, sharing a family resemblance and influencing one another to such an extent that no student of one can do without some knowledge of both. It was by trying his hand at the cantata that the incipient opera composer learned to construct a scene of recitative and aria, in many cases dealing with texts not unlike some he would find in an opera libretto. The fact that a passage consisting of three arias, each followed by a recitative, from Scarlatti's opera "La Roseura" (1690) exists as a cantata in more than one manuscript¹ does perhaps indicate the use of an operatic extract in the guise of vocal chamber music, but such instances are rare. We may view it merely as further evidence of the close connexion between the two forms.

If there have been misunderstandings about the origins of the cantata, there have been others about the extent of its life and influence. Scott Goddard, for example, has attempted to trace the influence of Scarlatti's cantatas, through the concert-arias and 'scene' of Mozart, and Beethoven's "Ah! Perfido", to the three canticles of Benjamin Britten.² Such an argument seems a trifle laboured, for if Britten's canticles need any parentage beyond their texts there are so many other and closer precedents to consider, not least the longer songs of Schubert with instrumental obbligato, such as "Der Hirt auf dem Felsen" and "Auf dem Strom". Present-day compositions, secular as well as sacred, bearing the title of cantata are nearly

1. E.J.Dent, "Alessandro Scarlatti" (Arnold 1905), p.222
2. "The Listener", July 21st.1960.

always large-scale compositions for soloists, chorus, and orchestra. Even Edmund Rubbra's "Cantata di camera" op.110 is of this kind.

We may safely say that the secular cantata as a chamber music form did not survive Scarlatti for more than a generation. The orchestral cantatas of Leo, Pergolesi, and Hasse, while retaining the outward form of Scarlatti's works, lead us away from the drawing-room and into the concert-hall, and it is there that we enjoy the comparable works of Mozart and Beethoven. To the Baroque musician the term 'da camera' signified music designed to be performed in a building other than the church or the theatre, but when applied to the cantata up to and including Scarlatti we may interpret it as chamber music in the sense in which we understand the term to-day.

The cantata da camera was for the seventeenth-century Italian the ideal form of intimate music-making; in fact it was the only one possible for advanced expression until composers discovered that the new violins could rival the voice in strength, technique, and lyrical performance. The supreme executive artist of the seventeenth century was the singer, and it is quite understandable that he should dominate the music of the drawing-room, just as he did that of the church and the theatre.

The cantata flourished above all in the court, in such gatherings as those which Scarlatti's patron, Cardinal Ottoboni, held each Monday at his villa in Rome, and in the meetings of the 'accademie' which existed then in such profusion throughout Italy. Here the works were no doubt sung by, and often specially composed for, singers from the opera, and the listener could therefore regard the performance as an extension of his favourite musical entertainment. It is not always easy to know how far to take Marcello seriously, but when he tells us that

"the modern composer will show the greatest attentions to all the virtuose of the operas, presenting them with old cantatas transposed to fit their voices, in addition to saying to each one that the opera owes its success to her talent"¹

1. B.Marcello, "Il teatro alla moda" (c.1720) quoted in

we cannot avoid noticing that many of Scarlatti's cantatas exist in different keys. On the other hand, Scarlatti wrote sufficient of them to be able to present a new one to each of his 'prime donne'.

To the mature composer the chamber cantata afforded the opportunity to express himself freely, without the necessity of satisfying the desires of a capricious audience. Just how much the opera composer was forced to adapt his natural style to the wishes of his patron and public may be gauged from the correspondence between Scarlatti and Ferdinand III, son of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, for whose theatre at Pratolino, near Florence, Scarlatti wrote a number of works. In the chamber cantata the composer was able to write in a more serious style and to experiment with technical problems, knowing that he would be serving an audience less likely to misunderstand him, and less impatient with music which did not merely satisfy the craving for a pretty tune.

This does not mean, of course, that every cantata is of a quality superior to that of the average operatic aria. The composer was called upon to write too many for that to be possible, and many of those by even such a master as Scarlatti were obviously written in haste. Nevertheless, the best of the chamber cantatas have a depth of feeling and an appeal to the intellect which are far less common in the operas of the period. The cantata is, therefore, an ideal form wherein the student may assess the capabilities of a vocal composer, for no matter how stereotyped the form became it always remained the vehicle for the most ambitious technique and the most serious expression. The cantata has a further interest for the historian, for it was one of the principal messengers in the dissemination of the Italian style, a fact born out by the large number of contemporary manuscripts in libraries outside Italy, and by the number of such works written by foreign composers "in just imitation of the fam'd Italian Masters".

The music of the cantata is a good deal more interesting than the texts which composers used. There can be few pastimes more depressing than that of reading

Strunk, "Source readings in music history" (Faber, 1952), p. 530.

through a quantity of poems used by the majority of composers, and especially those which date from after about 1680 — that is to say after the Roman school of composers, whose texts are on the whole more interesting, and certainly more varied, than others. The study of the chamber cantata during the Baroque period reveals that gradual shift of interest from the poetry to the music which is paralleled in the opera of the period.

In any case, Italian literature, after the rich flowering of the Renaissance, was in the doldrums. Giuseppe Morpurgo observes that "Il Seicento non ha un grande, forse neppure un solo vero poeta".¹ The inspiration for many of the early cantata texts may be found in the poetry of the Renaissance, but Baroque literature itself was one of decadence. The lyricism of Tasso and Guarini became with Gianbattista Marini a language of conceits, in which 'la meraviglia' was extolled as one of the highest poetic values.²

Marini's epic, "L'Adone" (Paris, 1623), earned him an international reputation and was reprinted no less than fourteen times between 1623 and 1922. It was itself used for more than one cantata setting, and its style became the guiding light for the numerous poetasters of the Arcadian and other literary 'accademie' which flourished first in Florence and later in all the major cities of Italy. At their gatherings the literary dilettantes would vie with one another in their powers of fanciful poetic description, their intention being to avoid using one ordinary word where it was possible to use three or four uncommon ones. We know the style best from Molière's parodies in "Les Précieuses Ridicules" and "Les Femmes Savantes", but French 'préciosité' was largely inspired by the refined and precious language of Marini and his followers in Italy.

Until the last two decades of the century there was at least some variety in the subjects of the poems. Pastorals abound, but so do stories from Classical history and mythology. Laments are numerous, probably stimulated

1. "Antologia Italiana" (Fifth edition, 1949).
2. It is interesting to note that one of the earliest compositions to bear the title of 'cantata', Grandi's "Aprè l'uomo", was a setting of words by Marini.

by the example of Monteverdi's "Arianna", and of these Carissimi's Lament of Mary Queen of Scots ("Ferma, lascia ch'io parli") is a fine example. Carissimi also gained a reputation for cantatas on humorous subjects, and Cesti seems to have shown a penchant for satirical works, probably because of his friendship with the poet Salvator Rosa. Other cantatas, like Rossi's "Gelosia che poco a poco", are built around some emotion, and still others are purely descriptive.

Before the end of the seventeenth century this variety in the subject-matter of the cantata gave way to an artificial pastoral setting peopled with stereotyped Arcadian nymphs and shepherds, as unreal as the figures in a 'fête galante' of Watteau but without their light-hearted and fanciful gaiety. The cantata became a lyrical rather than a dramatic form, but some pretence at a narrative, or at least a situation, is usually preserved. Filli and Clori, Eurillo and Daliso are the protagonists, and they tell us, with unrelieved self-pity, of the heartlessness or the inconstancy of the beloved. Other kinds of texts did not lose favour altogether, but the large majority written after about 1680 fall into what Polonius would probably have described as the 'pastoral-tragical' type.

First-rate poetry is not a necessary ingredient for a good song, and however much we may deplore the literary style and taste of the period, we cannot deny the poetry its effectiveness for musical treatment. The poets obviously studied the requirements of the composer very closely, not only in the general form of the work but in detail, and many of them must have had first-hand experience of what would sound well when sung. Every effort is made, particularly in the recitative sections, to allow the composer the opportunity of showing his inventiveness in descriptive and pathetic word-painting; and it should not be forgotten that the cantata librettist was to a large extent dictated to by the demands of a strict musical form. Particularly restrictive in this respect was the da capo aria, for here the poet had to ensure that the sense of the first half of the aria was in itself complete, so that on repetition it was not left inconclusive.

Except in printed works (and not always even then) the poets are seldom named. We may assume that they were

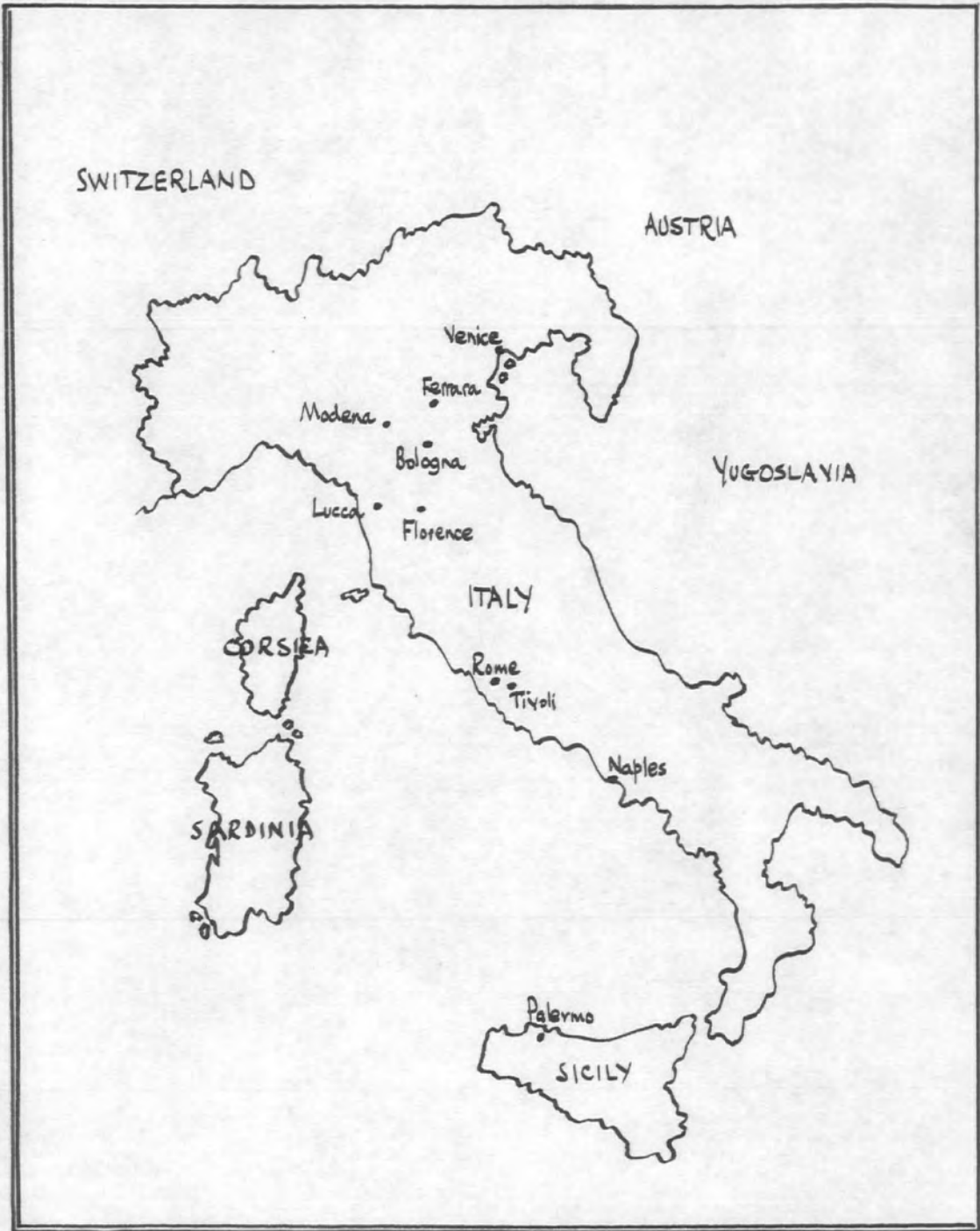
court poets, opera librettists, members of literary academies, the composers' patrons, and sometimes even the composers themselves. At first they seem to have taken over existing literary forms, especially the madrigal, for their texts, but by 1698 Crescimbeni could identify a specific 'cantata' form of poetry:

"Oltre alle feste s'introdussero per la musica certe altre maniere di Poesia, che comunamente si chiaman Cantate le quali sono composte di versi e versetti rimati senza legge con mescolamento d'arie e talora ad una voce, talora à più; e se ne sono fatte e fanno anche miste di drammatico e di narrativo. Questa sorte di Poesia è invenzione del secolo XVII perciochè nell'arte antecedente per la musica servivano i madrigali, e gli altri componimenti."¹

We shall observe in later chapters how the cantata, beginning in Venice as an alternative to the accompanied madrigal and the simpler strophic song, followed the path of opera and spread first to Rome, later to Naples and Bologna, and finally to all the important centres of music in Europe. The point to be stressed at the moment is that it retained its character of chamber music until near the end of the Baroque period, and we will profit most from our study of it if we bear in mind its essentially intimate nature. The chamber cantata does not protest, never shouts, rarely smiles, and is but seldom concerned with the expression of lofty ideals; but when we come to know it well we find a great deal of warmth behind its calm, serious exterior.

* * *

1. Crescimbeni, "Istoria della volga poesia" (1698) p.299.



Map of Italy, showing the places mentioned in the text.

CHAPTER TWO

THE CANTATA BEFORE ALESSANDRO SCARLATTI

The Venetian School

It is possible to distinguish three main stages in the development of the cantata before Alessandro Scarlatti, each of about twenty years and altogether covering the period between the first cantatas (1620) and the earliest by Scarlatti (about 1680). As we might expect, the cantata flourished in the places where opera composers were most active, and we can thus focus our attention on the cities important in the development of opera -- Venice, Rome, and then Naples and elsewhere. A proper study of the pre-Scarlatti cantata would begin with a detailed consideration of the Florentine monodists, but since this chapter is intended as no more than an introduction to those which follow, we may confine our remarks to certain features of the cantata to be observed during the period before 1620. Let us begin by considering the composer's raw material, the text.

Just as the kind of drama suitable for opera existed long before 1597 in the pastoral comedies of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, so the type of text favoured by cantata writers already existed before 1620. Jacopo Sannazaro's renowned pastoral romance, "L'Arcadia" (1489), may be considered as the beginning of a tradition in Italian literature which reached far into the nineteenth century, but Alfred Einstein¹ points to an even earlier work, the eclogue "Corinto" by Lorenzo de Medici (1449-1492) as containing all the necessary requirements of a

1. "Der 'Stile Nuove' auf dem Gebiet der profanen Kammermusik" in Adler's "Handbuch der Musikgeschichte" (Frankfurt am Main, 1924).

good cantata text:

"La luna in mezzo alle minori stelle
chiara fulgea nel ciel quieto e sereno,
quasi ascendo lo splendor di quelle:
e'l sonno avea ogni animal terreno
dalle fatiche lor diurni sciolti:
e il mondo è d'ombre e di silenzio pieno.
Sol Corinto pastor ne' boschi folti
cantava per amor di Galatea
tra' fraggi, e non v'è altri che l'ascolti:
ne alle luci lacrimosi avea
data quiete alcuna, anzi soletto
con questi versi il suo amor piangea:
-- -- -- O Galatea" etc.

This would, of course, serve as a recitative, the first aria beginning with the words "O Galatea". The following extract, which Scarlatti treats as a recitativo stromentato, from the cantata "Nel silentio comune" for soprano, two violins, viola, and continuo (British Museum, Add.MS.14163) comes very close to Lorenzo de Medici's eclogue, and might almost be regarded as a paraphrase of it in the first person:

"Nel silentio comune di notte si tranquilla,
stanca dal'opre ogn'anima riposa.
Placido il mar' coll'onde;
par che baci le sponde.
E alla quiete intenti
più non batton le penne in aria i venti.
Sol di cura amorosa
vinto dal duol profondo,
vigila il mio pensiero;
all'or che posa
il cielo, il mare, e il mondo.
(Aria) -- Nel dormir l'anima mia,
Cara Filli, a te sen viene" etc.

But for the type of texts found in the early cantatas composers had to look no further than the continuo-madrigals of Monteverdi and his contemporaries, and indeed the chamber cantata may be regarded as the logical outcome of the dying madrigal. In his monumental study of the Italian madrigal Alfred Einstein has shown how the madrigal disintegrated from within, so to speak, when

composers began to attach more importance to the underlining of the text and to the use of chromatic harmonies than to the part-writing, thus breaking down the polyphonic framework. Many of the continuo-madrigals in Monteverdi's seventh book are cantatas in all but name, and the one-voiced and two-voiced cantatas of Luigi Rossi and Carissimi are their spiritual descendants. The cantata of the seventeenth century replaced the madrigal of the sixteenth as the most prominent form of vocal chamber music.

Two other factors contribute to the formation of the cantata. First, the recitative style which had been introduced for operatic purposes in Florence during the last decade of the sixteenth century, although it was not until the second generation of cantata composers that the recitative was to play a major role; second, the strophic songs of the early seventeenth century, such as those found in the "Nuove Musiche" (1602) of Caccini and in the "Varie Musiche" (1609) of Peri.

We thus have before 1620 four elements necessary for the formation of the cantata -- a semi-dramatic, semi-lyrical type of poem, the example of the continuo-madrigal, the establishment of recitative, and the strophic song; but it was some time before all these elements were integrated to make up what we normally think of to-day as the Italian cantata. The first use of the term 'cantata' has been variously attributed to a number of different composers. J.E. Galliard mentions

"some Compositions of a Lady... whose name was Barbara Strozzi; in which we have an Account that She, being the first who invented this mixture of Recitative and Air, gave it to the Publick as a Trial whether that Style would be acceptable..."¹

Burney mentioned that it was "often asserted by musical writers that (Carissimi) was the inventor of cantatas",² but he himself traced the use of the word back to Benedetto Ferrari (1597-1681), who published three

1. J.E. Galliard, "Six English Cantatas" (London c.1716).
2. Burney, "General History of Music" (1789), Mercer edition (New York, 1957) Vol.IV,p.607.

volumes of cantatas during the long time he spent at Venice. Until quite recently most historians have accepted Burney's account, but it is now generally thought that Alessandro Grandi (d.1630) must take credit for the first use of the term. Grandi published his first volume of "Cantade e Arie" at Venice in 1620, and this was later followed by three other volumes. The second has never been known; the third was printed in 1623, and the fourth in 1629.

The cantatas in Grandi's volumes are pieces built on what we now call a strophic bass structure; this means that there is a different melody for each stanza but the bass of each stanza is identical. Printed copies of Grandi's cantatas are rare; the only known extant copies of the first and third books were destroyed at Breslau during the 1939-1945 war, the second has never come to light, and the fourth and last exists in one copy at the Musikbibliothek Peters in Leipzig. Our knowledge of these works must, therefore, rely largely on quotations in modern textbooks, and the following extracts, quoted by Manfred Bukofzer in his "Music in the Baroque Era" (page 32) will serve to illustrate the method of composition.

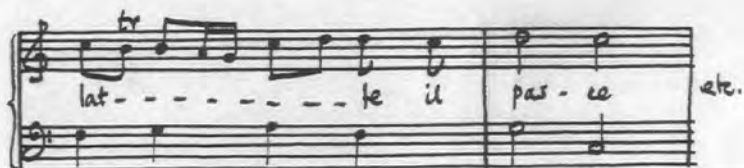
Ex.1.

A- pre delhuo - mo infe - li - ce all' hor che nas - - - ca

This is the opening of the first stanza. The second begins as follows:

Ex.2.

Fan - - - ciue - - - - - do poi che non più



and the fourth like this:

Ex. 3.



Short extracts like these might lead one to suppose that the strophic bass is the same as the ground bass, another favourite device of the period and one to which it is undoubtedly related. In fact the two forms are very different. In the first place, the strophic bass is much longer than the ground; it is, in fact, as long as the melody for one stanza, for there is no repetition of the bass within the stanza. The bass which follows after examples 1 and 2 above proceeds to new material. Also, the strophic bass lacks the melodic shape which we find in the shorter ground bass, and these two factors make it less recognizable as the basis of the structure. Moreover (though this is not evident in the above quotations) it is frequently found with long notes while the vocal part above moves comparatively quickly, thus claiming even more of the interest. The last difference in character follows naturally from the others; this is that the strophic bass generally contains within itself modulation (either expressed or implied, or both), whereas modulation in a ground bass structure is rarely achieved without transposition of the bass theme.

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1. For other examples by Grandi see (a) Lavignac, "Encyclopédie de la Musique" (1913), Vol. V, p. 3395; (b) Prunières, article in *Music & Letters*, 1926; (c) Schmitz, "Geschichte der Kantate und des geistlichen Konzertes (I. Geschichte der weltlichen Solokantate)" (Leipzig, 1914); (d) Riemann, "Handbuch der Musikgeschichte" Vol. II(2), pp. 39-45.

One cannot be certain how Grandi and others approached the composition of their strophic bass cantatas, but it is interesting to make conjectures, and if the following guess is correct we may observe a further contrast with the ground bass. In the case of the latter it is quite certain that the bass melody was written first (and many of the Baroque grounds were the common property of every composer). The composer would then construct his melody above its repetitions, part of his skill being to hide the joins in the bass by melodic overlap. The writer of a strophic bass, on the other hand, probably began by writing a melody for the opening stanza and simultaneously a bass to support it. This bass would then remain as a framework for different, though similar, melodies in the remaining stanzas. Thus the bass is the starting point for a ground, the melody for a strophic bass.

The strophic bass seems to many of us now a rather rough and cumbersome construction, and one might well wonder why it proved so popular with cantata composers from Grandi to Carissimi. Perhaps the best way to arrive at an answer is to put ourselves in the place of the early Baroque composer, and to examine his intentions and the material he had at his disposal to realize them.

First of all, then, we notice that the cantata is a longish work — long, that is, in comparison with the strophic song of the period. The composer would realize that although exact repetition of a melody is acceptable in a short song, it would prove somewhat tedious in a much longer work like the cantata, and he was forced, therefore, to find some way of varying each stanza. Entirely new music for every stanza would be equally unsatisfactory because this would also prove wearisome (though for a different reason) and would destroy the unity of the piece. And here we notice another important feature of the strophic bass form, which is that although the melody changes each time the bass is repeated, the harmony implied by melody and bass together (or stated explicitly by the figured bass) is, in all essential respects, the same for all stanzas. The strophic bass, therefore, provided an ideal solution to the composer's problem, for it allowed him enough melodic freedom to avoid monotony and sufficient harmonic integrity to preserve unity.

The form is sometimes also referred to as strophic variations, a misleading term since, as we have seen, the intention is neither to compose variations on the melody of the first stanza nor to write variations over a given bass, which in any case is neither 'given' nor easily recognizable as the framework of the piece. The term is not entirely incorrect if we look upon each stanza as a variation of a harmonic progression, for the cadences are well defined, but even then we run the risk of misinterpreting the intentions of the composer.

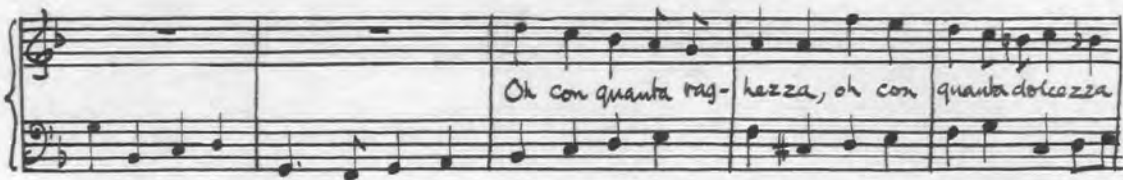
Grandi was not the first to make use of the strophic bass; Peri had used it in 1602 for some of his "Varie Musiche", and we find it also in the works of Gagliano, P. Benedetti, and Antonio Cifra. But Grandi's use of the form in conjunction with the title 'cantata' (or 'cantada') was new, and had a large following among composers in Venice and later elsewhere. Outstanding among Grandi's Venetian contemporaries were Berti, Ferrari, and Rovetta.

Giovanni Pietro Berti (d. 1638), a tenor and later deputy organist at St. Mark's, published two sets of "Cantade e Arie", the first in 1624 and the second in 1627. As in Grandi's books, the arias outnumber the cantatas and the latter are in strophic bass form. Berti extends the form by use of verbal repetition and instrumental ritornelli, and melodic sequence, uncommon in Grandi, is a feature of his style. The opening of the cantata "Oh con quanta vaghezza"¹ from the first book will illustrate his use of ritornello and sequence. There are six stanzas in all, each one preceded by the same ritornello.

Ex. 4.



1. Quoted by Einstein in Adler, op.cit.



Benedetto Ferrari (1597-1681), sometimes known as Benedetto della Tiorba because of his proficiency on the theorbo, spent most of the last years of his life at Modena, but had previously been active in Venice, for which city he wrote operas and libretti. His chamber cantatas, which follow Grandi's models, were published in Venice in three collections of "Musiche varie a voce sola" in 1633, 1637¹; and 1642². Giovanni Rovetta (d.1668) was, like Berti, then as vice-maestro di cappella, and finally, from 1644, as maestro di cappella. He published a volume which contained cantatas in 1629.

Other composers active at Venice include Milanuzii, Strozzi, Manelli, and Sances. Carlo Milanuzii (c.1590-c.1645) held the post of organist at Santo Stefano between 1623 and 1629. As the majority of his cantatas were published during this period we may think of him, for our present purposes, as a Venetian composer. His cantatas were included in nine volumes of "Ariose vaghezze" published in Venice between 1622 and 1635, of which seven survive. Francesco Manelli settled in Venice in 1636, where in the same year he published his "Musiche varie", his only extant work. Although born at Rome and employed first as a singer and later as music director at the Imperial Chapel, Vienna, Giovanni Felice Sances (c.1600-1679) published two volumes containing cantatas at Venice, the "Cantade a due" (1633) and the "Capricci poeticii" (1648). The cantata continued to flourish at Venice after the ascendancy of the Roman school, and consideration of the contribution made by Barbara Strozzi, an important contemporary of Rossi and Carissimi, may conveniently be left for a later section of this chapter.

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1. Alfred Loewenburg in Grove, and most other authorities. Prunières (op.cit.) gives 1641.
 2. Two of his cantatas are in Riemann's "Kantaten-Frühling" Vol.I (Leipzig,n.d.).

The historical interest of the early Venetian school is considerable, but we lack the requisite material to give more than an estimate of its artistic value. We can, however, safely venture the opinion that there is nothing in their work which would have ensured the continuation of the cantata as an art-form, and it is perhaps significant that many of the composers were employed primarily as executants. Association with a composer of more than average gifts was needed, and one regrets that Monteverdi, who was active at Venice during this period, left no volumes of "Cantade e Arie". It was left to the Roman school of the following generation to supply the impetus which was to keep the cantata alive for well over a hundred years.

The achievement of the Venetian composers was to establish the cantata as a lyrico-dramatic form for solo voice and continuo on a strophic bass foundation. But to say this is to tell only part of the truth, for the adoption of the term 'cantata' was a gradual and, at first, a haphazard one. There are a number of works of the period which are cantatas in everything but name, and it is to be observed that contemporary manuscript sources by composers even as late as Stradella are often recognizable as cantatas only by their length and the subjects of the texts. It is these two criteria which have been used to identify as cantatas many of the works to be discussed in the next part of this chapter.

* * *

The Roman School

The second generation of cantata composers is centred at Rome and includes among its leaders composers important in the development of the opera, especially Luigi Rossi and Cesti. We now begin to find not only the lesser men but the leading composers of the time -- Rossi, Cesti, and Carissimi -- favouring the solo cantata with their attention, and infusing it with new life in much the same way as Monteverdi had done previously with the opera. This is a period of greater freedom in form as well as of greater variety in subject, and we see at

last the merging of the various elements of the cantata mentioned at the beginning of this chapter.

Schmitz draws attention to the fact that from about 1640 onwards, when the Roman composers began to come into prominence, far fewer cantatas found their way to the printing-press. He attributes this to the growing practice of writing cantatas to satisfy an occasional demand by a restricted circle.

"Ein markantes äusseres Merkmal ist zu Beginn der Blütezeit der Kammerkantate (i.e. the period of Rossi and Carissimi) noch zu beobachten: nämlich das Zurücktreten der Druckliteratur gegenüber der handschriftlichen Überlieferung. Eine handschriftliche Literatur unserer Kunstgattung besteht natürlich seit Anfang des Jahrhunderts. Allein die unbestrittene Führerrolle spielen im ersten Stadium der Entwicklung die Drucke; erst im vierten Dezennium erfolgt hier der Umschwung. Der Grund ist wohl darin zu suchen, dass sich die Kantate in zunehmendem Masse zur "Gelegenheitskomposition" ausbildete. Wie die Komponist seine Opern für ein bestimmtes Theater, bestimmte Sänger und eine bestimmte Spielzeit komponierte, so waren auch die Kammerkantaten in der Regel für einen eng umgrenzten Kreis bestimmt."¹

Unfortunately Schmitz produces no evidence to show that there was any less general demand for the cantatas of Rossi and Carissimi than for those of Grandi and Ferrari. The reverse was probably the case. The reason why they were less published was surely the simple one that Rome, unlike Venice and other northern cities, was not advanced in the printing of music. How else can we account for the fact that the cantatas of Scarlatti written at Rome and Naples should remain in manuscript, while those of his less famous contemporaries in Bologna and London appeared in print? A composer would make special arrangements to have published at Venice, Amsterdam, or even London, the vocal and instrumental parts of larger works likely to enjoy a wide popularity,

1. Schmitz, op.cit. p.69

but he would not incur the expense of publishing cantatas unless there was a good printer on his doorstep.

The first important Roman writer of cantatas was Luigi Rossi (c.1598-1653), also the first ever to make cantata composition the chief part of his output. After study in Naples he settled in Rome, first in the service of Marc'Antonio Borghese, and later with Cardinal Antonio Barberini. Rome, with its long tradition of learning and its intermittent papal restrictions on the production of opera, must have been especially receptive to the composer of cantatas.

The date 1640 has been put forward as the beginning of Roman predominance in the cantata, but in fact one of Rossi's most famous cantatas, "Un ferito cavaliere", had already earned for him an international reputation in 1632, and it is not surprising to find that he makes use of the strophic bass in many of his works. This, however, is only one of four types of construction which can be found in Rossi's cantatas.¹ These are:

- (a) the strophic bass cantata,
- (b) the recitative cantata,
- (c) the refrain cantata,
- (d) cantatas based on a free alternation of recitative and aria.

The strophic bass accounts for less than a quarter of Rossi's total output of over a hundred cantatas, and it is likely that many of these are early works. The basic form is the same as that used by Grandi and others in the examples already mentioned, but Rossi shows much greater freedom and mastery in his handling of the individual stanzas. One cannot fail to notice in the cantatas of the Venetians a certain stiffness and amateurishness in the way that the melody for the later stanzas is tailored to fit the repeated bass line, as though composers were afraid to transgress their self-imposed limitations. Rossi, on the other hand, does not hesitate to alter the rhythm or even the pitch of certain

1. For brief analyses of a hundred of Rossi's cantatas see H. Riemann, "Handbuch der Musikgeschichte" Vol. II (2), (Leipzig, second edition ed. A. Einstein, 1922).

bass, and it is this "diversity within unity" which is to be the hall-mark of the genuine chamber cantata from Rossi onwards, although later composers find other methods of achieving it.

Variety within the stanza itself makes variation of the melody in subsequent stanzas less necessary, indeed less desirable. The first stanza of "Gelosia che poco a poco" has fifty-three bars (if one adapts the manuscript to modern bar-line procedure). In the second stanza only nineteen bars, and in the third and last stanza only eight bars, show any variation of the opening melodic line. This is in great contrast with Grandi's method, where we find new melodic material throughout the work, although the cadences often preserve the same outlines.

It will be evident from the foregoing analysis that the stanzas are much longer than in the earlier examples by the Venetian school, and as a result the total number of stanzas is, generally speaking, smaller. In fact for the most part Rossi makes use of only three stanzas for his strophic bass cantatas, and this seems to have become the usual practice for his contemporaries also.

"Gelosia che poco a poco" is a fiery, passionate portrayal of the insidiousness of jealousy, and the temptation to include quotations from it is very great. It has, however, been well described already and it will be more profitable to give some account of another cantata, "Già nel'oblio profondo" (B.M. Harl.1265), which is a more typical, if less arresting, example of Rossi's methods in the composition of the strophic bass. The text is above average in literary quality. The singer describes his burning, unresting feelings for Clori, contrasting them with the quiet of nightfall which surrounds him. The cantata is written for soprano and continuo and is divided into Rossi's usual scheme of three statements of the strophic bass, each of which in this case includes a short recitative followed by an aria. It will be convenient to quote the first stanza in its entirety.

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1. By C.H.H. Parry in the "Oxford History of Music" (1st edition) Vol. III (1902) pp. 153-154. Unfortunately Parry conveys the impression that Rossi invented the strophic bass form.

Ex. 6.

Gia' nel'oblio pro-fondo il di sepolto giace e cinto d'ombre il

6 6^b3

mondo stanco vi-po-sa e ta - - - - - ce

56 67
34 43

Sol risplendon la su spar - - - - - se fra

43 4#3

lo - ro del già ca - du - to di ru - i - ne do - - - -

6 6 #6

-ro, del già ca - du - to di ru - i - ne d'o - - - - ro, ru -

43

-i - - - - - ne d'o - - - - ro, del già ca - du - to di

43



There are a number of points to notice here. The short opening recitative looks commonplace enough at first sight, but in fact the low tessitura of the voice and the leaning of the harmony towards the flat (or "dark") side of the key show a scrupulous regard for the meaning of the text, and set in relief the bright treatment of the word "risplendon" which follows.

The aria is fairly long for Rossi and shows him more concerned than usual with formal matters. It might well have ended at bar 19¹, but the continuation allows him, as well as some fresh material, a better climax, another modulation, and a more secure return to the home key, resulting in an aria of very satisfying proportions within a modest scale. Rossi's well-developed rhythmic sense is also shown to good advantage, with a nice balance of iambic and trochaic metres and a characteristic use of hemiole.

There are two further points which deserve remark, the first being the subservience of the bass. Its role is clearly a supporting one, and in this it is typical of the period. Rossi rarely allows his basses to take a more active part in the texture than this one does at bars 19 to 20. The second point, which follows logically from the first, is that there are no instrumental ritornelli. This is also typical of Rossi and his contemporaries and may be accounted for, as Dent suggests in connexion with Stradella, by the fact that "their instrumental technique was not advanced enough to give them the chance of relieving the voice by interludes".² But it also serves to illustrate how the early and middle Baroque composer was much more interested in the setting of the text than in the development of purely musical form.

1. Cf. ex. 11, p. 32-33.

2. E. J. Dent, "Italian Chamber Cantatas" (Musical Antiquary, Vol. II, 1910-1911).

Extracts from the other two stanzas will illustrate how and how far Rossi alters the melodic line to accommodate new words. The voice part of the second stanza keeps close to the outlines of the first, but shows more use of melisma, particularly at the end of the recitative,

Ex.7.

mar - - - - - tr

and at the end of the aria.

Ex.8.

sen - - - - - l'om-bre del - cia - o

(Example 8 also shows slight alteration of the bass part.) The third stanza once again shows increasing use of melisma at similar points in the text; at the end of the recitative,

Ex.9.

ben - - - - - m'in - vi - o

and at the end of the aria.

Ex.10. (see next page)

Ex. 10.

The image shows a musical score for Ex. 10. It consists of two systems of music. The first system has a vocal line on a treble clef staff and a piano accompaniment on a bass clef staff. The vocal line starts with the word "ciel" and then has a long melisma "Uor" with a dashed line underneath. There are two bracketed numbers, [2] and [4], above the vocal line. The piano accompaniment has a 3/4 time signature and a bass line with a 6 chord indicated below it. The second system continues the vocal line with the lyrics "me del co-re" and the piano accompaniment. A 6 chord is also indicated below the piano line in this system.

Characteristic of Rossi is this use of increasingly florid melisma throughout a cantata, giving the whole work the same kind of cumulative effect which we enjoy in a Bach passacaglia or in a set of variations by Brahms. Rossi's fioriture are of quite a different genre from the pyrotechnics which we associate with many of the late Baroque composers, such as those which Hasse wrote for Farinelli. They are always prompted by a sense of drama (as in "Gelosia che poco a poco") or by the expressive demands of the text.

Less interesting are the recitative cantatas, which are generally long, in a declamatory style, and often with a short aria or arioso at the end. Many of them are laments and show the influence of Arianna's lament in Monteverdi's opera of 1608. "Lasciate ch'io ritorni", which falls into ten sections, "Al soave spirar" (L'Arione), and "Erminia sventurata" (all of them in B.M. Harl. 1265) are examples of this type, the last named being the most successful.

The recitative cantata "Lasciate ch'io ritorni" might also be included in the third category -- that of the refrain cantata -- for the opening section returns four times during the course of the work, serving as a ritornello in much the same way as does the opening of Arianna's lament. The refrain cantata is the type most frequently found in Rossi's output, and some of his best works are in this form. Many of them are long and straggling, held together only by their key scheme (which

is usually primitive) and the return of material heard earlier in the cantata. Sometimes the repetitions are of music only, at other times they are of both music and words. Sometimes a whole aria, or even two, may be repeated; at other times only a short arioso passage.

The cantata "E chi non v'ameria" (B.M. Harl.1265) opens with two arias, the first in F minor and the second in F major, which are followed by a recitative. These three sections are then repeated to different words, the whole cantata ending with a third appearance of the opening aria, making a clear-cut rondo form (A B C A B C A). The cantata "Giusto così v'a detto" (B.M. Harl.1265), on the other hand, consists of nine sections, only one of which can be called an aria, and the returning portion is the short opening arioso of a mere four bars.

There is, then, no set form for the refrain cantata, but most of Rossi's examples are somewhere between these two extremes. A particularly attractive work is the cantata "Anime, voi che siete" (B.M. Harl.1863). As in "Gelosia che poco a poco" the subject here is jealousy, but the poet's treatment is more restrained, objective, and indeed almost cynical. "If you wish to know what jealousy is like", he says, "ask me about it". The music is consequently lighter and with a melodic appeal which finds an immediate response from the modern listener. The cantata begins with a recitative of thirteen bars (C minor) in a fairly simple style, and this is followed by an aria of as many bars which deserves quotation in full.

Ex. 11.

The image shows a musical score for a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The first system of music is in C minor and common time. The vocal line has the lyrics: "Che non sa che co-sa si-a ge-lo - si-a lo chie-di a". The piano accompaniment consists of a simple bass line. The second system of music is in C major and common time. The vocal line has the lyrics: "me, lo di-man-dia l'al-mia mi-a, lo sa-prà de la mia fè, lo di-". The piano accompaniment continues with a simple bass line.

-man-di a l'al-ma mi-a, lo sa-prà de la mia fè

The form of the aria (A B1 B2) is a common one, and one which we are to observe again in the cantatas of Stradella and early Scarlatti; the immediate appeal of the present example no doubt derives from its balance of four-bar phrases and its clearly defined cadences. Six bars of recitative follow, the text of which is immediately restated in the following arioso:

Ex. 12.

che di-ran-no ch'è un af-fan-no, un tor-men-to, un cruc-ci-o, un purga-to-rio al fin peg-gio d'infer-no

After fifteen bars of recitative this section returns in 3/4 time, modified and extended as follows, the change in the metre of the text demanding a corresponding change in time-signature from 3/4 to 6/8.

Ex. 13.

Di chi-me-re di fan-tas-me ho la men-te in stre-pi-di-ta, pieno il

cor di doglie e spasmi, sta fra crucci la mia vi-ta. Ogn' ombra m'addombra, il
 so-le m'abbag-lia, ne mai da me sgombra si fe-ra battaglia.

After a short recitative (seven bars) the cantata ends with a repeat of the aria quoted at example 11. This repeat is in fact demanded by the text, but nevertheless performs a formal function. The extracts quoted here are sufficient to show how unified the refrain cantata of Rossi can be. The beginning of example 13 was no doubt intended as a variation of example 12; whether or not Rossi was conscious of the very close connexion between the second part of example 13 ("Ogn'ombra" etc) and the opening of example 11 is immaterial to its formal importance.

The recitatives fulfil the musical purpose of modulating to the key needed for the next aria or arioso, though this is done without the foresight evident in the mature Scarlatti cantata. Although the cantata always begins and ends in the same key, there is rarely any further evidence of a planned tonal structure, and Rossi is conservative in his modulations, never straying very far from the home key. He and his contemporaries certainly show a feeling for major and minor, but the use of contrasted keys for structural purposes was one of the developments in which Scarlatti was later to play such a large part.

A number of Rossi's cantatas show that alternation of recitative and aria which was to become the strongest *feature* of the cantata from Scarlatti onwards, but they tend, like the early cantatas of Scarlatti himself, to be rather long, straggling works, without sharp differentiation between the various sections. Many of them show features of the refrain cantata. The cantata "A la rota,

a la benda" ("La Fortuna") (B.M. Harl.1265), for example, may be analysed as follows:

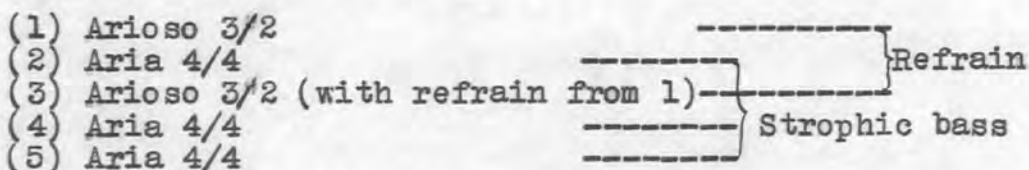
- (1) Recit -- Bflat - Gmin
- (2) Aria -- "Il nocchier" (Gmin 4/4)
- (3) Recit -- G (2 bars only)
- (4) Arioso-- "Mentre sorte" (Gmin 3/4)
- (5) Aria -- "In vano amanti" (Gmin 6/8)
- (6) Recit -- B flat
- (7) Aria -- resembling (2) above (Gmin 4/4)
- (8) Recit
- (9) Aria -- "Chi fortuna non ha" (Refrain, Bflat 6/8)
- (10) Recit
- (11) Aria -- Repetition of (9)
- (12) Recit
- (13) Aria -- Repetition of (9).

It is important not to lay too much stress (as some commentators have) on the more or less regular alternation of recitative and aria in works such as "La Fortuna". Such a structure is rare in Rossi, and, moreover, one receives the impression that it is the result of chance, of the demands of a specific text, rather than of a deliberate intention to set recitative and aria in juxtaposition. Also, the recitative has not yet the structural significance nor the subservience to the aria that one finds in later composers. Nevertheless the position that such works hold in the development of the cantata form is an interesting one.

Many of the remarks just made on the cantatas of Luigi Rossi may be extended to include those of his contemporaries at Rome and Venice. We find in the examples of Carissimi and Cesti the three main forms for the cantata -- strophic bass, recitative, and refrain -- which we have seen in the work of Rossi.

Giacomo Carissimi (1605-1674) was born in Rome and spent the greater part of his working life there as maestro di cappella at Sant'Apollinare. He is remembered as the first outstanding composer of oratorio, and especially of the beautiful "Jeptha", but he also gained recognition in his day as a writer of chamber cantatas and made a special contribution in his humorous examples of the form, such as the "Requiem Jocosum" and the

autobiographical "Testamentum Asini". In their basic forms Carissimi's cantatas follow Rossi, but he made some interesting attempts to combine the strophic bass with features of other types of cantata. The very moving lament of Mary Queen of Scots, "Ferma, lascia ch'io parli" (B.M. Harl.1265), for example, includes two stanzas in C minor on the same bass within long stretches of free recitative in G minor. "No, mio core" (B.M. Harl.1501 & 1270) shows an even more interesting construction, a combination of strophic bass and refrain, which may be outlined as follows:



The absence of recitative which we notice here, and also in many other cantatas, may perhaps reflect Carissimi's lack of interest in opera. Certainly, he seldom rivals Rossi's powers of dramatic recitative, but he has, on the other hand, a more lyrical flow of melody, a much more adventurous approach to modulation, and a greater variation of key between the various sections of a work. A feature of his harmony is the so-called neapolitan sixth, while another characteristic (almost a mannerism, though found to a certain extent in his contemporaries also) is his habit of immediately repeating the opening phrase of an aria in another key, more often than not a fifth higher. Sequential patterns, in both recitative and aria, become more frequent with Carissimi.

All these features are displayed in a very attractive cantata, "Almeno un pensiero" (B.M. Harl.1272) which, like certain other cantatas by Carissimi, approaches very closely the 'Neapolitan' form of the mature Scarlatti. In this work the chains of Love are likened to those of the prisoner, and it opens with a fairly extended ternary aria (or more properly binary with coda) of which the following is the first part:

Ex.14. (see next page)

Ex. 14.

Al- me - no un pen-sie-ro, al- me - no un pen-sie-ro ch'è
 lam - - - - - po del lo-re si do-ni, si do-ni, si
 do - ni a chi mo - - - - - re - si do - ni, si
 do - ni a chi mo - - - - - re -

43

The repetition of the first phrase in the dominant minor and the use of the (implied) neapolitan sixth at bar 11 are typical of Carissimi, and it is to be observed that the insertion of a bar in a different time-signature is a practice not confined to Rossi. The middle section of the aria is concerned mainly with sequential working-out of the following figure:

Ex. 15.

al duol che si fe-vo

6 [b]5 [b]4 3

within the same key scheme (Bflat - C minor - G minor). The coda shows a return to the opening words of the aria, "Almeno un pensiero", but, curiously enough, not to the first music.

Twenty-eight bars of recitative follow, more restrained than Rossi would have made them, but with a more carefully thought out structural organization in the modulations, and showing characteristic repetition of certain telling phrases as well as melisma when the text demands it.

Ex.16.

di ri-nasce-n-te gio-ia, di rinascen-te gio-ia e - - - - -

bro di-vie-ne

The aria which follows this, "Già fui vinto", is worth quoting in full.

Ex.17.

Già fui vin-to e lo sai tu. già fui vin-to

e lo sai tu mia guer-rie - - - - -

- -ra gra - di - - - - - tu, fù quest' al - ma ra - pi - ta con e'

ter - na ca - te - - - - - na, con e - ter - na ca - te - na in

ser - - vi - tù, fù quest' al - ma ra - pi - ta con e - ter - na ca -

- te - - - - - na, con e - ter - na ca - te - na in ser - - vi -

- tù. Già fù vin - to e lo sai tu, già fù

vin - to e lo sai tu, e lo sai tu.

Once again we notice a number of things characteristic of Carissimi; the repetition of the opening phrase in a related key, the interesting and well-planned modulations, and a less careful regard for the accents of the text than

we would expect from Rossi. The anapaestic metre of bars 18 and 27 (and incidentally the identical rhythm of example 15) is another feature of Carissimi's style, though he shows even greater predilection for the dactyl. We cannot fail to observe also the clear ternary form of the aria or the careful construction of the individual sections. It cannot strictly be called a da capo aria, because the return of the opening lines is shortened, and modified to present the same sequence of modulations while ensuring a return to the tonic (in much the same way that Schubert often modified the key scheme in the recapitulation of a sonata-form movement). The form of the aria shows a degree of forethought rarely to be found in Rossi's arias, although the instrumental ritornello is still absent. Carissimi clearly felt the need of some kind of coda at bar 40, but he could do no better than echo the last phrase. The bass, it will be observed, shows no advance on Rossi in its share of the interest.

The cantata ends with ten bars of recitative followed by a repeat of the aria "Già fui vinto". The whole work is most interesting for the way in which it so closely approaches the plan which Scarlatti was to adopt for the majority of his cantatas only after a period of experiment on other lines.

Pietro Antonio Cesti (1623-1669) spent much of his life at Venice, Florence, and Innsbruck as well as at Rome, but it is not unreasonable to suppose that some at least of his cantatas were written for performance in the city where the form was particularly cultivated. He was, in fact, a pupil of Carissimi at Rome, and it is not surprising that his cantatas follow, in outline at least, those of his master and of Luigi Rossi; but he seems to have made something of a reputation as a composer of satirical works. One such, "La Corte di Roma"; a setting of words by his friend Salvator Rosa, describes the 'dolce vita' of Roman high society and has retained some of the fame which it enjoyed for a number of decades. Much more interesting to the musician, however, is the satirical cantata "Aspettate, adesso canto" (B.M. Harl. 1863).

The text of this cantata might also have been the work of Salvator Rosa for it is written in the same

1. Printed in Riemann, "Kantaten-Frühling Vol. II (Leipzig).

satirical vein as his "Satire", and indeed the target of attack is similar to that of the first of the "Satire" ("La Musica"). The cantata begins with a recitative which serves as a refrain since it recurs, in whole or in part, a number of times throughout the work.

Ex. 18.

1 *Aspettate, aspettate, adesso, adesso canto.*

Ec-co che suona e in tan-to di-teni, di-te-ni come la desiderate

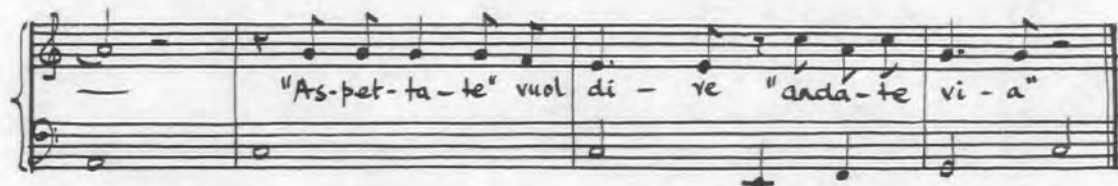
The singer never in fact completes any of his songs. Like a music-hall comedian he is continually interrupting himself until the audience is finally let down with the following:

Ex. 19.

Con tante ciarle e tan-te, cre-dea farvi par-ti-re; ma non movendo

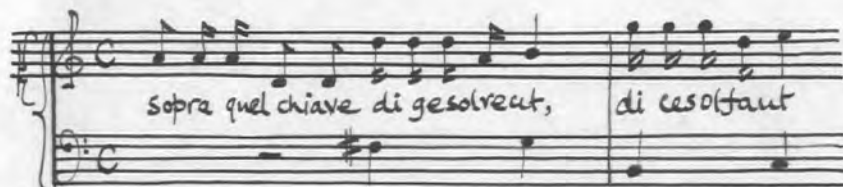
voi punta le piante, mi ri-sol-vo di di-re che se non intendeste quell'aspet-

1. The first two bars of the basso-continuo are blank in the MS.



This is a rather weak joke and especially so when extended to over four hundred bars of music. The music itself is tuneful but not otherwise extraordinary and it must be admitted that the interest is primarily literary. However, the work does present us with some interesting and valuable information about the contemporary attitude to the singer and the song. We learn from the following extract, for instance,

Ex. 20.



not only that the teaching of musical theory followed strict Guidonian principles (which we know in any case from the writings of contemporary theorists) but also that Cesti, like Scarlatti at a later date¹, was able to assume a fair knowledge of these principles in his audience.

It is interesting, and perhaps comforting too, to learn that the conventional amatory texts of many of the cantatas and songs of the day were not always taken seriously. After beginning a typical love-song Cesti breaks off with:

1. See p. 114.

Ex. 21.

1. Ma pia-no, sen-ti-te; lasciamo andardi gratia le can-zoni amo-
-ro - se tut-ta la gen-te è sa-ti-a d'ascol-tar queste co-se

and goes on to say that no matter where you go you here nothing but "pupillette, Filli, Lilla, luci belle" and other such "barzellette". Nevertheless, it was precisely these "barzellette" which were to furnish the stock-in-trade of cantata writers for a further eighty years, and one can only assume that the conventions of cantata texts, like those of opera libretti, were accepted as uncritically by the seventeenth-century audiences as are the words of popular love-songs by their admirers to-day.

Later in the same cantata we learn something of the passion for singing which was cultivated in Rome at the time, especially in this case by the women --

Ex. 22.

L'o-degn'hor per i vi-o-ri dir DO RE MI FA
sol LA, gi-ra pur di qua e di là dab-per-tut-to

1. This and the following bar of the basso-continuo part are blank in the MS.

Ex. 23.

Hog-gi
na-sce una can-zo - - ne e do-ma-ni è bel-la e vec - -
-chia. On-de poi l'altra ap-pa-re - chia - Il po -
-e - ta che com-po - nê ha che po-ca dis-cre-tio - -
-ne. se due vol-te una è sen-ti - ta di-co
su-bi-to ch'è tris - - ta che buo-na un tem-po ve-ra-mente - fu

One would expect Cesti to enter into the spirit of the text of this cantata by introducing quotations from other songs or cantatas well known at the time. I have

been unable to discover any exact correspondences. Example 23, above, is immediately followed by a phrase to the words "Non si puo resistere più", which serves as a refrain for this section of the work:

Ex. 24.

che buo-na un tem-po ve-ra-men-te — fù. Non si

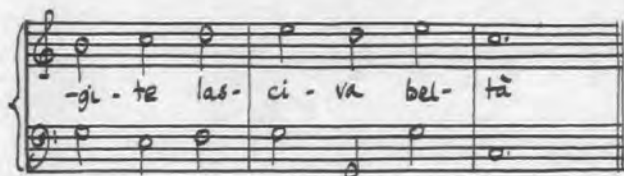
puo re-sis-ter — più

This bears considerable resemblance to part of a canzone by Cavalli, Cesti's contemporary at Venice, the manuscript of which is in the library of the Conservatorio G. B. Martini at Bologna. Both are in the same key, have the same time-signature, and are similar in modulation, harmony, and melodic outline; but these similarities probably display a common musical language rather than a conscious borrowing. The cadence in which the fifth of the dominant chord rises a step before falling to the tonic, a prominent feature of both examples, is characteristic of the period. Here is the relevant passage in the song by Cavalli:¹

Ex. 25.

che in-si-die scal-tri-te tra-men-do vi va. Don-zel-le fug-

1. The canzone is quoted in full by L. Torchi, "Canzoni ed Arie italiane ad una voce nel secolo XVII" (Rivista Musicale Italiana, Vol. I, 1894).



Contemporary with Cesti at Venice was Barbara Strozzi (dates unknown), whose contribution to the development of the cantata has been exaggerated by many writers, but whose works are not without significance. Reference has already been made to Galliard's account of her work,¹ but the claims he put forward for her were merely those which she made for herself in the preface to her "Cantate, arie e duetti" published at Venice in 1651, in which she claimed priority for the invention of a form which contrasted recitative and aria. Although her claims were unjustified, it is nevertheless true that recitative and aria are more often and more sharply differentiated in her cantatas than in those of many of her contemporaries in Venice and Rome. This is particularly noticeable in those of her works which break up a ground bass structure with interposed recitative sections.

Barbara Strozzi was the adopted daughter of the poet Giulio Strozzi and a pupil of Cavalli at Venice. She warmly acknowledges her indebtedness to her master Cavalli in the preface to her second published work, the "Cantate, ariette e duetti" op.2 (Venice 1651).

"Inanimata dà molti Professori di questa bell' arte, e particolarmente dal Sig. Francesco Cavalli, uno de' più celebri di questo secolo, già dalla mia fanciullezza mio cortese precettore, ho pubblicata al mondo questa seconda mia fatica."

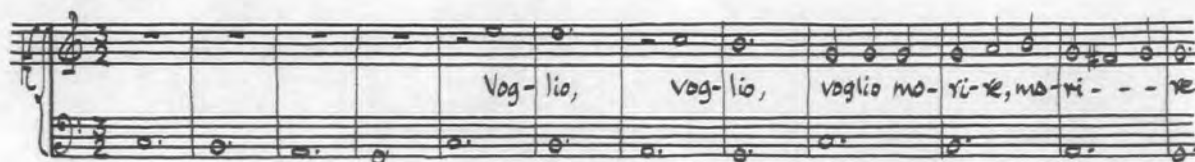
The first cantata of Strozzi's third book (Venice, 1654) is built on a strophic bass framework of three stanzas ("Cuore che reprime alla lingua di manifestare il nome della sua cara"), but she shows greater partiality for the ground bass proper, and especially for the chaconne consisting of a descending tetrachord. Riemann²

-
1. See p.17.
 2. H.Riemann, "Der 'Basso Ostinato' und die Anfänge der Kantate" (Sammelbände der Internationalen Musik gesellschaft, Vol.XIII).

has drawn attention to the frequent use of this same bass by other early cantata composers at Venice, notably Ferrari.

Barbara Strozzi's opus 2 was dedicated to Ferdinand III of Austria on the occasion of his third marriage to Eleonora Gonzaga of Mantua, and includes two chaconne cantatas, no.14, "Udite amanti" ("L'Eraclito amoroso") and no.16, "Voglio morire" ("L'Amante segreto"); the latter begins as follows:

Ex.26.



Occasionally the ground is altered by the insertion of an F between the A and the G. The scheme of the whole cantata may be outlined as follows:

- (1) Ground bass, C major 3/2 - 13 times
- (2) Recitative, A minor 4/4 - 4 bars
- (3) Ground bass continued - 6 times
- (4) Recitative, A minor 4/4 - 15 bars
- (5) Ground bass continued - 5 times
- (6) Recitative, G major 4/4 - 12 bars
- (7) Ground bass continued - 10 times
- (8) Recitative, A minor - 12 bars
- (9) Aria 3/2, ending with short arioso 4/4.

In this cantatas, and in others as well, Barbara Strozzi shows an expert handling of the recitative style. We notice verbal repetition to musical sequences, a certain amount of imitation between voice and bass, and a fairly wide range of modulation. The recitative which makes up section (6) of the cantata "Voglio morire" presents a good illustration of her style.

Ex.27. (see next page)

Ex. 27.

L'er-bet-ta ch'al ce-der di fred-da bri-na lan - - gui-dal capo in-
 - chi - na all' ap - pa - rir del so - le lie - - - - - ta, lie - - - - - ta ver -
 - deg - gia più ver - deg - gia più di - - - - - quel - - - - -
 - - - - - che - - - - - suo - - - - - le'

A woman composer, like Dr. Johnson's woman preacher, is sure to attract attention for her very rarity, but Barbara Strozzi has not been included in this account merely because she was the only woman to write cantatas. We do admire the performance, and her cantatas hold an important position in the development of the form, even if this position is a humbler one than that which she claimed for herself.

Other cantata composers active at Rome during the period of Rossi and Carissimi include Abbatini (1598-1680), Marazzoli (d.1662), Bernabei (1620-1687), Savioni (dates unknown), Caproli (d.1683), Tenaglia (dates unknown), and Liberati (d.after 1685). The Roman school has been treated in some length, for if there is no composer to attain the stature of Alessandro Scarlatti as a writer of chamber cantatas their works as a whole have a variety, freshness,

and sincerity not to be found in later periods. Nor can the achievements of later composers be fully appreciated without some understanding of the advances they made, particularly in matters of form and key relationships.

* * *

From Carissimi to Scarlatti

During the twenty or so years preceding the early works of Alessandro Scarlatti the popularity of the cantata as an art form spread throughout all the musical centres of Italy and, to some extent, abroad. Naples, the city which was to produce more writers of cantatas than any other city, began to emerge as a leading centre of musical activity, especially in the field of opera. Provenzale and Stradella, the two composers most important in the development of the cantata between Carissimi and Scarlatti, were both in some way associated with Naples.

Francesco Provenzale (prob. 1627-1704) was born and died in Naples and spent the majority of his working years there, principally as a teacher at the Conservatorio dei Turchini, one of the city's four famous schools of music. Only nine of his cantatas are known to-day. Two of these with obbligato parts for two violins, in the Conservatorio di Milano, are described in detail by Hugo Riemann; the other seven, in the library of the Conservatorio di S. Pietro a Maiella, are the subject of an article by Guido Pannain. Only those described by Riemann show the 'Neapolitan' form which we associate with the later Scarlatti. They are undoubtedly later works than the other seven and were possibly influenced by Scarlatti himself; the remainder show a variety and waywardness in their layout such as we associate with Scarlatti's early cantatas.

1. "Handbuch der Musikgeschichte" Vol. II(2), 2nd edition ed. Alfred Einstein (Leipzig, 1922).
2. "Francesco Provenzale e la lirica del suo tempo" (Rivista Musicale Italiana Vol. XXXII, 1925, p. 497 et. seq).

More important (and more accessible) are the cantatas of Alessandro Stradella (1642-1682). Hess¹ listed 193 of them, and some thirty others have come to light since he wrote. Little is known of Stradella's life outside the realms of legend and colourful conjecture, but although he seems to have been most active in the North there can be no doubt that his cantatas were known at Rome and Naples since their influence is seen in the early works of Scarlatti.

With Stradella the form of the cantata is still determined by the text. The strophic bass is no longer used because the possibilities of structures based on key-relationships are becoming more widely understood; but the refrain is still used to preserve unity in longer works -- and often in short ones also. Many of Stradella's long cantatas which are broken into a number of short sections, like some of those by Rossi and early Scarlatti, are on texts dealing with historical and mythological figures. A fine example is "Già languiva la notte" ("Medea tradita") (B.M. Add.MS.31487), and another, "Sopra un'eccelesa torre" ("Il Nerone"), seems to have been one of the best known of Stradella's cantatas. The British Museum possesses three manuscript copies of it for bass voice and continuo, and the Royal College of Music, London, has a rather unsatisfactory arrangement transposed a fourth higher for soprano.²

The story of Nero and the burning of Rome never fails to arouse the imagination, and it is difficult to account in any other way for the popularity of this work since the music is nearly all in recitative style, relieved by a couple of arias and the following refrain, which occurs four times in all:

Ex.28. (see next page)

-
1. "Die Opern Alessandro Stradellas" (1906).
 2. British Museum Add.MSS.31487, 31488, and 33234; Royal College of Music MS.1102. All versions differ in minor details. The quotation given here is from a collation of B.M. Add.MSS.31487 and 31488.

Ex. 28.

Allegro

Claudio ri - - - - - da, Claudio ri - - - - - da, e Roma, e

Roma abbrugi, e Roma, e Roma abbru-gi, Claudio ri - - - - - da, Claudio

ri - - - - - da, e Roma, e Roma abbrugi, e Roma, e Roma abbru-

The construction is very simple, but what is important to notice is the way that Stradella has extended no more than two very short ideas using only five words to make a complete musical paragraph of twelve bars. This shows a definite grappling with the problems of musical form and it is this development of thematic material, as will be more fully demonstrated later, which gives Stradella's arias a sweep and flow not often to be found in the cantatas of earlier composers.

The instrumental passage which concludes this refrain¹

1. This appears in only one of the cited MSS. It and other similar passages may be the work of a later hand.

is worthy of notice. Such instrumental portions are by no means common in Stradella's cantatas but they do appear more frequently than in those of his predecessors, and are a feature which was further developed by the generation of composers which succeeded him. On the few occasions when Stradella provides an introductory instrumental ritornello for an aria, in the manner which later became almost invariable, the thematic connexion between it and the opening of the aria which follows is as a rule very slight. In the cantata "Se Nerone mi vuole morte" (B.M. Add.MS.31488), which tells of the death of Seneca and may be regarded as a companion work to "Sopra un eccelsa torre", two of the four arias have instrumental introductions, though in each case the voice part which immediately follows soon abandons its rather flimsy connexion with the bass opening:

Ex. 29(a).

Musical score for Ex. 29(a). The score consists of two staves: a vocal line (treble clef) and a bass line (bass clef). Both are in C major and common time. The vocal line features a melodic phrase marked with an 'x' above it, with the text "Sia giustizia andò il mio" written below. The bass line features a corresponding melodic phrase also marked with an 'x' above it. The number 7 is written at the end of the bass line.

Ex. 29(b).

Musical score for Ex. 29(b). The score consists of two staves: a vocal line (treble clef) and a bass line (bass clef). Both are in B major and 3/2 time. The vocal line features a melodic phrase marked with an 'x' above it, with the text "È un mar la cor-te" written below. The bass line features a corresponding melodic phrase also marked with an 'x' above it. Below the bass line, the numbers 4 3 and 6 5 6 # 6 are written.

Differentiation between recitative and aria is more clear in the cantatas of Stradella than in those of the Roman and Venetian schools, and the alternation of one with the other is made with the obvious intention of providing form and contrast. The cantata "Forsenato pensier" (B.M. Add.MS.31489) provides a clear example of this and of Stradella's methods in general. The text is amatory and draws its images from the sea. It begins with a short arioso, followed by a recitative which modulates rather timidly from E major to B major, the dominant of the aria which follows. This aria is largely

concerned with the rather laboured working-out of the initial rhythmic phrase of the melody:

Ex. 30.

Musical score for Ex. 30. The score consists of two staves: a vocal line (treble clef) and a bass line (bass clef). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is common time (C). The vocal line features a melodic phrase with lyrics: "Fra le sivi-ti de tor- - - - manti". The bass line provides accompaniment with a steady rhythm of crotchets.

and the bass, which remains in crotchets almost throughout, plays a very subordinate role. A return of the opening arioso and a further fourteen bars of recitative are followed by two other arias of more interest. Both are splendid examples of Stradella's tightly-knit construction; the first, "Delle speranze mie", is concerned exclusively with two ideas, a four-bar phrase mainly in minims and a descending crotchet scale which has the character of a fugal counter-subject:

Ex. 31.

Musical score for Ex. 31. The score consists of two staves: a vocal line (treble clef) and a bass line (bass clef). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 2/2. The vocal line features a melodic phrase with lyrics: "Delle speran- - - ze mi- e som- mer- - - - ge". The bass line provides accompaniment with a steady rhythm of minims.

Much is made of the possibilities of imitation and of combining the two ideas. In fact the bass is now equal in melodic importance with the soloist, and the descending scale is gradually extended until it submerges the other idea:

Ex. 32.

Musical score for Ex. 32. The score consists of two staves: a vocal line (treble clef) and a bass line (bass clef). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 2/2. The vocal line features a melodic phrase with lyrics: "Som- mer- - - -". The bass line provides accompaniment with a steady rhythm of minims.



The aria ends with an exciting flourish, the voice leaping up two octaves to descend almost as far again:

Ex. 33.



The apparently curious difference in key between the beginning and the end of this aria (arioso might be a more appropriate term though it is some sixty bars in length) is explained by the fact that the text (incomplete in itself) is a continuation of the previous recitative, which began in A major. The final aria is in E major, the key of the cantata.

This work displays a number of features, typical of Stradella and his contemporaries, which sum up the main changes in the approach of composers to vocal music, or more exactly to vocal chamber music, during the period between Carissimi and Scarlatti. Most of these stem from what is basically the ascendancy of the aria over the recitative, and of the music over the text. Not only does the recitative cantata, which we find so movingly treated by Carissimi, disappear altogether, but the recitative portions of the existing type of cantata tend to be shorter, and both the fine dramatic coloratura of Rossi and the lyrical effusions of Carissimi are gradually replaced by a more continuously 'parlando' recitative style. It should be added, though, that the seventeenth-century Italian composer always preserved a scrupulous regard for the inflexions of the text.

In the aria, on the other hand, an entirely new kind of melisma is to be observed; a melisma primarily concerned not with emotional intensification nor with

pictorial representation, but with the purely musical development of melodic phrases. For the first time since the polyphonic schools of the sixteenth century we find vocal composers interested in extending the music beyond the demands of the words. In the aria (or arioso) by Stradella just described some sixty bars of music are fitted to only six words, "Delle speranze mie sommerge l'ali". The greatest composers will always try to ensure that this primarily musical melisma is in good taste, but the dangers of emptiness and extravagance are not always avoided. In the final aria of the same cantata Stradella writes the following passage:

Ex. 34.

The image shows a musical score for a vocal piece with piano accompaniment. It consists of three systems of staves. The first system shows the vocal line with lyrics 'le voragi - ne sue tro -' and the piano accompaniment. The second system continues the piano accompaniment. The third system shows the vocal line with the word 'va' and the piano accompaniment. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 8/8.

and this is by no means among the worst of his excesses.¹

The stimulus for this type of melismatic writing probably came from the example of instrumental music, particularly for strings, which was making rapid advances at the time. Nearly all the passages for which Stradella is frequently censured may be explained, if not excused, as the desire of the composer to incorporate into vocal

1. See Dent, op.cit.p.17.

pieces procedures and techniques learnt from instrumental music.

Stradella died in 1682. Scarlatti probably began writing cantatas four or five years before this date. Although his early style shows the influence of Carissimi, Cesti, and Legrenzi, it was with those of Stradella as his foundation that he was to build his own imposing, unequalled, and infinitely varied treasure-house of chamber cantatas.

* * *

CHAPTER THREE

ALESSANDRO SCARLATTI : THE EARLY CANTATAS

Dent saw in Scarlatti's music five distinct creative periods.¹ Schmitz, leaning heavily on Dent and allowing himself a surprisingly small proportion of space for the discussion of Scarlatti, divided the cantatas into three periods,² and this tripartition has been accepted by Luigi Ronga.³ It is as follows:

1. Those cantatas written before 1703,
2. 1703-1708 (the period of Scarlatti's residence in Rome as assistant maestro di cappella at S. Maria Maggiore, and
3. 1708-1725.

This makes a neat biographical and geographical partition but hardly takes into consideration the changes in style and form which Scarlatti made in the cantata, particularly during the period from about 1693 to about 1698. There is little appreciable difference between a cantata written in, say, 1701 and one written in 1705, but if we compare a cantata of 1699 with one written four years earlier we shall be confronted with many profound changes in both form and style. And while it is true, as Dent points out, that many of the later cantatas "are written round some interesting problem of form or harmony",⁴ it is also true that many others show no such concern and might easily be taken for earlier works.

Indeed the chronology of Scarlatti's cantatas presents a difficult problem, for only about a hundred and

1. Article on Scarlatti in Grove, 5th edition.
2. E. Schmitz, op. cit.
3. L. Ronga, "Motivi critici su Alessandro Scarlatti" (Rivista Musicale Italiana Vol. 56, 1954).
4. E. J. Dent, "Alessandro Scarlatti" (London, 1905) p. 191.

thirty of the six hundred or so that he wrote are dated in manuscript copies, and some of these dates conflict between one manuscript and another, while other dates must be regarded as doubtful from internal evidence. However, by reference to the dated cantatas and by comparison with the operas (which are easier to date accurately), it is possible to estimate with some confidence the rough chronology of undated cantatas.

Consideration of the works themselves rather than of the accidents of their author's career lends preference, at least for present purposes, to a division into only two periods. The two most important and far-reaching changes introduced by Scarlatti into the form of the cantata were the standardization of the overall structure into the 'Neapolitan' pattern (of two or more arias each preceded by a recitative) and the almost exclusive use of the da capo form for the arias. Scarlatti seems to have made regular use of the Neapolitan form only from about 1699 onwards, and although the da capo aria makes its appearance at a much earlier date it is at first short and rudimentary in design, and exists alongside arias in binary and other forms. The mature da capo aria establishes itself at roughly the same time as the Neapolitan structure, and it is at about this time that we notice the maturing of Scarlatti's vocal chamber style as a whole, particularly in matters of harmony and melodic construction. Later works show an enrichment of this new-found mastery rather than any deviation from it. The present chapter will therefore deal with the cantatas up to 1698, though it is hardly necessary to add that the transition from early works to later ones was a gradual one.

The early cantatas show the influence of the Roman school, especially Carissimi, and of Stradella. After a childhood spent in Sicily, Alessandro Scarlatti (1660-1725) passed his youth and early manhood in Rome, and it is difficult to overestimate the extent to which this environment must have influenced his later career as a cantata composer. Here the compositions of the chief masters of the form circulated freely in manuscript or publications, and the young Scarlatti must have spent many evenings listening to them in company with other musicians, perhaps assisting at the harpsichord (which he played well), and studying them in private. It was at

Rome that he made his own first essays in the form, and it was for Rome at a later date that many of his finest cantatas were written. There is much evidence to support the theory that Scarlatti actually studied with Carissimi at Rome, though the association could not have been a long one because Scarlatti did not arrive at Rome until he was twelve years old, and the aged Carissimi died two years later.

The most obvious point of similarity between the early cantatas of Scarlatti and those of his immediate predecessors is their diversity of form. Some are quite short; many remind us of Rossi and Cesti in their sprawling length. While the division between recitative and aria is sharply drawn from the start, their regular alternation is not always apparent in the early works. Frequent use of 3/2 time is another Roman, even Venetian, characteristic, as is also the use of texts written round some historical or mythological personage.

Other features of the earlier cantatas include the use of binary forms and ground basses, gradually replaced by the da capo form, for the arias; the careful treatment of the recitative, involving much melismatic and contrapuntal writing; and a conservatism in the scheme of keys used. In their harmony and modulation the early cantatas are, as a whole, rather rudimentary, even at times crude; but it must be remembered that the harmonic possibilities of the comparatively new major-minor system of tonality were just beginning to be discovered during Scarlatti's early years, and it was not until a few years before his death that they were codified by Rameau.

* * *

For the overall form of his early cantatas Scarlatti is entirely dependent on the text. The cantata "Lascia più di tormentarmi" has only three sections, while both "Lasciato havea l'adultero superbo" and "Sulla sponda fiorito d'un rio pargoleggiante" are in as many as twelve parts. Those with instrumental accompaniment tend to be longer than those supported only by continuo, and some of these might possibly have been written, like the serenatas, for special occasions. Setting these aside,

it seems true to generalize that the longer the work the earlier is its date of composition.

Like Rossi, Scarlatti generally feels the need to unify these long works with some kind of refrain. Sometimes this may take the form of a complete aria, sometimes a portion of arioso, and occasionally both. The cantata "Son pur care quelle pene" appears in 'Mr. William Croft his Book, July 6th 1697' (R.C.M. MS.1101) but certainly dates from a number of years previous to this. Its opening aria is repeated once at about the middle and again at the end of the work, producing the following layout:

- (1) Aria : Son pur care, D major 4/4
- (2) Recit-arioso : Non avanti, 4/4-3/2
- (3) Aria : Cupido ho uno strale, A major 6/8
- (4) Aria : repetition of (1)
- (5) Recit : Ma perchè, 4/4
- (6) Aria : All'armi, D major 4/4
- (7) Arioso : Ch'il mio core, 3/2 (9 bars)
- (8) Recit : No, più non si tardi, 4/4
- (9) Aria : repetition of (1).¹

Although we associate a refrain particularly with long cantatas it is by no means confined to them alone, nor is it exclusively the property of the early cantatas, as we shall observe in the next chapter. In both these cases, however, it is a short arioso rather than a whole aria which returns.

The alternation of recitative and aria -- invariable in the later works -- is usually to be found in the early cantatas also, but the exceptions are sufficiently numerous to make us realize that at this period Scarlatti was at least as concerned with faithfully serving the text as he was with musical structure for its own sake. And while the recitative fulfils the structural requirement of modulating in readiness for the succeeding aria, or to end the work in the same key as it began,² its

1. For a description of another cantata similar in design, "Augellin, sospendi i vanni", see Dent, op.cit. pp.12-13.
2. Any Italian cantata which begins and ends in different keys must be viewed with suspicion. See Appendix I, p.165

purely musical importance is by no means subordinate to that of the aria.

Indeed it would be no exaggeration to say that in the early cantatas Scarlatti lavishes his best music on the recitatives. Much of their interest derives from his typically Baroque penchant for descriptive and expressive word-painting; this applies also to the later cantatas, but the early ones are considerably richer in this respect. The cantata "Qui dove alfin m'assido" ("Il rossignuolo") is undated in the manuscript (B.M. Add. MS.14220) but it is undoubtedly a late work, probably written after 1710. We are concerned at the moment only with the early cantatas, but it will be convenient to quote from the second recitative of this work, "Ma, oh Dio", since it contains a passage which will serve as a catalogue of many of the descriptive effects which can be observed in the early works. The passage describes the nightingale, and Roman Vlad's description of Stravinsky's nightingale music -- "il canto palpitante di un essere vivo che fa fremere quel mondo irrigidito in una glaciale cerimoniosità"¹ -- would not be inappropriate here.

Ex. 35.

The image shows two systems of musical notation. The first system consists of a vocal line and a basso continuo line. The vocal line has the lyrics "sempre più s'ad-do-lo - - -". The basso continuo line has figured bass notation: ♭4, ♭4, ♭6, ♭7, ♭7, ♭6, #6, 4, 3. The second system also consists of a vocal line and a basso continuo line. The vocal line has the lyrics "va. lento prima incomincia e tut-to perde d'aria". The basso continuo line has figured bass notation: #6, ♭7, ♭6, 4, 3.

1. R. Vlad, "Stravinsky" (Einaudi, 1958) p. 63.

tre - - - - - ma la voce e par che mo - - -

4b/5 6/4 b7/5

- - va, quando riufor-zailfiato e presto ascen - - -

4# 6

- - de, tril - - - - - la, scio - - - - -

#6 #6 #6

- - - - - glie più no-te, e poi sospi - - - - - va; poi

6 #4/2 6 b #b bb/4 b7/4 6 6 b

cas-sa e si ri-ti-va mor-mo-ran - - - - - do nel sen profonde

bb bb 6/4 b5

no-te in-di-i-ra-to si suo - - - - - te, si sfi - - - - -

6 6

- - - da si ris-pon - - - - de e poi slas
 - col - - - - ta e aggi- tan - - - - do in nul-le guise e mille la gola armoniosa etc.

This is, of course, something of a 'tour de force', and would be even for the early cantatas. As well as obvious parallels, such as the ascending phrase on the word "ascende" and the trill on "trilla", we find in this extract a number of procedures which go to make up the stock-in-trade of Scarlatti's descriptive vocabulary: the augmented and diminished intervals at the words "s'addolora", the broken phrase for the word "sospira", and the alternation of two notes on "marmorando". The hocket effect on words to do with sighing is a derivation from madrigalian technique, while the slow alternation of adjacent notes on the verb "mormorare" is often used to suggest a lulling effect similar to that produced by Benjamin Britten in the Keats sonnet from his Serenade for tenor, horn, and strings, op.31:

Ex. 36.

Adagio.

its wl - - - - - ling chari-ties

Scarlatti's expressive, or emotional, word-painting is full of clichés which he shares with his Italian contemporaries; one can be sure of finding the appropriate treatment of the words "pianto", "peno", "moro", and so on. The later works supply the richer effects, but the following extract from the cantata "Colui che fisso mira" (1696) (B.M. Add.MS.14163) shows that Scarlatti has fully mastered the neapolitan sixth and the diminished seventh for both expressive effect and the purposes of modulation:

Ex. 37.

tu sei laf-far-ro, e tu la mor- - - - - te mi- - - - - a

6 b6 #4/2 6 b7/5 [2]6/# 4#3 b

Musical symbolism plays a considerable part in Scarlatti's word-painting. The word "costanza", for example, is almost invariably set to a long note in the voice part -- though rarely with such a prolongation as in the early cantata "Un incredula speranza" (R. C.M. MS.581):

Ex. 38.

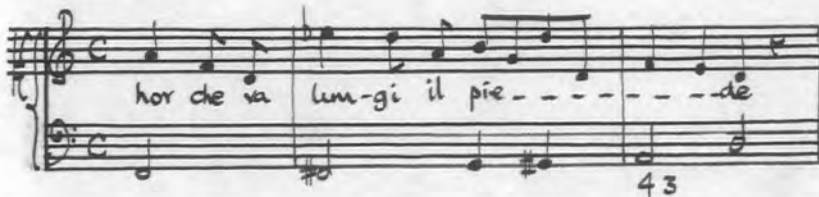
sempre costan - - - - -

b b



The words "lungi", "lontananza", and the like, which occur frequently in the cantatas when the beloved offends by his (or her) absence, are generally accompanied by wide intervals, and the idea of distance is often further emphasized by the use of triadically unrelated notes (major sevenths and minor ninths are common), as in the following example from the cantata "Già vicina è quell' hora", 1699 (Cardiff Public Library, Mackworth collection, MS.1.19):

Ex. 39.



Sometimes wide intervals are coupled with a long, winding phrase (cantata, "Fra tante pene e tante", 1706, B.M. Add. MS. 31510):

Ex. 40.



It was doubtless passages such as these that Dr. Burney had in mind when he wrote of Scarlatti's "irresistible temptations to wring the ear with crudities".

1. Not 1705 as stated in Dent, op.cit.
2. Burney, "General History of Music" (Mercer edition) Book IV p.629.

Title-page of the cantata "Colui che fisso mira" by
Alessandro Scarlatti. From the autograph in the British
Museum (Add.MS.14163)

Allegro

o sui cheo bio

Adagio.

mi ra d. Cori a o eta

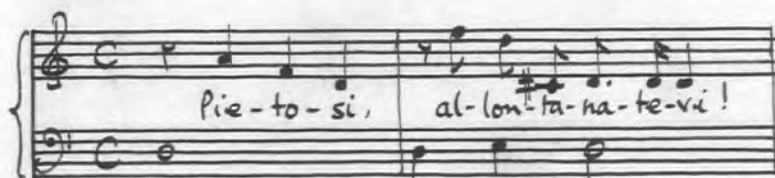
mi ra d. Cori a o eta

spira e c. folio

spira e c. folio

The censure is not altogether fair. Such 'crudities' are part of the common musical language of the day and find a place in the cantata as early as Sances, if not before. His cantata "Pietosi, allontanatevi" (1633)¹ opens as follows:

Ex. 41.



Melodic angularity of this kind was out of tune with the musical aesthetic of Burney's day. What the venerable doctor found in Scarlatti more than in other composers was a melodic line which was dictated by a vigorous and adventurous harmony, especially in the later works.

Arioso plays a large part in the recitative sections of the early cantatas. One often finds an extended 3/2 arioso used to close a recitative, as in the cantatas by Venetian and Roman composers, or even used as a completely independent movement. More common is the insertion of a short 3/2 arioso section in a 4/4 parlando recitative, where it is generally used to illustrate some deeply emotional or pathetic feeling in the text. A typical example is the following passage from the opening recitative of the cantata "Correa nel seno amato" (B.M. Add.MS.31506):

Ex. 42.



1. Reproduced in "La Flora" ed. Knud Jeppesen, Vol. II (Copenhagen 1949).

-tà, ter-ge - a tut - to pie-tà spie - ta - - - - -

b b b b

- - to a - mo - - - re. Stanche al fin le sue membra (etc)

b 43 b

A more common type of arioso, and one found quite frequently in the later cantatas also, is that which involves no change of time-signature but burgeons from the 'parlando' recitative at the expressive demands of the text. Though mostly quite short such passages are often highly organized, with much imitative interplay between voice and bass. The same recitative from the cantata "Correa nel seno amato" provides an example typical of Scarlatti's methods:

Ex. 43.

[a tempo]

fis - sando i lumi del cielo co - sì con lau - - re il ven - to sfo - ga -

#6 43 43

- - va sin - ghiozzan - do il suo - tormen - - - - -

76 6 76 76 2 4 3/4 b

to, co-si con lau-ye (etc)

The change from 'parlando' to arioso style in passages such as this is often accompanied by the direction "a tempo", from which we may assume that the singer was free to take liberties with the time in the recitatives. Dent's suggestion that Scarlatti's recitatives were intended to be interpreted in strict common time is, therefore, a strange one.

The imitation between voice part and bass, which is the strongest feature of these 4/4 arioso passages, was sometimes developed on much broader lines. In the opening recitative of the cantata "Morirei disperato" (B.M. Add.MS.14164), for example, there is a passage almost entirely in canon at the fifth which, with more adventurous modulations and a few suspensions, would hardly be out of place in a two-part Invention by Bach:

Ex. 44.

ve-dresti nau-fra-gar ve-

-dresti nau-fra-gar Lac --- qua

1. E.J.Dent, "A Pastoral Opera by Scarlatti" (Music Review Vol.XII, 1951, p.12).

l'ac- - - - qua, l'ac- qua nel fo - - -

co

An even more consciously academic passage occurs in the cantata "Deh per merce" (B.M. Add.MS.14164). Here Scarlatti seems so preoccupied with contrapuntal matters that consideration of the text takes second place:

Ex. 45.

che mes-tahor ti sos- pi-ro ed hor ti pian - - -

b \flat 6 #6 b

90

che mes- ta hor ti sos- pi-ro che mes-tahor ti sos-

#6

-pi-ro, ed hor ti pian - - -

65 43[?] 43 b6 # 6#6



It was not without good reason that Scarlatti was renowned for his learned style. The extract just quoted, with its invertible counterpoint, its chromatic movement, and its syncopation, reminds us of that 'ne plus ultra' of Baroque contrapuntal contrivance, Bach's "Die Kunst der Fuge":

Ex. 46.

(Contrapunctus XIII)



Modulation in the modern sense is not a strong point of the early Scarlatti's style, and both the above examples suffer from the lack of forward thrust which a well-planned scheme of modulations would give them. Nevertheless they are interesting, and important in the development of Scarlatti's vocal chamber music. Such passages would be out of place in the operas, but it is just this active interplay between voice and bass which

proves one of the chief sources of delight not of the recitatives, but of the arias in the later cantatas. It is largely this contrapuntal skill which lends distinction and vigour to the later works, setting them apart from those of Scarlatti's contemporaries in Italy, who can often rival him in sensual appeal but rarely in intellectual beauty.

This reliance on counterpoint means that Scarlatti's cantatas suffer more than those of most other composers when they are performed with pianoforte accompaniment. The nineteenth century is often blamed for "Romanticizing" Bach; and there is no doubt that taste in the performance of Baroque music is better informed now than it was fifty or sixty years ago; but errors of judgement still exist, and it is becoming commonplace to witness performances of the Brandenburg concertos in spacious concert-halls or cathedrals with a large body of strings conducted from the harpsichord. The result is that the harpsichord, when audible, is heard not as the noble, sonorous instrument which Bach knew, but as a tinkling symbol of our present passion for performance "as the composer would have heard it". Common-sense indicates some kind of compromise, but none is possible in the performance of Scarlatti's cantatas unless much of their beauty is to be lost. No amount of skilful left hand cantabile from the pianist can compensate for the sustaining tone of the violoncello, and the harpsichord must be used if the contrapuntal texture is to be heard clearly.

We must be careful not to give the impression that every recitative in the early cantatas is rich in passages such as those quoted above.² Very few, however,

1. Do we not render equal disservice to Baroque (and Classical) composers when we allow modern compositional techniques to intrude into analyses of their works? Do we learn anything about Scarlatti (or Schoenberg for that matter) by pretending that certain passages in Scarlatti's work which happen to make use of all, or nearly all, the twelve notes of the chromatic scale are for that reason significant? For an example of this kind of criticism see J. Edmunds, "Chamber Cantatas -- The Mastery of Alessandro Scarlatti" in *Tempo* no. 42 (1956-1957).
2. The recitative quoted at example 45 was evidently thought

are without interest, and the majority, in their use of descriptive and expressive word-painting, of 3/2 arioso and 4/4 imitative arioso, have a freshness and exuberance which is often missing from the recitatives of the eighteenth-century cantatas.

A comparison with the recitatives of the early operas reveals a profound difference between the chamber and theatre styles. Passages such as that from "Deh per merce" quoted at example 45 would, of course, have been quite out of place in an operatic recitative, where the plot must move forward swiftly. But the exigencies of the drama cannot altogether explain the comparatively colourless recitative we find in many of the early operas. In "La Statira" (Cardiff Public Library, MS.1.3), first produced at Rome in 1690, there are but few passages of arioso, even in the most pathetic scenes. In Act I Scene 10, for example, we find Statira, the heroine, imprisoned, her father dead, and the remnants of his army in chains. Alone, she laments their downfall. "Inhuman Alessandro, cruel Demetrio, and still more cruel Fate", she sings, but the music itself is quite perfunctory.

Ex. 47.

Alexsan-dro inhumano, cru-del Deme-trio, e assai di voi più

cru-do crudelis-simo fa-to

extraordinary even for Scarlatti, since it is found as an independent item in a number of manuscripts (e.g. B.M. Add.MS.31412, and St.Michael's College, Tenbury, MS.900).

A cantata from the same period would show much greater care over the composition of the recitatives, and the comparison serves to illustrate what has already been mentioned; that when writing chamber music Scarlatti could count on a higher degree of intellectual appreciation than he would receive from an opera audience. It also serves to illustrate the difference between operatic and chamber recitative styles in general, a difference which was recognized by musicians of the period. Pier Francesco Tosi distinguished three types of recitative: ecclesiastic, theatrical, and that which "a giudizio di chi più intende, si accosta più degli altri al cuore, e chiamasi recitativo da camera". He attributes the peculiar quality of the chamber recitative to the words, which, he says, are "dirette (poco men che tutte) allo sfogo delle passioni più violente dell'animo" and had, therefore, to court reality in their interpretation*.

* * *

Alessandro Scarlatti is so often associated with the use, sometimes even with the invention, of the da capo aria that it comes as a surprise to find that it is only after the age of about forty that he uses it as the invariable form for the arias of both operas and chamber cantatas. In the very early cantatas the da capo form is little used, and until about 1697 it exists alongside arias in other forms, mainly binary. Both the arias of the earliest dated cantata (1688) are in da capo form, but as late as 1696 we find the cantata "Colui che fisso mira" with only two of its four arias in that form.

The arias of the early cantatas include a large number built on ground basses, showing Scarlatti's indebtedness to previous composers. In the cantata "Sulla sponda fiorita d'un rio pargoleggiante" ("L'Adone") (B.M. Add.MS.14164) for example, there are no less than three ground bass arias, though it is unusual for a cantata to contain more than one. Scarlatti's use of the

1. P.F.Tosi, "Opinioni de'cantori antichi e moderni, o sieno osservazioni sopra il canto figurato" (1723).

form is not often satisfying. The basses themselves are usually quite pedestrian, neither melodically attractive nor giving much scope for harmonic invention. The first aria, "Voi ridete", from the cantata just mentioned is built on a bass typical of the type:

Ex. 48.



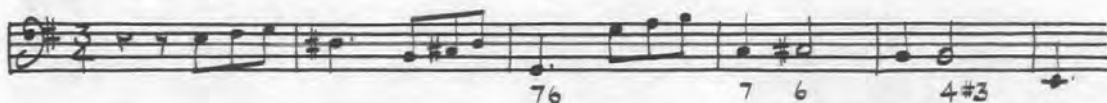
Almost invariably Scarlatti has to transpose the bass into different keys to avoid harmonic monotony. The one just quoted appears three times in B minor, six times in D major, twice in F sharp minor, five times in A major, four times again in F sharp minor, twice again in A major, once yet again in F sharp minor, and finally returns to B minor with five appearances. The whole conception is wayward and extempore in character, and the change from one key to another is rarely skilfully done. Moreover, the vocal part tends to be chopped into phrases corresponding with the length of the bass melody, without that artful use of overlap which we so much admire in the ground basses of Scarlatti's contemporary, Henry Purcell.

One of the best ground basses in the early cantatas of Scarlatti, and one largely free from these various defects, is that to be found in the cantata "Poi che riseppe Orfeo" (B.M. Add.MS.31511). In fact the work as a whole is most interesting, and a beautiful example of Scarlatti's very early style. The myth of Orpheus and Eurydice served the seventeenth-century cantata composers as well as it did the opera writers of the period. The use of mythological and historical texts -- what Schmitz calls "Sujet-kantaten" -- is a feature of the early Scarlatti rarely if ever to be found in his later cantatas, which are, with but few exceptions, of the pastoral, Arcadian type. In this particular work Orpheus laments Eurydice's death and resolves to descend into the underworld to seek for her.

It is written for soprano and continuo and falls into five sections, beginning with a recitative in E minor. The instrumental coda which ends this section is

written out in full on two staves, a practice occasionally to be observed in the early works, but never in the later cantatas, where contrapuntal interest disappears from the recitatives. The B minor aria, "Crude stelle", which follows is in a rudimentary da capo form without introduction. Stylistically it looks back to the early Florentine monodists and its gentle melisma reminds us of some of the songs of Caccini. It is in the nature of a meditation for the voice into which the bass rarely intrudes. After another recitative the ground bass aria appears, and here, for once, Scarlatti shows himself a master of the form. The bass itself is a five-bar phrase, the tempo is Adagio, and the harmonic implications, suspensions, and falling intervals (augmented fourth, augmented fifth, and major seventh) all contribute to give added effect to the words ("Pianga il rio"):

Ex. 49.



Scarlatti makes no attempt to force his melodic line into five-bar phrases, and the result is a free-flowing vocal part which belies the strictness of its structure. The ground is transposed (to B minor, F sharp minor, and A major) in the course of its eleven statements, but in this case Scarlatti allows himself a free bar (and in one case two free bars) between each change of key, and is thus able to make his transpositions more smoothly than he usually does. The cantata ends with a recitative, "È morta la mia cara", typical of the early works in its expressive word-painting.

Though it is evident that the ground bass did not come easily to Scarlatti it is not difficult to see why he persisted in using it in the early works, for it provided him with a serviceable framework for the aria which did not exist outside the ground bass, and which he had not yet succeeded in fashioning for himself. The arias of the earliest cantatas which are not in ground bass form are generally long and straggling, with little contrast between the melodic phrases and little sense of direction in the modulations. Ternary forms are con-

spicuously rare at first, the majority of the arias being either through-composed or in the extended binary form (A B1 B2) which we have already met in the works of Luigi Rossi, Carissimi, and Stradella.

The arias of the cantata "Nel silenzio comune" (B.M. Add.MS.14163) are typical (so far as it is possible for any of the early works to be called typical) of Scarlatti's methods before about 1685, and the cantata as a whole contains many points of interest which recur frequently during this early period. Of the four arias in the work, which is scored for soprano, two violins, viola, and continuo, the first is on a ground bass and reference will be made to it later in the chapter. The second, "Pupille care" in G minor, is through-composed and begins with a ritornello for violins in unison and continuo which heralds the opening vocal phrase:

Ex. 50.

Andante

Pupille care

Pupille care

Opening ritornelli are by no means the rule in the early cantatas, but are often found in the few arias where the strings play throughout. It will be noticed that the 'Devise' is not confined to the da capo aria, with which it is so often associated. Before considering the remainder of the aria it will be convenient to quote the text in full; the letters a, b, and c indicate different musical ideas.

"Pupille care,
 se così avare
 voi mi negate
 i dolci sguardi, } a

 1. cf. ex.6 and ex.11.

deh ancor cessate
 d'avventar dardi } b
 contro il mio seno; }
 ò nol ferite, } c
 ò lo mirate almeno."

The phrase quoted at example 50 is continued to accommodate the first four lines of the text, and is followed by a new idea for the succeeding three lines, a melody which fluctuates between C minor and B flat:

Ex.51.(violins' part omitted)

and a new phrase, beginning in C minor, is introduced for the last two lines:

Ex.52.(violins' part omitted)

Nowhere in this cantata are the difficulties which Scarlatti found in managing his modulations more clearly evident than in the last lines of this aria, where the music hovers between B flat major and C minor as if the composer were doubtful how to return to the tonic.

In an aria with a layout such as this -- that is,

without the return of any of the melodic material -- Scarlatti has often to rely on a second stanza to provide contrast and formal shape, and arias with two stanzas (never more) are a feature of the early cantatas which he discarded after he had completely developed the da capo scheme. Here, however, unity and balance are achieved by recurring semiquaver figures in the unison violins, and by a final repetition of the opening ritornello.

The remaining arias, "Se negasti vegliando" and "Acciochè rimbombe", are both of the binary type (A B1 B2) already described. The second of them, in C major, the key of the cantata, demonstrates very clearly Scarlatti's handling of the form. The text is as follows:

"Acciochè rimbombe	}	a
intorno al ben mio		
il suon de martiri,	}	b
dian fiato alle trombe		
d'amante desio		
i caldi sospiri."		

Clear metrical and rhyme schemes give rise to a more lucid musical pattern. After an instrumental introduction (the aria is accompanied by full strings) the voice sings the opening phrase, which is cast in obvious imitation of a trumpet:

Ex.53.



Italian trumpets in Scarlatti's day were in D, and the whole aria is very much in the style of his early D major arias with trumpet obbligato, such as we find in some of the operas and in the cantata "Sulle sponde del Tebro" (B.M. Add.MS.31487). Modulation to A minor brings a new idea (B1) for the last three lines of the text; the trumpet style is maintained:

Ex.54. (see next page)

Ex. 54. (string parts omitted)

The image shows a musical score for a vocal line and a string line. The vocal line is in treble clef and the string line is in bass clef. The lyrics are "dian fia-to al-le trom - - - - - be". The music is in a binary form, with a repeat sign at the end of the first phrase.

The whole of this section, words and music, is then repeated (B2), beginning in F major and ending, rather abruptly, in C. The ariasshows most clearly not only Scarlatti's handling of the binary form but also the extent to which the style of many of the early concerto writers was indebted to vocal composers. The whole movement would sound well played by a solo trumpet and string orchestra.

Also to be found in the early cantatas are simple, short binary arias with repeats, frequently based on dance forms; these reveal the same basic structure which Scarlatti's son, Domenico, was to adopt for his keyboard 'essercizi'. Examples may be seen in the cantatas "Sulla sponda fiorita d'un rio pargoleggiante" (B.M. Add.MS. 14164) and "E pur vuole il cielo" (B.M. Add.MSS.31491, 22104, and 31490) among others.

Ground basses and binary forms account for the majority of arias in the early cantatas, and binary forms continue to be used side by side with the da capo form until about 1696, after which date they are discarded altogether. Scarlatti's earliest da capo arias seem to date from about 1683, and nearly all the arias in the opera "L'Olimpia vendicante" (B.M. Add.MS.37976), first performed on December 23rd 1685, are in a rudimentary ternary form, as are both the arias in the earliest dated cantata, "Lascia più di tormentarmi" (B.M. Add.MSS.29249 and 31518), written in 1688.

1. This cantata is certainly earlier than 1706, the date given, though queried, by Dent ("Alessandro Scarlatti", London, 1905).
2. The cantata bears no date in either of the B.M. manuscripts. Dent (op.cit.) lists only the MS in the library of the Paris Conservatoire, and presumably that MS bears the date 1688. A musical incipit kindly supplied by M. B. Bardet of the Paris Conservatoire confirms the identity of the B.M. manuscripts.

To trace Scarlatti's adoption and gradual development of the da capo aria makes a fascinating study. Four important steps in his approach towards the form may be noticed;

- (a) the importance of those arias which show the alternation of two (or more) melodic ideas,
- (b) the ternary harmonic framework of most of his ground bass arias,
- (c) the realization of the potentialities of modulation and key contrast as formal factors, and
- (d) the supply of the necessary verse forms.

Before amplifying these points we should make it clear that Scarlatti was by no means the only composer actively concerned with the development of the da capo aria, or indeed with the chamber cantata as a whole. Some of Bassani's cantatas, and one might mention "Dal crudele Daliro"¹ (1682) and "Bella piangente"² (1699) as accessible examples, are certainly not conservative compared with Scarlatti's works of the same dates. When discussing Scarlatti's progress towards the da capo aria, therefore, we should perhaps add a fifth point to the four already mentioned -- the example and stimulation of other composers working in the same direction.

Along with the ground basses and binary arias of the early cantatas are to be found a few others which show some alternation of two or more sections. A readily accessible example is the aria "E fortuna sentir" from the cantata "Pensieri, oh Dio, qual pena"³; where two melodic ideas alternate, though each is set to the same text, showing the form:

A1 (C min) -- B1 (G min) -- A2 (C min) -- B2 (G-Cmin)

Arias such as this, though not common, are important in the development towards the da capo aria, for they alone among the earlier types show a conscious attempt at contrast between two melodic sections, which is, of course, its main feature.

1. Printed in Riemann's "Kantaten-Frühling" (Leipzig n.d.)
2. Described by H. Prunières in Music & Letters, 1926.
3. In "La Flora" Vol. I, ed. K. Jeppesen (Copenhagen 1949).

We have already noticed how Scarlatti usually transposes the bass, often to a number of different keys, in the middle parts of his ground bass arias. In doing this he occasionally comes very close to the key schemes later adopted for the da capo aria. For instance, the alto aria "Che le fieri" from the duet-cantata "E pur vuole il cielo" shows the following layout:

F major - three statements	--	A
D minor - two statements	}	-- B
A minor - four statements		
F major - six statements	--	A

which, if without the balance of the da capo aria, shows one of its basic key schemes, where the middle section begins in the relative minor and ends in the mediant minor. Sometimes (for example in the aria "Nel dormir" from the cantata "Nel silentio comune") Scarlatti couples the return of the opening key with a return to the opening text and vocal melody, making the ternary form even clearer and sometimes even resulting in a genuine da capo aria.

The da capo aria, like the ritornello concerto which we associate first with Vivaldi and Albinoni, is a form based on key relationship and contrast. While it would be an exaggeration to say that Scarlatti's early harmony is in any way modal (except in the 'alla Palestrina' church music which he was called upon to write all his life) it is nevertheless obvious that the da capo aria, like the Venetian concerto, had to await the development of modulation built on modern major-minor harmony with its circle of fifths'. The modulations of the early Scarlatti da capo arias are as conservative as those of the later ones are adventurous.

At first we find the da capo aria existing alongside arias in binary forms and even ground basses, in both the cantatas and the operas. As has already been said, the da capo aria needs a text which allows the

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1. Dent's statement that "Alessandro Scarlatti did not use ground basses for very long; after about 1685 we find none" (Proceedings of the Musical Association Vol. XXX (1903-1904)) is not strictly true. Oronte's

first part to be repeated without destroying the sense, and there must have been some period of experiment before the poet began to supply such a text for every aria as a matter of course. Examination of those cantatas which include both da capo arias and others in binary forms shows that in nearly every case Scarlatti uses the binary structure where the particular text would not in any case allow repetition of the opening lines. (A glance at the text quoted on page 80, for instance, will reveal the impossibility of using it for a da capo aria.) The adoption of the da capo aria, by other composers as well as by Scarlatti, goes a long way towards explaining the change in the nature of the texts which coincides with it. For whereas previously any poem of suitable length and subject could furnish the material for a cantata, the text had now to be tailored to fit the da capo aria. The composer was therefore forced to accept the current literary vogue, and the comparative catholicity of Scarlatti's early cantatas soon gives way to the stereotyped situations of the pastoral-amatory Arcadian verses.

The da capo arias of this early period are rudimentary in form. Many have no instrumental ritornelli at all, others have only an introduction, only a short interlude in the middle of the aria, or only a coda, and all are short. The middle section of the aria is particularly brief, the modulations few, and the composer has too often to fall back on automatic repetition of a phrase to obtain a satisfactory balance. Scarlatti is obviously preoccupied with problems of form and the natural flow of his melody is temporarily restricted. The 'Devise', already an occasional feature of the binary aria, makes an early appearance, and the practice of repeating the music to a second stanza persists.

The aria "Gemme che mi cingete il sen" from the duet-cantata "Amica, hora che Aprile" (B.M. Add.MSS.31488 and 31506) may be taken as fairly typical of the early da capo aria, and is here quoted in full:

Ex.55. (see next page)

ground bass aria, "Mai non cede" in "La Statira" (1690)
Act I Scene 8 is probably not an isolated example.

Ex. 55.

Gemme che mi cingete il

sen, ce-de-te, ce-de-te, mi piace più d'un fior la po-ver-

tà, mi piace più d'un fior la po-ver-tà. Ro-sa vez-zosa,

ro-sa vez-zo-sa le-ga meglio d'un crin la li-ber-tà.

Gemme che mi cingete il sen, ce-de-te, ce-de-te, mi piace più d'un

fior la po-ver-tà, mi piace più d'un fior la po-ver-tà

This is then repeated to a second stanza. The feeling of shortwindedness in arias like this one is dispelled later only when Scarlatti has mastered the art and science of modulation to keys other than those most nearly related to the tonic. We notice in the present example the use of the 'Devise' at the middle as well as at the opening section, probably because it allows the composer a method of phrase extension without having to invent new material. An instrumental ritornello between the first two sections would have made the whole piece longer, but Scarlatti apparently felt it inadvisable to allow the vocal part to be thus interrupted in an aria of such brevity, and consequently he also curtails the opening ritornello at the repeat. Besides, instrumental technique had not yet reached the standard where the composer would entrust the player with more work than he considered absolutely necessary for a balanced design.

Strictly speaking this aria, like many similar ones of the same period, is not a da capo aria, for the music is written out in full. The practice of inserting the direction "da capo" after the middle section of the ternary aria does not become widespread until the mature examples of the form, when no doubt the labour of transcribing the music played a deciding part in its adoption.

When an aria is accompanied by strings, as in the operas or those cantatas which include obbligato string parts, it is common practice for the violins to anticipate the opening phrase of the vocal part in an introductory ritornello. Where the accompaniment is for continuo alone the composer may choose between two alternatives; either he may begin with an independent bass melody which will then serve as a support for the opening vocal phrase, or he may anticipate the vocal line itself, as in the aria quoted at example 55. Among the most satisfying arias in Scarlatti's later cantatas, as we shall observe in the next chapter, are those in which an independent bass part provides rhythmic thrust as a foil to the vocal cantilena, its figures piercing the texture and unifying the whole. In the earlier cantatas, however, Scarlatti seems to favour the second method, probably because his approach to instrumental music is still very much that of the vocal composer. Where the other method is used the result is often a kind of 'moto perpetuo' bass line with continuous

quaver or semiquaver movement, which we often come across in the cantatas of Stradella. As an example of Scarlatti's methods we may quote the opening of the aria "S'ogni fiamma" from the cantata "Io morirei contento" (R.C.M. MS. 581):

Ex.56.

The musical score for Ex. 56 consists of two systems. The first system shows a vocal line (treble clef) and a keyboard accompaniment (bass clef). The vocal line has a long rest for the first measure, then begins with the lyrics "S'ogni fiamma spar-gesse". The keyboard accompaniment features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes in the right hand and a more active bass line in the left hand. The second system continues the vocal line and keyboard accompaniment, with the lyrics "S'ogni fiamma spar-gesse" written above the vocal line.

Compared with the recitatives of the early cantatas, the arias, and especially the da capo arias, show considerable restraint in the use of word-painting and melisma. The place for vocal pyrotechnics was the opera-house and passages such as the following, from the opera "Le Nozze con l'Inimico" (B.M. Add.MS.31517) produced at Naples in 1695, never blemish the pages of a chamber cantata:

Ex.57.

The musical score for Ex. 57 consists of two systems. The first system shows a vocal line (treble clef) and a keyboard accompaniment (bass clef). The vocal line has a long rest for the first measure, then begins with the lyrics "can". The vocal line is marked with "tr" above several notes. The keyboard accompaniment features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes in the right hand and a more active bass line in the left hand. The second system continues the vocal line and keyboard accompaniment, with the lyrics "can" written below the vocal line.



* * *

Of Scarlatti's vast output of chamber cantatas only about sixty use instruments other than those of the continuo, the most common obbligato parts being for two violins, the solo instruments of the purely instrumental trio-sonata. "Nel silenzio comune" is one of five solo cantatas with accompaniment of full strings (two violins, viola, and basso-continuo)¹. As is usually the practice in such works, the cantata opens with an introduction for the strings alone, which in this case comprises three short movements, each in binary form. The first of these is a highly contrapuntal 'Grave' presenting two main ideas, a rising arpeggio in crotchets and a quaver figure distinguished by the leap of an octave.

Ex. 58.

Grave.



1. The other four are: (1) "Da duplicati oggetti" (R. Conservatoire, Naples); (2) "Oh di Betlemme" (B.M. Add. MS. 14165); (3) "Sulla sponda del mare" (Imperial Library, Vienna); (4) "Ferma omai fugace e bella" (Rome).

appears upside down after the double bar.

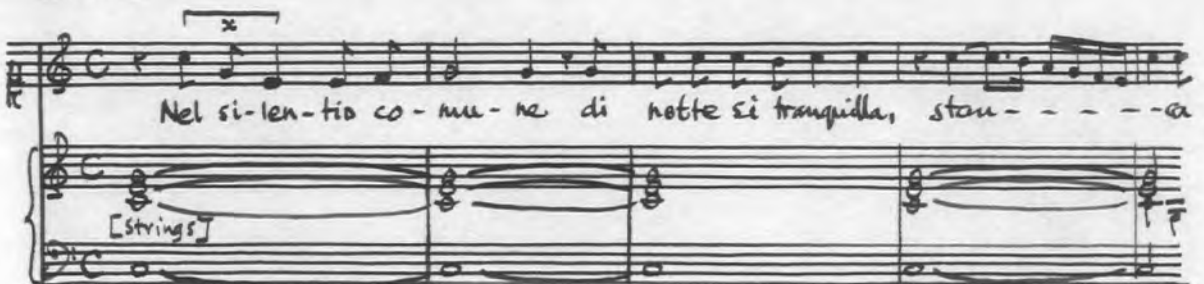
Ex. 61.



The last part of the introduction is a short, simple minuet in chordal style, also in C major and in binary form with repeats. The minuet was often used by Scarlatti to end his operatic 'sinfonie' and is usually, as here, in 6/8 time; 6/8 metre was the normal one for the seventeenth-century Italian minuet, which was a much faster dance than the 3/4 movements of Haydn and Mozart.

Immediately after the instrumental overture the voice enters in an accompanied recitative with the words quoted on page sixteen. The strings supply a serene, peaceful background for the voice which could not possibly have been achieved with the usual continuo accompaniment.

Ex. 62.



(Does one read too much into Scarlatti's methods of formal construction in suggesting a deliberate connexion between

the opening of the 'Courente', the recitative, and, by inversion, the initial 'Grave'? The answer would be an unqualified "yes" were it not that in other cantatas Scarlatti's similar intentions are unmistakable. In the early cantata for soprano, two violins, and continuo, "Ben mio, quel verme alato" (B.M. Add.MS.31506), for example, the opening 'sinfonia' begins:

Ex. 63.



and this is quite obviously fashioned with the opening of the first recitative in mind:

Ex. 64.



Other examples of the same thing which spring to mind may be found in the cantatas "Oh di Betlemme altera", where the connexion is rhythmically disguised, and "Alma, tu che dal cielo" (B.M. Add.MS.34056), where the voice enters with a "tonal" reference to the instrumental theme.)

The 'recitativo stromentato' first appeared in Scarlatti's operas in "Olimpia vendicata" in 1685, and "Nel silentio comune" probably dates from about then. The composer seems to have made at first a deliberate association of accompanied recitative with peaceful night scenes and sleep. The example in "Olimpia vendicata" is sung by Bireno in Act III before she falls asleep after being drugged by Olimpia.¹ Act I of "La Statira" (1690)

1. The passage is quoted by Dent, op.cit.p.46.

opens with Oronte on guard outside the tents of the Persian army and once again accompanied recitative is employed to portray the peace of a moonlit night:

Ex. 65.

Not- te, not-te se-re-na, te-so-ri-a di pa-ce

[Strings]

6 4 2
7 6

The cantata "Notte ch'in carro d'ombre" for soprano, two violins, and continuo also begins with a 'recitativo stromentato', and similar passages are to be found in other works.

Many of these recitatives, including those from which quotation has been made, are directed to be performed "senza cimbalo" and yet the bass is figured. Could this have been "for rehearsal only", or merely through force of habit? More probably the latter, although the carefully figured manuscript in the British Museum (Add. MS.34056) of the cantata "Alma, tu che dal cielo" contains two accompanied recitatives "senza cimbalo", neither of which is figured. This cantata also contains an example of 'recitativo stromentato' in a more broken style, a later development made possible by advances in string playing generally and in the composer's own experience, and allowing a greater dramatic impact.

Many of the examples above have been given in score to show how old-fashioned is the orchestration. Parts cross freely, making a kind of paper counterpoint which is often unperceived by even the most attentive listener. The passages quoted at examples 60 and 61, for instance, are both spoilt by this practice for in neither case is the imitation between the first violin and the bass clearly audible, and yet this imitation is quite visibly the 'raison d'etre' of the writing in both cases. It

would be easy to excuse the miscalculations of a yet not fully experienced composer, but the same kind of writing is found in the later works, and is not confined to Scarlatti. Even in purely instrumental pieces, such as the concerto, where one would expect a more careful approach to orchestral writing, passages such as these are found.¹ Can we see in them the composer trained in the tradition of vocal music attempting to integrate the old choral style with the new harmonic instrumental music, without at first realizing that the comparably greater difference in timbre between the voices, and the association of words with musical line, enable vocal counterpoint of this kind to be more easily perceived than similar string counterpoint? It is difficult to believe that the composer was satisfied with the results of such passages in performance, and yet it seems unlikely that he would rehearse his players to strive for an effect which he could so much more easily achieve by a different distribution of the parts.

So far as the arias are concerned, the strings are usually confined to a closing ritornello which treats the initial vocal phrase in a contrapuntal, imitative manner; occasionally they will play both an opening and closing ritornello in simple style. Less often are they allowed to take part throughout, and then only to echo the vocal phrases or to provide a single-strand counterpoint. Scarlatti seems reluctant at first to allow the strings actually to accompany the voice, though he does so on occasions, as we shall see presently.

* * *

In artistic merit the early cantatas of Scarlatti are very uneven. There is about them a freshness and spontaneity of form and utterance for which we often look in vain in the later works, but there are few which are not marred by some clumsy harmony or pedestrian melody. Scarlatti was unfortunate to live at a time when the cantata, and not the cantata alone, was going through a period of transition, and indeed much of his early

1. See A. J. B. Hutchings, "The Baroque Concerto" (London, 1961) pp. 284-285.

maturity was spent in developing and perfecting a form and style in opera and cantata which would serve his musical and expressive intentions. Moreover, he was dealing with texts which rarely do anything to hide any deficiencies in the music.

There are, however, a number of works which would justify serious attention from singers to-day, as well as many extracts of great beauty. The cantata "Sulle sponde del Tebro" no doubt owes much of its popularity to the brilliant writing for solo trumpet and to the very moving accompanied arioso "Infelice miei lumi", but it can hardly be said to show Scarlatti's chamber style at its best.¹ One of the early cantatas which maintains a fairly consistent high level of inspiration and workmanship is "Correa nel seno amato" (B.M. Add.MS.31506) for soprano, two violins, and continuo. It is one of the many cantatas in which the soloist is at once narrator and principle character. Daliso tells of his passionate, and of course unrequited, love for Eurilla.

The work opens with an introduction in B flat major for instruments alone; in form and style it is not unlike that of "Nel silenzio comune" already described,² and reference has already been made to the richness and variety of the long recitative which follows.³ The first aria is one of the most beautiful of all those to be found in the early cantatas and the temptation to quote it in full is very strong. It shows Scarlatti's most complete mastery of the old extended binary form (A B1 B2), and is particularly interesting, from a formal point of view, for the structural significance of the ritornello. It is much more than an introduction, for portions of it recur twice in different keys during the first section of the aria, each time succeeded by fresh vocal material. It was not until many years later that Scarlatti began to apply this procedure to the da capo aria. The strings play throughout, not merely echoing the vocal phrases but accompanying them and sometimes weaving imitative counterpoints around them.

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1. The work has been recorded in the Deutsche-Grammophon Archive series (APM 14024).
 2. See pp.88-90.
 3. See pp.68-70.

The opening soprano phrase, a fine example of the 'bel-canto' style, shows a very expressive rise, the dotted rhythms and rests in the strings (derived from the ritornello) acting as a gentle foil to the long held notes in the solo part:

Ex. 66.

Largo

Om - bre o - pa - che che il chia - ro - re del - la
 lu - ce miscon - de - - - te. etc.

An imperfect cadence in C minor makes way for a contrasting theme to which the diminished fourth lends a plangent tone. Imitative entries in the violins, with the bass silent at first, confine themselves to the same notes as the voice sings with an insistence which conveys a sense of grief which, in its utter hopelessness, transcends the meaning of the words themselves.

Ex. 67.

se pur sie - te del do - lo - re, fidei - - - ni - che,

fi-de a - mi - che, hor che il de - si - o

5 bb 6 b b

Short extracts cannot convey the many beauties of an aria which, in its classical dignity and purity of expression, invites comparison with Lully's "Bois epais".

The aria "Fresche brine" follows after a short recitative. Here we find Scarlatti at his most straightforward and relaxed. Though not so rich in material as the previous one this aria has an immediate and irresistible melodic appeal. It is cast in short da capo form, the violins being employed only in the opening and closing ritornelli. The first section will give some idea of its character, though it will not be adequate to show how Scarlatti's melodic invention is maintained through the whole aria.

Ex. 68.

Fres - che bri - ne che pie - to - se

6 6 6 6 b

Fres - che bri - ne che pie - to - se rav - vi - ra - - te ques - te ro - se e ba -

6 6

cia-te, e ba-cia-te, e ba-cia-te il lem-bo ai fior', e bacia-te il'

lem-bo ai fior?

The two remaining arias are not of such a high standard. The third, "Dolo amato", a D minor aria, 4/4, in binary form (A B1 B2), relies too much on instrumental echoes of rather foursquare vocal phrases. The last aria, "Onde belle" (G minor, 4/4) is more interesting, and indeed something of a rarity in early Scarlatti, for it is entirely concerned with the contrapuntal working out of a theme stated first by the second violin unaccompanied:

Ex. 69.

hargo.
Vl. I.
[On . . . de bel . . . le]

Although the voice states this theme only twice (the 'Devisè' is used) before proceeding to material quite independent from it, the violins and bass continue its working out throughout the aria. It would be misleading to mention the word "fugue" in this connexion, but the contrapuntal writing found in this aria reminds us of nothing so much as the exuberant indiscipline of Bach's early organ fugues.

The work ends with a short accompanied recitative, "Volea più dir Daliso, ma...". (The poet not infrequently has to resort to some such conventional phrase to bring an essentially undramatic cantata to its end.) "Correa

nel seno amato" amply demonstrates that for Scarlatti the cantata da camera was a vehicle not only for sensual delight, but for profound emotion and the strictest intellectual beauty -- that it was in fact a form of chamber music almost as intimate in its communication as the string quartets of Beethoven.

* * *

CHAPTER FOUR

ALESSANDRO SCARLATTI : THE LATER CANTATAS

The beginning of the second period of Scarlatti's cantatas coincides with a pronounced surge of interest in the form on the part of the composer. We can attribute this, in part at least, to the stimulus which Scarlatti's appointment in 1703 with Cardinal Ottoboni at Rome would give to this type of composition. We have already drawn attention to the fact that Rome was for many reasons particularly well disposed towards the composer of chamber cantatas, and Cardinal Ottoboni's weekly musical gatherings must have solicited many from the pen of the now famous composer. The earliest of Scarlatti's cantatas had, of course, been written for Rome, but since February 1684 the composer had been employed as maestro di cappella at the court of Naples.

A further stimulus came in 1706 when Scarlatti, together with the composers Corelli and Pasquini, was admitted to membership of the famous Arcadian Academy. Crescimbeni gives us documentary evidence of Scarlatti's activities as a cantata composer at their meetings. However, the unprecedented activity in cantata writing which we notice during this period actually pre-dates Scarlatti's departure from Naples by about four years, as is shown in the following inventory of the dated cantatas for the period 1698 to 1708. The total number of dated cantatas for the years before 1698 is seven, or an average of less than a half per year if we assume the first to date from 1680.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Number of dated cantatas</u>
1698 —	5
1699 —	10
1700 —	3
1701 —	10
1702 —	17 or 18 ¹
1703 —	2
1704 —	13 or 14 ¹
1705 —	11
1706 —	11
1707 —	2
1708 —	4

The move of Scarlatti and his family from Naples to Rome in 1703, coupled with political upheavals, may account for the small number of cantatas attributable to that year. In 1707 Scarlatti spent much of his time in Venice, where his operas "Mitridate Eupatore" and "Il Trionfo della Libertà" were given in that year, and at Urbino, where his eldest son, Pietro, held the post of maestro di cappella.

Since only about a hundred and thirty, less than a quarter, of all the cantatas are dated, the figures above should represent some two-thirds of Scarlatti's entire output. It is extremely unlikely that they in fact do so, but even allowing for the element of chance which must come into such a reckoning there can be no doubt that these ten or eleven years were for the cantata the most productive of Scarlatti's career. The average number of dated cantatas for the years after this period, that is 1709 to 1725, is just over two a year, and in no single year does the total exceed six. Moreover, we have documentary evidence from at least two sources of Scarlatti's profligacy during this period. Dent quotes Crescimbeni's account of a meeting of the Arcadian Academy at which Scarlatti (whose pastoral pseudonym was Terpan-dro) set to music some verses by Gian Battista Felice Zappi (Tirsi)². Crescimbeni tells us that

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1. The cantata "Spiega l'ali il mio pensiero" dates from either 1702 or 1704. See Dent, op.cit.p.225.
 2. Dent, op.cit.p.90.

"No sooner had Tirsi finished his recital than Terpandro, with a truly stupendous promptness, began to transcribe the verses recited, with the music thereto; and when these had been sung, the souls of those present received of them so great delight, that they not only obliged the singer to repeat the song again and again, but also urged both poet and musician to display their skill afresh... Every one was astonished to see how two such excellent Masters, the one of poetry and the other of music did contend; and their contention was so close that scarce had the one finished repeating the last line of the new air than the other ended the last stave of his music."¹

Burney's evidence is more important, if less picturesque. He tells us that

"of this fertile musician's cantatas I was so fortunate as to purchase, when at Rome, an original manuscript containing thirty-five in his own handwriting that were chiefly composed at Tivoli during a visit to Andrea Adami, Maestro di Cappella to the pope, and author of "Osservazioni per ben regolare il Coro de i Cantori della Cap. Pontif" published at Rome, 1711. Each of these cantatas is dated; by which we learn that he frequently produced one every day for several days together, and that the whole number was composed between the month of October, 1704, and March, 1705".²

Scarlatti could hardly have composed so many works in such a short time unless the design of the cantata had become standardized. We noticed during the early

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1. Crescimbeni, "Arcadia" Lib.vii,prosa v.
 2. Burney, "General History of Music", 1789 (Mercer ed.) Book IV p.629. Burney's statement lends support to Dent's assertion (op.cit.p.113) that Scarlatti was not in Ferrara during the early months of 1705.

period a gradual decrease in the number of long straggling works of ten or more sections in favour of a more compact structure of alternate short recitative and da capo aria. Before he was writing cantatas for the Arcadian Academy Scarlatti had finally established the 'Neapolitan' design for the cantata.

I have chosen the term 'Neapolitan' to designate a structure of two da capo arias each preceded by a recitative, or slight deviations from this basic structure. Although many of the cantatas were written for Rome, the term has some validity because it was this form which was favoured by Scarlatti's contemporaries and successors at Naples, and the comparison it invites with Neapolitan opera is deliberate. The form recit - aria - recit - aria accounts for over sixty per cent of Scarlatti's mature works as well as the majority of cantatas by other composers. Other forms of the Neapolitan cantata commonly found in Scarlatti are

recit-aria-recit-aria-recit-aria (about 12%)

aria-recit-aria-recit-aria (about 10%)

aria-recit-aria (about 9%)

The remaining ten per cent or so of the mature cantatas are nearly all in one or another of the following designs:

aria-recit-aria-recit-aria-recit

recit-aria-recit-aria-recit

recit-aria-recit-aria-recit-aria-recit

aria-recit-aria-recit

It will be observed that Neapolitan cantatas ending with a recitative are in the minority, and with a few exceptions it is possible to ascribe such works to a date of composition earlier than those which end with an aria. The practice of ending with a recitative or an arioso, so commonly found in the early cantatas, seems to have lost favour with Italian composers after about 1700. The Germans, certainly, condemned the practice not much later. Mattheson, in "Der Vollkommene Kapellmeister" (Hamburg 1739) writes:

"Wenn sich aber eine Cantate mit dem Recitativ endigt, hat eben die beste Wirkung

nicht, es geschäbe den in besondern Fällen, da man gantz unvermutet abbrechen, und eben dadurch die Zuhörer auf eine angenehme Art überraschen wollte."

Scheibe, rather curiously, goes so far as to attribute the decline of the Italian cantata, in part at least, to the use of a final recitative.

"Ich weiss zwar wohl, dass verschiedene Italiener diese Gewohnheit (i.e. that of ending with a recitative) ebemals gehabt haben, allein anitzo hat sie bereits ihren Verfall gelitten."¹

The disfavour in which a final recitative was held serves to underline the swing away from the dramatic towards the lyrical element, which is a prominent feature of the history of the cantata as a whole.

The occasional use of a refrain, reminiscent of Rossi's cantatas, was observed during the early period of Scarlatti. In the later works the practice is much rarer and almost entirely confined to the repeat of the initial phrase of the cantata at the end of the first recitative, rather in the manner of Dowland's "In darkness let me dwell". The few cantatas which show an extension of this procedure often produce happy results, and a good example is "La beltà ch'io sospiro", 1701 (B.M. Add.MS.29249) in which an arioso section appears four times in all, including the beginning and end, resulting in the following structure:

- (1) Arioso(x) - recit - arioso(x)
- (2) Aria
- (3) Recit - arioso(x)
- (4) Aria
- (5) Recit - arioso(x).

A basic plan identical with this is found in Carissimi's "Insegnatemi a morire" (R.C.M. MS.1102) and a similar design is to be observed in Scarlatti's "Sarei troppo felice", 1702,² and there is every evidence that the use

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1. Scheibe, "Kritischen Musicus" (Leipzig, 1737-1740).
 2. Described by Dent, op.cit.p.76 et seq..

of a refrain in this way is a temporary legacy of the earlier period. Scarlatti probably discarded it when he felt that the da capo aria offered sufficient recapitulation.

The adoption of the Neapolitan form coincided with the universal dissemination of the Italian cantata and it is in this form that it was cultivated by a multitude of composers, not only in Italy but, as we shall see in the next chapter, in France, England, Spain, and Germany as well. Many of Bach's church cantatas differ in form from the later chamber cantatas of Scarlatti only in the addition of a final chorale.

With the formal structure of the cantata standardized, the composer was able to give his attention to matters of detail, and Scarlatti shows much care and forethought in the keys he chooses for the various sections. Whereas in the early works undue insistence is often made on the key of the cantata itself, in the later works the keys of the arias are chosen with an obvious wish to avoid the initial key until the final section is reached. The selection of keys for the arias, however, depends only partly on the composer's fancy, since it is inadvisable to depart too far from the home key, and Scarlatti rarely, if ever, writes an aria in a key which with modern signatures would need more than three sharps or four flats. A flat major is also rare. The keys most favoured for the cantatas as a whole, as well as for individual arias, are the minor keys of A, E, G, and D, and minor keys outnumber major keys by about five to one. We may assume from this a sensitivity on the part of the composer to the texts used, rather than a preponderance of melancholy in his own temperament.

Where a cantata begins with a recitative, as the majority of them do, the result is that the tonal unity is appreciated on paper only, since the listener is unlikely to retain until the end of a work the sense of a tonic which has been so little stressed. Nevertheless, the Italian composers and most of their foreign contemporaries never abandoned the practice of beginning and ending the cantata in the same key, although the Germans sometimes did, as we may observe in the secular cantatas of Handel and the church cantatas of Bach.

The standardization of the overall structure of the cantata brought with it a number of other conventions — the da capo aria, standard key schemes, cadential formulae, and so on. The greatest and most truly original composer is not always the one who flouts convention, and we admire Scarlatti's cantatas not because he advanced the form beyond that of his contemporaries, but because of the high quality of his inspiration and craftsmanship. There are some dull works, to be sure, just as there are some mundane piano sonatas of Mozart, but anyone who thinks Scarlatti dull because he uses the conventions of his day understands neither the conventions nor Scarlatti.

The beauties of the later cantatas are not to be discovered by the careless listener, nor by anyone who is unable to dissociate beauty in vocal music from a deeply moving text. For the present writer one of the most sublime moments in Mozart's "Le Nozze di Figaro", and 'ipso facto' in all music, is Bassanio's:

Ex. 70.

Allegro assai.

Ah, del paggio, quel ch'ho detti-to, e-ra so-lo un mio sospetto

It is impossible to state precisely why such an apparently commonplace phrase should, in context, prove so moving, and one is content to accept the fact that it does so. What is almost certain is that anyone unable to respond to the beauties of such moments as this, or, to take another example from the same work, Figaro's:

Ex. 71.

Andante

Mente il ce-f-fo io già non men-to

is unlikely to find much to interest him in Scarlatti's cantatas, for the appeal of Scarlatti is of the same

kind, if not of the same order, as that of Mozart.

* * *

We noticed in our review of the early cantatas a gradual shift of interest from the recitative to the aria; in the later works the supremacy of the aria becomes complete. Arioso sections in 3/2 time disappear entirely, and even those involving no change of time-signature (cf.p.69) become much rarer; melismatic word-painting is more restrained, and the recitatives themselves are altogether much shorter than those in the earlier works. This is not to infer that they are carelessly written. Many of us find Bach's account of Peter's denial in the St.Matthew Passion more moving than the more elaborate treatment of the corresponding passage in the earlier St.John setting, and Scarlatti's recitative would probably be considered superior to Bach's if it were associated with similar words. Moreover, Scarlatti's recitative, even in the operas and much less in the cantatas, is never as 'secco' as Mozart's, nor even 'parlato' as opposed to 'cantato'; it would be a mistake to regard his recitatives merely as a string on which to thread the arias.

If those of the later cantatas lose in melodic interest, they gain by a freer and richer use of harmony and modulation. Gasparini might well have had Scarlatti in mind when he wrote of the diminished seventh as "much used by modern composers"¹; for Scarlatti makes frequent use of the chord for both expressive effect and for its possibilities in modulation. More than once he goes so far as to begin a cantata with a diminished seventh, either directly, as in the cantata "Amor, Mitilde è morta" (B.M. Add.MS.14212):

Ex.72.

Amor, a-mar Mitil-de

b7
s

g
4

1. Gasparini, "L'Armonico pratico al cimbolo" (1708).

or above a tonic pedal, as in the cantata "Amo, peno, gioisco" (Cardiff Public Library, MS.1.19):

Ex.73.

A - mo, pe - - no, gio - is - co, soffro, spero, pavento

#7
4
2

Although we are concerned at the moment only with the recitatives of the later cantatas, it is convenient to mention here the influence which the diminished seventh exerted on Scarlatti's melodic style. This influence is particularly noticeable at the beginnings of certain arias where the initial phrase is imitated by the bass, and the following quotations, taken at random from the later cantatas, may be regarded as prototypes of many of the fugue subjects of Bach and Handel:

Ex.74.

Moderato

(a) lo son ti - rau - no

Andante

(b) ris - pondi al - men can - del, can - del

Tempo giusto.

(c) Do - ve se - i? Do - ve t'as - (condi)

In the recitatives Scarlatti does not confine himself only to the diminished seventh for expressive harmonic effect. His increased command of modulation plays a large part in passages such as the following from the cantata "All'hor che il Dio di Delo" ("La Gelosia") (B.M. Add.MS.14165), where the gradual onset of jealousy is richly expressed in a short phrase which begins in B flat minor and ends in the remote key of C sharp minor:

Ex. 75.

Sen-to ge-lar- - ni, ge-lar- - ni in ven og - ni favilla

♯ ♭5 ♭6 4♯3 7♯6 ♯5 ♯4♯3 4♯3

The admiration which we feel to-day for the harmonic richness of Scarlatti's recitatives in the later cantatas was by no means shared by his own contemporaries. Many of his procedures were evidently found very puzzling, and Heinichen expressed a general reaction when he found Scarlatti's harmony strange and extravagant, saying that

"the celebrated Sig. Alessandro Scarlatti, among all the composers of our time, uses strange and extravagant ("extravagant und irregulair") harmony, as we may observe in many of his cantatas. In fact this composer never, or rarely, confines himself to the normal harmonic gambit, but invents, willy-nilly, a heterogeneous collection of notes, often of extreme boldness, which should have no place in a swiftly flowing recitative."¹

It is not without significance that the recitatives of the early cantatas usually retain the key-signature of the

1. J.D. Heinichen, "Der Generalbass in der Komposition" (Dresden, 1728) p. 797, quoted (in Italian) by L. Ronga, "Motivi critici su Alessandro Scarlatti" (Rivista Musicale Italiana Vol. LVI, 1954, p. 130).

cantata, whereas those in the later works are most often without any key-signature at all. Scarlatti no doubt found that his increased freedom of modulation involved him in too many accidentals, and certainly different keys often follow each other in rapid succession. The second recitative from the cantata "Al fin m'ucciderete", 1718 (Cardiff Public Library, MS.1.19), for example, contains no less than eighteen modulations in about thirty bars of music, including cadences in keys as remote as B major and A flat minor. Such is Scarlatti's skill that we never lose our sense of direction, and each change of key is subtly expressive of the text. Here are the last few bars of the recitative:

Ex.76.

The musical score consists of three systems, each with a vocal line and a basso continuo line. The lyrics are written below the vocal line.

System 1:
 Lyrics: *quando poi giungon l'ore, che per conforto mio per mio costume, ve n'ha del tuo bell'umore li-*
 Key signatures: \flat , $\frac{4}{2}$, $\sharp 4$, $\frac{4}{2}$

System 2:
 Lyrics: *-mato a vagheggia, dolce splendore per mia barbaro sorte quando giungo nell'ore lo giungo morte.*
 Key signatures: $\flat\flat$, $\flat\flat$, \flat , $\frac{4}{2}$, $\flat\sharp$, $\flat\sharp$, $\frac{4}{3}$

System 3:
 Lyrics: *Onde, con usof-fai-bi-le martoro, in un is-tes-so di, più volte, più volte io moro*
 Key signatures: \flat , \flat , $\frac{6}{4}$, $\sharp 0$, \flat , $\frac{7}{5}$

This cantata, incidentally, seems to have been one of the best known, perhaps the most famous, of Scarlatti's

entire output. Dent lists eleven manuscript sources¹ (more than for any other cantata), and the present writer has come across it in two other eighteenth-century manuscripts.² Scarlatti himself seems to have thought highly of it; the original of a well-known portrait by an unknown painter (see frontispiece) now faces Sig. Ettore Desderi in the director's room of the Conservatorio G. B. Martini at Bologna (formerly the Liceo Musicale) and shows us the elderly composer with this cantata a prominent feature of the background.

Francesco Durante (1684-1755) chose the opening of this same cantata as the basis for one of his two-part arrangements of extracts from Scarlatti cantatas. These arrangements were widely admired long after Scarlatti's originals fell out of favour, and Villarosa (1762-1847) was not exaggerating greatly when he said that had it not been for Durante's arrangements "the name of Scarlatti would be no more heard among us". Burney thought very highly of them:

"His (Durante's) duets were formed from the airs³ of his own master Alessandro Scarlatti's cantatas.⁴ They are more in dialogue than fugue, or duo; but composed of the most select, beautiful, and impassioned traits of melody that the creative genius of the elder Scarlatti had ever invented, and are put together with such science, that it seems as if art and refinement in this species of composition could go no further."⁵

"Sacchini, who used to teach these duets to his favourite scholars, seldom finished his lesson without kissing the book. And, indeed, to hear them in a select company, which has often fortunately happened to myself when Pacchierotti, Rubinelli, Marchesi, Ranzzini, or Montellari have performed a part, affords to lovers of such refined and artificial composition, a pleasure the most exquisite that vocal Music can bestow."⁵

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1. Dent, op.cit.p.215.
 2. See appendix I.
 3. In actual fact they are based on recitatives or ariosi.
 4. We now know that Durante was not a pupil of Scarlatti.
 5. Burney, op.cit. Book III p.426.

Florimo, writing a hundred years later than Burney, shares his admiration:

"(Scarlatti) scrisse... un numero prodigioso di cantate che son servite di modello a tutti i compositori italiani del XVIII secolo, e molte delle quali Durante suo allievo¹, con una sagacità meravigliosa, ridusse a duetti, che nel campo dell'arte sono della più grande importanza."²

Manuscript copies of Durante's duets abound in European libraries, and some of them have been published, notably in an edition revised and corrected by Cherubini, printed in Paris in the 1820's, and also in a collection published at Leipzig in the 1840's. The curious reader will find an example on pages 192 to 195 of Davison and Apel's "Historical Anthology of Music" Vol. II (Harvard, 1950). Durante's contrapuntal skill is to be admired, but the rather automatic points of imitation soon become wearisome, and the duets sound laboured when compared with the freedom of the Scarlatti originals. Neither in Davison and Apel's anthology nor in the majority of manuscript sources is Scarlatti mentioned as composer of the originals, and even some of his duet-cantatas are sometimes attributed to Durante. (Close examination of a volume of "Duetti" by Durante in the British Museum (Add. MS. 32313) shows at least nine, and probably all, to be originally the work of Scarlatti. Some are two-part elaborations of movements from solo cantatas, but at least seven items are identical with original duet-cantatas by Scarlatti.) Much remains to be done in tracing misattributed compositions to their sources in Scarlatti's cantatas, and the task is not a simple one since many of the so-called Durante works are taken from the middle movements of cantatas by Scarlatti.

This is not the place to dilate on the merits of "Al fin m'ucciderete". Suffice it to say for the moment that it justly deserves the high regard in which it was held, and to add that it is one of many Scarlatti cantatas which we should like to see available in print to-day.

1. See p. 110, footnote 4.

2. Florimo, "La scuola musicale di Napoli" (Naples 1880-1881) Vol. II p. 164.

It would be misleading to suggest that all the recitatives of Scarlatti's later cantatas are as interesting in their harmony as the passages so far quoted, but these illustrations have not been chosen for anything exceptional in their methods. Scarlatti's harmonic experiments go further than the procedures found in these examples only in a few works of a purposely extravagant character. The best known of these is the F sharp minor setting of the text "Andate o miei sospiri", one of the cantatas which figured in the famous exchange between Scarlatti and Gasparini which took place in 1712.¹

Scarlatti was by no means the only composer of his generation to experiment with extravagant and bizarre harmonies. Gasparini himself published a volume of cantatas at Lucca in 1697²; one of the few extant copies of which is in the British Museum. The harmonies of the recitatives are as advanced as anything we find in Scarlatti at the same date, and the eighth cantata of the set, "Ed ecco in fine", shows us Gasparini experimenting with enharmonic progressions. The following is an extract from the opening recitative:

Ex. 77.

The image shows two systems of musical notation. The first system has a vocal line in treble clef and a basso continuo line in bass clef. The lyrics are "do-ve con-duce, do-ve con-duce il lusinghiero ingan-". The basso continuo line has figured bass notation: b7, b3, bb5, #, #6, #6#5, #43. The second system also has a vocal line and a basso continuo line. The lyrics are "-no prima a latta la gio-ia un poscia in un momento". The basso continuo line has figured bass notation: #, #, bb6, b56.

The vogue for this kind of writing is exemplified again

1. For an account of the cantata and the correspondence see Dent, op.cit.pp.140-146.
2. Not 1695 as stated by Schmitz (op.cit.).

in the cantata "Stravaganze d'amore" by Benedetto Marcello;¹ a pupil and friend of Gasparini; the following is the opening of the second recitative:

Ex. 78.

Amor tu sei quell' Empio che con ardente fa-ce incene- vis- ti
 del mio cor la pa-ce, ma no, non fia mai vero, che volto lusinghiero

#6 #7 5b
 b7 b5 4 3 #0 b6 b5 b

The result in both these works is less puzzling to the ear than to the eye, and they are altogether less advanced than Scarlatti's cantata of 1712. The cantata "Per un vago desire" (R.C.M. MS.578)², though less startling than "Andate o miei sospiri", also shows us Scarlatti experimenting with unusual harmonic progressions and abrupt modulations. It is also one of the few cantatas with a humorous text, the old story of the amorous music master, but this time in a pastoral setting. Tirsi, wishing to give instruction in music to his beloved Clori, begins by teaching her the construction of the hexachord. Scarlatti chooses Fefaut, but himself avoids any cadence in F major!

Ex. 79.

Questo è un DO, questo è un RE, questo un MI, questo è un FA

b b6 #0 b

1. Printed in "A Treasury of Early Music" ed. C.Parrish (Faber 1959). The figuring here replaces the editor's realization.
2. Printed in "Arie e Cantate di A.Scarlatti" ed. Alceo

questo è un sol, questo un LA.

6

Like Cesti at an earlier date³, Scarlatti could evidently count on some knowledge of musical theory in his audience; the principles of modulation (or strictly speaking of mutation) are taught to Clori according to strict Guidonian methods:

"Vocibus utaris solum mutando duabus
Per RE quidem sursum mutatur, per LA deorsum"

or, as Scarlatti puts it:

Ex.80.

Quando ascendersi de al- lora questo LA si muta in RE. Quando al

6 4#3

basso si va, al- lo- ra questo RE si muta in LA

#[b] 4#3

It will be noticed that in each case Scarlatti wilfully confuses 'la' and 're' as both fixed notes and solmization symbols. One hopes that all this in a first music lesson did not prove too discouraging to the poor girl!

The word "mutazione", which occurs a little later, is naturally a challenge, which the composer meets with

Toni, published by the Società anonima notare per edizione di musica italiana (Milan, 1920).

1. See p.42.

a modulation from D minor to A flat major:

Ex.81.

Sulla pri-ma le-zione Tirsi a Clo-ri insegnò la mu-ta-zio-

6 # #4 7 4 43

b6 6 43

but the most striking progression is reserved for the end of the recitative, when the narrator points out to Tirsi that, while teaching Clori how to change key, he might also be teaching her how to change heart ("i cangiamenti"):

Ex.82.

a Clo-ri tua chiè donna i cangia-men-

#6 5#6 #4 43

The aria, of course, does not lend itself so readily to such extravagances, and both the complete arias in this cantata are good examples of the mature Scarlatti's easy, flowing style, despite the faithful musical renderings of such puns as "mi fa morir", and "là sol mi re(n)do".

It was largely passages such as those just quoted, and others from "Andate, o miei sospiri" quoted by Dent, which led Alfred Einstein to compare the role of Scarlatti as cantata composer with that of the late Italian madrigalists. He sees Scarlatti's experiments as a sign (not a cause) of the decadence of the form:

"Gerade Scarlatti war auf diesem Gebiet einer der grössten Experimentatoren. Aber diese Lust am Experiment zeigt, wie früher beim Madrigal, auch schon die Zersetzung der Kunstform an".¹

One has no wish to enter into dispute with a man of Einstein's vast knowledge and fine judgement, and there is surely much truth in what he says; but it would be a mistake to think of Scarlatti as a kind of "Gesualdo of the cantata": Experimental harmonic progressions such as those we have just described are exceptional even in Scarlatti's works, and, moreover, may be regarded as an intellectual game indulged in by many Baroque composers, not least by Bach. There seems no reason to suppose that such works betray any dissatisfaction or impatience on Scarlatti's part with the cantata as an art-form, and nobody, I think, has suggested that Bach's Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue is symptomatic of the decline of the prelude and fugue. While it is true, as Dent says, that many of the later cantatas are "written round some interesting problem of form or harmony"²; they cannot be considered experimental in the sense that Gesualdo's madrigals are experimental, for they do not themselves endanger the survival of the form.

* * *

As far as the arias of the later cantatas are concerned, the da capo form accounts for all but a very small minority. Scarlatti has been maligned by many historians for his cultivation, even invention, of an aria which is dramatically unacceptable and artistically suspect, a censure altogether unjust for at least two reasons. Firstly, he is merely the most important of a

1. A. Einstein, "Der 'Stile Nuove' auf dem Gebiet der profanen Kammermusik" in G. Adler, "Handbuch der Musikgeschichte" (Frankfurt am Main, 1924).
2. Ernst Bücken's comparison of Scarlatti with Marenzio, Gesualdo, and Monteverdi ("Die Musik der Nationen", Leipzig 1937, p.113) seems quite misleading.
3. E. J. Dent, op. cit. p.191.

multitude of composers who found the da capo form admirably suited to their needs; and secondly, we are guilty of arrogance (or ignorance) if we refuse to judge Neapolitan opera by the conventions of its day simply because they are more irrational than any we are willing to accept in our own theatres. The da capo aria is perhaps the greatest single stumbling-block to widespread acceptance of operas by Scarlatti and Handel (although at least one writer is convinced that this barrier could be surmounted by good voices and stylish singing); but whatever arguments may be directed against the dramatic propriety of the form it can hardly be denied that 'quasi ipse' it is most successful. The human mind derives great satisfaction from things tripartite, and ternary form is after all the basis of so much art — many dance forms, sonata-form, the modern popular song, the majority of Romantic piano pieces, the triptych, a great deal of architecture, and most stained-glass windows, to name but a few.

An example of one of Scarlatti's early da capo arias has already been given.¹ The mature aria shows an advance on this in a number of ways. Instrumental ritornelli become the normal thing and an integral part of the aria, appearing not only at the beginning but before each of the three sections of the aria, and again at the end; in the later works fragments of the ritornello often return in related keys during the course of the aria.

Reference books conflict in their accounts of the structure of the da capo aria, particularly in regard to the scheme of keys used. Dr Willi Apel outlines the form as follows:

$$\frac{A}{T - D - T} \quad \frac{B}{R - D_r - T} \quad \frac{A}{T - D - T}$$

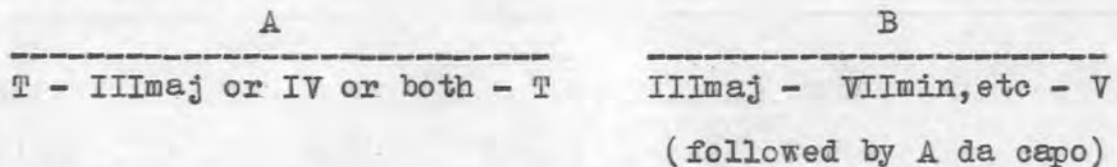
(T = tonic; D = dominant; R = relative keys)²

This certainly holds good for some of Scarlatti's arias in major keys, but since the great majority are in any case in the minor it would be misleading to represent the

1. See p.85.

2. W. Apel, "Harvard Dictionary of Music" (1944) p.50.

above structure as being typical of all Scarlatti's arias. For the opening section of arias in minor keys he favours modulations to the subdominant and the relative major. The middle section most frequently opens in the relative major, ends in the dominant minor, and includes modulations to keys on the flat side of the tonic. The whole structure has therefore a much greater leaning towards the subdominant than is suggested by Dr Apel's outline. The Scarlatti plan for minor keys might be outlined as the following:



but it must be added that this diagram has no more validity for all Scarlatti's da capo arias than a sketch of so-called sonata-form would have for all the first movements of Haydn's symphonies. Exceptions are numerous, and the number and variety of subsidiary modulations is one of the features which distinguish Scarlatti from his less gifted imitators. Though naturally more conservative than in the recitatives, he by no means confines himself merely to modulations to the nearest related keys.

Instrumental ritornelli, which in the early cantatas played a comparatively unimportant part, are of the greatest structural significance in the later works, and their importance reaches beyond vocal music. When Scarlatti uses fragments of the ritornello in keys other than the tonic, and follows these with new melodic material for the singer, we have in embryo one of the most important methods of extension which helped to make possible the Venetian concerto of Albinoni and Vivaldi. The example of Corelli, who occupied an apartment at Cardinal Ottoboni's palace in Rome at the same time that Scarlatti was there, and the improvement in string playing generally, are reflected in the more characteristically instrumental nature of Scarlatti's basses, particularly in arias where the bass part is not derived from solo material. Dotted rhythms become more common, and basses such as the following, from the cantata "Doppo lungo penar" (B.M. Add.MS.14166) are commonly found:

Ex.83.



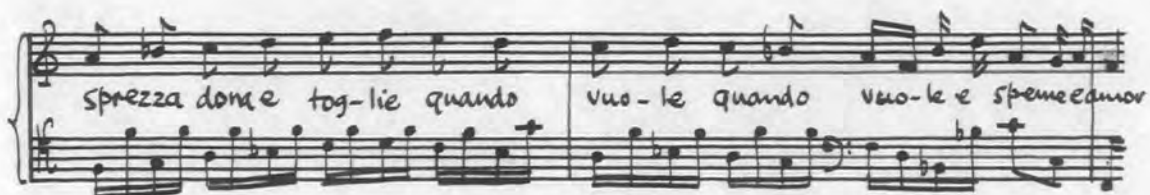
Indeed Scarlatti gained something of a reputation for the difficulty of his violoncello parts. Burney tells us that

"The violoncello parts of many of his cantatas were so excellent, that whoever was able to do them justice was thought a supernatural being. Geminiani used to relate that Franceschilli (Franceschiello), a celebrated performer on the violoncello at the beginning of this century, accompanied one of these cantatas at Rome so admirably, while Scarlatti was at the harpsichord, that the company, being good Catholics and living in a country where miraculous powers had not yet ceased, were firmly persuaded it was not Franceschilli (sic) who had played the violoncello, but an angel that had descended and assumed his shape."¹

There is little in the cantatas which would pose any difficult technical problems for the average 'cellist to-day, but there are some works which were obviously written for a performer whose attainment was more than ordinary. "Il genio di Mitilde" (B.M. Add.MS.14229) is one of these. Both its arias are distinguished by the busyness and importance of their bass lines, of which the following extract from the first aria, "Tante il mar", is a representative example:

Ex.84. [Allegro]

1. Burney, op.cit.p.629.



The bass parts of the later cantatas are never merely a support for the voice. Quotations cannot do justice to the many subtleties of interplay between the two written parts, and only thorough study can reveal the mastery of Scarlatti's ritornello technique. The freedom and fancy which he was able to bring to his vocal lines was possible only when he had mastered the art of inventing a bass which would not only unify the aria, but also give the music a sense of direction. That this direction is forward owes something to a well-planned scheme of modulations, but more to the power generated by Scarlatti's basses.

"Apart from the Webern-like opening and the occasional influence of Stravinsky, the music is unusually non-derivative, and, in consequence, extremely effective".¹ (My underlining.)

It is not the opinion we object to, but the 'non-sequitur', which is typical of much present-day thinking on the nature of convention and originality. We so often hear people speak of a composer "searching for a personal style" (as if he could find one by searching for it) that we perhaps forget that an easily recognizable personal idiom has not always been valued so highly as we value it to-day. We are naturally flattered when we correctly identify a portrait by Modigliani or a landscape by Vlaminck, but we deceive ourselves if we judge the merit of a particular painting solely on our ability to identify the artist, or if we prefer Modigliani and Vlaminck to, say, Picasso, simply because Picasso's enormous influence has made his individuality

1. Gerald Seaman, describing a work by the Russian, Alfred Schnittke in the "Guardian", January 4th 1962.

less obvious to our casual gaze. Individuality of style, which we rightly look for in a great composer, is not the only, nor even the most important, criterion by which to judge achievement. If it were, Bach and Mozart would have to give way to Puccini and Delius, and Palestrina would be considered a very minor composer indeed.

Scarlatti was in no sense an iconoclast, but his individuality would be more apparent if his influence had been less. Much of his originality is hidden from us because it was absorbed either by greater men or by others whose music is, for one reason or another, better known to us to-day. Where Scarlatti does still retain his personality, in his best work at least, is in his melodic line. It would take a more able commentator than the present writer to show exactly why a melody such as the following, from the cantata "Lontan dalla sua Clori" (B.M. Add.MS.31509)¹, is unmistakably the work of Scarlatti:

Ex. 88. *Lento.*

Co-me o Dio non vie-nie sen-ti i miei tristi la-men-ti, il
 mio langui- - - re Co-me o Dio non vie-nie
 sen-ti i miei tristi la-men- - ti il mio langui- - re

1. The opening recitative and aria (not the one quoted) have been printed in "Arie e Cantate di A. Scarlatti" ed. Alceo Toni, published by the Società anonima notari per edizione di musica italiana (Milan, 1920).

but it is possible to point to certain important features of Scarlatti's melodic style as a whole.

It goes without saying that his word-setting is impeccable, and this is merely a quality which he shares with the majority of Italian vocal composers. Like Handel and Mozart, and unlike Bach and Beethoven, he writes with a natural feeling for the voice, and though his melodies are distinguished by a frequent use of wide intervals they proceed with a fluency which singers delight in. Languishing arias in 12/8 time are a feature of his style, and together with "pastorale" arias were much imitated by later composers, including Handel; but Scarlatti's imprint, in this instance, goes beyond the use of dotted rhythms in compound time, or, for that matter, of the neapolitan sixth.

The melodies of Scarlatti's mature da capo arias are characterized by a frequent use of rests, which, however, do not break up the flow of the melody since the forward impulse is maintained in the bass and its accompanying harmony. Example 85, and others to follow, will illustrate this. Scarlatti also understood, as did Mozart, the value of silence for dramatic or telling effect. The pedestrian composer would have botched the following phrase from Mozart's Piano Concerto K.453 by inserting a bass note on the third beat of the second bar (and fie upon the pianist who keeps down the pedal at that point!):

Ex.86.

Scarlatti also knew how to obtain the best effect by omitting an expected strong beat, as the following quotation (again from the cantata "Lontan dalla sua Clori") will show:

Ex.87. (see next page)

Ex. 87.

Tempo giusto.

Ca - - ro e dol - - ce, dol - - ce e ca - - - - ro mio te-so-ro?

do - ve, do - ve sei, do-ve has-

Scarlatti's melody is distinguished by the use of wide intervals, which act as a check to that kind of sentimentality to which every composer with a leaning towards the softer emotions is prone. Leaps of major and minor sixths and sevenths abound in passages which contrast with others of a more conjunct and flowing movement, and yet the whole result is a perfectly integrated musical paragraph. As an example of this kind of subtlety let us take the following opening from an aria in the cantata "Io son pur solo" (R. C. M. MS. 578).

Ex. 88.

So-no aman-te, So-no a-man-te d'un volto ch'a

b7 6 7 6 7 6

- do - - ro, e pe-nan--do fra cru-de ri-tor--te

b2 b 6 b 6 b7

non ho spe - - - - me - - - - di dol - ce se - ren

7 6 4 2 b6

From the expressive economy of the opening phrase (a minor second) we know immediately that this is no happy lover; but Scarlatti was not a composer to be bogged down by the maudlin self-pity of his texts, and the vigorous treatment of the continuation, with its leaping fifths and sevenths, the long held notes on the word "speme", and the return to a smoother flow (and a major key) for "dolce seren", are subtleties by which he avoids any touch of banality. Anyone who thinks this melody at all commonplace would find it instructive to turn at random to any aria by Scarlatti's Italian contemporaries expressive of a similar emotion.

A later passage from the same aria furnishes an example of an unexpected turn of phrase, unexceptional in itself, but a further example of how Scarlatti's melodic line obtains its unique flavour. If we were to ask an examination candidate (or the majority of Scarlatti's contemporaries) to continue the following for a few bars:

Ex.89.

fra cu - - de ni - tor - - te, fra cu - - de ri

6 b6 6 7 6 4

the immediate continuation would probably involve a completion of the sequence with a cadence in C minor. Scarlatti, however, gives us the following, which by-passes altogether the key of C minor and carries the melodic flow forward:

Ex.90.

The image shows a musical score for a vocal piece. It consists of two staves. The upper staff is a vocal line in treble clef, and the lower staff is a bass line in bass clef. The vocal line has the lyrics: "fra cru - - de ri - tor - - te, fra cru - - de ri - tor - te, no, no —". The bass line is a figured bass with the following figures: 6, b6, 6, 7, 6, 4, 6. The music is in a minor key, indicated by the one flat in the key signature.

Such "tangential" modulations as this have enormous influence on the contours of Scarlatti's melodies, and it would be possible to write at length on these and other subtleties of his style. Concentration on languorous 12/8 melodies has been made purposely, since they exist in the cantatas in such profusion that one is easily led to imagine that the composer merely repeated himself in both expression and technique. In fact, he was always careful to provide sharp contrast between the two or more arias in a work, and when we consider the nature of the texts and the ubiquity of the da capo form we realize how astonishing was his range of expression, and how high the level of his melodic inspiration.

Scarlatti was one of those composers (Mozart, Puccini, and Benjamin Britten are others) to whom inspiration came so readily that he could afford to be liberal with his musical ideas. One can understand, perhaps, the attitude of a composer who bestows less care on the middle part of a ternary aria, since the music there will be heard only once. Indeed, this is so common in the works of lesser composers of the period that it was one of the targets for Marcello's satire in his "Il teatro alla moda" (c.1720), where he writes of the middle section as being "made up of second-hand stuff". Such criticism cannot be levelled against Scarlatti. Indeed his arias, like Mozart's piano concertos, are full of phrases which make their expressive effect by understatement.

The later arias show a much freer use of melisma than do the da capo arias of the early cantatas. We sometimes find above a chordal bass the kind of sequential figures which we more readily associate with Handel (cantata, "Filli crudel, dunque tu parti" — B.M. Add.MS. 31510):

Ex.91.

Allegro.

Vo - - - - -

- la, vanne lungi; vanne

lungi, par-ti, vo-le, lungi van - - - - - ne

and less often a tortuous Bachian coloratura;¹ but Scarlatti's melisma is, generally speaking, restrained, admirably vocal, and with a personal turn of phrase. A particularly beautiful example is to be found in the aria "Se delitto" from the cantata "Bella, quanto crudel, spietata Irene", 1717 (R.C.M. MS.579).

Ex.92.

Lento.

mi van - - - - -

1. For an example see Dent, op.cit.p.190.

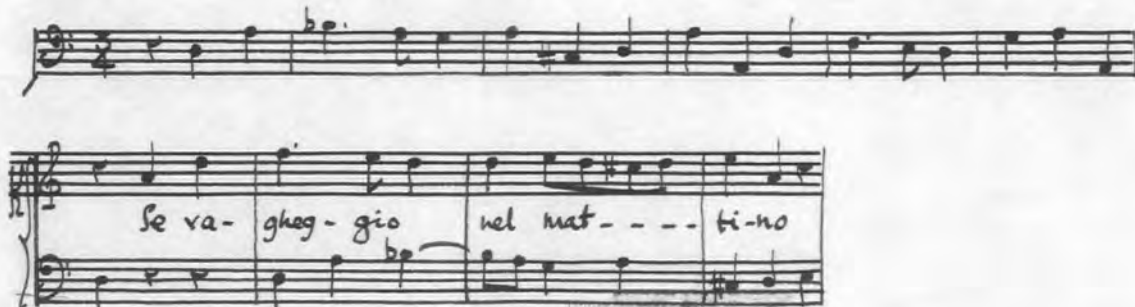


Unaccompanied vocal phrases are a feature of the arias of the mature Scarlatti, but they are rarely used with greater mastery ~~than~~ here, where it seems almost as though the bass had been silenced, as Scarlatti's audience must surely have been, by the beauty of the voice.

As in the early cantatas, the da capo arias may be divided into two groups, according to whether the bass of the opening ritornello presages the opening vocal phrase, or whether its material is independent throughout. The latter form is found more often in the later than in the earlier cantatas, but is still outnumbered by the other type by about two to one. When it does occur, the composer often shows great artistry in combining the motivic, quasi-ostinato figures of the bass with each new phrase of a freely unfolding soprano line.

So far as the first and more common type is concerned, the voice usually begins with exact reference to the opening bass part, but Scarlatti sometimes experiments with "tonal" echoes, often combining "subject" and "answer" in stretto, though rarely with the rhythmic ingenuity of the following example from the cantata "Se vagheggio nel mattino", 1709 (R. C.M. MS.579):

Ex.93.



(Observe the way in which the temporarily static bass and melody remove the unwanted stress from the first beat of the bar at the unimportant word "nel".)

Contrapuntal procedures such as this would not be expected from a composer of opera and oratorio, but they are as strong a feature of Scarlatti's later cantatas as is the harmonic richness of the recitatives. The final aria, "Tenta la fuga", from the cantata "Farfalla che s'aggira" ("La Pazzia") (B.M. Add.MS.31510) is a canon at the octave, as are the final arias of "Nel dolce tempo", 1712 or 1716 (R.C.M. MSS.582 and 584)¹, and "Qui dove alfin m'assido" ("Il rossignuolo") (B.M. Add.MS.14220); and the duet-cantata "Questo silenzio ombroso", 1707 (B.M. Add.MSS.14166, 31412, and 32313), ends with a two-part fugue above a continuous quaver bass. These are merely a few examples which demonstrate Scarlatti's interest in counterpoint as obviously as the more didactic canon for two voices (B.M. Add.MS.14166); but it would not be far from true to say that all Scarlatti's mature vocal chamber music is propelled by counterpoint, and one example will suffice to show his methods within the framework of the more conventional type of da capo aria.

The aria "Di cupido con la face" from the cantata "Io son pur solo" (R.C.M. MS.578) is almost entirely concerned with the first five notes of the first instrumental ritornello:

Ex.94.



which appear sometimes in the vocal line, sometimes in the bass; sometimes in stretto,



1. R.C.M. MS.584 has an alternative last aria.

sometimes in inversion,

Ex.96.

fa-to ch'ho - cru - del

and sometimes in stretto and inversion;

Ex.97.

Che più cres-ce al fin

and are rarely absent from the texture.

It goes without saying that not all the arias lean so heavily on contrapuntal device as does this one, but it is nevertheless true that of the mature da capo arias there are very few indeed which do not show a high degree of craftsmanship in both counterpoint and motivic development. We can understand why his contemporaries found Scarlatti's chamber style learned and difficult. Even some of his operas were criticized for the seriousness of their music.

We have already observed how the distinction between recitative and aria is more sharply marked in the later cantatas than it was in the earlier works. The absence of $3/2$ arioso sections, and the conventional punctuations of the recitative, help to emphasize the distinction. More often than not the recitative ends in the dominant minor of the key of the succeeding aria if that aria is to be in a minor key, and in the mediant minor if the aria to follow is to be in a major key. (In other words, the aria is approached by the same chord as its middle part ends with.) On a number of occasions,

however, Scarlatti succeeds in making the music of the whole cantata more continuous. This he does in three ways; first, by bringing the recitative to a close not in the dominant of the key to follow, but on that dominant. The result of this is that the flow of the music is carried over from the end of the recitative to the beginning of the aria. Examples are too numerous to make quotation necessary, but we might mention the cantata "Ben che o sirena bella" (B.M. Add.MS.14220); in this work both of the recitatives end on the dominant of the keys of the arias which follow them (C minor and D minor), and so the only break in the continuity of the music occurs after the first aria.

Secondly, Scarlatti at times allows the voice to sing the opening phrase of the aria unaccompanied before the instrumental ritornello begins, as a kind of 'Devise'. The result in such cases is often prosaic and even becomes something of a cliché, but a particularly successful example is to be found in the cantata "Clori vezzosa e bella" (B.M. Add.MS.14212)¹. Here the sense of the text runs on after the end of the recitative, and the drop of a fourth from tonic to dominant on the word "sguardo" is a nice touch, since the effect of finality which it produces by its association with recitative is immediately cancelled by the movement of the continuo. It is as if the singer were caught up in the aria unawares.

Ex.98.

The musical score for Ex. 98 consists of two systems. The first system shows a recitative and the beginning of an aria. The recitative is marked [Recit] and the aria is marked [Aria] Andante lento. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is common time (C). The lyrics for the recitative are "e se nol credi!". The lyrics for the aria are "Vol-gi lo sguardo,". The second system continues the aria with the lyrics "volgi lo sguardo e ve-di".

1. Recorded by L'Oiseau-Lyre (OL 50173).

The third method used to soften the transition between recitative and aria is to preface the latter, either before or after the instrumental ritornello, with a short, contrasted phrase sung 'ad libitum'. Dent compares this method with the opening of Beethoven's piano sonata in F sharp op.78, and mentions it as a feature of Scarlatti's late operas, with quotations from "Tito Sempronio Gracco" and "Turno Aricino", 1720.¹ It can, however, be found earlier in the cantatas, and even in the operas. Act I scene 4 of "Il Prigionero Fortunato", first given in 1698, begins:

Ex.99.

after which the strings begin the opening ritornello in triplets (presto). We return to "Benche o sirena bella" for a fine example from the cantatas. Note also the close of the preceding recitative on the dominant of the aria.

Ex.100.

1. Dent, op.cit.p.162.

Of the few mature arias which are not in the da capo form the majority are binary with repeats, in the style of a dance. Such movements are invariably in a major key and represent the very few occasions in the cantatas when Scarlatti adopts a less sophisticated attitude, for they are very similar to the popular canzonettas of his day. The opening words of "Darsi in braccio" from the cantata "Venne ed Amor desio" (B.M. Add.MSS.14165 and 31507) obviously gave Scarlatti the idea of setting the whole text in dance style, and the song is entitled "minuet" in both manuscripts. If we detect in it a certain flavour of French folk song, we may, perhaps, attribute this to the influence of the French dances which were imported for the ballet sequences of his operas.

Ex. 101.

Vivace

Darsi in braccio al

-la - spe - ranza ch'è tor- men- to, ch'è tor- mento anch'io lo so, lo so, anch'io

io lo so Col mar-tir del- la tar-

-danza più go- de-re, più go- de-re non si puo, no, no, no non si

puo.

* * *

We find little relief in the later cantatas from texts dealing with love, usually unhappy, in an Arcadian setting; historical and mythological subjects, found in the early works, are entirely absent. But before we criticize too harshly any lack of literary taste which this would seem to imply on Scarlatti's part we would do well to remember two things; first, that a large part of the beauty of the Italian language lies in its sound, and this beauty can be appreciated apart from its sense; and second, that the Italians themselves were not blind to the extravagances and the artificiality of the poetic conventions of their day. We have already seen Luigi Rossi's treatment of a text which satirizes these conventions; contemporary with Scarlatti we find a similar expression in a cantata by Pasquini:

"Eh che non è possibile
 scrivere e non parlar di Filli e Clori!
 Il mondo vuole amori,
 vuol sentir dolce pene,
 vuol parlar di catene,
 vuol suono di piacer, non di rigori."

Apart from the cantata "Per un vago desire", only a very few depart from the stereotyped pastoral situations, and among these are the only two cantatas with sacred

texts. Scarlatti was obliged to write a fair amount of church music for Rome, but sacred texts were out of place in chamber music and both these cantatas were probably written in response to some special commission. The words in both cases are by Prince Antonio Ottoboni, father of Scarlatti's patron, and a general in the papal army.¹ One of them, a Christmas cantata which begins "Oh di Betlemme altera" (B.M. Add.MS.14165) is scored for two violins, viola, violoncello, and continuo, and is to-day the best known of all Scarlatti's cantatas, owing its popularity to Dent's edition and (very free) translation.² It is an attractive work, but there can be no doubt that Dent would have preferred to publish others if he could have foreseen a demand for them. The other sacred cantata, "Alma tu, che dal cielo" (B.M. Add.MS.34056) dates from 1709 and is scored for the same combination as the Christmas cantata except that there is no part for viola. Musically it is disappointing and is not well served by the text — a laboured and trite underlining of the old saying, "Take time by the forelock, for he is bald behind".

Only some twenty-five of all Scarlatti's cantatas are for two voices, but they include some very fine works. The majority are dialogues for two Arcadian characters, who both express the same affect in a similar situation. In other words, the presence of a second person does not lend any dramatic force to the cantata, and in this they resemble the serious ensembles of Scarlatti's operas. These works frequently begin and end with a duet and contain an equal share of solo arias for both singers, as well as recitatives in which both of them take part. Two beautiful examples of this type of duet cantata are in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, and have been recorded;³ "Lisa del foco mio", and "Ahi, che sarà di me?", which date from 1706 and 1707 respectively.

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1. The MS. of "Oh di Betlemme altera", in common with the vast majority of cantata MSS., does not bear the name of the poet. Dent (op.cit.p.99) declares him to be Prince Antonio Ottoboni without revealing the source of his information. The other cantata is included in a volume of works by various composers, all to texts by Prince Antonio.
 2. Oxford University Press, 1945.
 3. L'Oiseau-Lyre, OL 50154.

A second type of cantata for two voices is that which contains no recitative and is sung in two parts throughout, both voices singing the same words. Such works might be considered the vocal counterparts of the instrumental trio-sonata. Since Scarlatti's basses always provide more than mere harmonic support the result is a highly contrapuntal texture of three strands, to which it is often difficult to add a meaningful realization of the figured bass. It might be more proper to refer to works such as these as chamber-duets rather than as cantatas, since they have much in common with the chamber-duets of Steffani and others, but neither Steffani, nor for that matter Handel, ever surpassed the mastery of Scarlatti's vocal duets, and many of the duets in the church cantatas of J.S.Bach sound strained and overloaded after hearing Scarlatti's.

A very fine example of this second type of 'cantata a due' is "Questo silenzio ombroso", which has already been mentioned for its fugal last movement. Since short extracts are insufficient to give the measure of a work, let us, for our last example from the cantatas of Alessandro Scarlatti, quote the opening arioso in its entirety. Even this will convey only part of the beauty of the work, and will give little idea of the way in which the composer adapts the cantata structure to serve his expressive purposes.

Ex. 102.

Largo.

Ques - - to si - len - zio om -

Ques - - to si - len - zio ombro - - -

6 7 6 4 4b 6 6 7 6 6 5 b 6 b

-bro -- so, o-ve so-a-ve spi-ra leg-gierauret ---

-so, o-ve so-a-ve spi -- ra leg-

7 4b 6 b 6 15 b7 6 7 6

--- ta, e un usig-nuol sos-

-gie-ra auret --- ta, e un usig-nuol sos-

6 6 5 4

-pi --- ra, sospi-ra, e un usig-nuol sos

-pi --- ra, sos-pi-ra, e un usig-nuol

6 b 7 7 b 6 7 4b 98 4

-pi --- ra, gli stan -- chi lu-mi

sos-pi --- ra, gli stan -- chi lumi mie ---

7 6 4 4 5 6 5 6 7 6 b7 6 43 4b 7

Musical score for the first system. The top two staves are vocal lines with lyrics: "mie - - i chia - - - mail'ri-po - - -" and "i chia - - mail'ri-po - - -". The bottom staff is a basso continuo line with figured bass notation: 5 6 43 6 76 #.

Musical score for the second system. The top two staves are vocal lines with lyrics: "- - - - so" and "- - - - so". The bottom staff is a basso continuo line with figured bass notation: 6 5 6 7 6 4#6 6 43.

The mature Neapolitan cantata is a form of perfectly balanced proportions, and one which, for all its outward uniformity, is capable of remarkable variation and subtlety in the minutiae of design and expression. Scarlatti's best cantatas bear the evidence of genius in their superb craftsmanship, their balance and restraint, and their sensitivity to nuances of expression. They are unlikely to appeal to those whose idea of beauty lies only in massive structures and the expression of forthright emotions and ideals; and devotees of Bach's cantatas might find them disappointing, and even trivial. Their appreciation demands the same measure of sensitivity as attended their creation, for they are, in the best sense of the word, aristocratic.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE DECLINE OF THE CHAMBER CANTATA

We have so far observed the course of the 'cantata da camera' from its beginnings as an offshoot of the Florentine monody and its subsequent development at Venice, Rome, and Naples. We have seen it as a strophic bass form at Venice, as a free admixture of recitative, arioso, and aria bound together by a recurrent refrain at Rome, and finally as a regular alternation of recitative and da capo aria with Scarlatti at Naples.

Although Naples remained the centre of cantata activity during the early eighteenth century, the cultivation of the Neapolitan cantata, as of the Neapolitan opera seria, took place not only in Italy as a whole but in all the leading musical countries of Western Europe, particularly France, Germany, and England. In Italy itself, and especially in Naples, there seems to have been an insatiable demand for such works, and examples may be found by nearly all the active composers of the time, though none was as prolific as Alessandro Scarlatti.

The most prominent of Scarlatti's contemporaries in Italy, and the most rewarding for the student of the chamber cantata, are Bassani and Giovanni Bononcini at Bologna, Benedetto Marcello at Venice, Gasparini at Rome, d'Astorga, and Handel.¹

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1. To give a complete list would be tedious as well as unnecessary, since it would include every opera composer of the day. The composers whose works are most often found alongside the works of those already mentioned include Ariosti (b. 1666), Lotti (c. 1667-1740), Caldara (1670-1736), A.M. Bononcini (1675-1726), Fago

Handel is mentioned in the present company since the majority of his cantatas were written during his Italian journey in the years 1706 to 1709. If we say that all these composers at their best produced cantatas which suffer nothing in comparison with some of Scarlatti's we are choosing our words carefully, but the reader, or the listener who has heard examples of the form only by Handel, will be justified in asking why we consider Scarlatti, and not one of them, as the more important composer. A few points of general comparison will help to show where Scarlatti's genius lay, and why his contemporaries only rarely equalled it.

1. None of them equalled Scarlatti's range of expression, or the consistently high level of his invention and inspiration. This is not a question of profligacy. Scarlatti had himself forged the cantata which served as the model for so many other composers, and he understood it as no-one else did.

2. The contrapuntal interest found in Scarlatti's cantatas give them a strength of utterance so often lacking in the works of other composers.

3. Though his harmony is hardly more advanced than that of even his lesser contemporaries, his skill in using it, and in modulation, is much greater. It is often possible to predict the tonal course of a cantata by, say Bononcini, but Scarlatti often surprises with an unexpected change of key.

4. While others were content to pour conventionalities into the stereotyped mould, Scarlatti never became the servant of the form.

5. His strength lies in those places which discover the weaknesses of others. For instance, he rarely falls into the temptation of securing continuation of a phrase with empty sequential figures; the middle parts of his da capo arias show no flagging in invention and resource; and his florid passages are made to sound spontaneously prompted by the text.

The musical importance of Bologna in the early eighteenth century has been overshadowed by that of the Neapolitan school, perhaps because concert programmes do

1. (contd. from p.138).(1677-1745), Mancini(1679-1739), Conti(1681-1731), A.Marcello(1684-c.1750), and Porpora (1686-1766).

not encourage us to associate Italy with instrumental music in the way that we do France and particularly Germany. The Bologna composers are important for their work in the sonata and in the beginnings of the orchestral concerto, but they were also very active in the composition of cantatas, and, indeed, more cantatas were published there than anywhere else in Italy. The interest of the Bolognese composer in instrumental music is reflected in the numerous cantatas which include parts for obbligato instruments, including of course the trumpet, and there was at least one early attempt to fuse the cantata with the concerto grosso, or at least with the forces of the concerto grosso. Giacomo Antonio Perti (1661-1756) wrote in 1688 a cantata "Dal profondo de' pensieri" for soprano "con violino e violoncello obbligato e Concerto grosso, Arpa o Tiorba". We notice that Torelli, one of the leading figures in the early history of the concerto at Bologna, also wrote cantatas, although Corelli seems not to have done so.

Bologna was important as a centre of cantata composition before the beginning of the eighteenth century, and may be regarded, with Naples, as an offshoot of the Roman school of Carissimi and Luigi Rossi. Scarcellì published a volume of "Cantate a voce sola" at Bologna as early as 1642, Alessandro Melani (d.1703) was writing cantatas there in 1660 when he was appointed maestro di cappella at San Petronio, and Colonna (1637-1695), G.F. Tosi (b.c.1630), and G.M. Bononcini (1642-1678) were all prominent in the cultivation of the form before Scarlatti had begun to write his earliest works. Some measure of the activity in cantata composition at Bologna is shown by the collection "Melpomene coronata", published there by Marino Silvani in 1685, which included cantatas by Albergati, Arresti, Colonna, Frabetti, Gabrielli, Gherardini, Giovanardi, Monari, Passarini, Pellicani, Perti, and Tosi.

Although its musical importance was on the decline by the year of Scarlatti's death (1725), Bologna is associated with at least two influential writers of cantatas of the early eighteenth century, G. Bononcini and Bassani. Giovanni Bononcini was born at Modena, not far from Bologna, in 1670 and died in 1755. He was the most famous member of a musical family, both his father,

Giovanni Maria, and his brother, Antonio Maria, being active in the production of cantatas. It is unfortunate that we first learn of Bononcini from the popular biographies of Handel, where he is frequently painted as the overrated, undergifted composer who sought to destroy Handel's reputation as an opera composer. The mental image we have of him is further influenced by his part in a scandal of plagiarism which is said to have hastened his departure from England. Such learning does not encourage us to approach Bononcini's music with an open mind, but we must also guard against the temptation to rush to the defence of the underdog.

Of Bononcini's popularity there can be no doubt. He went to England in 1720, and the volume of "Cantate e Duetti" which he published in the following year and dedicated to the king contains a subscription list of about two hundred and thirty names, many of the subscribers having purchased more than one copy. The fourteen cantatas in this volume are arranged symmetrically so that it falls into two parts. The first half consists of six cantatas for solo soprano and one duet cantata for soprano and alto; the second part has six cantatas for solo alto and one for two altos. The solo cantatas are accompanied alternately by two violins and continuo and by continuo alone. The duets have no obbligato string parts.

Considerable care went into the preparation of this publication and we may be sure that it shows us Bononcini's chamber style at its best. All the cantatas are in the Neapolitan form, and all those with strings except one, the eighth, begin with an instrumental prelude consisting of two (and in one case three) short contrasted movements in binary form. Only the tenth cantata, "Siedi Amarilli", shows any departure from the accepted structure. It starts with a movement which alternates stretches of accompanied aria with others of secco recitative in an unusual and satisfying manner.

It is not difficult to understand why Bononcini enjoyed so much popularity, for his cantatas contain nothing which calls for maximum concentration from either performers or audience. His recitatives are short and straightforward, his melody ingratiating and entirely free from any rhythmic subtlety, his bass parts never obtrude, and

his harmony shows a leaning towards easy pathos; his favourite indication of expression is "affetuoso" and this term effectively sums up much of his music.¹

These remarks are not necessarily pejorative, and Bononcini can delight us when his imagination is at its liveliest; but most of his work is humdrum. His modulations are so unadventurous as to be predictable and his melodic construction relies too much on mechanical sequences and repetition. It is difficult to understand Burney's admiration for Bononcini's bass parts, for although he was a violoncellist himself, his basses are nearly all uninteresting and contribute little to the unfolding of the aria. The middle parts of his da capo arias are rarely more than repetitions of previous material in a different key scheme.

We cannot condemn a musical culture which delighted in vocal virtuosity for its own sake without also condemning the Queen of the Night's arias in "Die Zauberflöte" and Donna Anna's aria, "Non mi dir", from "Don Giovanni". Scarlatti's approach to melisma was that of a seventeenth-century composer; Bononcini's treatment, on the other hand, shows him to be thoroughly eighteenth-century in style. One of the characteristics of the virtuosic vocal writing of the eighteenth century rarely, if ever, found in the music of the previous century or of Scarlatti, is the use of a cadenza on the last syllable of a word which itself demands no special treatment in the way of word-painting. It is found as much in Mozart as in Bononcini but is responsible for much poor music, and the following example, from Bononcini's cantata "O frondoso arboscello" (number six of the 1721 volume), is typical of the emptiness of many of the composer's florid passages:

Ex.103. (see next page)

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1. A. J. B. Hutchings ("The Baroque Concerto", London 1961, p.71) has drawn attention to the direction "affetuoso" as common in the slow movements of Pietro degli Antonii's instrumental works. Was it perhaps in vogue at Bologna? I recall only one instance of its use in a Scarlatti MS.

Ex.103.

Musical score for Ex. 103. The top staff is a vocal line in G major, 2/4 time, with the lyrics "a te non più ver-rà". The bottom staff is a piano accompaniment in G major, 2/4 time, consisting of a steady eighth-note pattern.

A short extract will serve better than a lengthy description to show the measure of Bononcini's achievements. It is the entire first section of a da capo aria from the cantata "Ah non m'havesse" (Cardiff Public Library, MS.1.2). The reader will observe a melody which proceeds in short phrases, the stilted effect of which is further emphasised by empty sequential repetition, and by a bass which does nothing to relieve the rhythmic dullness of the vocal part. Quotation of the remainder of the aria is unnecessary, for it merely repeats the same material in a different, but equally predictable, sequence of keys.

Ex.104.

Musical score for Ex. 104, marked "Adagio". The top staff is a vocal line in G major, 2/4 time, with the lyrics "Ecco che tutto fo-co torna a languire". The bottom staff is a piano accompaniment in G major, 2/4 time, with a bass line that changes key signature to D major (marked #6) and includes fingerings 6 and 2. The lyrics "cor torna a languire il cor ecco che tutto fo-co torna a languire" are written below the piano staff.

cor, torna a languire il cor, torna a languire il cor, torna a languire il cor, torna a languire il cor

cor, torna a languire - -re il cor. [Fine]

#6

Let us admit at once that Bononcini can do better than this; but we must add that Scarlatti, even at his worst, is never so facile in his expression. However, the short-comings of Bononcini have not been exposed in an attempt to win greater glory for Scarlatti. The baiting of a third-rate composer should never be the task of the serious historian, but some account of the third-rate cantata is necessary for our present purposes. A form becomes moribund when it serves merely to cloak poverty of invention, and the preponderance of works by composers no more gifted than Bononcini helped to accelerate the decline of the cantata as a chamber-music form after the death of Scarlatti.

Amidst the multitude of second-rate imitations some composers succeeded in achieving a good standard, and even some measure of individuality. Manuscript cantatas of Bononcini's contemporary at Bologna, Giovanni Battista Bassani (c.1657-1716), are rarely to be found in British libraries, but the example reproduced in Riemann's "Kantaten-Frühling" (Leipzig n.d.) and the dozen or so in the French collection at St. Michael's College, Tenbury, showed that he avoided the banality of Bononcini and composed with a good standard of workmanship. The same remarks apply to the cantatas of the Venetian Benedetto Marcello (1668-1739), who is frequently commended for the beauty of his recitatives.

Emmanuele d'Astorga (1680-1757) was, like Marcello, an amateur musician of noble birth, the word 'amateur' signifying only that he did not compose to earn his living. Born in Sicily, he was active in Rome, Vienna, Palermo, and Spain, and published a volume of twelve cantatas at Lisbon. His work has been underrated by many writers. With Bassani, Marcello, and Handel he shares a place in the composition of Neapolitan cantatas second only to that held by Scarlatti. His recitatives are never less than interesting in their harmony, and his arias show a fine flow of melody which avoids the monotony of four-square phrases. Some idea of his vigorous style and lively sense of rhythm may be gathered from example 105, which quotes the openings of both the arias in the cantata "Ti parlo, e non m'ascolti" (B.M. Add.MS.14216).

Ex. 105(a).

È des-tin - ch'io vi - - va in pe - - ne se cer-can-down

4
2

Bb

pic - - ciol be-ne mi con-vie -- ne ch'io lo cer-chi

Bb

6 6 5 6

ch'io lo cer -- chi sos -- pi -- ran -- do

5 6

Ex.105(b).

L'imgo - tua vez zo - - - sa ch'impessa in sen'io por-to mi

da qualche con-for - - - to, ma sos-pi-rar, ma sospi-rar - mi

f

Handel's cantatas are nearly all youthful works, and although they show the hand of a gifted composer they cannot stand beside his achievements in opera, oratorio, and concerto. A few are found in recital programmes today. While Scarlatti's continue to be neglected we can only attribute this to the interest we naturally display in the minor works of a major composer.

Like the Neapolitan opera seria, the Neapolitan cantata found acceptance in every major musical centre of Europe. Even in France, the country most resistant to the new Italian style in opera, interest in the cantata is shown by the existence of Italian scores in her libraries and of French works in imitation of them. Probably the first to write works in French under the title of cantata was J.B.Morin, who published two sets of cantatas in 1706 and 1726. In the preface to his "Cantates Françaises" (Paris 1706) he speaks of the

difficulty which audiences found in understanding the words of Italian pieces and of his attempt to preserve the inflexions of French prosody within the Italian framework. He says that he has "been advised" to publish the work because of the circulation of inaccurate manuscript copies. One reads this in so many prefaces to published works of the period that one can only assume that to let it be thought that one published for personal fame or advancement, or simply from belief in the value of the publication, was considered to be in bad taste. Morin writes:

"Il y a quelques années que j'eus dessein d'essayer si notre langue ne seroit point susceptible de Composition de musique, appellées communément en Italie Cantates, ou sujets différents de Poesies, mêlées d'airs, et de récitatifs. Quelques-unes de celles que j'avois mises en musique se sont répandues en plusieurs endroits; mais comme ce qui court en manuscrit n'est jamais parfaitement correct, on m'a conseillé de mettre ce recueil au jour, et plusieurs personnes m'ont fait espérer que la nouveauté de ces sortes d'ouvrages pourrait plaire au publique, la plupart de ceux qui entendent chanter la musique Italiene n'ayant pas la même satisfaction que s'ils entendoient les Paroles. J'ay fait aussi mon possible pour conserver la douceur de notre chant françois, sur des accompagnemens plus diversifiés, et sur les mouvemens et la modulation dont les cantates italiennes sont composées."

Volumes of cantatas appeared fairly regularly from French publishers between 1706 and about 1750, the most outstanding composers being André Campra (1660-1744) who published three books of "Cantates Françaises" in 1708, 1714, and 1728, Michel Pirolet de Montéclair (1667-1737), and Louis Nicolas Clérembault (1676-1749), the only French composer whose cantatas form the major part of his output. The last-named published five volumes, and numerous others remain in manuscript. His "Cantate d'Orphée" ("Le Fameux Chantre de la Thrace") (B.M. Add.MS.17785) betrays his

interest in mythological subjects as well as his indebtedness to Italian composers for a design of alternate recitative and da capo aria.

Political and cultural ties between Spain and the kingdom of Naples were very strong in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, and it is not surprising that Spanish composers turned to the cantata form. Although there arose no native school comparable with those of Italy and France, there was certainly some demand for Italian cantatas; d'Astorga published cantatas at Lisbon with Italian and Spanish words. Most of the seventeen works, and perhaps all, contained in a manuscript volume of "Cantadas Españolas" in the Mackworth collection at Cardiff Public Library (MS.1.14) pre-date d'Astorga's publication. The composers represented are Joseph Torres (or de Torres), Joachim Landuez, Federico, Durón, D.F.D. R.C. (perhaps the scribe), Pedro Rabaza, and Antonio Literes.

Information about these composers is not readily available in the standard English reference books, but at least three of them were active at Madrid. Sebastián Durón (dates unknown) was master of the Royal Chapel there from 1691 until 1702, and well known as a composer of opera and sacred music. Antonio Literes (c.1670-1747) and Joseph Torres (d.1738) both worked as organists at the Royal Chapel, the former being employed with Nebra in restoring the contents of the library after the fire at the Royal Palace in 1734. The texts of these cantatas show Italian influence in the predominance of Arcadian settings; in fact they could easily be Spanish translations or paraphrasings of Italian originals. The music shows similar Italian influence, although only five of the works are in the Neapolitan design. Even those movements which bear titles of Spanish song- or dance-forms are predominantly Italian in flavour.

The composer represented by the largest number of works (eleven) in the present volume is Joseph Torres. The best of them, "Bosques umbrosos" is stylistically not far removed from an early Scarlatti work (for example "Correa nel seno amato") and is scored for the same combination of performers as that work. Compare, for instance, the following extract from the opening move-

ment (Estribillo) of Torres's work with the quotation from Scarlatti's at example 67 (pages 95-96):

Ex.106.

The musical score for Ex. 106 consists of four systems. The first system includes staves for Violin I (Vl. I.), Violin II (Vl. II.), Voice, and Bassoon (B.c.). The Voice part has the lyrics "yen tal do - - - lor, yen tal es -". The second system includes staves for Violin I, Violin II, Voice, and Bassoon. The Voice part has the lyrics "-qui-va suer - - - - - te". The Bassoon part includes figured bass notation: b, b6, 5, 43.

The Cardiff manuscript does not point to the presence of any significant school of secular cantata composers in Spain, and the cultivation of the form in Germany was similarly sporadic. The greatest contribution to early eighteenth-century music in the southern states of Germany was made in instrumental and orchestral forms, and the vocal music of the northern, Lutheran, part of the country was more concerned with the fusion of Italian forms and style with the traditional chorale — in other words, with sacred music.

As far as the seventeenth century in Germany is concerned, the cantata is virtually non-existent. Kaspar Kittel's "Arien und Kantaten" (1638) op.1 is an isolated

work, the fruit of study in Italy where Kittel (1603-1639) absorbed the idiom of Caccini as well as the technique of the strophic bass. The Generalbass-lied reached a high degree of perfection in the hands of Heinrich Albert (1604-1651), Kaspar Kittel, Adam Krieger (1634-1666), and Phillip Heinrich Erlebach (1667-1714), but although originally Italian-inspired the German Baroque Lied does not strictly lie within the field of our present study. It was only when the Baroque Lied fell into decline that the cantata began to spring up, in other words at about the beginning of the eighteenth century; even then it was not developed much as a truly national form, for Italian texts were used.

It is not surprising to find that the German cantata first flourished at Hamburg, the centre of Italian opera in Germany, or that the first German composer to cultivate the form was Reinhard Keiser (1674-1739), the leading figure at the Hamburg opera. Christian Friedrich Hunold-Menantes provides evidence of the popularity of the cantata at Hamburg when he states:

"Was die Grandes in Spanien, die Printzen vom Geblüte in Frankreich, die Mylords in England... das sind die Cantaten in der Poesie und Musik. Sie sind auch unvergleichlich nette, und ist sowohl vor einem Poeten als Musicum kein Genus schöner als dieses."²

The majority of Keiser's cantatas are in Italian, but there are some with German texts and at least one which uses both Italian and German words, the cantata "L'ocaso di Titone all'Aurora Oriente", published in his collection "Divertimenti serenissimi delle Cantate, duetti, et arie diverse" at Hamburg in 1713. Polyglot libretti are frequently found in the Hamburg operas.

Schmitz mentions the following German composers of Italian cantatas: Keiser, Johann Fischer, Jakob

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1. Hunold-Menantes, "Die allerneueste Art zur Reinen und Galanten Poesie zu gelangen" (Hamburg, 1706) p.284.

Greber, Johann Christoph Pez (1664-1716), Abraham Pfuhl, Johann David Heinichen (1683-1729), and Johann Melchior Molter (d.1765). Cantatas with German texts are less common, but examples exist by Telemann (1681-1767), the Graun brothers, Gottfried Heinrich Stölzel (1690-1749), and Johann Heinrich Rolle (1718-1785). As late as 1781 we find Johann Adam Hiller (1728-1804) publishing at Leipzig a volume of "Cantaten und Arien verschiedener Dichter".¹

The cantata in England, as in Germany, was a product of the eighteenth century and was written in imitation of Italian models. There are numerous works by seventeenth-century English composers to which the title "cantata" would be appropriate. Purcell's "Expostulation of the Blessed Virgin Mary", for example, is a cantata in all but name, but the first use of the term in an English publication is found in a volume of Six English Cantatas by John Christopher Pepusch (1667-1752). Born in Berlin and christened Johann Cristoph, Pepusch went to England in about 1700 and remained in London for the rest of his life. He took his D.Mus. at Oxford in 1713, and became musical director at Lincoln's Inn Fields. Best known to us now as the arranger of the music for John Gay's "The Beggars' Opera" in 1728, he taught Travers, Boyce, and Cooke.

Pepusch's first book of cantatas was published by Walsh and dedicated to the Marchioness of Kent. The publication bears no date but Burney, from advertisements in the Tatler, assigns it to 1710. Pepusch himself claimed priority for his cantatas in the preface, which was probably written by John Hughes, who supplied the words for the cantatas. Perhaps Pepusch felt his own command of the English language inadequate for the writing of the preface; certainly his setting of English words is often unorthodox. Like Morin in the first book of French cantatas, the writer here speaks of the difficulty which audiences of the day found with the Italian language.

"Mr Pepusch having desir'd that some Account
shou'd be prefix'd to these Cantata's,
relating to the Words, it may be proper to

1. Schmitz, op.cit. chap.VI.

acquaint the Publick, that they are the first Essays of this kind, written for the most part several Years ago, as an Experiment of introducing a sort of Composition which had never been naturalis'd in our Language. Those who are affectedly partial to the Italian Tongue, will scarce allow Musick to speak any other; but if Reason may be admitted to have any Share in these Entertainments, nothing is more necessary than that the Words shou'd be understood, without which the End of Vocal Musick is lost. The Want of this occasions a common Complaint, and is the chief, if not the only Reason, that the best Works of Scarlati (sic) and other Italians, except those perform'd in Opera's, are generally but little known or regarded here.

"(Mr Pepusch)... is desirous the Publick shou'd be infor'd that they are not only the first he has attempted in English, but the first of any of his Works published by himself; and as he wholly submits them to the Judgement of the Lovers of this Art it will be a Pleasure to him to find that his Endeavours to promote the Composing of Musick in the English language, after a new Model, are favourably accepted."

That Pepusch's endeavours were in fact favourably accepted is proved by subsequent publications by himself and others, although there is little in his first volume to interest us to-day. Burney considered number five, "While Corydon the lovely shepherd" for soprano, flute, and continuo, to be the best¹; while Schmitz regarded Pepusch as the "one-eyed man among the blind" in the kingdom of the English cantata: ("Alles in allem darf er (Pepusch) in der Reihe der englischen Kantatencomponisten aber doch als der 'Einäugige unter den Blinden' gelten".)

All the cantatas in Pepusch's first book are in the

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1. Burney, op.cit. Book III p.426.
 2. Schmitz, op.cit.p.312.

Neapolitan design, but they show a number of features which are shared by other English works of this genre. Arcadian verses are much in evidence, but so are classical myths, and there is less emphasis on love poems. A brief resume of the subjects in the present volume will show how much more varied they are than those of Scarlatti discussed in the previous chapter.

1. The Island of Beauty. A cantata in praise of Britain, the favourite island of Venus.
2. Alexis. Alexis wishes to assuage his amorous pains with the power of music, but Apollo warns him that it is impossible to do so.
3. The Spring. Collinet, a shepherd, heralds the approach of Spring.
4. Miranda. Apollo and the gods pay homage to Miranda and her tuneful voice.
5. Corydon and
6. Cloe are both of an amatory nature, in a pastoral setting.

The English composers, perhaps because of the lighter nature of many of their texts, make more use of major keys than does Scarlatti. All the works in Pepusch's book are in the major, and there is only one aria in a minor key. The arias are in da capo form, usually very short like Bononcini's; they never offend, and rarely please. The recitatives are unadventurous, with much use of 'Orgelpunkt' in the bass. The second cantata, "Alexis", proved very popular with English audiences, and indeed was frequently performed until about the middle of the nineteenth century. Perhaps English audiences were charmed by the prettiness of the first aria, "Charming sounds that sweetly languish", or by the novelty of the 'alberti' figurations in the obbligato cembalo part of the second.

Ex. 107.

do not shep-herd then de - - ceive thee

6 6

-
1. Not obbligato violoncello as stated in Grove.

"Six English Cantatas after the Italian Manner compos'd by Mr. Galliard" were published by Walsh and Hare some six years after Pepusch's first set, and are on the whole more successful. Johann Ernst (John Ernest) Galliard (c.1680-1749) was born at Celle and studied under Farinelli and Steffani. He was a friend of the Bolognese composer, Pier Francesco Tosi, whose "Opinioni de' cantori antichi e moderni, o sieno osservazioni sopra il canto figurato" (1723) he translated into English. He went to England in 1706 and succeeded Draghi as organist at Somerset House as well as playing the oboe in the opera orchestra under Handel. The cantatas are dedicated to "my Lady Rich", the wife of John Rich, for which gentleman Galliard composed pantomimes and other stage entertainments. Galliard had, of course, been forced into publication by the circulation of inaccurate manuscript copies.

The words of Galliard's cantatas are the work of Hughes, Congreve, and Prior, but the music makes greater acknowledgement to Italian influence than did that of Pepusch. In his preface Galliard expresses his admiration for Scarlatti, Bononcini, and Tosi, and it is noticeable that only one of his cantatas is in a major key, and that none uses instruments other than continuo.

A full account of the cantata in England must be left until a later date, but it might be convenient to mention here the names of some of the more important contributors to the form. They include Daniel Purcell (c.1660-1717), Michael Christian Festing (d.1752), Maurice Greene (c.1695-1755), John Stanley (1713-1786) (probably the most prolific of the English cantata composers), and William Boyce (1710-1739). There is little in their work which bears comparison with Scarlatti, or which makes us lament the less the early death of Henry Purcell.

Satire is always an indication of some popularity (or notoriety), and "The Stocking, A Cantata by Mr. Stokes" points to a wide acceptance of the English cantata. Although undated it was probably published after 1750. The satire, like that of Cesti described in an earlier chapter, is mainly literary, and some idea of its style may be drawn from the opening recitative. The composer confines his own wit to providing unnecessary indications

for the keyboard player, and omitting the expected cadence at the third bar:

Ex. 108.

The musical score for Ex. 108 consists of four systems of music, each with a vocal line and a keyboard accompaniment line. The lyrics are written below the vocal line.

System 1: The lyrics are "Sylvia, whose eyes are fatal as a Gun, sat basking in the Sun, One stocking". The keyboard part has fingerings 7/4/2, 5/3, 7/4/2, and 5/3.

System 2: The lyrics are "off, the other on, One stocking off, for why? The gentle fair just then was". Performance markings include "Sy:" above the first bar and "Adagio" above the last bar. A fingering of 6 is shown in the keyboard part.

System 3: The lyrics are "minded to — re-pair a Breach her fra-grant foot had made; The faithfull". Performance markings include "tr" above the first bar, "Recitative" above the second bar, and "Sym:" above the last bar. The keyboard part has fingerings 6/5 and #/5.

System 4: The lyrics are "Daemon at her side, intent, the neat Performance; and thus in plaintive Numbers sung, said:". The keyboard part has fingerings 6, 4/2, 4/2, and b6.

In the second aria, "Happy insects Demon cry'd", the composer directs his fire towards the senseless repetition of words to fit a conventional melodic formula. It will be noticed that the formula itself belongs to the period after the Baroque.

Ex. 109. (see next page)

Ex. 109.

Allegro.

Each e-xu-ding Fea-ture shows, Fea-ture

shows, Fea-ture shows, Each e-xu-ding Fea-ture

Shows.

Before the end of the eighteenth century the cantata had fallen out of favour with English musicians, a fact which Burney laments in his History:

"Opera scenes, or single songs, now supply the place of cantatas in all private concerts; but besides the loss which these sustain when taken out of their niche, as they were originally calculated for a numerous orchestra, they can seldom be completely accompanied by a small band."¹

* * *

1. Burney, op.cit. Book IV chap.4.p.638.

In the hands of Alessandro Scarlatti the chamber cantata had been a form capable of serving the most varied musical expression, continually enriched and extended by the searchings of a creative mind. A brief study of the cantata after Scarlatti is enough to show how this form became, for his later contemporaries in Italy and abroad, a mere framework for conventional trivialities. To sum up all that has so far been said in this chapter one cannot do better than quote the words of one who knew the period and its music as well as anyone, and understood it better than most. Alfred Einstein writes:

"Nach ihren grossen Meistern,... verflacht die Arie durch die allgemeine Neigung der Periode zur reinen Homophonie: die Melodie verweichlicht in der Manier des Vorhalts, die Koloratur wird zum willkürlichen und unorganischen Auswuchs; der Bass sinkt wieder, wie am Anfang der Bewegung, in seine lediglich stützende, geistlos dienende Rolle zurück; wenn auch mit dem wesentlichen Unterschied, dass diese Zurückhaltung der Stützstimme einst dem Wortausdruck, dem affektiven Gehalt diene, und am Ende der Entwicklung nur mehr einem leeren, virtuosischen, instrumentalen Schall."¹

Among the factors contributing to the decline of the chamber cantata was the neglect of singing in favour of instrumental virtuosity. Even before the end of the seventeenth century the violin sonata and the trio-sonata had begun to challenge the cantata as the ideal form of chamber music, and by 1725, the year in which Scarlatti died, the challenge had become a serious one. Arrangements for instruments of operatic or cantata arias became popular, especially in England. Sometime about 1750 Samuel Howard (1710-1782) published a volume of "Cantatas for the German Flute", and not many years later we find Burney observing about Porpora that

"by confining himself rigidly in his songs and cantatas to such passages are only fit for the voice, his cantatas will seem to

1. A.Einstein, op.cit.

want spirit when tried upon an instrument."¹

Italian composers after Scarlatti who were not content merely to imitate his chamber style transformed the cantata into a piece for virtuoso singer and orchestra. Important in this new development were Leonardo Leo (1694-1744), Leonardo Vinci (1690-1730), and Johann Adolph Hasse (1699-1783), but among the best works are those of Pergolesi (1710-1736). The orchestral cantatas of these composers can be called chamber works only in the sense that Baroque musicians used the term 'da camera' — that is to say for music which was not intended for the church or the theatre. They are not chamber music in the way we understand the word to-day, and the only feature they have in common with Scarlatti's cantatas is the wholesale adoption of the Neapolitan form.

Indeed the works are as interesting from an instrumental as from a vocal viewpoint, and we can see in them a number of details of orchestral accompaniment which we more readily associate with Mozart. There is, however, frequent doubling of first and second violins, and of viola and bass at the octave. Composers make a rule of introducing at least one 'stromentato' recitative, often with much elaboration in the orchestral writing. The arias are on a large scale, with a long opening ritornello introducing a number of ideas on concerto lines, and there is often a well-defined "second subject" in the nearest related key (usually the dominant, since composers begin to favour major tonalities). The middle part of the da capo aria is comparatively short, often showing a change of tempo and time-signature and sometimes an excursion into the new 'empfindsamer' style. The new pre-classical style is to be observed in a number of other ways as well; in the slower rate of chord change, the frequent pedal points, the simple harmony, the clear-cut modulations, and the melodic inflexions.

Pergolesi's cantata "Chi non ode" (R.C.M. MS.492) is a good example of the genre, and the two quotations from it which follow will illustrate many of the remarks made above. The first is from the opening of the work. The

1. Burney, op.cit. Book IV chap.4.p.637.

ritornello presents three well-defined thematic ideas (identified here by the letters A, B, and C), each of which is used independently and in different keys during the course of the aria.

Ex. 110.

Tempo giusto.

VI-I
VI-II
Va.
B.c.

(A)

6 4 2 5

[VI-III]

6 7 6 7 6 7 6 6

(B)

for.

7 5 4 3

©

pia.

dol.

dol. $\frac{6}{4}$

This system contains the first two measures of the piece. It features a piano introduction with a copyright symbol (©) in the first measure. The music is written for four staves: two treble clefs and two bass clefs. The first measure includes a circled copyright symbol. The second measure has a *pia.* (piano) marking. The third measure has a *dol.* (dolce) marking. The fourth measure has a *dol.* marking and a time signature change to $\frac{6}{4}$.

for.

for.

p^o

dol.

for.

Chi non o - de, e chi non

This system contains the third and fourth measures. The first measure has a *for.* (forte) marking. The second measure has a *for.* marking. The third measure has a *p^o* (piano) marking. The fourth measure has a *dol.* marking. The fifth measure has a *for.* marking. The sixth measure has the lyrics "Chi non o - de, e chi non". The seventh measure has a *for.* marking. The eighth measure has a *for.* marking. The ninth measure has a *for.* marking. The tenth measure has a *for.* marking. The eleventh measure has a *for.* marking. The twelfth measure has a *for.* marking.

ve - de le mie vo - ci, e il mio sem - biance

This system contains the fifth, sixth, and seventh measures. The fifth measure has a *for.* marking. The sixth measure has a *for.* marking. The seventh measure has a *for.* marking. The eighth measure has a *for.* marking. The ninth measure has a *for.* marking. The tenth measure has a *for.* marking. The eleventh measure has a *for.* marking. The twelfth measure has a *for.* marking. The thirteenth measure has a *for.* marking. The fourteenth measure has a *for.* marking. The fifteenth measure has a *for.* marking. The sixteenth measure has a *for.* marking. The seventeenth measure has a *for.* marking. The eighteenth measure has a *for.* marking. The nineteenth measure has a *for.* marking. The twentieth measure has a *for.* marking. The lyrics "ve - de le mie vo - ci, e il mio sem - biance" are written under the vocal line.

The second quotation has been chosen to illustrate the broken style of the accompanied recitative.

Ex. 111.

Musical score for the first system of Ex. 111. It consists of three staves. The top two staves are vocal lines, and the bottom staff is a basso continuo line with figured bass notation. The music is in common time (C) and the key signature has one flat (B-flat). The first measure of the vocal lines is marked *dot.* and the second measure is marked *dolciss.*. The lyrics are: "Mi - se - ri affetti miei, bar - bara". The figured bass notation below the staff includes figures: 6, b7/5, 4, 6, 6/4, b.

Musical score for the second system of Ex. 111. It consists of three staves. The top two staves are vocal lines, and the bottom staff is a basso continuo line with figured bass notation. The music is in common time (C) and the key signature has one flat (B-flat). The first measure of the vocal lines is marked *Stacc.* and the second measure is marked *for.*. The lyrics are: "Sov - te, Tiranno A - mor, se incendiar ti". The figured bass notation below the staff includes figures: 6, 6, 6/4, b6, 46.

Musical score for the first system, featuring five staves. The vocal line includes the lyrics "piae va-dop-pia i col-pi ad affrettar la". A 6/4 time signature is indicated below the bass staff.

Musical score for the second system, featuring five staves. The vocal line includes the lyrics "mor-te" and "(etc.)".

With works such as this one by Pergolesi we are clearly getting far away from the chamber style of the seventeenth-century cantata, and so from the subject of our present study. There is to-day a growing interest both in the music of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries and, on the part of composers, in using the voice as a partner in instrumental chamber music. The time seems

ripe for a revival of interest in the Italian chamber cantata, and such a revival could not fail to enhance the stature of Alessandro Scarlatti as an important composer, and one who has contributed much to our musical heritage. At least one writer hopes that we shall soon have no cause to lament, with Dr. Burney,

"that a species of composition so admirably calculated for concerts... should now be so seldom cultivated; as it contains a little drama entire, having a beginning, a middle, and an end, in which the charms of poetry are united with those of Music, and the mind is amused while the ear is gratified."¹

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1. Burney, op.cit. Book IV, chap. 4. p. 638.

APPENDIX ONE

DENT'S CATALOGUE OF SCARLATTI'S CANTATAS:

SOME ADDENDA AND CORRIGENDA

The catalogue which appeared at the end of Dent's book on Scarlatti (1905) contains the most complete inventory of the cantatas yet made, and the new edition of the work prepared by Frank Walker to celebrate the composer's tercentenary in 1960 contained no alterations to it. A complete revision would entail extensive research, and the following additions and corrections are merely the result of observations made during the preparation of this study.

Manuscript sources, except in one case which is noted, have been confined to those made before about 1800, and the following abbreviations are used:

- BL = Bologna, R. Conservatorio di Musica G.B. Martini
(formerly the Liceo Musicale)
- BM = London, British Museum
- Bos = Boston Public Library, Massachusetts
- Car = Cardiff Public Library (the Mackworth collection)
- Cop = Copenhagen, Royal Library
- LC = London, Royal College of Music
- P = Pavia University
- T = Tenbury, St. Michael's College
- W = Vienna, Hofbibliothek.

* * *

1. Cantatas not listed by Dent

1. Al mare, al bosco, al rio (Sop). Bos (M.360.10.v.3.no.1)
2. A pie d'un faggio ombroso (Sop). LC (MS.578)
3. Celinda è la mia vita (Sop). Bos (M.360.10.v.3.no.10)
4. Cruda Filli spietata (Sop). LC (MS.578)
5. Dal sigri ahi mia (Sop). Cop
6. E con qual core (Sop). HM (Add.MS.14228)
7. Elitropio d'amor (Sop). P (Aldini collection 423)
8. Fermate omai fermate (Alto). P (Aldini collection 423)¹
9. Il centro del mio core (Sop). Bos (M.360.10.v.4.no.18)
10. Il fulgido splendor d'un ciglio (Sop). Bos (M.360.10.v.4.no.19)
11. Infelice mio core²
12. In fra notturni orrori (Sop). Bos (M.360.10.v.4.no.17)
13. In questa lacrimosa orrida valle (Tantalo sitibondo) (Sop). Bos (M.360.10.v.4.no.20)
14. Lascia, deh lascia al fine di tormentarmi (Sop). Bos (M.360.10.v.4.no.2), LC (MS.578), W (MS.17530)³
15. Lontano dal suo bene (Sop). HM (Add.MS.31488)
16. Io sa il cielo, sallo amore (Sop). LC (MS.578)
17. Mentre mesto (Sop). Bos (M.360.10.v.3.no.12)⁴
18. Mitilde addio (Sop). Bos (M.360.10.v.3.no.5)
19. Mitilde, anima mia, conforto di mie pene (Sop). T (MS.1099)⁵

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1. This cantata and nos.7,24, and 58 in the present list have been published in a modern edition edited by Giampiero Tintori (Ricordi, 1958). This particular work is either incomplete, or unauthentic, or the only Scarlatti cantata to my knowledge which begins and ends in different keys. All the works in the edition are immature, and such a publication, while of interest to the student, can only be unjust to Scarlatti when so many finer works remain inaccessible — an injustice which is further aggravated by poor editorial work.
 2. Mentioned by Schmitz (op.cit.p.128) without reference to its source.
 3. Referred to by Heinichen in his "Generalbasslehre" (1728), and printed by A.Schering, "Geschichte der Musik in Beispielen" (Leipzig, 1931) pp.378-383.
 4. Called "Cantata a contralto solo" in the MS., but written in soprano clef.
 5. In the hand of Joseph Mayer, dated 1860.

20. Mitilde, mio tesor, così veloce (Sop). Bos (M.360.10)¹
21. Quella che chiudo (Sop). Bos (M.360.10.v.4.no.11)
22. Questa il giardin felice (Sop). LC (MS.578)
23. Questa vermiglia rosa (Sop). Bos (M.360.10.v.4.no.12)
24. Speranze mie, addio (Sop). P (Aldini collection 423)

* * *

2. Additional sources for cantatas listed by Dent

25. Ah, Mitilde vezzosa (Sop). Bos (M.360.10.v.3.no.7)
26. Al fin m'ucciderete (Sop). Car (MS.1.19), Cop
27. Alme, voi che provaste (Sop). LC (MS.578)
28. Amo, peno, gioisco (Sop). Car (MS.1.19)
29. Amor, Mitilde è morta (Sop). Bos (M.360.10.v.2.no.1)
30. Andate, o miei sospiri (Sop. setting unspecified). Bos
(M.360.10.v.2.no.8)
31. Ardo tacito amante (Alto). Bos (M.360.10.v.3.no.11)
32. Augelletti semplicetti (Sop). Bos (M.360.10.v.3.no.9)
33. Aure io son di voi geloso (Sop). Car (MS.1.19)
34. Bella, per te d'amore (Sop). Bos (M.360.10.v.4.no.14)
35. Clori vezzosa e bella (Sop). Bos (M.360.10.v.3.no.14)
36. Cruda Irene superba (Sop). LC (MS.578)
37. Crudo amor, che vuoi da me (Sop). Bos (M.360.10.v.2.no.7)
38. Da che Tirsi mirai (Sop). Car (MS.1.19)
39. Dal colle al pian discesa (Sop). LC (MS.578)
40. Da quel dì che Mitilde (Sop). Bos (M.360.10.v.3.no.8)
41. Del lacrimoso lido (Sop). Car (MS.1.19)
42. Della spietata Irene fur l'accese pupille (Sop). Bos
(M.360.10.v.4.no.1)
43. Diedi a Fileno il core (Sop). Bos (M.360.10.v.3.no.4)
44. Dove al fin mi traeste? (L'Arianna) (Sop). Bos (M.360.
10.v.2.no.3)
45. Dov'io mi volga o vada (Sop). Bos (M.360.10.v.2.no.11)
46. Due nemici tirammi (Sop). Bos (M.360.10.v.4.no.11)
47. Ecco che a voi ritorno (Sop). BM (Add.MS.29484), Bos
(M.360.10.v.2.no.4)
48. E come, oh Dio, lontano (Sop). B.M. (Add.MS.38036)
49. È pure il gran tormento (Sop). Bos (M.360.10.v.4.no.13),
Car (MS.1.19)

1. Printed in Davison and Apel's "Historical Anthology of Music" Vol.II.pp.152-155.

50. E pur vuole il cielo (Sop & alto). HM (Add.MSS.22104, 31490 (incomplete), 32313 (incomplete and ascribed to Durante))
51. Eurilla, io parto, addio (Sop). Bos (M.360.10.v.3.no.6)
52. Farfalla che s'aggira (La Pazzia) (Sop). Bos (M.360.10.v.2.no.5), LC (MS.578)
53. Fiero acerbo destin dell'alma mia (Sop). Bos (M.360.10.v.2.no.6)
54. Fille, tu parti, oh Dio (Sop). Bos (M.360.10.v.4.no.15)
55. Già vicina è quell'ora (Sop). Car (MS.1.19)
56. Il genio di Mitilde (Sop). Bos (M.360.10.v.2.no.9)
57. In due vaghe pupille (Sop). HM (Add.MS.14217)
58. Io morirei contento (Sop). P (Aldini collection 423)
59. La Fortuna di Roma (Il Coriolano) (Alto). HM (Add.MS.24311)
60. Lascia più di tormentarmi (Sop). HM (Add.MSS.29249, 31518)
61. Lasciato havea l'adultero superbo (La Lucretia Romana) (Sop). HM (Add.MS.31488)
62. Leandro, anima mia, Ero t'attende (Alto). HM (Add.MS.22104)
63. Lumi dolente lumi (Sop). Bos (M.360.10.v.2.no.10)
64. Mentre da queste monte (Sop). Car (MS.1.19)
65. Mie speranze fallaci (Sop). Bos (M.360.10.v.3.no.2)
66. Mitilde, mio tesoro, e dove sei? (Sop). Bos (M.360.10), LC (MS.578)
67. Nei languidi respiri (Sop). HM (Add.MS.29484), LC (MS.578)
68. Nei tuoi lumi, o Bella Clori (Sop). T (MS.1252)
69. Nel suo fido caro nido (Sop). Bos (M.360.10.v.4.no.4)
70. O de' pastori diletto stuolo (Sop). LC (MS.578)
71. Oh Mitilde, fosti meco tiranna (Sop). Bos (M.360.10.v.4.no.5)
72. O pace del mio cor (Sop). HM (Add.MS.29484)
73. Or che di te son privo (Sop). LC (MS.578)
74. O sol degli occhi miei (Sop). Bos (M.360.10.v.4.no.6)
75. Ove al Sebeto in riva (Sop). Bos (M.360.10.v.4.no.7)
76. Pastori amici, amiche pastorelle (Sop). Bos (M.360.10.v.4.no.8)
77. Pensier che in ogni parte (Sop). Bos (M.360.10.v.4.no.21)
78. Pensieri, pensieri, oh Dio qual pena (Sop). Cop¹

1. Printed in "La Flora" Vol.I edited by Knud Jeppesen (Copenhagen, 1949).

79. Per un momento solo (Sop). Bos (M.360.10.v.4.no.9),
T (MS.1252)
80. Più che penso all'idol mio (Sop). Bos (M.360.v.4.no.10)
81. Poi che a Tirsi infelice (Sop). LC (MS.578)
82. Quante le grazie son (Alto). Bos (M.360.10.v.3.no.16)
83. Quanti affanni ad un core (Sop). Bos (M.360.10.v.3.no.3)
84. Questo di bei giacinti serto (Alto). Bos (M.360.10.
v.3.no.13)
85. Questo silenzio ombroso (Sop & alto). BM (Add.MS.32313)[†]
86. Qui dove alfin m'assido (Il rossignuolo) (Sop). Bos
(M.360.10.v.2.no.12)
87. Se a quel fiero dolor (Sop). T (MS.1252)
88. Senti bell'idol mio (Sop). LC (MS.578)
89. Solitudine care in voi spera (Sop). LC (MS.578)
90. Son quest'ultimi momenti (Alto). Bos (M.360.10.v.3.no.15)
91. Spiega l'ali il mio pensiero (Sop). T (MS.1252)
92. Tenebrose foreste (Sop). LC (MS.578)

* * *

3. Corrigenda

93. Di pensiero in pensier; for alto not sop. (BM Add.MS.
14165)
94. Dormono l'aure estive; for alto not sop in LC (MS.584)
95. Fatto d'amor seguace; for alto not sop in BM (Add.MS.
31510)
96. Fra tante pene e tante; dated 23 June 1706, not 1705
in BM (Add.MS.31510)
97. Già per lunga stagion; in BM Add.MS.14165, not 31487
98. Già vicina è quell'hora; for alto not sop in BL²
99. L'armi crudeli e fieri; for alto not sop (BM. Add.MS.
29249)
100. Lascia di tormentar; in BM Add.MS.31509, not 31507
101. Lontan dall'idol mio; dated 1699 in BM Harl.1273
102. M'ha diviso il cor dal core; for alto not sop in BM
(Add.MS.34056)
103. (a) Mitilde, alma mia, se udiste mai (LC MS.583)
(b) O Flora, anima mia (BM Add.MS.14190)
- These cantatas, although listed as different works

-
1. Erroneously ascribed to Durante.
2. See L. Torchi, "Canzoni e arie ad una voce nel secolo
XVII" (Rivista Musicale Italiana, Vol. I. 1894).

- by Dent, are the same.
104. Ninfa crudel, deh vieni; for alto not sop in BM (Add. MS.14215)
 105. No, non deggio, è troppo cara; dated 1709 in LC (MS. 580)
 106. Perfida Filli ingrata; autograph in LC (MS.579)
 107. Son io barbara donna; for alto not sop in BM (Add.MS. 14213)
 108. Strali, facelle, Amore; for alto not sop (EM Add.MS. 14165)
 109. Sul margine fiorito d'un tumido ruscello; "tumido" reads "limpido" in BM (Add.MS.14225)
 110. Troppo oppresso dal sonno; incomplete (LC MS.579)
 111. Un sol guardo di Clori; for alto not sop (EM Add.MS. 31507)
 112. Vieni, vieni, o caro Mirtillo; for alto not sop (EM Add.MS.31507)
 113. Voi giungeste o vaghi fiori (I fiori); for alto not sop in BM (Add.MS.31507).

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