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*I hereby recommend that the thesis prepared under my
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_____ THE FIRST FIFTY PSALMS OF BENEDETTO MARCELLO

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degree of* _____ DOCTOR OF MUSICAL ARTS

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ESTRO POETICO-ARMONICO:
THE FIRST FIFTY PSALMS OF BENEDETTO MARCELLO
(1686-1739)

A Thesis Submitted to the
Division of Graduate Studies
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PREFACE

Estro Poetico-Armonico, a setting of the first fifty Psalms, in paraphrase, by Benedetto Marcello¹, is an incredibly rich source of vocal (solo and choral) compositions representative of late Baroque compositional technique, particularly as practiced in Italy.

Published in eight volumes between the years 1724 and 1726, the Psalms are set for one, two, three, and four voices, in both solo and choral combinations, with the majority of the settings falling in the two- and three-voice categories. In general, the settings are scored for continuo accompaniment only, but six Psalms have independent instrumental parts provided for violas and violoncellos.

The Psalms are set verse by verse for the entire fifty Psalms, an incredible amount of text, representing an equally incredible variety of poetic subject matter. The settings encompass many of the standard vocal and choral forms of the period in a seemingly endless succession of recitatives, arias, ariosos, duets, trios, quartets, and choruses--all in a late Baroque style of very high quality.

A large number of Marcello's contemporaries highly praised this work--especially congratulating him on the ingenuity of his invention, his affective writing, and his successful fusion of styles. The settings

¹Benedetto Marcello, Estro Poetico-Armonico, Parafrasi Sopra li primi Cinquanta Salmi (8 vols.; Venezia: Domenico Lovisa 1724-1726; facs. reprint, Farnborough, England: Gregg Press, 1967).

were acknowledged by such men as Avison¹ and Mattheson², as outstanding examples of the treatment of the affections. Avison states that the composition is ". . . a most perfect example of the grand, the beautiful, and the pathetic in music."³

Today, Marcello's Psalm Settings are still considered outstanding examples of works portraying the affections, and Franz Gehring has noted that ". . . for expression, they far surpass any other work of the kind."⁴

No modern-day performing edition of the complete set exists and only a relatively few extracts are available. This is regrettable because Marcello's composition is of the highest quality and should be better known.

As the public appetite for baroque literature continues to grow, a monumental source of such quality and variety should be made available for performance.

There are several areas of performance for which these compositions are quite suitable--in all areas of concert work, for use as church anthems and solos, and they are particularly appropriate for use in conservatories and schools of music, not only for their intrinsic musical worth, but also as outstanding examples of the Baroque interest in expressive and affective settings.

¹John Garth (trans.) and Charles Avison (trans.), The First Fifty Psalms of Benedetto Marcello (8 vols.; English edition; London: J. Johnson, 1759), I, Remarks, iv.

²Ibid., VI, ii.

³Sir John Hawkins, A General History of the Science and Practice of Music (2 vols.; London: 1776. Reprint, New York: Dover, 1963), II, 845.

⁴Franz Gehring, "Benedetto Marcello," Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, ed. Eric Blom (9 vols., 5th ed., New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1955), V, 563.

This paper will survey the Estro Poetico-Armonico from an analytical and historical basis. In addition, representative settings from every category of the work will be analyzed, transcribed into modern notation, and edited for modern performance--complete with full realizations. Special emphasis will be placed on problems of modern performance.

The edition used for this study is a facsimile of the original Lovisa edition.¹ The facsimile reprint was published in 1967 by Gregg Press, Farnborough, England.

A Microfilm of the English edition, published by John Garth and Charles Avison in 1757 was also very useful, particularly for the translations of Marcello's Prefaces. It also contains Charles Avison's valuable "Remarks on the Psalms of Marcello" and John Garth's "Advertisement"--an explanation of his methods in setting the English text to Marcello's music.

The Garth-Avison edition, like the original, was published in eight volumes with the Psalms distributed in the same manner as in the original. The translation of the texts was undertaken by Garth and Avison in order to make the work available for use in the Anglican Service.

¹See Chapter II, p. 24 for a description of the Lovisa Edition.

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I wish to especially acknowledge and thank Professor Carol MacClintock of the College-Conservatory of Music, University of Cincinnati, who inspired me to begin this project, and who gave me invaluable assistance and encouragement, enabling me to complete it.

Finally, my thanks are directed to my family, and particularly to my wife, Betsy, without whose forbearance, encouragement, and assistance, this project would not have been completed.

CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL ASPECTS

Stylistic Background

Benedetto Marcello lived during one of the most exciting and fruitful eras of the history of music. The years of his life, 1686-1739, practically outline the years generally assigned to the period of the Late Baroque in Italy.

To understand the achievements of this period it will be helpful to review the entire Baroque musical period in terms of the major changes and philosophies involved.

Beginning in the early part of the 17th century, the new stile moderno as represented by Monteverdi and the early group of monodists had been established by the progressive composers in opposition to the stile antico, or old motet style of the Renaissance. The latter style was retained as largely the province of church music, with the stile moderno encompassing the concertato style based on Venetian developments, along with the new affective recitative in free rhythm over a basso continuo.

In addition to these two systems of composition, also called prima prattica for the antico, and seconda for the moderno, three general styles were enunciated. Marco Scacchi defined these styles as church, chamber, and theater.¹ This emphasis on styles was to continue throughout

¹Claude V. Palisca, Baroque Music (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1968), p. 57.

the entire era and was a hallmark of the whole Baroque period.

Like the late Renaissance composers, the Baroque composers were concerned with the musical expression of the text and this interest was embodied in a system called the doctrine of the affections.

Two major innovations which helped to effect the change to the new music and which had vast implications for the entire period of Baroque music were the recitative and the basso continuo. The recitative was a new solo declamatory style which afforded the singer an opportunity to portray the affections in the most emphatic and expressive style. These recitatives were accompanied by a basso continuo--essentially a bass line or melody which implied a chordal progression to be realized or extemporized by a chord-playing instrument, i.e. a harpsichord, lute, or organ. This kind of accompaniment freed the singer from strict rhythmic patterns and allowed him to express the text in the most meaningful way.

Among the results of these two innovations was the polarity of voices with the emphasis on soprano and bass lines. The realized continuo line provided a stream of harmonies which governed the entire composition.

During this early period, chordal harmony was experimental and pre-tonal. A great desire for dissonance was manifest and it was used very freely for both harmonic color and expression.

The same may be said for melodic treatment in which augmented and diminished intervals appeared quite frequently.

Rhythmic practice shows two major treatments: it was free and unmeasured in the recitative, and at the same time was rigidly confined in measured music.

For the first time composers explored idiomatic writing with a distinction being made between vocal and instrumental music. Vocal music became extremely virtuosic and was paramount over instrumental music.

Virtuosic singing developed along with the art of improvising ornaments with both female singers and castrati sharing honors in this field. Improvisation in all instruments and voices became another hallmark of Baroque music.

The major forms which were introduced included the opera, cantata, and oratorio in the vocal field; and the instrumental field saw the early developments of the trio sonata, concerto grosso, and the solo concerto.

In the 1630s a major new style emerged--bel-canto. Essentially vocal in its origins, it implied beauty and simplicity of melody. Basically a musical reaction to the earlier dictates of the text, the new bel-canto style called for music to be coordinated with the text. Rhythms were generally ternary while harmony was simplified and triadic, and the frequent use of the V-I cadence heralded the ultimate victory of tonality. Bel-canto style became so important that it ultimately often affected the instrumental style.

The recitative, aria, and arioso became fixed entities being reserved for narrative, lyric, and dramatic purposes, respectively.

With the renewal of musical considerations came a revival of interest in counterpoint, and the many small sections of the Early Baroque forms were reduced in number and expanded in size by contrapuntal extension.

By the early 1680s tonality was definitely established in Italy and functional harmony reigned, having completely assimilated counterpoint in what was to be called harmonic or tonal counterpoint. This is the period generally called the Late Baroque.

The characteristic driving rhythm of the instrumental style became dominant, and the multiple small sections of the forms were further reduced in number and enlarged in size.

During this period the great forms of the Baroque were to reach peak stages of development in the hands of Marcello's illustrious contemporaries in the Italian peninsula.

Alessandro Scarlatti, Porpora, and Handel were the leading operatic composers during the opening years of the 18th century, and Scarlatti was also making definitive statements in his over 600 chamber cantatas. Other major composers who contributed to these forms were Steffani and Durante.

Corelli, the great representative of the Bologna School, was bringing the trio sonata to its final form in the church and chamber sonatas. At the same time he, along with Torelli, combined the trio sonata grouping with the full orchestra and adapted the Venetian concertato techniques to establish the concerto grosso. It was to be Marcello's great Venetian contemporary, Vivaldi, who brought the Baroque solo concerto and the concerto grosso to their culmination.

These were the giants of the musical scene in Italy; however, a host of lesser, but extremely talented composers were also productive.

The Venetian Environment

"The Baroque was the period of Italian Supremacy in Music,"¹ says Blume. Not only did she export her musicians to every court in Europe, but she also played host and teacher to most of the rising young composers and performers from every country.

Among the Italian cities favored for visit and study was Venice with its great musical heritage and its material and artistic wealth. For several hundred years it had been one of the leading cities of Europe and the seat of its own far-flung mercantile empire. Her ruling merchant families became the greatest art patrons of Europe, sparing no expense in adorning their city with the best which all the arts had to offer. A city immensely fond of festivals and the pomp and ceremony which such wealth dictated naturally required a large musical establishment to provide the necessary music for the Duomo as well as the state festival occasions. As early as the year 1600, Venice had approximately forty festival occasions annually which were to be celebrated with the greatest pomp and pagentry,² including, of course, elaborate music.

From the early 16th century with the founding of the Venetian School by the great Flemish composer, Willaert, the position of maestro di cappella at St. Mark's had been one of the leading musical posts in Italy, indeed in all of Europe, and was to continue as such until well into the 18th century.

¹Friedrich Blume, Renaissance and Baroque Music, trans. M. O. H. Norton (New York: W. W. Norton, 1967), p. 153.

²Denis Arnold, Monteverdi (London: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1963), p. 28.

Her lists of masters and other musicians read like a Who's Who of Renaissance and Baroque music--Williaert, Zarlino, de Rore, the Gabriellis, Monteverdi, Cavalli, and Lotti, to name but a few.

With such an illustrious background and with her acknowledged achievements in the concertato style, it is not surprising that Venice should exert an extraordinary influence on the emerging Baroque music.

The Venetian love of pomp, extravagance, splendor, and excess in all things may also be another of her contributions to the Baroque spirit. Perhaps nowhere does the ". . . Basic assumption--the Baroque feeling for life and need for expression,"¹ manifest itself so strongly as it did in Venice.

Venice's love affair with opera, dating from the 1630s, lasted all through the succeeding century, and her insatiable appetite for new operas brought most of the major opera composers in Europe to Venice.

By the time of Marcello's birth in the late 17th century, Venice was well past her hey-day, both politically and economically. However, she was still living on her vast capital acquired during the centuries of successful trade, and all her institutions remained intact, conferring upon her citizens all the benefits of an extremely well-organized society in which the arts were given great emphasis.

Still ruled by an oligarchy of patricians from the great mercantile families, her patronage of the arts showed no signs of abating, and she was the mecca for musicians, artists, and travelers from throughout Europe. Venice was literally bathed in music as the accounts of her many visitors show.

¹Blume, op. cit., p. 154.

Burney, who did not visit the city until the 1770s, was tremendously impressed by the quantity and quality of music on every side.¹ Gondoliers sang constantly and very well. Gondolas filled with musicians playing and singing impromptu serenades were a charming feature of summer evenings in Venice. Strolling instrumentalists and singers performed so admirably that Burney felt they would have been accorded great applause in any other country in Europe, while such occurrences were so common in Venice as to elicit no notice at all.²

In addition to these amateur performances, the city abounded in public performances in the cathedral and other churches, the academies, the conservatories, and the opera houses, not to mention the recitals and concerts given in the great private palaces.

The academies, ". . . having the character in part of exclusive clubs for the aristocracy and upper-class citizens, in part of public concerts, . . ."³ were the scenes of the most advanced intellectual and cultural activities. It was in such an academy that Marcello's Psalms probably received their first performances.

St. Mark's, with its great cappella still intact, was the scene of many splendid musical celebrations. Burney's account of a performance there in 1770, while past Marcello's era, still gives an idea of the stunning musical forces associated with festival performances at the cathedral:

¹Charles Burney, Dr. Burney's Musical Tours in Europe, ed. Percy A. Scholes (2 vols.; London: Oxford University Press, 1959), I, 110.

²Ibid.

³op. cit., p. 160.

Count Bujovich then conducted me through the palace into the great org. loft of St. Mark's Cathedral, where I heard the Mass performed by six Choirs and six orchestras, conducted by Signor Galuppi the State Maestro di Capella, and composer of the Music. Being a festival, the doge was present, and upon this occasion there were six orchestras, two great ones in the galleries of the two principal organs, and four less, two on a side, in which there were likewise small organs.¹

Many of the other churches in the city also had major musical establishments presenting frequent sacred concerts.

One of the unique aspects of musical life in Venice was the city's four famous conservatories. Founded originally as orphanages, these unusual institutions developed into first-rate conservatories producing a large number of well-trained female musicians. The lists of masters at these institutions are truly impressive and include such names as Vivaldi, Lotti, A. Scarlatti, and Gasparini, to name only four from Marcello's time. The number of children in these institutions was considerable; and one conservatory, the Pietà, may have had as many as 6,000 children, according to a traveler's account in 1720.² Fifty years later Burney reported a figure of 1,000, though the number of musicians actually serving as members of the cappella and orchestra was probably about 70.³ He noted that concerts at each of the conservatories were scheduled on every Saturday and Sunday evening, as well as on festival days.⁴ By all accounts, the performances were charming and the concerts

¹Burney, op. cit., I, 131.

²Grout, op. cit., p. 370.

³Burney, op. cit., p. 124.

⁴Ibid., p. 12.

very well performed. Burney speculates on the implication of such excellent musical training for the general state of music in Venice:

. . . and in the private families, into which the girls of the Conservatories marry, it is Natural to suppose that good taste and a love for music are introduced.¹

The astounding number of concerts, as indicated above, probably exceeded the entire musical activity in other European cities, yet the above accounts do not include the musical activity for which Venice was most famous during the early 18th century--opera.

The first opera house in Venice, San Cassiano, was opened in 1637, and by 1700 opera was so popular that there were 16 opera theaters, and a total of 388 operas had been produced.² Unlike the court theaters of the monarchical states, the Venetian theaters were privately owned and supported by the sale of admissions. Thus the taste of a large audience, rather than that of a single reigning monarch, dictated the musical fare.

The appetite for new operas was insatiable, and from 8 to 10 new operas were produced each year.³ The Venetians were particularly fond of solo singing by the male and female virtuosos, and a notorious star system developed in which the virtuosos were lionized by the public. The castrati and female singers were particularly adored by the public and were given outrageously special treatment. Naturally, such emphasis led to all kinds of abuses in every area of opera and these were brilliantly satirized by Marcello in his Teatro Alla Moda.⁴

¹Ibid., p. 138.

²Palisca, op. cit., p. 119.

³Charles Burney, A General History of Music (2 vols.; New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1935), II, 906.

⁴Oliver Strunk, Source Readings in Music History, The Baroque Era (New York: W. W. Norton, 1965), pp. 158-171.

Marcello

Benedetto Marcello, patrician of Venice, was born in Venice, July 24, 1686¹ in the family palazzo on the Grand Canal. As befitted the great noble families of Venice, he was surrounded by a rich cultural environment in which the study of music, literature, and art was stressed.

His father, Agostino, was both a poet and a violinist, while his mother, Paola, of the noble Cappello family, was an artist and a writer.

Benedetto and his brothers, Alessandro and Girolamo, were taught by the best musicians of Venice, including Tartini, Lotti, and Gasparini, who were intimates of the Marcello circle.

The brothers received extensive training in poetry, as well as music, and it was said that Agostino required them to compose eight to ten verses daily.

Benedetto also received training in law, and at the age of 21 he entered the service of the state, serving in various capacities. In 1716 he became a member of the Council of Forty, one of the great bodies of judges in Venice, and he remained in state service until his death. His vast output of music and poetry may be considered somewhat miraculous in view of the fact that his practice of the arts could never be more than a part-time occupation.

Marcello wrote a great deal of instrumental music, mostly

¹The biographical details in this study are taken largely from Andrea D'Angeli, Benedetto Marcello (Milano: Fratelli Bocca, 1940), pp. 1-35.

sonatas and concertos, and over 400¹ secular vocal pieces, the majority of which were chamber cantatas. His popularity as a composer of chamber cantatas is illustrated by the large number of manuscript copies which circulated throughout the capitals of Europe. He was particularly noted for his expressive and affective writing, and his two large cantatas, La Cassandra and Il Timoteo, were considered to be outstanding examples of this art.

The majority of Marcello's musical output was composed prior to 1724, the date which saw the composition of the first volumes of the Estro Poetico-Armonico. He was deeply affected by the spiritual nature of the Psalms, and during the three years which he dedicated to the setting of Giustiniani's paraphrases he appears to have undergone a religious or spiritual experience which produced a notable change in his personality and nature. After the completion of the Estro Poetico-Armonico, his few remaining musical compositions were largely sacred in nature, and he directed his attention to poetry rather than music.

As a poet he wrote librettos for operas and cantatas, and during the last ten years of his life he devoted much time to the composition of an unfinished poem of epic size, Redenzione.

Marcello was a member of two august academies, the Academy of the Philharmonia in Bologna and the Academy of Arcadians in Rome. The latter honored him with a series of performances of the complete Estro Poetico-Armonico in 1739.

¹Caroline S. Fruchtman, Checklist of Vocal Chamber Works by Benedetto Marcello (Detroit Studies in Music Bibliography - 10; Detroit: Information Coordinators, Inc., 1967), p. ix.

Marcello died at Brescia in July, 1739, where he was serving as Camerlengo or treasurer for the State of Venice.

The two works for which he is best known remain the brilliant satire on opera, Teatro Alla Moda, and the Estro Poetico-Armonico.

Text

Girolamo Giustiniani, another Venetian nobleman, was in the Marcello Circle; and, like Marcello, he was both a musician and a poet. He was a violinist of some stature and it is of interest that Gasparini, Marcello's teacher, dedicated his treatise on the realization of a basso continuo, L'Armonico Pratico Al Cimbalo, to Giustiniani.

Giustiniani received a classical education at the University of Padua and one of his major works was a paraphrased translation of the Psalms of David. This he showed to Marcello who enthusiastically received the work, and at the poet's suggestion, quickly set some of the Psalms to music.

The importance which Marcello assigned to the text of the Estro Poetico-Armonico is indicated by the primary position of the word Poetico in the title itself. The entire first page of the composer's preface is concerned with a description of the text, and, indeed, the subject of the music is not even mentioned until page two of the preface. Marcello begins his description of the text as follows:

The Translation is a Poetical Paraphrase of the Psalms, set off with some Ornaments of Poetry, and enlarged by some Expositions, which are, however, founded on the Authority of our most venerable Commentators; without which Liberty of paraphrasing, it would have been difficult to have connected the Sense, so as to have rendered them easy and intelligible to every one.¹

Giustiniani's Paraphrase is literal rather than allegorical, and the verse, while poetic in nature, is, like the original Hebrew, generally unrhymed and of various meters.

¹Garth and Avison, op. cit., I, Preface, i.

Marcello's training as a poet must have made him unusually sensitive to the qualities of a particular text, and the zeal and speed with which he worked in the setting of these paraphrases is indicative of his appreciation of the literary and musical attributes of the work.

As Marcello indicated, the text plays a role of the utmost importance in this work. Its great length, a total of 864 verses, required extraordinary compositional ability to maintain interest. Thus, compositional devices and stylistic features were carefully chosen to achieve contrast and variety. In every case the form and length of movement was largely determined by the text. The text and the type of affection or emotion portrayed determined tempo, style of setting, the number of voices to be employed, the instrumentation, etc.

The important consideration for the composer was not the overall form of the piece, but rather the proper expression of this all-important sacred text. In these settings, the text is truly the mistress of the harmony as Monteverdi had decreed one hundred years earlier.

In his preface to Volume I, Marcello laments the general poor quality of the poetry of the day and its effect on modern music. He notes that such trivial poetry debases the music, preventing it from inspiring the nobler passions. Thus he states his reasons for choosing the Psalms as texts:

In order therefore to restore Music to its former Dignity and Service, we have chosen the divine Subject of the Psalms; and to render it again, if not of equal Efficacy with That of the Ancients, by Reason of its different Laws, at least more conformable to the sacred Use for which it was principally intended; namely the Worship of the Deity.¹

¹Ibid., I, Preface, iiii.

Doctrine of the Affections

"With regard to the Music, it is adapted to a subject which requires principally, the Expression of the Words and the Sentiments."¹ Thus Marcello, in his preface to the first volume, identifies his principal concern and challenge in setting the paraphrased Psalms furnished him by his friend, the poet Giustiniani. Marcello's setting, with its careful attention to the sentiments and expression of the words, is really a reflection of that all-pervasive and fundamental aspect of Baroque music known as the Doctrine of the Affections.

If there is any common thread that unites the great variety of music that we call baroque, then, it is an underlying faith in music's power, indeed its obligation, to move the affections.²

It is not proper to the scope of this paper to present a detailed discussion of the doctrine of the affections. (It could be, and in fact has been, the subject of several dissertations).³ However, a brief history of the development of the doctrine is in order, since it is of paramount importance for an understanding of the period and of this particular work.

The doctrine of the affections was essentially grounded in the classical Greek concepts of the nature of music and its power to move the

¹Garth and Avison, op. cit., I, Preface, ii.

²Claude Palisca, Baroque Music (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1968), p. 4.

³Harold J. Fink, The Doctrine of Affections and Handel (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Western Reserve University, 1953) and Frederick T. Wessel, The Affektenlehre in the 18th Century (Ph.D. dissertation, Indiana University, 1955).

passions or affections.

That music is not only sound and form as such, but signifies something beyond, possesses an expressive value, has been a view of all people and times, and its capacity to achieve such expression has never, from the antique high cultures of Asia and Europe onward through a history of several thousand years, been seriously disputed.¹

It appears that mankind has had an almost intuitive idea of significance in music, and succeeding ages and cultures have addressed themselves to various aspects of expression in music. The ancient Greeks were particularly concerned about the moral qualities and effects of music, and Aristotle explained through the doctrine of imitation how music can stimulate various passions such as love, anger, hate, joy, etc., since music itself can imitate those passions.²

It was this theory to which the humanists of the early Renaissance turned, and the theorists of the late 16th century drew on this doctrine as they spoke of the importance of expressing musically the emotions of the text. Zarlino wrote in the Instituzione armoniche of 1588:

Thus we see that in our day music arouses various passions in us, just as it did in ancient times. For sometimes when a beautiful, learned, and elegant poem is recited to the sound of an instrument, the listeners are greatly moved. . . . For if music had these effects in ancient times, it was being performed in the manner already described, and not, as is usual at present, with a multitude of parts and with so many singers and instruments that one sometimes hears nothing but the noise and uproar of voices mixed with the sounds of various instruments, a singing without judgment of discretion and with the words pronounced in so disorderly a manner that nothing but confusion is heard.³

¹Blume, op. cit., p. 111.

²Donald Jay Grout, A History of Western Music (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1960), p. 9.

³Alfred Einstein, The Italian Madrigal (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1949), II, 837-838.

Later Caccini was to say that the purpose of the musician is ". . . to delight and move the affections of the mind."¹

There was much theorizing about the affections or passions throughout the 17th and 18th centuries with perhaps the most comprehensive study being The Passions of the Soul (1649) by Rene Descartes.² A whole system of musical rhetoric was built up by theorists such as Joachim Burmeister and Andreas Werckmeister. These in turn passed it on to Johann David Heinichen, Johann Gottfried Walter, and Johann Mattheson,³ contemporaries of Marcello. Mattheson is of particular interest to us because of his letter to Marcello, congratulating him on his affective style. This letter was included in the original edition of the Estro Poetico-Armonico, and Avison and Garth considered it of such importance that it was the only laudatory letter in the entire eight volumes which they translated for the English edition.

A host of other writers also contributed important treatises on the subject--Rameau, Geminiani, and Avison, to name a few. Their works, like many of the treatises of the period, included systemized lists of musical figures or motives which usually represented or symbolized specific affections.

Typically, Rameau devised a series of relationships between the intervals and the affections. While he identified a particular relationship for every possible interval, the table below is only a

¹From Le Nuove Musiche, cited by Strunk, op. cit., p. 382.

²Palisca, op. cit., p. 4

³Blume, op. cit., p. 105.

partial listing, but will serve as an example of such systematic lists.

TABLE 1. RAMEAU'S INTERVAL-AFFECTION RELATIONSHIPS

<u>Figure (Interval)</u>	<u>Affection</u>
1. Augmented Second	Uncertainty, Suspense
2. Descending Chromaticism	Sadness
3. Ascending Chromaticism	Sadness
4. Major Third	Joy
5. Minor Third	Softness, Tenderness
6. Intervals of the Fourth and Fifth	Energy, Fierceness, Wildness
7. Augmented Fifth	Harshness ¹

Another table, published by Geminiani, consists of fourteen figures which he calls "Ornaments of Expression."

TABLE 2. GEMINIANI'S ORNAMENTS OF EXPRESSION

To the End therefore that those who are Lovers of Music may with more Ease and Certainty arrive at Perfection, I recommend the Study and Practice of the following Ornaments of Expression, which are fourteen in Number; . . .

After listing the fourteen ornaments he then proceeds with the following descriptions:

(First) Of the Plain Shake.

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

(Second) Of the Turned Shake.

The turn'd Shake being made quick and long is fit to express

¹Based on information compiled by Paul-Marie Masson, L'Opéra de Rameau (Paris: Henri Lauren, 1930), pp. 436-450.

Gaiety; but if you make it short, and continue the Length of the Note plain and soft, it may then express some of the more tender Passions.

(Third) Of the Superior Apogiatura.

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

(Fourth) Of the Inferior Apogiatura.

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

(Fifth) Of Holding a Note.

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

(Sixth) Of the Staccato.

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

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

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

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

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

(Eleventh) Of Anticipation.

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

(Twelfth) Of the Separation.

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

(Thirteenth) Of the Beat.

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

(Fourteenth) Of the Close Shake.

This cannot possibly be described by Notes as in former Examples. To perform it, you must press the Finger strongly upon the String of the Instrument, and move the Wrist in and out slowly and equally, when it is long continued swelling the Sound by Degrees, drawing the Bow nearer to the Bridge, and ending it very strong it may express Majesty, Dignity, &c. But making it shorter, lower and softer, it may denote Affliction, Fear, &c. and when it is made on short Notes, it only contributes to make their Sound more agreeable and for this Reason it should be made use of as often as possible.

Men of purblind Understandings, and half Ideas may perhaps ask, is it possible to give Meaning and Expression to Wood and Wire; or to bestow upon them the Power of Raising and soothing the Passions of rational Beings? But whenever I hear such a Question put, whether for the Sake of Information, or to convey Ridicule, I shall make no difficulty to answer in the Affirmative, and without searching over-deeply into the Cause, shall think it sufficient to appeal to the Effect. Even in common Speech a Difference of Tone gives the same Word a different meaning. And with Regard to musical Performances, Experience has shewn that the Imagination of the Hearer is in general so much at the Disposal of the Master, that by the Help of Variations, Movements, Intervals and Modulation he may almost stamp what Impression on the Mind he pleases.

These extraordinary Emotions are indeed most easily excited when accompany'd with Words; and I would besides advise, as well the Composer as the Performer, who is ambitious to inspire his Audience, to be first inspired himself; which he cannot fail to be if he chuses a Work of Genius, if he makes himself thoroughly acquainted with all its Beauties; and if while his Imagination is warm and glowing he pours the same exalted Spirit into his own Performance.¹

For each of the fourteen ornaments Geminiani also wrote out a musical example.

¹Francesco Geminiani, The Art of Playing the Violin, 1751 (facs. edition, ed. David D. Boyden; London: Oxford Press, 1957), pp. [6]-[8].

Avison is of special interest to this study because it was he who, with John Garth, championed the translation of Marcello's Psalms into English. His long introduction for the English edition praises Marcello for his work, specifically for his affective writing. He examines the Estro Poetico-Armonico and lists the various "stiles of expression" represented, as shown below. While this chart does not consist of specific symbols or techniques it is perhaps even more valuable to us in this case because it identifies the basic affection for specific Psalms.

TABLE 3. AVISON'S VARIOUS STILES OF EXPRESSION FOR THE PSALMS

<u>Affection</u>	<u>Psalm</u>
Sublime	2, 17, 18, 23, 25, 28, 34, 47, 49
Joyous	20, 32, 46
Learned	36, 43, 48
Cheerful	33, 44
Serene	1, 8, 14, 15, 27, 39, 40, 41
Pastoral	22
Devout	4, 5, 24, 38
Plaintive	3, 6, 37
Sorrowful	21, 50

According to Avison, the remaining Psalms

. . . are too various in their meanings to be classed under any one general character; some of them containing, in themselves almost all the various Stiles of Expression.

. . . their respective Characters will be easily distinguished

by those who are Judges of Music, and of the Passions which it can best express. The entire Psalms referred to have also their regular Movements, consisting in grand and joyous Fugues; serene and graceful Airs; and devoutly pathetic strains, eminently distinguished, as the Master-Works of Design, amongst numerous solemn and rapid short Airs: And by a just expression of these, in their several styles, a sentimental or impassioned Music is everywhere produced.¹

The significance of the doctrine of the affections to Marcello was enormous, and it would be difficult to overstate its importance to him. He was concerned that every word of every line be set as expressively as possible, and his remarks in the several prefaces consistently reinforce his concern for the ". . . proper Expression of the Words and Sentiment, . . ."² and his desire to ". . . move the passions and the affections, . . ."³

Giustiani had given Marcello a text peculiarly suited to affective treatment, and on the basis of his remarks the composer clearly accepted the goal of setting the text in the most affective way possible. Many of the commentators of the day felt that he had achieved that goal, and their letters and comments reflect their praise and approbation.

In the long haul however, the success of a musical composition cannot rest on the presence of metaphorical figures, but rather on how well the musical structure and metaphorical meaning are integrated.⁴

¹Garth and Avison, op. cit., I, Remarks, iii.

²Ibid., III, Preface, iii.

³Ibid., I, Preface, ii.

⁴Manfred F. Bukofzer, Music in the Baroque Era (New York: Norton, 1947), p. 389.

In this respect, it is hoped that this study will indicate that Marcello's Estro Poetico-Armonico holds up very well indeed. Special attention will be given to the affective aspects of Marcello's compositional technique in the representative settings of the Psalms, as discussed in the commentaries in Chapter IV.

CHAPTER II

ESTRO POETICO-ARMONICOPhysical Description of The Edition

The first edition of the Estro Poetico-Armonico was issued in eight large volumes. The first four volumes, containing Psalms 1-25, were published by Lovisa in 1724. In the preface to Volume IV, Marcello notes the approbation and encouragement which he and Giustiniani have received, and resolves to bring out the next twenty-five Psalms in four more volumes.¹ Again Lovisa was the publisher, and the title page of Volume V is dated 1725, while Volumes VI, VII, and VIII all carry the date of 1726.

The layout of each volume is essentially the same and consists of the following scheme.

A half-title page has the inscription Parafrasi Sopra Salmi, followed by the phrase Procul Este Prophani. Each volume has a full page engraved frontispiece depicting an idealized David or some scene connected with his life. Volume I shows David with a harp surrounded with various musicians playing a timbrel, a triangle, a "pan" pipe, an aulos, a flute, a kithera, etc. Volume II depicts a warrior with his hands clasped in prayer. Volume III pictures a prophet standing before David, the King, while an angel with a sword hovers in a cloud.

¹Garth and Avison, op. cit., IV, Preface, i.

Volume IV shows David sacrificing a calf before battle. The remaining four volumes repeat the engravings in the same order. The artist for plates I and II was Joseph Camerata, while Sebastian Ricci was the artist for plates III and IV. Antonio Faldoni was the engraver for all the plates except number III, which was by Zucchi.

The title page is presented in handsome, large, Roman type in the following format:

ESTRO
 POETICO-ARMONICO.
 PARAFRASI
 Sopra li primi
 VENTICINQUE SALMI
 POESIA
 di
 GIROLAMO ASCANIO GIUSTINIANI,
 MUSICA
 di
 BENEDETTO MARCELLO
 PATRIZJ VENETI
 TOMO PRIMO

Here appears an elaborate tri-partite coat of arms, consisting of three oval escutcheons. The center shield bears the figure of King David with a harp, the left shield bears a double eagle, while the right shield is divided by an ondè band. The scroll bears the motto "Omnis Spiritus Laudet Dominum."

VENEZIA
 MDCCXXIV

The title page is followed by Marcello's Preface, which in volume I alone consists of nine pages. After the preface of each volume, several laudatory letters from well-known contemporary composers are included. Those represented are: Lazzarini, Gasparini, Bononcini, Conti, Bosellini, Baliani, Calegari, Carapella, Sarri, Mattheson, Fiorè, Bencini, Jacomelli, and Telemann. Of these, Lazzarini, Conti, Bononcini, and Calegari are represented twice.

In each volume, the texts of all the Psalms which are to appear in that volume are then presented in sequence under the title, "Parafrasi Poetica Sopra Salmi." For each Psalm text the Latin and its Italian paraphrase appear in parallel columns. The Latin version (Vulgate) is invariably placed on the outside of the page and is printed in Roman type. The Italian version is placed on the inside of the page and is printed in italics. While the Latin verse averages from two to four lines, the paraphrase is at least twice as long and usually longer--a matter of the utmost significance for the composer since it requires a great deal more music.

Following the presentation of the texts, the musical setting of each Psalm is presented with the Italian text underlaid. All pages of the musical score are paginated in Roman numerals, while the entire section preceding the score is paginated in Arabic numerals.

Beginning with the first page of the musical score of Salmo Primo, one is struck by the style of printing. It is remarkably similar to the first edition of Peri's Euridice, Caccini's Le Nuove Musiche, both from 1601, and Monteverdi's Orfeo of 1609. The same style note heads and stems are used (for a complete chart, see Appendix p. 97.)

and, as in the Peri and the Caccini works, the initial letter is highly ornamented.

The style of printing is still rather old-fashioned, using the diamond-shaped semibreve and minim and the square breve. This is very similar to the printing used throughout the 17th century. It is startling to find this old style of printing as opposed to the contemporary engraving using round headed notes, as found in both France and England during this period.

A Formal and Stylistic Survey

In his long preface to the first volume of the Estro Poetico-Armonico, Marcello submits his poetic and harmonic work to the judgement of the learned, announcing it as the first work of its kind.¹ This setting of the first fifty Psalms is difficult to categorize as a whole because it is absolutely unique--there are no comparable settings. However, in terms of forces and forms employed, it is possible to relate the individual Psalm settings to a number of Baroque vocal and choral forms.

If one does not press the analogy too far, it is fair to say that the majority of Marcello's Psalms are essentially sacred cantatas. The longer Psalms, such as Psalm 17 and Psalm 50, by virtue of their great length, approach the dimensions of the oratorio. Three of the fifty Psalms were set in the stile antico and Marcello labels them Da Capella. Set for chorus only, they are essentially motets.

¹Garth and Avison, op. cit., I, Preface, i.

With the exception of these three Da Capella settings, each Psalm consists of a series of sections or movements in the form of recitatives, ariosos, arias, and choruses with an occasional brief instrumental ritornello. Each section or movement may consist of one verse of text; however, two or more verses are frequently combined within the same frame to form a single unit or movement.

1. Formal Design

There is no discernable overall form for the entire set-- consequently there are no thematic connections between Psalms. Each Psalm is considered as an entity with the text and the underlying affections generating the form, style, forces, tempo, devices, and sonorities to be employed. As a result, within each Psalm there are certain unifying elements which also afford a certain unity to the entire fifty Psalms. The major unifying element is text, consisting of highly charged, descriptive paraphrases of the Psalms. Thematic similarities within a given poetic text are frequently repeated in musical similarities within the same setting.

The composer's harmonic treatment affords a high degree of unity within individual Psalms through key relationship and similar cadences. The consistent use of these elements provides, to a certain extent, overall unity.

Alternate singing between soloist and chorus on a given part is a typical compositional device, giving unity of approach to the individual Psalms as well as to the whole work.

The standard use of continuo accompaniment throughout is also

one of the outstanding elements of unity, both within the individual Psalm and the entire work.

It has already been pointed out that the overall plan of each Psalm (with the exception of the three Da Capella settings) is cantata-like, consisting of recitatives, arias, ariosos, and choruses. The organization or design of the arias and choruses will be considered first.

a. Aria and Chorus

Several general types of design are used in the organization of the arias and choruses, though the composer was seldom consistent in his use of them. This, of course, is not surprising since he was at all times concerned with the proper expression of the text rather than fitting the text into a pre-conceived design.

Six types of design have been identified:¹

1. Monothematic--Basically a theme of two phrases which constitute the thematic material for the entire movement.
2. Through composed--One of the most frequently used, it is reflective of a tendency to set each new poetic thought with a new theme or motive.
3. Binary--The two sections are based on two different themes.
4. Da Capo--Typical of the form; however, rarely used since the composer seldom wished to repeat text.
5. Rondo-like--Material from early sections may return one or more times as unifying device, or as an allusion to previously stated poetic material.
6. Alternation of two melodies--May be used in alternation of complete verses or in alternation of short phrases.

¹Caroline Sites, Benedetto Marcello's L'Estro Poetico-Armonico: A Style--Critical Study, (unpublished Master's thesis, Department of Music, University of North Carolina, 1956.)

It is important to observe that all the above designs have one trait in common. Bukofzer defines it as ". . . 'continuous expansion.' Being a formal principle and not a scheme, it lent itself to infinite variation as to formal patterns."¹ Thus for every example of the above, it is possible to find many variations which appear to begin with one basic scheme only to digress into another. Again, the dictates of the text clearly determine the infinite variety of patterns.

b. Arioso and Recitative

In addition to arias and choruses, the other two formal units are arioso and recitative. These are quite common, alternating with solo and choral sections, and are introduced, according to Marcello, ". . . to diversify the Hearers Pleasure by some variety borrowed from modern Practice."² In general these contain the more dramatic and affective texts, and as a result, some of the more chromatic and modulatory sections are found there. Both arioso and recitative tend to use disjunct melodies containing augmented and diminished intervals.

The arioso is less parlando in style than the recitative and partakes of the character of the aria. Frequently the recitative concludes with a brief arioso, and on occasion, an arioso is interpolated within a recitative.

2. Fusion of Styles

One aspect which all the Psalms have in common, with the

¹Bukofzer, op. cit., p. 359.

²Garth and Avison, op. cit., I, Preface, v.

possible exception of the twelve solo settings, is the frequent alternation of sections in stile antico and stile moderno. In fact, within these settings Marcello demonstrates a masterful fusion of these styles, creating an overall unity out of diversity.

For Marcello, the stile antico represents his bow to contrapuntal compositional technique; but as might be expected from a Late Baroque composer, the technique is a totally-integrated harmonic counterpoint. That is, the lines are still conceived vocally in an imitative texture, but the undergirding continuo harmony definitely holds the composition within a tonality or key.

The stile moderno was for the Baroque composer, in the words of Bukofzer, ". . . the vehicle of his spontaneous expression."¹ For Marcello this includes his recitatives and ariosos in both declamatory and highly chromatic style; arias, ensembles, and choruses in the instrumental concerto style; and da capo arias in bel canto style. There are even some arias and duet sections which seem to anticipate the galant style.

The stile antico was essentially reserved for the church style, while moderno implied secular style.² Thus this fusion represents not only a fusion of ancient and modern styles, but also of the sacred and secular. Since Marcello chose to set the Psalm paraphrases rather than the original Psalms, we can be sure that he never envisioned these settings for liturgical use; however, it is quite clear that he considers

¹Bukofzer, op. cit., p. 3.

²Ibid.

them to be sacred in nature. His fusion of style is another reflection of his genius for variety and contrast necessitated by the text.

Gasparini, Marcello's old teacher,

. . . with great Justice and Candour, acknowledges the superior Genius of his illustrious Pupil, as the only Composer who, to the Simplicity of the Ancient, had added the Graces of the modern Music, and thence formed a System of Harmony entirely his own.¹

3. Referential Material

Marcello's research concerning the Ancients, particularly the Greeks and Hebrews, resulted in rather frequent use of borrowed Hebrew chants and ancient Greek melodies, as he himself testifies:

It was thought not improper to introduce, in these Psalms, several of the most ancient and most common Intonations, or Chants of the Hebrews, which were formerly, and are still sung by the Jews, as a Species of Music peculiar to that People. These Chants we have sometimes accompanied after the modern artificial System, as will be seen in the Second, and more diffusively in the third and fourth Volumes, together with some ancient Greek Odes, taken from printed and manuscript Remarks on those Hymns; although made Use of by the Heathens to celebrate the Praises of their false Gods. And these we have interpreted, with the utmost Care, according to the musical Characters of two ancient Greek Philosophers, Alipius and Gaudentius, which we have now adapted to the modern Practice.²

The two Greek melodies which Marcello chose are of doubtful authenticity,³ but, as the above quote shows, he cited his authorities and there can be little doubt of the sincerity of his motives. Marcello goes into great detail concerning the ancient Greek modes; however, his settings utilize a specially composed continuo accompaniment which gives

¹Garth and Avison, op. cit., I, Memoirs, viii.

²Garth and Avison, op. cit., I, Preface, v.

³Phillips Barry, "Greek Music," Musical Quarterly, V (1919), 610-612. Mr. Barry thinks these melodies may be forgeries.

a tonal rather than a modal effect.

The Hymn to the Sun in the Greek Hypolydian mode is used in Psalm 16, and the Hymn of Homer to Ceres in the Greek Lydian mode is used in Psalm 18. Each hymn is presented first in the original Greek characters and text. Both settings are choral and are largely unison in nature in compliance with Marcello's theories concerning the unison singing of the Greeks.

The Hebrew Chant melodies are apparently borrowed from contemporary sources and Marcello himself tells us that he noted down these melodies in actual performance.¹ He assumes that the songs are handed down by oral tradition and this is quite possible, though obviously the melodies would have undergone many transformations. Idelsohn includes the six German Hebrew melodies in his great work.²

The melodies are divided into four Spanish or Sephardic melodies and six German or Ashkenazic melodies. Gradenwitz characterizes the Sephardic melodies as being influenced by Arabic chant with a tendency to dance forms and song-like recitative, while the Ashkenazic melodies show affinities with Gregorian chant and are often of a marchlike character.³

The Hebrew settings appear in Volumes II, III, and IV, and like the Greek hymns are printed first in their original characters, reading from right to left as in the Hebrew language. A continuo accompaniment is provided for all the chants, frequently doubling the melody.

¹Garth and Avison, op. cit., II, Preface, i.

²A. Z. Idelsohn, Hebrew Oriental Melodies (Leipzig: Hofmeister, 1932), VI, Preface, xxii.

³Peter Gradenwitz, The Music of Israel (New York: Norton, 1949), p. 156.

Most of the melodies are binary in form and are predominantly set in unison, alternating solo and unison singing--a reflection of the ancient Hebrew methods of singing the Psalms.

In addition to the Greek and Hebrew melodies, Marcello also used psalm tones in four different settings, all appropriately in the stile antico, or church style.

Like the other two types of referential melodies, the psalm tone is printed in its original version before each psalm. Each setting of the cantus firmus is distinguished by additional melodic material which assumes the character of counter melodies. One setting, Psalm 17, is distinctive because of the moving ostinato continuo line. Though modal in character, the settings demonstrate the harmonic counterpoint of the Late Baroque.

An interesting treatment of a borrowed Gregorian Chant melody occurs in Psalm 5. The chant is set in mensural notation and is scored for two parts accompanied by continuo.

4. Categories of Settings

Basically, there are three general categories of settings:

- a. The Solo-Choral Setting
- b. The Solo Setting
- c. The Da Capella Setting for Chorus Alone

Representative settings from each of these categories are included in Volume II and will be discussed at length in Chapter IV.

a. Solo-Choral Setting

The most frequently employed category is the Solo-Choral Setting.

Thirty-five (70%) of the psalm settings belong to this group in settings which may vary from one to four soloists with chorus. The typical setting is for two or three voices. There are seventeen settings for two voices with chorus, fourteen settings for three voices with chorus, and only four settings for four voices with chorus.

As noted earlier, these settings are basically sacred cantatas, being somewhat similar to the English verse anthem which is essentially a sacred cantata for the Anglican service. The verse anthem typically consists of recitatives, arias, and choruses with instrumental accompaniment which is occasionally limited to continuo, the norm for the Marcello settings. The text for the verse anthem is typically the English translation of the Psalms in contrast to the paraphrased version of Marcello's settings.

This resemblance to the verse anthem was particularly noted by Charles Avison and John Garth, who promoted the English edition of the Marcello Psalms in the hope that they would be adopted for use in the Church of England.

Most of the other Psalms may be considered as Verse Anthems, containing different Movements for two, three, or four Voices; and, like them, may be reinforced in the Chorus, at Pleasure.¹

One of the unique aspects of this Solo-Choral category is that the scoring for the chorus never exceeds the number of solo voice lines designated for the psalm. For example, if the setting is a due (SA), the chorus will be two parts (SA); if a tre (SAB), the chorus will be three parts (SAB); and if a quattro (SATB), the chorus will be

¹Garth and Avison, op. cit., I, Remarks, iii.

four parts (SATB). The solo voices and the chorus sing alternately, usually in imitation or in sequence. This scoring technique is a result of Marcello's attempts to simulate, as nearly as practicable, the ideal of unison and alternate singing as practiced by the Hebrews.

But tho' the greatest Part of these Psalms, as remarked above, are composed for two Voices only, they ought sometimes to be sung with a Reinforcement of Voices, agreeably to the Directions annexed to the Work itself: And our Reasons for this Conduct in the Performance, which will hereafter be subjoined, may serve to give some Idea of the particular Method which was observed by the Hebrews in singing their Psalms and Canticles.¹

Typically, as in Psalm 22, a two-voice setting, the alto and tenor soloists first present a theme or melody which is then repeated by the full sections of altos and tenors. Marcello further states:

. . . the Chorus of those who exalt the divine Praises, should be as numerous and full as possible; and also these Psalms, tho' for the most Part composed for two Voices only, will produce a more noble Effect, when the Chorus Parts are reinforced, than when they are performed only by two Singers; and these, perhaps not always ready in their Execution: Or however skillful they may be in this, or excellent in other Aspects, yet if they be too long heard, their Performance will be less pleasing, than when the Parts are redoubled; this being necessary to render it sometimes more solemn or more enlivening and full, according as the Words or Sentiments require a more powerful Emphasis and Expression; which was usually practised among the Hebrews, not by one or two Persons, as now a Days, but by a great Number together.²

It is highly significant that in effecting these unisons Marcello uses the typically Venetian concertato technique, i. e. the constant juxtaposition of smaller and larger forces. Thus to achieve what he considers to be a unique setting he uses the typical musical vocabulary of the sophisticated Late Baroque composer. We shall see this aspect in Marcello and his Psalms frequently. For example, over and

¹Ibid., I, Preface, iv.

²Ibid.

over he tells us of the ideal of unison singing by the ancients, but he presents many arguments to justify composing for two, three, and even four voices:

But in our Days, the Ear being accustomed to the harmonic institution of many Parts, the Attempt to approach too nearly to that most happy and simple Melody of the Ancients, might prove no less difficult than dangerous; it was, therefore, judged not improper to compose for two, sometimes for three and four Parts, as may be seen in the following Volumes.¹

At still another time he justifies the use of the modern style:

On the other Hand, it is most certain that during a long Series of Time new Laws, both in Theory and Practice, were continually added; to which, at this Time, we must entirely submit, although far different from those ancient Rules, which produced, in their Music, those marvellous Effects, fully attested by Historians both sacred and profane; who inform us likewise of the magnificent Use, and the sacred Purposes to which it was applied.²

Thus while he strove always for the ideal of simplicity in setting these Psalms, he chose to do this within the typical Late Baroque vocabulary and framework. The representative settings of the Solo-Choral category, Psalms 10 and 22, are located in Volume II of this study.

b. Solo Setting

The second category of settings is that of the Solo Setting and accounts for twelve Psalms--seven solo, four duet, and one trio. The works in this category strongly resemble the chamber cantata in terms of forces involved, that is, solo voices with continuo accompaniment. Like the chamber cantata the movements alternate recitative and

¹Ibid., p. ii.

²Ibid.

aria, but the Marcello solo aria is rarely of the da capo type. Another major difference is the text which for the chamber cantata was usually a secular love lyric, whereas the Marcello text is a psalm paraphrase.

One of the solo settings (Psalm 8 for Alto solo) is unique in that while it is scored for solo voice, the composer calls for alternate statements of solo--tutti, with the tutti being the full alto section. This is his first solo psalm setting, and while Marcello wrote other solo settings, he never repeated this type. Marcello alludes to this setting in his Preface to Volume I:

In some Parts of the Work, besides some Psalms which are composed throughout for One Voice only, are also introduced Recitatives, and a Species of Airs to be sung by one Voice only, or, alternately by two, (which was likewise in Use among the Ancients, and was called Alternate Singing) to diversify the Hearers Pleasure by some Variety borrowed from modern Practice, and at the same to approach, in some Degree to that of the Praecentors, Chief Musicians among the Hebrews, as may be collected from Scripture.¹

The solo settings afford great contrast to the choral settings and are further evidence of Marcello's genius for variety and contrast. As might be expected, the solo lines tend to be more florid, employing difficult intervals, and require more virtuosic singing.

Another very important aspect in Marcello's selection of solo settings is the text. Of the twelve solo Psalms, the texts for eight of these are in the first person singular--an obvious consideration for one interested in the most affective setting possible. Psalms 21 and 46 have been transcribed and appear in Volume II as representative settings of the Solo category.

¹Ibid., p. v.

c. Da Capella Setting for Chorus Alone

The third general category consists of only three Psalms--36, 43, and 48; yet, on these Marcello lavished some of his loveliest writing. In his Preface to Volume VII, Marcello is careful to explain that these Psalms are in the Church Style or Da Capella:

The Thirty-Sixth Psalm, the First of this Volume, being of a great Length, is composed in the Ecclesiastical Stile Da Capella. Though it was, necessary, for the same Reason, to endeavour at the utmost Brevity in the Construction of it, yet it was thought not improper to give it some Extension, according to the established Rules of Art; more especially as the Subject of it principally turns upon Sentiments of the finest Morality, Preceptive Instruction in Piety, and Correction of the Vices and Passions.¹

Two of the settings are for SATB, as might be expected for motet style, and the third setting is for ATB. Marcello is at pains to explain that this reduced setting is for the sake of variety.²

As the Solo-Choral settings most closely resemble the English verse anthem, these Da Capella settings are like the full anthem of the English, i.e., motet-like settings for full chorus. Again Avison, in his remarks on the Psalms of Marcello, recommends their use in the English Service:

Those Psalms . . . are of that Species of Music which is distinguished by the Term Da Capella; and are composed like our Full Anthems and Services, for the more frequent Use of Divine Service.³

Like all the antico settings, these works are characterized by imitative texture within the harmonic counterpoint of the Late Baroque.

¹Ibid., VII, Preface, i.

²Ibid., VIII, Preface, i.

³Ibid., I, Preface, iii.

However, always concerned with variety of treatment, Marcello could not resist adding special instrumental parts in certain sections for contrast. Psalm 36 has been chosen as one of the representative Psalm settings and appears in Volume II.

5. Vocal Scoring

The scoring of the Estro Poetico-Armonico is one of its most interesting aspects, with Marcello's gift for contrast being well illustrated in the great variety of vocal combinations.

Settings occur for one, two, three, and four parts in solo, solo ensemble, solo-choral, and choral settings. (To clarify the above terms, "solo ensemble" refers to an ensembler of solo voices. "Solo-choral" refers to a setting for solo voices reinforced with a chorus of the same voice types). A chart listing Marcello's vocal scoring of The Estro Poetico-Armonico is included in the Appendix.

Marcello employs some very unusual vocal combinations for many of his settings, e.g., one setting is for BB, one for ATTB, and one for AATB. He then further intensifies the variety and interest within the individual psalms with such unusual combinations as a trio of basses (Psalm 23), or a duet of tenors (Psalm 26).

The most frequently used combinations are AB, ATB, and AT, demonstrating Marcello's predilection for the alto quality in this work. In his preface to Volume I, Marcello explains that he has more frequently composed for the alto voice rather than the soprano, ". . . seeing these latter too delicate and acute Voices, were not used by the Hebrews, or

other Ancient Nations; . . ."1

The range and timbre of the alto voice apparently seemed peculiarly appropriate for the penitential nature inherent in a great number of psalms.

Perhaps not surprisingly, Marcello provided solo settings for all voices except the tenor, though there are a few short tenor arias within some of the individual settings. The tenor voice is, however, frequently employed for recitatives and duets.²

Because of his aims in setting these Psalms, Marcello displays a preference for two-part settings.

. . . in order to produce more happily the Effect intended. It was for the Same Purpose, and to move the Passions and Affections, that Music was made Use of by the Ancients in Unisons only, particularly by the Hebrews, Phoenicians, and Greeks.³

The Classical ideal of unison singing is always before him, but Marcello is obviously too much a creature of his period, and too fluent a composer to limit himself to a single-line composition. Thus, to approach as nearly as possible the unison ideal, he frequently chooses to reduce his vocal forces to two lines. The resulting grouping of two independent lines plus the continuo are, of course, the classic grouping for the favored idiom--the trio sonata.

¹Ibid., p. v.

²It is well known that at this time the tenor was not a favorite voice. Handel rarely used the tenor solo voice, preferring the castrato or female contralto timbre where the tenor voice might normally be employed. In only a few of his operas did he provide tenor roles. See Winton Dean, Handel's Dramatic Oratorios and Masques (New York: A.A. Wyn, Inc., 1934).

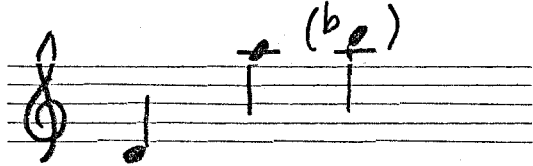
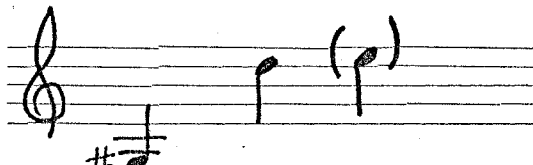
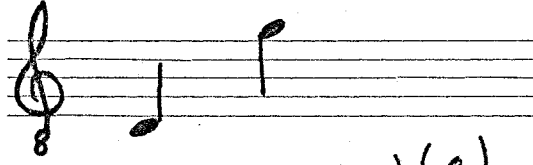
³Ibid., p. i.

To summarize Marcello's scoring of these settings in terms of the number of vocal lines, there are 21 settings à due, 16 settings à tre, 6 settings à quattro, and seven solo settings.

The voice ranges used are of particular interest. Since Marcello composed these Psalm settings for no particular occasion and was not limited in any way in terms of forces available, we may assume that the voices and ranges for which he wrote would have approached his conception of the sound ideal for such settings.

The voice ranges used are:

TABLE 4. VOICE RANGES FOR ESTRO POETICO-ARMONICO

Soprano	
Alto	
Tenor	
Bass	

The soprano range is well within the present day standard and, in only one setting does the soprano rise to a b-flat". This occurs in

Psalm 41, a virtuosic duet for sopranos. The alto range is not excessive and only occasionally extends to e". The tenor range is the most limited and only rarely exceeds an eleventh.¹ The bass range calls for the greatest virtuosity of all the voices, moving from a low F to an occasional use of f' two octaves above. The bass lines are also characterized by extremely wide leaps and difficult intervals.

6. Instrumental Scoring

The instrumentation of the Psalms is basically limited to continuo instruments, with the occasional use of the cello and two violas as obbligato instruments. The continuo instruments consist of harpsichord, violoncello, and double bass. In addition, Marcello sometimes calls for doubling one or more of these instruments; a discussion of this point is included in the section on performance practice.

The bass line is only occasionally figured, and when this occurs it is generally indicative of a highly chromatic or modulatory section.

The continuo line appears in three basic types:

1. That which doubles the bass voice line.
2. The ostinato type.
3. The independent melodic line.

The most frequently used type doubles the bass voice line.

¹Sites, *op. cit.*, p. 24, whose study was limited to three or four volumes, states that the tenor range rarely encompasses more than a tenth, extending up to f'. The present study discloses the frequent use of g' with a range of an eleventh.

Occasional variations appear, including embellishments, augmentation, and diminution of the bass line.

The ostinato type is quite frequent and is one of the major unifying devices. Special emphasis should also be placed on the affective qualities of this device. In this respect, Marcello states:

When the Accompaniment of the moving Basses comes in, this is done with a particular Design to introduce some proper Variety in the Performance, and, in a more distinguished Manner, to mark the Expression of those Sentiments, the Force of which may be more effectually impressed by such a Change in the Basses.¹

The independent line appears quite frequently, and as might be expected, appears most often in solo and duo settings. The emphasis which Marcello appears to place on the trio sonata texture has already been noted and the use of this grouping seems to generate an interesting continuo line which is contrapuntally effective with the other two lines.

Both the independent and the ostinato type continuo line imply considerable technical facility on the part of all the continuo players, due to the florid nature of the continuo line.

It might seem that Marcello's deliberate choice of such a small instrumental grouping for accompaniment could lead to monotony and dullness. However, his rich and imaginative use of rhythm, melody, and contrasting instrumental timbres, and his detailed attention to the niceties of articulation combined to produce a vibrant and ever-changing accompaniment.

Frequent and careful instructions are given in the body of the work concerning idiomatic use of the continuo instruments. Such directions

¹Garth and Avison, VII, Preface, i.

as senza arco, fermo, sordino, tasto solo, senza cembalo, and colla parte frequently appear and are indicative of the composer's skill in achieving a varied and affective setting.

Marcello's use of the viola as an obligato instrument has already been noted. His selection of this stringed instrument with its distinctive alto register is related to his choice of the alto voice as a favored timbre. The violas appear in Psalms 21 and 50, both of which are extremely penitential in nature.

And in order to . . . awaken in the Hearers the deepest Sorrow it was possible from the Contemplation of this grand Mystery, we have given it an Accompaniment of Tenor Violins [Violas], an Instrument which (in the Hand of a Master) is of itself extremely well calculated for the Expression of tender and melancholy Strains.¹

Marcello describes the viola as ". . . an Instrument the best adapted to excite in devout Minds penitential Affliction and Sorrow."²

One of the unusual facets of this monumental setting is the complete absence of the violin as a part of the accompanying instrumentation. In view of the almost universal use of the instrument at the time, one is tempted to speculate on the reasons. Perhaps a part of the answer lies in the penitential nature of the Psalms and in the composer's wish to illustrate this affectively with instruments and voices of a dark or sombre timbre. However, certain Psalms are extremely joyful in nature and might reasonably be a suitable vehicle for the violins with their lighter quality.

¹Ibid., IV, Preface i.

²Ibid., VIII, Preface, i.

Another reason may be found in Marcello's own tastes and prejudices. It may be recalled that Marcello's satire on early 18th-century opera, Teatro alla Moda¹ was published shortly before he set to work on the Estro Poetico-Armonico. His devastating comments concerning the contemporary use of the violins in the instrumental ritornelli of the opera cannot be forgotten:

All the ariettas should be preceded by very long ritornelli with violins in unison, composed ordinarily of eighth and sixteenth notes, and these will be played mezzopiano, to make them more novel and less tedious, . . .²

Thus, it is possible that Marcello felt violins would add a much too secular and frivolous air to his settings.

7. Harmonic Considerations

Harmonically, Estro Poetico-Armonico may be characterized as being ". . . written in the idiom of fully established tonality."³ Even in the most conservative sections of the stile antico movements, the counterpoint is fully regulated by a basic tonality. The use of modal key signatures is quite common, being a hangover from the Baroque composer's training in modal counterpoint. However, Marcello consistently adds the missing sharp or flat which the tonality demands.

¹A translation of a portion of the work may be found in Strunk, op. cit., pp. 158-171. For a complete translation see R. G. Pauly, "Benedetto Marcello's Satire on Early 18th-Century Opera," The Musical Quarterly, XXXIV (1948), 222-233; 371-403 and XXXV (1949), 85-105.

²Ibid., p. 167.

³Bukofzer, op. cit., p. 219.

a. Cadences

The most commonly used cadential formula is the V-I pattern, another indication that tonality is in control. The plagal cadence occurs, but less frequently. One cadential formula, which is used so frequently as to be called a Marcellian trait, is the raised subdominant followed by V to I. However, the final cadences of the three stile antico settings which use the psalm tones are unusual. In order to retain the modal effect, the sections cadence on the final of the mode rather than the tonic of the key in which they are harmonized.

b. Key Relationships

The sense of unity in the various Psalms is emphasized by the frequent occurrence of first and last movements in the same key. Within a Psalm, key signatures of individual movements may vary from two flats to two sharps. The use of the third relationship between movements, while not unique for the period, is used so frequently as to be considered another Marcellian mannerism. This key relationship may also be seen within the individual movements in a sequence of modulations.

c. Modulations

Transient modulations to closely related keys are common, chiefly in sequences involving the circle of fifths. For example, Psalm 17 runs the full cycle in 12 measures, and Psalm 10 discloses nearly 20 transient modulations in 25 measures. See the discussion of Psalm 10 in the Commentary Section, Chapter IV.

Modulation is used for purely musical effects as well as for affective reason. Some enharmonic modulations are employed as a purely

expressive device, as Marcello relates:

Nor was it thought inexpedient to adapt a peculiar Kind of Music to those Mysterious and Emphatic Sentences, in which the Royal Prophet hath denounced the dreadful Vengeance of Divine Justice. These we have attempted to express by some foreign and uncommon Researches in the most extreme Diatonico-chromatic Modulation, leaning upon the Equivocal Chord,¹ and therefore imperfect in the scale of our modern Instrument, particularly in that of the Harpsichord.²

The composer is apparently aware of the extreme dissonance which such enharmonic modulations would occasion in a harpsichord tuned in the mean-tone system rather than the well-tempered.

d. Dissonance

Dissonance treatment appears quite normal for the period with accented passing tones and suspensions occurring as the most frequent dissonances. Augmented sixth chords occur infrequently and seem to be reserved for affective moments. They occur most often near a cadence point.

Due to the sequential nature of Marcello's technique, wherever dissonances occur they are likely to be repeated sequentially, thereby coloring the entire section. Expressive and affective sections, reflecting this sequential treatment of dissonance, are evident in Psalms 21 and 36.

¹A footnote by Garth and Avison, op. cit., I, Preface, v, describes the "equivocal chord" as follows:

. . . The Chromatic Diesis, or extreme Sharp, which by the Composer's Art, may be contrived to dwell upon the Ear, so as to leave it doubtful to what Harmony it properly belongs, and may be carried into extreme different Melodies at Pleasure. Hence it is called the Equivocal Chord.

²Ibid.

William Newman notes similar dissonance treatment in his study of the Marcello keyboard sonatas, and adds, ". . . beyond these dissonances the harmony offers considerable charm but no surprises."¹

8. Melodic Considerations

Marcello's melodies are distinguished by a frequent use of sequence in both solo and choral context. The duo settings display an unusual affinity for the sequence. Newman points out the propensity for sequence in the keyboard sonatas also, and concludes that, ". . . Marcello sometimes wears the device thin, even as measured against other styles in this chief era of the sequence."²

In general, the melodies are of uneven phrase lengths and exhibit much chromaticism due to frequent modulations, text painting, and affective writing.

The solo melodies in contrast to those given to the choruses, tend to virtuosic, often instrumental style. They are characterized by wide leaps and augmented and diminished intervals. Florid passages abound, but they are never used for mere display.

The choral melodies are similar to the solo, but they are generally less ornate and have a narrower range.

¹William S. Newman, "The Keyboard Sonatas of Benedetto Marcello," Acta Musicologica, XXIX (1957), 38.

²Ibid., p. 34.

9. Counterpoint

Bukofzer places Marcello, along with Vivaldi, among the progressive composers relative to the use of concerto technique.¹

With a bow to Marcello's contrapuntal expertise, Bukofzer further places him among the Baroque progressives who, ". . . wrote in stile antico with skill and taste."² Marcello was a musical descendent of Corelli, through Gasparini, and his contrapuntal mastery is a reflection of that master's influence.

Marcello's skill at choral settings in the stile antico has already been mentioned. He is equally adept in the duo settings which most frequently occur in a contrapuntal texture. These settings utilizing the trio sonata grouping are excellent examples of harmonic counterpoint and demonstrate his use of sequence and of imitation which is employed most frequently at the expected intervals of the octave, fourth and fifth. The Da Capella settings make extensive use of point of imitation technique and a psalm tone is used as a cantus firmus in Psalm 36. There is little use of augmentation and inversion, but they do occur, most notably in the settings of the psalm tones.

To demonstrate his mastery of strict counterpoint, Marcello closes his cycle of fifty Psalms with triple canon for six voices, using the fourth verse of Psalm 18 as the text. Marcello's wry sense of humor, so apparent in his Teatro alla Moda, is evident in the following remarks which are his final words to the reader:

¹Bukofzer, op. cit., p. 231.

²Ibid., p. 70.

. . . in the last Page of the present Volume, is given a Triple Canon closed infinite sub Diapente for Six Voices, on the Fourth Verse of the Eighteenth Psalm. This too artificial Kind of Composition, having been thought improper to be introduced in the Work itself, in which those Counterpoints, which may rather tend to surprise the Eye, than to delight the Ear, have been altogether avoided; it was judged, nevertheless, that this Piece of ingenious Labour ought not to be omitted at the End of it, as well to shew, that the Author was not wholly unskilled in it, as to satisfy, in some Measure, the curious Search of certain Musical Geniuses, too subtle and refined, who looking purposely for it through the whole Work, would otherwise have been utterly disappointed.¹

10. Rhythmic Considerations

a. Rhythm

The vitality of Marcello's psalm settings is frequently the result of his imaginative variation of rhythmic patterns and division of beats--another example of his genius for contrast and variety. Many of these patterns occur as an affective device. Again, his predilection for melodic sequence affects other compositional elements--in this case resulting in rhythmic sequences of great affective import. Rhythmic ostinatos are common, and various devices for shift of accent such as hemiola and syncope are frequently used.

b. Tempo and Meter

Tempo and meter are basically determined by the text and the implied affections. Tempo indications are usually given for each movement, and in those cases when they are not, the text is always a reliable guide.

¹Garth-Avison, op. cit., VIII, Preface, i.

Meter markings are quite in line with contemporary practice of the period and indeed present no problem to the performer of today. One marking which may be considered an archaism is the use of the Alla Breve sign, C , which in this work almost invariably indicates $\frac{4}{2}$, four half notes to the measure. Marcello typically uses this for Grave or Adagio movements in imitative style.

A unique use of the Alla Breve sign occurs in Psalm 5. It is used for a movement based on a Gregorian Chant-like melody, a variation of Pange lingua, and the entire movement is without bar lines in mensural notation complete with ligatures. With the exception of the ostinato-like bass, the movement could almost be from the 16th century.

Meter signatures are almost invariably given and the following types are used:

C $\frac{4}{2}$ C $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{3}{2}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{3}{8}$ $\frac{6}{8}$ $\frac{12}{8}$

It is interesting to note that the $\frac{3}{8}$ and $\frac{12}{8}$ meters are frequently used, while the $\frac{6}{8}$ meter is extremely rare.

In general, as an obvious device for variety, tempo will alternate from slow to fast, movement by movement; but this is not an invariable rule, depending on the mood of each individual Psalm text. For example, Psalm 21, which textually is penitential in nature throughout, has several successive slow movements reflecting the overall affection. Psalm 46, which is joyful in nature, consists largely of successive allegro movements. However, many Psalms present widely contrasting thoughts and emotions in alternate verses, and these contrasting texts served to stimulate Marcello in his search for variety, resulting in the typical alternation of tempo.

CHAPTER III

THE PERFORMANCE

. . . playing in good Taste doth not consist of frequent Passages, but in expressing with Strength and Delicacy, the Intention of the Composer.¹

The written score is a kind of "short-hand" and is limited, at best, in indicating the composer's intentions to the performer. If performer and composer are contemporaries, there will likely be a system of conventions concerning such points as notation and execution which are common practice or in the public domain, so to speak, making it possible for the composer's "short-hand" to indicate his intentions fairly well. However, the greater the distance in time between the composer and performer, the more difficult it will be for the performer to accurately re-create the music according to the composer's wishes. The "understood," unspoken conventions will have been forgotten, and even a note-perfect rendering of the score may not be an accurate performance of the piece as the composer envisioned it, or as it would have been performed by his contemporaries.

The performer of today who wishes to re-create music of another era must attempt to learn these "lost" conventions which separate him from the true understanding of the music he would re-create. Since the score seldom tells us of these subtleties, recourse must be made to

¹Geminiani, op. cit., p. 6 .

treatises and theoretical writings of the period to gain the necessary information.

In this chapter an effort will be made to establish some common ground between the Performer and the composer, giving some understanding of the style and conventions of his period. We will attempt to do this, first, through a general survey of the style and the precepts and principles which governed performance--particularly those elements which relate to Estro Poetico-Armonico.

Second, we will examine accounts of actual performances of the work in its own time, paying special heed to implications for modern performance.

Third, and most important, we will examine the rather considerable number of performance directions of the composer himself.

Finally, from the foregoing study, we hope to establish valid principles and directions to govern modern-day performance.

Specific recommendations based on the above criteria will be included in Chapter IV in the Commentaries which concern those selected works which have been transcribed and edited for modern performance. These transcriptions are contained in Volume II.

French and Italian Styles

Reference was made previously to the various styles and the great stress placed on style in general in the Baroque period. Of particular interest, and quite pertinent to performance practice, is the development of the two great national styles during the Baroque--French and Italian.

There was much controversy concerning these two styles during the Baroque period, and many treatises were written explaining their differences. Such treatises are important to us, because in explaining the style differences the authors tell us of the subtleties of performance and departures from notation which were a part of the unwritten musical usage of the time, but which are not explained in the scores of the period.

Essentially the differences concerned manner of embellishment, problems concerned with notational differences, and a basic difference of approach to music. The French based all on regulation and reason, while the Italians stressed freedom and feeling.

In general, the French were much more sedate and mannered in their performances. Their embellishments tended to the smaller, more delicate graces, called *agrèments*, such as *coulé* (slur) and *pincé* (mordent). On the other hand, the Italians were impetuous, composing and performing with a great deal of freedom and spontaneity. In their embellishments they leaned to long runs and scale passages in a free and improvisatory manner.¹

Raguenet's treatise, published in the early years of the 18th century, reveals a succinct description of both styles:

The Italians are more bold and hardy in their *Airs*, than the French; they carry their point farther, both in their tender songs, and those that are more sprightly, as well as in their other Compositions: Nay, they often unite *Stiles* which the French think incompatible. . . . The French in their *Airs* aim at the soft, the *Easie*, the *Flowing*, and *Coherent*; . . . there is nothing bold and

¹It is ironic that in his *Psalmi* Marcello rigidly proscribed most embellishments. However, his free compositional approach would place these works in the True Italian style.

adventurous in it, it's all equal and of a Piece. . . . The Italians pass boldly and in an Instant from b Sharp to b Flat, . . . they venture the boldest Cadences, and the most irregular Dissonance; and their Airs are so out of the Way that they resemble the Compositions of no other Nation . . . the French wou'd think themselves undone, if they offended in the least against the Rules; they Flatter, Tickle, and court the Ear, and are still doubtful of Success, tho' ev'ry thing be done with an exact Regularity. . . . The Italians venture at ev'ry thing that is harsh and out of the way, but then they do it like People that have a right to venture, and are sure of Success. . . . at all Times and Places; . . . the Italians are naturally much more brisk than the French, so are they more sensible of the Passions, and consequently express 'em more lively in all their Productions. . . . If a Storm or Rage, is to be described in a Symphony, their Notes gives us so natural an Idea of it, that our souls can hardly receive a stronger Impression from the Reality than they do from the Description; every Thing is so brisk and piercing, so impetuous and affecting, . . . A Symphony of Furies shakes the soul; the Artist himself, [Here the footnote by the translator gives the familiar description of Corelli in concert], whilst he is performing it, is seiz'd with an unavoidable Agony, he tortures his Violin, he racks his body; he is no longer Master of himself, but is agitated like one possest with an irresistable Motion.

If, . . . the Symphony is to express a Calm and Tranquility, which requires a quite different Style, they however execute it with an equal Success: . . . So that be their Airs either of a sprightly or gentle Style, let 'em be impetuous or languishing; in all these the Italians are equally preferable to the French: . . . the Italian Invention is infinite, both for the Quantity, and Diversity of their Airs; the number of 'em may modestly be said to be without Number; and yet it will be very difficult to find two among 'em all that are alike.¹

Raguenet, a Frenchman, was obviously on the Italian side; still his descriptions agree essentially with most of the commentators of the time, and his conclusions as to which style is best must, of course, be a matter of personal taste. The important point here is that he describes both styles in detail.

Couperin's comments concerning the styles are equally beneficial

¹Francois Raguenet, A Comparison Between the French and Italian Musick and Opera's. (London: 1709; facs. ed. Gregg International, 1968), pp. 13-30.

to us:

In my opinion, there are faults in our way of writing music, which correspond to the way in which we write our language. The fact is we write a thing differently from the way in which we expect it; . . . the Italians on the contrary, write their music in the true time-values in which they have intended them to be played. For instance, we dot several consecutive quavers in diatonic succession, and yet we write them as equal; . . .¹

Performance Practice of Marcello's Time

1. The Singer

Estro Poetico-Armonico was presented to a world in which the virtuoso singer reigned supreme. Opera and its emphasis on virtuoso singing had brought vocal technique to an unprecedented and unsurpassed stage of development.

The extreme virtuosity was due in part to the early and intensive training which was given to children. Tosi's book on the Florid Song is directed in the first chapters to the teachers of the young treble voices. He is careful to give instructions to develop the compass of the voice and to take care that the young voice is not strained.²

Raguenet speaks of this early study, saying, ". . . the Italians sing from the Cradles, they sing at all Times and Places."³

Both males and females received this training and the important

¹Francois Couperin, L'art de Toucher le Clavecin (ed. Anne Linde; Leipzig: Breitkopf and Hartel, 1933), p. 23.

²Pier. Francesco Tosi, Observations on the Florid Song (London: Printed for J. Wilcox, 1743; reprint from the 2nd ed., by William Reeves, London: 1926).

³Raguenet, op. cit., p. 19.

role of the Venetian Conservatories in training young women has already been cited.¹

Opera had opened the way for female singers to perform publicly, and while they still were not allowed to sing in church, we are certain they were singing in public recitals in the academies in addition to the theaters.

Ursula Kirkendale has uncovered evidence in the Ruspoli documents of the proscription of female singers even outside the church. It seems likely, that on the basis of the Ruspoli account books, Margherita Durastante, a well-known opera singer of the period, may have been dismissed after having sung the first performance of Handel's La Resurrezione in 1708 in Rome. A Papal admonition against the use of female singers appears to have been directed to Marchese Ruspoli, whose palace was the scene of the oratorio. All subsequent performances were sung by castrati in the female roles.²

Mattheson in Hamburg appears to have had better luck in introducing women into the choir loft. Apparently basing his arguments on the Venetian Conservatory practices, Mattheson had requested permission to have female singers in church. In 1716 Madame Keiser, a famous Hamburg opera singer, was the first female allowed to sing in the Hamburg Cathedral. Mattheson apparently continued this practice of bringing in

¹Chapter I, p. 8.

²Ursula Kirkendale, "The Ruspoli Documents on Handel," Journal of the American Musicological Society, XX (1967), pp. 236-237.

female singers without criticism.¹ This is of interest to us because of Mattheson's performance of some of the Marcello Psalms in 1724. Thus, the chorus may have contained women.

The greatest of the female singers were widely acclaimed for their beautiful voices and it is significant that singers with widely different vocal qualities and techniques could win equal acclaim for their abilities. Tosi compares the two greatest female singers of his day, Faustina and Cuzzoni. The former:

. . . is inimitable for a priviled'd Gift of Singing, and for enchanting the World with a prodigious Felicity in executing, and with a singular Brilliant (I know not whether from Nature or Art) which pleases to Excess. The delightful, soothing Cantabile of the other, joined with the Sweetness of a fine Voice, a perfect Intonation, Strictness of Time, and the rarest Productions of a Genius, are Qualifications as particular and uncommon, as they are difficult to be imitated. The Pathetick of the one, and the Allegro of the other, are the Qualities the most to be admired respectively in each of them. What a beautiful mixture would it be, if the Excellence of these two angelick Creatures could be united in one single Person!²

Quantz had similar remarks to make concerning the two ladies when he heard them in London in 1727.³

Mention of the great Faustina is particularly interesting to us because she was a student of both Marcello and Gasparini. One report mentions that she sang in the premiere performance of some of the Psalms.

In contrast to female singers, the castrati were, of course,

¹Elwyn Wienandt, Choral Music of the Church (New York: The Free Press, 1965), p. 17.

²Tosi, op. cit., p. 171.

³Burney, op. cit., II, 745.

unlimited as to the places they could sing, and they were as eagerly followed in church and concert as at the theatre. The extraordinary range and treble quality combined with immense power and technical facility must have been overwhelming, as many writers of the time testify.

Raguenet gives glowing reports of the castrato:

. . . who with a Voice the most clear, and at the same time equally soft, pierces the Symphony, and tops all the Instruments with an agreeableness which they that hear it may conceive, but will never be able to describe.

These Pipes of Theirs, resemble that of the Nightingale; their long-winded throats draw you in a manner out of your Depth and make you lose your Breath: they'll execute Passages of I know not how many Bars together, they'll have Eccho's on the same Passages and Swellings of a prodigious Length, and then with a chuckle in the throat exactly like that of a Nightingale, they'll conclude with Cadences of an equal Length, and all this in the same Breath.¹

The beginning of the castrato system goes back to the mid-16th century when the first castrati were admitted to the papal choir.²

Prior to the introduction of castrati, the treble lines were, ". . . sung by Spaniards, in false." ³

Mancini's description of the vocal technique of the great castrato Farinelli probably can be taken as a description of castrato singing at its best:

His voice was thought a marvel, because it was so perfect, so powerful, so sonorous and so rich in its extent, both in the high and the low parts of the register, that its equal has never been heard in our times. He was, moreover, endowed with a creative genius which inspired him with embellishments so new and so astonishing that no one was able to imitate them. The art of taking and keeping the breath so softly and easily that no one could

¹Raguenet, op. cit., p. 37f.

²Philip A. Duey, Bel Canto in Its Golden Age (New York: King's Crown Press, 1951), p. 48.

³Burney, op. cit., II, 528.

perceive it began and died with him. The qualities in which he excelled were the evenness of his voice, the art of swelling its sound, the portamento, the union of the registers, a surprising agility, a graceful and pathetic style, and a shake as admirable as it was rare. There was no branch of the art which he did not carry to the highest pitch of perfection. . . .¹

Such well developed technique obviously was based on a well organized teaching system, and many singing manuals were published during the period. Tosi, the great castrato and teacher, published his Opinioni de Cantori Antichi e Moderni in 1723, one year before the first volume of Marcello's Psalms. Generally, acknowledged as the leading 18th-century work on singing,² the work went through many editions and the English translation by Galliard was published in 1743 as Observations on the Florid Song.

Though writing in his seventies at a time when the new style of almost continual virtuoso ornamentation seemed to be carrying the day, Tosi inveighed against ". . . that Torrent of Passages and Divisions, so much the Mode, . . ."³ and defended the simpler cantabile and pathetick of the earlier bel canto style. In a most amusing description of the latest mode of excessive ornamentation, Tosi describes a modern singer's performance of a da capo aria, consisting of interminable passages and divisions on each cadence:

. . . but on the last Cadence, the Throat is set a going like a Weather-cock in a Whirlwind, and the Orchestra yawns. But why

¹As cited by Thurston Dart, The Interpretation of Music (New York: Harper Colophon, 1963), p. 49.

²Jean-Baptiste Bérard, L'Art du Chant (Paris: Dessarint and Saillant, 1755; trans. Sidney Murray, Milwaukee: Pro Musica Press, 1969), p. 37.

³Tosi, op. cit., p. 127.

must the World be thus continually deafened with so many Divisions? I must (with your leave, Gentlemen Moderns) say in Favor of the Profession, that good Taste does not consist in a continual Velocity of the Voice, which goes thus rambling on, without a Guide, and without Foundations; but rather, in the Cantabile, in the putting forth the Voice agreeably, in Appoggiatura's, in Art, and in the true Notion of Graces, going from one Note to another with singular and unexpected surprizes, and stealing the Time exactly on the true Motion of the Bass.¹

Tosi was writing against all the vocal abuses which had developed as a result of the growing emphasis on lavish and ostentatious virtuosity. At that same time, Marcello was satirizing the same abuses in his Teatro alla Moda. Thus their viewpoints seem to be quite similar, and one of Tosi's last instructions reads almost like a paraphrase of Marcello's performance directions. Tosi exhorts the singers:

. . . to sing in Tune, to put forth the Voice, to make the Words understood, to express, to use proper Gesture, to perform in Time, to vary on its Movement, to compose, and to study the Pathetick, in which alone Taste and Judgement triumph.²

In an age which placed so much emphasis on ornamentation, Tosi may seem to be advocating the elimination of ornaments--but on the contrary, he defended their use. His book is filled with instructions concerning the desirable ornaments and embellishments and their execution. His advice on the proper performance of the da capo arias is a case in point:

In the first [section] they require nothing but the simplest Ornaments, of a good Taste and few, that the Composition may remain simple, plain, and pure; in the second they expect, that to this Purity some artful Graces be added, by which the

¹Ibid., p. 129.

²Ibid., p. 180.

Judicious may hear, that the Ability of the Singer is greater; and, in repeating the Air, he that does not vary it for the better, is no great Master.¹

The lesson is clear; Tosi required ornaments but only in "good taste," in a restrained manner, and at the proper places.

Tosi's list of embellishments include the appoggiatura, ". . . the first Embellishment of the Art,"² the shake (trill), the gliding (or portamento), and the messia di voce. During the Baroque, most of these ornaments had become standardized and appeared in many variations in the numerous manuals and treatises of the period. For example, Geminiani's table of Ornaments of Expression, reproduced on p. 18, chapter I, contains, as he said, ". . . all the Ornaments of Expression, necessary to the playing in good taste."³ Thus the singer or player of that Time or today could turn to these and other charts of the period to find the appropriate ornament.

Departures from the written score constitute one of the main characteristics by which Italian and French style may be differentiated, according to Dart; and he lists four categories for the Italian style:

. . . extemporized embellishments of Adagios; optional variation of repeated material; additional ornamentation at cadences, varying from a trill to a whole cadenza; slight alterations of written note-values always associated with the occurrence of trochaic, anapaestic or triplet rhythms elsewhere in the same movement. . . .⁴

¹Ibid., p. 93.

²Ibid., p. 29.

³Geminiani, op. cit., p. [6].

⁴Dart, op. cit., pp. 78, 89.

Our examples from Tosi have substantiated most of these, but Dart's comments concerning the alteration of note values will need further examination. All during the Baroque period, dotted notes followed by shorter notes occurring in a march, siciliano or a grave are generally lengthened or doubledotted in performance with the short note being further shortened. Both Quantz and C. P. E. Bach seem to agree on this,¹ and this style is in agreement with the French.²

The problem of performing the eighth note triplet pattern appearing in conjunction with the dotted eighth and sixteenth note is another problem and is still a subject of much controversy. Quantz and C. P. E. Bach were among the first writers to mention the problem,³ and their opinions are in direct conflict in this area. Essentially, Bach advocates that the sixteenth note be played with the third note of the triplet,⁴ while Quantz specifically prohibits this, saying:

. . . you must not strike the short note . . . with the third note of the triplet, but after it! Otherwise, it will sound like six-eight or twelve-eight time. . . .⁵

In spite of an enormous literature on the subject, Dart's phrase, ". . . assimilate all dotted rhythms to the dominant rhythm of the movement," is probably a very adequate rule of thumb.

¹Dolmetsch, op. cit., pp. 55-65.

²Dart, op. cit., p. 89.

³Michael Collins, "The Performance of Triplets in the 17th and 18th Centuries," Journal of the American Musicological Society, XIX, (1966), pp. 281-328.

⁴Carl Phillip Emanuel Bach, Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments (trans. William J. Mitchell; New York: W. W. Norton, 1949) p. 160.

⁵Johann J. Quantz, On Playing the Flute (trans. Edward Reilly; New York: The Free Press, 1966), Chapter V, no. 22, p. 68.

Michael Collins' conclusion seems to parallel this rule:

When a piece consisted entirely of triplets and dotted figures, they knew to perform them in ternary rhythm or proportion. Likewise, when triplets appeared in a context consisting primarily of binary patterns, the performers knew to resolve the triplets into binary figures.¹

2. The Accompaniment

Basic to all accompanied music of the Baroque is the basso continuo or thorough bass. Essentially a single bass line or melody, it was realized, or extemporaneously put into a basically four-part accompaniment, on a chord-playing instrument--generally harpsichord or organ. To stress the primacy of the foundation line, especially since the harpsichord sound dies so quickly, various stringed bass instruments were used to double the bass line. These instruments were generally one or more of the following: violoncello, contrabass, and violone (the bass member of the viol family). According to the conventions of the period, it was possible to add other bass instruments to the continuo grouping such as bassoon or theorbo.

The absolute necessity for a chordal accompaniment was never questioned at any time during the Baroque period.² C. P. E. Bach's comments are particularly pertinent:

The emptiness of a performance without this accompanying instrument is, unfortunately, made apparent to us far too often . . . no piece can be well performed without some form of keyboard accompaniment. Even in heavily scored works, such as operas performed out of doors,

¹Collins, op. cit., p. 328.

²F. T. Arnold, The Art of Accompaniment from a Thorough-Bass (2 vols.; New York: Dover Publications, 1965), I, xii.

where no one would think that the harpsichord could be heard, its absence can certainly be felt I base these observations on experiences which may be duplicated by anyone.¹

While Bach was writing this some years after the publication of the Psalms, the statement is still pertinent, since it deals with a basic convention of the Baroque which had been universally accepted for 150 years.

Relatively few performance problems were presented for the bass players, because they played only the bass line, as written. However, this was not the case for the harpsichordist who was expected to improvise at sight an interesting and stylistically proper accompaniment. As a result, an enormous literature was developed to assist the harpsichordist in realizing the continuo line.

In general, most writers on the subject require that the effect be free and improvisatory in style. What was wanted was a clear and unobtrusive accompaniment, providing support and interest with taste and imagination. An example may be adduced from Thomas Mace:

. . . But still you must further know, that the Greatest Excellency in this kind of Performances lies beyond whatever Directions can be given by Rule.

The Rule is an Easie, Certain, and Safe Way to walk by; but He that shall not Play beyond the Rule, had sometimes better be Silent; that is, He must be able, together with the Rule to lend his Ear, to the Ayre and Matter of the Composition so, as (upon very many occasions) He must forsake His Rule; and instead of Conchords, pass through all manner of Discords, according to the Humour of the Compositions he shall meet with.

The thing will require a Quick Discerning Faculty of the Ear, an Able Hand; and a Good Judgement. The 1st of which must be given in Nature; the 2 last will come with Practice, and Care.²

¹Bach, op. cit., pp. 172-73.

²Thomas Mace, Musick's Monument (London: 1676), p. 217 as quoted in Dolmetch, p. 345.

Quantz alludes to this same freedom of style:

The general rule of thorough-bass is that you always play in four parts; yet if you wish to accompany well, a better effect is often produced if you do not bind yourself very strictly to this rule, and if you leave out some parts, or even double the bass an octave higher with the right hand. For just as a composer is neither able nor compelled to set a three-, four-, or five-part instrumental accompaniment to all melodies, so not every melody allows an accompaniment of full chords upon the keyboard; hence an accompanist must govern himself more by the individual case than by the general rules of thorough-bass.¹

Francesco Geminiani, a student of Corelli and a sometime performer with Handel, summarizes a number of very important points concerning freedom of style, use of Acciacature, and sweeping or spreading of chords:

With Respect to the Thorough Bass on the Harpsichord, it has been my particular Aim to observe a great variety of Harmony and Movements, which two Things are most agreeable to the Nature of that Instrument; and have given the following short Rules, for the use of those who desire to accompany in a good Taste. They must be sure to place the Chords between both Hands, in such a Manner as to produce (by passing from one Chord to another) at once both an agreeable Harmony and Melody. Sometimes playing many Chords, and at other Times few, for our Delight arises from the Variety. Whenever the Upper Part stops, and the Bass continues, He who accompanies must make some Melodious Variation on the same Harmony, in order to awaken the Imagination of the Performer, whether he Sings or Plays, and at the same Time to give Pleasure to the Hearer. . . . In accompanying grave Movements, he should make use of the Acciacature, for these rightly placed, have a wonderful Effect; and now and then should touch the several Notes of the Chord lightly one after another, to keep the Harmony alive. . . . Particular Care should be taken to touch the Keys of the Instrument delicately, otherwise the Accompaniment of the Drum would be as grateful as that of the Harpsichord. He who accompanies should by no means play the Part of the Person who Sings or Plays, unless with an Intention to instruct or affront him. . . . To conclude, I must beg Leave to affirm that he who has no other Qualities than that of playing the Notes in Time, and placing the Figures, as well as he can, is but a wretched Accompanyer.²

¹Quantz, op. cit., Chapter VII, vi, 4.

²Francesco Geminiani, Rules for Playing in a True Taste, on the Violin German Flute Violoncello and Harpsichord particularly the Thorough Bass, Opera VIII, (Ca. 1745), p. 2.

Francesco Gasparini, Marcello's teacher and friend, wrote an important treatise on accompaniment from a thorough-bass: L'Armonico Practico Al Cimbalo. Published in 1708, the work was issued in 6 different editions, the last one appearing in 1802.¹

His advice on the embellishment of the accompaniment by means of scale passages, broken chords and trills in the right hand, indicates the great amount of freedom allowed the performer.² The ubiquitous "with good taste and judgement" must of course be interpolated here.

As F. T. Arnold indicates, Gasparini's chapter on the use of Acciacature was the basis of Heinichen's own comments which follow:

. . . . the beginner is to notice when the interval of a third in a chord coincides with an unoccupied finger, which is forthwith to strike the intervening note "whether a Mordente or an Acciacatura happens to result."³

Gasparini also adds the familiar admonition against doubling the solo line:

. . . one must never play note for note the same as the voice part or any other part composed for the violin, etc., since it suffices that the consonance or dissonance which is composed (i.e. in the solo part), or required by the Bass, should be found in the body of the harmony (i.e. not in the highest part) in conformity with the Rules of Accompaniment.⁴

Couperin's remarks which deal primarily with the idiomatic use of the harpsichord are pertinent here:

. . . . my feeling is that one should not forsake the style which is suited to it. Quick passages or runs, batteries (arpeggios)

¹Arnold, op. cit., I, 250.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., I, 453.

⁴Ibid., I, 252.

within the compass of the hand; the 'choses lûtées' (pieces in which the chords are played arpeggio, or broken rhythmically, as on the lute), and syncopated pieces are to be preferred to those which are full of sustained notes, or notes that are too deep in pitch. A perfect legato must be preserved in all that is executed upon it; let all the Agréments be very exact and precise: those consisting of repercussions, (such as shakes) must be played very evenly, and the gradations should be imperceptible. . . . Finally, let the style of playing be directed by the 'bon-gout' (good taste) of today. . . .¹

We may close this section with Geminiani's advice which should be taken to heart by all who aspire to realize a continuo part:

. . . a good Accompanier ought to possess a faculty of playing all sorts of Basses in different manners, so as to be able on proper occasions, to enliven the composition and delight the singer or player. But he is to exercise this Faculty with Judgement, Taste, and Discretion, agreeable to the Stile of the Composition, and the Manner and Intention of the Composer.²

3. Tempo

One of the major problems in performing early music deals with questions of tempo. However, in general, in the performance of music of the Late Baroque, very few major problems concerning tempo present themselves. The reasons for this may be found in Blume's observation, ". . . in the late stage of the Baroque, . . . fixed measure in the modern sense developed."³

The Italians started adding "tempo words" early in the 17th century and by the end of the century a large vocabulary of tempo terms existed.⁴ Sebastian di Brossard's Dictionnaire de musique of 1703 gives

¹Couperin, op. cit., p. 33.

²As quoted in Arnold, op. cit., p. 439.

³Blume, op. cit., p. 131.

⁴Carol MacClintock, The Solo Song, 1580-1730 (A Norton Music Anthology; New York: W. W. Norton, 1973), p. xx.

a listing of tempo terms in use during Marcello's time, and some representative ones are:

- Largo - very slow, as if enlarging the measure and making the main beats often unequal, etc.
- Adagio adagio - very slow.
- Adagio - comfortably, at your ease, without pressing on, almost always slow and dragging the speed a little.
- Lento - slowly, heavily, not at all lively or animated.
- Andante - to stroll with even steps, means above all for Basso Continuos, that all the Notes must be made equal, and the Sounds well separated.
- Allegretto - diminutive of Allegro, means rather gaily, but with a gracious, pretty, blithe gaiety.
- Allegro - always Gay, and decidedly lively; very often quick and light; but also at times with a moderate speed, yet gay and lively.¹

While the tempo terms do give an approximation of the composer's wishes, theorists continued to search for a more exact method to determine tempo. Mersenne in 1636 gives the time value of a minim as that of a beat of the heart,² confirming a practice followed throughout the Renaissance. Various writers used the heart beat or pulse as a basis for measuring tempo.

Quantz, who was Gasparini's pupil during the Roman visit of the former in 1724, and who probably met Marcello on his visit to Venice during that same period, developed a system of tempo indications based on an average pulse beat of 80 per minute. His remarks in terms of present day M. M. markings may be summarized as follows:

¹As quoted in MacClintock, op. cit., p. xx.

²Cited in Dolmetsch, op. cit., p. 28.

In common time	C	—	Allegro assai		=	80
			Allegretto		=	80
			Adagio Cantabile		=	80
			Adagio assai		=	80
In <u>alla breve</u>	C	—	Allegro assai		=	80
			Allegretto		=	80
			Adagio cantabile		=	80
			Adagio assai		=	80

1

Quantz explains that the markings apply most exactly to instrumental music; but that they are applicable also to vocal music. His explanation sounds modern, indeed:

One should consider the sense of the words, the movement of the notes, especially the quickest, and in quick airs the ability and the voice of the singer With a little experience and the knowledge that vocal music does not as a rule require so fast a tempo as music for instruments, one should find out the right one without particular difficulties.²

¹Quantz, op. cit., Ch. VII, vii, 48.

²Cited in Dolmetsch, op. cit., pp. 42-43.

18th Century Performances of Marcello's Psalms

D'Angeli tells us that from the first performances, the Psalms were extremely successful.¹ The first performance apparently was the presentation of the first five Psalms. All that we are told is that the audience was "astounded and moved" and Marcello was thus encouraged to proceed further with the composition of the remaining Psalms.

D'Angeli gives us an account of an early performance of the Psalms in 1726 at the Academia Cavallerizza. They were performed on a Thursday--lasting four hours without intermission. They received praise and admiration, not only from the invited guests, but also from the passers-by who filled the adjoining piazza, completely stopping traffic in the area. Marcello, himself sat at the harpsichord and " . . . sometimes adding his beautiful voice to the singers, he indicated to all his artistic spirit and emotion." D'Angeli adds further that Marcello was very strict in the performance of his music and allowed no one, not even the virtuosi, to improvise or to omit anything.² This, of course, is in line with Marcello's own performance indications contained in the Prefaces.

Ernest David tells us that some of the most illustrious virtuosi of 18th century Italy sang Marcello's Psalms: Tesi, Faustina, Santa Stella (Singora Lotti), Grimaldi, Carestini, Farinelli, Barbieri, and Paita. Thus, some of the leading castrati as well as the leading

¹D'Angeli, op. cit., p. 19.

²Ibid.

female singers participated. Faustina, we are told, sang in the premiere of Psalm 18, "I Cieli immensi narrano," at the Cavallerizza.¹ This is especially interesting since that Psalm is set for ATTB and Faustina was called a mezzo-soprano by Quantz.² If this account is true, it would seem that mezzo-sopranos then, as now, might be called on to sing the alto part.

We know of other accounts of successful performances from the laudatory letters included in the Psalms. In February, 1724, Francesco Bosellini of Modena wrote Marcello, telling him of his

. . . most beautiful Psalms . . . which, sung at a private accademie, are considered wonderful by professors and dilettantes of the city. All confess this to be a work truly divine. . . . I have observed that the famous Signor D'Antonio Balugani . . . wept tears of tenderness when he sang the Psalm "O Dio, perche" (Psalm 3) with Signor Francesco Ferrari. . . .³

Since Psalm 3 is a setting for SA, we have further evidence that castrati were used in singing these Psalms.

Mattheson's letter to Marcello gives us further information about a contemporary performance. After a very warm and effusive introduction, filled with praise for the first five volumes of Psalms, he announces that he has translated some of the Psalms into German and presented them in concert in the Hamburg Cathedral:

The Undertaking was executed by thirty select Performers, (every one a Virtuoso in his Sphere): who sung with the Unanimity of the Ancient Levites, and with the Graces of the modern Manner. The Congregation, from the Novelty of the Melody, were delighted to such a Degree, that almost the whole Audience were transported with Wonder and Joy. Every Word being distinctly pronounced, and clearly understood, contributed greatly to their Admiration and Delight; and the more so, as they are Advantages but rarely found

¹Sites, op. cit., p. 8.

²Burney, op. cit., II, 745.

³Marcello, op. cit., III, vii.

in our Music. . . . The Sunday following, the same method was imitated with Success in another Church; So that as formerly it was commonly said, Alla Palestrina, we now say here, Alla Marcella.¹

D'Angeli quotes both Fontana and Santi, Marcello's earliest biographers, concerning a series of performances in Rome. This account not only gives us information concerning the soloists, but also the size of the chorus, as well as the size of the instrumental ensemble.

In 1739, the year of Marcello's death, there occurred in Rome a series of performances of the Psalms. These were scheduled on Wednesdays in the months of July, August, and September at the palace of Cardinal Ottoboni, Papal Vice-Chancellor. Ottoboni was a great music patron (Corelli and A. Scarlatti particularly), friend of Marcello, and like him a member of the literary academy called the Arcadia. It is possible that the above series of concerts was scheduled as a part of the regular meeting of the group.

Participating were such excellent singers as Domenico Ricci, Maneguccio, Pasqualino Betti, Giuseppe Carminatti, and Biago Ermini. The chorus was composed of 24 singers from the Capella, and the orchestra was composed of harpsichord, 8 violincelli, and 8 contrabassi, the most able and best of Rome.

D'Angeli continues:

It is not known with exactness if this performance was one of those which were given of all 50 Psalms in 12 evenings, all on Wednesday of the Months of July, August, and September and for

¹Avison and Garth, op. cit., VI, ii.

which were distributed libretti.¹ And this was probably in 1739. The hearings were interrupted between the third and fourth evenings by the death of the composer on July 24. This information was given by Dr. U. Rolandi based on a volume published for the occasion, in which all the dates of the concert were listed.²

Hawkins has a similar account, but it appears that he may have mixed several reports:

. . . at the palace of Cardinal Ottoboni was a musical academy holden on Monday on every week, in which Corelli performed; at this musical assembly one of the psalms of Marcello made constantly a part of the entertainment; [a possible reference to the series in July, August, and September 1739?] and for the purpose of performing them there, the author composed to them instrumental parts.³

Several questions arise. It is known that Ottoboni did frequently host the meetings of the Arcadia.⁴ It is also known that Corelli enjoyed his patronage and was in charge of the orchestra for many of the performances. However, since Corelli died in 1713, eleven years before the publication of the Psalms, it is not possible that he could have been present.

Hawkins provides a footnote to the preceeding passage concerning the "instrumental parts":

¹This practice of furnishing libretti at the Ottoboni palace is confirmed by Sven Hansell in his article, "Orchestral Practice at the Court of Cardinal Pietro Ottoboni," Journal of the American Musicological Society, XIX (1966), p. 400.

²D'Angeli, op. cit., p. 31.

³Hawkins, op. cit., II, 849.

⁴Hansell, op. cit., p. 399.

A copy of these was in the collection of the late Mr. Smith, the English counsel at Venice, and was sold as part of his library by Messieurs Baker and Leigh, booksellers, in York street, Covent-Garden.¹

If these parts could be found, they might change our ideas concerning Marcello's instruments for accompanying the Psalms; however, there is no evidence that he wanted anything more than the continuo instruments and violas. If Mr. Smith's parts did exist, it is quite likely that they consisted of extra parts for the large number of violincelli and contrabassi reported by Fontana and Santi.

One further account of an 18th century performance of the Psalms is of interest. Burney reports during his visit to Venice:

. . . there were several academias or private concerts. I was invited to one, which assembles on all festivals, in order to sing the works of Marcello, without other accompaniment than a harpsichord; . . .

Several of Marcello's Psalms were here very well sung by Abate Martini and some other dilettanti, among whom one had a very good base voice. . . .²

D'Angeli and others list many other 18th century performances; however, the performance details are omitted and thus they are not included in this discussion.

The performance information which the above accounts have given us may be summarized as follows:

1. Marcello is reported to have been a strict conductor, allowing no improvisation, even by virtuosi.
2. Most accounts stress that the soloists were virtuoso performers.
3. Soloists include adult male and female voices as well as castrati.

¹Hawkins, op. cit., II, 849.

²Burney, op. cit., I, 122.

4. The chorus numbered 30 in the Hamburg performance and 24 in the Rome performance.
5. Both choruses probably consisted of well-trained singers. Mattheson says his Hamburg chorus members were all virtuosos. Also the cappella of the Papal Chancellery could be expected to have outstanding performers, especially since Ottoboni was a leading music patron.
6. In at least one performance a large number of bass instruments for the continuo were reported: 8 violoncelli and 8 contrabassi. They were the " . . . best of Rome."
7. Chamber performances were held in the 18th century using only harpsichord as accompaniment.

Marcello's Instructions

. . . the only man who knows exactly how he wants his music to be performed is presumably the composer himself, . . . consequently, every scrap of information that an early composer conveyed to his performer . . . must be treated as though it were gold; it is very precious. . . .¹

The Estro Poetico-Armonico has many unique aspects, not the least of which is the presence of so many performance instructions from the composer. Each volume contains a preface in which Marcello gives information and instructions concerning the Psalms. Totalling 25 pages, these prefaces contain lengthy discussions on various subjects connected with the Psalms. As one might expect, the composer discusses the theoretical and philosophical aspects of his composition at much greater length than the more mundane subject of practical performance matters. However, Marcello did have strong views on the proper performance of the Psalms as he tells us himself:

We come to the Execution of the Psalms: This ought to be exact throughout; more especially in the Chorus; as when Music

¹Dart, op. cit., p. 15.

is intended for the Solemnity of divine Worship; we should never attempt those vague and florid Ornaments, which but ill suit with the truly devout and attentive Mind. Let not the Performer, therefore, embellish the Subject unless he can form his Graces, like the skillful Musician, in perfect Cadence of Time, and Decorum of Manner and Voice; and, with Clearness of Expression, distinctly articulate and resound each Syllable and Note.¹

These first instructions are directed to the performer and deal with actual performance techniques.

He further emphasizes his proscription of improvisation in his directions for the performance of those Psalms set to Hebrew chants:

" . . . wherever this kind of Music occurs in this Work, it ought to be executed in a plain and simple manner. . . ."²

Marcello's instructions for the performance of Psalm 21 could well serve as the singer's guide to the performance of the entire 50 Psalms:

Let therefore the performer who is to execute this Psalm, consider what it is he is to express and represent and accordingly, rather with devout Tenderness of Heart than Artificial Flourishing of the Voice, pronounce it simply and distinctly. . . .³

Having presented his views on performance techniques as they related to the Psalms, he then turned to the forces involved in the performance, dealing particularly with his unique system of choral reinforcement of the solo line in alternatim technique:

. . . Tho' the greatest Part of these Psalms [Vol. I] . . . are composed for two Voices only, they ought sometimes to be sung with a Reinforcement of Voices, agreeably to the Directions annexed to the Work itself . . . which must, however, be done in some just Proportion. . . .⁴

¹Garth and Avison, op. cit., I, Preface, vi.

²Ibid., II, Preface, i.

³Ibid., IV, Preface, i.

⁴Ibid., I, Preface, iv.

In keeping with the custom of the Ancient Hebrews, Marcello felt that many voices should be employed in praising the deity. He states:

. . . The Chorus of those who exalt the divine Praises, should be as numerous and full as possible. . . this being necessary to render it sometimes more solemn or more enlivening and full, according as the Words or Sentiments require a more powerful Emphasis and Expression; which was usually practised among the Hebrews, not by one or two Persons, as now a Days,¹ but by a great Number together.²

Also, in imitation of the Hebrew alternation style, Marcello tells of introducing:

. . . Recitatives, and a Species of Airs to be sung by one Voice only, or, alternately by two, (Which was likewise in use among the Ancients, and was called Alternate Singing). . . .³

Just as Marcello adapted Hebrew Choral methods (largely in spirit rather than actual fact), so did he also adapt the use of instrumental accompaniment:

Also, the Ripieno [accompaniments]⁴ of various Basses ought to be as numerous, and disposed in as exact Proportion as possible, in order to supply, in the best Manner, the Use of the ancient Instruments, that from the whole together may be derived the full and proper Effect for which it was composed.⁵

Marcello limited his use of accompanying instruments to the continuo grouping in 48 of the 50 Psalms. As an additional accompanying instrument he chose the plaintive viola as being particularly appropriate for the penitential nature of Psalm 21:

. . . And in order to express it in the strongest Manner, and to awaken in the Hearers the deepest Sorrow it was possible from the

¹Italics mine.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., V.

⁴A printer's or translator's error. Italian accompagnamento was incorrectly translated as Accomplishments in the Garth and Avison edition.

⁵Ibid., VI.

Contemplation of this grand Mystery, we have given it an Accompaniment of Tenor Violins [Violas] an instrument which (in the Hand of a Master) is of itself extremely well calculated for the Expression of tender and melancholy Strains.¹

And again for Psalm 50, another great penitential text:

The last Psalm Miserere, so universally received for the Exercise of Christian Piety and Compunction, that those mournful Sentiments which it contains, might be the better expressed, is composed for an Accompaniment of Tenor-Violins [Violas] an Instrument the best adapted to exercise in devout Minds penitential Affliction and Sorrow.²

In the final two volumes, Marcello introduces the "Ecclesiastical Stile DaCapella"³ in three Psalms, emphasizing the special accompaniment situation:

The four principal Parts only are printed, which are intended to be sung as Compositions of the Madrigal Kind, and those Pieces of Counterpoint commonly used in the Church. Nevertheless, to sustain and reinforce these Parts in the Execution of this Psalm, Harpsicords and Ripieno Basses may be added to the Bass, according to the Directions annexed to the Beginning and other Places. When the Accompaniment of the moving Basses comes in, this is done with a particular Design to introduce some proper Variety in the Performance, and, in a more distinguished Manner, to mark the Expression of those Sentiments, the Force of which may be more effectually impressed by such a change in the Basses.⁴

In addition to Marcello's performance instructions contained within the prefaces, the large number of performance instructions scattered throughout the work itself reflect Marcello's concern for the proper performance of his music. Many of these instructions appear in the Representative Settings.

¹Ibid., IV, Preface, i.

²Ibid., VIII, Preface, i.

³Ibid., VII, Preface, i.

⁴Ibid.

Within the score, itself, frequent alternation of solo-tutti forces are clearly marked, both in the vocal and instrumental scores. Frequent changes of timbre are also indicated. In the vocal score much use is made of changes in voice register (soprano to bass, etc.), while in the instrumental score, indications of instrumental changes also abound (tasto solo, senza cembalo, violoncello e contrabass solo, etc.).

There is much use of piano and forte, and occasionally even pianissimo is indicated. An occasional use of such terms as fermo, risoluto, and sordino give further dynamic instructions.

Tempo changes to reflect the mood of the text often occur, even in mid-movement, and these are clearly indicated.

The use of staccato is quite often found in both vocal and choral scores, indicated by the staccato symbol (') as well as the word itself. Articulation for the stringed instruments is clearly indicated by the use of slurs, staccato marks, and terms such as arco and senza arco.

A further indication of Marcello's restriction of the use of improvised ornaments is reflected in his carefully notated trill signs--used sparingly and only in solo sections at cadences or when needed for affective purposes. The trill sign (Tr.) is the only embellishment symbol which appears in the complete work. In view of all of Marcello's comments in reference to execution of his music in a "plain and simple manner," it is my opinion that the trill is the only ornament which he wanted in the performance of his Psalms.

Marcello's long and varied discussions concerning such learned

subjects as the Greek modes, or Hebrew musical practices in the Tabernacle at Jerusalem might be of little interest to the modern performer of these Psalms, but his philosophical views and his statements as to why he composed these Psalms are very pertinent.

D'Angeli believes that Marcello became increasingly devout as he worked on the Psalms, and he may have given us a foreshadowing of this spiritual awakening as he explains the devout character of the work and the ". . . sacred Use for which it was principally intended; namely, the Worship of the Deity."¹

As he continued the Psalm settings his comments in the Prefaces indicate a marked spiritual growth, culminating in his statements in Volume IV, at the completion of the first twenty-five Psalms. In essence, he gives us a summation of his philosophical basis for the work with this plea:

May it please The Almighty that both the Execution of Performers, and the Attention of it's Hearers, may be directed to no other End than that which the Authors propos'd to themselves when they undertook and compos'd it, viz. the Advancement of the Divine Honour and Glory.²

Marcello's performance directions as found in the Prefaces may be summarized as follows:

1) Performance Techniques

- a) Exactness throughout (rhythm and notes), especially in chorus.
- b) No arbitrary ornaments.
 - 1) Never in chorus.
 - 2) Limited to virtuoso soloists.
- c) Well placed voice (Decorum of Manner and Voice).
- d) Distinct articulation.

¹Ibid., I, Preface, iv.

²Ibid., IV, Preface, i.

- e) Good diction.
- f) Careful attention to expression as indicated by Affective text.

2) Forces Involved

- a) Vocal
 - 1) Chorus as large as possible (proportionate to soloists, instruments, etc.)
 - 2) Choral reinforcement of the solo line in alternation technique.
 - 3) Alternate singing by two voices.
- b) Instrumental
 - 1) Number of continuo basses in proportion to vocal forces.
 - 2) Violas scored for two penitential settings (expressive qualities).
 - 3) Da Capella settings--continuo only as directed in score.

Implications for Modern Day Performance

On the basis of the foregoing study, certain solutions for performance will seem quite obvious, others may seem not so clear, and in still others the solution may have to be an educated guess.

For example, we know from the evidence that the treble parts were occasionally sung by adult female voices; therefore, today's sopranos and altos can quite authentically sing these parts. If a good boys choir were available, this would be quite acceptable too because this would also conform to Baroque practice. While counter tenors were not used in Italy during the Baroque period, due to the availability of castrati, they were certainly in use in England during the period and thus would be acceptable for the alto parts where available.

Since the settings vary so widely from solo to four-part choral settings, it will be difficult to make general statements concerning the number of voices needed for a performance. Perhaps the best

solution is to arrive at a standardized number of singers per part, with the total number depending on the setting.

The two most reliable reports of contemporary performances give similar sized groups. Mattheson's group of 30 virtuoso singers presumably included soloists, while the Ottoboni palace chorus consisted of 24 singers with additional soloists. In both cases, this number of singers is quite in line with choir sizes of the entire period. The accounts imply both performances were festival-like in nature and it is safe to assume that the performances probably included some of the grand scale settings for four-voice chorus. Thus, 24 to 30 singers would account for six to eight singers on a part. Marcello's remarks asking that the chorus be as full and numerous as possible must be taken in the context of the Baroque choir. If it is recalled that at the same general period Bach could call for a minimum choir of 12 voices and an ideal one of 16¹, then the figure of 24 or 30 is a large choir indeed.

Handel in some of his oratorios had a choir of 25² and the choirs of both the Sistine Chapel³ and St. Mark's⁴ consisted of approximately 30 singers.

Thus, if we accept the standard of six or eight singers on a part, we have only to multiply that number by the number of voices in the setting to arrive at the total. Thus for a setting à due, 12 to 16 voices

¹Hans T. David and Arthur Mendel, The Bach Reader (New York: W. W. Norton, 1966), pp. 121-124.

²Arthur Jacobs, Choral Music (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1963), p. 147.

³Burney, op. cit., p. 292.

⁴Dennis Arnold, op. cit., p. 27.

would be required, while for a setting à tre, 18 to 24 voices would be needed.

The instrumental requirements are perhaps the most problematical, particularly concerning the bass instruments. The keyboard instrument is, of course, a harpsichord since that is clearly scored; however, it is entirely possible that an organ could be used in accordance with Baroque practice. If any of the Psalms are to be performed in church, the organ would be especially appropriate.

An interesting problem of instrument identification was presented by Marcello's designation of *violette* as a part of the accompaniment for Psalm 21 and Psalm 50. Since the instrument was scored in the Alto Clef, it seemed logical to assume that the instrument was a viola; however, since the various names for the instruments of the viola and violin families were used rather loosely in the 17th and 18th centuries, it was possible that Marcello wanted one of the viol instruments.

The researches of both Sven Hansell¹ and Ursula Kirkendale² disclose that in the early 18th century the name *violetta* to distinguish our present day viola began to be replaced by the term *viola*, particularly in Rome, while in Venice and Naples the older term *violetta* lingered well into the 18th century. The Ruspoli, and the Ottoboni account books, already referred to, list the same players over a period of years. In the early years of the 18th century these players are

¹Hansell, op. cit., p. 399-400.

²Kirkendale, op. cit., p. 237.

listed as performers on the violetta, while by 1720 they are listed as viola players. Kirkendale notes that for performances of the same works in different years the bills used different terms for the same players.¹ Since Marcello, as a member of the Arcadians, was on intimate terms with members of the Ottoboni and Ruspoli circle, it might be assumed that he would be using the terms interchangeably also.

The final confirmation comes in the score of Psalm 21. The score calls for "violetta"; however, at the entrance of the second violetta Marcello calls for "seconda viola."

Both the violoncello and the contrabass are scored in this work, and the problem presented here is how many should be used. Marcello carefully asks for basses in proportion to the voices, but he does not specify how many. Obviously a solo setting would require the minimum number of one cello and one double bass. The account of the Rome performances mentions a staggering number of basses--eight violoncellos and eight contrabasses, a total of 16 bass instruments to accompany a choir of 24 voices! Several possibilities are suggested. It is possible that the account is incorrect. It is also possible that the 16 bass players were all present but that different groupings may have played in alternate settings. The bass parts call for real virtuoso playing and because of this, it is not impossible that the players could have indeed alternated on various settings. We may recall that Quantz had a less than enthusiastic opinion of the performing abilities of the 18th-century double bass player, and he even went so far as to simplify bass parts,

¹Ibid.

allowing his double basses to play alternate notes in rapid passages.¹ The coloratura bass passages of the Marcello score may very likely have needed Quantz's editing for some players.

Handel's orchestra for his 1708 oratorio, La Resurrezione, which was presented at Ruspoli's palace consisted of five contrabassi and five violoni (violoncelli according to Kirkendale) to balance twenty violins, four violas, two trumpets, one trombone, and four oboes.²

A 1690 performance of an Ottoboni opera, set by Lanciani, used an orchestra of four violini, two violette, one violone, one contrabasso, and cembalo, and two trumpets for the prologue. At two additional performances, an enlarged group of instrumentalists, nineteen violini, six violette, eight violoni, and five contrabassi performed a sinfonia.³ This continuo grouping approaches the size of that of Marcello's reported Roman performances. However, the 1690 performances had 25 upper strings to balance the 13 bass strings, while the Marcello grouping apparently used only bass strings and 24 singers, only half of which were treble voices.

Just as Marcello felt the necessity to conform to modern taste in not going too far with the ideal of unison singing, it will be necessary for us to bow to the modern taste of today in the performance of his works. Thus for a chorus of 24 to 30 singers our continuo grouping will probably not exceed one harpsichord, one violoncello and one double bass, though the adventurous conductor might try more bass strings.

¹Cited in Adam Carse, The Orchestra in the XVIIIth Century (Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons, 1940), p. 123.

²Kirkendale, op. cit., pp. 256, 257.

³Ibid.

CHAPTER IV

COMMENTARIES

The selected Psalms which were chosen for transcription and which appear in a realized version in Volume II are discussed below. A table of contents listing all movements, a facsimile of the Italian and Latin texts, and an English translation by Professor Lander MacClintock accompany each Psalm in Volume II. The English translations are not intended as a performing text for these Psalms, but rather as an aid to proper interpretation. For that reason, while not "line-by-line" translations, they do retain the approximate order of the original and should prove to be a tremendous aid to the performer. It should be understood that if the Psalms are performed in translation, some of the exquisite affective relationships between music and text will inevitably be lost. However, where English is desired or required, as in a church performance, the Garth translations are recommended. Though the Garth translations are far from literal ones, they do manage to portray the overall affection of each of Giustiniani's paraphrases, while admirably retaining the flavor of the Book of Common Prayer language.

PSALM 10

D'Angeli, Marcello's biographer, characterizes this Psalm as a

sublime sign of artistic excellence. Representative of the Solo-Choral category, this setting is scored for SATB chorus with alto and bass recitatives. There are eight verses divided into nine separate movements-- 7 choruses, 2 recitatives, and 1 arioso, all scored for continuo accompaniment.

The text of the Psalm deals with David's reactions to the counsel of his friends to escape Saul's persecutions by fleeing to the mountains.

The first movement, a recitative followed by a chorus, is an excellent example of Marcello's genius for variety and contrast in terms of scoring, tempo, tonality, and style of writing, all in line with the proper affection as indicated by the text.

The outstanding elements of the movement include the use of an introductory recitative representing the Psalmist speaking, the exciting allegro section describing the flight of a bird, the text painting using short note values for the words "flying rapidly," and the ascending passages of sixteenth notes indicating ascension to the mountain top. The final adagio section of the movement begins in a minor key representing the "insidious ones" in contrast to the joyous F major of the first section. As the text speaks of the innocent one, the mode again changes to major, ending on a triumphant F major chord of the beginning key.

The elements of contrast in every movement point up the contrasting moods of the text expressing the alternation between good and evil, the innocent and the insidious, fear and serenity, hope and despair, etc. Because of this variety of mood, Avison was unable to assign to this Psalm a specific "style of expression."

Movements No. 6 and No. 7 employ contrasting styles of writing to express the contrasting moods, the former in the stile antico or imitative style, while the latter is in the declamatory, homophonic style. Movement No. 7 contains the extremely modulatory section based on the circle of fifths which was mentioned earlier. Within twenty-five measures Marcello accomplishes approximately twenty transient modulations. The bass for this movement is an excellent example of the heavily figured basses which accompany such chromatic, modulatory sections, and is reflective of the highly charged pictorial text.

The final chorus represents Marcello's approach to the ancient ideal of unison singing. With the open fifths and march-like effect, one can imagine the temple musicians of David with timbrels and various ancient percussion instruments.

For the performance of this work a good SATB chorus of approximately twenty-four to thirty voices is recommended. Harpsichord, violoncello, and double bass are desirable for the continuo. a concert occasion rather than a church service is recommended for the performance, and the original Italian text is recommended for this extremely affective setting.

PSALM 21

A solo setting for alto with two violas and continuo, this Psalm is one of the great penitential texts, and the sombre timbre of the alto voice and viola were deliberately chosen by Marcello to reflect the penitential nature of the text.

A total of 34 verses are set into 18 movements--11 arias, 1 arioso, and 6 recitatives.

The entire Psalm is classed by Avison as being in the Sorrowful "stile of expression". Consequently there is little alternation of tempo. All movements are slow with the exception of Nos. 6 and 8 which depict ferocity, wildness, lust, evil, and iniquity. In spite of the consistent use of a slow tempo, Marcello achieves unusual variety through a number of devices, not the least of which is his brilliant instrumental scoring, beginning with movement No. 1 where he calls for three obbligato instruments (violoncello and two violas) to point up the plaintive character of the work. In the course of the setting he calls for accompaniment of strings only, without the harpsichord. In movement No. 5 he changes the role of the viola from Obbligato instrument to continuo instrument, doubling the bass line an octave higher. Movement No. 9 uses the two violas in unison over a continuo consisting of violoncello and double bass soli, played pizzicato, without harpsichord. Movement No. 11, on a German-Hebrew melody, introduces the melody in a long instrumental ritornello employing all the instrumental forces for this Psalm. When the alto solo enters, the second viola doubles the voice line for the remainder of the movement. Movement No. 13 combines violas, voice, and cello solo, excluding harpsichord and double bass from the continuo grouping. The recitatives are accompanied by the standard basso continuo grouping.

For affective purposes, a characteristic rhythmic figure consisting of a dotted sixteenth note followed by a thirty-second note seems to be a unifying motif depicting the throbbing of the penitential heart.

It is first presented by the violas in a descending Phrygian scale pattern. It is interesting to note that a variation of this same scale and pattern is used in Psalm 50, the other great penitential Psalm of this cycle.

While the tempo of the Psalm remains constant, there is a frequent change of meter, e.g. $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{3}{2}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{3}{8}$ etc.

The Marcellian third relationship between movements is in evidence in this work, e.g. C minor, E flat major, G minor, B flat major, and G minor, to list the key centers of the first five movements. The preceding progression also illustrates the frequent alternation of major and minor modes.

Another notable affective feature of this Psalm is the prevalence of the use of suspensions, reflective of the emotional unrest of the penitent.

This Psalm requires an excellent singer. The challenge lies not in florid lines, but rather in interpretation. Intense expression is called for and as Marcello advised, the singer must carefully consider every word of this text.

PSALM 22

A representative of the Solo-Choral category, this Psalm is set for alto and tenor soloists and alto and tenor chorus. Nine verses are divided into five movements--4 duet choruses and 1 recitative, all with continuo accompaniment.

The text is the famous, "The Lord is my Shepherd," and its serene pastoral nature is exemplified by an emphasis on triple meter throughout

the work. The two-part vocal lines are characterized by simple conjunct melodies of the pastoral type, often duetting in thirds over a long-held drone.

In contrast to Psalm 10, another Solo-Choral Psalm, which consisted largely of choral settings, Psalm 22 consists entirely of alternation singing between solo-solo and solo-tutti, a reflection of Marcello's interest in the alternation singing of the Hebrews.

Movement No. 3 is of special interest. A pastorale, it was originally scored by Marcello in common time which resulted in many triplet patterns in conjunction with a dotted eighth note followed by a sixteenth. The meter has been changed here to $\frac{12}{8}$ to allow the assimilation of the dotted patterns to the dominant triplet rhythm, retaining the smooth, flowing nature inherent in the pastorale. The theme of this piece is a German-Hebrew melody and is introduced by an instrumental ritornello featuring a violoncello solo. The final four measure ritornello marks a unique conclusion to this movement by setting the lovely melody in the continuo line itself. The high tessitura of the melody places the realization in a high register, giving an almost impressionistic effect to this ethereal ending.

In contrast to the serene, moderate tempo of the majority of the movements, the final movement is a stunning presto featuring extremely syncopated vocal lines in imitative style. The text at this point is repeating endlessly, "that I may pass my days and remain there forever," and the melodic material is a small fragment also repeated endlessly.

There are no real virtuosic problems here for the singers with the possible exception of the final syncopated presto movement.

The entire Psalm or selected movements would be quite appropriate for either church or concert.

PSALM 36

One of this cycle's three great choral settings, called Da Capella by Marcello, this Psalm is set in the imitative stile antico. Forty-two verses are divided into twelve separate choruses. Set for SATB chorus, the Psalm calls for the bass strings to double the bass line except in the movements containing the ostinato continuo line (Nos. 4, 7, and 10). The harpsichord is employed only in these movements.

The text of the Psalm is summarized as moral instruction for those who are in adversity--the practice of virtue is the true means of being happy in this and the next life.

The Psalm is a series of imitative, motet-style choruses. Notable examples of text painting occur in movement No. 2, Verse 10, in typical ascending scale passages on the word esultar, while notes of long value are given to the word attendi (wait). Variety is introduced in movement No. 3 in a series of duet movements where the themes alternate between SA and TB choruses. After a complete statement of the theme, the full SATB Chorus enters with ST and AB in unison--another aspect of unison singing which Marcello stressed in this work.

A great feature for variety and for unity is found in the ostinato bass accompaniment of chorus Nos. 4, 7, and 8. Musically these are almost identical and are settings for verses which represent the punishment and destruction of the wicked. The continuo line is extremely active, while the chorus is handled in a completely declamatory fashion,

in contrast to the other movements of this work which are predominantly contrapuntal.

Marcello's affective treatment of the text is illustrated in Chorus No. 1 by the use of a chromatic theme indicating sadness and desolation. This theme contains the distinctive interval of a tri-tone which, along with the rhythmic pattern, Marcello uses as a unifying device, e.g. in Movement No. 2, Verse 8, the tri-tone is used to depict irritation (irritarti), and Movement No. 5, Verse 22, begins with the tri-tone on the word dura (harsh). Movement No. 9, depicting the rise of the wicked man to lofty heights, employs an ascending line which begins in the bass line on E flat; and, within the space of four measures it is carried through the tenor, alto and soprano lines up two octaves to e flat".

The final movement is a serenely beautiful contrapuntal setting using the second psalm tone as a cantus firmus. This movement is characterized by extended melismas on the words sommo bene (highest good).

This Psalm might very effectively be performed in church, as well as in concert, in whole or in part.

PSALM 46

Another representative of the Solo category, this Psalm is scored for soprano and continuo. Nine verses are divided into four movements--3 arias, 1 arioso, and 1 recitative. The text is a joyful song of praise and is categorized by Avison as being of a cheerful "stile of expression".

Being consistently cheerful in nature, the tempo is allegro throughout with the exception of the arioso. The melodic lines are characterized by melismatic passages, wide leaps, and trills; and in Movement No. 3 the melodies are quite instrumental, depicting the trumpets described in the text.

Two types of trills are introduced. Movement No. 1 features the trill symbol at cadence points. An affective use of an ornamental figure is found in Movement No. 3 where the trill is written into the melodic line in an extended pattern imitating a trumpet trill on the word trombe (trumpet).

The final movement features a return to a more serene tempo in reflection of the text which offers reverent and devout homage to God. The movement is characterized by a descending syncopated motif depicting the act of bowing in reverent homage.

A virtuoso singer is required, and the bass and harpsichord parts have equally florid lines, indicating the need for virtuoso continuo players as well.

This Psalm would be most effective used in concert and recital.

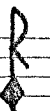
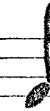
Marcello's Psalms are beautiful examples of Late Baroque compositional practice. It is this writer's hope that the Psalms will once again be included in concert, recital, and church performances, affording delight and pleasure to new audiences. In closing, we may join our voices with that of Charles Avison as he says:

. . . wherever the Psalms of Marcello have been known, they have been admired: And every Succession of true Lovers of Music will admire them, till Time, and the Art itself, shall be no more.¹

¹Garth and Avison, op. cit., I, Remarks, iv.

APPENDIX A

MARCELLO'S ELEMENTS OF NOTATION

Notes		Rests	
Marcello	Modern	Marcello	Modern
			
			
			
			
			
			
			

APPENDIX B

VOCAL SCORING - MARCELLO'S ESTRO POETICO-ARMONICO

PSALM NUMBER	SOLO-CHORAL SETTINGS			SOLO SETTINGS			CHORAL SETTINGS	
	17 à due	14 à tre	4 à quattro	7 solo	4 duet	1 trio	1 à tre	2 à quattro
1.	A B							
2.	A B							
3.	S A							
4.	S A							
5.	A B							
6.	A B							
7.	S B							
8.				A*				
9.		A T B						
10.			S A T B					
11.	A A							
12.					A T			
13.					B B			

APPENDIX B

VOCAL SCORING - MARCELLO'S ESTRO POETICO-ARMONICO

PSALM NUMBER	SOLO-CHORAL SETTINGS			SOLO SETTINGS			CHORAL SETTINGS	
	17 `a due	14 `a tre	4 `a quattro	7 solo	4 duet	1 trio	1 `a tre	2 `a quattro
14.				S				
15.				A				
16.	T T							
17.		A T B						
18.			A T T B					
19.			A T B B					
20.			A A T B					
21.				A+				
22.	A T							
23.		A T B						
24.	T B							
25.		A T B						
26.		S T B						

APPENDIX B

VOCAL SCORING - MARCELLO'S ESTRO POETICO-ARMONICO

PSALM NUMBER	SOLO-CHORAL SETTINGS			SOLO SETTINGS			CHORAL SETTINGS	
	17 à due	14 à tre	4 à quattro	7 solo	4 duet	1 trio	1 à tre	2 à quattro
27.					S A			
28.		A T B						
29.	T B							
30.								
31.		A T B				A T B		
32.		A T B						
33.	A B							
34.		A T B						
35.	T B							
36.								S A T B
37.	S A							
38.				S				

APPENDIX B

VOCAL SCORING - MARCELLO'S ESTRO POETICO-ARMONICO

PSALM NUMBER	SOLO-CHORAL SETTINGS			SOLO SETTINGS			CHORAL SETTINGS	
	17 `a due	14 `a tre	4 `a quattro	7 solo	4 duet	1 trio	1 `a tre	2 `a quattro
39.	A B							
40.		A T B						
41.					S S			
42.				B				
43.								S A T B
44.		A T B						
45.	A B							
46.				S				
47.		S T B						
48.							A T B	
49.		S A B						
50.		A T B+						

* With tutti

+ With violas

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