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Judgment and Choice: Politics and Ideology in Early Eighteenth-Century Masques

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## ABSTRACT

The faculty of judgment, whether aesthetic, political, or moral, held a central position in the life of eighteenth-century England. This dissertation reveals the political ideologies underlying the aesthetic judgments (made by composers, audiences, and characters) in a repertoire of masque settings of William Congreve's libretto, *The Judgment of Paris* from 1701 to 1742.

Chapter One provides an introduction to English political history in the early to mid-eighteenth century, in particular the Parliamentary strife which existed between the Whig and Tory parties, and documents the influence of politics on cultural production and aesthetic ideology. Chapter Two outlines the events surrounding the "The Prize Musick" competition including the circumstances of its inception, sponsors, competitors, and outcome. This chapter also discusses Congreve's ties to the Whig party and the structure and content of his libretto. Chapter Three analyses and compares the settings of the original extant settings from the competition by Daniel Purcell, John Weldon, and John Eccles with emphasis on their relative strengths of orchestration, harmonic structure, and motivic content. In Chapter Four new settings of Congreve's libretto, dating from the 1740s, by Giuseppe Sammartini and Thomas Arne are analysed and compared, both to each other and to the earlier "Prize" settings. This chapter also discusses the rise of other dramatic works based on similar "judgment" or "choice" plots such as Handel's *The Choice of Hercules*. Finally, Chapter Five outlines the historical function of music and aesthetic judgment in maintaining an orderly society and the role of *The Judgment of Paris* settings in fulfilling this function.

## RÉSUMÉ

La faculté de jugement, qu'elle touche au domaine esthétique, politique ou moral, occupa une position centrale dans la société anglaise du dix-huitième siècle. Cette thèse analyse les idéologies politiques qui sous-tendent les jugements esthétiques (formulés par les compositeurs, le public et les personnages) dans une série de masques écrits de 1701 à 1742 sur le livret *The Judgment of Paris* de William Congreve.

Le premier chapitre brosse un tableau général de l'histoire politique anglaise dans la première moitié du dix-huitième siècle, en s'attachant plus particulièrement à la controverse parlementaire qui opposa les partis des Whigs et Tories, et analyse l'influence de la politique sur la production artistique et l'idéologie esthétique. Le prochain chapitre discute les événements entourant la compétition "The Prize Musick" en incluant les circonstances touchant à sa genèse et ses résultats, et le rôle des patrons et compétiteurs. Ce chapitre discute également les liens de Congreve avec le parti Whig, ainsi que la structure et le contenu de son livret. Des réalisations musicales complètes du texte de Congreve pour la compétition par Daniel Purcell, John Weldon, et John Eccles nous sont parvenues. Elles font l'objet d'analyse et sont comparées entre elles dans le chapitre trois, en portant une attention particulière à l'orchestration, la structure harmonique et le contenu motivique. Dans le quatrième chapitre, de nouvelles partitions musicales réalisées sur le livret de Congreve dans les années 1740 par Giuseppe Sammartini et Thomas Arne sont analysées, et font l'objet d'une comparaison, à la fois entre elles et avec les réalisations antérieures du "Prize." Ce chapitre discute également l'émergence d'autres oeuvres dramatiques fondées sur des intrigues de "jugement" ou de "choix,"

comme *The Choice of Hercules* de Haendel. Finalement, le chapitre cinq évalue la fonction historique de la musique et du jugement esthétique dans le maintien de l'ordre social, et en particulier le rôle qu'ont jouées les différentes réalisations musicales dans cette perspective.

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Finally I wish to thank and dedicate this dissertation to my parents and grandparents for their continuing support; Charlene Gerein for everything; the Montreal Expos for winning despite Montreal; and all my colleagues and friends at McGill for their ongoing fortitude, companionship, and insights into the art of music.

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## INTRODUCTION

The musical history of England during the period following Henry Purcell's death has traditionally been dominated by scholarship lamenting the lack of a serious English composition school and the subsequent influence of foreign styles and composers. In 1963 Stoddard Lincoln aptly stated that the "sixteen years from the death of Henry Purcell in 1695 to the advent of George Frederick Handel in 1711, hardly noticed by scholars of drama and neglected by musicologists, are usually considered an interregnum between the consummation of the musical ideals of the Restoration. . . and the establishment of the Italian music that dominated eighteenth-century England."<sup>1</sup> The decades since 1963 have witnessed a vast improvement in the cataloging and surveying of most of the relevant works written and produced in England during this period.<sup>2</sup> Nonetheless, with a few recent exceptions,<sup>3</sup> little attention has been given to the political influences which shaped the music and its production, and even less to the influences of contemporary aesthetic theory on the development of an English repertoire and style.

In this dissertation I consider the ideologies of both aesthetic and political judgment and their relationship to the musical style of a repertoire of masques based on

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<sup>1</sup> Stoddard Lincoln, "John Eccles: The Last of a Tradition" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Wadham College, University of Oxford, 1963), 1.

<sup>2</sup> See for example Roger Fiske, *English Theatre Music in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986); H. Diack Johnstone and Roger Fiske (eds.) *Music in Britain: The Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd., 1990); Curtis Price, *Music in the Restoration Theatre* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1979); Robert D. Hume, *The Development of English Drama in the Late Seventeenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1976).

<sup>3</sup> Such exceptions include Curtis Price, "Political Allegory in Late-Seventeenth-Century English Opera," *Music and Theatre: Essays in Honour of Winton Dean* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 1-30; Richard Leppert, *Music and Image: Domesticity, Ideology, and Socio-Cultural Formation in Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); John Shepperd, *Music as Social Text* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991).

William Congreve's libretto *The Judgment of Paris*. This libretto, based on the well known myth concerning Paris' awarding of a golden apple to the most beautiful of the goddesses Juno, Pallas Athena, and Venus, was commissioned for "The Prize Musick" composition contest of 1701. The contestants in this competition, John Eccles, Daniel Purcell, John Weldon, and Gottfried Finger, were each to set Congreve's libretto, with the prize decided by the approbation of the audience. In the wake of Henry Purcell's death this event marked an attempt to promote English music and musicians. However, as the competition was sponsored and promoted exclusively by the Whig party, these works also provided unique vehicles with which to propagate Whig party ideology, propounding individual liberty and right to subjective judgment, and prejudice public political judgment against their Tory rivals in the wake of the "Glorious Revolution" of 1688-89.

Though the increasing popularity of Italian opera soon eclipsed revivals of the original "Prize" settings and, indeed, nearly eclipsed the English masque altogether, a revival of interest in the libretto and in other works employing "judgment" or "choice" plots took place beginning some forty years after the original "Prize" competition. Both Giuseppe Sammartini (1740) and Thomas Arne (1742) mounted new settings of Congreve's libretto. These works were set in the context of a nostalgic revival of both the political and musical ideas of the "Glorious Revolution." A number of other masques based on judgment and choice, notably Handel's *Choice of Hercules* (1751) also arose during this period.

As the plot of *The Judgment of Paris* revolves around what is, ostensibly, a beauty contest set to music, these settings additionally provide a unique insight into what was

then considered to be musically beautiful. They also illustrate an important development in the history of aesthetics through their involvement of both traditional, objectively utilitarian neoclassical aesthetics and new theories, developed by the Earl of Shaftesbury and Francis Hutcheson, propounding the value of subjective aesthetic judgment.

This dissertation represents an original study of the tradition of “judgment” and “choice” masques, of settings of Congreve’s *The Judgment of Paris* in particular, and political and aesthetic ideologies which underlay them. “The Prize Musick” competition has been mentioned in many histories;<sup>4</sup> but Weldon’s, Eccles’ and Purcell’s settings of *The Judgment of Paris* (the only three surviving settings) have previously received only cursory scholarly analysis in works by Roger Fiske, Diack Johnson, and Stoddard Lincoln.<sup>5</sup> This dissertation represents the first comprehensive comparative analysis of these works. Likewise, the later settings by Sammartini and Arne also receive their first comprehensive study here. In combination with the earlier settings and other musical works employing “judgment” and “choice” as central plot components, this dissertation establishes the presence of an important, though previously overlooked, repertoire. While providing a significant stylistic comparison of English dramatic composition in the early to mid-eighteenth century, this dissertation also makes original contributions in linking eighteenth-century politics to aesthetic theory and the production of settings of Congreve’s *Judgment of Paris* and English musical theatre in general.

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<sup>4</sup> Both Charles Burney and John Hawkins, for example, describe the event in their histories. See Charles Burney, *A General History of Music, From the Earliest Ages to the Present Period* (London, 1776-89), reprint 2 vols. Frank Mercer, ed. (New York: Dover Publications, 1957), ii, 984; John Hawkins, *A General History of the Science and Practice of Music* (London, 1776), reprint 2 vols. (New York: Dover Publications, 1963), ii, 759-60, 784-85.

<sup>5</sup> See Fiske, *Theatre Music*, 14-24; Johnson, *Eighteenth Century*, 97-103; Stoddard Lincoln, “A Congreve Masque,” *Musical Times* 113 (1972), 1078-1081; Winton Dean, *Handel’s Dramatic Oratorios and Masques* (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), 153-54.

Chapter One discusses the state of English politics and aesthetics at the end of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth centuries, and presents an overview of the state of English theatre music in the period leading up to "The Prize Musick" competition. The political and aesthetic developments of the middle part of the century are also discussed to provide context for Sammartini and Arne's later settings of Congreve's libretto. Chapter Two details the events which instigated "The Prize" competition, the competition itself, and provides a detailed examination of Congreve's libretto and its potential for political allegory. Chapter Three provides a comparative analysis of the original three extant "Prize" settings of 1701 by John Weldon, Daniel Purcell, and John Eccles. This chapter places particular emphasis on the relation of the various compositional approaches to period aesthetic theory and its reverberation with Whig political ideologies. Chapter Four discusses subsequent revivals of the original settings and the motivations for new mid-century settings of Congreve's libretto by Sammartini and Arne. A comparative analysis of Sammartini's and Arne's settings is also presented. Finally, this chapter explores the rise of other musical works which took the notion of "judgment" or "choice" as the central plot device. Particular emphasis is placed here on Handel's *Choice of Hercules* and its similarity of language and design to Congreve's plan for *The Judgment of Paris*. Chapter Five discusses the traditional use of music to affect political judgments and the prominence of theories concerning the relationship between aesthetic and political judgments. The role of "judgment" - "choice" musical works, including *The Judgment of Paris*, is explained in relation to these issues.

The objectives of this dissertation are to illuminate the relationships among English political agendas, aesthetic theory, and the musical productions of the day. It is also my purpose to expose an important though little known repertoire and broaden and deepen our understanding of English musical tastes and English musical style in the era following the death of Henry Purcell, an era in which scholarship has traditionally focused on the dearth of English music and dominance of Italianate practices.



## CHAPTER ONE

### POLITICS, AESTHETICS, AND THE THEATRE

In order to understand the context of *The Judgment of Paris* settings, a substantive discussion of the state of English politics and aesthetics at the end of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth centuries is required. This chapter outlines the various ideologies and relationships which existed between Parliament, the Whig and Tory parties in particular, and the Crown, the two political institutions which exercised the most control over the production of “judgment” masques.<sup>1</sup> The influence which these institutions held over cultural and musical production is also discussed. The second half of this chapter contains an overview of various contemporary aesthetic theories as formulated by John Locke, Joseph Addison, David Bedford, the Earl of Shaftesbury, John Toland, and Francis Hutcheson. The rise of the notion of “disinterested” aesthetic experience and the relationship of these theories to various political and party agendas is also outlined. Throughout this chapter emphasis is placed on the period leading up to 1701, the year of “The Prize” competition, and on the mid-century years 1740–42 which marked Thomas Arne’s and Giuseppe Sammartini’s new settings of Congreve’s *The Judgment of Paris*.

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<sup>1</sup> In addition to Parliament and the Crown, the Anglican church forms the third of the most important and powerful institutions at this time. The influence of the Church in the production of theatre music was, at best, only indirect. Anglican religious ideology, to be sure, entered into the political agendas and ideology of both Parliament and the Crown, institutions which had far greater control over secular cultural production. It is thus in the context of Parliamentary and Court ideologies that religious influences are discussed. The significant role of religion in shaping the aesthetic values and theories which imbued this repertoire is also discussed in the second half of this chapter.

## I. THE POLITICAL LANDSCAPE

Before moving to the matter of the influence of the party struggle in shaping and controlling aesthetic production during this period it will be necessary to come to some understanding of party organization and the electoral process. In the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries political power was allied to the possession of wealth and property, especially, given England's primarily rural economy, landed property. Until the industrial revolution England was ruled almost exclusively by an elite mix of its largest landowners, wealthiest businessmen, and its leading professional men. Indeed, the political historian William Speck has estimated that throughout the period 1701-1715 the Members of the House of Commons "were drawn almost exclusively from a social range which spanned at most 0.5 per cent of the total population."<sup>2</sup> The Tory party tended to align itself with, and was largely comprised of, men of landed interest. The permanence of landed wealth was identified by the Tories with the security, importance, and permanence of national interest. In keeping with its more cosmopolitan outlook, the Whig party, on the other hand, recruited more members of business and professional interest. According to Speck, "In any House of Commons the bulk of the Tory side consisted of country gentlemen, while the Whig party contained a greater proportion of merchants, lawyers, army officers and other professional men."<sup>3</sup>

Leadership and organization were also factors in shaping party ideology and policy, and ensuring party unity. The Whigs were led by a powerful Junto of Lords

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<sup>2</sup> William Speck, *Tory and Whig: The Struggle in the Constituencies 1701-1715* (London: MacMillan, 1970), 3.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

including the aforementioned John Somers, Edward Russell and Charles Montagu and also by Thomas Warton and Charles Spencer. The Junto was a group of relatively moderate Whigs who had first united to support William's war effort in 1693-94. They held almost daily meetings while Parliament was in session, usually inviting other Whig leaders and members as necessary. Early meetings were held in one another's homes or in the Rose Tavern. In 1700, however, the Kit-Cat Club, founded by the noted publisher Jacob Tonson, became the central meeting place for both Whig party officials and other men of letters. By comparison the Tory party was much more loosely structured and, as a result, often suffered from more internal divisions and tensions. Though no group officially wielded more power than another in the Tory party, some of the most prominent and active party members included supporters of High Church principles Robert Harley, the Earl of Rochester, and Sir Edward Seymour. From the late 1690s and during the reign of Queen Anne the Tory leaders would hold briefing assemblies or "general meetings" with backbenchers just before or after Parliamentary sessions. Often these meetings were held in the Fountain Tavern in the Strand. Both sides used a system of regional whips and circular letters to coordinate activities, select candidates, and plan party tactics and policy.<sup>4</sup>

The reigns of William and Anne witnessed an unprecedented number of General Elections. Between 1689 and 1715 there were twelve General Elections - in 1689, 1690, 1695, 1698, 1701 (two), 1702, 1705, 1708, 1710, 1713, and 1715. The Whigs claimed victory in the years 1689, 1690, 1695, 1698, the January election of 1701, 1708, and

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<sup>4</sup> Tim Harris, *Politics Under the Later Stuarts: Party Conflict in a Divided Society 1660-1715* (London: Longman, 1993), 152. Also see Speck, *Tory and Whig*, chs. 3, 4.

1715. The years after 1715 until 1760 saw Parliament controlled by a Whig dynasty led by a series of statesmen including Charles Stanhope, Robert Walpole, John Carteret, and William Pitt. From studying the election propaganda for any given year, one might receive the impression that the elections were fought on the same ideological issues which divided the parties in Parliament: religion, war in Europe, and the security of the Protestant succession.<sup>5</sup> It has become clear, however, that in many constituencies, especially those outside of London and other urban centers, local issues were of greater importance. When national issues were a factor they were often distinctively shaped by local circumstances.<sup>6</sup>

#### Early Eighteenth-Century Politics: Parliament and Crown, Tory and Whig

In the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries a series of political crises gave English politics a highly charged ideological atmosphere. England was destabilized by the *ad hoc* installation of William and Mary in 1689, the rapid expansion of the state to meet the demands of war with France and, later, by the Hanoverian succession. During this time English Parliamentary politics were engulfed in fierce partisanship arising from the settlement of 1689. The rivalry between the two major parties, Tory and Whig, was so intense that many feared the onset of another civil war. The fundamental differences in opinion involved a wide variety of constitutional and ecclesiastical issues. The Tory party, later identified with conservatism, preferred divine right theories of government and supported a strong monarchy. The Tories also initially defended hereditary (Catholic)

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<sup>5</sup> Speck, *Tory and Whig*, 86-87.

<sup>6</sup> Harris, *Politics*, 189-191.

succession to the throne of James II and opposed William III and his involvement of England in European affairs. The Whigs, on the other hand, were nationalist-populists who, in opposition to Tory principles, advocated a Lockean contractual kingship and a strong Parliament that would defend the rights and liberties of individual citizens. They ardently supported the Protestant succession of William III and exclusionist policies to bar Catholic succession. The Whigs were also anxious to defend dissenters against the arbitrary exercise of legal power by the Anglican Church, and strongly backed William's attempt to contain Louis XIV by consolidating England's influence in Europe.<sup>7</sup>

These issues, which lay at the root of parliamentary conflict in the early eighteenth century, did not spring forth full blown in that period but rather matured during the course of the second half of the seventeenth century. It was during the Exclusion Crisis of 1679-1681 that many of the issues so important to William and Anne's reigns were first clearly outlined within the context of party activity. The exclusion conflict both resonated with many of the same constitutional questions which caused the Civil War and anticipated many of the problems encountered during the Glorious Revolution of 1688, by itself the immediate cause of most of the political and religious controversy in England during the early eighteenth century. The exclusion crisis was dominated by a single important question: whether James, Duke of York, should be barred from succession to the English

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<sup>7</sup> The delineation of Whig and Tory platforms has been the subject of much debate. Party positions on many issues often radically changed from time to time to conform and cater to changing political expediencies. The above distinctions are compiled from a variety of recent concordant scholarship including: Speck, *Tory and Whig*; Harris, *Politics*; J. C. D. Clark, *English Society 1688-1832: Ideology, Social Structure and Political Practice During the Ancien Régime* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Geoffrey Holmes, *British Politics in the Age of Anne*, rev. edn. (London: MacMillan, 1987); John Brewer, *The Sinews of Power: War Money and the English State, 1688-1783* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989); Jeremy Black, ed., *Culture, Politics, and Society in Britain, 1660-1800* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1991).

throne because of his Catholic religion. In 1679, in the face of the Popish Plot to kill Charles II and the constant threat of war with Catholic France, the religious issue seemed a matter of paramount importance. The Whigs at that time felt that "James would dispense with Parliament and depend solely on the French King [Louis XIV] and the pope for support."<sup>8</sup> The Whigs wanted James to be literally excluded from succession. To justify their position they rallied around the Lockean theory of a contractual kingship. This theory, first publicly outlined in John Locke's *An Essay Concerning the True Original, Extent, and End of Civil Government*, was based on the assumption that civilized society is the result of a voluntary contract that establishes a representative authority to enforce rights and guarantee security which had previously depended on an individual's own efforts.<sup>9</sup> In short, Locke and the Whig party, which he avidly supported, believed that men possessed the basic right to protect their lives and liberties, a right that superseded all government. Indeed, the idea of a balanced constitution and the separation of powers to ensure government by consent, espoused by Locke, forms one of the most potent political ideologies that remains with us to day.<sup>10</sup> This theory was, effectively, a confirmation and extension of the rise of individualism which was, perhaps, an implicit trajectory since the Protestant Reformation.

The Tories had little rebuttal to such theories and to Whig charges that popery posed a serious threat to the both the state and Anglican church. Their prime defensive tactic was to enhance the aura of kingship by claiming that the monarchy was divinely

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<sup>8</sup> James O. Richards, *Party Propaganda Under Queen Anne: The General Elections of 1702-1713* (Athens GA.: University of Georgia Press, 1972), 24.

<sup>9</sup> Basil Williams, *The Whig Supremacy 1714-1760* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1962), 4.

<sup>10</sup> Robert Leach, *British Political Ideologies* (Hemel Hempstead: Philip Allan, 1991), 37.

sanctioned by God and that therefore exclusion, even of an unjust or tyrannical king, was sinful and subversive. In short, succession was by divine right and could not be altered. As events unfolded the exclusion movement failed, and in 1685 James II ascended the throne, though his heavy-handed actions under the guise of divine right might have provided some justification for the ensuing Glorious Revolution.<sup>11</sup>

The Revolution of 1688 was clearly Whig inspired, but what followed was anything but what the Whigs and Tories expected. William III, the “saviour” of the “ancient constitution,” refused to subject himself to either party though he relied heavily on Tories who had served James II. The Tories faced a crisis in 1696, however, when the revelation of a plot, involving some high ranking Tories, to assassinate the king rejuvenated Whiggish sentiments throughout the country.<sup>12</sup> Whig leaders attempted to capitalize on the situation by proposing a bipartisan association to declare William the “rightful and lawful King of these realms.”<sup>13</sup> The surge in Whig fortunes was short-lived, however, for it was revealed late in 1696 that some of their highest leaders had engaged in treasonable correspondence with James II.

Though the issues and divisions discussed above dominated post-Revolution politics, they became particularly important, even intensified, in the initial years of the eighteenth century. The problem of a potential Catholic succession, apparently solved by William’s Glorious Revolution of 1688, was reopened in 1700 with the death of Anne’s sole potential heir. This problem was averted in 1701 with the passage of The Act of

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<sup>11</sup> Richards, *Party Propaganda*, 25.

<sup>12</sup> For a more complete discussion of this issue see Keith Feiling, *A History of the Tory Party, 1640-1714* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1924), 318-320.

<sup>13</sup> As quoted in Richards, *Party Propaganda*, 26.

Settlement. The act guaranteed the security of the Protestant Monarchy by passing the descent of the crown to the House of Hanover after Anne's death. The act, however, can be read as a critique of William III's government, in as much as it was a barrier against a Stuart (Catholic) restoration. It also attempted to secure the "rights and liberties of the subject" by ensuring a program of constitutional opposition to the crown.<sup>14</sup> It included clauses establishing judicial independence from royal control, and, in keeping with xenophobic Whig fears of an absolutist French-style Monarchy, excluded foreign born nationals from the House of Commons. Although the Toleration Act of 1689 meant that Dissenters were no longer prosecuted for their beliefs, they were still denied full civil rights and were technically banned from holding public office. The problem of religious dissent was re-ignited both by an increasing number of Catholic dissenters who occasionally took communion in the Anglican Church merely in order to qualify for elected office, and by the deluge of anticlerical literature which followed in the wake of the expiry of the Licensing Act in 1695.<sup>15</sup> These events were construed as a serious threat to the Anglican Church which in the mid-1690s rallied around the cry "Church in Danger" and later prompted the Tories, from 1702-1704, to introduce three unsuccessful bills into Parliament to stamp out the practice of occasional conformity.<sup>16</sup> Through such avid support for high Anglican principles the Tories became known as, and cultivated the moral image of being, the "High Church" party. The Whigs, on the other hand, came to be known as the "Low Church" party and continued to be critical of the religious

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<sup>14</sup> As quoted from the Act of Settlement in Sir George Clark's *The Later Stuarts 1660-1714* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1961), 190.

<sup>15</sup> Speck, *Tory and Whig*, 2.

<sup>16</sup> Harris, *Politics*, 153.



intolerance of the High Anglican Church, adhering to their belief in individual liberty of conscience. The Whigs were also the party of international Protestantism, believing that England should open its borders to foreign Protestants who were forced to flee their homelands due to religious persecution. The Tories adamantly opposed the Whigs on this issue. Much in the manner of current conservative thinking, the Tories felt that an influx of foreign immigrants posed a threat to national security, would siphon jobs from native workers, and would pose an additional threat to the dominance of the Church of England.<sup>17</sup>

The party division over foreigners was further acerbated, or at least reinforced, by their relative positions on foreign policy. The year 1701 saw the prospects for war with France re-emerge as a serious threat. The Whigs sought to rally the country behind the Grand Alliance, a system of continental alliances which William was constructing in order to counteract the expansionist policies of Louis XIV, and to maintain the balance of power in Europe between the Bourbons and the Hapsburgs.<sup>18</sup> Consequently, England became involved in several major European conflicts, including the War of the League of Augsburg (1689-97) and the War of Spanish Succession (1702-1713). The Tories, however, were much more isolationist than the Whigs. Though many individual Tories conceded that Louis XIV needed to be checked, the party favored only a limited naval engagement and opposed William and the Duke of Marlborough's (Anne's leading

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<sup>17</sup> The divisions between "High Church" Tories and "Low Church" Whigs had several musical implications. Perhaps the most important was the Tory advocacy of inherently English music and support for music modeled on the past masters, versus the more contemporary tastes favored by the "Low Church" party. Based on such alignments of musical taste it seems of little surprise that Whig playwrights dominated the theatre in the early part of the century. For a more detailed discussion of these implications see William Weber, *The Rise of Musical Classics in Eighteenth-Century England* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1992), 30-36.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 159.

General) strategy of maintaining an expensive continental army, a strategy that imposed a heavy burden on the nation's taxpayers.

With the Whigs more consumed with foreign issues, the Tories devoted much of their attention to mounting a series of attacks against Whig breaches of ethics and abuses of power incurred in prosecuting their foreign policies. In 1702 these attacks eventually resulted in the impeachment of four Whig leaders, John Somers, William Portland, Edward Russell (who became Earl of Orford), and Charles Montagu (who became Earl of Halifax).<sup>19</sup>

Debates over Catholic exclusion and dissent, The Act of Settlement, individual civil liberty and a strong Parliament versus absolute government by divine right, continental alliances and war, and Whig breaches of ethics were the significant issues which defined and dominated the Parliamentary conflicts in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. As William Speck writes: "the coincidence of these events in 1701-2 molded the party struggle into a shape that was not drastically altered until after the Hanoverian succession."<sup>20</sup>

#### Mid-Century Politics: Parliament, Crown, and Patriots

Mid-century Parliamentary politics, which surround the ca. 1740 revival of judgment masque repertoire, were far less fragmented. Consequently, the political

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<sup>19</sup> Clark, *The Later Stuarts*, 195, and Harris, *Politics*, 168-69. The impeachments arose out of Somers' (The Lord Keeper) use of the Great Seal on a blank commission to the first Spanish Partition Treaty of 1698 without Parliament's approval. The Spanish Partition Treaties of 1698 and 1699 resulted from the common desire of William III and Louis XIV to avoid a war over the disposition of the Spanish inheritance as laid out in the will of Charles II of Spain.

<sup>20</sup> Speck, *Tory and Whig*, 2.

influences on cultural production are much more complicated than the relatively clear cut divisions and agendas which existed between parliamentary parties and the Crown at the beginning of the century.

From 1721- 42, under the strong domination of the Whig government of Robert Walpole and its relatively successful trade policies which saw England prosper economically, partisan Parliamentary divisions were much less in evidence. The accession of the Hanoverians, George I and II, also transferred a great deal of royal power into the hands of Parliament, hence dissipating many of the previous tensions which had existed between court and Parliament.<sup>21</sup> Religious intolerance was also relatively dormant at this time. The historian Basil Williams, no doubt perpetuating the Whig interpretation of history, only slightly overstates the stability of the period in the introduction to his book *The Whig Supremacy*:

The period of the first two Georges seems an oasis of tranquillity between two agitated epochs: before it, a century of revolutionary unrest . . . following it, the long reign of George III with its uneasy adjustments, at home and in America . . . Between 1714 and 1760 the English people, wearied with struggles and sated with glory, was content to stabilize the results of the Revolution under a dynasty for which it had no love and accept an oligarchic system of government which for the time being seemed exactly suited to its needs. It was an age of stability in politics, in religion, in literature, and in social observances, a stability needed to enable the nation to recover its poise after more than a century of excitement.<sup>22</sup>

In the face of the 1739 War of Austrian Succession and with the constant threat of war with Spain and France, many of these developments, especially tolerance, seem to

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<sup>21</sup> Since the accession of George I, no sovereign has refused to give assent to a bill supported by both houses of Parliament. The openly expressed preference of both George I and George II for their continental possessions over England also detracted from their authority over their English subjects. Williams, *Whig Supremacy*, 15.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

have been dictated by the need for political peace in the country as a whole.<sup>23</sup> The apparent unity of the country's political spectrum thus rested more on political expediency than on genuine conviction.

Despite the, at least superficially, unifying developments in the English political landscape described above, a number of new political power struggles began. Walpole resigned as Prime minister in 1742, following a series of setbacks in domestic and foreign affairs. In 1733 he was forced to abandon his excise tax scheme, which would have seen a tax applied to nearly all consumed goods. Later, a series of disputes weakened England's foreign alliances.<sup>24</sup> Relations with Spain became especially strained. For many years England had protested Spanish piracy and the highly invasive "right of search" policies carried out against British merchants by the Spanish *guarda-costas* in order, ostensibly, to stop smuggling. Overriding Walpole's desire to keep the peace, the feud escalated to a declaration of war on 19 October 1739. Walpole apparently lacked the heart for the war and resigned less than three years later.<sup>25</sup>

Perhaps the most important dispute to have a direct bearing on the revival of the "judgment" masques was the inter-family quarrel which arose between George II and his son Frederick, Prince of Wales. The quarrel resulted from the king's fear that his son was gaining too much popularity and power and that, eventually, he might depose him as monarch. In order to contain his son's influence, George II limited Frederick's yearly allowance to £50,000 even though the king had been granted an extra £100,000 for his civil list on the understanding that the prince would be allowed that amount. The feud

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<sup>23</sup> W. T. Shelley, *England in the Eighteenth Century* (London: A & C Black Ltd., 1934), 67.

<sup>24</sup> See Williams, *The Whig Supremacy*, 205-8.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 210.

was such that Frederick was eventually banned from court after intentionally avoiding having his first-born child delivered under his parent's roof.<sup>26</sup>

Despised and rejected by his parents, Frederick was the perfect lightning rod to attract opposition both to his father and to Walpole's Whig government, avidly supported by his father. Frederick thus attracted the support and friendship of Viscount Bolingbroke, the most serious opponent of Walpole's government and a tireless agitator. Bolingbroke saw Frederick as the model of the political theories he had outlined in *The Patriot King* (c.1738) and contrived, as unofficial leader of the opposition, to unite remaining Jacobites, Tories, and malcontent Whigs in common hostility to the ruling government. "The Patriots" as they came to be known included a number of political stars and men of fashion as well many of the leading authors of the day, including Gay, Pope, Swift, Arbuthnot, and Fielding.<sup>27</sup> Some of the most effective tools of this opposition group were the propagandist periodicals *The Craftsman*, *Fog's Weekly Journal*, and *Common Sense*, which featured articles by many of the authors listed above as well as by Bolingbroke himself.

The political ideology behind "The Patriots" is somewhat difficult to pinpoint. As previously mentioned, the group was drawn from a variety of political backgrounds including disaffected Whigs. The common thread was a united sense of opposition to, or dissatisfaction with, both George II and Walpole's government. Much as with the Whig party opposition to tyranny following the revolution of 1689, "The Patriots" saw the ruling government as overly repressive in its taxation schemes and they had a large part in

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 204.

forcing the withdrawal of Walpole's Excise scheme in 1733. "The Patriots," as the name implied, also took an extremely nationalist stance on foreign matters. They consistently argued against Walpole's foreign policy and, in the pages of their periodicals, were instrumental in stimulating and agitating public outrage against Spain.<sup>28</sup> The group was also opposed to George II's frequent trips to his continental electorate of Hanover and seeming predilection for foreigners at court (including foreign musicians such as Handel).

Frederick, on the other hand, was the first of the Hanoverians to identify himself exclusively with British interests. As mentioned, he served as the ostensible subject of and inspiration for the political ideas outlined in Bolingbroke's *Patriot King*.<sup>29</sup> Frederick, and indeed Bolingbroke as well, manifested their nationalist politics through increased patronage of English arts which, under Walpole and the Hanoverians, had been largely neglected. This situation is important to the revival of "judgment" masques in that it was Frederick, surrounded by his circle of oppositionist friends, who commissioned Giuseppe Sammartini's version of Congreve's *Judgment of Paris* in 1740, a work which subsequently inspired Thomas Arne's setting in 1742.<sup>30</sup> With respect to Sammartini's version, the nationalist and political sentiment of the work was further reinforced by the program's companion piece, Arne's masque *Alfred* (1740). This work was based on the story of King Alfred and propagated a myth of the superiority of Teutonic (Anglo-Saxon) racial origin of the English.

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 205.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 340.

<sup>30</sup> Though there is no direct evidence it is interesting to speculate that Handel's adoption of the English oratorio at this time may also have arisen in partial concession to "patriot" politics. Handel's relationship with Frederick, often portrayed as oppositional, has recently been reconsidered. See Carole Taylor, "Handel and Frederick, Prince of Wales," *Musical Times* 124 (1984), 89-92.

After the Glorious Revolution of 1688, and throughout the eighteenth century, Parliament, in its role as representative of the people - including an increasingly powerful middle class - grew in political importance and influence. It is a mistake, however, to underestimate the continuing power and influence of the monarchy in society at large. The historian J.C.D. Clark has recently provided evidence that, after 1689, even the expanding influence of Parliamentary bureaucracy "did not destroy the Court's role as the principal arena of intrigue and manoeuvre, the place where real power - royal favor and nomination to office - was fought for, won, and lost."<sup>31</sup>

The Crown's power and independence tended to rise and fall with the health of its finances. The commercial prosperity of England in the early eighteenth century, for example, ensured the strong position of the Hanoverian Monarchs. Perhaps the most obvious source of royal power is the influence it was able to wield with its wealth. The 1698 Civil List Act had transferred the responsibility for many areas of state expenditure to Parliament but, nonetheless, left the King certain revenues deemed sufficient to run some traditional court controlled functions (such as ministerial salaries, royal household expenses - including musicians - and pensions).<sup>32</sup> Indeed the negotiation of increasingly generous Civil List revenues for the court became an important means by which ruling parties secured royal favour.<sup>33</sup> Previous to the Civil List Act, the Bill of Rights of 1689 also attempted to limit royal power. It enshrined the principle that taxes could only be

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<sup>31</sup> J. C. D. Clark, *Revolution and Rebellion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 70.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 73.

<sup>33</sup> Parliamentary Provisions for the Civil List substantially increased with every Monarch from Anne until George II. It is widely held that Robert Walpole bought his own political ascendancy by securing a generous provision for George II. See Clark, *Revolution and Rebellion*, 73; E. A. Reitan, "The Civil List in Eighteenth-Century British Politics: Parliamentary Supremacy Versus the Independence of the Crown," *Historical Journal* 9 (1966), 318-37.

raised with the approval of Parliament and prohibited the raising or keeping of a standing army within England without Parliamentary consent. This Bill and the previously discussed Act of Settlement placed severe restrictions on Royal independence. Though the Crown maintained some degree of influence over the House of Commons, the primary means by which it exercised any form of power over Parliament was its influence, achieved through appointments and pensions, over the House of Lords.

Parliament must, however, be given credit for limiting the King's power to some degree. The declining exercise of the royal veto after 1688, used for the last time in 1708, would seem to reinforce this perception.<sup>34</sup> Recent scholarship has also elaborated on the decline of court influence and culture during the reign of Queen Anne.<sup>35</sup> However, one need only look to the competition for royal patronage in the arts for evidence of the Court's continued importance in cultural production. To be sure the late Stuarts were not as active in sponsoring artistic projects to achieve political goals as other continental royal houses, such as the Bourbons or the Hapsburgs. England's physical isolation from other countries meant that the court could adopt a more relaxed attitude towards its cultural life. With the advent of the Hanoverian's and, in particular, Frederick's attempt to curry political favour, royal patronage of the arts again became increasingly important.

#### Early Eighteenth-Century Politics and Cultural Production

The prime vehicles for royal musical patronage were household music, composed for balls, weddings, birthdays and other state occasions, and sacred music which was the

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<sup>34</sup> Clark, *Revolution and Rebellion*, 76.

<sup>35</sup> See R. O. Bucholz, *The Augustan Court: Queen Anne and the Decline of Court Culture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993).



responsibility of the Chapel Royal. The most important position in terms of household music was the Master of the King's Music. Upon the death of Nicholas Lanier, the original title holder, in 1666, the position was taken up by Louis Grabu (perhaps most famous for his English opera, a setting of Dryden's *Albion and Albanius*) who was succeeded by Nicholas Staggins in 1674. When Staggins died in 1700 John Eccles became Master, this despite a note among Treasury papers "that the King [William] would speak with the Lord Chamberlain about sinking the Master of Musick's place."<sup>36</sup>

The Chapel Royal was the other prominent royal musical institution. The degree of royal control over the Chapel, however, was less than might be imagined. Beginning with the reign of Charles I, the musicians of the Chapel Royal were allowed more freedom from royal control than in continental courts. Few musicians actually resided at court and many developed performing careers in situations outside of court. In addition there was the added benefit of an unusual amount of respect. The Chapel Royal musicians carried the title of Gentlemen where other employees of equal rank did not. They were also paid well, and often granted monopolistic rights for businesses either in or outside of music.<sup>37</sup>

The decline of the court and the general burgeoning of London's musical life at the end of the seventeenth century additionally redirected the careers of court musicians. Recent evidence has shown that, although Charles II initially based much of his court, including his patronage of the arts, on an absolutist French-style model, this style of

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<sup>36</sup> As quoted in John Harley, *Music in Purcell's London* (London: Denis Dobson, 1968), 58.

<sup>37</sup> Stephen Orgel, "The Royal Theatre and the Role of the King," in S. Orgel and G. Fitch Lytle, eds., *Patronage in the Renaissance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 261-273; Weber, *Musical Classics*, 9.

patronage was losing favour in the latter years of his reign.<sup>38</sup> By the time of Queen Anne's reign, the city of London itself had effectively replaced the court as the focus of elite social life and the location of political patronage of the arts. Though the Civil List and the Act of Settlement provided some impetus for this movement, fundamental shifts in both English politics and upper-class life shifted the channels of influence and fashion away from the court and into the city. The clubs, theatres, taverns, and coffee shops now became the focus of political and cultural activity.

Perhaps the most well known example of this shift was provided by the Whig Kit-Cat Club. The Kit-Cat Club virtually became a court in its own right, bestowing patronage for painting, theatre, literature and opera. The members were drawn from the highest ranks of London's social elite and included such leading Whig statesmen as Somerset, Manchester, Godolphin, Halifax, Marlborough, and Temple as well as Whig journalists and poets such as Vanburgh, Congreve, Steele, and Addison. The evidence of their influence and organization was visibly manifest in 1705 when they built their own playhouse, The New Theatre in the Haymarket. This event, and the extent of Kit-Cat influence in society is recounted in Charles Leslie's *Rehearsal* of May 12, 1705. The Tory journalist describes the Whig influence on the opening of the theatre in bitter and sarcastic terms:

The Kit-Cat *Clubb* [sic] is now grown *Famous* and *Notorious* all over the *Kingdom*. And they have Built a *Temple* for their *Dragon*, the new *Play-House* in the *Hay-Market*. The *Foundation* was laid with great *Solemnity*, by a *Noble Babe of Grace*. And over the *Foundation Stone* is a *Plate of Silver*, on which is Graven *Kit Cat* on the one side, and *Little Wigg* on the other... And there was such *Zeal*

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<sup>38</sup> See R. Bucholz, *The Augustan Court* and Weber, *Musical Classics*, 7-8.

*shew'd, and all Purses open to carry on this Work, that it was almost as soon Finish'd as Begun.*<sup>39</sup>

The New Theatre in the Haymarket was merely one manifestation of the infiltration of partisan party politics and ideology which influenced and controlled a substantial amount of cultural production in the years following the Glorious Revolution. The ideological divisions between the Whig and Tory parties reached beyond Parliament and extended to a variety of efforts to capture public opinion. As William Speck writes "Unable to agree among themselves, they [the Members of Parliament] avidly competed for the support of the electorate below them."<sup>40</sup> As a result the public was subjected to a barrage of new techniques of campaigning, pamphleteering, and party organization and to a variety of other forms of public propaganda including literature, theatre, and various types of musical drama.

The most obvious and pervasive form of overt propaganda was found in the explosion of political journalistic activity which took place at this time. Increasing numbers of newspapers, periodical essays and pamphlets fed an expanding readership and helped ensure that the public had relatively easy access to extensive information on both domestic and foreign affairs. In London, in 1704, there were nine newspapers publishing a total of almost forty thousand copies a week.<sup>41</sup> Of these, four, including the Whig controlled journals *Review*, the *Observer*, the *Flying Post*, and the Tory influenced *Post Boy*, were particularly well known for their active partisan propagandizing and

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<sup>39</sup> *Rehearsal* No. 41. Also see R.J. Allen, "The Kit-Cat Club and the Theatre," *Review of English Studies* 7 (1931), 56-60.

<sup>40</sup> Speck, *Tory and Whig*, 6.

<sup>41</sup> James O. Richards, *Party Propaganda Under Queen Anne* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1972), 10.

electioneering. Many of the authors of propagandist articles remained anonymous and their identities must frequently be deduced on the basis of internal evidence or references to authorship gleaned from other sources. Authors of propaganda often risked jail or even death if their identities were revealed and the public's distaste for overt partisanship dissuaded most Whig and Tory leaders from any public acknowledgment that they had hired writers to propagate their political agendas.<sup>42</sup> Nonetheless, there is little doubt today about the allegiances of many of the more well known authors involved in periodical propaganda. Whig supporters included Joseph Addison, Richard Steele, John Tutchin, and Robert Walpole, among others, while Tory writers included John Dryden, John Arbuthnot, Mathew Prior, and Jonathan Swift.<sup>43</sup>

Periodical propaganda was aimed chiefly at the growing numbers of merchants and gentry who possessed both the ability, leisure, and interest to read political literature. As previously mentioned, the gentry were heavily Tory and responded positively to attacks on the heavy burden of taxation which was imposed by Parliament to fund the long wars fought during both William's and Anne's reigns. Merchants, however, were more predisposed to Whig propaganda, especially that which espoused Protestant moral virtues of "individual judgment," a message which accorded well with their desired image of self-made independence.

Party affiliation also permeated literary and theatrical life: nearly all writers of the day were identified with either the Whig or Tory parties. A sampling of the most active Whig writers and playwrights would include Colly Cibber, John Vanburgh, Nicholas

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 7, 32, 107, 133, 137, 190-91.

Rowe, John Dennis, Thomas D'Urfey, and William Congreve. George Granville, John Dryden, Bevil Higgens, and Thomas Otway, amongst others, actively promoted Tory principles in their works. In consequence the theatre was virtually a political arena and political considerations extended into managerial policies, including the choice of plays, playwrights, and subject matter. Dramatists were often, though not always, allied to various theatres based solely on partisan political considerations.<sup>44</sup> Plays, prologues, and epilogues all became vehicles for party sentiment. The relative ascendancy and prevalence of partisan Whig and Tory viewpoints within the theatre underwent several shifts, roughly corresponding to the political power which each party held at any given time. Accordingly, Tory views supporting the King and divine right of kingship, such as expressed in Dryden's *Albion and Albanius* (1685) and Thomas Otway's *Venice Preserved* (1682), nearly monopolized the theatre during James II's brief reign. With the exception of attacks on Catholicism, such as in Nathaniel Lee's *The Massacre of Paris* (1689), government censorship seems to have suppressed any serious Whig response in the theatre at that time.<sup>45</sup> With the ascendancy of William III, and for the greater part of the eighteenth century, portrayals of royal tyranny and Catholic atrocities became common as the Whigs regained prominence in the theatre and in the country as a whole. The well organized approach by the Whig leadership, manifest in the influential efforts of the Kit-Cat Club members, seems to have ensured Whig dominance in the theatre until the mid-eighteenth century.<sup>46</sup> The extremely partisan fervor of the theatre which marked

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<sup>44</sup> John Loftis, *The Politics of Drama in Augustan England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), 2.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 20-21.

<sup>46</sup> This dominance may also have been ensured by conservative "High" church Tory principles which frowned upon the licentiousness of the theatre.

the era leading up to and immediately preceding The Glorious Revolution eventually began to wane with the increased stability of the Hanoverian monarchs and the Whig dynasty of Robert Walpole which lasted from 1721-1742.

The political content of theatrical works was an extension of the Parliamentary war between Whigs and Tories to capture public opinion. This war, however, was often fought out in a series of small skirmishes, individual works or even by the applause or jeers of the audience over the allegorical meaning of single sentences.<sup>47</sup> Nicholas Rowe's *Tamerlane* (1701) is perhaps the best known example of a work that was intended by its author and recognized by its spectators to be a Whig party play. The work portrays Tamerlane as a constitutional monarch analogous to William III, whose power was derived from a social compact, and describes his struggle to overcome Bajazet, a foreign absolutist monarch analogous to Louis XIV. The play contains a Whig religious comment as Bajazet's Moslem beliefs would also have readily been identified with Catholicism. Perhaps more important, *Tamerlane* openly dramatizes the Whig constitutional position as Tamerlane and his captive Bajazet, debate their rival theories of kingship. Free to acknowledge the human limitations of his position, Tamerlane sees himself as little more than an elevated servant to his people as he proclaims:

Be it to have been Heaven's happy Instrument  
The means of Good to all my Fellow-Creatures;  
This is a King's best Praise.

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<sup>47</sup> Perhaps the best known example is that of Joseph Addison's *Cato* (1713). The ambiguity of the political message was such that, according to Colly Cibber, it "demanded two almost irreconcilable Parties to embrace and join in their equal Applauses of it." See Colly Cibber, *An Apology for the Life of Mr. Colly Cibber, Comedian* (London, 1740) ii, 26-27. Also quoted in Loftis, *The Politics of Drama*, 60.

Perhaps the most calculated dramatization of Whig political ideology was John Dennis's *Liberty Asserted* (1704). With a Canadian setting and Native American characters, Dennis wrote the work expressly to support Lockean principles of individual liberty in government and to stimulate public desire for an uncompromising opposition to French tyranny.<sup>48</sup> The plot centers on the actions of a Native Indian who, in a stereotypically noble devotion to freedom, persuades the French governor of the province to declare independence from France. Dennis fully publicizes his anti-French and, through their lack of enthusiasm for war with France, anti-Tory intentions in his preface when he explains that the work "shews a Man who makes a Treaty with the French upon private Interest, made by that Treaty the most wretched of all Mankind."<sup>49</sup>

The theater's preoccupation with politics became obvious to anyone connected with the art. This preoccupation was, rather sarcastically, summed up by John Dennis in his *A Large Account of Taste in Poetry* (1702): "Now I leave any one to judge whether the imaginative faculty of the Soul, must be more exercised in a reign of Poetry and Pleasure, or in a Reign of politicks and Business."<sup>50</sup> The preoccupation with politics, he argued, was a principal cause of what he considered to be a degeneracy of taste in drama. The reasons for this political preoccupation are perhaps best explained by the theatre historian John Loftis:

The self bound world of tragedy, in which practical conclusions could be made to follow from theoretical premises, offered to the Augustans an attractive area for the exploration of political ideas. Dramatists provided...a set of illustrations of political propositions, in which partisan assumptions were given the appearance of natural

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<sup>48</sup> Loftis, *The Politics of Drama*, 42.

<sup>49</sup> *The Critical Works of John Dennis*, ed. Edward Niles Hooker (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1943), I. 321.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, I. 291.

law. Even the dullest of Augustan tragedies convey a certain interest as exercises in political theory, as coherent expositions of opinions that were widely and strongly held. They are in a sense case histories worked up from theories expounded in political treatises. They do not represent original thought on the vexed constitutional issues...but they do record the political convictions by which generations of men lived.<sup>51</sup>

The theatre, explained in these terms, was merely a political stage, used to vent political theories and opinions. This situation remained largely unchanged throughout the eighteenth century.

### Mid-Century Politics and Cultural Production

Politics also played an important role in theatre during the middle years of the century. Following on the heels of the success of John Gay's *The Beggar's Opera* (1728), political propaganda and satire invaded the stage to such an extent that, in 1737, the Stage Licensing Act received Royal assent with Walpole's support. John Loftis cites Henry Fielding's political satires such as *Tom Thumb* (1730), *The Welsh Opera* (1731), *The Grub-Street Opera* (1734) and *Pasquin* (1736) as "influential in provoking the Licensing Act."<sup>52</sup> Whatever the ultimate cause, the Act contained three major provisions. First it banned all theatres except those with Royal patents or which were licensed by the Lord Chamberlain. It also prohibited theatrical performances of new plays outside of the city of Westminster and places of Royal residence. Last the Act required that copies of all new plays, new additions to old plays, prologues and epilogues be submitted to the Lord Chamberlain for licensing at least two weeks before public performance.<sup>53</sup> Thus

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<sup>51</sup> Loftis, *The Politics of Drama*, 42.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 129. See also pp. 128-152 inclusive.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 142.



new plays were effectively submitted to the censorship of the government. Consequently the Act was viewed by many as a direct imposition of partisan (Whig) government supervision and a restriction on freedom of expression and individual liberty. To "The Patriots" and other opposition groups, the Licensing Act, coming on the heels of the failed excise tax scheme, represented further evidence that Walpole was becoming a tyrant in his own right. In reality, very few plays were banned and the censorship was limited only to works with blatant political protests, though it is obviously difficult to assess the effect the Act had in discouraging political works. Henry Brook's *Gustavus Vasa* (1739), an allegorical portrayal of a corrupt minister (Walpole) and a tyrannical foreign king (George II), was the first play to be banned.<sup>54</sup> In the same year James Thomson's *Edward and Eleonora* was banned for its allegorical support for the Prince of Wales.<sup>55</sup> Perhaps the most serious consequence of the Licensing Act was the closing of many of the fringe theatres which were unable to secure patents and licenses. For many years public theatrical performances were largely limited to Drury Lane and Covent Garden and theatres such as Lincoln's Inn Fields gradually fell into obscurity.<sup>56</sup>

Compounding the blackened image of both Walpole and George II was the lack of government or court patronage for the arts offered under their reigns. The opposition, Frederick, Prince of Wales, and Bolingbroke, however, were quick to capitalize on this oversight and actively patronized many of the leading "wits and poets."<sup>57</sup> One of "The Patriots," Philip Dormer Stanhope, the Earl of Chesterfield, actively campaigned against

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 150.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 152. Also see Fiske, *Theatre Music*, 149-50.

<sup>57</sup> Williams, *The Whig Supremacy*, 421.

the Licensing Act in Parliament, attempting to show how censorship of the theatre would lead to that of the press and eventually the end of civil liberty. Chesterfield described the Act as "an arrow, that does but glance upon the stage; the mortal wound seems designed against the liberty of the press."<sup>58</sup> Ironically it was now the opposition to Walpole and the Whigs which defended the ideals of liberty and freedom of expression.

### Theatre Music: Early and Mid-Century

The absorption with political matters also extended into theatre music. While the musicians and composers of the day did not tend to take sides as obviously as writers and playwrights, the librettos they set were nonetheless often filled with thinly veiled political allegories. Discussion and criticism of music, particularly opera, often contained strong political overtones, and was manipulated to different ends by both Tories and Whigs. Many of the attacks, of course, revolved around the foreign nature of Italian opera which was then infiltrating many areas of English theatre music. The satirical reviews of Italian opera by the Whig journalists John Dennis, Richard Steele and Joseph Addison are well known.<sup>59</sup> Many critics merely denigrated Italian opera based on general xenophobia and the fact that it was in a foreign language. Critics such as Thomas Baker complained of Italian opera that "...a Parcel of Italian Eunuchs, like so many Cats, squawll out somewhat you don't understand."<sup>60</sup> However, besides the patriotism involved in upholding the

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<sup>58</sup> *Miscellaneous Works of the Late Philip Dormer Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield*, ed. M. Maty (London, 1777). Vol. I, Part ii, 230-1.

<sup>59</sup> See for example, "Addison and Steele Poke Fun at Handel's First London Opera" in P. Weiss and R. Taruskin, eds. *Music in the Western World* (New York: Schirmer, 1984), 240-242; Franz Montgomery, "Early Criticism of Italian Opera in England," *Musical Quarterly* 15 (1929), 415-25; Thomas Nelson McGeary, *English Opera Criticism and Aesthetics 1685-1747* (London, 1985).

<sup>60</sup> Thomas Baker, *Tunbridge Walks* (London, 1703). Reprinted in Dean, *Handel's Dramatic Oratorios*, 154.

principles of English music and musicians against Italian imports, many critics introduced an undertone of partisan political ideology into their reviews. In addition to the satirical jibes at the Italian librettist, the Whig principles of the importance of individual liberty would seem, at least in part, to underlie Joseph Addison's critique of Handel's first London opera *Rinaldo* (1711).

I shall give you a Taste of the [librettist's] Italian, from the first few lines of his Preface. *Behold, gentle Reader, the Birth of a few Evenings, which tho' it be [born in] the Night, is not the Abortive Darkness, but will make itself known to be the Son of Apollo, with a certain Ray of Parnassus.* He afterwards proceeds to call Signor *Hendel* the *Orpheus* of our Age, and to acquaint us, in the same Sublimity of Stile, that he Composed this Opera in a Fortnight. Such are the Wits, to Whose Tastes we must so ambitiously conform our selves.<sup>61</sup>

For Addison, the fact that London had appeared to submit and "conform" itself to the tyranny of fashionable taste for Italian opera, a foreign influence from a predominantly Catholic region, must have evoked a nonconformist Whig image of the threat of similar Catholic based tyranny by Louis XIV and James II.

The change from the seventeenth to eighteenth centuries also witnessed major changes in English musical theatre. The increasing vogue for Italian opera, along with its musicians and composers, was beginning to have a noticeable impact on the types of productions which were mounted.<sup>62</sup> Indeed, at the beginning of the eighteenth century four different types of operatic production competed for the attention of the London audience.<sup>63</sup> Each type had complex allegiances of supporters and detractors. First there was the directly imported Italian opera seria. These operas, the earliest complete version

<sup>61</sup> *Spectator*, March 6, 1711. Also reprinted in Weiss and Taruskin, *Music in the Western World*, 241-42.

<sup>62</sup> *An Apology for the Life of Mr. Colly Cibber, Comedian* (London, 1740), 185.

<sup>63</sup> I have drawn the following delineations from the work of Eilen Harris, *Handel and the Pastoral Tradition* (London: Oxford University Press, 1980), 193-95.

of which was Stanzani's *Arsinoe* (1705), were initially sung in English translation but eventually began to be performed entirely in Italian (e.g. G. Bononcini's *Almahide* of 1710 and Handel's *Rinaldo* of 1711).

The second operatic type of production, arising out of the need to confront the first, was English opera modeled on the Italian practice. The most famous of such works is Joseph Addison's and Thomas Clayton's *Rosamond* (1707). Unfortunately *Rosamond* met with little success, as did the entire attempt to create an English opera seria tradition. The reasons for the failure are complex, however conventional thinking has placed the blame on "a lack of expertise on the part of English artists compared with the skilled Italian artisans who overran and conquered the British Isle."<sup>64</sup> I will address the political nature of this turn away from English opera more completely in Chapter Four of this dissertation.

The third type was known variously as the "semi-opera" or "dramatic opera" which involved the interpolation of English songs and masques into an otherwise spoken drama.<sup>65</sup> Such works carried on the style of many of Henry Purcell's most famous dramatic works including the *Fairy Queen* (1692) and revivals based on Purcellian models such as Motteux and Daniel Purcell's *The Island Princess* (1699). One notable and outspoken proponent of continuing this tradition was the Whig critic John Dennis who feared that the "soft and effeminate" Italian music would dilute the natural heroic English temperament. As Ellen Harris writes, Dennis "called for England to claim

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 194.

<sup>65</sup> According to Richard Platt the term semi-opera was invented by Roger North and first appears in his *Essay of Musical Ayre* (c. 1715-20). At the time of their original performance such works were described as "dramatic" operas. See Johnstone and Fiske, *The Eighteenth Century*, 96n.

victory in the cultural war on the home front as resolutely as she did in political wars on foreign soil."<sup>66</sup> In the preface to his *An Essay on the Operas After the Italian Manner...* Dennis explained his position. "This small treatise is only levell'd against those opera's which are entirely Musical; for those which are Drammatical may be partly defended by the Examples of the ancients."<sup>67</sup>

The fourth type of operatic entertainment was the English pastoral masque. According to Harris this type of English operatic production "was most heavily represented."<sup>68</sup> After the death of Henry Purcell in 1695 a number of musicians and librettists actively propagated this genre including John Eccles, Gottfried Finger, Daniel Purcell, J.C. Pepusch, P.A. Motteux, and William Congreve. The masque was the result of the demand for afterpieces or interludes to plays in the Restoration period. Earlier in the seventeenth century they had mostly been short one or two act comedies.<sup>69</sup> Late in the century, however, these works took on a more dramatic character usually employing either mythological or pastoral plots, recitative, arioso, songs, choruses, and often elaborate staging effects. Important representatives of this genre include works such as Motteux's *The Loves of Mars and Venus* (1696) set by Gottfried Finger and John Eccles and interpolated into Edward Ravenscroft's *The Anatomist*, and Motteux's and Eccles' *Acis and Galatea* (1701) interpolated into John Fletcher's *The Mad Lover*. Masques were also often interpolated into dramatic operas of the 1670s and 1690s. The interpolated

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<sup>66</sup> Harris, *Pastoral Tradition*, 194-95.

<sup>67</sup> Dennis, "Preface" in *An Essay on the Operas After the Italian Manner, Which are About to be Established on the English Stage With Some Reflections on the Damage Which They May Bring to the Publick* (London, 1706). As quoted in Harris, *Pastoral Tradition*, 195.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 195.

<sup>69</sup> See Allardyce Nicoll, *A History of English Drama 1660-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955), 259.

masque, however, ceased to be written after about 1704, likely due to the changing restrictions on the performance of music and drama at different London theatres.<sup>70</sup>

Congreve's *Judgment of Paris* was one of the earliest examples of a masque that was intended to stand alone as a self-contained entity.<sup>71</sup> The popularity of this work seems to have been influential in encouraging the performance of masques as independent works, as later in the eighteenth century independent masques are more abundant including Handel's *Acis and Galatea* (1718), *The Choice of Hercules* (1751) and Thomas Arne's settings of *Dido and Aeneas* (1733), *Comus*, (1738), *The Tempest* (1746), *The Judgment of Paris* (1740), and *Alfred* (1740).<sup>72</sup>

The reasons for the revival of the indigenous masque in the mid 1730s and 40s and the intervening gap in production are complex. With the increasing availability and seeming popularity of Italian opera seria and following the failure of Addison's *Rosamond* in 1707, English composers largely abandoned the field of serious dramatic music until Thomas Arne's masques some thirty years later.<sup>73</sup> Even though Italian opera temporarily dropped out of favour around 1719, only a small number of the English masques performed in playhouses caught the public's imagination. With exception of John Hughes and Johann Galliard's unsuccessful opera *Calypso and Telemachus* (1712),

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<sup>70</sup> For a discussion of this see Michael Burden, "The Independent Masque 1700-1800: A Catalogue," *The Research Chronicle of the Royal Musical Association* 28 (1995), 59-152. Also see Price, *Music in the Restoration Theatre*, 111-34.

<sup>71</sup> For a complete and extensive survey of all types of theatre music popular in England at this time see Roger Fiske, *Theatre Music*.

<sup>72</sup> For a complete survey of independent masques see Burden, "The Independent Masque 1700-1800."

<sup>73</sup> This is not to say, of course, that English theatre music entirely disappeared. Ballad operas, Pantomimes, and Burlesque continued to flourish throughout this period. The popularity of these charming though unsophisticated genres may, however, have restricted the development of taste for the more complicated and convoluted dramatic structures involved in English opera. See Johnstone and Fiske, *The Eighteenth Century*, 132.

Colly Cibber's and J.C. Pepusch's masques *Venus and Adonis* (1715), *Myrtillo and Laura* (1715), and *Apollo and Daphne* (1716), Galliard's *Pan and Syrinx* (1718) few English works were even produced.<sup>74</sup> From the establishment of the Royal Academy of Music in 1719 until the demise of the Opera of the Nobility in 1737, Italian opera seria regained its prominence in London's theatres. The Opera of the Nobility (1733-7), it should be noted, received its main source of financial support from Frederick, Prince of Wales. This relationship fostered and, no doubt, added to the antagonistic relationship with his father, George II, and his father's continuing patronage of Handel and his company, the Royal Academy.<sup>75</sup>

In 1732 John Lampe, Thomas Arne senior and Thomas Arne junior collaborated in the first serious attempt to organize, produce, and stage full length, all-sung English operas in at least thirteen years.<sup>76</sup> Unfortunately operas such as J.C. Smith's *Teraminta* (1732), Lampe's *Amelia* (1732) and Arne's resetting of Addison's *Rosamond* (1733) did not continue to hold the public's interest. The attempt to establish an English opera company lasted for only one and a half seasons, though seven full-length English operas

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<sup>74</sup> It should be noted, however, that these works may have influenced Handel's masque *Acis and Galatea* (1718), but even this was not heard by the public until 1732. See Johnstone and Fiske, *The Eighteenth Century*, 117. It should also be noted that Michael Burden sees the eighteenth-century evolution of the masque as falling into three periods: the first revolving around "The Prize" competition of 1701, the second from 1715-1720 which includes the works of Cibber and Pepusch at Drury Lane and Lincoln's Inn Fields, and a final revival group of masques from the 1730s. Though he offers little explanation, Burden also sees the revival of the masque in the 1730s as resulting from Thomas Arne senior's efforts to produce "English Opera" at the Haymarket. See Burden, "The Independent Masque," 60.

<sup>75</sup> Though Frederick's sponsorship of the Opera of the Nobility undoubtedly was in opposition to his father, it is less likely that it involved any active opposition to Handel himself. See Carol Taylor, "Handel and Frederick, Prince of Wales," *Musical Times* 125 (1984), 89-92.

<sup>76</sup> The thirteen years is measured from Johann Galliard's setting of Charles Davenant's play *Circe* (1719) to Lampe's *Amelia* (1732). Since only three songs survive, however, it is unclear whether *Circe* represents a full scale opera or merely incidental music. For a summary of the debate on this issue see Johnstone and Fiske, *The Eighteenth Century*, 119n.

were produced - more than in the remainder of the century put together.<sup>77</sup> Conventional scholarship has largely assumed that, after this apparent failure to compete with Italian opera, English composers preferred instead to turn again to their traditional strength, the masque, in order to resurrect an English language repertoire.<sup>78</sup> While this may in part be true, it overlooks the significant role that changing aesthetic theory, and the political ideologies which informed it, had in shaping the rebirth of indigenous forms of English music, particularly the rise of the English oratorio and the revitalization of the masque. The ideological/aesthetic influences which contributed to the decline and resurrection of the masque in the face of Italian opera seria will be discussed in Chapter Four.

## II. IDEOLOGY AND AESTHETIC THEORY

As with dramatic productions as a whole, political ideology and allegory played an important role in the production and content of much, if not most, musical theatre in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. During this period many theatre music productions were occasional, written to commemorate specific events or to honour important patrons. Perhaps the most well known example of this is John Dryden's opera *Albion and Albanus* (1685) which is a transparent homage to the Restoration and a tribute to Charles II. Set by the French-trained composer Louis Grabu, *Albion and Albanus* represents the first full-length, all-sung English opera for which the complete

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<sup>77</sup> See Fiske, *Theatre Music*, 132.

<sup>78</sup> See Johnstone and Fiske, *The Eighteenth Century*, 147; Fiske, *Theatre Music*, 51-62, 171-74; Murray Lefkowitz, "Masque," *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 20 vols., ed. Stanley Sadie (London: MacMillan, 1980), Vol. 11, 756-769; and Henry Raynor, *Music in England* (London: Robert Hale, 1980), Vol. 11, 120-121.



music survives. It was also expressly political, composed at the order of the King so as to, as Curtis Price has written, "commemorate his delivery from the Rye House assassination plot and the resolution of the Exclusion Crises."<sup>79</sup>

Though many theatre music productions were occasional, and thus usually contained some explicit political content (whether implied or directly articulated) many other works carried covert, or encoded, comments on partisan political issues such as "Elective Kingship" or "Loyalty to the Pretender." Curtis Price has effectively demonstrated the prevalence of such political allegory in various types of English theatre music, including non-occasional events, of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.<sup>80</sup> Price details a number of political allusions and allegories in English opera, including works such as Christopher Gibbon and Mathew Locke's masque *Cupid and Death* (1653), Dryden and Purcell's semi-opera *King Arthur* (1684), George Granville's semi-opera *The British Enchanters* (1706), and Joseph Addison's full opera *Rosamond* (1707).

The period from 1688 - 1742 witnessed some of the greatest and most dramatic political, and concomitant social, philosophical and musical upheavals (as manifest in the Parliamentary struggles and the onslaught of Italian opera seria discussed above) that, outside of a civil war, any country is ever likely to witness. Despite this fact no significant scholarship has addressed the relationship of political and aesthetic ideology to the musical tradition of this era. The political influences which shaped earlier pre-

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<sup>79</sup> Curtis Price, "Political Allegory in Late-Seventeenth-Century English Opera" in Nigel Fortune, ed., *Music and Theatre*, 2.

<sup>80</sup> Price, "Political Allegory," 2. Also see Curtis Price, "English Traditions in Handel's *Rinaldo*," in A. Hicks and S. Sadie, eds., *Handel Tercentenary Collection* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1987), 120-137.

Restoration (Jacobean) and Restoration masques, however, have long been recognized. Authors such as Edward Hohl, Stephen Orgel, and Aiden Sinnott, have each contributed significant studies on the relationship between politics and pre-Restoration and Restoration masques.<sup>81</sup> Similarly, there are a number of important works on the influence of politics on Restoration literature.<sup>82</sup> Despite the interest in the study of such aspects during the Restoration, the study of partisan political interest in shaping cultural production during the post-Glorious Revolution and early eighteenth-century eras is still sadly lacking. While both John Loftis and Curtis Price provide admirable introductions to the underlying political content of late seventeenth- and early-eighteenth century English theatre and music, no significant effort has yet been attempted to understand the partisan nature of the political ideologies and their influence on the aesthetic agendas which shaped and controlled this repertoire. Many musicologists have recently begun to recognize the influence of politics, political agendas, and ideology on shaping both culture and cultural discourse.<sup>83</sup> Nonetheless, we have only scant evidence as to the partisan aesthetic agendas which shaped the musical production of early eighteenth-century England. The latter half of this chapter will survey the prevalent aesthetic

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<sup>81</sup> Edward David Hohl, *The Politics of Art: The Jonsonian Masque and Jacobean Drama* (Ann Arbor: UMI Press, 1979); Stephen Orgel, *The Jonsonian Masque* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1965), and *The Illusion of Power: Political Theatre in the English Renaissance* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975); Aiden J. B. Sinnott, "Stuart Politics and the Court Masque," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of North Carolina, 1974).

<sup>82</sup> See for example, Richard Ashcroft and Alan Roper eds., *Politics as Reflected in Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987); Betrand A. Goldgar, *Walpole and the Wits: The Relationship of Politics to Literature, 1722-1742* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1976); Kevin Sharpe and Steven Zwicker, eds., *Politics of Discourse: Literature and History of Seventeenth-Century England* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987).

<sup>83</sup> See works such as: Rose Rosengard Subotnik, *Developing Variations: Style and Ideology in Western Music* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991); John Shepherd, *Music as Social Text*; Richard Leppert, *Music and Image: Domesticity, Ideology and Socio-Cultural Formation in Eighteenth-Century England*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

theories which would have influenced the original, 1701, settings of *The Judgment of Paris* and map the evolution of those theories in conjunction with a return to the "Judgment" masque repertoire in the 1740s.

### General Introduction

At the end of the seventeenth century England underwent a series of societal disruptions and ideological relocations which were unique in Europe. Perhaps the most important single underlying principle of these disruptions was the rise of the idea of individual liberty. The increasing currency of this idea was manifest in the increase of Parliamentary power, particularly in the ascendancy of Whig ideals, and the concomitant decline of absolutist institutions of both the court and church. No longer was the Monarchy and, by association, the Anglican Church, the unquestioned objective source of power. Political power was now, in practical terms, decentralized, though still located in the hands of a relatively small number of elite members of society. Consequently, as reflected in the philosophic writings of Hobbes and Locke among others, there was a decline in the popularity of the objective notion of divine authority and a corresponding rise in the belief in the authority of the subject or individual. At least to some extent, this decline in elitist absolutist ideology represented the first stirrings of the rise in egalitarian goals which characterizes our current (post-modern) condition.

Even with the rise in Parliamentary authority and Lockean theories of individual liberty, in practice Britain was, at best, still an oligarchy. Increasingly, however, this elite was a new capitalist elite, who grounded their wealth and their philosophy in

mercantilism rather than landed property.<sup>84</sup> The rise in mercantilism also reflects an increasing consciousness of individualism and is in keeping with the aforementioned support by merchants of Whig principles of individual liberty.

While other European societies laboured under absolutist monarchies or fractured into decentralized feudal states, England, for all its upheavals, managed to retain a high degree of linguistic and cultural solidarity and thus still maintained a high degree of state authority. It seems likely that it was precisely the presence of individual liberty and self-determination, as manifest in the elected Parliament and propagated in Whig ideology, which contributed to this sense of social solidarity.<sup>85</sup>

Under these propitious conditions, which offered the opportunity for increased capitalist development and a resilient political framework to safeguard it, Britain emerged in the eighteenth century as the world's leading commercial power. The stable Hanoverian monarchy and the aristocratic Whig dynasty actively promoted British mercantile interests around the world. In early eighteenth-century Britain, as the Marxist literary critic Terry Eagleton remarks, "we encounter a robust well-founded unity of agrarian and mercantile interests, accompanied by a marked ideological *rapprochement* between new [mercantile] and traditional [landed] social elites."<sup>86</sup>

The period which spans the genesis and revival of the "judgment" masque repertoire, 1701 - 1751, also highlights an important period in the history of aesthetic theory. Concurrent with the political and social dislocations described above, aesthetic

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<sup>84</sup> For a more detailed discussion of the British oligarchy and the rise of the mercantile elite see Geoffrey Holmes, "The Professions and Social Change in England, 1680-1730," *Proceedings of the British Academy* 65 (1979), 313-54. Also see discussions by Speck, *Tory and Whig*, 3-6, and Harris, *Politics*, 13-19.

<sup>85</sup> See John Brewer, *The Sinews of Power*. William Weber also discusses this issue in *Musical Classics*, 6.

<sup>86</sup> Terry Eagleton, *The Ideology of the Aesthetic* (Cambridge, MA.: Basil Blackwell, 1990), 32.

theory underwent similar changes. Aesthetics witnessed a marked de-stabilization of traditional neoclassical notions of the importance of the objective affect and moral utility of art (including music) to its audience. This de-stabilization, which later culminated in the full blown romantic philosophies of subjective judgment and autonomy of art promoted by Kant and Hegel, found its initial impetus in the moral libertarian writings of the Third Earl of Shaftesbury, John Toland, and Francis Hutcheson among others. As I will illustrate, this new line of aesthetic thinking was intimately bound up with, if not a result of, the same religious/political agendas and issues which characterized partisan Parliamentary politics and the ascendancy of the Whig ideology of individual liberty in particular. Traditionally, in the relationship between political and aesthetic issues in the eighteenth century, the Tories have been identified with "a defense of the *status quo* and security."<sup>87</sup> Their musical tastes were often conservative as they preferred music modeled on Palestrina and Byrd over more contemporary or foreign composers. This attitude was in keeping with "High Church" principles and with the party's traditional roots among landed gentry. Whig aesthetics, on the other hand, were identified with "progress and an expanding future," and were influenced by their expansionist mercantile and political aspirations which they associated with the national good.<sup>88</sup> The Earl of Shaftesbury adopts such a mercantile attitude in the following discussion of wit:

. . . wit is its own remedy. Liberty and commerce bring it to its true standard. The only danger is, the laying an embargo. The same thing happens here, as in the case

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<sup>87</sup> Lee Andrew Elioseff, *The Cultural Milieu of Addison's Literary Criticism* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1963), 128.

<sup>88</sup> Samuel Klinger, "Whig Aesthetics: A Phase of Eighteenth-Century Taste," *ELH*, 16 (1949), 135-150.

of trade. Impositions and restrictions reduce it to a low ebb. Nothing is so advantageous as a free port.<sup>89</sup>

Shaftesbury here also equates the "embargo" or restriction in trade with a restriction in liberty, and the "free port" is equated by analogy to the libertarian Whig ideal of England itself. Indeed the general notion of "progress" in society and history has often been attributed to twentieth-century authors propagating an overly empiricist, linear, and, often, biased "Whig interpretation of history."<sup>90</sup> Though it is difficult, if not impossible, to ever concretely pinpoint a coherent "Whig aesthetic," the politicization of the allegorical content of music and theatre was mirrored in these new aesthetic attitudes and represented a largely Whig inspired ideology of the aesthetic.<sup>91</sup>

Though the theatre (and theatre music) was often markedly partisan in its surface or allegorical content, the underlying aesthetic theory on which it was based could, and often did, cross ideological party lines. The Whig playwright John Dennis, for example, glorified Whig principles of freedom and civil liberty in his dramas yet, in the words of John Loftis, "was among the nation's firmest admirers of classical regularity in drama--of the 'tyranny' of French [neoclassical formalist] rules."<sup>92</sup> Loftis further argues that:

In short, Dennis, Addison, and Steele, all three of them Whig dramatists, disagreed as thoroughly on critical principles as they did on most other subjects except politics. And their disagreement illustrates a general absence of correlation between political and literary assumptions . . . There are important correlations between the political

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<sup>89</sup> Shaftesbury, *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, and Times*, 3 vols. (London, 1711), modern edition by John M. Robertson (New York: Bobbs-Merrill Co. Inc., 1964), Treatise I, 45.

<sup>90</sup> For a more complete discussion of the rise and fall of the "Whig interpretation of history" see J.C.D. Clark, "Representation and Oligarchy in England: an Historical Survey," in *English Society 1688-1832* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 8-38. For a discussion of the English notion of progress in history see R. G. Collingwood, *The Idea of History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967), 143-45.

<sup>91</sup> For a more detailed discussion of this question see the final section of Chapter Three, "An Aesthetic Comparison of 'The Prize Musick' Settings."

<sup>92</sup> Loftis, *The Politics of Drama*, 159.

and critical attitudes of the Augustan age, but they are fundamental ones which exist without much reference to the division between Whig and Tory.<sup>93</sup>

Loftis is undoubtedly correct in his recognition that critical theory crossed party lines. He fails, however, to take into account the belief, shared by many twentieth century cultural critics, that because aesthetic theory and its practical influence on artistic production is engaged in a continual dialectic with political ideology, it thus will, at times, lag behind it.<sup>94</sup> There is not a perfect correlation between political and aesthetic/critical theory but there is a general one and it would be a mistake to overlook the significance of the “fundamental” correlation between political ideologies expounding libertarian values and the subsequent rise in aesthetic theories promoting the value and importance of subjective aesthetic judgment. With reference to the “moral sense” philosophers, Shaftesbury and Hutcheson, Terry Eagleton describes such an intermingling of aristocratic socio-political life and aesthetics during this period.

The whole of social life is aestheticized; and what this signifies is a social order so spontaneously cohesive that its members no longer need to think about it. . . A sound political regime is one in which the subjects conduct themselves gracefully - where . . . the law is no longer external to individuals but is lived out, with fine cavalier insouciance, as the very principle of their free identities. Such an internal appropriation of the law is at once central to the work of art and to the process of political hegemony. The aesthetic is in this sense no more than a name for the political unconscious: it is simply the way social harmony registers itself on our senses, imprints itself on our sensibilities. The beautiful is just political order lived out on the body, the way it strikes the eye and stirs the heart . . . The socially disruptive, by contrast, is as instantly offensive as a foul smell. The unity of social life sustains itself requiring no further legitimation, anchored as it is in our most primordial instincts. Like the work of art, it is immune from all rational analysis, and so from all rational criticism.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> Ibid., 159-60.

<sup>94</sup> See for example Eagleton, *Aesthetic*, 3-4; Rose Rosengard Subotnik, *Developing Variations*, xxv-xxvii.

<sup>95</sup> Eagleton, *Aesthetic*, 37-38.

In this manner morality itself was aestheticized in order to serve and foster aristocratic ideals of social and political order.

The overarching thesis of this dissertation is to identify and map the influence of political ideology on the masques which take the concept of "judgment" as the central plot element. To this end, the survey of contemporary eighteenth-century aesthetic theory presented below will concentrate on the relationship between politics and aesthetic theory and, within aesthetic theory in particular, various concepts of aesthetic judgment and beauty which relate most directly to these same issues as they are presented in "The Prize" competition and mirrored in the aesthetic judgments central to the plot of *The Judgment of Paris* and other judgment or choice masques from later in the eighteenth century.

### Neoclassicism

Throughout Europe and England the dominant force in aesthetic criticism and theory in the early- to mid-eighteenth century was neoclassicism. The central concept of neoclassical aesthetics was an objective imitation of nature or Aristotelian mimesis. These terms did not, however, mean a literal copying of nature, as they are often interpreted today, but rather a representation of nature. The term "nature" is also often misinterpreted as referring only to subjects which literally occur in the outdoors such as plants, animals, landscapes and the like. "Nature," in fact, referred to reality in general, including human nature.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> René Wellek, *A History of Modern Criticism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955), i, 15.



Nevertheless, imitation of nature in neoclassical theory meant different things to different people. In painting it was often interpreted as realism. In other arts it was often employed in the sense of “general nature,” art that would retain the general principles and order of nature. Some interpretations which followed this generalized view stretched the meaning of nature to include the typical, things which characterize the nature of humans as a species as they occur at all times. This demand for the “typical” or universal formed the basis for the doctrine of decorum and propriety, which frowned upon the depiction of the ugly, the horrible or the vulgar.<sup>97</sup>

This demand for typicality or universality, in turn, could also pass naturally enough into a demand for the idealization of nature. This idealization could mean either nature as it realistically occurred, or as fantasized in an inner vision of the artist, author or composer. John Dennis defended this position claiming that the function of art was “to restore the decays that happened to human nature by the fall, by restoring order.”<sup>98</sup> Such a statement also serves to reinforce the politicization of aesthetics (i.e. the parallel desire for social and aesthetic order) described by Eagleton above. Nonetheless, “imitation of nature” was a term which allowed for a wide variety of artistic approaches stretching from literal realism and naturalism to abstract idealism.

In addition to an interest in the relation of art to reality, neoclassical theory was also concerned with the effects of art on its audience. Morality became steadily aestheticized as the majority of critics and aesthetic philosophers felt that moral utility was the primary virtue of art, to which end pleasure and delight were considered

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<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> John Dennis, *The Grounds of Criticism in Poetry* (London, 1704), in *The Critical Works*, E. N. Hooker ed. (Baltimore, 1939), I, 336.

necessary means.<sup>99</sup> Our sense of morality, the Earl of Shaftesbury argues, exists in “a real antipathy or aversion to injustice or wrong, and in real affection or love towards equity and right, for its own sake, and on account of its natural beauty and worth.”<sup>100</sup> Critics such as Shaftesbury envisioned men of their own kind - men of taste, civilized, schooled in the classics, and taught from childhood to distinguish good from bad - as the ideal audience of music and art. Many critics felt that the writers of antiquity were inferior and barbaric, due to their comparative lack of gentlemanly taste. The French critic François Fénelon summed up this chronocentric position: “The heroes of Homer do not resemble gentlemen, and the gods of that poet are even much below his heroes, who are unworthy of the idea we have of a gentlemen.”<sup>101</sup> Thus the theory of “moral utility” of art was aimed not at a universal audience but at a select few, upper-class cultivated gentlemen. In spite of the almost universal distaste for political absolutism, moral standards were still absolute, a reflection of the social hierarchy which helped to create them.

### Conservative Neoclassicism

Beginning in the 1690s, English music came under the influence of a campaign to reform manners, a movement amongst the largely High Church and Tory nobility and intelligentsia to raise moral standards and improve taste, and therefore increase order, in

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<sup>99</sup> Wellek, *History of Criticism*, 21.

<sup>100</sup> Shaftesbury, “An Inquiry Concerning Virtue or Merit,” in L. A. Selby-Bigge, ed., *British Moralists* (Oxford, 1897), 15. Also reprinted in Eagleton, *Aesthetic*, 34.

<sup>101</sup> François Fénelon, *Lettre sur les occupations de l'Académie française*, ed. M. E. Depois (Paris, 1714), 103. As translated in Wellek, 23.

English society.<sup>102</sup> The campaign was rooted in neoclassical belief in the moral utility of art and seems to have been stimulated by rapid urban growth and the increasingly unsettled nature of the population which in turn generated a sense of social disruption and moral flux. The movement, though grounded in “High” Anglican religious values, was propagated by organizations which were independent of the church such as the Society for the Reformation of Manners and the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK).

Music and musical aesthetics directly felt the fallout of this attempt at moral reformation. Both Jeremy Collier’s *Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage* (1698), and *The Great Abuse of Music* (1711) by Collier’s protégé, Arthur Bedford, made categorical references to the traditional neoclassical doctrines of passing judgment on works of music and music theatre, directly in proportion to their level of moral usefulness. Bedford, for example, forcefully tried to illustrate the sinful and base level to which he felt music and musical life had sunk:

But in this degenerate Age, they [musicians] make themselves mean and contemptible by their own Works. The *Playhouses* are so many *Synagogues of Satan*, whose chief Design and Tendency is to corrupt the Age, to banish all serious *Thinking and Reflection*, and to lull the *Conscience* asleep, or smear it with an hot Iron. The *Poets* and Servants to the *Players*, in composing such *Plays*, and in them such *impious, lewd, and blasphemous Songs*, as serve for this Purpose; and the *Masters of Musick* are *Servants* to the *Poets*, to compose such *Musick* which shall be proper for their *Songs*, as if the *Curse* of wicked and immodest, *Ham* was fallen upon them.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> For a more in depth discussion of the “Manners Campaign” and its consequences see Weber, *Musical Classics*, 12, 47-56.

<sup>103</sup> Arthur Bedford, *The Great Abuse of Music* (London, 1711), 62. Also quoted in Weber, *Musical Classics*, 51.

As evidenced by Bedford's aggressive rhetoric, such attempts at moral reformation had both religious and political motivations. The Society for the Reformation of Manners did not survive for long as it included a broad spectrum of Dissenters and Anglicans.<sup>104</sup> The SPCK, with which Bedford was allied early in his career, was, however, almost exclusively led by "High Church" members aligned with the Tory party. Indeed, Bedford himself had well known ties with the Tories.<sup>105</sup> In their criticisms of the increasing profanity and commercialism of music and theatre, both Collier and Bedford, and the various societies for promoting manners in society, upheld the traditional, conservative, neoclassical aesthetic viewpoint. William Weber sums up Arthur Bedford's and the manners campaign's desire to recover older and more rigidly controlled church music forms.

Arthur Bedford's 1711 *Great Abuse of Musick* opened up a new ideological dimension in the perception of sacred music. The works of Byrd and Tallis, he wrote, should be revived as part of the reformation of manners going on at the time; through such means he wished to launch a moral campaign against licentious and tasteless music. He outlined a purpose for the propagation of ancient church music that was aimed against the commercialization of musical life by publishers and entrepreneurial musicians.<sup>106</sup>

Thus Bedford, and other neoclassical critics, advocated the restoration of an Elizabethan model of taste. Musically this entailed a return to the creation of the smooth melodies and imitative vocal polyphony of Byrd and Tallis. Bedford argued that the best defense against the moral degeneration of music was a revival of music from the "High" church tradition, such as anthems and services. Bedford writes "Our antient [Tallis and Byrd] church musick is lost and that solid Harmony, fit for a Martyr to delight in, and an Angel

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<sup>104</sup> Weber, *Musical Classics*, 49.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., 47.

to hear, is now chang'd to a Diversion for Atheists & Libertines."<sup>107</sup> Through the call for a return to the values and style of "antient" music, Bedford and the other moral reformers were thus instrumental in raising public awareness of, and demand for, historical compositions. As William Weber has recently discussed, this marked an important moment in the establishment of a musical canon in England.<sup>108</sup>

The restrictive tenets of conservative neoclassical aesthetics and the moral reform movement are roughly analogous to the political restriction of individual liberty and absolutist institutional control as initially advocated by the Tory party following the Glorious Revolution. This, combined with membership which was largely drawn from High Church Tories, allowed for a highly politicized impetus to the aesthetic ideals of the manners campaign.

As we shall see in Chapter Two, "The Prize" music competition was conceived during the manners campaign and was an attempt to raise the standards of English musical taste. The Judgment of Paris subject, with its ethical and moral judgments was also an attempt by the Whig sponsors of the competition to claim some moral high ground from their Tory/High Church detractors.

Early Eighteenth-Century Empiricist Moral Libertarians: Locke, Addison, Toland, and Shaftesbury

Offsetting, and eventually overshadowing the conservative aesthetic trends propagated in the manners campaign, a number of more liberal-minded British

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<sup>107</sup> Bedford, *The Great Abuse of Music*, 209.

<sup>108</sup> For a more complete discussion to the influence of the moral reform movement in establishing a musical canon see Weber, *Musical Classics*, 47-56.

philosophers and aestheticians, most with Whig party ties, began to advocate new ideas regarding the potential value and importance of subjective musical creation, judgment, and experience. With the rise of Lockean notions of civil liberty, the empirical study of the psychological processes involved in art and artistic experience began to challenge traditional absolutist neoclassical theories of artistic and musical experience.

John Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* is the primary manifesto of systematic empiricism. Locke believed that "Reason must be our last Judge and Guide in every Thing."<sup>109</sup> He insists that the ultimate source of ideas and all knowledge lies within individual inner-experience and sensibility. Locke's defense of individual liberty and advocacy of a social compact has already been discussed in terms of its influence and relation to political and, in particular, Whig ideology. This same belief in individual self-determination carries into Locke's moral/aesthetic philosophy. Locke argues against the presence of innate or absolute principles of judgment, stating: "Hence naturally flows the great variety of Opinions, concerning Moral rules, which are to be found amongst Men, according to the different sorts of happiness, they have a prospect of, or propose of themselves: Which would not be, if practical Principles were innate, and imprinted in our Minds immediately by the hand of God."<sup>110</sup>

Later, in his discussion of discerning, Locke makes his famous distinction between "wit" and "judgment."

For *Wit* lying most in the assemblage of *Ideas*, and putting those together with quickness and variety, wherein can be found any resemblance or congruity, thereby to make up pleasant Pictures, and agreeable Visions in the Fancy: *Judgment*, on the contrary, lies quite on the other side, in separating carefully, one from another, *Ideas*,

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<sup>109</sup> John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (London, 1690). Modern edn. by Peter H. Nidditch (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), 704.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, 69.

wherein can be found the least difference, thereby to avoid being misled by Similitude, and by affinity to take one thing for another.<sup>111</sup>

Judgment thus consists in the ability to distinguish carefully among ideas even though they may appear similar. Judgment is the superior faculty as it requires clear thought while wit merely proceeds by:

Metaphor and Allusion, wherein, for the most part, lies that entertainment and pleasantry of Wit, which strikes so lively on the Fancy, and therefore so acceptable to all People; because its Beauty appears at first sight, and there is no labour of thought, to examine what Truth or Reason there is in it. The Mind without looking any farther, rests satisfied with the agreeableness of the Picture, and the gayety of the Fancy.<sup>112</sup>

It is just such rationalized judgment which Locke would see applied to both political and aesthetic decisions. At its root, it is the quest for rational judgment which inspired the aesthetic and political judgments encapsulated and promoted in "The Prize" competition and Congreve's *Judgment of Paris* libretto.

Despite his systematic search for truth, Locke had little interest in the arts in general. It is only with the journalistic criticism of Joseph Addison and the work of the moral sense philosophers, Shaftesbury and Hutcheson, that a considered approach to aesthetic experience took root in England.

Addison's aesthetic ideas are often based on principles of Lockean psychology. Both, for example, trace all ideas to impressions on the senses. Addison, however, anticipates the shift to subjective aesthetic experience, later systematized by Francis Hutcheson, in his belief that "there's nothing that makes its way more directly to the Soul

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<sup>111</sup> Ibid., 156.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid., 156-7.

than *beauty*"; it "strikes the Mind with an inward Joy."<sup>113</sup> Visual beauty, for Addison, is found in "Gaiety or Variety of Colours, in the Symmetry and Proportion of Parts."<sup>114</sup>

With regard to music and musical judgment, Addison accurately observed that what might seem "Harmony to one Ear, may be Dissonance to an-other."<sup>115</sup> He later offers the following conclusions:

I shall add no more to what I have here offer'd than that Musick, Architecture and Painting, as well as Poetry and Oratory, are to deduce their Laws and Rules from the general Sense and Taste of Mankind and not from the Principles of those Arts themselves; or in other Words, the Taste is not to conform to the Art but the Art to the Taste. Musick is not design'd to please only Chromatick Ears, but all that are capable of distinguishing harsh from disagreeable Notes. A Man of ordinary Ear is a Judge whether a Passion is express'd in proper Sounds, and whether the Melody of those Sounds be more or less pleasing.<sup>116</sup>

In this manner, Addison, a Whig journalist, extends the same rights to subjectivity and liberty, found in Whig political ideals, to the realm of aesthetic experience. For Addison, the amateur listeners were at least as qualified to judge musical excellence as the elite musical professionals.

Anthony Ashley Cooper, the Third Earl of Shaftesbury, has been acknowledged as one of the pre-eminent aesthetic philosophers and most widely read and influential authors of his time.<sup>117</sup> Cassirer describes him as "the first great aesthetician that England produced."<sup>118</sup> Much in the manner of current critiques of formalist and positivistic

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<sup>113</sup> Joseph Addison, *Spectator*, No. 412. Monday, June 23, 1712.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>115</sup> Joseph Addison and Richard Steele, *The Spectator*, ed. Donald Bond (London: Clarendon, 1965), i, 121.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, i, 123. Also see Donald R. Boomgaarden, *Musical Thought in Britain and Germany During the Early Eighteenth Century* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., 1987), 137.

<sup>117</sup> See R.L. Brett, *The Third Earl of Shaftesbury* (London, 1951), 32; Jerome Stolnitz, "On the Origins of Aesthetic Disinterestedness," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 20 (1961-62), 131-43.

<sup>118</sup> Cassirer, *The Platonic Renaissance in England* (Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson and Sons., 1953), 166.



musicology, Shaftesbury railed against Locke and other philosophers who will allow us "to know nothing beside what we can prove by strict and formal demonstration."<sup>119</sup> For Shaftesbury, as Ernst Cassirer states, " 'truth' signifies rather the intellectual structure of the universe, which cannot be known in terms of concepts alone or grasped inductively by means of an accumulation of individual experiences, but which can only be immediately experienced and intuitively understood."<sup>120</sup> Shaftesbury was deeply suspicious of all abstract or logical formulations of human nature and of the elevation of any individual's set of beliefs to the status of divine revelation. Such absolutism he regarded as contrary to the universality of truth. Shaftesbury was also an important contributor to the Whig belief in liberty of thought and held to an optimistic view of the essential goodness of human nature, which allowed that society had no need of tyrannical measures to keep it in control. As such, Shaftesbury was one of the most important instigators of the concepts of an internal aesthetic sense and of the autonomy of the aesthetic object.

The grandson of the first Earl, the founder of the Whig party, Shaftesbury was a strong believer in civic liberties yet, paradoxically, also a firm upholder of absolute, objective moral law.<sup>121</sup> As such he rejects the notion that immediate and unreasoned feeling is sufficient justification for value in aesthetic experience. Rather, he holds that moral sense must be educated and disciplined by reason. In the face of Locke's powerful

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<sup>119</sup> Shaftesbury, *Characteristics*, II, 287.

<sup>120</sup> Ernst Cassirer, *Philosophy of the Enlightenment* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1951), 314.

<sup>121</sup> Regarding the infusion of Whiggism into Shaftesbury's writing Lawrence E. Klein states that, in his *Characteristicks*, Shaftesbury "wrote in a recognizably Whiggish vocabulary, interpreting the Revolution as an affirmation of English liberty whose coordinates were balance in the relations of people and monarch, the rule of law..., a Protestant succession, and a religious settlement (tolerating Dissenters and excluding Catholics from office). In fact, Shaftesbury's writings are so choked with Whig disposition and assumption that it would be tedious to document in detail all the instances." Lawrence E. Klein, *Shaftesbury and the Culture of Politeness* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 133.

attack on the concept of innate ideas, Shaftesbury nonetheless argues “that although [the] ideas of divinity and beauty were vain, they were yet in a manner innate, or such as men were really born to and could hardly by any means avoid.”<sup>122</sup> By ideas which are “in a manner innate,” Shaftesbury refers not to concepts inherently present at birth but rather to ideas which almost inevitably are caused to germinate in the course of natural human development.<sup>123</sup> In Shaftesbury’s philosophy, innate ideas such as beauty, good, and God are essential aspects to his concept of human understanding.

Shaftesbury was also a traditional aristocrat and was too much of a social realist to believe that organized society could exist entirely without rules and regulations, rules which, in practical effect, limited an individual’s freedom of behavior. Thus the liberty he defends is often the liberty of convention or “the liberty of the *club*, and that sort of freedom which is taken amongst gentlemen . . .”<sup>124</sup> Like the elite Whig members of Parliament who effectively controlled the social policy of the country and whose policies he supported, Shaftesbury’s theories, though advanced under a patina of universal civil liberty, in practice only promoted limited, elitist, autonomy and subjectivity. In the words of Terry Eagleton, Shaftesbury’s philosophy “unites the absolute law of the old school with the subjective freedom of the new, sensualizing the one while spiritualizing the other.”<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>122</sup> Shaftesbury, *Characteristics*, II, 178. Also quoted in Stanley Grean, *Shaftesbury’s Philosophy of Religion and Ethics* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1967), 43.

<sup>123</sup> For a further discussion of Shaftesbury’s delineation and qualification of “innate ideas” see Grean, *Shaftesbury’s Philosophy*, 42-49.

<sup>124</sup> Shaftesbury, *Characteristics*, I, 53.

<sup>125</sup> Eagleton, *Ideology of the Aesthetic*, 36.

Shaftesbury was far from alone in these beliefs. The controversial philosopher John Toland, a friend of Shaftesbury, held similar politically inspired views. Toland, who early in his career was an active propagandist for the Whig party, also supported civil liberty as grounded, far more specifically and forcefully than with Shaftesbury, in religious tolerance and liberty of conscience. Toland, like Shaftesbury, called on reason to mitigate a slide into anarchic licentiousness: By liberty

we do not mean Licentiousness in morals (Which has no Plea from Conscience) nor Indifference as to all Religions: but a free Toleration but of such actions as are in their own nature allow'd to be indifferent, or in their circumstances un sinful; and of such doctrines or opinions as are not destructive of Humane society and all Religion, but consisting in bare speculation, and solely regarding the conscience or persuasion of men. The equity of this Liberty is grounded upon the use of Reason which is equally the right of all men, upon the nature of things, and upon the difference of Education as well of Capacities.<sup>126</sup>

Toland believed the Whigs endorsed his positions on tolerance and thus actively supported Whig party principles.<sup>127</sup>

Shaftesbury as well, despite his moral absolutism, actively followed and endorsed the Whig party line of upholding civil liberties. It is likely that his speech in the Commons (November 1695) ensured the passage of a Bill providing the right of counsel to persons accused of treason and his letters reveal his strong opposition to such Tory sponsored legislation as the Occasional Conformity Bill which passed over Whig objections in 1711.<sup>128</sup> Freedom was for Shaftesbury the condition under which rationality could most effectively operate. Referring to his own seminal work, *Characteristics of*

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<sup>126</sup> John Toland, *The State Anatomy of Great Britain*. 4th edn. (London: John Philips et al., 1717), 27. Also quoted in Stephen Daniel, *John Toland: His Methods, Manners, and Mind* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1984), 173.

<sup>127</sup> Daniel, *Toland*, 174.

<sup>128</sup> Grean, *Shaftesbury's Philosophy*, 133.

*Men, Manners, Opinions, Times*. Shaftesbury calls the theme of moral and political liberty “the hinge and bottom of the whole work.”<sup>129</sup> Indeed for Shaftesbury, freedom of thought and civil liberty have both a traditionally moral utilitarian value for man and also serve to actually define his true humanity, as they are “necessary and essential to his Manly Dignity and Character.”<sup>130</sup> Similarly, Shaftesbury allies freedom of thought and ideas to the discovery of truth: “Let but the search go freely on, and the right measure of everything will soon be found.”<sup>131</sup> Shaftesbury optimistically believes that greater intellectual freedom would lessen the likelihood of the bloody civil and religious insurrections which took place earlier in the seventeenth century. The underlying political bent of Shaftesbury’s optimism is evident in the following passage:

‘Tis scarce a quarter of an age since a happy balance of power was settled between our prince [William III] and people as has firmly secured our hitherto precarious liberties, and removed from us the fear of civil commotions, wars and violence, either on account of religion and worship, the property of the subject, or the contending titles of the Crown.<sup>132</sup>

Shaftesbury can thus be labeled an optimistic metaphysicist for his faith that both the universe and the nature of man were ultimately good and rational.

Shaftesbury freely mingled politics, aesthetics, and ethics. Beauty, order (including social order), and goodness were indistinguishable. The intermingling of politics and aesthetics is markedly evident when he writes that to admire beauty is “advantageous to social affection, and highly assistant to virtue, which is itself no other

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<sup>129</sup> *The Life, Unpublished Letters, and Philosophical Regimen of Anthony, Earl of Shaftesbury*, ed. Benjamin Rand (London: Swan Sonnenschein & Co., Ltd., 1900), 449.

<sup>130</sup> *Several Letters Written by a Noble Lord to a Young Man at the University* (London, 1716) as quoted in Stanley Grean, *Shaftesbury’s Philosophy*, 129.

<sup>131</sup> Shaftesbury, *Characteristics*, I, 10.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 141.

than the love of order and beauty in society.”<sup>133</sup> Again, such a mixture of politics and aesthetics could, though there is no direct connection, function as an immediate model for the political and aesthetic judgments manifest in “The Prize” competition. “The Prize” was a competition to compose the most beautiful setting of *The Judgment of Paris*, a situation mirroring a similar appreciation of beauty which was the basis of the plot. These aesthetic judgments, given the political climate, partisan sponsorship and prevalent aesthetic ideology, were in turn analogous to political judgments and the establishment of Shaftesbury’s “love of order and beauty in society.” We are here, yet again, also confronted with direct evidence of the aestheticization of society and social behavior as discussed by Eagleton above.

For Shaftesbury aesthetic sense and moral sense held to universal standards of absolute judgment. The central notions of Shaftesbury’s aesthetic are outlined in the following passage:

Is there then, said he, a natural beauty of figures? and is there not as natural a one of actions? No sooner the eye opens upon figures, the ear upon sounds, than straight the beautiful results and grace and harmony are known and acknowledged. No sooner are actions viewed, no sooner the human affections and passions discerned (and they are most of them as soon discerned as felt) than straight an inward eye [moral sense] distinguishes, and sees the fair and shapely, the amiable and the admirable, apart from the deformed, the foul, the odious, or the despicable. How is it possible therefore not to own “that as these distinctions have their foundations in Nature, the discernment itself is natural, and from Nature alone?”<sup>134</sup>

The “inward eye” to which Shaftesbury refers he later gave the term “moral sense.” This internal sense was an intuitive, unreasoned, comprehension of harmony or beauty.<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> Ibid., I, 279.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid., II, 137. Also quoted in Munroe C. Beardsley, *Aesthetics from Classical Greece to the Present* (London: University of Alabama Press, 1966), 179.

<sup>135</sup> Beardsley, *Aesthetics*, 190.

During Shaftesbury's day the term "taste" was usually applied to the capacity to appreciate beautiful objects in this manner. Taste, however, was an ambiguous term that was often analysed as a simple subjective or relativistic response. Shaftesbury, though he made important contributions to the development of an inner moral-aesthetic sense, did not think taste was relative. The inner aesthetic sense, he held, permitted universal standards of judgment which were determined by conventional rationalistic principles. Such principles are evident in Shaftesbury's concept of beauty, in which he distinguishes between "three degrees or orders of beauty."<sup>136</sup> The first degree of beauty is found in so called "dead forms" which are products formed by both man and nature but which have "no forming power, no action, or intelligence."<sup>137</sup> Such forms include precious "metals and stones," "the palaces, the coins, the brazen or the marble figures of men..." and any other *object* in which beauty might be passively apprehended.<sup>138</sup> The second degree of beauty is made up of "forming forms . . . which have intelligence, action, and operation."<sup>139</sup> This is regarded by Shaftesbury as a higher level of beauty because it includes both form, a product of the mind, and the mind itself. It is from the second order of beauty that "the dead form receives its lustre and force of beauty."<sup>140</sup> It is a manner of inner or creative form, referring to our ability to create or apprehend the beauty of the "dead" objects in the first order. For Shaftesbury, the arts of "architecture and music, and all which is of human invention" belong to this middle order.<sup>141</sup> The third and

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<sup>136</sup> Shaftesbury, *Characteristics*, II, 132.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid., 133.

highest order of beauty is that of the supreme mind of God “which fashions even minds themselves, contains in itself all the beauties fashioned by those minds, and is consequently the principle, source, and foundation of all beauty.”<sup>142</sup> Shaftesbury resolves or subsumes all beauty in this highest order:

Therefore whatever beauty appears in our second order of forms, or whatever is derived or produced from thence, all this is eminently, principally, and originally, in this last order of supreme and sovereign beauty.<sup>143</sup>

The source of beauty is thus traced by Shaftesbury to the mind, rationality is essential to beauty and it is “the beautifying not the beautified, [which] is the really beautiful.”<sup>144</sup> The beautiful was thus an expression of the mind.

In order to distinguish between the beautiful and the merely pleasing, Shaftesbury developed his concept of “disinterestedness.” It is a concept which Cassirer considers to be Shaftesbury’s “most important contribution to aesthetics” and which proved to be the forerunner of later aesthetic theories concerning the autonomous or self-contained nature of an aesthetic object.<sup>145</sup> Arising out of the study of ethics, “disinterestedness” referred to the fact that an artistic object should be both created and appreciated with no cause, motivation, or “interest” other than its own existence. Disinterestedness meant indifference, not to the interests of others, but to one’s own. Aesthetic creation and attitude should, for Shaftesbury, be free from any corrupting fear of punishment or reward which would be “fatal to virtue.”<sup>146</sup> Shaftesbury believed that to truly appreciate

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<sup>142</sup> Ibid.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid., 131.

<sup>145</sup> Cassirer, *Philosophy of Enlightenment*, 326. Also see Stolnitz, “Origins of Disinterestedness,” 131-143.

<sup>146</sup> Shaftesbury, *Characteristics*, I, 275. Also see Stolnitz, “Origins of Disinterestedness,” 132.

the beautiful, the mind must overcome the instinct to possess, use, or master the object of our contemplation. To admire and enjoy the beauty of nature is different from attempting to possess or control it. The "absurdity," Shaftesbury believes, lies "in seeking the enjoyment elsewhere than in the subject loved."<sup>147</sup> Shaftesbury illustrates this point by way of the following aphorism:

Let who will call it [the beauty of the ocean] theirs, . . . you will own the enjoyment of this kind to be very different from that which should naturally follow from the ocean's beauty. The bridegroom-Doge, who in his stately Bucentaur floats on the bosom of his Thetis, has less possession than the poor shepherd, who hanging from a rock or point of some high promontory, stretched at his ease, forgets his feeding flocks, while he admires her beauty.<sup>148</sup>

The Doge, whose interests lie in possessing (marrying) the ocean, is then, both literally and metaphorically too close to it (or interested in it), to appreciate its true beauty. The disinterested shepherd, however, is far enough removed from the ocean, both literally and metaphorically, that his appreciation is uncorrupted. Shaftesbury thus takes some element of disinterestedness to be necessary for both aesthetic perception as well as artistic creation.

Interestingly, Daniel Purcell, in his dedication of his setting of *The Judgment of Paris* to Anthony Henly appears to acknowledge the practice of a disinterested aesthetic experience. In regards to Henly's skill as a musical "judge," Purcell writes:

This Sr ought to awe me from Thrusting my self on a second Tryal before a Judge so knowing, that he can want no true information of the Cause, and so Candid and impartial, that he will not let his favour [for Purcell] bypass his Judgment. . .<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>147</sup> Shaftesbury, *Characteristics*, II, 126.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid., 127.

<sup>149</sup> Daniel Purcell's dedication to Anthony Henly Esquire contained in Walsh and Hare's published edition of his *The Judgment of Paris* (1702). See Chapter Two, Fig. 2, p.75.



Purcell's metaphorical comparison of Henly's musical-aesthetic judgment with that of a true legal judge underlines the combination of rationalism and concern for a disinterested aesthetic judgment. The quote also alludes directly to the notion that the audience and patrons were indeed aesthetic judges. Thus, by analogy, the audience was called upon to make much the same aesthetic decisions and judgment as Paris is called upon to make in judging the beauty of the three goddesses.

Paradoxically, disinterested aesthetic experience, with its theoretical disavowal of self interest, represented a powerful political statement. Contrary to the dominant libertarian ideologies promoted by Locke and the Whig party which were actively propagated in many forms of cultural production, disinterested aesthetic experiences and judgments involved a de-centering of subjective or personal reaction in pursuit of an objective communal recognition of value. In his discussion of disinterestedness, Terry Eagleton writes "the aesthetic is the enemy of bourgeois egoism: to judge aesthetically means to bracket as far as possible one's own petty prejudices in the name of a common general humanity."<sup>150</sup> Disinterestedness, interpreted in this manner, results in a subjugation of the self in favour of a communal sensibility with others.<sup>151</sup>

Thus, the ideology of the "judgment" masque aesthetic provided the Whigs and, with the later judgment masques, the ruling aristocracy in general, with a powerful political weapon in addition to providing them with a public platform on which to align

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<sup>150</sup> Eagleton, *Ideology of Aesthetic*, 39.

<sup>151</sup> The concept of "disinterestedness" also played an important role in Kant's *Critique of Judgment* as he claims that "the satisfaction that determines the judgment of taste is disinterested." Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgment* (New York: Hafner, 1951), 38. Peter Kivy claims that Kant's doctrine of disinterestedness represented the culmination of an "aesthetic revolution" which saw the arts "steadily moving from the arena of social interaction to the pedestal of public (or private) contemplation. . ." Peter Kivy, *Authenticities* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), 237.

themselves with moral reform and the improvement of taste. It allowed the Whig sponsors the opportunity of co-opting the message of the Tory-backed manners campaign without having to officially endorse it. The ideology of the "judgment" masque aesthetic was a weapon which functioned as a double-edged sword, simultaneously embodying middle-class emancipatory values of individual liberty and repressive ruling-class values commensurate with the propagation of hierarchical and absolute aesthetic values. Through "The Prize" competition and the judgment of Paris, in the guise of a simple shepherd, the Whigs were able to highlight the importance of ordinary individuals, providing them with a sense of empowerment by allowing them apparently autonomous and subjective judgments and responses. At the same time, however, the politicized aesthetic theory of the day reinforced or ingrained the subjugation of the individual in favour of an objective, communal, recognition of aesthetic value. It was precisely this aesthetic dichotomy which the Whigs and, later, other ruling institutions, played upon as they instilled the notion in the image, though not the reality, of an objective bourgeois autonomy.

In his commitment to the existence of objectively conceived rules of art that could be universally appreciated, Shaftesbury was directly in accord with a metaphysical brand of neoclassical thinking. On the other hand, Shaftesbury is also aware of the more subjective and emotionally intuitive elements which are involved in the concept of taste and of a "disinterested" aesthetic attitude. In addition to the concept of "disinterestedness," as Peter Kivy has accurately pointed out, "emphasis in the theory of

art shifted from object to subject - from the work of art to the perceiver and critic."<sup>152</sup> It is Francis Hutcheson, Shaftesbury's self-styled disciple, who would prove to be the "founder and principal spokesman" of this subjectivist understanding of aesthetic experience.<sup>153</sup> Writing in the middle part of the century, Hutcheson's aesthetic philosophy more accurately reflects the aesthetic philosophy of the era, beginning around 1740, surrounding the later settings of Congreve's *Judgment of Paris* by Sammartini and Arne.<sup>154</sup>

#### Mid-Century Libertarians: Francis Hutcheson

Monroe Beardsley has referred to Hutcheson's *An Inquiry Concerning Beauty, Order, Harmony, and Desire*, the first half of *An Inquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue* (1725) as "the first modern essay of philosophical aesthetics."<sup>155</sup>

During the mid-eighteenth century the modern system of the arts, and the notion of an autonomous discipline devoted to art and beauty, was being established in England.<sup>156</sup>

Hutcheson, as one of the founders of this philosophical movement, was responsible for the rise of the notion of "aesthetic disinterestedness" and the accompanying shift in emphasis from the objective work of art to the subjective perceiver. "All beauty," writes

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<sup>152</sup> Peter Kivy, ed., *Francis Hutcheson: An Inquiry Concerning Beauty, Order, Harmony, Design* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1973), 5.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

<sup>154</sup> The first edition of Hutcheson's *Inquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue* came out in 1725, the second in 1726, the third in 1729, and the fourth in 1738. All of these editions were compiled under Hutcheson's direct supervision. See Kivy, *Hutcheson*, 1.

<sup>155</sup> Beardsley, *Aesthetics*, 185.

<sup>156</sup> See Paul O. Kristeller, "The Modern System of the Arts (II)," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 13 (1952), 17 - 46.

Hutcheson, "is relative to the sense of some mind perceiving it. . ."<sup>157</sup> As previously stated, disinterestedness challenged the traditional neoclassical notions of the moral utility of art and implied that an object of aesthetic contemplation should have no other role, cause or function, than its own existence.<sup>158</sup> As such it represents an early precursor to the post-enlightenment concept of the autonomy of art. Likewise, a disinterested aesthetic experience was understood as one in which subjects ignored, as far as was possible, their own prejudices (or interests) in pursuit of a communal objective recognition of value. Such an aesthetic judgment is also analogous to developing a standard of "taste" and of the notion of "correct" and "incorrect" aesthetic judgments. Such judgments were, however, mitigated by a universal aesthetic sense. Thus, "men may have different fancies of beauty, and yet uniformity be the universal foundation of our approbation of any form whatsoever as beautiful."<sup>159</sup> The "Prize" competition, for example, can be read as an exercise in achieving precisely such a communal recognition of beauty, which Weldon's first place score evidently met.

Hutcheson saw beauty and harmony, as in music, as one and the same phenomenon. This idea and the basic premise of his aesthetic philosophy is encapsulated in the following definition:

. . . the word *beauty* is taken for the idea rais'd in us, and a *sense* of beauty for our power of receiving this idea. *Harmony* also denotes our pleasant ideas arising from composition of sounds, and a *good ear* (as it is generally taken) a power of perceiving this pleasure.<sup>160</sup>

<sup>157</sup> Hutcheson, *An Inquiry Concerning Beauty, Order, Harmony, Design* (London, 1725) Section IV, Article I, 54. Note: all subsequent references to Hutcheson's *Inquiry* refer to Kivy's edition.

<sup>158</sup> Peter Le Huray and James Day, eds., *Music and Aesthetics in the Eighteenth and Early-Nineteenth Centuries*, introduction, 1.

<sup>159</sup> Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, Section VI, Article VII.

<sup>160</sup> Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, Section I, Article IX, 34. Also quoted in Beardsley, *Aesthetics*, 185.

Beauty is thus an "idea," though an idea which is inspired by the external objective world. Hutcheson goes on to question the quality which might excite ideas of beauty, concluding that "The figures which excite in us the idea of beauty seem to be those in which there is *uniformity amidst variety*."<sup>161</sup> This is the cornerstone of Hutcheson's theory of beauty, a view which, yet again, takes its cue from the natural world: "in every part of the world which we call beautiful there is a surprising uniformity amidst almost infinite variety."<sup>162</sup>

As with his predecessor Shaftesbury, Hutcheson mixed aesthetics and ethics and essentially believed that what was aesthetically beautiful was also subject to the pleasure found in the contemplation of moral beauty. In response to Hutcheson's influence on Kant's statement that "perceiving the *true* is knowledge, whereas that of sensing the *good* is *feeling*. . .," Peter Kivy sums up the importance of Hutcheson's concepts regarding beauty and moral sense.<sup>163</sup> "Reading 'beautiful' for 'good' we have an accurate characterization of this profound change in the theory of aesthetics which Hutcheson had such a major role in effecting."<sup>164</sup>

Hutcheson directly appropriated Shaftesbury's concept of an internal moral sense or "moral sense of beauty in actions and affections, by which we perceive virtue or vice,

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<sup>161</sup> *Inquiry*, II-III, 40. Of course the notion of uniformity amidst variety has its roots in Ancient Greek theory as described by Plato, Aristotle and others. See my discussion of this issue in Chapters Two (Fn. 62) and Five.

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*, II-V, 41-2.

<sup>163</sup> As quoted from Paul Arthur Schilpp, *Kant's Pre-Critical Ethics* (2nd ed.; Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1960), 31.

<sup>164</sup> Kivy, Introduction to *Hutcheson*, 5-6.

in ourselves or others.”<sup>165</sup> Hutcheson put considerable weight on the contribution of moral sense in artistic appreciation.

But as the contemplation of moral objects, either of vice or virtue, affects us more strongly, and moves our passions in a quite different and more powerful manner than natural beauty, or (what we commonly call) deformity, so the most moving beauties bear a relation to our moral sense, and affect us more vehemently than the representations of natural objects in the liveliest descriptions.<sup>166</sup>

This “moral sense,” naturally enough, was often coupled with the concept of “moral judgment,” a faculty which, like Shaftesbury, he describes as acting instinctively and immediately.<sup>167</sup>

As was also the case with Shaftesbury, Hutcheson was a supporter of the Whig party, though politics played less of an active role in his everyday life.<sup>168</sup> In his discussion of the utilitarian standard of actions to be judged on their ultimate benefit to mankind, a notion which he also shared with Shaftesbury, Hutcheson allows a glimpse of his political colours. In the following passage he reveals and attempts to justify Whiggish opposition to divine right theory as manifest in passive obedience to the Crown.

That which produces more good than evil in the Whole is acknowledged as good; what does not, is counted as evil. In this case we no other way regard the good of the actor, or that of those who are thus inquiring, than as they make a part of the great system. In our late debates about Passive Obedience and the right of Resistance in defence of privileges, the point disputed among men of sense was, whether universal submission would probably be attended with greater natural evils than temporary insurrections, when privileges are invaded; and not, whether what tended in the whole to the public natural good, was also morally good.<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>165</sup> Shaftesbury's *Inquiry* as quoted by Thomas Fowler, *English Philosophers: Shaftesbury and Hutcheson* (London: Sampson, Low, Marston, Searle, & Rivington, 1882), 184.

<sup>166</sup> Francis Hutcheson, *An Inquiry Concerning Moral Good and Evil* Section VI, Article VII. Text of 4th ed., (London, 17...). As reprinted in Kivy, *Hutcheson*, 9.

<sup>167</sup> Fowler, *English Philosophers*, 188.

<sup>168</sup> See Thomas Mautner, ed., *Francis Hutcheson: On Human Nature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 84.

<sup>169</sup> Hutcheson, *Moral Good and Evil*, III. Also reprinted in Fowler, *English Philosophers*, 188-9.

Hutcheson thus concludes that the utilitarian standard ("that, in equal degrees of happiness expected to proceed from the action, virtue is in proportion to the number of persons to whom the happiness shall extend")<sup>170</sup> was met by the Whigs' resistance to passive obedience.

Unlike Shaftesbury, Hutcheson saw two kinds of beauty, *absolute* or *original* beauty and *relative* or *comparative* beauty. *Absolute* beauty consisted of "that beauty which we perceive in objects without comparison to any thing external. . . ."<sup>171</sup> *Relative* beauty, on the other hand, referred to "that which we perceive in objects commonly considered as imitations or resemblances of something else."<sup>172</sup> Hutcheson qualifies this latter category when he writes "All beauty is relative to the sense of some mind perceiving it; but what we call relative is that which is apprehended in any object commonly considered as an imitation of some original."<sup>173</sup>

Music was considered by Hutcheson to be one of the leading forms of original or absolute beauty and thus he states:

Under *original beauty* we may include *harmony* or *beauty of sound*, if that expression can be allowed, because harmony is not usually conceived as an imitation of anything else. Harmony often raises pleasure in those who know not what is the occasion of it; and yet the foundation of this pleasure is known to be a sort of uniformity.<sup>174</sup>

Harmony is taken by Hutcheson to mean "when the several vibrations of one note regularly coincide with the vibrations of another" a state which Hutcheson labels

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<sup>170</sup> Ibid.

<sup>171</sup> Hutcheson, *Inquiry*., I-XVI, 39.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid., IV-I, 54.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid., Section II, Article VIII.

"concorde."<sup>175</sup> Hutcheson goes on to provide a relatively detailed description of just what musical beauty, the presence of uniformity amidst variety, should ideally consist:

... good compositions, besides the frequency of these [concordant triads] chords, must retain a general unity of key, a uniformity among the parts in bars, risings, fallings, closes. The necessity of this will appear by observing the dissonance which would arise from tacking parts of different tunes together as one, although both were separately agreeable. A greater uniformity is also observable among the basses, tenors, trebles of the same tune.

There is indeed observable, in the best compositions, a mysterious effect of discords: they often give as great a pleasure as continued harmony, whether by refreshing the ear with variety, or by awakening the attention, and enlivening the relish for the succeeding harmony of concords, as shades enliven and beautify pictures, or by some other means not yet known.<sup>176</sup>

For Hutcheson the principle of musical beauty assumes the dominance of consonant harmonies, a unified key structure, balanced and well contoured melodic phrases, and balanced distribution of material among registral voices. Musical variety is provided by the judicious use of dissonant harmonies, though the reasons for the pleasure they provide are not precisely understood by Hutcheson.

Hutcheson goes on to recognize music as expression, including the fact that opinions often widely differ on the question of musical beauty. As manifest in the following passage, Hutcheson is also among the first aestheticians to acknowledge the "tempers and past circumstances" of individuals as the deciding factors influencing subjective musical judgment.

Now in such a diversity of pleasing or displeasing ideas which may be joined with forms of bodies, or tunes, when men are of such different dispositions, and prone to such a variety of passions, it is no wonder that they should so often disagree in their fancies of objects, even although their sense of beauty and harmony were perfectly uniform; because many other ideas may either please or displease, according to a person's tempers and past circumstances. We know how agreeable

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<sup>175</sup> Ibid.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid.



a very wild country may be to any person who has spent the cheerful days of his youth in it, and how disagreeable very beautiful places may be if they were the scenes of his misery. And this may help us in many cases to account for the diversities of fancy, without denying the uniformity of our internal sense of beauty.<sup>177</sup>

Aesthetic judgment is then, for Hutcheson, a combination of subjective feeling of individuals which, nevertheless, requires an objective uniformity (or universality) of agreement.

Aesthetic judgment, interpreted in this manner, is thus comparable to political judgment and to the electoral process itself. Voters judge candidates according to their individual subjective feeling in much the same manner as they judge the aesthetic value of a work of art. The outcome of the election, however, is dependent on an objective measure of the collective judgments of the community of individual voters much as an artwork's value, in Hutcheson's opinion, is ultimately dependent on some type of universal agreement. A universal or, at least, an objective majority of agreement is needed to win a democratic election. The Whigs, with their emphasis on individual liberty and desire to mitigate the powers of the monarchy through a strong elected Parliament, were most strongly identified with this notion of individual empowerment. Whig influenced philosophers such as Shaftesbury and Hutcheson thus duly reflected these values in their thinking. Aesthetic theory and political theory were thus closely linked.

The rise of the parties and the subsequent parliamentary divisions which arose in the late seventeenth century were to dominate England for the remainder of the century.

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<sup>177</sup> Ibid., VI-XII, 81.

Consequently much of the country's intellectual and cultural life was subject to the influence of various political factions. As outlined in this chapter, the period was rife with poems, plays, articles, and various forms of theatre music which were vehicles for political ideology and propaganda. As manifest in the philosophy of Locke, Shaftesbury, Hutcheson and others, aesthetic theory of the early to mid eighteenth century was also highly intertwined with politics and political ideology. The result of this was the fact that cultural production and even the aesthetic appreciation of cultural products became, in a word, politicized.

## CHAPTER TWO

### “THE PRIZE” AND THE *JUDGMENT OF PARIS*

In addition to the political and aesthetic ideological battles discussed in the previous chapter, the first years of the eighteenth century witnessed several major disruptions in English musical theatre. It was at this time that Italian opera seria was just beginning to take hold. Colly Cibber would later describe the unsettled nature of this advance when:

The *Italian* Opera began first to steal into *England*; but in as rude a disguise and unlike itself as possible; in a lame, hobbling translation into our own Language, with false Quantities, or Metre out of Measure, to its original Notes, sung by our own unskillful Voices, with Graces misapply'd to almost every Sentiment, and with Action lifeless and unmeaning through every Character.<sup>1</sup>

Also at this time a fierce rivalry between London's two main theatre companies, Drury Lane and Lincoln's Inns Fields, resulted in a general reduction in quality and availability of musical theatre. Both houses competed for a limited audience by promoting a variety of novelty acts, such as jugglers, acrobats, dancers, and trained animals. The cost of these ventures undermined the finances of both companies which, in the words of Stoddard Lincoln, were guilty of “pandering to London's lowest taste.”<sup>2</sup> Adding to the chaotic nature of English theatre at this time were the vehement attacks against the stage in Jeremy Collier's *Short View of the Immorality, and Profaneness of the English Stage* (1698). This attack, it will be recalled from the previous chapter, formed part of “High”

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<sup>1</sup> *An Apology for the Life of Mr. Colly Cibber, Comedian* (London, 1740), 185; modern edition, ed. B. R. S. Fone (Ann Arbor, 1968), 175.

<sup>2</sup> Lincoln, “A Congreve Masque,” 1078-1081.

Church and Tory efforts to introduce a reformation of manners in English society through the Manners Campaign.

It was in the midst of this general decay in musical and theatrical life that a group of prominent Whig leaders attempted to both improve musical taste and, in the process, gain some measure of political popularity by devising and sponsoring a composition contest. Judging from the dedications contained in both John Eccles' and Daniel Purcell's settings, the Whig Junto leader, Lord Halifax, whose real name was Charles Montague, was the moving force behind the competition. Lord Halifax, who had previously held the positions of First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer, was an amateur poet and well known for his avid patronage of the arts. Indeed, after his death in 1723, John Dennis claimed that Lord Halifax was the recipient of more dedications than any other person of his day.<sup>3</sup> "The Prize" would prove to be no exception to this as Halifax was the recipient of John Eccles' dedication (See Figure 1, following page).

From a letter to Lord Halifax from George Stepney, British Envoy to Vienna, we know that his fellow Whig, Charles Seymour, Duke of Somerset, also lent his support to this venture. Stepney writes:

I thank you for your Eccles his Musick, which I suppose is got by this time to Hamburg and will shortly be here, where Finger will see it performed to the best advantage: He assures me notwithstanding the partiality which was shown by the Duke of Somerset and others in favor of Welding and Eccles, Mr. Purcell's Musick was the best (I mean after his own, for no Decision can destroy the Love we have for our selves).<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> See *Remarks on a Play, call'd, The Conscious Lovers, A Comedy* (1723) in Hooker (ed.), *Critical Works*, ii, 251. For more on Halifax and his patronage of the arts see Loftis, *The Politics of Drama*, 40-41.

<sup>4</sup> Letter in the Bodleian, MS 255427, f.67; quoted in John C. Hodges (ed.) *William Congreve: Letters and Documents* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1964), 21.

To the Right Hon<sup>ble</sup> Charles L<sup>d</sup> Halifax sc.  
My Lord

The favourable reception which my poor Endeavours have met from your L<sup>d</sup>s goodness, has given me the boldness humbly to offer this piece of Musick to your Protection: And since it entirely derives its being from that generous Design of Improving and Encouraging the English professions in this Art, which your L<sup>d</sup> so Effectually promotes: I hope you will receive this Dedication as an Instance of my Duty & humble Acknowledgments.

I am very far from thinking this so perfect as to merit your L<sup>d</sup>s Approbation. And if it can Entitle me to the Continuance of your patronage That is all which I ought to expect from it: The influence of which will I hope Animate me to produce something more worthy of your Leisure hours.

Nex: after the Service of your Country, It has appear'd that your L<sup>d</sup> has made it both your business and pleasure to Encourage and Improve Arts and Sciences. That to your Immortal Honour You have had so long and Irreversible Success in the former, is owing to your L<sup>d</sup> having been a Principal Agent in the Executive part of your own Great and good Designs. If in your second care You should not Equally Succeed, it is because it Do's not equally depend upon your L<sup>d</sup>. Your part in this being but halfe of what you have sustain'd in the other.

For my own part, However I may hitherto have fallen short of what I ought to have done, in proportion to the Encouragement received from your Lordship. Yet I will not Despair some time or other thro' my Industry to make amends for it.

As to the following Composition, my Labour in it was more then requir'd, by your L<sup>d</sup>s Allowance of it at the Practice: if at the publick performance, besides the kind Approbation which it received from the Greater part of the Audience, it had also had the fortune to have pleas'd them who came prepar'd to Dislike it. I might have been too vain of my Success, and may be not have thought my self Obliged (as now I think I am) by my future care to Endeavour to Observe their good Opinions Whome it is my Ambition to please and from whom I am Sorry not to have already Deserv'd more Encouragement.

Under the Sanctuary of your L<sup>d</sup>s name I Venture this unto the publick, humbly asking your L<sup>d</sup>s pardon for all its faults, and particularly for this which it has made me now Comitt in Giving you this trouble from

Y<sup>r</sup> L<sup>d</sup>s  
Most Humble and  
Most Obedient serv<sup>t</sup>

John Eccles

Fig 1. John Eccles' dedication to Lord Halifax. (London: printed for J. Walsh and J. Hare, 1702) GB-Lbl 11.226

In the letter Stepney refers to all four contestants for “The Prize,” John Eccles, John Weldon, Daniel Purcell, and Gottfried Finger, a Moravian/Austrian composer who finished last in the competition. The Duke of Somerset was a somewhat soft Whig, who would later transfer his allegiance to the Tories after the fall of the Whig ministry in 1710.<sup>5</sup> Though moderate in his Whig politics, the Duke was one of the most powerful landowners in the country, and consequently was one of the more influential members of the Whig party at the time of the competition.<sup>6</sup>

Another influential sponsor of the competition was Anthony Henly Esq., a sitting Whig member of Parliament in 1701 and a staunch Whig supporter throughout his life.<sup>7</sup> It was to Henly that Daniel Purcell dedicated his score (see Figure 2, following page). The names of other sponsors of “The Prize,” if any, remain unknown.

The *London Gazette* for the 18-21 March 1700 published the following advertisement of the Whig’s proposal.

Several Persons of Quality having, for the Encouragement of Musick advanced 200 Guineas, to be distributed in 4 Prizes, the First of 100, the Second of 50, the Third of 30, and the Fourth of 20 Guineas, to such Masters as shall be adjudged to Compose the best; This is therefore to give Notice, That those who intend to put in for the Prizes, are to repair to Jacob Tonson at Grays-Inn-Gate before Easter-Day next, where they may be further Informed.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> See Harris, *Later Stuarts*, 163.

<sup>6</sup> Holmes, *Politics in the Age of Anne*, 195-96, and 275-76.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 359-61.

<sup>8</sup> As advertised in the *London Gazette* on 21 March 1700 (no. 3585).

To Anthony Henly Esq<sup>r</sup>. of the Grange in Hants-shire

S<sup>r</sup>. The favourable opinion you have had of this piece of Musick has so far strengthen'd the approbation it met with from Gentlemen of no less Candour; than knowledge in this Science, that thereby I have gathered assurance Enough to lay it at your feet in this publick manner, as some Attonement for those other less perfect Essays of this Nature: That I have presum'd to address to so generous a Lover of this art, so Esteem'd by the Antients that they thought their Heroes and Poets unaccomplish'd without a Perfection in it, which in this age is so far sunk that the nearer a Man approaches to the Mastery, the farther he is generally from meeting with a due Encouragement.

There is a Justness of Composition a true Harmony of parts, The making the Notes and Airs expressive of the Numbers and meaning of the Words, the pathetique or Comanding Force that Stirs the Passions which many Censurers regard no more, than some Masters in their Comparures. There is a Sort of Painting in Musick as well as Poetry, which if a Master misles he may be fortunate with the unknowing, but never with such Judges as you S<sup>r</sup> whose Skill is too great to be impos'd on by false Charms, or glaring defects or to neglect or over look any real Beauty and perfection.

This I thought to avert me from Throwing my Self on a Second Tryal before a Judge so knowing, that he can want no true Information of the Cause, and so Candid and impartial, that he will not let his favour byass his Judgment, but from you S<sup>r</sup>, being sure of an animadversion on my real, not imaginary Errors, I hope so far to improve by it, as to be able hereafter to present the World with something more worthy your Patronage, and the desire S<sup>r</sup>.

Of your most humble Serv<sup>t</sup>

Daniel Purcell

Fig. 2. Daniel Purcell's dedication to Anthony Henly. (London: printed for J. Walsh and J. Hare, 1702) GB-Lbl I.325

Jacob Tonson was also a well known Whig figure, and is notable for having founded the infamous Kit-Cat Club the previous year. Indeed, the “Persons of Quality” appear to have all been well-known Whig leaders. It is clear that the party and its platform would benefit from this charitable act, if only through public association with the encouragement of the arts. Indeed, given the relatively decrepit state of musical theatre in 1701, the efforts to sponsor “The Prize” for the “Encouragement of Musick” can be read, not only as a charitable undertaking to raise the general level of musical taste in the community, but also as an effort to align the Whig party with the manners campaign and the general movement for moral reform of the arts.<sup>9</sup> It is equally clear that the Whigs were also hoping that their gesture would simply “Encourage” and stimulate interest and excitement in English music. This rationale would have been particularly cogent given the recent death of Henry Purcell (1695) and the increasing impact of Italian musicians and musical style. Indeed the Whigs were at least partially successful in this endeavor. Writing some 26 years after the inception of “The Prize,” Roger North saw it as the start of aristocratic patronage of opera in England and described the “Prize Musick” as “a preludium to the latter Operas.”<sup>10</sup>

Not surprisingly, given the Whig domination of the theatre at this time, subsequent advertisements for “The Prize,” which were published after the contestants had been finalized, appeared in Whig controlled periodicals - *The Post Boy*, *The Post*

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<sup>9</sup> Though the Judgment of Paris is based on pagan subject matter it was, nonetheless, an allegory on moral choice. The fact that “The Prize” competition was decided by the audience also supports the notion that this event was, by analogy, intended to raise the issue of proper moral and aesthetic choice within the community as a whole.

<sup>10</sup> “Notes of Comparison between the Elder and Later Musick” as quoted in John Wilson (ed.), *Roger North on Music* (London, 1959), 312.



*Man*, and *The English Post* all ran advertisements at various times which highlighted the charitable nature of the event. One ran in *The English Post* for 11 April 1701, the day of the initial performance of Daniel Purcell's setting.

Dorset Gardens Theatre, 11th April: The Musick Prize set by D. Purcell, the Profit of the Galleries for the Benefit of Mr. Dogget and Mr. Wilks, they having farmed it of the performers.<sup>11</sup>

The ads are careful to note the non-profit nature of the competition and refer to the fact that any profit will be shared among the performers rather than the sponsors or theatre management. Mr. Dogget and Mr. Wilks are the actors Thomas Dogget and Robert Wilks. Dogget would later become a manager of Drury Lane and gained additional fame after his death as he posthumously instituted an annual charitable rowing race for Thames watermen in 1716.<sup>12</sup> Wilks was a good friend of Dogget and also became involved in the management of Drury Lane. At the time of "The Prize" in 1701, both men were avid Whigs and supporters of the Protestant accession.<sup>13</sup> Both men were also close friends with William Congreve, the librettist of *The Judgment of Paris*. Dogget had received much acclaim for his roles in Congreve's comedies, the *Old Bachelor* and *Love for Love*. Colly Cibber wrote of Dogget: "Congreve was a great Admirer of him, and found his Account in the Characters he expressly wrote for him."<sup>14</sup> Congreve, apparently, had an equal respect for his friend Robert Wilks. In a letter to Joseph Keally, Congreve describes

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<sup>11</sup> As advertised in *The English Post* on 11 April 1701. See also Michael Tilmouth "A Calendar of References to Music in Newspapers Published in London and the Provinces (1600-1719)" *RMA Research Chronicle* 1 (1961), 65.

<sup>12</sup> The race for Dogget's Coat and Badge served as the subject of Charles Dibden's afterpiece *The Waterman* (1774). The race is still in existence today. See Fiske, *Theatre Music*, 371 and Williams, *The Whig Supremacy*, 133.

<sup>13</sup> Loftis, *The Politics of Drama*, 56-57.

<sup>14</sup> Cibber, *An Apology*, II, 310. Also quoted in Hodges, *Congreve Letters*, 112, n4.

Wilks' switch from Drury Lane to the Haymarket in Whiggish terms as "another revolution" in the Playhouses.<sup>15</sup>

#### WILLIAM CONGREVE

As mentioned, the Whig sponsors enlisted William Congreve to write the contested libretto. Congreve was a staunch Whig supporter throughout his life and held a strong belief in the principles of the Revolution. His literary fame ensured that he was given a wide hearing and the Whigs, in their efforts to popularize the Revolution and King William, consequently subsidized much of Congreve's work. His lament on the death of Queen Mary was, at least to some degree, a party poem, as were his odes in praise of King William, Marlborough, Sidney, Godolphin, Halifax, and other Whig leaders.<sup>16</sup> Congreve, along with Steele, Walsh, Addison, and Vanbrugh, was also one of the most prominent literary members of the Whig Kit-Cat Club. Among these eminent members at the turn of the century, Congreve has been described by his biographer John Hodges as "easily the most distinguished . . . a kind of poet laureate for the principles of the Revolution."<sup>17</sup>

As a direct result of his service and loyalty to the Whig party Congreve received several patronage positions throughout the course of his life. These included posts such as Commissioner for the Licensing of Hackney Coaches (1695), Commissioner for the Licensing of Wines (1705), and, upon the Whigs' return to power in 1714, a lucrative

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<sup>15</sup> Congreve to Joseph Keally, 10 September, 1706. See Hodges, *Congreve Letters*, 43.

<sup>16</sup> See John Hodges, *William Congreve The Man: A Biography from New Sources* (London: Oxford University Press, 1941), 53.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 96.

position as Secretary to the Island of Jamaica.<sup>18</sup> His loyalty to the Whig party was unwavering and remained so even during a brief period of Tory power from 1710-1714, when he was concerned about losing his patronage post as wine commissioner. In a letter to another Whig leader, Robert Harley, the Earl of Oxford, Lord Halifax tried to allay Congreve's fears:

Poor Congreve is again alarmed by Reports He has had, that their Commission [of wine licenses] is renewing. He does not doubt the continuance of Your Lordships favour to Him, depending on the assurances Your Lordship has given Him, as well as Me, of Your Care and Protection of Him. But I beg Your Lordship will enable Me, to ease Him, entirely of His fears. . .<sup>19</sup>

As is made evident in the preceding letter, Congreve had a very close relationship with Lord Halifax. Halifax was his long time patron and the man to whom Congreve had previously dedicated both the play *The Double Dealer* (1694) and the poem "The Birth of the Muse" (1697).<sup>20</sup> In 1710 Congreve further acknowledged his ties to Halifax in his dedicatory ode "Epistle to Halifax." The following lines from this work allude to Halifax's own poetic career, which he abandoned in favour of politics.

O had Your Genius been to Leisure born,  
And not more bound to aid us, than adorn!  
*Albion* in Verse with ancient *Greece* had vy'd,  
And gain'd alone a Fame, which, there, seven States divide.  
But such, ev'n such Renown, too dear had cost,  
Had we the Patriot in the Poet lost.

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 53, 85-87, 98. Congreve had a particular fondness and enthusiasm for "good Burgundy" and the "Admirable Champagn." He once complained to Joseph Keally, "If I have a spleen, it is because this town affords not one drop of wine out of a private house." Congreve to Joseph Keally 30 April 1706. Hodges, *Congreve Letters*, 40.

<sup>19</sup> Charles Montague, Earl of Halifax, to Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford, 13 May, 1714. See Hodges, *Congreve Letters*, 121.

<sup>20</sup> Julie Stone Peters, *Congreve, the Drama, and the Printed Word* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), 80.

A true Poetic State we had deplor'd,  
Had not Your Ministry our Coin restor'd.<sup>21</sup>

Thus, through Halifax's decision, Congreve argues that England (Albion) has been disadvantaged in its poetic competition with ancient Greece. Congreve's Whiggish sentiments are seldom far from the surface of his works. In "The Birth of the Muse," Congreve suggests that the muse was created primarily to sing the praises of the Whig hero William III.

*To thee, the Dardan Prince shall owe his Fame;  
To thee, the Caesars their immortal Name.  
Eliza sung by thee, with Fate shall strive,  
And long as Time, in Sacred Verse survive.  
And yey O Muse, remains the Noblest Theme;  
The first of Men, Mature for Endless Fame  
Thy future Songs shall grace, and all thy Lays,  
Thenceforth, alone shall wait on WILLIAM's Praise.  
On his Heroick Deeds, thy Verse shall rise;  
Thou shalt diffuse the Fires that he supplies.  
Thro' him thy Songs shall more sublime aspire;  
And he thro' them, shall deathless Fame acquire:  
Nor Time, nor Fate his Glory shall oppose,  
Or blast the monuments the Muse bestows.<sup>22</sup>*

The suggestion that the muse was created to sing the praises of William III also carries the analogous suggestion that it was Congreve himself, a poet and presumably also touched by the muse, who was meant to sing his praises.

In the spring of 1698 Congreve came under the direct attack of Jeremy Collier, the High Church clergyman and well known manners reformer. Collier's *A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage* was published that year and bore "a

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<sup>21</sup> *The Complete Works of William Congreve*, ed. Montague Summers, 4 vols. (London: Nonsuch Press, 1923), iv, 139.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 59.

particular pique against Mr. Congreve."<sup>23</sup> Collier singled out Congreve's play *The Old Bachelor* (1692) for particular criticism, stating "almost all the characters in the Old Bachelor are foul and nauseous."<sup>24</sup> In his remarks on Congreve's *the Double Dealer* (1693), Collier writes "There are but *Four* Ladys in this *Play*, and *Three* of the biggest of them are Whores."<sup>25</sup> Collier in fact condemns nearly all of Congreve's major works, including *Love for Love*, for various similar offenses.<sup>26</sup> The reasons for this attack on Congreve are unclear. Collier, an avowed Tory and opponent of William III, may have taken offense at Congreve's Whig politics and poems in praise of William.

As the public furor, much of it supportive, over the *Short View* increased, Congreve felt compelled to respond. In July of 1698, nearly three months after the first appearance of the *Short View*, Congreve issued his *Amendments of Mr. Collier's False and Imperfect Citations, &c.* Congreve's anger at Collier was readily apparent as he wrote:

If I do not return his Civilities in calling him Names, it is because I am not very well vers'd in his *Nomenclatures*; therefore for his *Foot pads*, which he calls us in his Preface, and for his *Buffoons* and *Slaves in the Saturnalia*, which he bestows on us in the rest of his Book, I will only call him Mr. *Collier*, and that I will call him as often as I think he shall deserve it.<sup>27</sup>

Though Congreve suffered little in public popularity as a result of Collier's attacks, he, nonetheless, felt his artistic integrity was threatened. Following the moderate success of

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<sup>23</sup> Anonymous Author, *Some Remarks upon Mr. Collier's Defense of his Short View of the English Stage, etc. In Vindication of Mr. Congreve, etc. In a Letter to a Friend*, as reprinted in Hodges, *William Congreve*, 63.

<sup>24</sup> Jeremy Collier, *A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage* (London, 1698), Reprint (New York: AMS Press, 1974), 4.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>26</sup> For a more thorough discussion of Collier's criticism of Congreve see D. Crane Taylor, *William Congreve* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1963), 106-120.

<sup>27</sup> As reprinted in Hodges, *William Congreve*, 64.

his comedy, *The Way of the World* (1700), Congreve, at age thirty, decided to retire from writing for the stage.<sup>28</sup> One of the few theatrical works which followed this decision was his masque *The Judgment of Paris*.

The year 1701 (during which “The Prize” competition took place) saw a particularly high level of political volatility. Two hotly contested general elections were held, one in January and the other in December. The Whigs maintained a slim majority of seats over the Tories in the January election but the decision was narrowly reversed the following December.<sup>29</sup> Equally important, the year 1701 saw passage of the Whig-backed Act of Settlement which, as discussed in Chapter One, secured “the rights and liberties of the subject” by ensuring a Protestant succession. In addition to the active lobbying and propaganda which surrounded the elections and passage of the Act of Settlement, 1701 also saw Lord Halifax, and other Whig leaders, John Somers and Edward Orford, subjected to a series of personal attacks by the Tories for allegedly committing unconstitutional acts of embezzlement and abuse of power. In the middle of this political imbroglio, there could hardly have been a better time for Congreve, Lord Halifax, and the Whigs in general, to attempt to regain a measure of moral high ground through the pro-nationalist encouragement of English music and aesthetic beauty. Following so closely on the heels of Collier’s conservative, Tory backed, attacks on Congreve, and given Congreve’s prominent Whig politics, the Whig sponsorship of Congreve’s libretto and “The Prize” competition, the potential political implications of *The Judgment of Paris* can hardly be missed.

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 70.

<sup>29</sup> See Speck, *Tory and Whig*, 123.

## CONGREVE'S LIBRETTO

The plot of Congreve's *Judgment of Paris* was relatively simple and based on a well known classical myth.<sup>30</sup> Paris was the youngest of fifty sons of Priam, King of Troy, the city whose destruction he eventually caused. The episode of the judgment of Paris begins with the wedding of the mortal Peleus and the goddess Thetis. One goddess, Eris (Discordia), who had not been invited, spitefully threw a Golden Apple into the midst of the gods and goddesses in attendance. When the apple was found to bear the inscription "For the Fairest," three goddesses, Hera (Juno), Athena and Aphrodite (Venus), immediately laid claim to the prize. Jove (Zeus or Jupiter), wishing to avoid any appearance of favoritism, commanded the three goddesses to present themselves to Paris,

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<sup>30</sup> In that it is a tale involving the power of physical beauty, the judgment of Paris story has long been a popular subject in the arts. The subject was particularly favoured by painters, who commonly depict the moment when Venus receives the golden apple from Paris while the other two goddesses and Mercury look on. Famous settings include those by Peter Paul Rubens (c.1600), Antoine Watteau (c.1718-20), William Blake (c.1811), Paul Cézanne (1860-61), Pierre-Auguste Renoir (1908), John Singer Sargent (1916-21), and Pablo Picasso (1951). In England the story also served as the basis for several musical settings which predate Congreve's version of 1701. These are: James Shirley's masque *The Triumph of Beautie* (Music by William Lawes and others) 1646 and John Hilton the Younger's musical dialogue *Rise Princely Shepherd* c.1652-60. Shirley's libretto shows no resemblance to Congreve's libretto and includes a number of comic shepherd characters, modeled on *A Mid-Summer Night's Dream*, such as Crab, Bottle, and Clout. See William Gifford, ed. *The Dramatic Works and Poems of James Shirley* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1966), Vol. VI, 318-341 and Robert Stanley Forsythe, *The Relation of Shirley's Plays to the Elizabethan Drama* (New York: Benjamin Blom, 1965), 400-401. Hilton's dialogue is scored for continuo alone and, again bears no textual or musical resemblance to the 1702 settings. Written for just the four main characters the music is harmonically and melodically simple. The most notable aspect of this brief work is the four-part concluding chorus "Beauty is the soul of Human Excellence." The score resides in the British Library, Add. 11608. The Judgment of Paris subject was also used in several other well known continental works including Pietro Antonio Cesti's opera *Il pomo d'oro* of 1668 and Marc-Antoine Charpentier's opera *Le Jugement de Paris* c. 1690. The music for Charpentier's work has been lost though Acts II and V of Cesti's *Il pomo d'oro* are extant. Written in honour of Emperor Leopold I's wedding to his Spanish bride Margarita Cesti's work is similar to "The Prize" settings in its lavish production values - opulent sets and casts and taking two days to perform. Francesco Sbarra's libretto bears little similarity to Congreve's, however, as it recounts the entire Paris story through to the fall of Troy and injects several contrived sub-plots and adds three new characters: Momo (court jester); Filaura (a nurse); and Aurindo (a shepherd in love with Ennone). For a complete listing of the various uses of this myth see James Davidson Reid, ed. *Oxford Guide to Classical Mythology in the Arts 1300-1990s* (New York: Open University Press, 1993).

allegedly the world's most handsome man, and let him decide who was the fairest.

Though born to noble parents, Paris was reared by shepherds (having been cast out by his mother Hecuba after his brother Aesacus' prophecy that the child would cause the downfall of Troy). His common upbringing thus led Jove to regard Paris as an unbiased judge in the competition.

Paris was tending his flock on the slopes of Mount Ida when Hermes (Mercury) appeared with the goddesses and explained the situation. The contestants appeared unwilling to rely solely on Paris' unbiased opinion as they immediately began to offer bribes to the judge. Aphrodite, by offering Paris the love of Helen of Sparta, the wife of Menelaus and the most beautiful woman in the world, eventually wins the prize.

Paris, who was married to the prophetess Oenone, subsequently sailed to Sparta, accompanied by Aeneas (as instructed by Aphrodite), to claim Helen. With Menelaus away in Crete, Helen soon fell in love with Paris, and they returned to Troy. The leaders of the principal Greek cities, many of whom had previously been Helen's suitors, now raised a great army and sailed for Troy to reclaim the supposedly kidnapped queen. Paris, having killed the hero Achilles, was eventually mortally wounded by an arrow shot by Philoctetes and Troy, of course, fell to the Greeks after ten years.<sup>31</sup>

Planned as an all-sung masque, Congreve's version of *The Judgment of Paris* deviates very little from the original Greek myth though many of the gods are given their equivalent Roman names.<sup>32</sup> Paris is portrayed as a young shepherd. He is requested by

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<sup>31</sup> This account of the story is based on that provided in Edward Tripp, *Crowell's Handbook of Classical Mythology* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1970), 446-448. According to Tripp, early sources of the story of the Judgment of Paris include Euripides' "Trojan Women" and Apollodorus' "Epitome."

<sup>32</sup> The exception is Pallas Athena, simply called Pallas throughout, who retains her Greek name over Minerva, the Roman equivalent.



Jove, though his messenger, Mercury, to judge a beauty contest between three rival goddesses, Juno (Queen of the gods and Jove's wife), Pallas Athena (the warrior goddess), and Venus (the goddess of love). Paris is overwhelmed at the daunting prospect of judging such beauty and, as the goddesses descend sings the aria "Oh Ravishing Delight! What Mortal can support the Sight?" After Mercury and Paris have sung the duet "Happy thou of Human Race" each goddess takes her turn to introduce herself in song, attempting to impress Paris both with her physical beauty, and by analogy, the beauty of her singing. The short introductions by each goddess lead to a Trio, "Hither turn to me again." Paris' deliberations form the central part of the work. Unable to decide after the goddesses have each sung he asks them to disrobe, "...since a gay Robe an ill shape may disguise . . ." Thereupon each goddess attempts to influence Paris' judgment through various bribes. Each bribe takes the form of an extended aria which is reinforced with the weight of a concluding chorus. First Juno tries to entice Paris' favor by offering him political power.

Crowns I'll throw beneath thy Feet,  
Thou on Necks of Kings shalt tread,  
Joys in Circles, Joys shall meet  
Which way e'er thy Fancy lead.

Pallas Athena then offers Paris military glory.

O what joys does Conquest yield!  
When returning from the Field,  
Oh how glorious 'tis to See  
The Godlike Hero crown'd with Victory!

Finally Venus offers him true love in the form of Helen of Sparta, the epitome of mortal feminine beauty.

Happy Nymph who shall enfold thee,  
Circled in her yielding Arms!  
Should bright Helen once behold thee,  
She'd surrender all her Charms.

Paris is helpless to resist Venus' offer and in the aria "Forbear, O Goddess of Desire" he awards her "the Prize" of a golden apple. A final Grand Chorus, "Hither all ye Graces" proclaims both Venus' victory and the power of love and brings the work to a close (Appendix A presents a complete version of Congreve's libretto).

The structure of the libretto was extremely well planned by Congreve and was carefully scaled to provide maximum dramatic tension.<sup>33</sup> Congreve also clearly cast the work with an eye towards its subsequent musical development. Two initial arias, "From High Olympus" and "O *Hermes*" by Mercury and Paris, lead to a duet.<sup>34</sup> Then the introductory arias by each of the three goddesses lead to a trio. This progresses to an alternation between arias and choruses as each goddess attempts to amplify her plea with the added emphasis of extra stanzas, symphonies, and choruses. The work culminates with Paris' aria awarding "the Prize" to Venus followed by a traditional concluding chorus. The work thus divides neatly into three sections, the first two roughly equal in length to the third. The first section culminates in the duet by Mercury and Paris, the second ends in the trio between the three goddesses "Hither turn to me again," and the final section builds tension with the alternation of the goddesses' extended arias, symphonies, and choruses. The use of choruses is thus reserved for the final section.

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<sup>33</sup> For a complete breakdown of the numbers and structure of Congreve's libretto, please refer to table 3-1 in Chapter Three.

<sup>34</sup> The period English terminology for a tune, either vocal or instrumental was "air" and indeed the songs in most English operas and masques are often referred to as "airs." However, as the works discussed adhere to a variety of traditions, and to avoid confusion, the common term "aria" will be used to designate all self contained fully sung solo vocal compositions.

Juno's plea concludes with a choral repetition of her first stanza of text "Let ambition fire thy mind." Pallas' presentation is slightly varied in that it includes a symphony mid-way through before it too concludes with a final chorus "O how glorious 'tis to see" which sums up her militaristic promises to Paris. Venus, the eventual winner of the competition, naturally receives even more attention through the treatment of her final plea: an opening symphony contrasts with the choral bombast of Pallas' previous plea, and the chorus occurs at the mid point of her presentation rather than at the end. Venus, unlike her competitors, is then given the opportunity to address her final appeal, "Nature framed thee," directly to Paris, without the intervening chorus. Paris, in turn, is forced to respond to her directly and, overwhelmed, awards her the prize in the aria "I Yield." The work concludes with the final grand chorus, which functions as a type of choral coda to the previous climax. Congreve thus provides a series of tensional peaks and valleys with each climax slightly more powerful and emphatic than the previous. The elegance and eloquence of this design, and indeed the entire libretto, is attested to by the fact that it remained almost entirely unaltered in the subsequent settings by Sammartini and Arne composed some forty years later.

In several articles Stoddard Lincoln has described Congreve's considered approach to writing song lyrics and librettos.<sup>35</sup> Lincoln believes that Congreve modeled his approach on that laid out by John Dryden who believed that a lyric "must abound in the Softness and Variety of Numbers; its principal Intention being to please the Hearing

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<sup>35</sup> Lincoln, "A Congreve Masque," 1078-81; "John Eccles: The Last of a Tradition," (Ph. D. Dissertation: University of Oxford, 1963); "The Librettos and Lyrics of William Congreve," in *British Theatre and the Other Arts, 1660-1800* Shirley Strum Kenny ed. (London: Associated University Presses, 1984, 116-132.

rather than to gratify the Understanding."<sup>36</sup> Lincoln's description of the relationship between Congreve and Dryden is likely accurate. Congreve, for example, appears to acknowledge Dryden's influence on his own work in a dedication to an edition of Dryden's dramatic works (1717):

Mr. Dryden had personal qualities to challenge both love and esteem from all who were truly acquainted with him. . . He was extremely ready and gentle in corrections of any writer who thought fit to consult him; and full as ready and patient to admit of the reprehension of others in respect of his own oversight or mistakes.<sup>37</sup>

One of Lincoln's main assertions, however, concerns "Congreve's use of a different sound palette to characterize each of the goddesses."<sup>38</sup> He demonstrates his theory by comparing the introductory lines of each goddess. Juno's grandeur, for example, is reinforced by the use of "wide open vowels" as emphasized in the opening rhyme:

*Saturnia*, wife of thund'ring *Jove*, am I  
Belov'd by him, and Empress of the Sky . . .

Pallas Athena, in keeping with her warrior status, assumes a much more aggressive, almost dangerous posture with the use of more "explosive and sibilant" sounds, almost serpentine in nature:

This way, Mortal, bend thy Eyes,  
*Pallas* claims the golden Prize. . .

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<sup>36</sup> Preface to the opera *Albion and Albanius* (1685).

<sup>37</sup> Congreve as quoted in *Dryden: Poetry, Drama and Prose* (ed.) David Zesmer (New York: Bantam, 1967), 284.

<sup>38</sup> Lincoln, "A Congreve Masque," 1079

Finally. Venus, in accordance with her ultimate triumph in the competition and her position as goddess of love, is given much more “muted vowels and murmuring consonants” as well as gentler, more seductive sounding lyrics:<sup>39</sup>

Hither turn thee, gentle Swain,  
Let not *Venus* sue in vain . . .

These differences in lyric characterization are, according to Lincoln, maintained throughout the work. However, even based on this small sample, the same used by Lincoln, the evidence supporting his theory seems to be limited at best. The differences between the three goddesses seem to lie more in metrical accent than in the use of differing sound palettes. Both Venus and Pallas in the above example would seem exhibit the same sibilant qualities in their speech, the main difference being the softer “V” sound of the name Venus against the popping “P” of the name Pallas. The bribery episode which ensues seems to further deny Lincoln’s theory. As seen on pages 86-87 above, all three goddesses seem to employ open vowel sounds as the words “crowns,” “joys,” “Oh,” and “enfold” are emphasized by each of the three contestants. Similarly the long vowel “E” sound appears equally important in the final rhymes of each of their lines. Rather than supporting the particular character traits of each goddess, such open and long vowel sounds are typical of the generally peaceful mood of pastoral lyrics.<sup>40</sup>

Of more importance in creating interest and to the overall expressiveness of the work is the great variety of phrase structure, metrical patterns and verse lengths found in Congreve’s poetry and which corresponds with Dryden’s call for a “variety of numbers.” Though there appears to be no consistent pattern to his rhyme and metric designs,

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> See Marjorie Boulton, *The Anatomy of Poetry* (London: Routledge, 1982), 63, 108.

Congreve provides the composers with a flexible and musically adaptable text. The variety inherent in Congreve's versification is evident from the very beginning of the work with Mercury's introductory address to Paris:

From high *Olympus* and the Realms above,  
Behold I come the Messenger of *Jove*;  
His dread commands I bear,  
Shepherds, arise and hear;  
Arise, and leave a while thy Rural Care,  
Forbear thy woolly Flock to feed,  
And lay aside thy tuneful Reed;  
For thou to greater Honours art decreed.

This passage contains an uneven rhyme scheme, aabbbccc. It also variously switches from iambic pentameter for lines 1, 2, 5, and 8, to iambic trimeter in lines 3 and 4, to iambic tetrameter in lines 6 and 7. Adding to the complexity of the verse is that rhyme scheme, given on the left, overlaps these metric changes, listed on the right:

a	5
a	5
b	3
b	3
b	5
c	4
c	4
c	5

The unbalanced rhyme and metrical changes and overlap with one another are perhaps representative of the unsettled nature of Olympus and the discord amongst the gods which precipitates Mercury's mission.

Stoddard Lincoln also tries to establish a hierarchy of meters which Congreve uses to portray different classes of speech and social standing of characters. According to Lincoln:

The most common length found in the masque is tetrameter, which is used for neutral expression. Pentameter is used for more exalted thoughts and for references to high ranking gods. Trimeter is used for lower ranks, such as the mortal Paris, and all that is related to him as a shepherd.<sup>41</sup>

While in theory this seems to be an elegant approach, on closer inspection it does not appear to be completely accurate. As will be seen in the discussion below, Congreve, while he does differentiate characters through meter and metric lengths, seems to show no particular concern for matching pentameter, tetrameter, or trimeter with the associations listed by Lincoln. In short Lincoln's argument is accurate in terms of Congreve's use of different meters and lengths to portray different characters and their thoughts yet flawed in that the metric lengths do not appear to correspond to his suggested hierarchy.

Nonetheless, Congreve does give a variety of rhyme schemes and metric accents to each of the goddesses. It will be noticed, for example, that in the goddesses' introductory phrases above, Juno's verse is in iambic pentameter, a historically standard verse form which serves to underline her grandeur and status. Pallas, by contrast, is given a slightly more forceful trochaic tetrameter, in keeping with her more aggressive, warlike persona. Finally, Venus is initially portrayed in a softer and more lyrical iambic tetrameter that would seem somewhat more seductive and in keeping with her status as the goddess of love.<sup>42</sup> It should be noted that, in contrast to Lincoln's theory, passages by both Pallas and Venus are in tetrameter, though both are arguably high-ranking goddesses and neither could possibly be considered neutral statements.

Later, after disrobing for Paris, Juno is given a trochaic tetrameter and interlocking abab quatrain rhyme scheme:

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<sup>41</sup> Lincoln, "The Librettos and Lyrics of William Congreve," 122.

<sup>42</sup> Metric associations drawn from Boulton, *Anatomy of Poetry*, 17-44, 63-64.

*Let Ambition fire thy Mind,  
Thou wert born o'er Men to reign,  
Not to follow Flocks design'd,  
Scorn thy Crook and leave the Plain.*

Given the political context of the work, Juno's eventual loss in the competition is foreshadowed in this speech. The audience would likely not sympathize with the scorning and abandonment of the pastoral life of a shepherd, long equated with England and its hard-working citizens, for the sake of becoming a, possibly, tyrannical king. The ambitious and unsentimental nature of this entreaty are given a more forceful impact by the trochaic meter. The speech, however, could hardly be considered a neutral expression, the type which Lincoln attempts to associate with the use of tetrameter. It also refers to Paris and his life as shepherd, yet does not, as Lincoln suggests it should, use a trimeter.

Pallas, in contrast to Juno, is now given an iambic tetrameter with the added impact of a faster internal rhyme scheme, aabba.

*Awake, awake, thy Spirits raise,  
Waste not thus thy youthful Days,  
Piping, toying,  
Nymphs decoying.  
Lost in wanton and inglorious Ease.*

The repetitions on "awake" and the sprightly rhythmic rhymes of these verses emphasize Pallas' message to Paris to not waste his "youthful Days." In this instance Congreve appears to have intentionally built in textual repeats for the composers to expand upon. Venus is also given an iambic tetrameter but with a slower, more languid, tempo and a conventional abab quatrain rhyme scheme:



*Nature fram'd thee sure for Loving,  
Thus adorn'd with every Grace;  
Venus' self thy Form approving,  
Looks with Pleasure on thy Face.*

Venus is here, of course, appealing to Paris' own vanity by complimenting his looks, a supreme compliment from the goddess of love. In this manner the characters of Paris and Venus are thus linked by their common physical beauty.

With the exception of Lincoln's work the libretto has been largely overlooked by Congreve scholars. In his libretto for *The Judgment of Paris*, however, Congreve masterfully combines a variety of meters, line lengths, and rhyme schemes to paint each of the goddesses. This, in combination with his use of long term formal tensions, exhibits his keen awareness of the eventual musical setting of the work. The need to provide both variety of numbers and overall formal clarity is taken into account and the work is wonderful example of a librettist's foresight.

#### "THE PRIZE" - CONTESTANTS, VENUE, AND COMPETITION

There were four contestants for "the Prize", John Eccles (1668-1735), Gottfried Finger (1660-1730), John Weldon (1676-1736) and Henry Purcell's younger brother Daniel (? -1717). In the years following Henry Purcell's death in 1695, Daniel Purcell, Eccles, and Finger were among the most active composers in London's playhouses and were familiar with each other's work. John Weldon, however, was an unknown newcomer. The settings were performed on separate nights, beginning with Eccles' on 21 March 1701, followed by Finger's on 28 March, Purcell's on 11 April and finally

Weldon's on 6 May.<sup>43</sup> On 3 June all four works were given in succession in one large concert. After the final performance, according to Roger North, "the victorys [were] decided by the judgment of the subscribers."<sup>44</sup>

It is interesting to note that the conditions under which the competition was held may have been questioned by some composers, and may have contributed to the fact that, apparently, only four composers entered the competition. John Hawkins relates, for example, that Jeremiah Clarke upon "being asked why he did not compose for the prize, gave for answer that the nobility were to be the judges, leaving the querist to make the inference." This slightly cryptic comment also appears to bear out the political undertones of the competition and also lends additional credence to Eccles' claim (discussed below) that the competition may have been fixed.<sup>45</sup>

Daniel Purcell was an organist and composer who is primarily known for his secular incidental music. From 1696, when he wrote the music for the final masque in *The Indian Queen*, until 1707, he supplied the music for over forty plays.<sup>46</sup> At least two of these works also contained music by Purcell's fellow competitor Gottfried Finger: Dryden's *Secular Masque* (1700) and Nathaniel Lee's *The Rival Queens* (1701). Gottfried Finger was a Moravian by birth and the only foreigner in the competition. Finger initially came to England to serve in the Catholic Chapel of James II and remained

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<sup>43</sup> These dates are compiled from a variety of advertisements reproduced in Michael Tilmouth, "A Calendar of References to Music in newspapers Published in London and the Provinces (1660-1719)," *RMA Research Chronicle* 1 (1961), 65-66. They are also given in Richard Platt's introduction to the facsimile edition of John Eccles, *The Judgment of Paris: A Masque by William Congreve* (Tunbridge Wells: Macnutt, 1984), xi.

<sup>44</sup> Roger North, "Memoirs of Musick" (London, 1728), in *Roger North on Music*, ed. John Wilson (London, 1959), 354.

<sup>45</sup> John Hawkins, *General History*, 760.

<sup>46</sup> Jack Westrup, "Daniel Purcell," *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 20 vols., ed. Stanley Sadie (London: MacMillan, 1980), XV, 475.

after the Chapel was disbanded. He was an active and successful composer in London at the time of the competition. By 1700 he had published six chamber music collections and was in constant demand for his overtures and act tunes. Like both Purcell and Eccles, Finger is primarily remembered for his theatre music. In addition to the stage works to which he co-contributed with Daniel Purcell, Finger also shared composition duties with John Eccles on Motteux's masque *The Loves of Mars and Venus* (1696) which appeared between acts of Ravenscroft's play *The Anatomist*. John Eccles was probably the most well known and accomplished of the four competing composers. With the exception of Henry Purcell, Eccles has been referred to as "undoubtedly the greatest of the Restoration theatre composers."<sup>47</sup> In 1700 he was appointed Master of the King's Musick and, in addition to his setting of *The Judgment of Paris*, composed the music for a number of high profile theatrical works including Vanbrugh's play *The Provok'd Wife* (1697), Motteux's masque *Acis and Galatea* (1700), and Congreve's English opera *Semele* (1707). The last of the competitors, John Weldon, was an organist and a former pupil of Henry Purcell's. "The Prize" competition was Weldon's first significant exposure to the public; in subsequent years he went on to set a number of theatrical works including *The Tempest* (1712).<sup>48</sup> Later in his career, after he succeeded John Blow as organist of the Chapel Royal in 1708, he largely focused his attention on the composition of sacred music and gained some reputation for his composition of verse anthems.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>47</sup> Stoddard Lincoln, "John Eccles," *The New Grove Dictionary*, V, 820.

<sup>48</sup> No score bearing Weldon's name is known for this work, but it is widely believed that an extant score attributed to Henry Purcell may well be his. See Margaret Laurie, "Did Purcell Set the *Tempest*?", *Proceedings of the Royal Musicological Association* 90 (1963-4), 43.

<sup>49</sup> See Ian Spink, *Restoration Cathedral Music: 1660-1714* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 173-176.

The results of "The Prize" competition were somewhat surprising. Weldon, at 25 the youngest and least established of the four contestants, took first place. John Eccles, who came second, was expected by many to win. Eccles was, after all, a good friend of Congreve's and was by far the most popular and experienced composer to take part. Both his setting and Daniel Purcell's, who came third, were published in full score in 1702 by Walsh and Hare. Despite the fact that only his own and Purcell's settings were judged popular enough to be published, Eccles seems to have been openly disappointed at his second place finish in the competition.<sup>50</sup> In the dedication to his published score, Eccles expresses to Lord Halifax his disappointment at not winning the competition and hints at the possibility of the presence of a hostile clique within the audience.

My Lord . . . I am very far from thinking this so perfect as to merit your Lordship's approbation. And if it can Entitle me to the continuance of your patronage That is all I ought to expect from it: The influence of which will I hope animate me to produce something more worthy of your Leisure hours.

. . . For my own part however I may hitherto have fallen short of what I ought to have done, in proportion to the Encouragement received from your Lordship. Yet I will not Despair some time or other thro my Industry to make Amends for it.

As to the following Composition, my Labour in it was more then [sic] required, by your Lordship's Allowance of it at Practice; if at the publick performance, besides the kind Approbation which it received from the Greater part of the Audience, it had also had the fortune to have pleas'd them who came prepar'd to Dislike it, I might have been too vain of my success, and may not have thought myself obliged (as I now think I am) by my future care to Endeavour [sic] to obtain their good opinions Whom it is my Ambition to please and from whome I am Sorry not to have already Deserv'd more Encouragement.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>50</sup> Though the usual practice was for the publisher to pay for the rights of publication of a score (indeed the 1702 edition of Eccles' setting of *The Judgment of Paris* was "Printed for J. Walsh"), both John Hawkins and Charles Burney were of the opinion that Purcell and Eccles paid, with their own funds, for the privilege of having their scores published. See John Hawkins, *General History*, ii, 760. For a more detailed description of eighteenth-century publishing contracts in England see Ronald J. Rabin and Steven Zohn, "Arne, Handel, and Music as Intellectual Property: Two Eighteenth-Century Lawsuits," *Journal of the Royal Musicological Association* 120 (1995), 112-139.

<sup>51</sup> Dedication to Eccle's *The Judgment of Paris* (London: John Walsh and John Hare, 1702). This dedication is reproduced in its entirety in Figure 1 of this chapter.

Whether it was intentional or not, and we likely shall never know, Eccles' made one potentially troublesome error in his dedication . . . He misspelled his patron's name in the title and the work was consequently dedicated to "Lord Hallifax." As to that part of the audience which "came prepared to Dislike" Eccles' setting we, again, shall probably never know whether it was indeed an organized protest or merely an attempt on Eccles' part to conjure up an excuse for his second place showing.

Eccles' accusations and inferences can, perhaps, be given some credence in light of the fact that Weldon's winning score was not published. This fact may, however, have been more a result of Weldon's lack of public exposure and popularity and his lack of commercial potential in comparison to the other established composers, rather than any artificial first place finish in the competition.<sup>52</sup>

Adding to the mystery and bitterness surrounding the outcome of the competition was the reaction of Gottfried Finger, who finished last. Given his relatively lofty reputation as a composer in London, Finger was no doubt extremely insulted by his last place finish and, very soon after the event, he abandoned England for the Continent. Unfortunately, Finger appears to have taken his score with him as it is the only one not to have survived. Though purely musical reasons may have been at the heart of Finger's failure, the Whigs, and their mistrust of foreigners, may have ensured his lack of success.<sup>53</sup> The likelihood of Whig prejudice against Finger is compounded by the fact that he was originally recruited by the Whig's nemesis James II. Some evidence of

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<sup>52</sup> It may also have been, if one believes Charles Burney and John Hawkins, merely the fact that Weldon, unlike Purcell and Eccles, was unwilling or unable to pay for the publication of his score. (See Footnote 50 above.)

<sup>53</sup> Indeed Michael Tilmouth reports that Finger initially made many enemies among English musicians. See Michael Tilmouth, "Finger, Gottfried," *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* XI, 565.

Finger's disappointment is evident in the following letter, written by George Stepney, the English Envoy to Vienna, to Lord Halifax:

I thank you for Eccles his Musick, which I suppose by this time is got to Hamburgh and will shortly be here, where Finger will see it performed to the best advantage: he assures me notwithstanding the partiality which was shown by the Duke of Somersett and others in favor of Welding and Eccles, Mr. Purcell's Musick was the best (I mean after his own, for no Decision can destroy the Love we have for ourselves).<sup>54</sup>

This letter also seems to contradict Eccles' claim that some in the audience were biased against him. In Finger's view, if there was any partiality it was only shown "in favor of Welding and Eccles." Many professional musicians felt Finger's work was indeed the best and should have been placed first. According to Roger North, Finger's move to the continent was a direct outcome of the competition. North wrote that Finger "having lost his cause, declared he was mistaken in his musick, for he thought he was to be judged by men, and not by boys, and thereupon left England."<sup>55</sup> Charles Burney, writing in his *History* nearly eighty years after the event, also seems to have been convinced that Finger was the most deserving and that Purcell was, perhaps, the least. With his usual sense of critical sarcasm Burney writes:

. . . Godfrey Finger [was] the best musician perhaps among the candidates. . . Dan. Purcell was a wicked punster, and no less wicked a composer. His right to the first title is recorded in Joe Millar, and to the second, in the score of his *Judgement of Paris*, which he printed, it should seem, to convince the world how righteously he had been judged.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Letter from George Stepney to Lord Halifax, 3 December 1701. Bodlian MS. 25,427, f. 67; also quoted in Hodges, *Congreve Letters*, 21.

<sup>55</sup> Roger North, "Notes of Comparison between the Elder and Later Musick and Somewhat Historical of Both," (London, ca. 1726), in John Wilson ed., *Roger North on Music* (London: Novello and Company Ltd., 1959), 312.

<sup>56</sup> Burney, *General History of Music*, ii, 984. Burney's contemporary and competitor, John Hawkins, also wrote several entries concerning *The Judgment of Paris* and "The Prize" competition in his *General History of the Science and Practice of Music*. His writing is however limited to uncritical description of the event. See Footnote 50 above.

All the performances for "The Prize" were given at Dorset Garden Theatre which was specially renovated in order to stage the event. Dorset Gardens had been in existence since 1671 and had been the main theatre used to stage Henry Purcell's works. Upon Purcell's death, however, the theatre fell into disuse and was scheduled to be torn down. "The Prize" competition, however, must have for a time breathed new life into the venue as the Whig sponsors apparently spared no expense in order to carry off the event in style. According to Congreve, who described the production of Eccles' setting in a letter to his friend Joseph Keally, the orchestra and chorus were considerably larger than was usual, forcing a number of, undoubtedly expensive, modifications to the stage and seating area. Congreve described the "The Prize" concert series and the lavishness of the setting and production in some detail:

... I wished particularly for you [Joseph Keally] on Friday last, when Eccles his music for the prize was performed in Dorset Garden, and universally admired. Mr Finger's is to be to-morrow; and Purcell and Weldon's follow in their turn. The latter two I believe will not be before Easter. After all have been heard severally, they are all to be heard in one day, in order to a decision; and if you come at all this spring, you may come in time to hear that. Indeed I don't think any one place in the world can show such an assembly. The number of performers, besides the verse singers, was 85. The front of the stage was all built into a concave with deal boards; all which was faced with tin, to increase and throw forwards the sound. It was all hung with sconces of wax-candles, besides the common branches of light usual in play-houses. The boxes and pit were all thrown into one; so that all sat in common: and the whole was crammed with beauties and beaux, not one scrub being admitted. The place where formerly the music used to play, between the pit and stage, was turned into White's chocolate-house; the whole family be transplanted thither with chocolate, cool'd drinks, ratafia, Pontacq, &c. Which every body that would called for, the whole expence of every thing being defrayed by the subscribers. I think truly the whole thing better worth coming to see than the jubilee [held in Rome by Pope Innocent XIII].<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Letter from William Congreve to Joseph Keally, 26 March 1701, in Hodges, *Congreve Letters*, 20-21. Joseph Keally, an Irish lawyer and a fellow Whig party member, was a lifelong friend and Congreve's closest confidant.

As described by Congreve, the audience was comprised entirely of nobility and gentry with “not one scrub being admitted.” The exclusivity of the audience and the expensive trappings of the event are in keeping with the premise that it was intended not only to encourage English music and musical taste but also to promote the Whig party and its ideology. As mentioned in Chapter One, in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries political power was vested in property and wealth. Above all, given that England was still overwhelmingly rural, power was attached to the possession of land or landed property. Indeed, William Speck has estimated that throughout the period 1701-1715 the Members of the House of Commons were drawn from a social range which spanned only .5 per cent of the total population.<sup>58</sup> In order to even receive a voting franchise one often had to qualify through the ownership of a freehold, valued at around forty shillings per annum.<sup>59</sup> Viewed in the context of its chic audience, “The Prize” concerts thus approximated an exclusive Whig party fund-raiser. A fund-raiser which was, apparently intentionally, aimed at those persons of wealth and status who would wield the most influence in support of their cause.

Congreve’s letter is also of note as it somewhat bolsters Eccles’ belief that there was a fix on the final night of the competition. In the preliminary round, at least according to Congreve, Eccles’ setting was “universally admired.” It must also be noted that Congreve’s opinion may not have been without its own bias as Congreve and Eccles were well acquainted, if not good friends, at the time.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Speck, *Tory and Whig*, 3.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>60</sup> Eccles had previously supplied incidental music for Congreve’s *Love for Love* (1695) and *The Way of the World* (1700). Eccles and Congreve would, subsequent to *The Judgment of Paris* setting, collaborate



The elaborate lighting and acoustical effects described by Congreve are also evident in the stage directions which call for a number of machines and special stage effects. The stage directions, which do not appear in the musical score, appeared in the first edition of the libretto, published by Jacob Tonson in 1701. The first of these directions occurs as the masque opens. The setting is described:

*The SCENE is a Landscip[sic] of a beautiful Pasture supposed on Mount Ida. The Shepherd Paris is seen seated under a Tree, and playing on his Pipe; his Crook and Scrip, &c. Lying by him. While a Symphony is playing, Mercury Descends with his Caduceus in one Hand, and an Apple of Gold in the other: After the Symphony he sings.*

Next, as Mercury informs Paris of the beauty contest and his responsibilities,

*Juno, Pallas, and Venus, are seen at a distance descending in several Machines.*

Later, during the climactic moment when Paris offers the Golden Apple to Venus:

*Several Cupids descend, the three Graces alight from the Chariot of Venus, they call the Howrs, who assemble; with all the Attendants on Venus. All join in a Circle around her, and sing the last grand Chorus; while Juno and Pallas ascend.*

If nothing else, these stage directions show that the work was to be fully staged and acted.

Again, the elaborateness of the machines and staging involved point to the Whig sponsors desire to spare no expense in producing this event.

## ALLEGORICAL CONTENT

Outwardly the work functions as a moral lesson on the virtues and power of beauty and love to overcome all desire for military or political gain. It is Venus, the goddess of love, who "is Queen of Beauty crown'd." It will be recalled from the

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even more closely on the opera *Semele* (1707). See William Hugh Patterson, *Semele: Structure in a Baroque Opera* (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1982), 2.

previous chapter that English aesthetic theory at the end of the period freely mingled ethics and aesthetics. As the Earl of Shaftesbury stated, “virtue is itself no other than the love of order and beauty. . .”<sup>61</sup> The beauty competition was precisely such a manifestation of these principles. The social order of the Gods was disrupted or dislocated by Eris’ (Discordia’s) challenge. Order could then only be restored by the acknowledgment of beauty.<sup>62</sup> This disruption in mythical social order can also be viewed as analogous to the disruption of contemporary social order. Disruptions in contemporary social order were, of course, highlighted by the Whig - Tory Parliamentary divisions, the attempts at aesthetic and moral reforms by Bedford and Collier, and the disruptions to musical theatre caused by battles for audience share and the encroachment of Italian opera.

The potential for contemporary political allegory increases if the entire context of “The Prize” competition is taken into consideration. In addition to providing us with a unique insight into what was then considered musically beautiful, and providing its sponsors with a platform to encourage the quality and level of musical production and appreciation, “The Prize” competition functions on several levels to reflect larger political and aesthetic issues. The judgment plot of Congreve’s libretto parodied “The Prize” composition contest itself as each of the four entrants was also “judged” by the concert

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<sup>61</sup> Shaftesbury, *Characteristics*, I, 10.

<sup>62</sup> The ancient belief in the harmonious reconciliation of opposed qualities in a stable union, or *discordia concors*, traditionally relates the concepts of love, politics and music and, as such, provides a powerful underpinning to both the Judgment of Paris myth and the subsequent musical settings. For a discussion of this concept as it relates to settings of Congreve’s *Judgment of Paris* please see Chapter Five of this dissertation. For a discussion of these writings and the ancient beliefs regarding the relationship of music to good government see Julie Cumming, *Concord out of Discord: Occasional Motets of the Early Quattrocento* (Ph.D. dissertation: University of California, Berkeley, 1987), 3-34. Also see my discussion regarding the relationship of such theories to eighteenth-century English aesthetic theory in Chapter Three.

subscribers on the relative beauty of their respective settings. The audience was thus analogous to Paris. The composers, on the other hand, were analogous to the competing goddesses, with each of their settings vying to be named the most beautiful in the eyes of the audience.

At an even larger level, however, the exclusive Whig sponsorship of the event reflected a conscious effort to influence the political competition between themselves and the Tories. In this scenario the Whig and Tory parties function as the competing goddesses and it is the public, or electorate, who must judge their relative virtues. Just as the goddesses tried to bribe Paris to win his approbation, so too the Whig party attempted to win support for its cause from the electorate through their promotion of English music and composers. The "prize" which the Whigs desired, of course, was political power as manifest in a majority of seats in Parliament. It was a prize which they, at least temporarily, succeeded in winning.

Taken out of its larger narrative context, as it is generally presented in paintings and as it is in "The Prize" competition, *The Judgment of Paris* is usually interpreted as a tribute to beauty and the power of love as represented by Venus' victory. Placed in its full mythological context the story may, however, also be viewed as a cautionary tale. In following his heart, Paris does, after all, end up choosing to abduct a married woman, actions which eventually cause the downfall of Troy. Paris recklessly chooses love and beauty over political and military power. In the context of the politically charged atmosphere of early eighteenth-century England and given the relatively decadent nature of the musical theatre, if the moral reformers of the manners campaign are to be believed,

the *Judgment of Paris* could also be seen as an allegorical warning of England's own potential fate if her people worshipped beauty at the expense of political and military affairs. In this scenario Paris is analogous to the audience, who have the potential to make political choices which, if not well considered and morally correct, could result in damage to their freedoms and quality of life.

In either scenario, whether the work is perceived as a celebration of beauty or as a cautionary tale, the audience still functions analogously to Paris. They must make a choice or judgment, not only concerning the most beautiful setting but also, eventually, concerning political choices which will ultimately affect the fate of the entire nation. The political allegory could hardly have been overlooked no matter how the myth's allegory was interpreted.

Whig involvement in "The Prize" competition, however, reached beyond an attempt to curry favor with the public by merely sponsoring the event. The competition and Congreve's judgment plot also served to actively promote and practically demonstrate Whig ideology. The basic Whig ideal, it will be recalled from Chapter One, was a belief in the rights and liberty of individuals to decide their own fate through a strong and freely elected Parliament. For the Whigs individual freedom to "judge" or decide one's own fate, political or otherwise, was sacrosanct. They, perhaps unfairly, accused the Tories, on the other hand, of promoting passive obedience to the so-called "divine right" of the crown.

On two levels the Whig sponsors created a situation which was imbued with their party ideology. First they orchestrated a practical example of their belief in individual

liberties by granting the audience the franchise to decide the outcome of "The Prize."

The audience was thus encouraged to act as if the event was a mock election or Parliamentary vote. In this scenario, as in a Parliamentary vote, the audience could exercise their individual judgments and right to vote, presumably in this case by the level of their applause,<sup>63</sup> but the outcome was achieved as a result of a general consensus of the community. Secondly, by employing a plot which emphasized the power of an ordinary individual - Paris in the guise of the simple shepherd - to judge the beauty of immortal goddesses, the Whig sponsors provided the public with another powerful allegory of the electoral process and of the Whig principles which they wished to promote. This empowerment of the ordinary individual is, yet again, analogous to the Whig stance against the potential tyranny of the monarchy. On either level the Whigs managed to construct a practical demonstration of their principles and the electoral process through which they hoped to gain power.

Given the politically charged climate of the time, and of the theatre in particular, it is likely that subscribers to the concerts would have had little trouble in identifying the potential political allegory and Whig ideology manifest in the judgment scenario. Historically, the subject of Good Government was often personified in artworks as a judge, usually portrayed seated with the symbols of authority, an orb and scepter.<sup>64</sup> It is interesting to note that in many artworks based on *The Judgment of Paris*, including those

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<sup>63</sup> Applause, or as cited in Eccles' dedication to Lord Halifax, "approbation."

<sup>64</sup> See for example the panel of Emperor Henry II as Judge from the *Monte Cassino Gospels* or Ambrogio Lorenzetti's fresco of *Buon Governo* in the Palazzo pubblico at Siena.

by Rubens and Watteaux, Paris is portrayed in a very similar pose.<sup>65</sup> Indeed, the richly detailed frontispiece to Walsh and Hare's editions of Eccles' and Purcell's settings portrays Paris in just such a pose, a rock substituting for a throne, the Golden Apple for an orb, and his shepherd's crook for the scepter (see Figure 3, following page). Even if the audience was unaware of the theme of judge as good government, the prevalence of political pamphleteering and general propaganda involved in the two General Elections of 1701 would have ensured that the concert subscribers had an awareness of the ideological implications of "The Prize." In the midst of the elections the Whig journal *The Observer* urged voters to make careful judgments and choices, to determine before they voted for a candidate whether or not he had opposed the revolution, had been against making William and Mary king and queen, had denied their "rightful and lawful" title to the throne, and finally whether they had refused to support William's war with France in preserving "the Balance of Europe." If a candidate was rejected on these grounds the journal accused him of being a man of "French Principles" who will "Traffick with your Liberties, and even set your country to Sale."<sup>66</sup> For the Whigs a voter's judgment thus played an important role, not only in their party ideology, but also in their electoral strategy. Viewed in relationship to a plethora of such propaganda, the political analogy of the judgments provoked and portrayed in "The Prize" scenario would have been obvious to most subscribers.

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<sup>65</sup> See Peter Paul Rubens, "Paris Awards the Golden Apple to Venus," Painting, C.1600-01, National Gallery, London, inv. 6379; Antoine Watteau, "The Judgment of Paris," Painting, C.1718-20, Louvre, Paris, no. M.I. 1126.

<sup>66</sup> *Observer*, nos. 25, 26, July 19, 22, 1701.



*London Printed for I. Walsh Serv<sup>t</sup> to Her. M<sup>ty</sup> at the Harp and Hoboy in Katherine Street near Somerset House in d<sup>re</sup>:-*

Fig. 3: Frontespiece to Eccles' score published by Walsh and Hare (1702), engraved by Michiel Vander Gucht.

Though the overall judgment scenario, present on several levels as I have outlined, accurately reflects Whig ideology, direct political allegorical connections within the libretto are more difficult to determine. Perhaps the most obvious exception to this is provided merely by the prominent position afforded Venus. This goddess has historically been credited with the ability to create harmony, including musical harmony, as in the following Elizabethan paraphrase of Lucretius:

Great *Venus*, Queene of beautie and of grace,  
The ioy of Gods and men, that vnder [sic]skie  
Doest fayrest shine, and most adorne thy place,  
That with thy smiling looke doest pacifie  
The raging seas, and makst the stormes to flie;  
Thee goddesse, thee the winds, the clouds doe feare,  
And when thou spredst thy mantle forth on hie,  
The waters play and pleasant lands appeare,  
And heavens laugh, and al [sic] the world shews ioyous [sic] cheare.  
(*Faerie Queene*, IV.X.44)<sup>67</sup>

The sentiments here are similar to Congreve's final line in *The Judgment of Paris* which proclaims "The Queen of Love is Queen of beauty Crown'd." With the eventual triumph of the "Queen of Love" *The Judgment of Paris* presents divine love as a source of universal harmony. Venus, through her song and beauty, thus restores order in the heavens, much in the same manner that the Whigs would create civic order if elected, not only through her physical beauty but through the beautiful harmony of her song. Such a reading reflects ancient theories, expounded by Plato, Aristotle, Cicero and others

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<sup>67</sup> As quoted in Robin Headlam Wells, *Elizabethan Mythologies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 158.



regarding the maintenance of an orderly society based on harmonious musical principles.<sup>68</sup>

Furthering the political allegory of the character of Venus is the fact that she was long associated with English racial identity and the legend of the founding of Britain. According to the widely read *History of the Kings of Britain* written by Geoffrey of Monmouth (ca. 1136), Venus was the great-grandmother of Brutus, Britain's namesake.<sup>69</sup> Indeed, as Curtis Price has pointed out, in the mythology of seventeenth-century England, Venus had supposedly changed her dwelling, forsaking the isle of Cyprus for Britain itself.<sup>70</sup> Venus plays a prominent role in many restoration musical dramas including Locke's *Pysche* (1675), and Eccles' *The Loves of Mars and Venus* (1696). In Henry Purcell's nationalistic semi-opera *King Arthur* (1684), Venus appears in the final act for the aria "Fairest Isle." In this well known aria Venus unabashedly sings of Britain's virtues, "all Isles Excelling" and of her decision to make the island her home:

Venus, *here*, will choose her Dwelling,  
And forsake her Cyprian Groves.

In this manner Venus was symbolic of the beauty and patriotic love of England itself. These virtues represented precisely those which the Whig party were anxious to be identified as defending in the upcoming election. Venus thus represented the popular,

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<sup>68</sup> For further discussions of these issues see Chapter Three and Chapter Five. Also see Fn 62 above.

<sup>69</sup> Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*. rev. edn. (New York: Dutton & Co., 1958), 4-9. The lineage from Venus to Brutus is traced from Aeneas, son of Venus and father of Ascanius who was, in turn, the father of Brutus. Geoffrey's *History*, and his espousal of the Trojan ancestry of Englishmen remained the most popular interpretation of English origins into the late seventeenth century. In the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century, due to the Hanoverian succession and the increasing divisions between Parliament and the Monarchy, a transition to a racial myth based on a slightly more historically grounded belief in Germanic (Anglo-Saxon) origin of Englishmen replaced the myth of Trojan identity. Also see Hugh A. MacDougall, *Racial Myth in English History: Trojans, Teuton, and Anglo-Saxons* (Montreal: Harvest House, 1982), 8.

<sup>70</sup> Curtis Price, "Political Allegory," 9.

home-town girl, if you will, who conquers the foreign powers, analogous to the other goddesses, to claim the prize as the most beautiful.

The personification of England in Venus can even be taken one step further. At least to some extent, Venus could be viewed as representative of the Whig party itself, both hoping to be judged the fairest, both aligned with the beauty and national pride of England. The final couplet of the libretto, proclaiming Venus' victory, would also seem to reinforce the presence of an underlying Whig message in the libretto. The work concludes with the following address to the audience, sung by the Grand Chorus:

*Hither all ye Graces, all ye Loves;  
Hither all ye Hours resort,  
Billing Sparrows, cooing Doves;  
Come all the Train of Venus' Court.  
Sing all great Cytherea's Name;  
Over Empire, over Fame,  
Her Victory proclaim.  
Sing and Spread the joyful News around,  
The Queen of Love is Queen of Beauty crown'd.*

In the midst of political battles with the Tories and given that, at some level, Venus represents the Whig party, this ending can be viewed as a parting appeal to the audience (of potential voters) to spread the news of Whig virtues.

A similar appeal to potential voters can be read into Mercury's reassurances to Paris, which take place early in the work, that he may judge the goddesses free from any potential personal retribution:

*Fear not, Mortal, none shall harm thee,  
With my sacred Rod I'll charm thee;  
Freely gaze and view all over,  
Thou may'st every Grace discover.  
Though a thousand Darts fly around thee,  
Fear not, Mortal, none shall wound thee.*

In keeping with the Whig principles of defending individual liberties, Mercury's speech can thus be viewed in terms of being an allegorical message to voters that their freedom of choice will be protected and as a further encouragement to carefully decide their party allegiances.<sup>71</sup> The "Darts" in the political arena were of course the opposing propaganda and rhetoric of the Tories. Just as darts from a lovers bow could cause their target to blindly fall in love so could persuasive opposing propaganda cause the public to become blindly infatuated, or at least politically aligned, with the Tories.

In a similar vein is Paris' request that the three goddesses disrobe:

*And since a gay Robe an ill shape may disguise,  
When each is undrest  
I'll judge of the best,  
For 'tis not a Face that must carry the Prize.*

This appears to be a thinly veiled reminder to the audience of the aforementioned Whig concerns, outlined in papers like the *Observer*, that voters carefully determine the worthiness of candidates and determine the true principles for which they stood before casting their ballots. Indeed, in the trio which precedes Paris' request the goddesses appear to wage their own miniature propaganda war. Venus' aria "Hither turn thee, gentle Swain" is followed by this dialogue:

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<sup>71</sup> The character of Mercury is, much like the association of Venus with harmony and order, also conventionally associated with the concepts of authority and good government. In addition to his eloquence and mastery of poetry and song Mercury carries the caduceus, his staff of office and an emblem of "peace, control, government, and ultimately the monarchy itself." See Wells, *Elizabethan Mythologies*, 6. Indeed the caduceus, representing Mercury's ability to pacify two fighting serpents, is clearly depicted in Vander Gucht's engraved frontispiece in Figure 3. Ascribing a particular allegorical role to Mercury in *The Judgment of Paris* is somewhat problematic. In that his authority is divinely derived it is tempting to ascribe a representation of the monarchy to him. In his traditional function as messenger of the Gods it is equally tempting to view him as the messenger of the Whig party. In either case, given that his role is limited to the opening section of the work (in which he is given two ariosos, one solo aria and a duet with Paris) his character has little impact on the outcome of the judgment. His main role is inform Paris of his appointment and to reassure him of his freedom to choose without fear of reprisal. In this role he is closer to a general representation of the Whig party and its ideology.

Pallas: *Hither turn to me again*  
Juno: *Turn to me, for I am she*  
All Three: *To me, to me, for I am she.*  
Venus: *Hither turn thee, gentle swain;*  
Juno and Pallas: *She will deceive thee;*  
Venus: *They will deceive thee, I'll never leave thee;*  
*Hither turn to me again,*  
*To me, to me, for I am she:*  
*Hither turn thee, gentle Swain.*

In rapid succession the goddesses each vie for Paris' attention and accuse the others of deception. It is in both tone and content representative of the larger propaganda war being waged in the theaters and press by the Whigs and Tories. Venus, as she does throughout the work, gets in the last word, incorporating all of the persuasive lines of the other two goddesses. The deck was obviously stacked by Congreve in Venus' favour. This was done largely, no doubt, due to the fact that the outcome of the well known myth was already a forgone conclusion to the audience. Taking into account the promises of power, military glory, and love which the goddesses offer Paris in support of their cause, the work as a whole functions as an allegory of the bribery, corruption, and deceit that often accompanied the electoral process at that time.<sup>72</sup>

Though it lies somewhat outside the scope of this study, the fact that the three women characters in this event are portrayed in a contest based on, ostensibly, physical beauty and must disrobe in order to impress their male judge also, of course, more than implies the active presence of a different type of politics at work in this piece - that of traditional male dominated sexual politics. Indeed, Roger Fiske speculates that during the performance, subsequent to Paris' request, the actresses actually disrobed, to some extent.

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<sup>72</sup> For a more complete discussion of the lack of ethical standards which accompanied elections at this time see Richards, *Party Propaganda* and W.A. Speck, *Tory and Whig*.

The titillation of this scene is depicted by the naked goddesses on the title page of Walsh's editions. In typical fashion it is the male characters, Paris and Mercury (through Jove's authority) who control the destiny of the female goddesses and who thus wield the real power. In addition, the goddesses are all portrayed as being manipulative, deceitful, overly concerned with physical beauty, and must ultimately lower themselves to the pastoral equivalent of a cat-fight in order to decide the issue. In contrast to the irrationality displayed by the goddesses, Paris assumes the practical and traditionally patriarchal role of the judge. Even though his decision ultimately causes the fall of Troy, there is even a hint of chivalric honor in his decision to choose love above all other gain. Typically, however, it is the "women as evil enchantress" who blinds Paris to the fallibility of his decision. Paris himself recognizes this as he desperately appeals to Venus to "cease th' enchanting song," before awarding her the golden apple. The sexual politics of Paris' judgment resonates strongly with Naomi Wolf's definition of "the beauty myth."

The qualities that a given period calls beautiful in women are merely symbols of the female behavior that period considers desirable: *the beauty myth is always actually prescribing behavior and not appearance*. Competition between women is part of the myth so that women will be divided from one another.<sup>73</sup>

Indeed Juno, Pallas, and Venus are, ultimately judged, not on their appearance, but on their behavior and on the virtues of their various bribes. The sexual politics which de-emphasized the importance of women in music and which emphasized the value of

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<sup>73</sup> Naomi Wolf, *The Beauty Myth* (Toronto: Random House, 1990), 4.

female beauty had, of course, been long established at the time of "The Prize" competition.<sup>74</sup>

By virtue of the fact that the subscribers, in imitation of the empowerment of Paris, were given the liberty to determine the overall outcome of the competition, "The Prize" directly embodied Whig principles of the importance of and value of an individual's right to freely and subjectively determine one's own destiny. Nevertheless, a far more invidious reading of the event is also possible. The "judgment" masque aesthetic in fact provided them with a politically powerful double-edged sword. On the one hand it embodied emancipatory values of the right to individual liberty and freedom of choice. At the same time, however, this aesthetic embodied repressive ruling-class values commensurate with an effort to influence and control the electorate and the ideology and process of government. In accordance with their party ideology, the Whigs were able to promote the importance of individual freedom, providing the audience with a sense of individual empowerment by advancing and endorsing the apparently autonomous and subjective judgments of the individual audience members. At the same moment, however, the competition reinforced or ingrained the subjugation of the individual in favor of an objective communal recognition of the best or, in theory, most beautiful setting. The use of classical characters in a remote, pastoral, situation to praise political liberty also gained a rhetorical advantage of suggesting that what were in fact partisan views had universal application. The event thus effectively repressed subjective choice in its one-sided presentation of popular Whig ideals and principles. Paradoxically, the

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<sup>74</sup> See Eva Rieger "Dolce semplice: On the Changing Role of Women in Music," in Gisela Ecker ed., *Feminist Aesthetics* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1986), 135-149.

notions of "judgment" in this event simultaneously represented the analogous virtues of the subjective judgment of beauty and of political choice while also imparting an objective moral lesson on the virtues of beauty and the Whig party. It was precisely this aesthetic dichotomy which the Whigs played upon as they attempted to instill the notion, in image if not in reality, of the objective autonomy of the voters. The underlying message to the voters was not that they were free to choose, but rather that they were free to choose the Whig party.

## CHAPTER THREE

### A COMPARISON OF SETTINGS: PURCELL, WELDON, ECCLES

The Judgment of Paris myth, with its emphasis on the evaluation and appreciation of physical beauty, was an ideal vehicle for the parallel appreciation of musical beauty. In addition to the political underpinnings, "The Prize" competition provided an occasion, analogous to that of the goddesses' beauty contest, when English composers could compete to present unalloyed musical beauty. As such, their settings of Congreve's *Judgment of Paris* provide a unique glimpse into what was considered musically beautiful in the post-Purcell era of early-eighteenth century England. In the following chapter I compare and contrast the three extant settings by Weldon, Eccles, and Purcell, emphasizing their approaches to orchestration, use of chorus, key structure, and text setting. I compare the settings in terms of their effectiveness in exploiting these parameters and in terms of other more general stylistic traits which may have contributed to the outcome of the competition. I also place particular attention on the preference for English stylistic traits, such as the prevalence of simple melodies, florid arioso in place of recitative, and the prominence of the chorus, which are most evident in Weldon's and Eccles' settings, the two top finishers. Foreign, particularly Italianate, practices, including slow triple meter *bel canto* arias, motto arias, and ritornello structures are far more evident in Purcell's setting. The apparent preference by both audience and composers for English traits and its reverberations with nationalist Whig ideology is also discussed.



Following a general discussion and comparison of the content and style of each of the settings, a more comprehensive comparative analysis then focuses on individual pieces. For the purposes of this comparative analysis I limit my inquiry to the same two numbers from each work, Paris' aria/arioso "O Ravishing Delight!" and Venus' aria "Nature fram'd thee sure for loving." The choice of "O Ravishing Delight" is based on the fact that it is the first time in the story that Paris sees all three goddesses. It is treated as a highly emotional moment in all three settings. "Nature fram'd thee sure for loving" is Venus' second aria, sung immediately after having disrobed. It is the song which ultimately convinces Paris to award her the apple and thus arguably represents the point in the work where the composers strove to write their most beautiful and persuasive music.

#### Performing Forces: Orchestra and Singers

Perhaps the most immediate consideration in regard to performing forces is the large number of people involved. The enhanced orchestral forces in this event resulted in all of the composers employing lavish scoring and a variety of orchestral colours to depict the primary characters. It must be remembered that the orchestra and chorus were considerably larger than was the usual practice of the day. As quoted in Chapter Two, Congreve reported that "The number of performers, besides the verse singers [the five soloists], was 85."<sup>1</sup> Based on a 1703 document outlining a plan for a new theatre company we know that Eccles' orchestra normally consisted of only around twenty

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<sup>1</sup> William Congreve to Joseph Keally, 26 March 1701 as quoted in Hodges, *Congreve Letters*, 20-21. Also see previous chapter, p. 100.

musicians.<sup>2</sup> The exact number of orchestra members versus chorus members is, of course, open to speculation. However, given that the total number of performers minus the five lead roles was 85 and given a standard orchestra of around 20, and considering the extravagance of the event, a reasonable estimate would see a doubling of the orchestra to approximately 40 with the same number of chorus members. At any rate, it seems the number of performers was so great that it forced modifications to the stage, also described in Congreve's letter.

Very little is known about the soloists. It seems probable that as many as possible of the same five soloists were employed for all four performances as the trouble and expense incurred in rounding up and rehearsing new casts for each version would have been prohibitive.<sup>3</sup> In each setting the music for all three goddesses is written for sopranos. In both Eccles' and Purcell's settings, Mercury and Paris are respectively written for baritone and countertenor singers. This pattern is only broken in Weldon's setting which finds Mercury written for countertenor and Paris as a baritone. In any case it is possible, though there is no concrete evidence, that the same five voices could have

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<sup>2</sup> The document now resides in the London Public Records Office and is reproduced in Allardyce Nicoll, *A History of English Drama 1660-1900*, ii (1952), 277. Some estimate of the expense the Whig sponsors incurred in staging the competition can be gleaned from the same document, which lists the projected salaries and expenses for a new theatre company including: "Master to oversee Musick Mr Eccles...40 [pounds per annum]. Twenty musicians [sic] allowing near 20 sh p week to each for 40 weeks comes to 760." The figure of twenty musicians in an average opera orchestra is also reinforced in a 1708 document, estimating the cost of musicians for the New Haymarket Theatre. The estimate lists 23 instrumentalists as follows: five first violins, five second violins, two violas, five 'bases', two oboes, three bassoons and a trumpet; see *Vice Chamberlain Coke's Theatrical Papers 1706-1715*, ed. Judith Milhouse and Robert D. Hume (Carbondale, 1982), 69. Also see Johnstone and Fiske, *The Eighteenth Century*, 434, fn.11.

<sup>3</sup> Fiske similarly speculates "It may be that the same women singers were used for all four versions, that performances were well spaced so that they had time to learn the next one, and that in spite of this the difficulty of learning four settings of the same words was such that they insisted on having the music in their hands and giving a concert performance." *Theatre Music*, 16.

sung all three extant versions, with the male singers merely exchanging roles for Weldon's version.

Most of the limited information regarding the soloists comes from descriptions of Eccles' setting, perhaps not surprising given its subsequent published edition and comparative popularity. For the pivotal role of Venus, the name Mrs. Bracegirdle is recorded on the songsheets to Eccle's version published by Thomas Cross.<sup>4</sup> Congreve also refers to her in his letter to Joseph Keally regarding the performance of Eccles' setting. Indeed the postscript to Congreve's letter provides the most complete list of the three actresses involved and even contains comments on their relative success in the roles. After his signature Congreve writes: "Our friend Venus [Mrs. Anne Bracegirdle] performed to a miracle; so did Mrs Hodgson Juno. Mrs Boman was not quite so well approved in Pallas."<sup>5</sup> Unfortunately the male soloists who played Paris and Mercury remain unknown.

Bracegirdle, Hodgson, and Bowman were all members of Thomas Betterton's company at Lincoln's Inn Fields. Anne Bracegirdle (c1663-1748), whom Colly Cibber called "the Darling of the Theatre," was one of the most respected and sought after actresses of the day. She had previously played Emmeline in Henry Purcell and John Dryden's *King Arthur* (1691) and was the lead actress in many of Congreve's comedies including the roles of Angeline in *Love for Love*, Almira in the *Mourning Bride*, and

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<sup>4</sup> See Richard Platt, "Introduction" to Eccles, *The Judgment of Paris* (Tunbridge Wells: Macnutt, 1984), xiii.

<sup>5</sup> Congreve to Keally, 26 March 1701, in Hodges, *Congreve Letters*, 21. Mrs Bracegirdle is named in the role of Venus on songsheets published by Thomas Cross in 1702 including "Nature fram'd thee" (RISM E242) and "Stay, lovely youth" (RISM E243). Congreve's use of the term "our friend" also points to Bracegirdle, with whom he was well acquainted.

Belinda in *The Provok'd Wife*.<sup>6</sup> Though she was first and foremost a professional actress, she was also greatly admired for her singing ability. John Downes claimed that she possessed "a Potent and Magnetic Charm in performing a Song" and Cibber further claimed that "her voice and Action gave a Pleasure which good sense. . . was not ashamed to give Praise to."<sup>7</sup> Indeed Bracegirdle had many admirers and was reputed to have lead a rather lascivious life.<sup>8</sup> Congreve was apparently quite open in his admiration for her and Cibber once chided that Congreve "need not go to Heaven at all, but to stay and Ogle his dear Bracilla, with sneaking looks under his Hat, in his little side box [at the theatre]."<sup>9</sup> Eccles, also rumored to be romantically linked with Bracegirdle, was ostensibly the house composer for Betterton's company and so wrote most of Bracegirdle's songs. This familiarity with Bracegirdle's style and his knowledge of her vocal limitations perhaps resulted in the fact that, in comparison to Purcell and Weldon, Eccles' setting of *The Judgment of Paris* refrains from an overly coloraturic melodic style.

Though Bracegirdle may have been the most acclaimed performer in "The Prize" competition, Mrs. Hodgson (fl. 1692-1719), who sang Juno, was the only professional singer of the three known soloists. An accomplished oboist as well as singer, she was engaged with the United Company at Drury Lane in 1693 but by July 1695 had moved to

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<sup>6</sup> Platt, "Introduction," xiii.

<sup>7</sup> Downes is here referring to her performance in *Justice Busy* (1700), a comedy by Crowne with songs by Eccles. See P.H. Highfill, Kalman A. Burnim, and Edward A. Langhans, eds., *A Biographical Dictionary of Actors, Actresses, Musicians, Dancers, and Other Stage Personnel in London 1660-1800* (Carbondale Ill.: Southern Illinois University Press, 1975), v.7, 354, 355.

<sup>8</sup> Highfill, *Biographical Dictionary*, 354-55.

<sup>9</sup> Cibber 8 September, 1698. Preface to an anonymous pamphlet *Animated Diversions on Mr. Congreve's Late Answer to Mr. Collier*. As reprinted in *A Biographical Dictionary*, v.2, 276.

Betterton's company where she remained at least until 1704.<sup>10</sup> Listed only as a "singer" in the company, Hodgson likely did not portray characters in straight plays. Judging from the music written for her in *The Judgment of Paris* it is also likely that her vocal range was somewhat lower than that of an average soprano. Eric Walter White suggests that she may have sung the role of Dido in the revivals of Henry Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* which were staged at Lincoln's Inn Fields in 1700 and 1704.<sup>11</sup>

Elizabeth Bowman (c1677-c1707), sang the role of Pallas. She was Betterton's adopted daughter and was married to the actor-singer John Bowman (or Boman). Though in all three settings she has the second most challenging and important role (at least in terms of total number of songs and arioso) of the three goddesses, she was primarily an actress. Her lack of singing experience combined with a relatively difficult part may have accounted for the fact that, as Congreve mentions, she was "not quite so well approved" in her role taken for Eccles' setting. Bowman was, nonetheless, a well known and respected actress and had roles in most of Congreve's plays including the role of Sylvia in *The Old Batchelor* (1693) and Mrs. Fainall in the first production of *The Way of the World* (1700).<sup>12</sup> Again, her name often appears on Eccles' songsheets as it was he who, as mentioned, was the house composer for Betterton's company.

#### Orchestration

The three settings share a number of important basic traits of orchestration. The enhanced orchestral forces which were available for this prestigious event resulted in all

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Eric Walter White, "Early Theatrical Performances of Purcell's Operas," *Theatre Notebook*, xiii (1958-9), 43-65. Also see Platt, "Introduction," xiii.

<sup>12</sup> Platt, "Introduction," xiii.

three of the composers employing lavish scoring and a rich variety of orchestral colours. Each score calls for similar basic instrumental forces, with strings, oboes doubling the violins, recorders, elaborate trumpet parts, and continuo. Weldon's score is the only one to call for a curtill, or bassoon, in combination with both oboe and trumpet. This represents one of the earliest instances in English music of individual part-writing for the bassoon.<sup>13</sup> The curtill is first heard in Weldon's overture and then in introductory symphonies which introduce Pallas and in the symphony preceding Venus' second aria, "Nature fram'd thee," in which she convinces Paris to award her the prize. Most of the arias in all scores call for individual obbligato instruments and there is a conscious attempt on behalf of all three composers to characterize each of the goddesses by orchestral colouring. Each of the composers, for example, employs the amorous sound of flutes to accompany Venus, the goddess of love. The use of flutes or recorders to represent love was a conventional procedure of the times.<sup>14</sup> Pallas Athena is, likewise, conventionally portrayed with trumpet flourishes and kettle drums, as befitting her militaristic warrior goddess status. Weldon orchestrally painted an even more rarefied status for Pallas as he alone added oboes and the aforementioned curtill to her symphony. In all three settings Juno is simply accompanied by the string orchestra, though often with a stormy stream of sixteenth notes to portray her power and status as "Wife of Thundering Jove." Likewise, Paris and Mercury appear to rate no special orchestral treatment, though Purcell does employ flutes in his accompaniment of Paris' arioso "O Ravishing Delight!" perhaps to stress Paris' own romantic personality and beauty and his

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<sup>13</sup> See Fiske, *Theatre Music*, 23.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 17. Roger Fiske here provides a succinct history of the use of flutes to portray love in Grabu's *Albion and Albanus*, and Blow's *Venus and Adonis*.

ultimate decision to award the prize to Venus, who is also accompanied by flutes. This orchestrational link strengthens, I would suggest, the relationship between Paris, representing the public electorate, and Venus, representing the Whig party and the conscience of England. The two characters, both accompanied by flutes in Purcell's setting, are thus linked through their similar physical beauty, desires, and metaphorical representations of nationalism and political choice.

In addition to the orchestral similarities mentioned above, the three works are alike in several other respects. None of the scores, for example, uses recitative. Each of the composers chose instead to rely on the English preference for using florid arioso in alternation with the arias.<sup>15</sup> The common reliance on four-part, largely homophonic, choruses also follows a standard English practice common in verse anthems and in earlier dramatic works by Henry Purcell such as *King Arthur* and *Dido and Aeneas*.<sup>16</sup> In each of the three settings the choruses following the goddesses' arias are predominantly homophonic throughout. The lone exception to this is Pallas' chorus "Oh how glorious." Both Weldon and Purcell begin this chorus with strict imitative entrances a fifth apart. Eccles, for his part, employs no imitation for this chorus, preferring instead to reserve fugal treatment for the finale "Hither all ye graces." Indeed, in each of the settings the concluding Grand Chorus, "Hither all ye graces," creates a lasting impact by presenting a variety of impressive imitative and contrapuntal displays. Finally, each of the scores displays a preponderance of diatonic harmonies with only limited use of chromatic part-writing.

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<sup>15</sup> See Lincoln, "A Congreve Masque," 1080.

<sup>16</sup> For a discussion of the chorus in the post-Restoration English verse anthem see Peter le Huray, "Anthem," *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* Vol. I., 459.

The similarities of the three settings are understandable given their shared historical context. Early eighteenth-century masques, unlike the one act stand-alone construction of Congreve's *The Judgment of Paris*, were ordinarily divided into two interludes and often performed between the acts of larger dramatic works. As mentioned in Chapter One, the theatre masque tradition was threatened by the importation of Italian opera. Nonetheless many musicians and poets, such as J.C. Pepusch, John Eccles, Gottfried Finger, Pierre Motteux, Edward Ravenscroft, and William Congreve, continued to write short semi-operas which they labeled masques. Such works, including Eccles' and Motteux's masque *Acis and Galatea* (1701), drew on the earlier Restoration, Jacobean, and Caroline English masque tradition for their classical and pastoral plots, the use of florid recitative, arias, and choral finales.<sup>17</sup> The immediate and most well known models for the works would have been found in Henry Purcell's masques interpolated into his dramatic operas such as in the last act of *Dioclesian* (1690) or the three masque episodes incorporated into *King Arthur*. Indeed, all three "Prize" settings exhibit elements which recall the Italian-influenced English style of Henry Purcell.<sup>18</sup> The use of four-part string arrangements, triple meter arias, repetition of motives to different words, periodic phrasing, extended roulades, and chromatically descending grounds are all aspects of Purcell's vocal music style which are manifest in the three settings.<sup>19</sup> Likewise the Italianate pairing of arioso and arias, evident in Pallas' second plea "Awake thy spirits raise" and "Oh what Joys does Conquest yield" and in Paris' "I yield" and

<sup>17</sup> See Lefkowitz, "Masque," *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* Vol 11, 756-769. Also see Burden, "The Independent Masque," 59-152.

<sup>18</sup> Perhaps not surprising given that Henry Purcell was the older brother of Daniel Purcell and Weldon was a former pupil.



"Forbear, O Goddess of Desire," has many precedents in Purcell's oeuvre.<sup>20</sup> The harmonic organization of each work, based around the use of closely related keys which underscore the dramatic action, also follows in the English tradition of Purcell.<sup>21</sup> Finally, the grand chorus which concludes each work also recalls Purcell's late style.<sup>22</sup>

Though the three works are similar in these basic respects, it is the differences which must have led to the judges' decisions and to which we must look in order to glean some understanding of each composer's unique approach to musical beauty. Just as Paris judged the goddesses, so the audience of the "Prize Musick" competition was similarly empowered to judge the best setting of Congreve's text. Likewise each composer was also called upon to exercise his individual aesthetic judgment in his compositional choices. Indeed Daniel Purcell, Weldon, and Eccles each take a highly individualistic approach to the setting. Purcell's work is Italianate in style, with an emphasis on virtuosic vocal writing and frequent orchestral interludes. Weldon also relies heavily on Italianate melismata but also includes a number of simple but memorable melodies. Also distinguishing him from his competitors Weldon places far more emphasis on the chorus. For both Purcell and Weldon, ornate Italianate vocal melodies, peppered with extensive melismata, appear to be hallmarks of their concepts of musical beauty. Both composers also supplement their emphasis on vocal melody by

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<sup>19</sup> All these aspects of Purcell's style were likely drawn, in turn, from Cavalli (1602-76), whose operas were well known in England at that time. See Martin Adams, *Henry Purcell: The Origins and Development of his Musical Style* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 57, 71, 82.

<sup>20</sup> Purcell's pairing of recitatives and arias is also, of course, derivative of Italian practice. See Martin Adams' discussion of *King Arthur* and the ode *Welcome, Welcome Glorious Morn* in *Henry Purcell*, 66.

<sup>21</sup> For a discussion of dramatic structure and key areas in English music of the seventeenth century see Ellen Harris, *Henry Purcell's Dido and Aeneas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 69-81.

<sup>22</sup> See for example *Hail, Bright Cecilia* (1692). Adams attributes the inspiration for such massive choruses to the influence of Stradella's and Scarlatti's oratorios. See *Henry Purcell*, 82.

emphasizing either impressive orchestral display, in the case of Purcell, or impressive choral displays, in the case of Weldon.

In contrast to the ornate style of his two competitors, Eccles' score is marked by its straight-forward melodic simplicity, a reserved though balanced use of chorus and orchestra, and a careful attention to declamation and text setting. Eccles evidently had a more conservative notion of musical beauty, preferring the qualities of simplicity, balance, and unity over novelty and virtuosic display.

The disparate approaches to this setting of a common text provide ample evidence that, contrary to popular belief, English composers commanded a variety of compositional styles in the wake of Henry Purcell's death. Though Purcell may have provided the dominant model, the three composers do not merely imitate his style but build upon it and attempt to establish their own compositional identities. Likewise, though the three works are all, to varying degrees, influenced by encroaching Italian vocal and instrumental conventions such as *dal segno* and "motto" arias, coloratura, ground basses, and short instrumental ritornellos, each competitor employs such techniques in order to stake out an individual compositional territory which he could claim as his own.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Many of the prevailing techniques employed by English composers of this period were either French or Italian in origin. Even the English practice, popularized by Henry Purcell, of using ground basses and homophonic choruses were derived from Italian antecedents and the use of short binary dance form arias similarly derived from French antecedents. See Homer Ulrich and Paul Piske, *A History of Music and Musical Style* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1963), 233. Ellen Harris, in comparing Handel's pastoral style in 1708, also provides a valuable discussion of the infusion of Italianate pastoral practices into England. As a general indicator of the new Italian style which was taking hold, Harris, in discussing Handel's Italian pastoral style with his earlier German style, finds that:

...the melodies and instrumental accompaniments are smoother, the use of sequential repetitive figuration less persistent. The total lack of rhythmic complexity, the clear phrases, and the breathing spaces in the musical flow. . . The ritornellos tend to be shorter (but rarely lacking altogether) and usually based on the opening vocal material. Patterned figuration in the bass line is found less and less often.

In the following discussion of the three individual settings it may be helpful to refer to the list of basic vocal numbers, as initially prescribed by Congreve, given in Table 3-1.<sup>24</sup>

**Table 3-1: Vocal numbers in Congreve's *The Judgment of Paris***

<b>A</b>		
Mercury	"From high Olympus"	Arioso
Paris	"O Hermes"	Arioso
Mercury	"This radiant fruit"	E-Aria/ P-Arioso/ W-Aria
Paris	"O Ravishing Delight!"	Arioso
Mercury	"Fear not mortal"	Aria
Mercury and Paris	"Happy thou"	Duet
<b>B</b>		
Juno	"Saturnia"	E-Aria/ P&W - Arioso
Pallas	"This way mortal"	Aria
Venus	"Hither turn thee"	Aria
Juno/Pallas/Venus	"Hither turn thee"	Trio
<b>C</b>		
Paris	"Distracted I turn"	Aria/Arioso
Juno	"Let ambition"/ "Let ambition"	Aria and Chorus
Pallas	"Awake thy spirits raise"	Arioso
	"Hark, the Glorious voice of war"	Aria
	"Oh what joys"/ "O how Glorious"	Aria and Chorus
Venus	"Stay lovely youth"/ "One only Joy"	Aria and Chorus
	"Nature fram'd thee"	Aria
Paris	"I yield"	Arioso
	"Forbear, O Goddess"	Aria
Grand Chorus	"Hither all ye Graces"	Chorus

See Ellen Harris, *Handel and the Pastoral Tradition*, 168.

<sup>24</sup> Please refer to Appendix A for the entire libretto. Tables 3-3 and 3-4 later in this chapter also provide side by side comparisons of the key structures of the three settings.

## DANIEL PURCELL

Of the three composers, Daniel Purcell, who came third in the competition, places the most emphasis on the orchestra. His setting includes a four-movement overture with trumpets, oboes, and drums in addition to the string orchestra.<sup>25</sup> Purcell also added extended symphonies to introduce every character. Paris' arioso "O Ravishing Delight!," for example, is introduced by a one-movement symphony employing the somewhat uncommon combination of flutes and oboes over the lower strings.

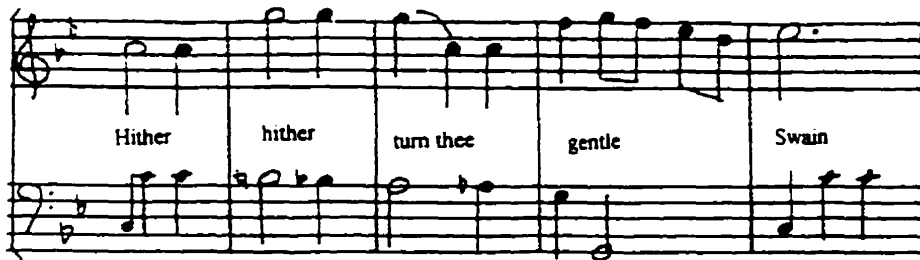
Purcell places greater orchestral emphasis on some characters than on others. Juno and Venus are introduced only by short sixteen-measure string symphonies, and Juno's introductory arioso lasts only four measures longer than the symphony which introduces it. Most of the orchestral emphasis is on the depiction and accompaniment of Pallas Athena. To introduce her, Purcell included a complete three-movement "Trumpet Sonata," and later a similar three-movement "Symphony" for trumpet and strings introduces her final aria. Pallas' martial status allowed Purcell the perfect opportunity for a lavish orchestral display and the chance to further capitalize on the enlarged orchestral forces.

Following the conclusion of the trio "Hither turn thee" Purcell includes an extra "Symphony of all." The piece, lasting twenty-four measures, is written only for strings and continuo and serves as an introduction to Paris' "Distracted I turn." Interestingly the "Symphony of all" contains no overt quotations from the goddesses' preceding music.

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<sup>25</sup> All references to Purcell's setting refer to the published edition, Walsh and Hare 1702, (item 1225, Houghton Library, Harvard University).

The chromatic harmony and half- to quarter-note rhythms are, however, evocative of the music accompanying Venus (see Ex. 3-1a & 1b). The dominance of Venus' music at this point, again, seems to foreshadow her eventual victory.



Ex. 3-1a: Venus, "Hither turn thee" (D. Purcell)



Ex. 3-1b: "Symphony of all" (D. Purcell)

Compounding Purcell's emphasis on the orchestra was his progressive use of instrumental solos, instrumental ritornellos (as is evident in Paris' aria "O Ravishing

Delight!") and the Italianate motto technique which was just becoming popular in England. This latter technique involves the singing of a motive at the opening of an aria followed by an instrumental (obbligato) ritornello based on this motive which is then followed by the principal voice entrance. The technique is employed by Purcell, in one manner or another, in nearly every aria in the work. It is used, for example, in Pallas' aria "This way mortal" (see Ex. 3-2). In this number the opening vocal motto is stated three times, with minor rhythmic elaboration, in alternation with the obbligato trumpet. This motto effect serves to increase the emphatic nature of the number, as if Pallas needed to state her case three times in order to reinforce her point. The motto technique is also used to create the same dogmatic effect for the other goddesses arias such as Juno's aria "Let ambition fire thy mind" and in the final verse of Venus' aria "Stay lovely youth." In these instances, however, instruments introduce the motto which is then repeated in the voice. As shown in Example 3-2 however, the result of this relatively formulaic use of motto technique is a somewhat stagnant repetition of melody. This state is compounded by the structural rigidity of Purcell's nearly constant reliance on four-bar phrasing.<sup>26</sup> Though the motto technique was already popular in Italy it would have been regarded as relatively novel in England at this time.<sup>27</sup> The constant predictability of Purcell's arias, however, seems to show a reliance on compositional formula and a concomitant lack of variety and inspiration, features which, especially when compared against Eccles and Weldon, would surely not have gone unnoticed by the audience.

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<sup>26</sup> In example 3-2 it should also be noted that the trumpet obbligato also necessarily limits the pitch material.

<sup>27</sup> Lincoln, "A Congreve Masque," 1080.

Ex. 3-2: Pallas, "This way Mortal" (D. Purcell)

Trumpet

Pallas

This way Mortal bend thy Eyes, Pallas claims the Golden Prize,

This way Mortal bend thy Eyes, Pallas claims the Golden Prize;

A Virgin Goddess free from Stain, and Queen of Arts and Arms I Reign.

A Virgin Goddess free from Stain,

Purcell employs an abundance of interesting and progressive orchestral techniques, but his orchestral fixation has led some commentators to complain that his “orchestral movements ...slow down the action” and that, with the abundance of interior instrumental works, there is little in the way of an overall architectural plan or sense of climax to the work.<sup>28</sup> Given this twentieth-century opinion of the unbalanced nature of the work and the reliance on repetitive motto arias discussed above, the prominence of a foreign, Italianate technique can only have compounded the audience’s negative reaction to the work in comparison to the other two settings.

Another Italianate characteristic is a proliferation of slow, triple meter, *bel canto* arias, such as Paris’ “O Hermes” and “Forbear, O Goddess of desire” and Venus’ arias “Hither turn thee,” “Stay lovely youth,” and “Nature fram’d thee sure for loving.” Confining the *bel canto* technique to Paris and Venus provides good evidence that this technique represented Purcell’s best effort to create beautiful music for the two most beautiful and important characters in the work.

In his solo writing Purcell also often relied on a highly coloraturic style. This is evident from the outset of his setting with Mercury’s opening arioso “From High Olympus” (Example 3-3, following page).

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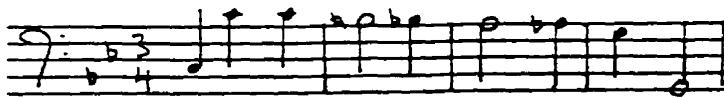
<sup>28</sup> Richard Platt, “Theatre Music I,” from *The Eighteenth Century*, 96. Roger Fiske also, for example, complains that Purcell “emphasizes the orchestra at the expense of the singers.” *Theatre Music*, 17.



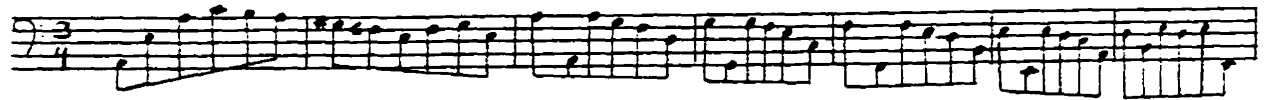
Example 3-3: Mercury, "From high Olympus" (D. Purcell) mm. 15-23.

The image displays three systems of musical notation for a vocal part. Each system consists of a treble and bass staff joined by a brace. The key signature has one sharp (F#), and the time signature is common time (C). The lyrics are written below the staves, with dashed lines indicating where the melody continues. The first system contains the lyrics "Shepherd arise" followed by a long dash, then "and hear, a rise" followed by another long dash, and finally "and leave, leave a". The second system contains the lyrics "while thy Ru" followed by a long dash. The third system contains the lyrics "ral care". Measure numbers 65, 66, and 76 are indicated below the staves.

Here Purcell displays an elegant control of text setting, effectively painting the word "arise" with ascending melismas before launching into the extended five measure coloraturic display on the soft "u" vowel of the word "rural." Such rhapsodic melismas are a common feature of Purcell's setting and occur most prominently during moments when characters are overwhelmed by beauty or emotion. In this instance the complexity of the line seems to contradict the simple pastoral setting. Purcell's desire to paint the beauty of the pastoral scene seems, rather, to have inspired the melisma on "rural." Nonetheless, it is clear that Purcell associated the use of florid melisma with musical beauty.



Ex. 3-4a: Ground bass from "Hither turn thee" (D. Purcell)



Ex. 3-4b: Ground bass from “Stay lovely youth” (D. Purcell)

<sup>29</sup> William S. Newman, *The Sonata in the Baroque Era* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1983), 134. Martin Adams also comments on the influence of Bolognese trumpet sonatas and Bolognese composers, such as Torelli, in the development of Henry Purcell's instrumental style. See Adams, *Henry Purcell*, 60.

<sup>30</sup> Though the ground bass was originally an Italian device it was, nonetheless a hall-mark of English composition at this time. For a complete discussion of the history and practice of the ground bass in English music of this period see Rosamond McGuiness, "The Ground Bass in the English Court Ode," *Music and Letters* 51/2,3 (April, July 1970), 118-40, 265-78. Also see Elaine Sisman, "Ground Bass," *New Harvard Dictionary of Music*, ed. by Don Randell (Cambridge Mass.: Belknap, 1986), 355.

The limping four-bar chromatic ground of the first example immediately recalls Henry Purcell's arias such as "When I am laid" from *Dido and Aeneas*. The second example, with its sprightly walking eighth-note and sequential compound melody, is also foreshadowed in several of Henry Purcell's court odes such as No.11 "By beauteous softness mix'd with majesty" and No.18 "Britain thou art great, art great indeed!"<sup>31</sup> Purcell's use of the ground to portray Venus is evidence of his concern for national taste - reserving his most English-favored technique for the winning goddess who is herself an embodiment of England. Given the prominence of Italian technique in other sections of the work, Purcell may have hoped to play upon his audience's, and the Whig sponsors, nationalistic predisposition for an "English" ground bass. The audience must, however, have rejected this relatively minor tip-of-the-hat to national musical identity. Purcell's third place showing in the competition may well have been precisely due to his alienating the audience through the adventurous and progressive use of foreign and unfamiliar Italianate techniques such as the "motto" aria.

## JOHN WELDON

In contrast to Daniel Purcell's elaborate use of the orchestra, John Weldon centered his setting around the chorus.<sup>32</sup> The emphasis on the chorus in a dramatic piece

<sup>31</sup> See McGuiness, "The Ground Bass in the English Court Ode," 136-38.

<sup>32</sup> All reference to Weldon's score are to the manuscript: Washington, D.C. Folger Shakespeare Library, W.b.526. This constitutes the only known version of Weldon's setting and is a transcript by a professional copyist of an earlier manuscript. It is a 92 page full score transcript likely meant for performance. The Folger Library ventures a date of ca.1735 for this copy however there is no known evidence of a revival of Weldon's setting at that late date. Revivals were, however, given in 1703 and 1704 (See Table 4-1) which would suggest a date much closer to the original 1701 "Prize" competition.

ostensibly designed to showcase individual characters and singers was somewhat unusual at this time. Though the chorus was often highlighted in Henry Purcell's dramatic works, such as *King Arthur* and *Dido Aeneas*, there are few, if any precedents for the dominant presence of the chorus in an independent masque. It was an approach which was more in keeping with a sacred verse-anthem style and foreshadowed the dramatic choral climaxes of Handel's oratorios. It must also be said, of course, that Weldon's strategy was successful, if his first-place finish in the competition is any indication.

In order to emphasize the presence of the chorus in his setting Weldon added several more choruses than Congreve had originally envisioned. In the original outline, it will be remembered from Chapter Two, Congreve envisioned the use of the chorus at four strategic points in the work. This plan called for choruses to add persuasive impact to the three goddesses' second plea to Paris - at the conclusion of Juno's aria "Let ambition fire thy mind," Pallas' aria "O how glorious is to see," and Venus' aria "Only one joy mankind can know." The fourth and final use of the chorus was to be the concluding grand chorus, "Hither all ye graces." Both Purcell and Eccles adhered to Congreve's suggested formula for the use of chorus in the work. Weldon, however, struck out on his own and added two more choral sections and an extra vocal trio, nearly doubling the presence of the chorus and ensembles in comparison to the other two contestants. Undoubtedly influenced by his church background, Weldon essentially cast the entire masque as an exaggerated Anglican verse anthem - alternating arias and choruses with episodes of arioso.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> For a more detailed discussion of the evolution and style of the English verse anthem and the influence of Italian ground basses, and florid style on English composition see Floyd Hickman, "The Restoration Anthem in England," *The Journal of Church Music* 23/8 (October, 1981) 2-5, 14. Also see John Morehen,

Weldon's first choral addition, "Forbear thy woolly flock" is only the second number in the work, immediately following Mercury's opening arioso "From high Olympus." Indeed, the text for the chorus is taken directly from the last three lines of this pronouncement. For this piece, which uses a simple homophonic texture, Weldon called for the additional elaboration of a double chorus. In so doing he was the only contestant to employ a double chorus, a technique which even more strongly reinforced the emphasis on the chorus in his setting. In giving such weight to the chorus and providing such a forceful and majestic moment so early in the work, Weldon creates an impressive beginning with which to immediately capture the audience's/judges' attention. Similarly, for the concluding Grand Chorus, "Hither all ye graces," Weldon thickens the usual four-part texture to six parts and, again, creates a magnificent conclusion to the work, one which balances the opening chorus "Forbear thy woolly flock." Employing six-part imitation throughout, this finale is also the longest piece in the work, lasting some seventy measures. This impressive final statement additionally serves to further highlight Weldon's fixation on the chorus.

Weldon also added a chorus to conclude Mercury and Paris' duet "Happy thou of human race." This is a standard four-part chorus which also uses a simple homophonic texture throughout. In addition to the two extra choruses, Weldon also added another trio. The unpublished score indicates that "Oh what joys does conquest yield," was to be sung by Pallas and those in "Attendance," presumably Venus and Juno.<sup>34</sup> This imitative trio

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"The English Consort and Verse Anthem," *Early Music* 6/3 (July, 1983) 381-85; Peter le Huray, "Anthem," *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, v.1, 459.

<sup>34</sup> Washington D.C., Folger Shakespeare Library, W.b.526, 52 (author of pagination unknown).

immediately precedes the chorus to accompany Pallas' "O how glorious t'is to see" in Congreve's libretto. Following Pallas' "To me kind swain," a continuation and final couplet of the original aria "O what Joys," this chorus is repeated again.

Judging from his first-place finish in the competition, the brilliance of Weldon's choral style must have made a considerable impact on the audience. Weldon's youth and unfamiliarity to London audiences may well have also worked to his favour.<sup>35</sup> His music must have seemed fresh and new in comparison to the other three composers, each of whom was well known to theatre audiences.<sup>36</sup> As mentioned, the heavy emphasis on the chorus and choral techniques, though common in sacred music of the day, also would likely have been regarded as something of a novelty in the theatre.

It is worth considering that, given the added trio and extra repeat of the final chorus, Pallas receives twice as much choral/ensemble treatment in Weldon's setting as the other two goddesses, including Venus the eventual winner.<sup>37</sup> Weldon additionally increased the prominence of Pallas within the work through the use of the rare accompanying curtil part, though this instrument is also used to accompany Venus' final symphony. The attention afforded Pallas is, however, matched in Purcell's similarly elaborate employment of trumpet sonatas which accompany and highlight Pallas' presence. Other than the typical use of martial kettle drums and a sudden and dramatic

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<sup>35</sup> Indeed this conclusion is reached by Lincoln in, "A Congreve Masque," 1080.

<sup>36</sup> Though Weldon would later write songs and music for other dramatic works including *Britain's Happiness* (1704) and *The Tempest* (c1712) his setting of *The Judgment of Paris* from 1701 was his earliest, and most substantial, stage work. Margaret Laurie attributes Weldon's earliest extant song, "A Song on the Peace of Ryswick" as dating from 1697. See Margaret Laurie, "John Weldon," *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Vol. 20, 332.

<sup>37</sup> Neither of the other settings displays such a complex construction of numbers for Pallas.

use of four trumpets to accompany Pallas' final song, Eccles, on the other hand, seems to show little interest in Pallas and saves his most lavish musical effects for Venus.

Several scenarios are possible regarding this seeming preference for Pallas, who, after all, along with Juno, was a losing goddess. It may be that Purcell and Weldon were merely trying to establish and reflect the grandeur and importance of Pallas' character. As "A Virgin Goddess free from Stain" and with her status as goddess of wisdom and arms she was, arguably, the most pure and most politically powerful of the three goddesses. It is therefore possible that these two composers felt that Pallas should be the preferred choice to take the golden apple. Perhaps they felt that Pallas, with her promises of political and military power, was a more practical and less morally offensive choice than beauty and the love of another man's wife (Helen of Troy). In this scenario both Purcell and Weldon would rather promote the notion of beauty based on rational moral principles, than on irrational subjective passions. The relative simplicity of Venus' settings, however, may also be interpreted as reflecting the purity of love. As reflected in the character Venus, beauty and love are portrayed as the unaffected and unadorned truth - beauty as simplicity versus the grandiose presentation afforded the power and material gain implicit in Pallas' offer.

Although Weldon exhibits a real mastery of choral technique, his orchestral and solo sections are, arguably, less successful. Weldon's orchestral writing is limited in scope and old fashioned, employing a lot of staid contrapuntal techniques. Weldon begins his setting with a "Pastoral Symphony" which was presumably mimed by "Paris & other Shepherds" and which takes the form of a four-part canon for flutes and oboes

(see Example 3-5 following page). This simple canon, consisting almost exclusively of C major arpeggios over an eighth-note tonic pedal is representative of Weldon's instrumental writing. Compared with the other competitors, especially Purcell, Weldon's instrumental setting seems to lack inspiration and confidence. Weldon adds no extra instrumental sections to Congreve's plan, though he does employ a simple instrumental ritornello to accompany the descent of the three goddesses during Paris' arioso "O Ravishing Delight!" Juno's symphony, which again begins with a short two part canon, takes a simple binary form and is a mere twenty-four measures long including repeats. Pallas' symphony, enlivened by the aforementioned curtill part, trumpets, and oboes, is also cast in a binary form and also contains a good deal of imitation, mostly between trumpets and oboes. Slightly longer and grander than Juno's symphony, this piece is still just thirty-two measures long. Venus' instrumental introduction is so short, a subtle eight-measure continuo fanfare, that it does not even merit the title of a symphony. Again, this seeming lack of attention given to Venus seems to be an attempt by Weldon to reflect the understated and yet, ultimately, irresistible nature of her offer. Weldon likely felt that little in the way of orchestral pomp was needed in order to persuade the audience of the simple beauty and seductive allure of her offer.

Weldon, unlike Purcell, declined to place heavy emphasis on Italian techniques. He preferred, instead, to concentrate on the English predilections for choruses, simple catchy melodies, and, perhaps most notably, the use of ground bass. In his use of ground bass, Weldon's intentions seem to closely mirror those of Purcell. Both composers set

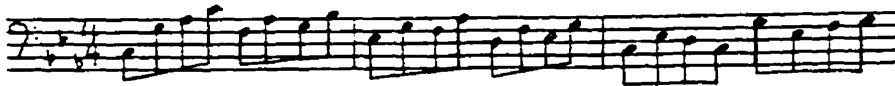


Ex. 3-5: "A Pastoral Symphony" (J. Weldon). Photocopy of microfilm of original manuscript, Wb.526 Folger Shakespeare Library Washington D.C.

*Allegro. 4 m 1. A Pastoral Symphony by Paris & other  
Shepherds on Idus' Top, while Mercury descends.*

The image displays a handwritten musical score for a piece titled "A Pastoral Symphony" by J. Weldon. The score is written on ten staves, organized into two systems of five staves each. The notation is in ink and includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and bar lines. The first staff of the first system is labeled "Hautboys" and the second staff is labeled "Flutes". The score is written in a style characteristic of 18th or 19th-century manuscript notation. The paper shows signs of age, including some staining and wear along the edges.

Venus' (the personification of England) final aria "Stay lovely youth" as a ground bass. It would seem that Weldon, like Purcell, was not above appealing to the national/patriotic preference for ground basses. Both composers thus could be viewed as appealing to the memory of Henry Purcell in order to win over the audience.<sup>38</sup> In "Stay lovely youth," Weldon employs a somewhat unusual three measure walking eighth-note ground ( see Example 3-6).

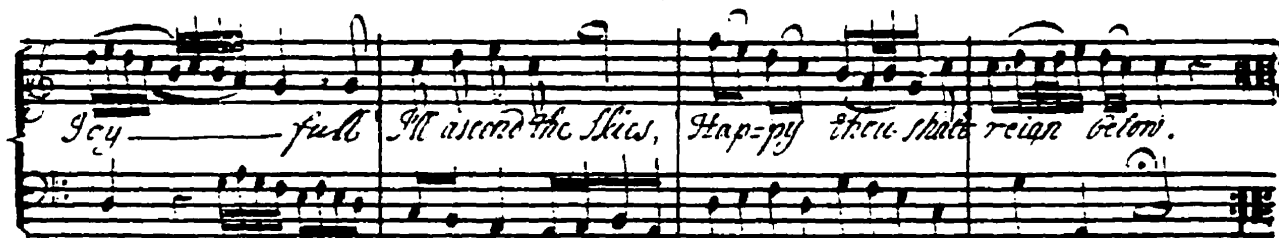
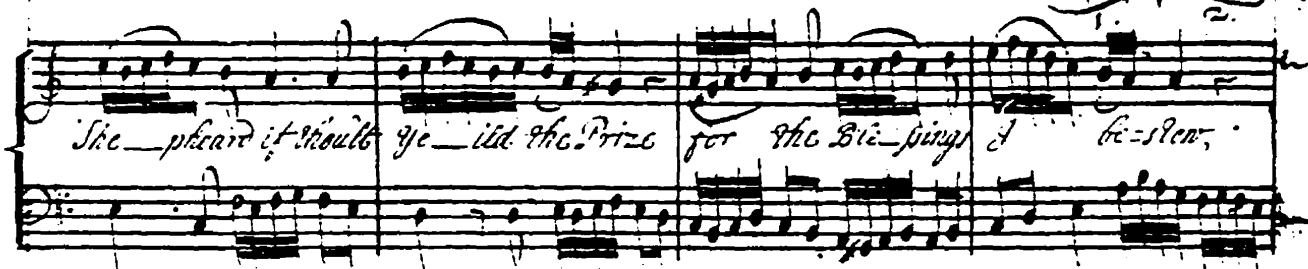
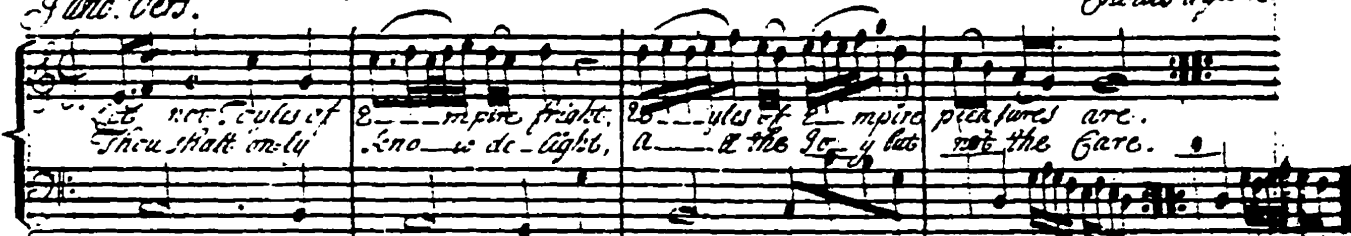


Ex. 3-7: Juno, "Let Ambition fire thy mind" (J. Weldon). Microfilm photocopy of original manuscript.

*After 4<sup>th</sup> upper words are sung, 4<sup>th</sup> (heres in 4<sup>th</sup> next Page follows;  
Juno. Vers. Then 4<sup>th</sup> Lower words are sung, and after 4<sup>th</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> same (heres ag<sup>o</sup>)*



*After 4<sup>th</sup> Chorus is sung 4<sup>th</sup> Time, follows this next Verse. The first strain shall  
Juno. Vers. sing first with 4<sup>th</sup> Upper, then with the lower words, 4<sup>th</sup> strain twice, then 4<sup>th</sup> strain  
Chorus again*



(



Ex. 3-8: Pallas, "This way Mortal" (J. Weldon)

## JOHN ECCLES

Eccles' took an entirely different approach to his setting. His vocal writing is consistently the least ornate of the three competitors and perhaps exhibits the most concern for unadorned text setting.

In its melodic simplicity and lack of grandiose vocal fireworks, Eccles' setting is the most reserved and balanced of the three.<sup>40</sup> In keeping with Eccles' own view that the competition seemed to have been fixed against him, several recent commentators have acclaimed his score as the most worthy of the three extant "Prize" settings.<sup>41</sup> Of course, despite such modern acclaim, the audience of the day judged Eccles' setting deserving of only second place in the competition.

Eccles' previous experience in composing theatre music is apparent in his solid and controlled approach which lacks the ostentatious effects of the other two settings. The most immediately striking thing about Eccles' setting is the relative simplicity and sparseness of the score. The melodic lines, largely set syllabically, are of limited range and are often in fluid conjunct motion; the accompanying harmonies are largely diatonic and often delivered in an uncluttered homophonic texture using uncomplicated rhythms. This stands in stark contrast to the grand displays of florid arioso and elaborate coloratura which the other two composers engaged in. Indeed Eccles' entire setting is stripped of all pretension and show. If Purcell placed most of his emphasis on the orchestra and Weldon

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<sup>40</sup> All references to Eccles' setting refer to a reprint of *RISM* E239; Smith: *Walsh*, i.102. Published by Walsh and Hare as advertised in *The Post-Man*, 31 October - 3 November 1702 and in the *London Gazette*, 2-5 November 1702. As republished in *Music for London Entertainment 1660-1800* (Tunbridge Wells, Kent: Richard Macnutt, 1984), Series C; vol.1.

<sup>41</sup> Stoddard Lincoln, for example, states that "In many respects Eccles' score is the finest." See "A Congreve Masque," 1080. Likewise, Roger Fiske claims that "The quality of the music [in all three settings] is high, especially in the Eccles, which is a masterpiece." See Fiske, *Theatre Music*, 17.

on the chorus. Eccles achieves a much more balanced presentation, emphasizing neither orchestra nor chorus nor soloists. As a result, his setting has an even paced dramatic flow and elaborate orchestral and choral effects are not allowed to hold up the dramatic action. Indeed, Eccles was the only contestant not to alter Congreve's original plan.

Though Eccles does not rely on the orchestra to carry the work in the manner of Purcell, his orchestral movements are, nonetheless, worthy of some note. Eccles begins his work with a "Symphony for Mercury," immediately introducing a trumpet, which is imitatively paired with obbligato violins. The use of trumpets to begin the work was a strategy common to all three composers. This "Symphony" consists of four short movements (fast - moderate - slow - fast), and is perhaps most notable for its falling chromatic bass line symbolizing Mercury's descent.

The next symphonic interlude occurs as the goddesses are descending. The section is written for "All the instruments" (an indication which likely referred only to tutti strings as the range would not suit recorders or trumpets) and given a "Loud" dynamic indication (probably implying that, given the previous unusual indication of "all instruments" that the following "soft" sections saw a reduction in the number of instruments which would accompany the voice). This movement is descriptive of the goddesses' descent with the violins and basses employing a stepwise descending sequence.

Unlike Weldon and Purcell, Eccles announces the three goddesses with short instrumental introductions rather than full fledged symphonies. The statement "Symphony for all" appears at the beginning of a seventeen-measure orchestral

introduction to Pallas' first aria. It apparently refers, not to a symphony for all three goddesses, but rather to the inclusion of the complete tutti string section as in the previous indication "All the instruments." Unlike the other two composers, Eccles does not employ trumpets and drums to accompany the introduction of Pallas. He prefers instead to reserve the dramatic impact of his instrumental effects for later in the work. Indeed with the exception of the opening trumpets of Mercury's symphony, and the flutes which are always used to accompany Venus, a simple string orchestra is maintained until the dramatic entrance of four trumpets and kettle drums following Pallas' second plea, the arioso "Awake thy Spirits Raise" (see Example 3-9).

Pallas

Awake awake thy Spirits Raise, woe't not that thy youthfull days, woe't not  
 that thy youthfull days, Piping, Tying, Nymphs decaying, left in wanton and Ingleuous  
 Ease, in Wa...-stion and Ingle...-rous Ease.

First Trumpet

Second Trumpet

Third Trumpet

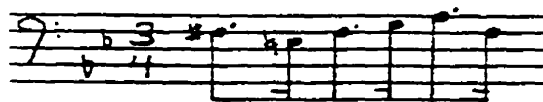
Fourth Trumpet

Kettle Drum

Example 3-9: Pallas, "Awake thy Spirits raise" (J. Eccles). Photocopy of Walsh and Hare edition (1702).

Given the paucity of pomp and showy display previous to this moment, the sudden entrance of the drums and trumpets must have made an impressive impact. Each trumpet enters in canon with a brilliant flourish before the kettle drum also takes up the rhythmic motive in a fifth imitative entrance.<sup>42</sup> The entire episode lasts a mere seventeen measures as a self contained entity, but the trumpets and drums continue in "Hark the glorious voice of war" and the aria-chorus "Oh how Glorious" which follow.

Though Pallas receives an impressive display, Venus is the only goddess to merit a full-fledged symphony (Juno is afforded a pedantic, homophonic, eight-measure "Symphony" for strings). Venus' symphony, however, with the customary obbligato flutes is thirty six measures long, over twice the length of Pallas' trumpet episode and four times longer than Juno's "Symphony." The piece finds the two flutes almost continually doubled by the violins. The predominant motive is given below (see Example 3-10).



Ex. 3-10: Flute motive from Venus' symphony (J. Eccles)

This motive merely serves as material for an elaborate sequential development which subsequently spans nearly the entire remainder of the piece.

Eccles also remains relatively restrained in his choral writing. He limits his use of the chorus to Congreve's original plan which called for four choruses, one to accompany the second aria of each goddess and the concluding Grand Chorus. Unlike Weldon's

<sup>42</sup> The four part canon is somewhat reminiscent of the four part canonic "Pastoral Symphony" which opens Weldon's setting.



choral deviations and Purcell's numerous orchestral additions, Eccles preferred to exploit the inherent building of dramatic tension which Congreve's plan was meant to afford and therefore reserved the use of showy choruses until midway through the work. For Juno's chorus "Let Ambition fire thy Mind" Eccles maintains a strictly syllabic presentation, half-note harmonic rhythm, and a simple homophonic quarter-note texture throughout the entire duration of the number (see Example 3-11).

**CHORUS**

The musical score is titled "CHORUS" and is for a four-part choir. It begins with an instrumental introduction in the Soprano part. The first verse of the chorus is: "Let Ambition fire thy Mind, let Ambition fire thy Mind, let Ambition fire thy Mind, let Ambition fire thy Mind." The second verse is: "Mind thou wert born, thou wert born, thou wert born, thou wert born." The score is written in a simple homophonic style with a half-note harmonic rhythm.

Ex. 3-11: Chorus, "Let Ambition fire thy mind" (J. Eccles)

The main interest lies in the *perpetuum mobile* of running sixteenth notes in the first violin. The choral extravagance is greatly increased, however, with Pallas' "Oh how Glorious" (See Example 3-12).

CHORUS

Ex. 3-12: Chorus "Oh how Glorious" (J. Eccles)

Here Eccles maintains the four trumpets and kettle drum which had previously been dramatically introduced. In keeping with the increased grandeur of the instrumentation

Eccles increases the technical requirements in the chorus. The four voices enter in imitation and must negotiate an elaborate eighth-note melisma on the word "Glorious." The melody is taken directly from the second phrase of the preceding aria "O what joys." Venus' chorus, "One only joy," is also constructed from the final phrase of her aria "Stay lovely youth." This chorus, as with that of Pallas, begins imitatively, here the voices enter in an ascending thirds outlining a G minor triad (G - B-flat - D - G). This chorus is relatively short compared to that of Pallas, just twenty-one measures versus fifty-one for Pallas. It also lacks the grandiose orchestral accompaniment of trumpets and drums which is afforded Pallas. In this chorus, Eccles seems to have preferred to withhold any increase in display in favour of the final Grand Chorus, again perhaps feeling that Venus had no need of bombast to make her case.

The final Grand Chorus provides a fitting climax to the work (see Example 3-13 following page). At seventy-five measures it is by far the longest piece in Eccles' setting. The entire number is set in a stately homophonic texture. Both Weldon and Purcell, while writing some homophonic passages in their Grand Choruses, preferred to rely on more impressive contrapuntal displays. Eccles, however, maintains simple unadorned rhythms, melodies, and harmonies, even at the work's conclusion. Similarly, the work is written only for strings and continuo, with no additional instruments such as the trumpets which had earlier accompanied Pallas' chorus. Eccles seems to have preferred to write a concluding chorus which was in keeping with the overall modest tone of his work. Experienced craftsman as he was, Eccles created a conclusion which sensibly unified the masque from a compositional point of view rather than attempting to

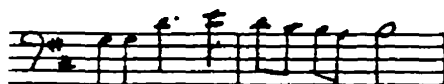
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Eccles, like Purcell, uses the instrumental ritornello to great effect. For Mercury's aria "Fear not Mortal" Eccles employs an extended sixteen-measure instrumental ritornello. This technique is then immediately repeated in the following duet "Happy thou of Human Race." The opening motive of the ritornello in "Happy thou" seems to be a slightly elaborated form of the opening theme from "Fear not Mortal" (See example 3-14a and 3-14b).



Ex. 3-14a: Motive from "Fear not Mortal" (J. Eccles)



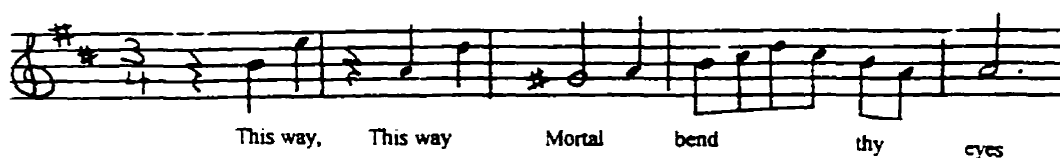
Happy thou of Human race

Ex. 3-14b: Motive from "Happy thou" (J. Eccles)

This was probably an attempt to link the subject matter of the two numbers, and additionally served to emphasize the blurring of the distinction between the gods and mortals which was the underlying theme of Paris' appointment to judge the contest. Extended instrumental ritornellos are also to be found in Pallas' "This way Mortal," Venus' "Hither turn thee," and "Nature framed thee" and in Paris' arioso "Distracted I turn." Eccles' use of ritornello technique, while hardly over-used, can perhaps be best understood as a more elegant effort, in contrast to Purcell's alteration of Congreve's

outline with added symphonies, to involve and exploit the orchestral forces available to him.

Of the arias using ritornello technique, Pallas' "This way Mortal" is perhaps worthy of special note. The four-measure ritornello, occurring some five times throughout the number, is based on the melody of the first four vocal measures (see Example 3-15a). The aria is also interesting for its textual similarity to Purcell's setting of the aria-chorus "Hither this way, this way bend" from *King Arthur* (1685) (see Example 3-15b).



Ex. 3-15a: Pallas, "This way Mortal" (J. Eccles)



Ex. 3-15b: Philidel, "Hither this way" (H. Purcell)

Though there is little basis for melodic comparison, both numbers emphasize similar lyrical content and serve a similar function within the larger works. Dryden's lyric from *King Arthur* is a beguiling warning to Arthur and the Britons, sung by the spirit Philidel, to avoid becoming stuck in the bogs - part of a trap laid by Oswald and the evil spirit Grimbald. "This way Mortal" is an equally beguiling attempt by Pallas to sway Paris'

judgment with the promises of military glory. In each case the sentiments are of questionable sincerity, Grimbald is trying to deceive Arthur and Pallas is trying to bribe Paris. Both lyrics emphasize a snake-like sibilance in order to enhance their seductiveness and both are set to angular melodies.

Extremely similar word repetition is, at times, also evident in Henry Purcell's and Eccles' settings. Compare the following text, complete with Eccles' own added word repetitions, from the final stanza of "This way Mortal" with a similar passage from Purcell's "Hither this way."<sup>43</sup>

Eccles:

This way, this way, this way Mortal,  
This way Mortal bend thy Eyes,  
This way, this way, this way Mortal bend thy Eyes,  
This way, this way, this way Mortal bend thy Eyes.

Purcell:

Hither this way, this way, this way bend,  
This way, this way, hither this way, this way bend.

The similarity of text (both works here share the words "this way" and "bend") and the similarity of the three repetitions which both composers give to "this way" seem to point to the direct influence of Purcell and Dryden's work on that of Eccles and Congreve.<sup>44</sup>

Neither Daniel Purcell nor Weldon choose to repeat these words. Daniel Purcell, however, in Mercury's arioso "This radiant Fruit," shows a similar repetition of the line "See now they descend, and this way bend."

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<sup>43</sup> Word repetitions and distortions of Congreve's libretto are not common features of Eccles' setting. In comparison to Purcell and Weldon, who often employed an abundance of relatively aimless word repetition, Eccles preferred to leave Congreve's poetry as unadulterated as possible - thereby achieving a more natural unity between text and music.

<sup>44</sup> The following aria trio "Hither turn thee, Gentle swain" also provides another textual similarity to Henry Purcell's and Dryden's "Hither this way."

See now they descend, now they descend and  
this way, this way, this way, this way bend,  
and this way, this way, this way, this way bend.

Set to a quarter note descending ground and in context of Mercury's observation of the goddesses descent, the repetition seems less derivative of Henry Purcell's work.

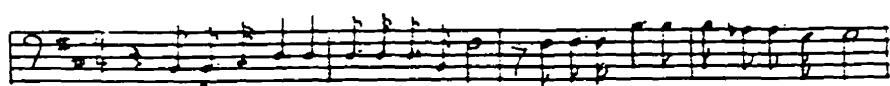
Given the proliferation of political propaganda in the theatre and the political underpinnings of "The Prize" competition, it is likely that, regardless of which setting, "This way Mortal" and Venus' aria "Hither turn thee Gentle swain," which immediately follows, would be recognized by the audience as emblematic of the attempts at political persuasion being waged by both the Whigs and Tories.

Eccles is unique among his competitors in that he almost totally avoids coloratura or *bel canto* vocal displays, though he is not loath to employ other Italian compositional techniques. In addition to an abundance of instrumental ritornellos, Eccles also resorts to *dal segno* arias such as in the duet "Happy thou of human race" and Juno's first aria "Saturnia, wife of thundering Jove." Eccles' setting also contains a single instance of a motto aria, found in Pallas' first aria "This way mortal," when the opening eight measures of the "Symphony for all" introduce Pallas' melody. Though it is interesting that Eccles seems to have been aware of this new technique, he doesn't exploit it to the constant degree found in Purcell's setting.

Compounding his detachment from popular English taste is the fact that Eccles employed no ground-bass arias. Indeed Eccles is the only composer of the three who did not utilize this form. The use of Italianate forms and techniques combined with the lack of any homage to the English taste for ground basses may have ensured Eccles' second-

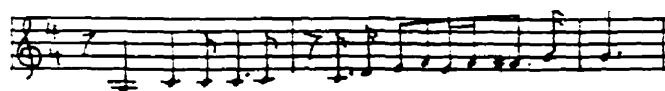


place finish. It must be said, however, that Eccles definitely eschews the ornate Italianate vocal style and exhibited perhaps the strongest display of prosody among the three composers. The simplicity of his melodic style is evident from the very opening of the work with Mercury's arioso "From High Olympus." Compare the smooth elegance of the first phrase of Eccles' setting with Weldon's more elaborate version (See Example 3-16 a, b).



From High Olympus and the realms above, behold I come ye Messenger of Jove

Ex 3-16a: Mercury, "From high Olympus" (J. Eccles)



From High Olympus and the Realms a - bove

Ex. 3-16b: Mercury, "From high Olympus" (J. Weldon)

Much the same comparison can be made between the three versions of Paris' first arioso "Oh Hermes" (See Example 3-17 a,b,c).



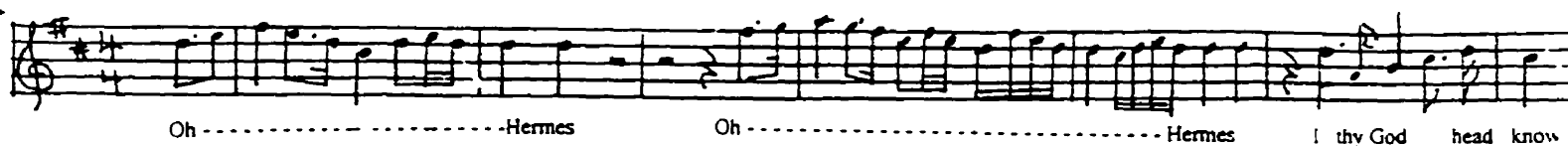
Oh Hermes I thy Godhead know

Ex. 3-17a: Paris, "Oh Hermes" (J. Eccles)



Oh Hermes I Thy Go-----d head know

Ex.17b: Paris, "Oh Hermes" (J. Weldon)



Ex. 17c: Paris, "Oh Hermes" (D. Purcell)

Although he provides a direct and unadorned presentation of the text, Eccles achieves interest through his great variety of phrase structures, matched to Congreve's text. Eccles is fond of repeating vocal phrases. Though he begins each repeat with similar melodic motives, he often ends each repetition differently. This feature, for example, is found in Juno's first aria "Saturnia, Wife of Thundering Jove." As shown below in Example 3-18 (following page), the first two seven-measure phrases beginning with "Saturnia" are the same for the first two measures before there is significant deviation. Each phrase, though using the same text, is concluded using different melodic formulas. An extremely varied phrase structure, another trait typical of Eccles' setting, is also exhibited in this aria. Juno enters with a seven-measure phrase followed by a four-measure instrumental episode, followed by another seven-measure phrase, a three-measure instrumental episode, then two five-measure phrases beginning on "Beloved by him" before a final three-measure instrumental episode leads into the B section of the *dal segno*. Such varied phrasing melds with the variety of meters and phrases in Congreve's text found throughout the work. In contrast to the constant and repetitious use of square four- and eight-measure phrases by Purcell and Weldon,

## Ex. 3-18, "Saturnia" (J. Eccles)

[illegible]

Eccles achieves an interesting mix of asymmetrical phrase lengths (see table 3-2 below).<sup>45</sup>

Though Congreve maintains a regular ten syllable iambic pentameter for each phrase

Eccles maintains unity between text and music by the repeated beginnings of many of his phrases while simultaneously creating variety and interest through his different phrase endings and phrase lengths.

**Table 3-2:** Eccles' phrase structure for "Saturnia, Wife of Thundring Jove"

Text:	Musical phrase
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**Section A**

Saturnia, Wife of Thundring Jove am I :	7 mm.
Instrumental episode:	4 mm.
Saturnia, Wife of Thundring Jove am I:	7 mm. (varied)
Instrumental episode:	3 mm.
Belov'd by him, and Empress of the Sky:	5 mm.
Belov'd by him, and Empress of the Sky:	5 mm. (varied)
Instrumental episode:	3 mm.

**Section B**

Shepherd, fix on me thy wondring sight,	9 mm.
Instrumental episode:	2 mm.
Beware, and view me well, and judge aright:	6 mm.
Beware, and view me well, and judge aright:	6 mm. (varied)
Instrumental episode:	14 mm

Eccles masterfully exploits Congreve's poetic plan. He consistently builds his setting to a climax and saves most of his flashier orchestral effects until the end of the work. Eccles' most exaggerated gesture in the work, for example, occurs with Pallas' second solo, "Awake thy spirits raise," which finds four trumpets suddenly appearing

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<sup>45</sup> The use square periodic phrasing is a progressive Italianate trait of Weldon and of Purcell's settings. The combination of melismata and regular periodicity is also a common feature of Henry Purcell's late style. See Adams, *Henry Purcell*, 63, 82.

with brilliant flourishes. In contrast, Weldon and Purcell have a less elegant sense of dramatic construction. Weldon, for example, used his most impressive piece, the double chorus for Mercury, "Forbear thy woolly flock," as the second number in the work.

The simplicity of the score, particularly the vocal melodies, is likely a direct product of Eccles' previous experience in the theatre. As Mrs. Hodgson was likely the only professional singer available to him, Eccles appears to have been the only contestant to accommodate and take into account the limited abilities of the actor-singers engaged from Lincoln's Inn Fields to stage this particular event. As mentioned, Eccles was more or less the house composer for Lincoln's Inn Fields and so had written music previously for several of the performers, notably Anne Bracegirdle who played Venus, and was able to tailor his music to suit their individual abilities. If Congreve's letter to Joseph Keally can be believed, however, Mrs. Boman still struggled with the role of Juno in Eccles setting.<sup>46</sup>

Despite the simplicity of much of the melodic writing Eccles exhibited a sophisticated and subtle display of prosody. Eccles, of course, also had the advantage of having worked with Congreve's lyrics before. Consequently his score, and prosody, exhibit a highly varied yet sympathetic and symbiotic relationship to Congreve's complex poetic constructions.

Before turning to a comparison of the harmonic structure of the three settings, it may be helpful to summarize the general stylistic approach of each composer and their concomitant ideas of what constituted musical beauty. Purcell is the most progressive of the three as manifest in his reliance on the "motto" aria technique with its repetitive and

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<sup>46</sup> See footnote 5, this chapter.

pre-classical balanced and symmetrical phrasing. He also, it will be recalled, most strongly emphasized the orchestra by adding symphonies, trumpet sonatas, and instrumental ritornellos. Heavy importance is likewise placed on orchestration, judging by Purcell's lavish use of flutes, trumpets, oboes, and by his progressive use of an obbligato curtill part. In addition to progressive Italianate orchestral and motto techniques, Purcell employed Italianate vocal techniques as his melodies were almost exclusively written in florid coloratura with an abundance of ornate melisma. Finally, Daniel Purcell also uses a number of ground basses which recall the style of his late brother. In short Purcell uses progressive, mostly Italianate, formal, instrumental, and vocal techniques in order to convince the audience of the contemporary beauty of his music.

Weldon's sense of musical beauty, by contrast, is more conservative and flavored by the grand choral displays of the church and, more specifically, verse anthem style. Weldon manifests this by the addition of several extra choruses and vocal ensembles to Congreve's original plan. Though more conservative than Purcell, Weldon, nonetheless, incorporates a significant amount stylistic variety in his setting. Like Purcell, Weldon's solo numbers also exhibit an abundance of ornate melisma and some Italianate coloratura arias. Weldon also, as in his setting of "Let ambition fire thy mind," incorporates a number of simple catchy melodies more in keeping with the English style. In contrast to Daniel Purcell he places relatively little emphasis on the orchestra also used a number of ground basses recalling the style of Henry Purcell. By way of grand choral display tempered by Italian coloratura, and English styled arioso and ground basses, Weldon

successfully captured first place in the competition. Thus, on some level, Weldon validated his more diverse concept of musical beauty.

Both Purcell and Weldon exhibit a concern for Italianate vocal techniques and, respectively, orchestral and choral effects. Eccles' score, in contrast, manifests a consistently conservative and unadorned style. He balances orchestra, chorus, and solo numbers. Eccles places most of his compositional emphasis on text projection and manifests the most concern for clarity of declamation and for matching his musical phrases to Congreve's poetry. His vocal melodies are consistently uniformly simple and elegant. His orchestral and choral textures are, likewise, predominantly homophonic and clearly articulated. Eccles approach to musical beauty was thus closely wedded to simple and clear text projection rather than orchestral or choral displays.

## TONAL PLANNING

One of the most interesting aspects of all three settings is their relative attention to harmonic architecture. In early eighteenth-century opera the notion of closed form, that is ending an opera in the key in which it began, was not the general rule. As a result it has often been assumed that such non-closed works were guilty of a lack of dramatic integration. Large-scale tonal structures in Baroque operas are indeed often considered to be non-existent and therefore the operas are considered to be somewhat inferior to those from other eras. Charles Rosen, for example, states:

The trouble with early eighteenth-century opera is that there is no large-scale tonal structure. . . As a result, there is no musical shape to the opera as a whole: the

libretto has some shape but there is nothing in the music to correspond to it; the structural principle of the music is essentially one damn aria after another.<sup>47</sup>

Rosen goes on to conclude that:

The creation of a large form in opera does not exist between Monteverdi and Mozart. It was beyond the grasp of the contemporary composer when he was given a variety of textures to build with.<sup>48</sup>

*The Judgment of Paris* is not a full fledged opera but it is, nonetheless, a relatively extensive dramatic work, with some 23 - 30 numbers (depending on how added symphonies and choruses are counted) in each setting and lasting approximately 45 to 60 minutes. In light of Rosen's assertions it is interesting to note that all three extant settings of this work are closed structures and demonstrate many harmonic and modulatory features which are directly connected or related to the dramatic events of the libretto. At least in reference to the "Prize" works, independent one movement masques with no recitative, Rosen's assertion seems unfounded

In the discussion of key centers which follows it will be helpful to refer to Table 3-3 (p.167) which presents a detailed list and side by side comparison of the keys of the various aria, arioso, and orchestral sections contained in Weldon, Purcell, and Eccles' settings. The table has been broken into three large sections A, B, and C, which correspond to the three main structural breaks originally planned by Congreve. As mentioned in Chapter Two, the sections have increasing levels of dramatic and musical impact. Section A introduces Mercury and Paris and concludes with their duet. Section B introduces the three goddesses and concludes with their trio. The final section, C, begins

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<sup>47</sup> Charles Rosen, "Too much Opera?" review of *The Operas of Alessandro Scarlatti*, edited by Donald J. Grout, and *Italian Opera* edited by Howard M. Brown, *The New York Review of Books*, 31 May 1979, 18.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.



with Paris' request that the goddesses disrobe in "Distracted I turn, but I cannot decide" whereupon the three goddesses re-argue their cases bolstered by concluding choruses. This section, of course, culminates in Paris awarding the prize to Venus in "I yield" before the work's climactic Grand Chorus. Smaller internal modulations are not reflected in this table. The character singing each number, or to whom it pertains in the case of symphonies and choral sections, is also given in the second column along with the type of piece (Aria, Arioso, or Chorus). Note the extra choral sections in Weldon's setting and the added orchestral sections in Purcell's. The economy of Eccles' setting is also manifest here in his lack of symphonies to introduce each goddess and his decision, not shared by either Purcell or Weldon, to refuse Paris a final aria in the second half of "I Yield."

A condensed version of the key centers given in this list is shown below in Table 3-4 (p.168). Note that in Table 3-4 there is no intended correspondence between the specific placement of the modulations. This table is merely a summation of the order of modulations in each setting, without reference to the number of pieces or length of time spent in each key. Purcell, for example, makes many more modulations than does Eccles. Likewise, though Weldon spends by far the largest amount of his time in C major this is not particularly evident in this condensed list of key centers.

**TABLE 3-3. Detailed key comparison of "The Prize" settings**

Section/Title	Character/Type	Key - Purcell	Key - Weldon	Key - Eccles
<b>A</b>				
Orchestral Intro.		D Major	C Major	D Major
"From High Olympus"	Mercury - Arioso	D Major	C Major	D Major
"Forbear thy woolly flock"			C Major Double chorus	
"O Hermes"	Paris - Arioso	D Major	C Minor	D Major
"This Radiant fruit behold"	Mercury - Aria/Arioso	A Major	C Major	D Major
		Symphony for Paris (D Minor)		
"O Ravishing Delight!"	Paris - Arioso	D Minor	F Minor	B Minor
"Fear not mortal"	Mercury - Aria	A Minor	F Major	B Minor
"Happy thou "	Duet - M/P	C Major	D Major	B Minor
			Chorus - D Major	
<b>B</b>				
"Saturnia, wife of thundering Jove"	Juno Symphony/Aria	F Major	G Major	E Major (No Symp.)
"This way mortal"	Pallas Symphony/Aria	C Major	C Major	A Major (No Symp.)
"Hither turn thee"	Venus Symphony/Aria	C Minor	C Minor	A Minor
"Hither turn thee"	Trio - J/P/V	C Major	C Major	A Major
		Symphony for All - A Minor		
<b>C</b>				
"Distracted I turn"	Paris - Aria/Arioso	A Minor	C Min - C Maj	A Major
"Let ambition fire thy mind"	Juno - Aria	A Major	C Major	D Minor
	Chorus	D Major	C Major	D Minor
"Awake, thy spirits raise" - "Hark the Glorious voice "	Pallas Arioso - Aria	D Major	C Major	D Major
"O what joys"	Pallas - Aria	D Major	A Min Chorus - C Maj	D Major
"O how glorious tis to see"	Chorus	D Major	C Major - "To me kind swain"/P aria	D Major
Symphony for Venus			C Minor	G Minor
"Stay lovely youth"	Venus - Aria	A Minor	C Minor	G Minor
"One only joy "	Chorus	A Minor	C Minor	G Minor
"Nature fram'd thee sure for loving"	Venus - Aria	D Major	E-Flat Major	G Minor
"I Yield"	Paris - Arioso	D Minor	E-Flat Major	G Major
"Forbear O Goddess of desire"	Paris - Aria	D Minor	C Minor	(All in prior arioso)
"Hither all ye graces"	Grand Chorus	D Major	C Major	D Major

**TABLE 3-4.** Condensed key structure with roman numerals.

<u>Purcell</u>		<u>Weldon</u>		<u>Eccles</u>	
<u>Section A</u>		<u>Section A</u>		<u>Section A</u>	
D	I	C	I	D	I
A		c		b	vi
d		C			
a		f			
C	V/III	F			
		D	V/V		
<u>Section B</u>		<u>Section B</u>		<u>Section B</u>	
F	III	G	V	E	V/V
C		C		A	
c		c		a	
C		C	I	A	V
a	v (V/III)				
<u>Section C</u>		<u>Section C</u>		<u>Section C</u>	
a	v	c/C	i/I	A	V
D		C		d	
a		c		D	
D		E-flat		g	
d		C	I	G	
D	I			D	I

The key shifts of all three composers are all to closely related keys, usually by fifths, or to parallel or relative major or minor keys. Individual harmonies are, likewise, usually simple and diatonic. As might be expected, Weldon, the least experienced composer, produced the most limited modulatory scheme of the three composers. His entire setting rarely leaves the security of C major and a relatively static concentration on the tonality of C, whether major or minor. Weldon's score, however, also reveals several important correspondences between the dramatic events of the libretto and his choice of

keys. The C major/minor tonality which opens the work is only broken by Paris' F minor arioso "O Ravishing Delight!" which takes place only after the three goddesses have descended to disrupt the pastoral peace of Mount Ida. Also of interest in Weldon's setting is his choice of C minor to set all of the music accompanying and surrounding Venus (with the exception of her final aria "Nature fram'd thee" which uses the relative major key of E-flat). In contrast, the music of both Pallas and Juno is set in the home key of C major. The only other occurrence of C minor is in Paris' ariosos "O Hermes" and "Distracted I turn." Similarly, the only other occurrence of E-flat major is Paris' climactic arioso "I yield." Weldon thus links the fate of Paris and Venus through their exclusive use of C minor and E-flat major. In his discussion of Mozart's operas, Daniel Heartz asserts that E-flat major has been traditionally associated with love, both divine and human.<sup>49</sup> Weldon seems to acknowledge this association by using E-flat major for "Nature fram'd thee" and "I yield," the moments when human love triumphs.

Though Weldon begins and ends in C major there appears to be little in the way of a functional approach or progression in his choice of keys for particular numbers. The home key is passed through at many points throughout the work and thus loses much of its potency. Indeed E-flat major, as the key in which Venus convinces Paris to award her the apple, stands out as something of a climax to the work. The home key of C major makes a final, and somewhat anti-climactic, re-appearance in the final Grand Chorus.

Nonetheless, in referring to the larger table of key structures in Table 3-3, it is evident that Weldon did keep Congreve's overall tonal plan in mind when designing his harmonic organization. The second section of the work, which begins with Paris' arioso

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<sup>49</sup> Daniel Heartz, *Mozart's Operas* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990), 24, 60.

"O Ravishing Delight!" and which introduces the goddesses, is structurally marked by a move from the preceding key of D major to G major, the dominant of the home key of C major, thus completing an internal or secondary V - I structural modulation. The second section then proceeds to the tonic key of C major completing another V - I structural modulation. The final section, however, remains relatively static in C minor/major, perhaps owing to the fact that Paris both opens and closes this section. Weldon's structural modulations in relation to Congreve's sectional segmentation can be diagrammed as follows:

Section:	A	B	C
Key:	C - D	G	c/C
	I - V/V	V - I	i/I

Both Purcell and Eccles chose D major as the home key of their respective works.<sup>50</sup> Purcell's modulatory scheme is more complex than Weldon's but perhaps not as dramatically structured as Eccles'. Purcell shifts key far more frequently than the other two composers and often repeats certain keys, notably the dominant tonal areas of A major and A minor. Following Paris' first arioso in D major Purcell uses minor keys for all of Paris' music subsequent to the descent of the goddesses. He does not, however, use a consistent key to portray either Paris or the goddesses. Paris is set using D major, D minor and A minor. Juno first takes F major then A major in her second aria. C major is used for Pallas' original aria then D major for her second aria. Venus first takes C minor and then A minor. Venus consistently uses the minor mode, while the other goddesses are in major. As in Weldon's setting, Venus and Paris are thus linked through their use of

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<sup>50</sup> The concentration on C major and D major evident in both Weldon and Purcell's settings was likely dictated in part by the use of trumpets.

the minor mode. Purcell brings back the home key for Venus' climactic aria "Nature fram'd thee" which immediately precedes Paris's decision to award her the prize.

As is the case with Weldon, Purcell's modulatory scheme shows an awareness of Congreve's structural divisions within the work. The transition from the A section to the B section is, like Weldon's, achieved through the use of an internal secondary V - I shift from C major to F major. The second section then ends in a dominant functioning C major for the trio and adds the relative key of A minor for the concluding symphony. The dominant tonal area also initiates the final section. The primary tonal area for each of the sections neatly outlines a D minor triad. Purcell's structural modulations may be diagrammed as follows:<sup>51</sup>

Section:	A	B	C
Key:	D - C	F - C/a	a/A - D
	I - II	II	V - I
	(V	I - V)	

In general, the overall detail of Eccles' key scheme is far more considered and integrated with the plot than that of the other contestants. As Congreve gradually built to a crescendo of dramatic tension through his planning of the libretto so too does Eccles imitate this through his modulatory scheme. Dramatic tension, for example, is built in the first half of the work as, beginning in D major, Eccles traverses the dominant side of the circle of fifths. After creating a stable and tranquil atmosphere in D major Eccles first moves to B minor for Paris' arioso "O Ravishing Delight!" This disruptive move follows

<sup>51</sup> It is also possible to argue that, given the strong presence of C major in the B section that the structural modulation would read:

A	B	C
D	C	D

immediately after the three goddesses make their decent. Continuing the circle of fifths the next major modulation, to E major, occurs with Juno's introduction and A major is used for Pallas' introduction and returns for the goddesses' trio. Like his competitors, Eccles does not use consistent keys to portray the three goddesses. After her first aria in E major, Juno's second is in D minor. Pallas moves from A major to the home key of D major and Venus moves from A minor to G minor. Yet again, Venus consistently sings in a minor key. After arriving at the stable subdominant of G major for Paris' deciding arioso "I yield," the home key is reached for the concluding Grand Chorus. In viewing the key plan of Eccles setting one is immediately struck by the limited number of key changes in comparison to the other two settings. Eccles moves almost totally by fifth motion with only three instances of parallel key shifting. These occur when Pallas' A major of "This way mortal" is replaced by Venus' A minor of "Hither turn thee" and when Pallas' "Awake thy spirits" D major supersedes Juno's D minor from "Let ambition fire thy mind" and with the shift from Venus' G minor "Nature fram'd thee" into Paris' final capitulation in G major, "I Yield."

Eccles also delineates Congreve's major structural division with corresponding structural modulations. The exception is the transition from the B section to the C section. Here Eccles intentionally leads the A major of the trio "Hither turn thee" into Paris' A major arioso "Distracted I turn," thereby sustaining and suspending Paris' state of uncertainty. Eccles' sectional key scheme may be diagrammed as below:

Section:	A	B	C
Key:	D - b	E - A	A - D
	I - vi	V/V - V	V - I

Congreve builds dramatic tension surrounding Paris' decision through the disrobing and repeated pleas of the three goddesses. His overall plan for the masque, with its increasing texture of ensembles and choruses, also contributed to this effect. In confining his musical numbers to Congreve's suggested outline, avoiding pedantic and repetitious phrase structures, and through his gradual expansion of keys, Eccles masterfully reflects Congreve's intended vision.

All three composers chose either C or D major as the tonal centers of their works. Both these keys, according to Price were representative of "triumph, ceremonies, and monarchs sitting in state." As mentioned, this association was undoubtedly due to the fact that these keys lent themselves well to natural trumpets which were often called upon for royal or military ceremonial occasions. That these keys should have been favoured over more traditionally pastoral keys, such as F major or B-flat major, may have reflected the composer's attempts to depict the god's wedding ceremony which precipitated the mythical contest or, indeed, it may merely have suited the grandiose nature of the "Prize" composition contest.

There is little evidence to support the idea of assigning various associations to the different key areas employed by the three composers. The character of Juno, for example, appears to be portrayed by no consistent key area. Pallas, as befitting her warrior status, is consistently portrayed in the heroic or military keys of C major and D major, however this may be due more to the limitations of the trumpets which accompany her than any direct attempt at key association.<sup>52</sup> Venus, however, does appear to receive specific key

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<sup>52</sup> For a discussion of the key characteristics of C major and D major see Hertz, *Mozart Operas*, 24, 59, 60.



characterization. In subsequent works, such as his opera *Semele*, Eccles associated the notion of love with both A minor and G minor.<sup>53</sup> Curtis Price, in relation to the work of Henry Purcell and his English contemporaries, has also postulated that the key of A minor is "often linked with sexual ardor."<sup>54</sup> Not surprisingly, these are the same keys which Eccles used to represent Venus, the goddess of love, in his setting of the *Judgment of Paris*. Though Daniel Purcell also places Venus' "Stay lovely youth" in A minor her previous music is in C minor, thought by Price to be a key which Henry Purcell often associated with mystery and awe.<sup>55</sup> Weldon also places Venus in C minor and her final aria "Nature fram'd thee" in E-flat, the key which Heartz has associated with divine love.<sup>56</sup> Though all three composer's took differing approaches to the key structure of Congreve's plan and in the portrayal of characters, there was thus a general preference for minor keys to represent love and beauty. Table 3-5 shows a comparison of key centers used for both the initial introduction of each goddess and her second plea.

**TABLE 3-5:** Comparison of key centers used for the goddesses

	<u><b>Juno</b></u>	<u><b>Pallas</b></u>	<u><b>Venus</b></u>
<u><b>Setting</b></u>			
Purcell	F / A(D)	C / D	c / a / D
Weldon	G / C	C / aC	c / c / E-flat
Eccles	E / d	A / D	a / g

<sup>53</sup> William Patterson makes this observation of Eccles' key connotation in *Semele*. Furthermore he recognizes an opposition between active major keys, which represent immortal gods, and passive minor keys which are used to portray mortals. See William Hugh Patterson, *Semele: Structure in a Baroque Opera* (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1982), 19-28.

<sup>54</sup> Curtis Price, *Henry Purcell and the London Stage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 23.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

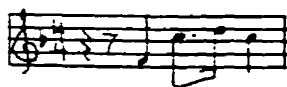
<sup>56</sup> See footnote 49 above.

## MOTIVIC CONTENT

At various points in the work Purcell and Eccles associated motives with various characters, associations which often spanned large amounts of time. It has already been discussed how the three composers painted the characteristics of the goddesses by means of orchestral colour, such as the use trumpets for Pallas and flutes for Venus; melodic and rhythmic colouring were also features of their characterizations.

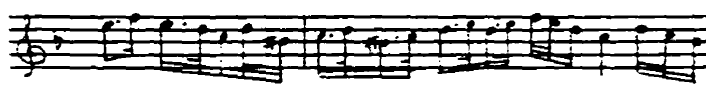
Daniel Purcell, for example, employs a variety of dotted figures in Juno's first arioso "Saturnia wife of Thundering Jove." These same figures later play a prominent role during her second aria "Let ambition fire thy mind." Example 3-19a shows two rhythmic figures from the former arioso while Example 3-19b shows similar detail from the latter aria.

I) m. 1.



Saturnia

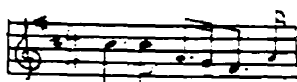
II) mm. 10 - 11



Won ..... dring

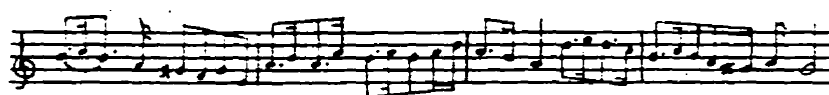
Ex. 3-19a: Motives from Juno's first arioso "Saturnia" (D. Purcell)

I) m. 34



crowns he'd throw

II) mm. 38-41



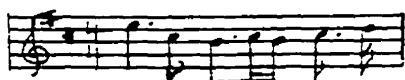
Joys in cir ..... cles Joys ..... shall meet

Ex. 3-19b: Motives from Juno's second aria "Let ambition" (D. Purcell)

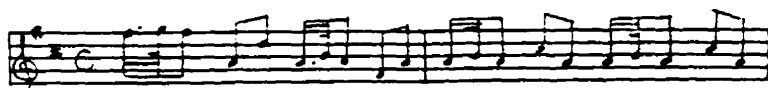
The same technique is also employed for Pallas: the figure from the opening of Pallas' "This way Mortal," (see Example 3-20a) is later greatly exaggerated in the voice motives to "Awake thy spirits raise" and, even more distorted, in the oboe motives to "Hark, the Glorious voice of war" (see Examples 3-20b/c).



Ex. 3-20a: Opening motives from Pallas' "This way Mortal" (D. Purcell)



Ex. 3-20b: Motive from Pallas' "Awake thy spirits raise" m.4. (D. Purcell)

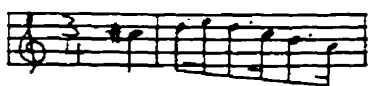


Ex. 3-20c: Oboe motive from Pallas' "Hark the Glorious voice of war" m.3-4 (D. Purcell)

Weldon, perhaps due to his relative inexperience, seems less accomplished at this technique than Purcell and there is little evidence, outside of a consistent use of rapid sixteenth- and thirty-second-note motion to portray Juno, of any attempt at constructing recurring melodic or rhythmic motives. Perhaps the lone exception is a reversal of a descending quarter-note octave arpeggio from G which is the motto introducing "This way mortal" into an ascending octave arpeggio to G to begin "Hark the Glorious voice of

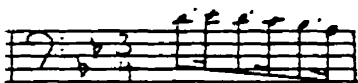
war,” in what might be considered an attempt to connect the two arias. There appears to be no other ulterior motive for the reversal and there are no further references between the two numbers.

Eccles also employs motivic links though perhaps not as broadly as Purcell. Both of Pallas’ arias have angular walking fourths in the voice which serve to evoke or portray her strength and military prowess. It is with Venus, however, that Eccles establishes definite motivic links between arias. The first link is established in “Hither turn thee Gentle swain,” with a characteristic descending dotted eighth and sixteenth-note figure, first heard in the continuo part and then in the flutes (see Example 3-21a).



Ex. 3-21a: Venus, “Hither turn thee gentle swain” (J. Eccles), m.4

Later these same figures recur and dominate the texture of the symphony which introduces Venus’ return and her aria “Stay lovely youth” (Example 3-21b).

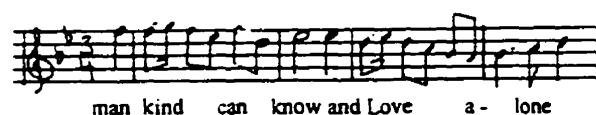


Ex. 3-21b: Motive, “Symphony for Venus” (J. Eccles), m.8

Similarly the motive from “Hither turn thee,” given in Example 3-22a, also makes a number of prominent recurrences, some inverted or slightly melodically altered, in “Stay lovely youth” (see Example 3-22b).



Ex. 3-22a: Venus, “Hither turn thee” (J. Eccles), m.37-39



Ex. 3-22b: Venus, “Stay lovely youth” (J. Eccles), mm. 57-60

Indeed the use of stepwise dotted eighth and sixteenth note motives serves to unify all four of Venus’ excerpts shown above. Thus it appears that, at least for Eccles, this motive, represented Venus and her associated traits of beauty and persuasion.

In using such recurring motives Eccles and Purcell were practicing one of the most fundamental precepts of the early eighteenth-century concept of musical beauty, namely that of creating unity whilst maintaining interest through variety.<sup>57</sup> Of course this concept could be evoked in relation to key schemes, orchestration and other compositional parameters however, these motivic associations seem particularly effective in painting unified characters. It should be noted, however, that none of the motives used by Eccles, or the other composers, is ever significantly developed, nor are they complex. Nonetheless it appears that at least the concept of using recurring motives in order to

<sup>57</sup> See Peter Kivy’s introduction to *Francis Hutcheson: A Inquiry Concerning Beauty, Order, Harmony, Design* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1973), 6. Also see my discussion of this notion in Chapter One.

paint or recall a particular affect or character was well known to, and indeed practiced by, English composers of this period.

#### DETAILED COMPARISON: "O RAVISHING DELIGHT!"

As illustrated above, large-scale harmonic structures often relate directly to the dramatic tension built into the libretto. This relationship between text and key is also apparent in the modulatory schemes of many of the individual arias and choruses. The following section presents a detailed comparison of the three settings of Paris' arioso "O Ravishing Delight," and Venus' aria "Nature fram'd thee sure for loving." The relative compositional approaches to these numbers, an arioso and an aria, will further illustrate the differing approaches to composition and musical beauty of the three composers.

The complete scores of all three settings of both "O Ravishing Delight" and "Nature fram'd thee" can be found in Appendix D and the complete text for both numbers can be found in Appendix A. In the following discussion it may also be helpful to refer to table 3-6 on the following page which provides a summary and side by side comparison of the differences in the three settings of "O Ravishing Delight."

Congreve's text for the number, shown on the following page, is wonderful portrayal of Paris' confused and conflicted emotional state upon viewing the three goddesses for the first time. A variety of phrase lengths are used to reflect this as well as a number of sexually charged words such as "Ravishing," "ecstasy," "aking," and "excess."

Text to "O Ravishing Delight."

O Ravishing Delight!  
 What Mortal can support the Sight?  
 Alas, too weak is Human Brain,  
 So much Rapture to sustain.  
 I faint, I fall! O take me hence,  
 Ere ecstasy invades my aking Sense:  
 Help me, Hermes, or I die,  
 Save me from Excess of Joy.

**Table 3-6:** "O Ravishing Delight!" style comparison.

Purcell	Weldon	Eccles
Key: D minor	Key: F minor	Key: B minor
2 sections	3 sections	1 section
i) 4/4 - 24 mm. Rhapsodic slow tempo Chromatic ground bass	i) 2/2 - 9 mm. Modulation: F min - C min	i) 3/2 - 68 mm. Modulations: B min - E min - B min
ii) 3/2 - 55 mm. on "Help me Hermes" Slow - more aria-like Ground bass - broken off	ii) 3/2 - 8 mm. on "I faint I fall" Modulation: C min - G min	
	iii) 4/4 - 19 mm. on "Ecstasy" Modulation: G min - F min	
Notes: Arioso - Aria Florid melisma throughout D minor throughout	Notes: Florid arioso throughout	Notes: Aria with orchestra Simple conjunct melody Variety of phrase lengths

All three composers also regard "O Ravishing Delight" as a highly emotional and important moment in the work. As mentioned above it marks the initial appearance of the three goddesses and so is the first time that Paris is exposed to their overwhelming beauty. The entrance of the goddesses is marked as a disruptive event in the key schemes of all three composers. It marks the first instance of a minor key, D minor, in Purcell's setting, the first transition from the central tonality of C major/minor to F minor in

Weldon's setting, and, in Eccles setting, marks the first movement away from the key of D major to B minor.

This common shift to the minor mode can also be viewed as a moment of engendered disruption. A number of musicologists have recognized that composers of the period seem to have identified the minor mode itself as typically "feminine" and "unstable."<sup>58</sup> Thus the minor mode heralds a disruption of the male conversation between Mercury and Paris with the descent of the female goddesses. The minor mode which, in all three settings, consistently accompanies Venus is a similarly gendered construction. Venus proves worthy of the minor mode, given these precepts, as she can be read as the epitome of femininity, both in her superior beauty, and in her disruptive nature which leads to the Trojan war. Venus' competitors, however, can only offer Paris typically masculine traits of wealth and power, thus they are consistently confined to the major mode. By comparison, Paris's music, in all three settings, switches in various numbers from major to minor modes. Such modal ambiguity can be construed as evidence of an androgynous nature or perhaps as a reflection of his conflicting desires. This aspect of Paris' character is reinforced by his own physical beauty and in his apparent weakness and instability arising from his uncertain judgment.

Though all three composers recognize the importance of the goddesses' descent in some way, each chooses a different way of setting the number. Typical of his preference for a coloratura style, Daniel Purcell, writing for a countertenor, sets "O

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<sup>58</sup> See Leonard G. Ratner, *Classic Music: Expression, Form, and Style* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1980), 50; Susan McClary, *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, and Sexuality* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), 11-12; and Gretchen Wheelock, "Schwarze Gredel and the Engendered Minor Mode in Mozart's Operas," in Ruth Solie ed., *Musicology and Difference: Gender and Sexuality in Music Scholarship* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993), 202.



Ravishing Delight" using florid melismata. Purcell presents the piece in two sections. The first section, consisting of 24 measures, is in an ornate arioso in 4/4 time. It is highlighted by a number of expressive semi-tone sighs over a chromatically descending bass. Reminiscent of his brother's descending ground bass laments, the descending bass is especially effective in painting the words "alas too weak is human brain" and the words "I faint, I fall." The sustained pedals in the bass and the abundance of rhapsodic melismas throughout this section tend to obscure any sense of a consistent pulse and suggest a slow tempo. Thus it functions in the manner of a virtuosic introductory recitative.

The second part of the number, beginning with "Help me Hermes," sees a shift in mood from the rhapsodic meandering of the previous arioso to a more aria-like setting in a more strongly marked 3/2 meter. The whole and half note values suggest a slow tempo in both sections. True to Purcell's penchant for Italianate techniques, the second section begins with a ten-measure instrumental ritornello with the addition of two obbligato flutes. The ritornello returns in a complete form at measure fifteen following the initial vocal entry, and in a fragmented form three more times, including the final six measures of the piece. There is no emphasis on the "motto" technique in this section, though the one-measure repeated whole- to half-note gesture which begins the ritornello is echoed by the voice upon its entrance. Purcell employs a ground bass technique (a five measure pattern of half-note 1 - 3 - 1 figures which repeats six times before disappearing) for the beginning of the second section of the arioso which, when combined with the triple meter, serves to accentuate the strong sense of rhythmic direction in comparison to the

first section. Melodically Purcell switches to a more direct and syllabic text presentation though he still includes several extremely long melismas, one lasting five complete measures, to paint the words "Excess" and "Joy." Purcell's melodies for this section are also simple and catchy in comparison with the earlier section. His prosody is competent though he exhibits a penchant for repeating the opening words of each phrase, a habit which is found throughout his setting. Of final note is the fact that Purcell does relatively little to create interest through modulation. Brief excursions through the relative major before returning to the home key of D minor are as adventuresome as Purcell becomes in this number.

Though there is little modulatory change, the contrast of rhythmic, metric, and instrumental affect between the two sections is directly related to the shift in mood of the text. The rhapsodic nature of the opening arioso "O Ravishing Delight" represents an internalized emotion. Paris' words are a representation of his inner state of mind as he is momentarily overwhelmed by the beauty of the three goddesses. The slow rhapsodic arioso style was, therefore, a fitting choice in which to set such personal expression. The shift to "Help me Hermes," however, represents a true externalization of his feelings as he appeals to Mercury for help. It is, in short, a shift to action driven text which required the more active, aria-like setting. Following the opening arioso with this aria-like section Purcell creates a progressive Italianate pairing of recitative and aria.

Weldon's setting is similar to Purcell's if only in its abundance of florid melismata. Both settings begin with sustained pedals on the first phrase "O Ravishing delight." If possible, Weldon attempts an even more passionate, more deeply felt, display

of emotion than Purcell. In contrast to Purcell's two-part division, Weldon divides the work into three sections, though the scope of the overall piece (just thirty-six measures) is much more compact than Purcell's. Unlike Purcell's shift from rhapsodic arioso to an aria texture, Weldon casts the entire number as highly virtuosic arioso. The first section, beginning in F minor, is an arioso in 2/2. The piece immediately begins with a virtuosic 32nd note melisma to paint the word "Ravishing." To conclude the second phrase, which is built around another extended melisma on "Rapture," Weldon comes to a full cadence on the dominant at the word "sustain." Also at this moment there is a change of meter from 2/2 to 3/2. The abrupt contrast of this second section, beginning midway through the word "sustain" seems to directly embody the sentiment expressed in the text. The rapture is such that, in effect, the preceding metric and harmonic affect could not be sustained. The second section then proceeds to a weak secondary dominant cadence on G major (V/V) on the words "take me hence."

Weldon shifts meters yet again at the beginning of the third section. This final section, which moves from G major to F minor, now shifts to 4/4 and maintains the florid style of the previous sections though now with some sixteenth-note motion in the bass. The combined effect of shifting from 2/2 to 3/2 to 4/4 over the course of a mere seventeen measures is to obscure any sense of a stable metric pulse - and thereby to underscore Paris' ecstatic disorientation. A number of 16th and 32nd note melismas on words such as "extacy," "aking," and "excess" undulate through the setting, further painting the sexually charged nature of Paris' joy. Though both settings employ ornate melisma Weldon achieves an even higher degree of passion and dramatic feeling in this

number than Purcell. Weldon also covers the material in a much more realistic fashion than Purcell, who interrupts Paris' stream of emotions with several instrumental ritornellos. Purcell in his recitative - aria approach to the number takes a more modern Italianate approach whereas Weldon employs a freer, seventeenth-century style arioso throughout. Weldon's constant metric changes combined with lavish melismas and an uninterrupted presentation of text create a relatively naturalistic portrayal of the human passions and confusions which are then tormenting Paris.

Eccles' setting attempts to portray the moment of the goddesses' descent in a much more subtle manner. Both Weldon and Purcell rely on lushly melismatic arioso to portray the depth of Paris' awe and confusion. Eccles instead relies on a beautifully shaped vocal line, a variety of phrase lengths and structures, and on an abundance of rich chromatic harmony, in order to emphasize Paris' confused emotional state.

Eccles chose to set "O Ravishing Delight" as a single unit and as a full aria with orchestra in contrast to the arioso with continuo of the other two settings. Set in 3/2 throughout, the piece begins with a three measure continuo introduction rather than immediately beginning with the voice as in the other two settings. The modulatory scheme is relatively simple. Starting in B minor the work passes through an f# minor cadence concluding the phrase "what Mortal can support the sight" before moving to E minor for the phrase "so much rapture to sustain," f# minor again on "Aking Sense," before returning to B minor.

Eccles' melodic line is predominantly in simple half- and quarter-note rhythms (remembering that Eccles had first-hand knowledge of the limited abilities of his singers)

and is predominantly stepwise. There is only a very restricted use of written melismas in Eccles' setting, and there are none on the words "Ravishing" or "excess" which are subject to extensive melismas in both Weldon's and Purcell's setting. Small unobtrusive melismas are however allowed on the words "rapture" and "akeing." These melismas are comprised of simple dotted-quarter and eighth-note rhythms in comparison to the extravagant running 32nd-note melismas of Purcell and Weldon. Though Eccles writes in a far more straightforward syllabic style than Purcell, he uses a slurred sighing technique, over a descending bass, on the words "I faint, I fall," reminiscent of Purcell's setting of the same line. Indeed the descending bass line (a chromatic descent for the line "What Mortal can support the sight) dominates much of Eccles' setting and helps paint both the descent of the goddesses and Paris' trepidation.

Eccles gives a great deal of attention to his prosody and the creation of interesting and varied phrase structures. Lacking the virtuosic and melismatic fireworks of the other two settings, Eccles instead attempts to musically portray Paris' weakness in the face of the goddesses' beauty. The limping harmonies and simple syllabic text setting underscores Paris' inability to muster enough strength to react more forcefully. Eccles' phrase structure presents a symmetrical pattern of repeated phrases of 3, 4, 5, 4, and 3 measures. Eccles builds the tension so that climax of the longest phrases occur during the E minor episode over the words "Alas, Alas too weak is human brain, So much rapture to sustain." Indeed Eccles does not sustain the phrase lengths as they subsequently recede in length. In addition to providing the longest phrase and a modulation to E minor, the high point of the vocal melody, a high A, is achieved here on the first syllable of

“Rapture.” The dramatic use of phrase lengths, modulation, and register further underscores Eccles’ concern to depict and express the tension of Congreve’s text.

Each of the three composers thus interprets Congreve’s text in a different manner. Purcell sees “Oh Ravishing Delight” as a moment of languid rhapsodic contemplation followed by a moment of intense panic as Paris cries “Help me Hermes.” To emphasize this shift he employs a progressive shift from an opening recitative followed by an aria. In addition to the use of florid melismata, Purcell’s notion of musical beauty is here also tied to the use of descending bass lines, and to repeating the opening melodies of phrases. This, in combination with his sectionalized, arioso-aria approach to the number points to Purcell’s concern for formal cohesion. Weldon however sees the moment as more virtuosic and intensely passionate and employs a freer seventeenth-century arioso style throughout. Both Purcell and Weldon equate musical beauty with rhapsodic melisma but Weldon, with his numerous metric shifts and even more ornate melismata, sees less need for balanced formal structure. Finally Eccles takes a much more outwardly restrained view of the episode as evidenced by his largely syllabic text setting. Though he sets the number as an aria with orchestra it is not vocal display which characterizes his sense of the moment. He prefers instead to project the emotions of Congreve’s libretto and interpret the internal state of Paris’ confusion through a considered climax of phrase structures.

#### “NATURE FRAM’D THEE”

This aria, sung by Venus, represents the decisive moment in the work, when Venus finally is able to convince Paris to award her the prize apple by promising him

Helen. As the final aria before Paris makes his decision in favour of Venus it is meant to be the most persuasive and, arguably, the most musically beautiful piece in the entire masque. Congreve underscores the importance of this aria as he wrote four separate verses for it, which appear below, and thus it is one of the most substantial numbers in the entire libretto. Employing an iambic tetrameter throughout, the aria is an ode to the beauty of both Paris and Helen. It also represents the first moment in the work when Helen is mentioned, indeed, in the third verse Venus even allows that Helen's beauty surpasses her own. The offer of Helen's love proves too much for Paris to resist as he awards Venus the prize apple in the following arioso "I Yield." As with "O Ravishing Delight," all three composers also see this as an inherently important musical moment in the piece. In the following discussion it may be helpful to refer to Appendix E which provides the complete settings of all three composers. A summary of the three approaches to "Nature fram'd thee sure for loving" is given in table 3-7 which appears on the following page.

Text to "Nature fram'd thee."

*Nature fram'd thee sure for Loving,  
Thus adorn'd with every Grace;  
Venus' self thy Form approving,  
Looks with pleasure on thy Face.*

*Happy Nymph who shall enfold thee,  
Circled in her yielding Arms!  
Should bright Helen once behold thee,  
She'd surrender all her Charms.*

*Fairest She, all Nymphs transcending,  
That the Sun himself has seen;  
Were she for the Crown contending,  
Thou would'st own her beauty's Queen.*

*Gentle Shepherd, if my Pleading  
Can from thee the Prize obtain,  
Love himself thy Conquest aiding,  
Thou that matchless Fair shalt gain.*

**Table 3-7:** "Nature fram'd thee sure for loving" style comparison.

<b>Purcell</b>	<b>Weldon</b>	<b>Eccles</b>
	(2 versions A/B)	
Key: D Major	Key: E-flat Major	Key: G Minor
4 sections/verses	Version A (2 sections)	4 verses ABAC
i) 3/4 D major - 35 mm.	i) verses 1 & 2 - 24 mm. 6/8 - E-flat Maj throughout AA BA' BA' form Note: 16th-note rhythms	A) 3/4 G min - B-flat Maj repeated 8mm. phrase
ii) 2/2 B minor - 33 mm.		B) 3/4 B-flat - G Min dotted rhythms "Helen" Inst. ritornello transition
iii) 2/2 D major - 19 mm. Begins arioso	ii) verses 3 & 4 - 48 mm. 3/4 - E-flat Maj throughout AA BB form Note: dotted sixteenth and eighth-note rhythms	A) 3/4 G min - B-flat Maj repeated 8 mm. phrase
iv) 3/4 D major - 46 mm. florid <i>bei tanto</i> throughout		C) 4/4 B-flat - G Min low register less melisma
		Note: sections AB = aa bcc sections AC = aa bcc
	Version B (2 sections)	
	i) verses 1 & 2 - 35 mm. 2/2 - E-flat Maj throughout AA BB' CB" form Shifts arioso to aria at B Note: much more melisma and imitation vs. Version A	
	ii) verses 3 & 4 - 36 mm. 2/2 - E flat Maj throughout AA BB' CC (reprise) form Note: shift to homophonic texture, walking bass	



The importance of the aria “Nature fram’d thee sure for loving” is immediately emphasized in Purcell’s setting by its D major key signature, the home key of the work. Following Venus’ previous numbers in A minor, the return to D major functions as a weak form of a V-I cadence.<sup>59</sup> The D minor of Paris’ arioso “I yield” which follows merely acts as an extended coda following this large-scale cadence. Again Purcell relies on a high degree of melisma for expression. Extended melismata, for example, occur on the words “pleasure” and “beauties.” Clearly Purcell, much as with Weldon’s similar preoccupation with melisma, thus associated such ornamentation with the notion of musical beauty itself.

The aria is in a florid *bel canto* style and takes a four-part sectional form corresponding to the changes in verse. The second verse section sees a shift from D major to B minor and from 3/4 to 2/2. After a short three-measure instrumental interlude this verse begins with the words “Happy nymph who shall enfold thee.” The “nymph” refers to Helen and, as mentioned, marks the first moment in the work that she is mentioned. Though the text begins “Happy nymph” Purcell nonetheless uses a minor mode to start this verse, perhaps portending the eventual unhappiness that Paris’ infatuation with Helen will cause. The third verse, beginning “Fairest she, all Nymphs transcending” is once again set in D major, though the duple time signature is maintained. The opening line of this verse is similar to the opening line of the first verse in that they both address the beauty of either Helen or Paris respectively. The third verse also contains several long melismas on the word “beauty’s” and echoes similar melismas in the opening verse on the word “pleasure.” Thus through the return of D major and

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<sup>59</sup> Please refer to Tables 3-3 and 3-4 for a summary of keys.

similar florid text setting the first and third verses are linked much as Paris and Helen will soon be. The third verse is also marked by sustained tonic and dominant pedals which, when combined with the long melismas described above, serve to impart an arioso-like feel. As in his setting of "O Ravishing Delight," Purcell thus combines arioso and aria styles. The fourth and final verse, now addressed directly to Paris the "Gentle Shepherd," is also set in the opening key of D major and reverts to the 3/4 time signature of the original verse, though it is now given a "slow" tempo indication to increase the weight and importance of Venus' offer.

Weldon's score includes two different versions of "Nature fram'd thee." The status of these works is unclear. Weldon may have intended both versions to be performed or he may merely have provided an alternate setting for the final night of the competition when all four settings were heard.<sup>60</sup>

In both settings Weldon divides the text in half, treating verses one and two as one section and verses three and four as another. Both settings remain in E-flat major throughout and both employ binary dance-like forms in each of the two sections creating two successive binary forms.

The first setting presents the most concise setting of the text. Relying almost exclusively on square four- and eight-measure phrasing this piece moves from 6/8 for the first two verses to 3/4 for the final two. As mentioned above, Weldon employs back to back binary forms to set each of the two verse sections. With each line of text set to four measures of music, Weldon repeats the musical material for each half of the first verse

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<sup>60</sup> It is also possible that one or other of the works was a new addition by the copyist and not Weldon's work. Though both versions appear to be written in roughly the same style the first version does lack the text repetition and florid melismata which characterizes the rest of Weldon's setting.

(A A). He then introduces contrasting material for the first two lines of the second verse and returns to a varied form of the opening musical material for the last half (B A'). He then repeats the entire second verse giving added emphasis to the offer of Helen. The first half of the number can be diagrammed as follows:<sup>61</sup>

Verse No.	1	2	2
	A A/	B A'/	B A'
Harmony:	I	V I	V I
Measures:	4 4	4 4	4 4

For the second half of the piece Weldon simply uses another simple binary form, though one that is not rounded. Now shifting to 3/4 Weldon uses eight measure phrases corresponding to each half of the third verse to create the A section and repeated sixteen measure phrases, incorporating the entire forth verse, for the B section. It can be simply diagrammed as follows:

Verse No.	3	4
	A A/	B B
Measures:	8 8	16 16

This aria, throughout all four verses, is free from the elaborate melismata which typify the majority of the rest of his setting. The complete first verse, for example, is squeezed into just eight measures. The second verse is twice as long but, as mentioned, contains an exact written out repeat. The first half of the piece, in its rounded binary form, is rhythmically dominated by running sixteenth-notes. The second half of the piece maintains the same key and presents another binary form but shifts to the 3/4 time signature and replaces the running sixteenth-notes patterns with dotted eighth- and

<sup>61</sup> For clarification please refer to the segments which are marked on the score in Appendix E. Note that the vocal melody for measures 13-18 has been obscured in the reproduction. However this material may be extrapolated from the bass line (A') which is repeated with the vocal melody intact in the following system.

sixteenth-note figures which serve to slow down the tempo and lend a more regal elegance to the setting.

In his use of successive binary dance forms Weldon seems oblivious to the changes in subject and sentiment between each verse. The first verse, "Nature fram'd thee," for example is a direct appeal from Venus to Paris. The second verse, "Happy Nymph, who shall enfold thee," refers to Helen as mentioned above. The third verse, "Fairest she," also refers to Helen while the forth verse, "Gentle Shepherd," returns the subject back to Paris himself. Given that, in many respects, this aria presents the decisive moment of the entire piece, Weldon in this setting seems unable, or unwilling, to capture it with the same dramatic flamboyance he exhibits elsewhere in the work. Nonetheless Weldon offers a symmetrical and balanced setting to match Congreve's equally balanced text. The dance-like binary forms, triple meters, square phrasing, and lack of melismata may reflect Weldon's reading of Congreve's text as a moment to celebrate the ultimate triumph of simplicity and unaffected emotion and the grounded sureness of the power of beauty. The shift from a gigue-like 6/8 of the first two verses to a more elegant 3/4 for the final two verses also reflects the emphasis on the grace and beauty of Helen and Paris.

Though using the same key of E-flat major and also set using two successive binary forms, Weldon's second setting is entirely re-composed and presents a much more dramatic interpretation of the text. The four verses are segmented in the same manner as previously but now using a 2/2 time signature throughout.

The use of florid melismata, which dominate the rest of Weldon's setting, returns once again in this setting. Beginning in a slow arioso-like manner, the first verse finds

extended melismas on “fram’d” and “pleasure.” In the second verse, in contrast to his first setting of this text, Weldon makes a noticeable attempt to shape his music to the sentiments of Congreve’s libretto. The second stanza is marked “Brisk” and shifts from the slow florid arioso of the first verse to a faster more lyrical aria with a much more active and propulsive bass line. This shift is accompanied by a move to a more imitative texture with sequential bass patterns and six measures of call and response motivic imitation on the word “all” from the line “She’d surrender all her Charms.” The decidedly more sprightly (nymph-like?) and enticing nature of the music in this verse is thus a more persuasive representation of Venus’ tempting offer of Helen.

As in the previous version of this aria, Weldon uses a binary form for the first two verse section of the aria. The first verse, in arioso, is divided in half with each set to a repeated six measure phrase (AA). The B section, consisting of the first half of the second verse, is four measures long and shifts from the arioso into an aria. This is followed by a four measure repeat of B, containing slight modifications in the continuo, which accompanies the second half of the verse (B’). The final line of the second verse “She’d surrender all her Charms” is set to a new ten measure phrase and repeated, highlighted by imitative figures between voice and continuo on the word “all” (C). The final five measures incorporates continuo material from both B and B’ sections (B’”). The form of the first two verses of this setting can be diagrammed as follows:<sup>62</sup>

Verse No.	1	2
	AA	BB’ CB’’
Measures:	6 6	4 4 10 5

<sup>62</sup> For clarification please refer to the segments which are marked on the score in Appendix E.

The third verse shifts in mood again as Weldon discards the imitation and melismata of the previous two verses. Weldon switches to a syllabic setting and largely homophonic texture with a walking bass to create a reverent atmosphere worthy of Venus' description of Helen's beauty: "Fairest she. . . That the Sun himself has seen." The fourth verse, beginning "Gentle Shepherd, if my Pleading," reflects Venus' continuing supplications and maintains the simple note-against-note texture of the third verse. Now, however, elaborate melismas highlighting the word "matchless" suddenly burst through this texture on the final line: "Thou that matchless Fair shalt gain." The entire verse is compacted into a single ten-measure phrase which is then repeated. A six-measure reprise, containing an even more virtuosic, cadenza-like, presentation of the "matchless" melisma is also repeated so that the extended "matchless" melismas are heard a total of four times by the conclusion of the number. The "matchless" melismas are obviously meant to be a musical representation of the "matchless" beauty of Helen, and thus more evidence of Weldon's preoccupation with and equation of musical beauty with melismatic ornament, a feature he shares with Purcell. However, such a virtuosic display near the work's conclusion, and at its most crucial dramatic moment, can also be read as a plug for Weldon's own setting, which he undoubtedly wanted the audience to indeed regard as "matchless."

The third and fourth verses are once again set in a dance-like binary form. Weldon gives each half of the third verse an almost exact four-measure repeat. The B section lasts ten measures and incorporates the text of the entire fourth verse. The most notable event in this section is the elaborate melisma on "matchless" described above.

With only minor melodic and harmonic variation this ten measure section is then repeated (B'). A final new section, lasting six measures and repeating the final line of text with the even more ornate "matchless" melisma, is then presented and repeated in the manner of petite reprise of B material (CC) The final half of the piece can be diagrammed as follows:

Verse No.	3	4	(final line of 4)
	AA	BB'	CC
Measures:	4	4	10 10 6 6

In his consistent use of binary dance-like forms, used back to back in both of his versions of "Nature fram'd thee," Weldon appears to draw on the influence of French style dance arias earlier popularized by Henry Purcell.<sup>63</sup> It is difficult, however, to identify the presence of particular dance types. The first version of the aria, perhaps suggesting a gigue or fast minuet, moves from 6/8 to 3/4 while the second version maintains a gavotte-like 2/2 throughout. Nonetheless the use of dance forms to set this text serves to hint at the physical union between Paris and Helen and also to evoke the elegant beauty, power and prestige, associated with court dances.

Eccles' setting of "Nature fram'd thee" is harmonically and structurally advanced and employs a number of simple yet effective melodies while avoiding the elaborate melismata of the other two contestants. Eccles segments the four verses into two interrelated binary sections. These sections, which in terms of their musical content might be diagrammed A B A C, are also connected by the recurring use of a three-note opening motive of a melodically ascending perfect fourth in quarter notes followed by a

<sup>63</sup> See Adams, *Henry Purcell*, 5, 6, 22, 23, 271. Leonard Ratner also equates binary or reprise form with French dance style. See Ratner, *Classic Music* (New York: Schirmer, 1980), 348-49.

half-note descending a minor second. The first through third verses are in 3/4 with the final verse shifting to 4/4.

The first verse contains two regularly structured eight-measure phrases, beginning in G minor and modulating to B-flat major during the second phrase. The entire two-phrase structure is then repeated (aa). The opening motive, as described above, is immediately heard with the words "Nature fram'd." After a perfect authentic cadence concludes the first verse the second verse begins in B-flat major (b). Again the motive accompanies first words of text "Happy Nymph." The motive maintains its rhythmic profile and initial ascending fourth, however, it has been transposed down an octave from its initial presentation and the second interval has been altered from minor second to a minor third. For this verse, in which Venus first mentions the offer of Helen, Eccles introduces more sprightly dotted rhythms and, for Eccles, an large amount of text repetition for the final line "She'd surrender all her charms," in order to highlight the abundance of Helen's charms. As a final reprise to the second verse the final line, is repeated (cc). Eccles varies the phrase length from eight to ten measures and modulates back into G minor. He also employs a quarter-note melody, G-D-E-flat, based on an inversion of his opening motive. The first half of the piece then concludes with an eight-measure instrumental ritornello for strings and continuo based on the same inverted motive. Essentially Eccles, like Weldon, presents the first half of the piece as a binary form aa bcc. In the second verse, or b section, Eccles graphically spices up Venus' offer of Helen by varying his phrase structure, inverting the opening motive, and by employing



more cloying dotted rhythms. The importance of this moment is emphasized by text and music repetition and the instrumental ritornello.

The third and fourth verses are again structured in a modified binary form and follow the aa bcc plan of the previous two verses. The third verse presents almost an exact musical repeat of the opening verse (aa). A written-out sixteenth-note ornament on the word “transcending” is the only change. Again, Eccles modulates from G minor to B-flat major and the voice begins with the same opening ascending fourth motive. The fourth and final verse presents new material with a four measure setting of the first two lines (d) followed by a repeated five measure setting of the second half of the verse (ee). This verse modulates from B-flat major to conclude in G minor, moves from 3/4 to 4/4, and is the only one of the four not to include some variation of the opening motive.

Instead Eccles emphasizes the apparent sincerity of Venus’ offer by setting this verse in a low register throughout and by using even less ornamental embellishment than previously. Eccles mimics the increasing tension of Venus’ plea by presenting the first line “Gentle Shepherd, if my Pleading” in a stepwise ascent from D to A. Unlike Weldon, Eccles employs almost no melismata in this final verse, preferring instead to emphasize the simple logic of the text rather than obscuring it with gaudy vocal display.

Eccles, like Weldon, sets “Nature fram’d thee” as two back-to-back modified binary forms each taking the same structure which can be diagrammed as follows:

Verse:	1	2	3	4
	aa	bcc	/	aa dee
	A	B	A	C

Verses one and three, however, are repetitions of each other while verses two and four present different musical material. Thus an overall form of A B A C emerges. As in Weldon's setting, the regularity of the phrase structure and rhythms is suggestive of dance structures, the 3/4 of the first three verses giving way to a gavotte-like duple meter in the fourth verse.

As in "Ravishing delight" each of the contestants read "Nature fram'd thee" in somewhat different ways. Purcell sees the aria as an important moment with which to harmonically round off his work and return to the home key of D major. As is typical of the rest of their settings both Purcell and Weldon rely on a number of melismas to heighten the intensity of Congreve's text. Purcell even sets the first verse of this number as arioso. Weldon's first version of "Nature fram'd thee" presents an uncharacteristically simple and unadorned interpretation of the moment. In his second version of the aria Weldon reverts back to using melismata and gives the aria a far more dramatic presentation. Both settings, however are written in simple binary or modified binary dance forms, often with symmetrical repeated four or eight measure phrasing. It is difficult, given the wide disparity between the two settings, to judge precisely how Weldon finally understood the aria. In that there is no remarkable change from his previous numbers, indeed Venus' previous two arias "Stay lovely youth" and "One only Joy" even maintain the G minor key signature of "Nature Fram'd thee," Eccles, in comparison to Purcell and Weldon, appears to give the least consequence to this aria. However, his unusual, for Eccles, amount of text repetition and ritornello structure do mitigate this reading and possibly reveal his desire to reinforce the importance of Venus'

offer. Eccles, as consistent with the rest of his setting, manages to achieve formal and melodic clarity and also sets the work using a binary dance-like form. Weldon and Eccles' use of such forms for the most persuasive number in the work reflects a desire to provide a symmetrical balanced musical structure to accompany Congreve's symmetrical verse structures. Thus both composers here equate formal order and symmetry with musical beauty. The dance-like forms also help to paint Paris and Helen's grace and beauty - the controlled formal structures evoking both the elegance of court and, on some level, the social and political order which court represented.<sup>64</sup>

#### An Aesthetic Comparison of "The Prize Musick" Settings

British moral libertarian philosophers such as Shaftesbury and Locke took the perception of beauty towards the realm of subjective experience. Nonetheless it is commonly agreed that there are three broad properties of objective beauty (including, but not limited to, musical beauty) which were thought to be identifiable in early eighteenth-century England: Uniformity (or unity) amidst variety (including the notion of novelty), harmony and proportion, and utility.<sup>65</sup> These categories, of course, are bound by the lack of any inherent reference to internalized, or felt, response. The following critical

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<sup>64</sup> According to Ratner dances "represented feeling" and reflected the "protocol and formality of 18th-century life." The minuet and gavotte-like styles, employed by Weldon and Eccles, are particularly associated with "the elegant world of court" and an "*amoroso* character." Ratner, *Classic Music*, 9,14. The use of these forms thus seems a fitting way to represent Venus' ode to high beauty and love.

<sup>65</sup> The aesthetic ideal of "uniformity amidst variety" was the central tenet of Francis Hutcheson's *Inquiry* (see Chapter One, p.66). The concept was, however, well accepted as a supposedly objective measure of beauty long before this. In his preface to the opera *Albion and Albanus* (1685) John Dryden writes that a song lyric "must abound in the Softness and Variety of numbers." Indeed, for Jerome Stolnitz, the notion of uniformity amidst variety is taken as a prime marker of objective beauty, "in one form or another" in the theories of "all British aestheticians [of the eighteenth century]." See Jerome Stolnitz, "Beauty": Some Stages in the History of an Idea," in *Essays on the History of Aesthetics*, ed. Peter Kivy (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 1992), 185 - 204.

comments on the relative “beauty” of the three “Prize” settings will be framed by the first two of the objective properties of beauty - uniformity amidst variety and harmony and proportion. Owing to the fact that all three settings shared the same libretto, setting, and function, the final category, utility, will be disregarded for the purposes of this discussion. Furthermore, the former two categories can be found in each composer’s work to greater or lesser degrees and it becomes an inherently subjective action to “judge” or “re-judge” the relative merits of each score. The best that may be achieved is a subjective reconstruction of judgments based on supposedly objective criteria. Much as an election is decided by a collective of individual voters the outcome of the competition rested, ostensibly, on a collective of the audience’s subjective opinions as to the emotional expressiveness and the depths of dramatic mood which each composer was able to conjure up. These responses are, however, impossible to reproduce and the causes are objectively unknowable.

Nonetheless it seems evident that, just as the audience of “The Prize” competition was called upon to make an aesthetic judgment and choices in the manner of Paris, so too were the competing composers. As manifest in their settings of the *Judgment of Paris* story their compositional choices represent a form of aesthetic judgment, judgments which represented their best attempt to represent musical beauty.

Weldon’s first place in the competition can perhaps best be attributed to the novelty of his setting. His relative lack of experience meant that his music, in comparison to the other three competitors, was new to London audiences and therefore inherently novel. Furthermore his reliance on grand choral effects and flashy virtuosic

melismata would also have been considered novel to the pre-Handelian-oratorio world of London theatre. In more modern terms the virtuosic ornamentation which dominates his solo passage-work would seem to fall more into the category of the “pretty,” often associated with the trivial, rather than a deeper sense of “beauty,” often associated with the serious.<sup>66</sup> Nonetheless Weldon’s concept of beauty seems tied to the use of melisma, traditional seventeenth century free arioso, and grand choral display.

Unfortunately, many of the same factors which lent novelty to Weldon’s setting also contribute to a lack of harmony and proportion. Though he creates some individual moments of deep expression, overall the work is heavy with choruses and melismata. Weldon attempts to overwhelm his audience with sheer aural display. Compounding this problem is the constant word repetition and exaggerated coloratura which obfuscates Congreve’s text. His setting also lacks an adventurous key structure as it remains largely in C major throughout. These factors may account for the fact that, with the exception of Juno’s aria “Let Ambition Fire thy Mind” which was included in Thomas Arne’s *Love in a Village* (1762) and remained popular for the remainder of the decade, Weldon’s score was largely forgotten in his own time as in our own.

To be sure, given the supposedly objective set of criteria above, Weldon’s score does exhibit some merit. His modulatory scheme, in its preoccupation with C major, is nothing if not unified and he does exhibit some skill at matching its, albeit, limited range of modulations to fit the dramatic structure of the libretto. Also his score is perhaps the most balanced in terms of his approach to melody, employing both a simple lyrical style

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<sup>66</sup> For discussion of the various relationship between conceptions of the Beautiful and the Pretty, see Francis Sparshott, “The Beautiful and the Pretty,” in his *The Structure of Aesthetics* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963), 70-72.

found in arias such "Let ambition fire thy mind" and more florid Italianate coloratura. Indeed his stylistic approach is the most varied and includes the aforementioned Italianate vocal styles as well as English arioso and ground bass styles and French dance influences as manifest in his setting of "Nature fram'd thee."

We may attribute Weldon's victory to the potential clique which might have blocked Eccles', seemingly assured, victory. Weldon also would have won favour from the nationalistic Whig sponsors of the competition for his pandering to the English taste for choruses and ground basses. To some extent the conflicted musical language employed by Weldon - the combination of Italianate vocal technique juxtaposed with traditionally English choral effects and ground bass arias, and French dance forms - is analogous to the discord and disruption which then existed in English society and politics. Nonetheless Weldon achieves the most cosmopolitan mix of compositional techniques.

Many of the same factors which apply to Weldon's setting also apply to Purcell's, though Purcell is more consistently tied to progressive Italian techniques. Purcell, for example exhibits much novelty in his use of recitative aria combinations, motto arias, and impressive orchestral displays. Purcell thus equated these new Italian operatic practices with musical beauty rather than the conservative seventeenth century choral practice which Weldon often employs. He is also slightly more advanced than Weldon in his modulatory schemes, exhibiting a greater variety of keys and a unity of key structure with Congreve's textual divisions. Purcell's score is disproportionately weighted towards the orchestra. A lack of balance or proportion may also have been noticed in his unwavering reliance on virtuosic coloraturic vocal display. Both these factors serve to weaken the

bonds with the subtleties and variety of Congreve's text and phrasing. Constant word repetition and a monotonous reliance on four- and eight-measure phrases also helps to sever this bond and, while adding a certain uniformity to the work, also ensures a lack of variety within individual numbers. Of course the balanced phrasing and use of Italianate recitative - aria combinations and motto aria techniques are also evidence of the progressive high baroque nature of Purcell's work.

In the dedication of his published score in 1702, Purcell provides perhaps the most insightful commentary regarding his ideology of aesthetic judgment. In commenting on his patron's ability to "Judge" the beauty of his composition, he states:

There is a Justness of Composition a true Harmony of parts; The makeing the Notes and Airs expressive of the Numbers and meaning of the Words, the pathetique or Commanding Force that stirs the Passions, which many censures regard no more, than some masters in their Composures, There is a sort of Painting in musick, as well as Poetry, which if a master misses he may be fortunate with the unknowing, but never with such Judges as you Sr [Anthony Henly Esq.] whose skill is too great to be imposed on by false Charms, or glaring defects or to neglect, or over look any real Beauty and perfection.<sup>67</sup>

Purcell here underscores the analogy of the audience as aesthetic judge, though he, like Eccles, seems to have felt slighted by unskilled judges who were susceptible to "false Charms" - possibly a reference to Weldon's penchant for choral display. He also places a particular emphasis on both "Harmony of parts" and the expression of the text. Ironically it could be said that, given his penchant for repetitive "motto" techniques and square four- or eight-measure phrasing, Purcell was rather unsuccessful in matching the variety of forms found in Congreve's poetry. His impressive orchestral displays are representative of the "Commanding Force that stirs the Passions" and his florid

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<sup>67</sup> British Library, I.325,f.2. Please refer to figure 2, p.76, in Chapter Two for the complete dedication.

coloraturic style, to be sure, did emphasize and heighten the expression of individual words. There appears, however, little in the way of an attempt to achieve more subtle musical interpretation of Congreve's text as his constant reliance on "motto" aria technique would attest.

Eccles' setting, of course, took only second place in the competition though his setting meets many of the criteria of unity amidst variety, and of harmony or proportion. The unity of Eccles' score is shown by his dramatic sense of tonal architecture. Eccles also achieves unity through his accomplished melding of Congreve's text with his own music. The vocal style is relatively simple (showing unity between Eccles' music and the abilities of his singers) and the text is largely set in a syllabic style with a minimum of word repetition and coloratura. Thus Congreve's poetry is unadulterated and clearly heard. In keeping with creating a musical union with the drama, Eccles is also the only one of the competitors not to drastically alter Congreve's careful placement of symphonies and choruses. This approach resulted in a well proportioned, well balanced, musical work which emphasized neither orchestra, chorus, nor the abilities of individual singers but created a harmonious union between all three performing groups. Eccles thus used his music as a vehicle for Congreve's text rather than for showy musical display.

Many of the same factors which create unity in Eccles' setting also simultaneously create variety. Eccles' modulatory scheme, though dramatically unified, is also the most varied and adventurous of the three composers. Likewise, the unity achieved between Congreve's text and his music also resulted in a wide variety of phrase structures and metrical accents in order to match the variety of Congreve's verse structures and meters.



In short, it is only novelty that Eccles' score seems to be lacking. Unlike Weldon's original use of chorus and generally cosmopolitan style, there was no attempt to introduce a new sound or style to the theatre. In this instance, unless one accepts Eccles' contention that there was a conspiracy against him, the novelty of Weldon's score in combination with a relatively balanced use of florid coloratura and simple lyricism, won out in the public's mind over Eccles' more reserved, yet technically more proficient, composition.

The often close correlation of party-political ideals with aesthetic appreciation further complicates the history of "taste" in England during the eighteenth-century. What Samuel Klinger has referred to as "Whig aesthetics" found Tories and Whigs roughly divided in their judgments on the qualities of an artwork which constitute its beauty.<sup>68</sup> Though there is wide room for individual exceptions, advocates of Whig principles of individual liberty, freedom from monarchical control, and progress often analogously displayed a taste for artistic freedom from neoclassical symmetry, balance, and restraint and thus valued imagination and variety of form.<sup>69</sup> On the other hand advocates of the Tory ideals of maintaining national stability through vested aristocratic interest and a strong monarchy often found aesthetic value in the *status quo* of neoclassical regularity and thus were prejudiced against perceived transgressions of excessive whiggish irregularity and experimentation. Of course a larger comparative study of Whig and Tory backed music would be needed to gage the overall accuracy of this generalization.

It is difficult to directly correlate political ideology with particular musical mannerisms. Nonetheless, in terms of "The Prize" competition the "Whig aesthetic"

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<sup>68</sup> Klinger specifically identifies the presence of a "Whig aesthetic" in the taste for Gothic architecture, landscape gardening, and literature. Klinger, "Whig Aesthetics," 135.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 135, 136.

may have accounted, at least in part for Weldon's and Eccles' respective first and second place finishes. Weldon's work, with its cosmopolitan style and original concentration on choral effects drawn from church traditions, would seem a likely candidate to play into the progressive tastes of the Whig sponsors of the competition. Indeed his work perhaps best mirrors Whig philosophy in that it appears the most free from the tyranny of a single controlling style. Eccles' score, while balanced and well crafted, exhibits little in the way of novelty or progressive variety. However, Eccles' simple lyrical style with attention to projecting the clarity of Congreve's text would have appealed to the more conservative tastes in the audience. The concentration on formal clarity found in both Weldon and Eccles' settings of "Nature fram'd thee" would also seem to appeal to Whig tastes as they provided a model of the ordered balance and formal harmony of society which the Whigs desired. Purcell's setting, however, manifests the most progressive compositional techniques yet still placed third. His concentration on coloratura, and repetitious use of four-square phrasing and motto technique may have been interpreted as lacking variety and interest. Above all, however, Purcell would not have appealed to the xenophobic Whig sponsors of the event with his preference for overtly foreign, Italianate techniques.

Regardless of the actual rationale behind the audiences judgment of these settings it is evident that the three composers each took a unique approach to setting Congreve's libretto. As such the competition itself was possibly the most powerful manifestation of unity amidst variety as it presented the variety of three distinct scores unified by the same text. If nothing else the "Prize Musick" competition served to display the health of composition in England during the period following the death of Henry Purcell.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### NEW SETTINGS: GIUSEPPE SAMMARTINI, THOMAS ARNE, AND G. F. HANDEL

#### I. Aftermath of "The Prize" Competition

Though the music of "The Prize" was the focus of London's attention for almost four months, from March to June of 1701, it was soon eclipsed by the increasing popularity of Italian opera. The popularity of the event, however, may well have encouraged the use of masques as afterpieces and independent works.<sup>1</sup>

"The Prize" settings themselves were also revived as independent works.

Table 4-1 is a listing of revival performances as drawn from period advertisements.<sup>2</sup>

**Table 4-1. Revival performances of "The Prize" settings**

Purcell	29.12.1702	DL (Drury Lane)
Weldon	18.01.1703	DL
Weldon	01.02.1704	Lincoln's Inn Fields (LIF)
Eccles	10.03.1705	LIF
Eccles	11.03.1706	Queen's Theatre (QT)
Eccles	15.04.1706	QT

The final two listings of revivals of Eccles' setting show that it was given as an afterpiece to Vanburgh's *The Provoked Wife* on 11 March, and to Southerne's *The Fatal Marriage* on 15 April. Paired with such seemingly innocuous domestic farces, the political undertones of the work may well have gone unnoticed by audience members.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For a list of such works see Burden, "The Independent Masque."

<sup>2</sup> *The London Stage 1660-1800*, ed. Emmett L. Avery, Vol. 12. (Carbondale Ill: Southern Illinois University Press, 1970). For a complete summary of revivals and new settings of Congreve's libretto as well as other musical works based on the Judgment of Paris story, please refer to Appendix B.

<sup>3</sup> Eccles' setting was also revived at Hampton Court in July 1951. Apart from this lone instance, however, there appears to be no other record of the original "Prize" settings being performed after the eighteenth century.

Though there were not a lot of revivals the libretto was set again: on 2 February 1702, the aging German composer Johann Wolfgang Franck (c.1645- c.1705) premiered his own setting of Congreve's *Judgment of Paris*. The work was given at the York Buildings and was "Compos'd for three Quires, and in quite a different way from the others, not used here before."<sup>4</sup> Unfortunately Franck's score does not survive. Roger Fiske speculates that Franck's entry, coming so soon after the competition's conclusion, may simply have arrived too late to be included in the event. Judging from Franck's comments above it is also possible that, having some knowledge of the previous settings, he simply felt inspired to try to outdo the younger composers. In his use of three choirs it seems that Franck appears to employ the same grandiose choral strategy which had proven successful in Weldon's winning setting.

Following the final revival of Eccles' setting in 1706, interest in Congreve's libretto faded. The subject of the *Judgment of Paris*, however, remained popular in London's musical theatres. On 26 March 1722 a pastoral opera called *Love Triumphant; or the Rival Goddesses* was given at Mrs. Bellamy's school. This work was set by Daniel Bellamy for private performance and is thought to have been based on Congreve's libretto.<sup>5</sup>

Another reference to Congreve's *The Judgment of Paris* occurred with John Gay's and Johann Christoph Pepusch's *The Beggar's Opera* (1728). Well-known for initiating the English vogue for ballad opera, the main targets of the satirical libretto were Italian opera and Robert Walpole's corrupt Whig government. The work was, in part, a

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<sup>4</sup> Franck as quoted in Fiske, *Theatre Music*, 23.

<sup>5</sup> See William Burlinze, *A Checklist of New Plays and Entertainments on the London Stage 1700-1737* (Toronto: Associated University Press, 1993), 190.

criticism of the bribery and corruption of the court and parliament. Though there appears to be no evidence of musical borrowing or adaptation, this well-known work makes several textual allusions to Congreve's libretto. From *The Beggar's Opera* the arias 52 and 53, "Hither, dear husband, turn your eyes" sung by Polly, and Macheath's "Which way shall I turn me," recall Venus' and Paris' arias "Hither turn thee" and "Distracted I turn." The second verse of Congreve's "Distracted I turn" begins:

Apart let me view then each heavenly Fair,  
For three at a time there's no Mortal can bear;

In "Which way shall I turn me" Gay changes the line to read:

One wife is too much for most husbands to hear,  
But two at a time there's no Mortal can bear.

Lucy's song (Aria 47) uses a tune popularly known as "Walpole, or the Happy Clown."<sup>6</sup>

Earlier, in Aria 30, Lockit directly raises the issue of government corruption:

If you mention Vice or Bribe,  
'Tis so pat to all the Tribe;  
Each cries that was levell'd at me.

Congreve's libretto, with its analogous references to bribery and corruption, was perfect fodder for Gay's satire. In alluding to Congreve's libretto for *The Judgment of Paris*, Gay effectively acknowledged, and criticized, the Whig party politics inherent in the work.

The year 1731 saw a new version of the Judgment of Paris story brought to the London stage in the form of "A New Pastoral Ballad Opera of one Act" called the *Judgment of Paris: or the Triumph of Beauty*. The work was staged on 6 May at Lincoln's Inn Fields as an interlude to Colly Cibber's *Love Makes a Man*. Yet again there

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<sup>6</sup> Johnstone and Fiske, *The Eighteenth Century*, 133.

is no surviving score for this work and both the composer and author are unknown. The story was significantly altered from Congreve's version, however, as the cast, in addition to the roles of Mercury, Paris, Venus, Juno, and Pallas, also included parts for a Miller and his Wife, and the Nymph of Ida (presumably Oenone Paris's previous lover whom left for Helen). The piece was given "By command of his Royal Highness" and was attended by Prince of Wales. The *Gentleman's Magazine* for 6 May 1731 states that:

Miss Holliday [Nymph of Ida] received from the Royal Family over and above the usual Present, a large Gold medal, weighing about 50 Guineas, with the Bust of her Majesty as Electress of Hanover on each side.<sup>7</sup>

*The Triumph of Beauty* had only one performance, but another ballad opera version of the story was mounted two years later. This work was entitled *The Judgment of Paris; or The Triumph of Beauty* was staged at Drury Lane and appears to have been more successful as it ran for seven performances through January and February of 1733.<sup>8</sup> Once again the story seems to have undergone some drastic revisions as, in addition to the central five characters, the cast includes the characters of Helen, four Shepherds and four Shepherdesses, Thalia, Power, Fame, Euphrosyne, and Aglai.<sup>9</sup> The work was a one-act interlude to larger dramatic works including Congreve's *The Old Batchelour* and Gay's *The Beggar's Opera*. Yet again, on at least one occasion (8 February 1733) the Prince of Wales was in attendance. The year 1733 also saw a pantomime dance version of the story mounted at Covent Garden.<sup>10</sup> Neither of the two new ballad operas nor the ballet versions of the Judgment of Paris story were related to Congreve's libretto. The presence

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<sup>7</sup> *Gentleman's Magazine* 1 (1731), 216.

<sup>8</sup> This work was printed for J. Tonson and set to music by John Weaver and Seedo [sic], as named in the title page. See Burlinze, *A Checklist of New Plays and Entertainments*, 153.

<sup>9</sup> *London Stage*, entry for February 12, 1733.

<sup>10</sup> *The London Stage* lists significant revivals of this work in 1757, 1758, 1760, and 1764.

of such works, however, attests to the ongoing fascination and preoccupation with the subject.

## II. The Mid-Century Masque Revivals and Politics

As shown in Table 4-1, it appears that none of the original "Prize Musick" settings were performed after 1706. The increasing appeal of Italian opera and a plethora of more frivolous forms of theatre music, such as pantomimes and burlesques, saw a marked decline in the popularity of the masque. With the exception of Cibber's and Pepusch's attempts to revive the masque form around 1715-18, it was not until the 1730s that the masque returned to its earlier prominence.<sup>11</sup>

The precise reasons for this decline and the ascendance of opera seria are little understood.<sup>12</sup> As shown by "The Prize" competition, England certainly did not lack for competent composers in the wake of Henry Purcell's death. Certainly there rose a fashionable taste for foreign, "exotic," art amongst aristocrats, a taste no doubt cultivated while on the Grand Tour. This also accounts, at least in part, for the great popularity of Italian singers. Nonetheless, during times which were rife with xenophobic and patriotic

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<sup>11</sup> For another discussion of the evolution of the masque in the eighteenth century see Burden, "The Independent Masque," 60.

<sup>12</sup> Some of the explanations have included the increasing vogue for opera seria and political upheavals in the management of London's theaters. See Curtis Price, *Music in the Restoration Theatre*, 112-34; Dean, *Handel's Dramatic Oratorios*, 153-159; Fiske, *Theatre Music*, 3-66, 127-145; Johnstone and Fiske, *The Eighteenth Century*, 96-158. Reinhard Strohm suggests that the decline of opera seria was due in large part to Handel's frustration with its conventions. See Reinhard Strohm, "Handel and His Italian Opera Texts," in *Essays on Handel and Opera* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 78. Gary C. Thomas, however, has suggested that the shift from opera seria to oratorio was, in the midst of masculine British nation building, a conscious "antidote...to suppress the Italian-homosexual-effeminate..." See Gary C. Thomas, "Was Handel Gay?," in *Queering the Pitch* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 186.

propaganda, the prominence of Italian opera seria seems somewhat out of place.<sup>13</sup>

Compounding this unlikely situation is the fact that, as recent evidence has indicated, opera seria was rarely, if ever, an outstanding financial success with the general public.<sup>14</sup>

Despite this, and in the face of considerable criticism from domestic journalists such as Richard Steele and Joseph Addison, opera seria achieved and maintained a prominent position in London's cultural hierarchy. This fact was due to the constant support of both the monarchy and various groups of aristocrats who patronized and propagated opera seria through the Royal Academy of Music and the Opera of the Nobility.<sup>15</sup> Opera seria, in short, pandered to the elitist tastes of the aristocracy and monarchy. In so doing, opera seria served several related functions for these institutions, reinforcing both their political agendas and social status. First, in that opera seria presented a rigidly conventionalized art form in a foreign language, written by foreign librettists, set by foreign composers, and using foreign performers, it was far less likely to contain discernibly seditious or politically critical plots. It was thus far less likely to be used as a vehicle for the expression of political dissent against the Monarchy or Parliament. Given the plethora of theatrical works which, either directly or indirectly presented political critiques and propaganda in the early part of the century, it is of little surprise that the vogue for a foreign language genre, whose practitioners were largely ignorant or indifferent to English politics, would have been welcomed by the ruling elite. Thus Italian opera can be

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<sup>13</sup> See Jeremy Black, "Ideology, History, Xenophobia and the World of Print in Eighteenth-Century England," *Culture, Politics and Society in Britain, 1660-1800*, Jeremy Black and Jeremy Gregory eds. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1991), 184-216.

<sup>14</sup> See Robert D. Hume, "Opera in London, 1695-1706," in *British Theatre and the Other Arts*, 87-88; Judith Milhouse and Robert D. Hume, "Box Office Receipts for Five Operas Mounted by Handel in London, 1732-1734," *Harvard Library Bulletin* 26 (1978), 245-66; Johnstone and Fiske, *The Eighteenth Century*, 14.

<sup>15</sup> Hume, "Opera in London," 88.



seen as circumventing the pervasive party politics which dominated the theatre at this time. Indeed the party and political rivalries were seen as lowering the taste of much theatre. The prologue to Christopher Bullock's *Woman is a Riddle* (1716) contains a summary of the complaint.

Colonel Manly: . . . The Rage of the Party is so Predominant, that ev'n publick Diversion is interrupted and t'is impossible to sit out a Play with any Satisfaction, for the ridiculous Comments which a Man is oblig'd to hear from the Politicians in the Pit. . . In short, the old Plays are so curtail'd for fear of giving Offence to Parties. . .<sup>16</sup>

Italian opera, even with the availability of translated librettos, would have been, if not immune from, less likely to suffer such curtailments and Party criticism.

In addition to the suppression of overt party political propaganda, opera seria also served to reinforce the equation of England and English society with the glory of ancient Rome. Writing in 1721 the Whig Algernon Sidney outlined the relationship between English liberty and the greatness of Rome, stating "the Strength, Vertue, [sic] Glory, Wealth, Power, and Happiness of *Rome* proceeding from Liberty, did rise, grow, and perish with it."<sup>17</sup> Likewise, during this "classical" age people believed that their musical and cultural tastes were directly related to the ancients. As G. M. Trevelyan states:

. . .the men of this "classical" age looked back with a sense of kinship to the far-off ancient world. The upper class regarded the Greeks and Romans as honorary Englishmen, their precursors in liberty and culture.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> As quoted from Loftis, *The Politics of Drama*, 66.

<sup>17</sup> Algernon Sidney, *Discourses*, p.116.

<sup>18</sup> George Maculey Trevelyan, *Illustrated English Social History* (London: Longmans, 1949-52), iii, 85-86.

Indeed the English had long associated themselves with Rome. Many actually believed that their ancestors, Aeneas and the Trojans, had founded Rome before Aeneas' grandson Brutus, for whom the area was later named, finally settled in Britain. In literary history the period from 1700-1740 is often referred to as the "Augustan Age" in order to underline a correspondence with the classical literary works of Ovid, Horace, and Virgil under Caesar Augustus.<sup>19</sup> Even the vogue for Italian Opera, in keeping with the original intent of the Florentine Camerata, can be understood as an attempt, at least on some level, to educate and raise English musical taste by appropriating, in updated form, the musical dramas of the ancients and by using numerous plots based on Roman history. The fourth Earl of Shaftesbury, for example propounded the opportunity which, through opera, the Italians had in "restoring the antient Tragedy (the True Opera) . . . in all its noble Orders of Musick and continu'd Harmony."<sup>20</sup> Through its supposed neoclassical imitation of the aesthetic ideals of classical art and in its relatively rigid set of forms and conventions, opera seria was an excellent vehicle for raising the morals and taste of English society and for reflecting its social order. Thus in addition to pandering to privileged tastes and discouraging political and social dissent, the rise of opera seria can be seen as an attempt by the Monarchy and nobility to equate England and English identity with the social order and political power of ancient Rome and Greece.<sup>21</sup> Ellen Harris, in discussing the popularity of Handel's pastorals versus the English preference for heroic dramas, asserts:

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<sup>19</sup> See Harry Blamires, *A Short History of English Literature* (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1984), 160-61.

<sup>20</sup> The fourth Earl of Shaftesbury as quoted by Thomas McGeary in "Shaftesbury, Handel, and Italian Opera," *Händel Jahrbuch* 32 (1986), 99-104.

<sup>21</sup> John Pocock has shown the influence of Italian republican thought on political thinking in early eighteenth-century England. See John Pocock, *The Machiavellian Movement: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Revolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975).

The political affairs of man play a large role in heroic dramas. Whereas in pastoral operas the rule of Arcadia is never threatened, in heroic dramas this is constantly the case . . . Two monarchs are in conflict in *Tamerlano*, *Giulio Cesare*, *Rinaldo*, *Riccardo*, *Lotario*, and *Floridante*. In *Aggrippina* and *Teseo* there is the question of a son's succession. These political aspects are notably lacking in the pastoral.<sup>22</sup>

This explanation may reasonably account for the increasing presence of pastoral topics in eighteenth-century England. However, as manifest in *The Judgment of Paris*, other potentially more insidious forms of politics could be at work in a pastoral. As we have seen *The Judgment of Paris* presents the allegorical story of a mortal who is elevated to sit in judgment over the gods a situation which strongly resonates with Lockean Whig ideology and later with the political ideals of Lord Bolingbroke and "The Patriots." The work promotes the value of individual liberty and political choice and thus "the rule of Arcadia," or a divine monarchy, is at least called into question if not actually "threatened" on some level.

As manifest in the popularity of Gay's *Beggar's Opera* and the plethora of other ballad operas and burlesques,<sup>23</sup> the mid-century witnessed a widening gap between aristocratic and bourgeois musical tastes. The increasingly de-centered state of English politics, as evident in the bi-partisan recognition of the corrupt nature of Walpole's Whig government and in the inter-family conflict between George II and the Prince of Wales, served to support the rise in the validity of subjective opinion. The rise of subjective opinion was, of course, also mirrored in the rise of "disinterested" aesthetic theory as first propounded by Francis Hutcheson and others. As manifest in Hutcheson's concepts of aesthetic disinterestedness, this period saw an important shift in emphasis away from the

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<sup>22</sup> Ellen Harris, *Handel and the Pastoral Tradition*, 235.

<sup>23</sup> For a comprehensive list of such works see Fiske, *Theatre Music*, Chapters Three and Four.

neoclassical ideals of the objective work of art to the subjective experience of the perceiver.<sup>24</sup> No longer under the influence of a dominant government ideology, all elements of society, including the theatre-going public, were increasingly freed from the rigid tenets of previous neoclassical aesthetic ideologies. This would seem to have, at least in part, promoted the abandonment of the rarefied conventions of opera seria.<sup>25</sup> It is of little surprise, therefore, that the revival of indigenous "judgment" masques in the 1740s coincided with the decline in opera seria. The limited empowerment afforded by notions of the value of subjective taste, cultivated under the guise of aesthetic disinterestedness by aesthetic philosophers such as Francis Hutcheson, can be seen as crucial to the rebirth of indigenous and more popular forms of English music, particularly the rise of the English oratorio under Handel and the revitalization of the masque.

Hutcheson, it will be recalled, saw "uniformity amidst variety" as the prime ideal of his theory of absolute musical beauty.<sup>26</sup> These aesthetic ideals also resonate with the political principles of the day. The Lockean notion of a contractual kingship or even the notion, propounded by Bolingbroke, of a benevolent kingship advocated the unity of the country under a ruling monarch while maintaining a state where the public was nonetheless free to exercise their individual opinion. In this manner the ideal unity of state, provided by the harmony and order of society, was roughly equivalent to the unity of a musical work provided by its harmony and unity of form and design.<sup>27</sup> Likewise, the

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<sup>24</sup> See Peter Kivy's introduction to *Francis Hutcheson's An Inquiry Concerning Beauty, Order, Harmony, Design* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1973), 5.

<sup>25</sup> There are, of course, a variety of reasons for the decline of opera seria. Please see my discussion earlier in this chapter and refer to more detailed explanations as listed in footnotes 11 and 13.

<sup>26</sup> Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, Section II, Article III.

<sup>27</sup> This concept, again, resonates with the ancient Greek notion of *discordia concors* and the interrelationship of music and government discussed by Plato, Cicero, and Aristotle. See Chapter Two, Fn. 62 and Chapter Five.

variety of public political opinion can be seen to correspond to the pleasure provided by discordant or dissonant intervals in music. Indeed even the notion of aesthetic “disinterestedness” has a political analogue as individuals were encouraged to make their political judgments free from outside influences. Though these analogies are very general they accurately reflect the relationship between aesthetic ideology and the political and social ideology of the day.

In the late 1730s and early 1740s the masque once again returned to public prominence. Works such as Maurice Greene’s *Florimel* (1734) and *The Judgment of Hercules* (1740), Thomas Arne’s *Comus* (1738) and *Alfred* (1740) became popular successes. Coinciding with this return to traditional forms was the London concert audience’s on-going infatuation with the theatre works of Henry Purcell. Until 1750 the majority of London concert programs included at least one song by Henry Purcell.<sup>28</sup> Given the onslaught of Italian opera, the reverence for Purcell had a strong patriotic motivation and thus members of both the Whig and Tory parties attempted to recall his memory to their respective advantage.<sup>29</sup> In evaluating the state of English composers in 1722, the Whig John Macky claimed that the English had “several great Masters of their own: Henry Purcell’s Works in that kind are esteemed beyond Lully everywhere; and they [the French] now have a good many very eminent Masters; but the Taste of the Town being at this day all Italian, it is a great Discouragement to them.”<sup>30</sup> The patriotism which was the impetus to the revivals of Purcell also manifest itself in the revival of

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<sup>28</sup> Weber, *Musical Classics*, 92

<sup>29</sup> The championing of Purcell as an exponent of an English style, given his increasing reliance on Italianate vocal techniques and formal devices, is of course open to question. For a more in-depth analysis of this problem see Curtis Price, *Henry Purcell and the London Stage* (Cambridge, 1984), 3-20.

<sup>30</sup> John Macky, *A Journey through England in Familiar Letters* (London, 1722), vol. I, xvi-xvii, 193.

historically indigenous forms. In the face of the failure of English opera to compete with Italian opera seria, composers turned instead to their traditional strengths, including the masque, in order to resurrect an English-language repertoire.<sup>31</sup>

It was during the general revival of interest in historically English forms such as the masque, that the most significant new settings of Congreve's *Judgment of Paris* libretto took place.<sup>32</sup> The first and one of the most significant occurred in 1740, with a setting by Giuseppe Sammartini. This, in turn, was followed in 1742 with a setting by Thomas Arne. These two works, coming some forty years after Congreve and the Whigs originally conceived of "The Prize" competition, marked a significant revival of interest in the work.

### III. New Settings: Sammartini and Arne

The two new settings of *The Judgment of Paris* were, like the original three settings, extremely individualistic. Sammartini's setting is marked by colorful orchestration, melodic simplicity and tunefulness and, in keeping with Hutcheson's ideals of beauty, had an extremely unified harmonic and melodic plan. These achievements were only partially mitigated by his lack of originality in declamation. Sammartini, an Italian, may not have felt confident of his ability to set the English language and consequently, as we shall see, relied on the declamatory scheme of John Eccles' previous setting. Arne's setting, on the other hand, is marked by its elegant declamation and an

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<sup>31</sup> Johnstone and Fiske, *The Eighteenth Century*, 148.

<sup>32</sup> For a summary of revivals, and new settings of Congreve's libretto and other works related to the *Judgment of Paris* story, please refer to Appendix B.

even more memorably melodic and lyrical style. Indeed Arne seemed more intent on cultivating an English melodic style with which to set this traditionally English form. Perhaps not surprisingly, therefore, his work often recalls the tunefulness of Henry Purcell, whose music, as explained above, was still being evoked for patriotic purposes.

Giuseppe Sammartini (1695-1750), the elder brother of Giovanni Battista Sammartini, was a renowned oboist and composer. He traveled to London from Italy in 1728 and remained there for the remainder of his life. In England Sammartini quickly gained the reputation of being "the greatest [oboist] the world had ever known..." though his music remained largely unknown until after his death.<sup>33</sup> Primarily an instrumental composer, between the years 1730-1750 he was one England's most prolific writers of concertos and sonatas, publishing 24 sonatas for flute and bass, 30 trios for recorders or violins, and 24 concerti grosso.

Throughout his tenure in England Sammartini was supported by Frederick, Prince of Wales. In 1736 Sammartini became the music master to Augusta, Princess of Wales, and her children. His subsequent loyalty to the Prince and his family was unwavering and evident in his dedication of the 12 sonatas of his op. 1 to Frederick and his 12 trios of op.3 to Augusta. He remained in his position of music master until his death and the obituary in the *Whitehall Evening Post* read: "Last week died at his Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales, Signior S. Martini, Musick Master to her Royal Highness and thought to be the finest performer on the hautboy in Europe."<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Hawkins, *A General History of the Science and Practice of Music*. Vol. ii, 895.

<sup>34</sup> Bathia Churgin, "Sammartini, Giuseppe," *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, XVI, 457.

Giuseppe Sammartini's setting of *The Judgment of Paris* was commissioned by Frederick, Prince of Wales and was first privately performed at his residence at Cliveden in 1740. The work was originally paired with Thomas Arne's masque *Alfred*, the two works ostensibly serving as entertainments in celebration of the thirtieth anniversary of the accession of the house of Hanover and the third birthday of Frederick's daughter, Princess Augusta. However, in light of the political controversies surrounding Frederick and given the political allegory of its companion piece, Sammartini's *Judgment of Paris* appears to impart no less of a political message than when the libretto was originally set in 1701.

As outlined in Chapter One, Frederick cultivated an ambitious circle of opposition to his father, George II and Robert Walpole's ruling Whig government. This coterie was comprised of malcontent party members of all persuasions as well as a variety of well known artists, authors, and musicians. "The patriots" as the opposition group came to be known, opposed George II's frequent trips to his continental electorate in Hanover and his seeming predilection for foreigners at court.

The nationalist stance of the patriots, and indeed much of their philosophy, was rooted in the controversial political writings of Henry St. John, Lord Bolingbroke, by far the patriot's most influential member. Bolingbroke's most significant work was *The Idea of a Patriot King* (1738). This treatise was a scathing indictment of "the lawless ambition, extravagant vanity, and detestable tyrannical spirit" of George II's government.<sup>35</sup> It advocated the ascendance of a "patriot" king modeled on Frederick,

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<sup>35</sup> Bolingbroke, *The Idea of a Patriot King* as reproduced in Isaac Kramnick (ed.), *Bolingbroke's Political Writings* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1970), 48.



whose rule would be based on the popular support of his subjects rather than the divine right of hereditary succession. According to Bolingbroke, the ideal "patriot" king should be "unambitious, generous [and] good-natured" and thus embody the ideals of a benevolent elected kingship.<sup>36</sup> Bolingbroke also described the general corruption that pervaded all English society with a particular emphasis on cataloging Walpole's crimes and general rapaciousness.

The political ambitions of both Frederick and Bolingbroke were directly expressed in Arne's masque *Alfred*, which was premiered on the same night as Sammartini's *The Judgment of Paris*. Perhaps best known for its concluding ode, "Rule Britannia," *Alfred* was co-authored by David Mallet and James Thompson, both well known as "patriot" writers. The plot revolved around the exploits of Alfred, a real Saxon King who ruled England in the years 871-99 A.D. Much like Bolingbroke's concept of a patriot king, Alfred was well known for his humanity, benevolence, and concern for civil liberty. This populist image of Alfred is traceable to Asser's *Life of King Alfred* (893) the most famous contemporaneous account of Alfred's exploits. Asser claimed that Alfred was a king elected "according to the unanimous wish of all the inhabitants of the kingdom."<sup>37</sup> This stands, of course, in marked contrast to George II who ostensibly acclaimed king by divine right. Notably Bolingbroke was also staunch advocate of Saxon racial ancestry, believing that it was the Saxons who "instituted the original sketch of a British

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<sup>36</sup> Bolingbroke, *The Idea of a Patriot King*, 58.

<sup>37</sup> Asser, *Life of King Alfred* (893), modern edition translated by Simon Keynes and Michael Lapidge (London: Penguin Books, 1983), 80. A facsimile edition of Asser's *Life of Alfred* was also published in 1722 and was evidence of the growing interest in Alfred's life and in Saxon racial ancestry in general.

Parliament.”<sup>38</sup> For Bolingbroke and the “Patriots,” the Saxon Alfred was the ideal example of an elected patriot king and the perfect subject to represent Frederick’s own political aspirations and devotion to England.

The “Frederick as Alfred” allegory was markedly evident in the libretto. The work revolves around Alfred’s attempts to drive the invading Danes from British soil and his reunion with his wife Eltruda. From the beginning of the masque, when two shepherds discover Alfred disguised as a peasant, the idea of the superiority of the Saxon character and the compassionate nature of Alfred are stressed. The Shepherd Corin describes Alfred’s appearance in terms highly reminiscent of Bolingbroke’s “unambitious, generous, [and] good-natured” description of a “patriot” king:

Modest of carriage, and of speech most gracious  
as if some saint or angel in disguise  
Had grac’d our lowly cottage with his presence,  
He steals, I know not how, into the heart,  
And makes it pant to serve him...<sup>39</sup>

Alfred’s saintly image was, however, in direct contrast to the invading Danes who are immediately described as “The haughty, cruel, unbelieving Dane...” and later as “the murderous foe” and “those foreign ruffians, those inhuman tyrants.” The foreigners are thus portrayed as pompous irreligious tyrants, just as the government of George II and Robert Walpole was characterized by Bolingbroke as “lawless,” “vain,” and “tyrannical.”

Bolingbroke also espoused the idea that England’s political system was being weakened by a lapse in devotion to public duty. He felt that it was the duty of the elected

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<sup>38</sup> Bolingbroke, *Remarks on the History of England* (London, 1747) as reproduced in Kramnick, *Political Writings*, 51.

<sup>39</sup> *Alfred* (Cliveden, 1740) as reproduced in Felicity Nussbaum (ed.) *The Plays of David Mallet* (New York: Garland, 1980), 1-44.

king to reform the system by a variety of means, including the use of virtue as a necessary attribute for advancement in public office, undertaking programs of general moral reform, and setting an appropriately virtuous and inspiring example for his subjects to emulate.

Act III of the masque perhaps presents the most conclusive example of the allegorical portrayal of Bolingbroke's political theories. It is essentially constructed of a series of historical tableaux, each presenting a series of past and future English heroes for Alfred to emulate. Thus, in the first tableau, the Genius of England summons the spirit of Edward III. The genius describes Edward's reign in terms highly reminiscent of Bolingbroke's theories:

A sovereign's great example forms a people.  
The public beast is noble, or is vile,  
As he inspires it. In this Edward's time  
Warm'd by his courage...  
High flames the British Spirit... (*III viii*, 1117-21)

Under the virtuous rule of Edward the British nation had nobly been reborn, as it would be born for Alfred and, indeed, as Bolingbroke hoped would again be re-born under Frederick's "great example."

With many such politically inspired passages the political allegory of Arne's *Alfred* is difficult to miss.<sup>40</sup> For the Patriots *Alfred* was an unalloyed tribute to an elected "patriot" king as manifest in their leader, Prince Frederick. As such *Alfred* was an obvious representation of Frederick. Both were waiting to claim the throne and both were exiled within their own country, Alfred by the Danes, Frederick by his father. In its portrayal of the courageous yet benevolent rule of a Saxon king, the masque also

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<sup>40</sup> See Michael Burden's dissection of *Alfred*'s political content in his article "A Mask for Politics: The Masque of Alfred" in *The Music Review* 48 (1988), 21-30.

celebrates the superiority of Frederick's Teutonic heritage and that of his adopted English homeland.

Written amidst the same political climate as Arne's *Alfred*, and premiered on the same night, Giuseppe Sammartini's *The Judgment of Paris* can be seen to have a similar political message. In this instance, of course, Congreve's libretto must be interpreted in terms of Frederick's and Bolingbroke's agendas rather than the Whig electoral agenda which underlay the work's original conception. It is not surprising, however, that many of the fundamental Whig ideals originally represented in the work were subsequently shared by Frederick and Bolingbroke. In keeping with the general resurgence of traditionally English musical forms as manifest in the revival of Congreve's *Judgment of Paris*, Bolingbroke's treatise also catered to a vogue for what Isaac Kramnick has called "the politics of nostalgia."<sup>41</sup> This is to say that the treatise was based largely on ideas derived from earlier ones, specifically the Lockeian and Whig ideals opposing tyranny which flourished in the wake of the "Glorious Revolution." As outlined in Chapter Two, Congreve's libretto *The Judgment of Paris*, and indeed the original "Prize Musick" competition were underscored by Whig party principles. Thus both the revival of Congreve's work and the ideals of Bolingbroke's treatise reflected a political and aesthetic nostalgia for precisely the same period.

Perhaps the most overt political message of the libretto, the advocacy of an ordinary individual's right to sit in judgment over more nobly born, was of primary concern to both the original Whig sponsors of "The Prize Musick" and of the patriots

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<sup>41</sup> Isaac Kramnick, *Bolingbroke and His Circle: The Politics of Nostalgia in the Age of Walpole* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968).

opposition to George II. Paris is again representative of the British public, who must choose the most beautiful goddess. In terms of Frederick's and Bolingbroke's agenda, however, the choice would have revolved around the most beautiful or virtuous monarch, either George II or Frederick himself. Frederick's attempts to prove his devotion to England in combination with the patriot's opposition to Spanish trading policies meant that their nationalist agendas were similar to the pro-nationalist ideology of the original Whig sponsors of "The Prize" competition. Thus the triumph of Venus, representing the love of England, would have maintained its patriotic appeal to Frederick and Bolingbroke. The celebration of beauty and its equation with virtue, as manifest in both Venus and Helen, is also in line with Bolingbroke's desire that the king should set a virtuous example in order to affect a general moral reform on his public. Frederick, much like the Whig party some forty years earlier, attempted to curry popular favour and influence the "judgments" amongst his circle, and other potential opposition to George II and Walpole's Whig government. In these ways Congreve's original political, moral, and aesthetic statements appear to have held equal weight for Frederick and Bolingbroke nearly forty years later.

#### A) Giuseppe Sammartini's Setting

Sammartini's setting uses Congreve's libretto in its entirety. Unlike the original "Prize" settings, however, the work is divided into two acts, each beginning with a fugal overture. The two acts divide the three goddesses' second plea to Paris. Act One

concludes with Juno's chorus "Let ambition fire thy mind" while Act Two resumes with Pallas' second plea "Awake thy spirits rise." Sammartini also uses full-fledged accompanied recitative in place of the florid arioso with continuo accompaniment which marked the earlier "Prize" settings. Sammartini's work is also much longer than the earlier settings. The manuscript score is 170 pages compared to 71 for Eccles, 82 for Purcell, and 91 for Weldon.<sup>42</sup> Writing in a typical Italian style he extends the length of the masque by means of word repetition, long *da capo* and *dal segno* arias, and repeated instrumental episodes and ritornellos. His melodic style is simple and lyrical, reminiscent of the unadorned English style of Eccles' setting though there is no trace of the ground bass constructions which marked the earlier settings.

The work is even more lavishly orchestrated than the earlier works, employing flutes, oboes, bassoon, horns, trumpets, timpani, and strings in addition to a continuo. It particularly evokes John Weldon's earlier setting due to Sammartini's similarly lavish and adventuresome use of orchestration. Recalling Weldon's earlier use of a curtill (bassoon), Mercury's second aria, "This radiant fruit," likely represents the first instance of a bassoon obbligato in English music history.<sup>43</sup> Venus' final aria "Fairest thee all nymphs transcending" is also scored for a cello obbligato and wind instruments are used abundantly throughout the work. Two of Pallas' arias feature both horns and trumpets, and Venus' aria "Stay lovely youth" is scored for horns, oboes, and flutes. The common practice in London playhouses of the day was for the same player to double on both

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<sup>42</sup> This and all subsequent references to Sammartini's setting of the *Judgment of Paris* are to GB-Lb. Add. 17860. There are two other complete manuscript scores in the British Library (R.M. 23.b.21 and R.M. 23.b.22).

<sup>43</sup> Fiske, *Theatre Music*, 193.

trumpet and horn and another to double on both wind instruments, flute and oboe.<sup>44</sup> Thus the simultaneous parts indicate that the Cliveden orchestra provided for the occasion was larger than those of Drury Lane or Covent Garden. Sammartini's work was also written for voice parts similar to those of Weldon's setting: Venus, Pallas, and Juno are soprano roles, Mercury is a bass, and Paris a countertenor.

Sammartini was influenced by some of the original "Prize" settings. Conclusive evidence of this is provided, not only by the fact that he was aware of Congreve's text in the first place, but also by the fact that, in several places throughout the work, he actually borrows melodic and declamatory material from John Eccles' setting.<sup>45</sup> This is immediately apparent from the outset of the masque. The melody from Mercury's opening recitative, "From high Olympus" is directly quoted from Eccles' score (See Example 4-1a,b.)



Ex. 4-1a: Mercury, "From high Olympus" (G. Sammartini)



Ex. 4-1b: Mercury, "From high Olympus" (J. Eccles)

<sup>44</sup> Roger Fiske, "A Cliveden Setting," *Music and Letters* 47 (1966), 126-129.

<sup>45</sup> Veronica Pritchard first noticed the borrowing from Eccles' work, but she only noticed the first instance in the opening recitative section of "This radiant fruit"; see her communication in *Music and Letters* 48 (1967), 101-2. Sammartini may also have been aware of Weldon's setting as his similar use of obbligato bassoon would appear to indicate.

A direct melodic borrowing also occurs on the words "Forbear thy woolly flock."

Elsewhere in the work, Sammartini borrows Eccles' opening melodic gesture for Mercury's aria "Fear not mortal," and for Paris' recitative "Apart let me view them."

This latter instance also sees Sammartini repeat the same sections of text as Eccles. The rhythmic declamation for Juno's chorus "Let ambition fire thy mind" is also nearly identical to that of Eccles.

Another curious instance of apparent influence occurs in Juno's introductory symphony which exploits a constant stream of repeated groups of four sixteenth notes in the violins. As shown in the comparison in Example 4-2a,b, this time, however, the inspiration for this gesture seems to have been provided by Daniel Purcell's setting, rather than Eccles'. Both Purcell's and Eccles' settings had been published in 1702 by Walsh and Hare and enjoyed a wide circulation, ensuring Sammartini relatively easy access.



Ex. 4-2a: Violins, Symphony for Juno, (G. Sammartini), mm. 9-11.



Ex. 4-2b: Violins, Symphony for Juno, (D. Purcell), mm. 1-3.



It must be noted that Sammartini's borrowings appear not to have been motivated by any lack of inspiration or by a desire for wholehearted thievery. In even the most obvious instances of borrowing, such as his use of Eccles' melody in the opening recitative "From high Olympus," Sammartini is careful to compose a different accompaniment. Indeed, even the melodic borrowing is largely broken off after just a few measures with only Eccles' declamatory pattern being maintained. The story is the same in all other instances of similarity to Eccles' or Purcell's scores. Sammartini was careful to confine himself to minor instances of melodic and declamatory borrowing, writing original accompaniments and breaking off after just a few measures. Often the borrowing was only of a general declamatory nature. It is as if the Italian Sammartini, whose grasp of the English language was likely not as strong as Eccles', merely used Eccles' setting as a melodic, rhythmic, and declamatory primer from which to derive his own ideas for setting Congreve's lyrics. Accordingly, Sammartini's setting has much of the same lyricality and simple tunefulness that marked Eccle's setting.

As noted above, Sammartini appears to have been aware of both Purcell's and Eccles' published settings. Sammartini's harmonic organization is similar to Purcell's but not to Eccles'. Both Purcell's and Sammartini's settings, for example, begin in D major, move to A major for Mercury's aria "This radiant fruit," and then D minor for the goddesses' arrival with Paris' aria "Oh Ravishing Delight." Later, Sammartini also chooses the same keys as Purcell, A Major and D major, to accompany Juno and Pallas

respectively. Sammartini's key scheme is presented in table 4-2 on the following page, and may be compared with that of the earlier three composers in table 3-3.

As previously mentioned, apart from Sammartini's strange division of the acts after Juno's entrance, there is little deviation from Congreve's original scheme. The three major internal structural divisions which Congreve originally delineated by the duet "Happy thou," the trio, "Hither turn thee," and the final grand chorus are all still present. Though the major external structural division occurs after Juno's chorus, the duet, "Happy thou" maintains its prominent position and, with the exception of the final chorus, is the longest and most elaborate number in the entire work. Sammartini's reasons for dividing the acts at the point that he does are unclear and open to speculation. It may be that Sammartini merely wanted the impact of a chorus to conclude the first act and that Juno's chorus was the earliest opportunity to do so without altering Congreve's original conception of the work. Regardless of the reasons, however, separating the entrance and initial pleas of Juno from the other two goddesses is a severe disruption to the logical dramatic flow of the work.

**Table 4-2. G. Sammartini - Key scheme for *The Judgment of Paris*<sup>46</sup>**

<u>Character/Style</u>	<u>Section/Title</u>	<u>Key</u>
	<b>Act I:</b>	
<b>Section A (Congreve)</b>	Fugal Overture	F Major
Mercury - accomp. recit	"From high Olympus"	G - C Major
Mercury - Aria	"Forbear thy woolly flock"	G Major
Paris - Aria	"O Hermes"	D Major
Mercury - Aria	"This radiant fruit"	A Major
Paris - accomp. recit	"O Ravishing Delight"	D Minor
Mercury - Aria	"Fear not mortal"	F Major
Mercury and Paris-Duet	"Happy thou"	D Major
	Symphonia	B Minor
<b>Section B</b>		
Juno - accomp. recit/Aria	"Saturnia"	G Major
Pallas - aria (w/40mm instrumental intro)	"This way mortal"	D Major
Venus & "terzetto" - trio	"Hither turn thee"	G Major
<b>Section C</b>		
Paris - accomp. recit	"Distracted I turn"	A Major
Juno - Aria	"Let Ambition"	A Major - A Minor
Chorus	"Let Ambition"	A Major
	<b>Act II:</b>	
	Fugal Overture	A Major
Pallas - accomp. recit	"Awake thy spirits rise"	A Major
Pallas - Aria	"Hark, the glorious voice"	D Major
Pallas - Aria	"O what joys"	D Major
Chorus	"O what joys"	D Major
Venus - Aria	"Stay lovely youth"	F Major
Venus - secco recit	"Far from thee"	B flat Major
Venus - Aria	"Only one joy"	B flat Major
Chorus	"Only one joy"	B flat Major
Venus - Aria	"Nature fram'd thee"	G Minor
Venus - Aria	"Fairest thee all nymphs"	G Major
Paris - accomp. recit	"I yield"	D Minor
Paris - Aria	"Forbear o goddess"	B flat Major
Final Chorus	"Hither all ye graces"	D Major

After the fugal overture in F major the opening dialogue begins in G major and progresses to A major to conclude the first act before progressing to D major to conclude the second. Unlike earlier settings Sammartini uses of blocks of several numbers set in

<sup>46</sup> Keys for all recitative sections are based on opening and closing key areas.

the same key and there is no apparent attempt to achieve an overall closed key scheme. The second act does employ almost constant circle of fifths key shifts and eventually traverses a V - I shift from an opening A major to a concluding D major. It is also interesting to note that B flat major is Sammartini's key of choice with which to set the majority of Venus' second plea. Paris, who is largely set in D major or D minor, upon yielding to Venus also takes on B flat major. It is as if Paris, in assuming Venus' key, also assimilates her character, a move which reinforces the connections between these two characters in terms of their shared celebration of love and beauty.

In Chapter Three Eccles', Purcell's, and Weldon's settings of "O Ravishing Delight" and "Nature fram'd thee" were compared. In the following discussion it may prove helpful to refer to Appendices F and G for the complete settings of Sammartini and Arne's respective settings of these two pieces. As Sammartini and Arne were not in direct competition with each other and their settings are separated by two years, I will deal with each composer's work individually before directly comparing them.

Sammartini, "O Ravishing Delight!"

Unlike the previous settings, Sammartini chose to set "O Ravishing Delight" as an accompanied recitative with two violins, viola and continuo. In D minor, this piece, as in the earlier versions, marks the first intrusion of a minor key in the work and seems similarly symbolic of the disruption caused by the goddesses' descent. As befits his modeling on Eccles' declamation the melody is simple, tuneful and almost completely

syllabic. The most notable exceptions to this occur on the words “rapture” and “aching” which respectively receive scalar thirty-second note and sixteenth-note melismas.

The number is written with an irregularly recurring ritornello, and consists of two distinct sections. The first section presents a long sixteen measure instrumental introductory ritornello, during which time the goddesses were presumably descending.<sup>47</sup> This introduction in 6/8 time is followed by Paris’ vocal entry, marked by a shift into a typical Italian recitative in 4/4. Though there is no direct use of the motto technique which was so popular in the previous settings, Sammartini does use a rhythmic motto taken from the opening bar of the first violin for Paris’ first utterance. Sammartini, however employs numerous motto arias elsewhere in the work. The ritornello in 6/8 makes a brief three-measure re-appearance at the end of the line “so much rapture to sustain.” The third, four measure, entrance of the ritornello following “Ere Extacy invades my aking sense,” marks the beginning of the final section. Preceding the words “Help O Hermes” the 6/8 is retained for the remainder of the work, its lilt reinforcing Paris’ giddy sense of helplessness. Sammartini here uses the compound meter and a shift to softer “pia” dynamic as well as increasing the harmonic and bassline activity as a method of increasing Paris’ supplication. These changes effect a shift from a relatively static recitative to a more active an arioso style.

Commensurate with the metric changes Sammartini also employs shifting vocal phrase lengths, of three, four, or six measures. Similarly, as outlined above, the ritornello episodes last variously sixteen, three, and four measures. Despite these shifts in phrase

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<sup>47</sup> Roger Fiske speculates that the length of this introduction was due to the outdoor staging of the work at Cliveden and the possibility that the three goddesses might have had to walk a considerable distance to make their entrance while this music was playing. See Fiske, *Theatre Music*, 194.

lengths and in contrast to the previous settings. Sammartini uses a number of repeated eight and four measure phrases, evidence of a new pre-classical concern for formal clarity and balance. Though short scalar melismas decorate words such as “rapture” and “aking” and there is an abundance of text repetition, the extreme ornamentation which characterized Weldon and Purcell’s earlier setting of this text has disappeared, a feature which again points to a new high baroque concern for melodic clarity.

The shifting time signatures and phrase lengths, as in the earlier settings, serve to portray Paris’ agitation and confusion caused both by the overwhelming beauty of the goddesses and by the fear of his impending decision. The following aria, Mercury’s “Fear not Mortal” attempts to remove Paris’ doubts and fears. As mentioned in Chapter Two, Mercury with “sacred rod” or caduceus is sometimes an allegory of social order and government. To musically assuage Paris’ anxiety and restore musical order Sammartini contrasts the irregular meters and phrasing of “O Ravishing Delight” with a lyrical 3/4 in Mercury’s aria “Fear not Mortal” set with regular four measure phrases throughout. Thus between “O ravishing Delight” and “Fear not Mortal” he effects a typically Italianate recitative - aria combination.

Given the political circumstances surrounding the premiere of Sammartini’s setting it is tempting to read the role of Mercury as, in some manner, representative of Frederick himself. It was, after all, to Frederick that Bolingbroke and the Patriots turned in order restore harmony to the state. Indeed Mercury’s advice to “fear not mortal, none shall harm thee” echoes Frederick’s desire to establish an elected kingship wherein his subjects could more freely exercise their political judgment - free of the tyranny

engendered in a kingship based on divine right. The fact that Frederick was also a musician, as Mercury is traditionally a poet musician, lends further credence to their association. Though such an association may have been possible in Sammartini's mind it is equally likely that the role of Paris, a shepherd of noble birth and far removed from the divinely chosen gods, would have served as an equally strong representation of Frederick. This possibility is further strengthened by the possibility, outlined below, that Frederick actually assumed the role of Paris for at least one production of the Judgment of Paris story.

Sammartini, "Nature fram'd thee"

The first two verses of "Nature fram'd thee" are set in an extended *da capo* form, typical of the middle part of the century. (Please refer to Appendix F for the complete setting of this work). The work is written in G minor with a 4/4 time signature maintained throughout. The second verse comprises the B section of the *da capo* form, however, there is little in the way of musical contrast from the A section - even the opening key and meter are maintained. Sammartini chose to set the number with a solo oboe accompaniment (in addition to string orchestra and continuo) rather than the flutes used in the earlier settings. This fact is not surprising given Sammartini's virtuosity on the instrument. Perhaps the most notable aspect of this aria is the domination of the orchestra. In concertato style the strings, set in almost continually running sixteenth-note figures, and are only silenced by short two or three-measure vocal interruptions. The

vocal melody is uncomplicated and there is little of the florid coloratura which dominated earlier settings of this text.

Sammartini sets the second half of the text, beginning with the third verse "Fairest she all nymphs transcending," as a separate independent aria. The division and extension of this text into two arias is, with the mid-eighteenth century propensity for repetition and balance is not unusual. Indeed both Weldon and Eccles previously used successive double binary forms to also essentially split the work into two separate arias.

In contrast with the first aria, the second aria sees a modal shift from G minor to G major. Sammartini additionally increases the persuasiveness of Venus' offer by changing the time signature from 4/4 to a more lyrical 3/4 and adding a second oboe part along with an obbligato cello. A dynamic shift is also affected as the active string orchestra of the previous aria remains largely tacit, allowing room for the more intimate cello obbligato to be heard. The orchestra returns for brief "tutti" sections which punctuate the end of each vocal phrase. Adding to the hushed importance of the moment, beginning with the line "were she for the crown contending," the remainder of Venus' vocal entrances are marked "pia." This shift to a brighter key, more lyrical meter, and richer orchestration, and generally softer dynamic reflects the textual shift to the description of Helen's beauty. It may, therefore, be surmised that the major key, triple meter, and soft dynamic and timbre of the obbligato cello closely represented Sammartini's ideal of musical beauty.

As typical of much of his setting, Sammartini relies almost exclusively on regular four and eight measure phrasing as seen in the opening of the second aria (verse three) with the added obbligato cello. (Example 4-3)





Ex. 4-3: Venus, "Nature fram'd thee" (G. Sammartini)

It should also be noted that, commensurate with the decreased importance of the string orchestra, the second aria places much more emphasis on the vocal melody which is allowed far more freedom and longer more expressive phrasing. Though Sammartini exhibits little propensity in either aria for vocal ornamentation in the second aria he includes a curiously long, seven measure, melisma on the word "aiding" from the line "Love himself thy conquest aiding." In both arias, however, Sammartini more typically employs a simple vocal style similar to that used by Eccles. He often even roughly follows Eccles' melodic contour as shown in Example 4-4a,b.



Ex. 4-4a: Venus, "Nature fram'd thee" (G. Sammartini)



Ex. 4-4b: Venus, "Nature fram'd thee" (J. Eccles)

Though Sammartini's setting of *The Judgment of Paris* was never performed in commercial London playhouses, an odd revival of the story apparently took place shortly after the Cliveden staging. In Horace Walpole's *Memoires of the Reign of King George II* an Appendix contains a song by Frederick himself, "Venez, mes cheres Deesses." The work is largely uninspiring but it is "addressed to Lady Catherine Harmer, Lady Falconberg, and Lady Middlesex, who were to act the three goddesses with Frederick Prince of Wales, in the Judgment of Paris, whom he was to represent, and Prince Lobkowitz Mercury."<sup>48</sup> It is unlikely, however, that such untrained amateurs were performing Sammartini's relatively advanced music and, though the cast appears to fit, there is little evidence to show that Congreve's libretto was used for the performance (if indeed it ever took place).<sup>49</sup> The Judgment of Paris story, as has been mentioned, was popular and well known to all. Nonetheless, Frederick was well acquainted with Sammartini's setting of the text and was a trained musician and composer thus it remains an intriguing possibility that it was Sammartini's setting or, at least, another arrangement

<sup>48</sup> Horace Walpole, *Memoires of the last ten years of the Reign of King George II* (London, 1822), 452.

<sup>49</sup> It is possible, given the simplicity of the vocal parts and its publication, that the production in question may have been a revival of Eccles work though there is no indication of a date given in the Appendix.

of Congreve's libretto. Unfortunately there is no other reference to this particular performance or event.

This cryptic remark nonetheless points to the fact that a performance of some version or other of the story was planned and, even more importantly, that Frederick was to assume the role of Paris himself. This Frederick as Paris dramatization is reminiscent of the Frederick as Alfred allegory contained in Arne's masque *Alfred*. The scenario of Frederick playing the role of Paris also serves to reinforce the political undertones of the work. Paris, as viewed as the common shepherd, is in touch with the rural beauty of the English countryside. Frederick thus identified with Paris, as he did with Alfred, as the common man and apparently attempted to disassociate himself from the Gods, whose power would likely have been recognized as emblematic of the divine right of George II. By taking the role of Paris, the shepherd of noble birth, Frederick also demonstrated his own attachment to the land and his own sense of virtue in the face of the perceived tyranny of George II's reign. In directly identifying himself with Paris he, in effect, saw himself as the most prudent judge of beauty and virtue and chose the goddess, Venus, who was most closely associated with England. In his role as shepherd he could be viewed by all as leading his flock in the proper moral direction. If nothing else, this strange episode gives additional weight to Frederick's interest in the subject at this time.

#### B) Arne's Setting

On 12 March 1742 Thomas Arne's setting of Congreve's *Judgment of Paris* was given for the first time at Drury Lane as an afterpiece to Handel's *Alexander's Feast*. At

the time of the premiere Arne was the leading English theatre composer of his day. His setting of Milton's *Comus* in 1738 was enormously successful and established his lasting popularity with London audiences.<sup>50</sup>

To mark the occasion of the premiere of Arne's *Judgment of Paris* and Handel's *Alexander's Feast* Jacob Tonson published a libretto which included both works. Arne was likely inspired to write his own setting of the story by hearing Sammartini's setting, which had premiered at Cliveden with his own masque *Alfred*, two years earlier. Ian Spink speculates that "Arne may have noticed at this time that the role of Venus in Congreve's libretto would afford an admirable vehicle for the talents of his wife [Cecilia Young]."<sup>51</sup>

Indeed, Arne had a strong cast for the performance. Young sang the role of Venus and her rival goddesses were Mrs. Catherine Clive (Pallas), and Miss Mary Edwards (Juno). Charles Burney claimed that Cecilia Young's "style of singing was infinitely superior to any other English women of her time."<sup>52</sup> Clive, a close friend of Samuel Johnson, was the leading female comic singer of her day and Edwards was also well known at the time. Paris and Mercury were both sung by tenors; John Beard, perhaps the most highly regarded male singer in England, and Thomas Lowe respectively. Burney claimed that Lowe possessed the finest tenor voice he had ever heard. Interestingly, Lowe first rose to prominence when he premiered Arne's "Rule Britannia" from the masque

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<sup>50</sup> By 1760 *Comus* had been performed over eighty times at Drury Lane. Fiske, *Theatre Music*, 181.

<sup>51</sup> Ian Spink, "Introduction" to Thomas Arne, *The Judgment of Paris*, Musica Britannica, (London: Stainer and Bell, 1978), XLII, 1978, xiii. All subsequent references to Arne's score refer to this edition.

<sup>52</sup> Burney, *General History*, Vol. II, 1000.

*Alfred* written for Prince Frederick at Cliveden. It is likely that on that occasion he also played the role of Mercury in Sammartini's *Judgment of Paris*.<sup>53</sup>

All five singers had a wealth of experience and their status was in keeping with the prestige of the event. As with all the earlier performances of Congreve's *Judgment of Paris*, no expense seems to have been spared in preparing the production. Something of the lavishness of the premier can be gleaned from the following advertisement:

Boxes 6s. Pit 4s. First Gallery 2s. 6d. Upper gallery 1s. 6d. Ladies are desir'd to send their servants to keep places by Four o'clock. N.B. Mr Arne humbly hopes the Town will not be offended at this small advance of Prices, being at an extraordinary expense for copying all the Music, building the stage, additional instrumental performers, chorus singers, and erecting an organ.<sup>54</sup>

The tone of this advertisement suggests that it was aimed at the upper classes and that, as in the original production of "The Prize" competition, it was intended to be a social event as much as an evening of music theatre.

The initial production appears to have been successful as more tickets were sold than could be accommodated in the theatre and the performance, with *The Judgment of Paris* as companion piece to *Alexander's Feast*, was repeated a week later. A third performance took place on 17 April. It was only one month later that Dublin audiences were exposed to the first performance of Handel's *Messiah*, given with Arne's sister Susanna (Mrs. Cibber), singing some of the contralto arias. Perhaps emboldened by Handel's success, Arne too went to Dublin in June of the same year and was equally well received. In Dublin Arne paired *Alfred* and his *The Judgment of Paris* in emulation of the pairing of *Alfred* and Sammartini's *Judgment of Paris* which had occurred some two

<sup>53</sup> See P.H. Highfill, *A Biographical Dictionary of Actors etc.*, vol. 9, 372.

<sup>54</sup> *London Stage* entry for 12 March 1742., 974-975.

years earlier at Cliveden. As a double bill, the two works were performed at least four times during Arne's six-month Dublin sojourn.<sup>55</sup>

Upon Arne's return from Dublin in 1744 a published score of his setting of the *Judgment of Paris* was issued. The work was not, however, printed in its entirety. Only the overture, arias and accompanied recitatives were printed. The choruses (including the final Grand Chorus), *secco* recitatives and any additional instrumental pieces were left out.<sup>56</sup> The publication included an appendix containing "Rule Britannia" (originally the concluding ode to *Alfred*) and "Sawney & Jenny, a favourite Dialogue in ye Scotch Stile." The text of the latter piece is strongly anti-Jacobite and the pro-nationalist, even racist, political sentiments of "Rule Britannia" are well known. Published in conjunction with such overtly political works, and given the history of Congreve's libretto, it seems likely that *The Judgment of Paris* was meant to be regarded as equally politically charged.

Arne's connections to and support of Frederick have already been well documented with regard to the premier of *Alfred* at Cliveden in 1740. As mentioned this work premiered alongside Sammartini's version of the *Judgment of Paris*. Though there is little evidence of a specifically political agenda surrounding Arne's setting of Congreve's libretto, the fact that it had previously been used in this role in Sammartini's setting and, indeed, was published alongside other overtly political pieces, seems strong evidence of fact that many of the same political agendas were also underlying this work.

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<sup>55</sup> Fiske, *Theatre Music*, 198.

<sup>56</sup> Using the published full score from 1745 as a baseline, Ian Spink has reconstructed the *secco* recitatives, choruses and other instrumental symphonies for the Musica Britannica series. In the case of choruses and instrumental symphonies, the music of the preceding arias, or instrumental ritornellos, was adapted to reconstruct the original plan of the work as alluded to in the complete libretto. All references to these missing sections refer to this reconstruction.

Handel's *Alexander's Feast*, with which Arne's *The Judgment of Paris* was premiered and subsequently often paired, conveyed a more overt political narrative. John Dryden's libretto in praise of "THE POWER OF MUSIQUE" describes the power of poetry and music over politics. The poem, along with several other early works by Dryden,<sup>57</sup> was meant in part as a criticism of William III's lack of support for the arts. As such the poem contrasts the power of art against the emptiness of political achievement. On one hand the emperor Alexander (William III) sits "Aloft in awful State," while the musician Timotheus sits "high/amid the tuneful Quire." The critic Earl Minor describes Timotheus' ability to manipulate Alexander like a musical instrument: "In each stanza Timotheus the musician plays upon Alexander, the instrument of his virtuosity."<sup>58</sup> Dryden's satire of William is further exacerbated with the insinuation that Alexander "grew vain" and "with Love and Wine at once oppress'd,/ The vanquished Victor sunk upon her [his mistress Thais] Breast."<sup>59</sup> Indeed, in the final stanza it is only Timotheus, not Alexander for all his political achievement, who is fit and able to "divide the crown." Like love and beauty, music and poetry are able to transcend the banal achievements of politics. Art is here judged independent of and indeed superior to politics, the result of a historical tradition that transcends the rule of politics and nations.

Much like Congreve's *Judgment of Paris*, *Alexander's Feast* is a work glorifying the power of love and beauty. Likewise both works connect the power of love and music. Dryden's lines "So Love was Crown'd, but Musique won the Cause" and "Let old

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<sup>57</sup> Such works include the poems "To My Dear Friend Mr. Congreve," and "To Sir Godfrey Kneller" (1694) and the prose work *Discourse of Satire* (1693). See David Bywaters, *Dryden in Revolutionary England* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991), 133.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 132.

<sup>59</sup> The prostitute Thais was here likely a satire of William's wife Mary.

Timotheus yield the Prize" presage the sentiments in "The Prize" competition as expressed in lines such as "The Queen of Love is Queen of Beauty crown'd" and "Shepherd, if thoul't yield the Prize." Both works, in short, pay tribute to the power of love, beauty, and of music over that of politics.

Likewise, these works are linked in their common proposal that the power of music can influence judgment. They both suggest the idea that music has the ability to sway both rulers and subjects and that music could indeed actually influence rulers and electorate. As such they imply the power of music as an influential tool of political propaganda.

Though the initial reaction to Arne's *Judgment of Paris* was favorable it appears that it received little sustained success. Covent Garden revived Arne's work on 3 April 1759 and advertised it as having "new additions," though there is no record of what these may have been.<sup>60</sup> By 1767 there had been only eleven performances in London.<sup>61</sup> By comparison Arne's most popular masque, *Comus* (1738), received eleven performances in its first year and nearly eighty at Drury Lane alone by 1760.<sup>62</sup>

The general quality of Arne's setting is high, and is attested to by its initial popularity. Arne's music is strongly influenced by both Italian operatic style and by an English opera style modeled on that of Henry Purcell. The work contains a number of full fledged *da capo* arias, such as "Fear not mortal," and numerous instances of coloraturic passage-work. This is not to say, however, that Arne abandoned the more typically English style of tuneful lyricism which marked the previous settings of Eccles

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<sup>60</sup> Fiske, *Theatre Music*, 196.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 181.



and, to a lesser extent, Sammartini. Arias such as "Nature fram'd thee sure for loving" and "Forbear, O goddess of desire" recall a style of minuet-song (lyrical 3/4) typical of Henry Purcell.<sup>63</sup>

Unlike Sammartini, Arne made some alterations to Congreve's original plan. As mentioned the secco recitatives and choruses were not included in the published version but may be assumed from the published libretto. The first music that survives is for Paris' accompanied recitative "O Ravishing Delight." Since no other music is given for the initial dialogue between Paris and Mercury we may assume that it was given in a long *secco* recitative. Perhaps the most notable change to Congreve's plan, however, was the omission of the opening arias for Juno and Pallas. Thus, as they are not included in the published version we may assume that both Juno's "Saturnia wife of Thundering Jove" and Pallas' "This way mortal" were given in *secco* recitative. Venus, nonetheless maintained her introductory aria "Hither turn thee." The second half of the work, following Paris' aria "Distracted I turn" largely follows Congreve's original plan, with each of the three goddesses embellishing their pleas with the addition of choruses. The lone alteration is the exclusion of one verse from Venus' concluding aria "Nature fram'd thee." Arne also held to Congreve's original vision by presenting the work in a single act, this in contrast to Sammartini's two act version. Arne's score is also far more concise than Sammartini's, largely due to its lack of word repetition. As edited by Ian Spink, Arne's work is only 95 pages while Sammartini's manuscript score is 225 pages.

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<sup>63</sup> See, for example, the song "Fairest Isle" from *King Arthur* or "When I have often heard" from *The Fairy Queen*.

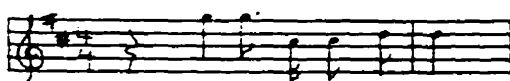
Arne, unlike Sammartini, combines both accompanied and *secco* recitative in his setting. The accompanied recitatives are typically used only at the most important moments of the work such as Paris' initial view of the goddesses "O Ravishing Delight", and his decision to award the apple to Venus in "I yield" and to introduce both Pallas and Venus' second arias. The accompanied recitatives are particularly rich in harmonic content and thus more dramatic and expressive than those of any of his predecessors. Above all else, however, Arne's score, especially in arias such as "Nature fram'd thee" and Mercury and Paris' duet "Happy I," exhibits a lyricism reminiscent of Henry Purcell. This similarity is not surprising, perhaps, given Arne's fondness for Purcell as evidenced by his setting of *Dido and Aeneas* (1734)<sup>64</sup> and in his re-setting of Purcell and Dryden's *King Arthur* (1771). Commensurate with the nostalgia for late seventeenth and early-eighteenth century political thinking, as manifest in Frederick and the Patriots resurrection of Whig ideals, composers such as Sammartini and, even more so, Arne exhibited a similar nostalgia for the music of this same period.

There are some, albeit limited, areas of similarity between Arne and Sammartini's settings. Both works, for example, begin with a fugal overture, though the subjects bear no particular resemblance to one another. Both works are lavishly scored, and include oboes, timpani, and trumpets in addition to strings (with cello) and continuo - though Arne does not employ bassoons or horns. While Sammartini took the unusual step of employing a cello obbligato for Venus' final aria, Arne, equally unexpectedly, uses a cello obbligato in Venus' first aria "Gentle swain, hither turn thee." Influence from

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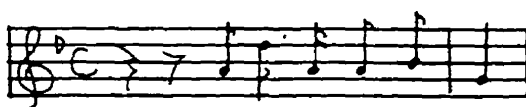
<sup>64</sup> The work was based on a libretto by Barton Booth which had been originally set by Johann Pepusch in 1716.

Sammartini may also be surmised in that neither Sammartini nor Arne use flutes in their settings and rely instead on oboes. This is in distinct contrast with the earlier three settings which all used flutes to portray Venus and her association with love. Perhaps the strongest evidence, however, of Sammartini's influence on Arne occurs in "O Ravishing Delight." Here, in addition to the similar though conventional use of accompanying strings, the opening motive appears to have been directly influenced by Sammartini's setting as shown in Examples 4-5a,b.



O Ra vishing de - light!

Ex. 4-5a: Paris, "O Ravishing Delight" (T. Arne)



O Ra vishing de - light!

Ex. 4-5b: Paris, "O Ravishing Delight" (G. Sammartini)

The similarity does not last long however, and this appears to be the lone instance of a direct melodic influence of Sammartini on Arne's work. Indeed, unlike Sammartini, Arne's score owes little to the preceding settings. Nonetheless, just as the libretto was

originally set in the context of a composition contest, it is interesting to envision Arne as, in a sense, competing with Sammartini.<sup>65</sup>

Like Sammartini, Arne uses no ground basses. Arne's work is, however, often more florid than Sammartini's. The complexity of the vocal melodies is balanced by the high degree of rhythmic complexity found in many of the instrumental parts. Consider the opening measures of the cello obbligato to Venus' aria "Hither turn thee" given in example 4-6.



Ex. 4-6: Venus, "Hither turn thee" Cello obbligato (T. Arne)

Though Arne was aware of and influenced by Sammartini's setting it is apparent that he tried to create a setting that was distinct from the earlier version. His native command of the English language ensured a smoother and original approach to text declamation and, as mentioned, his melodic approach balanced coloratura and simple lyricism. Likewise, the harmonic organization of Arne's setting appears to be entirely of his own design. Given the lack of a complete score the exact harmonic organization of Arne's setting is open to speculation. However, using Ian Spink's reconstruction of the missing secco recitatives and choruses it is possible to construct a key scheme for Arne's setting as shown in Table 4-3 on the following page.

<sup>65</sup> It is also interesting to note that Arne was also well aware of at least one of the earlier settings. Using new words, Arne adapted John Weldon's music from Juno's aria "Let ambition fire thy mind" for his opera *Love in a Village* (1762).

**Table 4-3: T. Arne's key scheme (based on Ian Spink's reconstruction)<sup>66</sup>**

Character/Style	Section/Title	Key
Section: A	Overture	G Minor - G major
Mercury - Secco recitative*	"From High Olympus"	G - D Major
Paris - Secco recitative*	"O Hermes"	
Mercury - Secco recitative*	"This radiant fruit"	
Paris - Accompanied recit	"O Ravishing Delight"	D - A Major
Mercury - Aria	"Fear not mortal"	F Major
Mercury & Paris -duet	"Happy I of human race"	B-flat Major
Section B		
Juno - Secco recitative*	"Saturnia"	B-flat Major
Pallas - Secco recitative*	"This way mortal"	G Major
Venus - Aria	"Hither turn thee"	G Major
Trio	"Hither turn thee"	A Major
Section C		
Paris - Aria	"Distracted I turn"	C Major
Juno - Aria	"Let ambition fire thy mind"	A Major
Juno - Chorus*		A Major
Pallas - accompanied recit	"Awake thy spirits raise"	F Major
Pallas - Aria	"The glorious voice of war"	D Major
Pallas - Chorus*	"O how glorious"	D Major
Venus - accompanied recit	"Stay lovely youth"	E Major
Venus - Aria	"One only joy"	C Major - A Minor
Venus - Chorus*		A Minor
Venus - Aria	"Nature fram'd thee"	G Major
Paris - accompanied recit	"I yield"	A Major
Paris - Aria	"Forbear, O goddess of desire"	D Major
Grand Chorus	"Hither all ye graces"	D Major

\* Denotes numbers reconstructed by Ian Spink

Spink's reconstruction is useful in coming to grips with an overall sense of the work's harmonic plan in comparison to the previous settings. However, given the lack of certainty surrounding this reconstruction I will confine my subsequent comments only to those numbers included in the original published version.

<sup>66</sup> Keys for all recitative sections are based on opening and closing key areas. To supply the missing keys Spink merely applies the key of the immediately preceding known number and, in the case of successively unknown numbers, applies the key of the immediate following number. Spink, "Introduction," xv.

Arne's harmonic plan, like Sammartini's and the three original settings, shows little in the way of adventuresome key shifts. Like Sammartini's setting, Arne's is also notably open, regardless of Spink's reconstruction. The piece ostensibly begins in G minor/major and concludes in the dominant D major. There also appears to be little coherent relationship between Arne's harmonic plan and the stage action. "O Ravishing Delight," for example, in the previous settings, including Sammartini's, provided the first opportunity to inject a minor key into the major setting, thus mirroring the destabilization caused by the goddesses' descent. Arne, by contrast merely uses the dominant key of D major to portray this event. Likewise, there is no consistent use of keys to portray the various characters. Mercury is given F and B-flat major, Paris D, C, A and G major, Juno A major, Pallas F, and D major and Venus variously G, E, and C major. Notably, none of the three competing goddesses share any keys while Paris, divided in his choice and undecided in his judgment, shares at least one key with each of the goddesses.

With the exception of the beginning of the overture (G minor) and the second half of Venus' aria "One only joy" (A minor) the work seems inexplicably mired in major keys. The brief move to flat side keys of F major and B-flat major which accompanies Mercury's aria "Fear not mortal" and the duet "Happy I of Human race" similarly seems to serve no particular dramatic purpose. The concentration on stable major keys and the lack of any adventuresome modulations, while also fairly typical of Classical style in general, may suggest that Arne viewed the work, not as a cautionary tale, but rather as a positive statement on the moral virtues of beauty.

Arne only manifests a limited attempt, through harmonic means, to delineate the work's overall form as suggested through Congreve's arrangement of numbers. Key shifts, at least, do occur with the transitions between sections. Thus, given a harmonic reduction similar to the one carried out on the original three settings, the following harmonic outline is present.

Section:	A	B	C
	G major - B flat major	G major <sup>67</sup> - A major	C major - D major
	I flat III	I II	IV V

This outline is obviously a non-functional progression and points to the fact that Arne, like Sammartini, was likely little attuned to, or at least little concerned with, the longer range structural subtleties of Congreve's text. No attempt is made, for example, to harmonically depict the increasing tension of Paris' judgment which Congreve, through a series of increasingly climactic duos, trios, and choruses, attempts to achieve. Despite the lack of long range internal logic in his harmonic planning, Arne, at the conclusion of the work, exhibits at least some evidence of short term key structure as the work concludes with what is ostensibly a V - I cadence, A major to D major.<sup>68</sup>

Thomas Arne, "O Ravishing Delight!"

In the following discussion it may prove helpful to refer to Appendix G which contains the entire settings of Arne's "O Ravishing Delight!" and "Nature fram'd thee."

<sup>67</sup> This is the first key found after section B that is included in Arne's published version.

<sup>68</sup> It must be noted, of course, that many operas of this period are not harmonically cohesive.

Arne's version of "O Ravishing Delight" is the first accompanied recitative in the work, evidence that Arne was not totally oblivious to the dramatic importance of the moment when the goddesses first descend. The descent is musically painted in the opening two measures with a rapid two octave descending scale played by the violins. This brief descent serves as an introduction to Paris's vocal entry. The shortness of this instrumental introduction of the goddesses stands in contrast to the elaborate sixteen-measure introduction used by Sammartini. The number is largely syllabic with the exception of two extended melismas on the word "joy." Somewhat unusually for Arne, this number also relies on abundant text repetition, reminiscent of Eccles' equally unusual approach to "O Ravishing Delight." Both composers perhaps felt the need for text repetition at this moment in order to underscore Paris' incredulity and reinforce the exceptional beauty of the three goddesses.

Arne's harmonic vocabulary in "O Ravishing Delight" is quite rich, as he employs a number of secondary dominants and chromatic chords. The plan of the recitative is also, typically, complex and well matched to the sentiments of Congreve's text. The number is comprised of five separate sections. Beginning in D major with an *Andante* tempo indication, the first section lasts nine measures, including the two measure instrumental introduction, and incorporates the entire first stanza of text. The second section, marked *Andante Largo*, lasts eight measures and moves to A minor with the phrase "I faint I fall." This section includes all the text up to and including the line "Help me Hermes or I die." The minor mode and slower tempo of this section thus paint Paris' extreme emotions at this point. The third section, marked *Allegro*, incorporates the



final phrase of text "save me from excess of joy" and modulates to A major. This section, lasting twelve measures, underlines the urgency of Paris' request a situation amplified by the faster tempo and increased activity in the accompaniment. Arne also extends this section by repeating the line in a melodic sequence and incorporating another extended five measure sequential melisma on the word "joy." The fourth section lasts just three measures. It shifts from the preceding A major *Allegro* into an E major *Andante Largo* for a repetition of the line "Help me Hermes or I die." As if indeed Paris has died, this brief moment is dramatically prolonged by a *fermata* which concludes the phrase. After this climactic rupture the number concludes with the final section which again repeats the final line "save me from excess of joy." Following the dramatic *fermata* of the previous section this final section shifts into an upbeat *Allegro*, heightened by a running sixteenth note string accompaniment, and modulates back to A major. This section lasts twelve measures and corresponds to the previous appearance of the line. With minor deviations it incorporates the same key, length, and sequential development including another extended melisma on the word "joy." A three-measure instrumental coda brings the number to a close.

As in the previous settings the rapid key changes and tempo shifts seem to reflect Paris' state of confusion. Dissonant melodic intervals, such as the tritone leap on "much rapture," also help to paint the state of psychological disarray in which Paris finds himself. The same can be said for the irregular phrasing which changes with almost every new phrase and section.

In terms of motivic content and orchestration Arne's setting of this number, as mentioned above, bears some similarity to Sammartini's setting. Further similarities can be found in their shared mid-century propensity to statically repeat many notes and harmonies in the accompaniment. Arne also maintains a relatively static half-note harmonic rhythm for almost the entire number.

Both Sammartini and Arne follow the heightened emotions of "O Ravishing Delight" with lyrical triple meter arias. For both Mercury's "Fear not Mortal," is an attempt to musically reconcile Paris' doubts and fears. In order to accomplish this Arne contrasts the irregular and discordant nature of "O Ravishing Delight" with an aria employing a lyrical *Con spirito* triple meter, stable balanced phrases of four and eight measures, and simple diatonic melodies and harmonies. Mercury, in his traditional role of eloquent conciliator, thus reconciles Paris to his fate. The situation, as outlined below, is somewhat similar in Arne's version of Venus' aria "Nature fram'd thee" which finds Venus, representing love, ultimately resolving Paris' indecision.

Differences between Sammartini and Arne's settings of "O Ravishing Delight" are harder to find. Perhaps the most obvious difference is found in the different meters employed. Sammartini, it will be recalled, shifted from 6/8 to 4/4 whereas Arne uses 4/4 throughout with occasional shifts in tempo, *Andante Largo* to *Allegro* as outlined above. Sammartini's setting is also generally more melodically active, with the string accompaniments playing a much more important and independent role. Arne's setting, in contrast, is more static with strings and continuo in parallel unison for almost the entire number.

Thomas Arne. "Nature fram'd thee"

Many of Arne's arias such as Mercury's "Fear not Mortal" exhibit a number of Italianate aspects such as a full *da capo* form, ornate coloratura and many opportunities for vocal cadenzas. "Nature fram'd thee sure for loving" however owes more to popular English tradition with its simple diatonic harmonies, lyrical melodies and largely syllabic declamation.<sup>69</sup> The number takes a compact strophic form consisting of three verses with each verse divided in half to form A and B sections. The number begins with two contrasting four measure phrases from which almost all of the remaining melodic and harmonic material in the work is drawn. The first consists of ascending quarter notes ornamented with grace notes while the second uses a series of diatonic running eighth-notes enlivened with triplets and trills. The repeated A section is constructed from these two phrases with the second phrase a slightly altered version of the running eighth-note phrase. The B section is comprised of two eight measure phrases the first employing a new presentation of elements drawn from both opening phrases and the second an extended version of the running eighth-note phrase.

The work is essentially cast as a strophic repeat of a binary form, and thus is similar to the dance-like binary settings of this number by Weldon and Eccles. This common use of dance-like forms might be the result of the influence of the earlier composers on Arne. In using such structures to set one of the most influential numbers in the work all three composers appear to equate formal regularity with musical beauty. The dance forms likely evoked elevated courtly taste - the ordered dance forms roughly analogous to the societal order represented by the court itself. However the composers

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<sup>69</sup> Please refer to Appendix G.

may merely have considered simple binary dance forms as the most coherent way to set the balanced structure of Congreve's verse.

While Sammartini used obbligato oboes for "Nature Fram'd thee," Arne merely orchestrates it for strings and continuo. Indeed Arne, like Sammartini, shuns the previously conventional use of flutes to represent Venus throughout the setting though the equally conventional use of trumpets and timpani are retained for Pallas' chorus "The glorious voice of war."

Arne's "Nature fram'd thee" is set in a flowing 3/4 time marked *Dolce*. For much of the aria the texture is rather thin as the continuo often remains tacet while the voice and violins double each other in parallel unison octaves or thirds. Through the 3/4 time signature, strophic binary form, and simple homophonic accompaniment this aria effectively recalls the lyrical minuet style ballads, such as "Fairest Isle" from *King Arthur*, common in the works of Henry Purcell. As is also typical of such works the melody is simple, mostly stepwise, of a limited range and largely syllabic. The second phrase of the B section of the form receives slightly more ornamentation as shown in Example 4-7.



Ex. 4-7: Venus, "Nature fram'd thee" (T. Arne)

Again, the lyrical triple meter and triplets are here used to evoke and suggest the beauty of Helen. Oddly enough, Arne does not use Congreve's third verse to "Nature fram'd thee" and, instead skips from the second verse "Happy nymph who shall enfold thee" straight to

the fourth verse "Gentle shepherd, if my pleading." By leaving out the third verse "Fairest she, all Nymphs transcending" Arne shortens the song, evidently feeling that three verses achieved a more satisfactory balance than four. As mentioned each of the three verses is split in half corresponding to the A and B sections of the binary form. As the music of each half verse is repeated three times Arne likely felt a fourth repetition of the same music redundant. His decision to leave out the verse which compares Helen's beauty to the three goddesses ("Were she for the Crown contending, Thou would'st own her Beauty's Queen") can be read as an attempt to lessen Helen's impact or influence in the story in favour of Venus' ultimate triumph. Arne thus avoids any confusion as to who actually was crowned "Queen of Beauty."

The simple melody, diatonic harmonies, minuet style rhythms, balanced repetitive phrasing combine to give this number a light and graceful tone. This moment which ultimately convinces Paris to yield the prize appears more in keeping with the natural sentiments of the text and less emotionally affected than in earlier settings. Arne prefers to see the moment as a harmoniously balanced one. Venus, through her lyrical melody and regular phrasing, removes all discord from Paris' mind. The beguiling clarity and tunefulness of Arne's music underlines the clarity of Venus' argument. As such it is the power of music, as much as the power of love, which is ultimately able to reconcile Paris' indecision.

Arne's setting was easily the most popular of all five extant settings of Congreve's libretto. In addition to the initial performances in London and Dublin, by 1771 the work

had been revived at least sixteen more times.<sup>70</sup> One notable revival took place at the Haymarket Theatre on 3 April 1751. This performance was a benefit for Thomas Lowe "with new additions." For this occasion "Books of the Masque" were advertised for sale "Price 6d." No copy of this libretto, however, is known to survive and it is impossible to say what the "new additions" might have been.

For the most part, Sammartini's and Arne's settings share many features. As with the original three "Prize" competition settings, both Sammartini's and Arne's works share similar historical influences. Handel's shadow is cast over both works, indeed of Arne's style in general Charles Burney observed "that the utmost. . . attempted seems to have been an humble and timid imitation of Handel's style of composition."<sup>71</sup> In keeping with mid-century pre-classical musical trends both Sammartini and Arne exhibit balanced four and eight-bar phrasing, static repetitive harmonies, accompanied recitative, extended instrumental ritornellos, extended *da capo* structures, and lyrical vocal melodies. Both also achieve a balance between aria, recitative, chorus and instrumental sections. Sammartini, to be sure, shows a greater mastery of, or concern for, harmonic planning but relied on Eccles' earlier setting for much of his melodic and declamatory inspiration. Thus Sammartini's score might be judged more unified in terms of its architectural key structure and Arne's more unified in its matching of melody to Congreve's words. Both composers continued the use of melisma in their works though it is used less often and is

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<sup>70</sup> This according to advertisements listed in *The London Stage*. The following dates and theatres are included: 12 April 1746 (Drury Lane), 20 April 1748 (Drury Lane), April 5 and 19 1750 (Covent Garden), 5 February 1751 (Haymarket), 3 April, 30 November, 4 December 1759 (Covent Garden), 18 June 1760 (Ranelagh), 12 June 1761 (Ranelagh), 24, 26, 31 August, 2, 5 September 1768 (Haymarket), 6 June 1771 (Covent Garden).

<sup>71</sup> Burney, *History*, ii, 781.

far less ornate than the earlier settings. They also both retained a simpler more lyrical approach to Venus' final aria "Nature fram'd thee." Sammartini, however, wrote two extended and relatively complex arias for this number. In contrast Arne confined himself to a simple strophic binary setting similar to those of Weldon and Eccles. Both composers avoided the traditional use of obbligato flutes to accompany Venus, Sammartini preferring instead the novelty of oboes while Arne employs a cello obbligato in "Hither turn thee" and a standard string orchestra for "Nature fram'd thee." Arne also added an element of variety to his setting by employing a greater degree of rhythmic complexity and vitality than is generally found in Sammartini's score.

As has been outlined, both settings exhibit contemporary stylistic aspects in keeping with the mid part of the century. Nonetheless the political nature of these works lies largely in their recollection of the past. Both settings were either sponsored or influenced by Frederick, Prince of Wales and his coterie of patriot opposition to Walpole's corrupt government. The patriot opposition created a politics of nostalgia which, led by Bolingbroke's desire to return to earlier Whig principles of a benevolent elected kingship, contrasted the heroic principles and idealism of "old England" against the corruption and cowardice of modern England under Walpole and George II. This style of nostalgic opposition is illustrated in Pope's *Epilogue to the Satires* (1738):

Old England's Genius, rough with many a scar,  
Dragg'd in the Dust! His Arms hang idly round,  
His Flag inverted trails the ground! . . .  
See thronging Millions to the Pagod run,  
And offer Country, Parent, Wife, or Son!  
Hear her black Trumpet thro' the Land proclaim,  
That "Not to be corrupted is the Shame. . ."

While Truth, Worth, Wisdom, daily they decry-  
"Nothing is Sacred now but Villany."  
(Lines 152-54, 158-60, 169-70)<sup>72</sup>

Thus Pope contrasts the heroism of "Old England" with the modern day corruption of the Pagod (Walpole and/or George II). Indeed the language of the opposition even supported a return to the "good old song" in order to offset the "new Court jargon."<sup>73</sup> Furthermore, the ills which permeated society under Walpole and George II were thought to be curable by returning to the old Lockean/Whig notions of public rule for public good. Poets such as James Miller, for example, actively called for a return of Liberty: "To publick Justice publick Plund'ers bring,/ And take the Wicked from before the King."<sup>74</sup> Such attacks on Walpole's regime eventually had the desired effect as he was forced to resign in 1742.<sup>75</sup> Imitating this literary politics of nostalgia Sammartini and Arne in their settings of *The Judgment of Paris* return to the use of a "good old song." They employ a masque form originally popular at the beginning of the century, a libretto from the same period, and some compositional techniques such as fugue, lyrical melodies, and minuet arias which also recalled the period. Likewise they chose Congreve's *The Judgment of Paris* text which originally was inspired by a movement to empower public political choice and raise public taste.

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<sup>72</sup> John Butt, ed. *The Poems of Alexander Pope* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), 694. Many other poems satirizing the corrupt state of Walpole's England also appeared in the years 1738-40 including Bezaleel Morrice's, *The Present Corruption of Britons*; Charles Wood's, *The World Unmasked: A Satire*; Paul Whitehead's *The State of Rome, under Nero and Domitian*. See Bertrand Goldgar, *Walpole and the Wits* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1976), 174.

<sup>73</sup> As quoted in Goldgar, *Walpole and the Wits*, 167.

<sup>74</sup> James Miller *The Year Forty-One: Carmen Seculare* (London, 1741), p.15. As quoted in Goldgar, *Walpole and the Wits*, 212.

<sup>75</sup> Coincidentally or not, 1742 was also the year of the public premiere of Arne's *The Judgment of Paris*.



#### IV. Judgment of Paris Settings: Post-Arne.<sup>76</sup>

As mentioned the final revival of Arne's setting of *The Judgment of Paris* was in 1771. In addition to Gay's earlier satirical allusions to Congreve's libretto in *The Beggar's Opera* the work was further alluded to in several comic or burlesque versions of the story. Though such parodies may have helped to sharpen the original political message of the story, the questionable taste and quality of these works likely did more to discourage further use of the work. In 1765, for example, Françoise Hippolyte Barthelemon staged his *The Judgment of Paris* to a libretto by Ralph Schomberg. According to Roger Fiske this work, an all sung burlesque, suffered from "... a singularly un-funny libretto."<sup>77</sup> Similarly, eight years later in 1773, John Abraham Fisher and Kane O' Hara staged their own all-sung burlesque called *The Golden Pippen*. This afterpiece was also loosely based on the Judgment of Paris story and found Venus cheating her rival goddesses in a game of cards. The text is farcical but on several occasions seems to recall Congreve's text directly. The phrase "Venus gains the golden prize" recalls Congreve's original "Pallas claims the golden Prize." Similarly the phrase "Juno can not sue in vain" directly recalls Congreve's text for Venus: "Let not Venus sue in vain." Most of the music for this piece was borrowed from other sources and, indeed, the melody for the latter text example seems vaguely derivative of Arne's setting (Example 4-8ab, following page)

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<sup>76</sup> For a chronological survey of musical works based on The Judgment of Paris story please refer to appendix B.

<sup>77</sup> Fiske, *Theatre Music*, 321.



Example 4-8a: Juno (K. O'Hara)



Example 4-8b: Venus (T. Arne)

Together with a number of other comic burlettas which satirized ancient mythology, such works helped to establish the view that the classical deities could no longer be taken seriously as moral allegorical subjects. To some degree the parody of the ancient deities can also be read as critical parodies of the aristocracy which had traditionally set the standards of aesthetic judgment and taste. So too did such productions represent a decline in the traditional notion of moral utility which had previously been a hallmark of neoclassical aesthetics earlier in the century. In light of such low comic versions of the story, Congreve's libretto would likely have seemed hopelessly naive to late eighteenth-century audiences. Such parodies, nonetheless, ensured the Judgment of Paris subject continued to hold the public's interest in the later part of the century.

In 1809 however, a final setting of Congreve's masque was made by James Fisin. Fisin (1750-1847) was an accomplished pianist, violinist and composer and is remembered primarily for his indebtedness to Charles Burney "from whom" Fisin acknowledged "he experienced infinite advantages," and to Sir Edward Walpole, "from whose exalted protection and benevolent attention he derived great benefit."<sup>78</sup> Few details are known of his career; he was one of the first violins at the Handel Memorial Concerts at Westminster Abbey and the Pantheon of 1784 and often played in concerts for the Academy of Ancient Music. In addition to his setting of *The Judgment of Paris* his published compositions include five sets of canzonets, six vocal duets, a number of ballads and several sonatas.

Fisin's *Judgment of Paris* was published by Richard Birchall with accompaniments for piano forte, violin or flute, and cello. The work was "expressly composed for private amusement" and was dedicated "by permission" to the Countess of Bridgewater.<sup>79</sup> The names of over eighty subscribers are listed on the second page of the publication. Some of the more prominent names include Fanny Burney, Thomas Twining, the Duchess of Newcastle, William Shield, the Countess of Winterton, and several members of Parliament including John Archer Houblon, Richard Davis, and Robert Alexander Crikitt. Though the political affiliations of all the names on the list is difficult to trace, it is well known that the husband of the work's dedicatee, the Earl of

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<sup>78</sup> James Fisin as quoted in *A Biographical Dictionary of Actors etc...*, Vol. 5, 286.

<sup>79</sup> An edition of this work, published by Richard Birchall, resides in London at the British Library, G. 317.b.

Bridgewater, also listed as a subscriber, and his predecessors, had been Whig supporters for generations.<sup>80</sup>

Entitled *The Judgment of Paris: A Masque Written by Congreve* the work itself bears little resemblance to the previous settings. Fisin, though an obscure composer, exhibits a competent and straight-forward style, exploiting simple catchy melodies - marketable and perhaps something of a throw-back to the earlier ideals of Eccles and Arne. The work displays a number of traits, such as a predominantly homophonic texture, balanced phrasing and motivic repetition, which are in keeping with the early nineteenth-century date of its composition. The work lacks the lavish orchestral setting which marked all the previous settings, however the flute is consistently used to accompany Venus. Again Congreve's libretto is used in its entirety, though with some alteration to the number scheme. "O Ravishing Delight," for example, was originally intended as a recitative but is broken into both aria and recitative, with the aria beginning on the words "I faint I fall." There is some variety in earlier settings of this number as Daniel Purcell essentially breaks the number into a similar aria - recitative pairing. The published version of Fisin's setting also lacks the impact of the choruses which follow the goddesses' second plea. The final grand chorus is, however, retained in a four voice setting and is the only chorus in the work.

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<sup>80</sup> Speck, *Tory and Whig*, 19.

V. Other Works Based on "Judgment" or "Choice": Handel's *Choice of Hercules*.<sup>81</sup>

The renewal of interest around 1740 in Congreve's *The Judgment of Paris*, and other works based on the same story, was accompanied by a variety of additional works employing similar "judgment" or "choice" plots. A brief survey of titles reveals Maurice Greene's *The Judgment of Hercules* (1740) based on a libretto by John Hoadly, G.F. Handel's masque *The Choice of Hercules* (1751)<sup>82</sup> based on a libretto by Thomas Morell, Christopher Smart's masque *The Judgment of Midas* (1752), John Stanley's narrative cantata *The Choice of Hercules* (date unknown), William Yates' *The Choice of Apollo* (1765) based on a libretto by John Potter, and Michael Arne's pantomime *The Choice of Harlequin* (1781).<sup>83</sup> The plot of each of these works revolves around a moral judgment or choice which the title character must make. In most cases it involves a trio of contenders just as in the *Judgment of Paris* story. In the case of William Yates' *The Choice of Apollo*, for example, Apollo chooses the character representing the art of poetry over those representing the arts of painting and music.<sup>84</sup>

The most popular subject, besides that of the Paris story, is undoubtedly the Choice of Hercules. In this story Hercules must make a moral choice between the allegorical characters of Virtue and Pleasure. Virtue, not surprisingly, wins out. In this respect the story parallels that of *The Judgment of Paris*. As outlined in Chapter One,

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<sup>81</sup> For a chronological survey of musical works based on "judgment" or "choice" plots please refer to appendix C.

<sup>82</sup> Ruth Smith prefers to call this work an "allegorical unacted drama" rather than a masque. See Ruth Smith, *Handel's Oratorios and Eighteenth-Century Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 22.

<sup>83</sup> The compilation of these works and dates was gleaned from entries in Roger Fiske's *Theatre Music* and from entries in *The London Stage*.

<sup>84</sup> A similar work entitled *The Theatrical Candidates* was staged at Drury Lane by John Garrick, music by William Bates, in 1775. The work involves an election, of sorts, in which the character of Pantomime surprisingly wins out over the characters of Tragedy and Comedy.

beauty was equated, by Shaftesbury and others, with virtue. Thus Venus, judged the most beautiful goddess, was also judged the most virtuous goddess. Though all three offers in Congreve's version involved some degree of pleasure, her offer of love, albeit adulterous love, still won out over the offers of empire and fame offered by Juno and Pallas.

Musical settings of *The Judgment of Hercules* by Greene and Stanley appear to pre-date Handel's, but his is, by far, the most musically important setting of the subject. As outlined by Winton Dean, much of Handel's music was adapted from his abandoned opera *Alceste* (1749).<sup>85</sup> Handel pieced together the score between 28 June and 5 July 1750 and it was premiered at Covent Garden on 1 March 1751 as "an Additional New Act" to *Alexander's Feast*.<sup>86</sup> The cast consisted of Miss Faulkner (Pleasure), Miss Young (Hercules), Lowe (Attendant on Pleasure), and Mrs. Arne (Virtue).<sup>87</sup> The casting of Mrs. Arne in the role of Virtue of course resonates with her previous role, some eight years earlier, as Venus in Thomas Arne's *Judgment of Paris*.

Though the music is unrelated to any of the previous *Judgment of Paris* settings the language of the libretto and structural plan of the work are remarkably similar to Congreve's plan for *The Judgment of Paris*. The work, written for two sopranos, tenor and alto soloists, opens with Pleasure trying to entice Hercules to her cause. Her arias "Come, blooming boy" and "While for thy arms that beauty glows" are strengthened by a chorus of her attendants. Virtue follows, rebuking Pleasure, and appealing to Hercules'

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<sup>85</sup> Dean, *Handel's Dramatic Oratorios*, 579.

<sup>86</sup> The political content of *Alexander's Feast* has previously been discussed in this chapter with relation to Arne's setting of *The Judgment of Paris*. That both Arne's *The Judgment of Paris* and Handel's *Choice of Hercules* were chosen as companion pieces to *Alexander's Feast* is testimony to the shared political, aesthetic, and narrative subject matter of all three works.

<sup>87</sup> Dean, *Handel's Dramatic Oratorios*, 586.

rationality in the arias "This manly youth's exalted mind" and "Go assert thy heav'nly race." Virtue's case is also then reinforced by a chorus of her attendants. Much as in Congreve's *Judgment of Paris* plan, Pleasure then makes a second plea "Turn thee, youth, to joy and love." This aria-chorus contains language reminiscent of Venus' first plea, "Hither turn thee, gentle Swain," from Congreve's *The Judgment of Paris*. Interestingly this sentiment is also present in Maurice Greene's *Judgment of Hercules* which contains a trio entitled "Hither turn thee, lovely youth."<sup>88</sup> Following Pleasure's second plea, Hercules interjects with recitative "Oh cease enchanting Siren! Cease thy song." The emotions of this moment, and the lyrics chosen to express them, are extremely similar to Congreve's version of Paris's recitative following Venus' final plea:

I yield, I yield, O take the Prize,  
And cease, O cease th' enchanting Song.

Following Pleasure's final plea to Hercules a trio between the three main characters forms a climax to the first section of the work, much in the same manner that a trio ends the second section of Congreve's work.

The final section of *The Choice of Hercules* is marked by Virtue's second plea "Mount the steep ascent!" in which she offers Hercules the prize of immortality "among the Gods a God." Hercules, like Paris, is helpless to resist and accompanied by a final chorus "Virtue will place thee in that blest abode" ascends to the heavens.

While such structural and textual similarities between *The Choice of Hercules* and Congreve's *Judgment of Paris* in no way prove a direct influence on later masques based on similar subjects it does, nonetheless, go some way to showing a general commonality

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<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 580.

of stylistic strategy and language which was employed by various librettists and composers at this time. *The Choice of Hercules* presents a moral judgment which may be likened to Paris' aesthetic judgment. Indeed Paris' decision is also partly a moral one as he chooses love over political and military power. As mentioned, the role of aesthetics and ethics were intimately connected during this period. For this reason Hercules' decision must also be regarded as an aesthetic one.

Though it was pieced together quite late in his life, Handel's work is a competent representation of his earlier pastoral style. As such it is in largely in keeping with Ellen Harris' observations regarding his older style of pastoral writing c. 1708. In addition to containing a large number of relatively short (two to four measure) instrumental ritornellos and interludes there are:

... fewer vocal cadenzas and less "spinning out" of motives. The melodic line becomes more conjunct or triadic and more syllabic; there are fewer dramatic contrasts between sections.<sup>89</sup>

The work is also marked by Handel's typical rhythmic drive and vitality, a consistent use of accompanied recitative as well as the use of mostly homophonic choruses which break into imitative polyphony in order to highlight the most important text.

The work lacks the lavish orchestral setting which marked all of the settings of *The Judgment of Paris*, however, as in the various portrayals of Venus, Pleasure is orchestrally portrayed by means of flute and oboe accompaniment. A pair of trumpets lends weight to two of Virtue's arias, much in the manner of previous orchestrational colouring of Pallas' role. Despite their opposing moral representations both Virtue and

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<sup>89</sup> Harris, *Pastoral Tradition*, 170.



Pleasure make their initial appearance in the work with similar rhythmic profiles.

Pleasure's music in "Come blooming boy" is saturated by a consistent use of a dotted figure of a sixteenth-note followed by a dotted eighth (Example 4-9a). This figure even bleeds into the successive aria - chorus "While for thy arms" and "Seize these blessings." Virtue's opening statement "This manly youth's exalted mind" is even more strongly marked by a dotted sixteenth to a thirty-second note figure which permeates both the vocal and instrumental texture for the duration of the aria (Example 4-9b).



Example 4-9a: Violin, m.1. Pleasure, "Come blooming boy" (G.F. Handel)



Example 4-9b: Violin, from Virtue's "This manly youth's exalted mind" (G.F. Handel)

The main source of contrast between these characters comes from the seductive 3/4 time used for Pleasure's "Come blooming boy" versus a more direct 4/4 used for Virtue's "This manly youth's exalted mind." The common use of dotted figures, nonetheless, adds a certain rhythmic liveliness, reflective of the energy and youth of Hercules, which is not a particular feature of the previous *Judgment of Paris* settings.

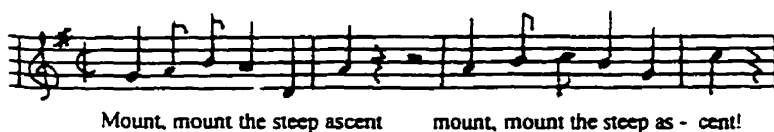
Handel's key structure, however, does not serve to portray plot or characters. This might be due to the fact that Handel adapted the majority of this setting from *Alceste*.

Nonetheless some key characteristics emerge. Perhaps of most note is the fact that the work is tonally closed, beginning in G major and ending in g minor. The final chorus in g minor, combined with a rather austere fugue, imparts little in the way of a triumphant victory by Virtue. It is as if Hercules would perhaps have been better served and happier had he chosen Pleasure's path. A complete summary of keys is given below in Table 4-4.

**TABLE 4-4: Key structure in Handel's *Choice of Hercules***

Character/Style	Title	Key
Sinfonia		G Major
Pleasure - Recit	"See Hercules!"	D Minor
Pleasure - Aria	"Come blooming boy"	D Minor
Pleasure - Aria	"There the brisk sparkling"	D Major
Pleasure - Aria	"While for thy arms"	D Minor
Chorus	"Seize these blessings"	D Minor
Virtue - Recit	"Away mistaken wretch"	D Major
Virtue - Aria	"This manly youth's"	D Major
Virtue - Aria	"Go assert thy heav'nly race"	F Major
Chorus	"So shalt thou gain immortal praise"	D Major
Pleasure - Aria & chorus	"Turn thee youth, to joy and love"	A Major
Hercules - Recit	"O cease enchanting siren"	E Major
Hercules - Aria	"Yet, can I hear"	E Major
Attendant on Pleasure - Aria	"Enjoy the sweet Elysian grove"	A Major
Trio (Hercules, Pleasure, Virtue)	"Where shall I go?"	A Minor
Virtue - Aria	"Mount the steep ascent"	C Major - G Major
Chorus	"Arise, mount the steep ascent"	D Major
Hercules - Aria	"Goddess lead the way"	D Minor
Chorus	"Virtue will place thee in that blest abode"	G Minor

As mentioned, Virtue's aria "Mount the steep ascent" which ultimately convinces Hercules of her case, represents the climactic persuasive moment in the work and thus can stand as a fair representative of Handel's best effort at creating beautiful and persuasive music. It is thus comparable in function to Congreve's "Nature fram'd thee sure for loving" which persuades Paris to award the apple to Venus. In keeping with Eccies', Sammartini's and Arne's versions of "Nature fram'd thee," Handel employs a syllabic and lyrical setting for this number. The aria is based on a single line of text "Mount the steep ascent and claim thy native skies." As such, and as with his setting in general, Handel employs a lot of text repetition, manifest in the repeated melody which begins the number (given in Example 4-10).



Ex. 4-10: Virtue, "Mount the steep ascent" (G.F. Handel)

The rhythm and melody for the beginning of this aria are taken from the preceding accompanied recitative which begins with the same words. The phrasing is consistently in four measure units and the syllabic diatonic setting is only broken with an elaborate four measure melisma on the word "claim." Handel here musically paints Hercules' ascent to claim his prize with ascending sequential figures.

Though the aria is short, lasting only some 45 measures, the following chorus is the longest and most elaborate number in the work. The number is built on the same line

of text repeated fourteen times, with many additional internal word repetitions. The setting, for SATB, is an impressive choral display with trombones, oboes, and strings in undulating running sixteenth notes throughout. It is almost entirely homophonic, with imitation occurring only on the later occurrence of the phrase "claim thy native skies." The almost obsessive repetition of the phrase seems to be the main source of the chorus' persuasive impact. Nonetheless the effect is quite impressive and following the chorus Hercules, in a brief secco recitative, is overwhelmed to the point where he can only utter: "The sounds breathe fire celestial, and impart immortal vigor to my glowing heart." Thus Hercules is musically persuaded by Virtue much like Paris yielded to Venus and called upon her to "cease her enchanting song."

In his grand use of choral display Handel recalls the successful approach of John Weldon's winning setting of *The Judgment of Paris* some fifty years earlier. Though Handel had, of course, been using large choruses in his oratorios for many years, like Weldon's setting, it is the sheer insistence and impact of the sonic choral assault seems to win Hercules over. Handel thus imitates Weldon's emphasis on choral splendor. In addition to his emphasis of the chorus, Handel's setting exhibits several other stylistic aspects, commonly manifest in previous settings of *The Judgment of Paris*, which were associated with musical beauty. Handel, for example, relies on a simple, yet lyrical, melodic style which is punctuated with melismata to paint important moments in the text. Such an approach resonates with Eccles', Weldon's and Arne's approach to melody. His text repetition is similar to, though even more pronounced than, that of Daniel Purcell's. Likewise his constant use of short instrumental ritornellos also recalls Purcell's setting.

In his use of active dotted rhythms and propulsive running sixteenth-note accompaniments, Handel achieves more rhythmic variety and energy than the preceding composers. This aspect, as mentioned, may have been the result of Handel's attempt to capture the more physically powerful and vigorous figure of Hercules. In comparison, Paris' somewhat feminine beauty apparently required a less vigorous rhythmic setting.

Of course the fact that the Weldon, Daniel Purcell, and Eccles anticipate many of the same techniques used by Handel, Sammartini, and Arne is quite remarkable. As such they anticipate Handel's attention to the chorus, the lyrical melodic style of all three mid-century composer's, as well as the lavish orchestration and the use of orchestration to paint various characters and aspects of the libretto. The balanced phrasing and binary forms used in Eccles and Weldon's settings of "Nature fram'd thee" also anticipated similar pre-classical balance in Sammartini and Arne's settings. To some extent the original "Prize" competition served as something of a bench mark in English composition and served to presage many of the stylistic approaches which would characterize English music for decades to come.

A political reading of *The Choice of Hercules* is complicated by the lack of any clear understanding of Handel's own political leanings.<sup>90</sup> Likewise the circumstances surrounding the adaptation of the music from *Alceste* make deciphering any particular political intent difficult. Handel enjoyed the patronage and support of the monarchy for much of his career so the work likely held a rather conservative political message if it

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<sup>90</sup> Handel's lone recorded political action was to vote for the Whigs in the 1749 Westminster by-election. See Jacob Simon ed., *Handel: A Celebration of His Life and Times* (London: National Portrait Gallery, 1985), 178. For related discussions of Handel's political inclinations also see Jonathan Keates, "Popery in Wit," *Handel: The Man and His Music* (London: Hamish Hamilton Ltd., 1985), 49-68; and Ruth Smith, *Handel's Oratorios*, 199-201.

held any. Indeed, unlike Paris, who sits in judgment of the gods, Hercules, (a demi-god to begin with) by making the proper moral choice, is offered the chance to become immortal himself. Thus the work may have played into aristocratic notions of their own moral fortitude. The return to the masque form may merely have been an attempt to capitalize on the increasing taste for older English musical forms. Nonetheless, as in the various versions of *The Judgment of Paris*, Handel provides an allegorical tale of moral and aesthetic judgment and it is a prominent example of the continuing popularity of such subjects. Indeed the popularity of “judgment” or “choice” masques, including Handel’s *Choice of Hercules*, is also manifest testimony to the variegated mingling of ethics and aesthetic content which occurred on the London stages during the eighteenth century and which is also evident in the aesthetic philosophies of Shaftesbury and Hutcheson.<sup>91</sup>

As discussed in this chapter the idea of representing the process of judgment and choice, whether political, moral, or aesthetic, was a recurrent theme in eighteenth-century English dramatic music. Music was thought to be able to actively influence judgment and choice and thus was a most appropriate medium by which to transmit these themes. In their various musical acts of persuasion these works functioned as models of the electoral process, specifically the attempts to influence the political choices and ideology of the public waged by the Tories, Whigs and Crown alike. Whether used to influence public judgment regarding Whig ideology, as in the “Prize” competition, or to bolster support

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<sup>91</sup> Indeed Shaftesbury wrote an entire treatise to interpreting a painting, which he commissioned, of “The Judgment of Hercules.” Entitled “A Notion of the Historical Draught or Tablature of the Judgment of Hercules” this treatise was written in 1714 and is further evidence of the interest in such “judgment” subjects. See Grean, *Shaftesbury*, xv. That Handel adopted a “judgment” theme which was previously associated with the Whig beliefs of Shaftesbury, Hutcheson, and Congreve does not, of course, prove his political affiliation but does, perhaps, shed some light on his leanings.

for patriot ideology, as in Sammartini and Arne's settings, or to influence and raise the moral standards, as in Handel's *The Choice of Hercules*, such musical works played on the notion of the influence of music on politics and society. All such works, on some level, thus stood as musical models of the importance of an individual's liberty to make their own judgments, whether political, moral, or aesthetic.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### JUDGMENT, GOVERNMENT, AND AESTHETICS

As captured by Congreve and in the settings of Weldon, Purcell, Eccles, Sammartini, and Arne, Paris' decision to award the apple to Venus following her aria "Nature fram'd thee" is a direct manifestation of the power of beauty, as projected through music, to affect judgment. The work represents, as the title of some of the works based on the Judgment of Paris story suggest, the triumph of beauty. In this myth beauty and its musical manifestation are shown to have the power to usurp the hierarchy of gods and mortals, as it is a mortal who decides the fate of the goddesses. The empowerment provided by musical beauty had a direct analogue in the events of "The Prize" competition which saw the outcome theoretically decided by the public and by the electoral process. In both instances it is not gods who are being judged by mere mortals but rather the upper-class and nobility who ordinarily controlled most of the commercial musical production as well as the political power. The recognition that aesthetic judgment was an inherently uncontrollable libertarian value also fell in line with Whig principles. In its ability to influence or override the power of politics it can be viewed as a reflection of the Whig desire to strengthen parliament and individual liberty against the absolutist power of the king. In these terms it is the role and power of the monarchy itself, analogous to the mythological gods, which must be decided and judged by the public electorate.



As discussed in Chapter One, the British moral libertarian philosophers took the concept of beauty towards the realm of an internalized, subjective, experience. The terms “beauty” and “beautiful” have nonetheless been traditionally used to designate the objective properties of objects (such as music and its aural and structural components). Indeed even Shaftesbury seems to defend the notion of common judgment, as mirrored in “The Prize” competition which called for a public judgment of the most beautiful setting. According to Shaftesbury, “The public always judges right, and the pieces esteemed or disesteemed after a time and a course of some years are always exactly esteemed according to their proportion of worth by those rules and studies.”<sup>1</sup> As mentioned in Chapter Three, there are three broad properties of objective beauty which, in early eighteenth-century England, were thought to be identifiable: Uniformity (or unity) amidst variety (including the notion of novelty), harmony and proportion, and utility.<sup>2</sup>

These “objective” criteria for the recognition of beauty are analogous to the prevalent political theories of the day. The harmony and order of a society can be viewed as roughly equivalent to the harmony (proportion) and order of a musical work. The aesthetic ideal of “uniformity amidst variety,” for example, mirrors the Lockean notion of a contractual kingship in which an electorate, unified by a ruling party or king, are still able to exercise a variety of individual rights and opinions. A unified society which was able to support a variety of views and opinions could indeed stand as the ultimate goal of Lockean and Whig political aspirations. Political and social judgments or choices are thus not dissimilar from aesthetic and moral choices. Indeed judgment, whether political,

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<sup>1</sup> Anthony, Earl of Shaftesbury, *Second Characters or the Language of Forms*, ed. Benjamin Rand (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1914), 124.

<sup>2</sup> See Chapter Three, Fn. 62.

aesthetic, or moral, in many ways stands at the heart of our existence. Every day we are confronted with a mind-boggling array of such judgments and choices. Even seemingly innocuous judgments, such as the music we will listen to, is a tacit aesthetic judgment which comes loaded with years of accreted political and cultural baggage. As such the audience's collective aesthetic judgment in "The Prize" competition was also analogous to a political judgment. The aesthetic ideal of uniformity amidst variety was mirrored in the majority of the audience's uniform will amongst a numberless variety of individual opinions. It was precisely this analogy which seems to have underscored the Whig sponsorship of the event and the Whig ideology which infused its aesthetic. Given the political strife at this time a variety of Whig commentators felt that liberty, including a discursive freedom to criticize, was under threat. Indeed according to Shaftesbury there could "be no *impartial* and *free Censure* of Manners where any peculiar Custom or National Opinion is set apart, and not only exempted from Criticism, but even flatter'd with the highest Art."<sup>3</sup> Thus the competition can be viewed as a direct attempt to reinforce the public's critical rights, both aesthetic and political.

The role of music and the arts in government was a concept which had, of course, been considered by various theorists since the time of the ancient Greeks. The central tenets of eighteenth-century English aesthetic theory, "uniformity amidst variety," can be seen to have direct precursor in the concept of "Harmonia est discordia concors," "Harmony is concordant discord."<sup>4</sup> Here consonant harmony (uniformity) arises from the

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<sup>3</sup> Shaftesbury, *Characterisicks* (London, 1711). Modern edition by John Robertson (London: Grant Richards, 1900) I, 9.

<sup>4</sup> My discussion of the concept of *discordia concors* is drawn from Julie Cumming, *Concord out of Discord*, 3-34. The phrase "Harmonia est discordia concors" appears on the Frontispiece to Gaffurius's *De harmonia musicorum instrumentorum opus* (Milan, 1518). Cumming, *Concord*, 6.

combination of dissimilar elements (variety). The concept bears an obvious relationship to the notion of civic harmony and order. The interrelationship of music and government is discussed in many of the most influential works on politics and the state such as Plato's *Republic*, Aristotle's *Politics*, Cicero's *Republic*, Augustine's *City of God*, and Dante's *Monarchy*.<sup>5</sup> Cicero's *Republic*, for example, presents a clear explanation of the relationship.

For just as in the music of harps and flutes or in the voices of singers a certain harmony of the different tones must be preserved, . . . and as this perfect agreement and harmony is produced by the proportionate blending of unlike tones, so also is a state made harmonious by agreement among dissimilar elements, brought about by a fair and reasonable blending together of the upper, middle, and lower classes, just as if they were musical tones. What the musicians call harmony in song is concord in the state, the strongest and best bond of permanent union in any commonwealth; and such concord can never be brought about without the aid of justice.<sup>6</sup>

The term "justice" here resonates with the concept of "judgment" as expressed in *The Judgment of Paris* story. As Cicero establishes, the relation of music to politics had been well entrenched in political theory long before the Congreve and the other Whig sponsors had conceived of "The Prize" competition or the *Judgment of Paris* libretto. The commingling of moral, ethical, and aesthetic decisions made by Paris (based on musical arguments by the three goddesses) has a direct analogue in the Whig (and later Prince Frederick's) desire to craft a harmonious concordant, state while maintaining the integrity of a variety of dissimilar individual opinions and ideas. In fact it is even the goddess Discordia (Eris) who destabilizes the harmony of mount Olympus by offering the Golden

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<sup>5</sup> Cumming, *Concord*, 6.

<sup>6</sup> Loeb Classical Library, Cicero vol 16: *De re publica*, ed. and trans. Clinton Walker Keyes (Cambridge, Mass., 1928), 181-183. As quoted in Cumming, *Concord*, 11.

Apple at the wedding of Thetis and Peleus.<sup>7</sup> The notion of an independent individual, yet communally concordant, judgment of aesthetic beauty lies at the heart of the politico-aesthetic agenda of the various settings of Congreve's *Judgment of Paris*.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries among the most common elements in musical treatises were the related ideas that music reproduced the harmony of man, nature, and the cosmos; that music could actively affect human conduct and temperament; and that it thus could create and maintain an orderly society.<sup>8</sup> Indeed the story recounted in Dryden and Handel's *Alexander's Feast* is the standard illustration of this. As explained above this philosophy was inherited from the ancient Greeks and Romans and was contingent on the existence of an ultimate basis for musical judgment, the ability to judge good or beneficial music from bad. Plato, for example, believed that "the finest music is that which delights the best men, the properly educated, that, above all, which pleases the one man who is supreme in goodness and education."<sup>9</sup> Thus a good musical judge was one who, in Lockean fashion, followed his or her individual freedom of choice and would stand against the communal will of an audience rather than following it. Plato's position was thus equivalent in its elitism to that of Shaftesbury who felt that composers preferred the appreciation and examination of their works by "the accurate Examiner and Judg [sic]" and that an expert musician "earnestly desires" to perform for an audience of educated critics, who are "able to censure, remark, and Sound every

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<sup>7</sup> See Chapter Three of this dissertation for a description of the events surrounding the Judgment of Paris story.

<sup>8</sup> See Robert M. Isherwood, *Music in Service of the King* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1973), 2.

<sup>9</sup> Plato, *The Collected Dialogues of Plato including the Letters*, ed. Hamilton and Cairns (New York: Bollingen Foundation, 1964), *Laws* ii, 1256.

Accord and Symphony.”<sup>10</sup> Of course the “educated critics” referred to by Shaftesbury were the elite upper classes.

Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the role of judgment, public judgment in particular, played a major role in both French and English aesthetic and political thinking. In France the crown actively attempted to cultivate favorable public judgment of the monarchy. Many philosophers sought to validate the public’s right to pass political judgment based on its judgment of artistic works. In the words of Houdar de La Motte: “It is a natural right of the Public to judge the writings that are exposed to it.”<sup>11</sup> Writing early in the seventeenth century Marin Mersenne, invoking the authority of Plato, placed ultimate importance on the regulation of music by government because “it is important for the morals of the citizens of a town that the music current and used in the country should be retained under certain laws, for the minds of most men are formed and their behaviour influenced by its character, so that where music is disordered, there morals are also depraved, and where it is well ordered, there men are well disciplined morally.”<sup>12</sup> Later Jean-Baptiste Dubos attempted to extend the public’s ability to make aesthetic judgment to accredit a similar ability “to make judgments in the realm of politics.”<sup>13</sup> Dubos also writes, “In effect, the uniform testimony of the senses of other men is, after the testimony of our own senses, the most certain means we have to judge the merit of things that affect our Sentiment.”<sup>14</sup> The term “Sentiment” here can be

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<sup>10</sup> Shaftesbury, *Characteristicks*, 235. As quoted in Thomas McGeary, “Shaftesbury, Handel, and Italian Opera,” *Händel Jahrbuch* 32 (1986), 99-104.

<sup>11</sup> Antoine Houdar de La Motte, *Réflexions sur la critique* (Paris, 1715), I, 21.

<sup>12</sup> As quoted in Isherwood, *Music in Service of the King*, 30.

<sup>13</sup> Thomas Kaiser, “Rhetoric in Service of the King: The Abbé Dubos and the Concept of Public Judgment,” *Eighteenth Century Studies* 23 (1989-90), 182-199.

<sup>14</sup> Dubos, *Réflexions critiques sur la poésie et sur la peinture* (Paris 1719), II, 497.

interpreted both as an aesthetic product and as a political product and thus Dubos calls upon aesthetic judgment as a means by which to validate political judgments.

Many French writers also noted the utilitarian value to the state of their musical *spectacles*. Lavish musical productions were held up as a sign to foreign enemies that France, despite imminent or ongoing wars, was nonetheless prosperous and unconcerned by any potential threat. The poet Philippe Quinault wrote that to continue *spectacles* during war was “to give some well marked evidence that it [the state] has inexhaustible treasures and men left.”<sup>15</sup> Many writers also commented on the value of *spectacles* as a means of distracting the citizens and nobility from mischief to the state. As Abbé Du Guet wrote: “The *spectacles*, according to the politicians, are necessary to amuse a number of useless citizens who are always found in the large cities and who would create disorder . . . against the state if they did not have an amusement.”<sup>16</sup> To some extent this seventeenth-century French theory of using musical productions to maintain order and divert the seditious thoughts of its citizens was later mirrored in England. The sponsorship of opera seria by the monarchy and nobility can be seen as having much the same diversionary function, especially diverting attention from the overly politicized and satirical plots of English musical theater. Likewise, the Whigs’ sponsorship of “The Prize” competition was based on somewhat similar motivations to the French monarchy’s use of music. Just as the *spectacles* were designed to divert the nobility and inspire the popular admiration of the benefice of the sponsoring ruler so too did the Whigs attempt to woo the electorate to support their party and political ideals as well as instill loyalty to

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<sup>15</sup> As quoted in Isherwood, *Music in Service of the King*, 41.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

those already converted. In contrast to the French monarchy's use of music to divert its "useless" citizens, the Whigs used music to attempt to consciously mold and order the morals and ideology of their audiences. Rather than diverting citizens from political matters, the Whigs saw value in individual citizens, and attempted to engage, instruct, and empower audiences regarding political matters. Indeed *The Judgment of Paris* and other works based on judgment and choice served to reinforce the fact that English citizens actually did have a choice, a choice which their French counterparts did not.

Working under an absolutist state in the seventeenth century, French writers equated morality with patriotic devotion to the king. As such they seized upon opera, the king's favorite form of entertainment, as the ideal integration of harmony, poetry, and dance and thus an excellent forum to instill civil and moral virtue in society.

Paraphrasing the writings of Abbé Jean Terrasson Robert Isherwood observes that:

Presenting contented shepherds on the stage, operas create a mood of joy and calm. The shepherds urge us to be loving and faithful. Indeed, the prevalence of the love theme in operas contributes to the plan of God, who gave man the natural desire of procreation . . . Moreover, operas present heroic characters who inspire the virtues of courage, sacrifice, and loyalty, inviting the audience to emulate the heroes of the stage. . . Opera possesses the charm necessary to make virtue attractive and is, therefore, the perfect vehicle of public morality.<sup>17</sup>

Thus French writers adopted and molded the musical philosophy of the ancients. They politicized the notion of universal harmony by connecting opera to the harmony of the state, equated morality to loyalty to the monarchy and propounded music's role in glorifying the state and the heroic image of the monarch. In the following century the story was much the same regarding settings of Congreve's *Judgment of Paris*. The

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<sup>17</sup> Robert Isherwood, *Music in Service of the King*, 44-5.

story's theme of the virtue and power of love was tied to the notion of inspiring an analogous love of order in society, an order which would, of course, be provided by the sponsoring Whig party. The celebration of beauty and moral virtue, and the ability to independently judge or determine beauty, served, by analogy, to glorify the Whig party and its ideals. Thus though the French used music to, in effect, negate political judgments, the Whigs used music to celebrate political choice, though they promoted themselves as the only good choice.

In England, as in France, music was an important metaphor for politics during the first half of the eighteenth century. The popular press, for example, noted that "Public Diversions are by no Means Things indifferent; they give a Right or a Wrong Turn to the Minds of the People, and the wisest Governments have always thought them worth their Attention."<sup>18</sup> Indeed the Platonic notion of music's ability to soothe the political discords of the state was well known. As Daniel Prat claimed in his *Ode to Mr Handel, on his Playing the Organ* (1722), when Handel plays

See! Discord of her Rage disarm'd  
Relenting, calm, and bland as Peace;  
Ev'n restless noisy Faction charm'd . . .<sup>19</sup>

Similarly, the final stanza of Dryden's *Alexander's Feast* allows:

*Timotheus*, to his breathing Flute,  
And sounding lyre,  
Cou'd swell the soul to rage, or kindle soft Desire.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>18</sup> *Common Sense*, 14 October 1738. Also see Smith, *Handel's Oratorios*, 52.

<sup>19</sup> As quoted in Otto Erich Deutsch, *Handel: A Documentary Biography* (1955), 139-44; and in Smith, *Handel's Oratorios*, 209.

<sup>20</sup> Dryden, *Alexander's Feast*, as contained in David Zesmer, ed., *Dryden: Poetry, Drama and Prose* (New York: Bantam, 1967), 295.



The theory that music consisted of *discordia concors* was also a central feature in many theoretical treatises of the day.<sup>21</sup> William Holder's thorough bass treatise from 1694, for example, claimed that "consonancy and dissonancy are the result of the agreement, mixture or uniting, of the undulated motions of the ayr. . ." and that it is "the judgment of the ear that determines which are concords and which are discords."<sup>22</sup> Holder here attempts to unite the objective properties of harmony with the subjective faculty of judgment.

Theories of public judgment of art, including music, took on a no less important role in eighteenth-century English aesthetics. Alexander Pope's *Essay on Criticism* (1711) took as a central doctrine the notion that the sense of thoughtful judgment of literature was as important as the original writing.

A perfect Judge will read each work of Wit,  
With the same spirit that its author writ.

In every work regard the writer's End,  
Since none can compass more than they intend.

(Lines 233-34 and 255-56)<sup>23</sup>

Pope here alludes to "A perfect Judge" and the concept of a universal standard of judgment based on how well the author realized his or her intent, however important or trivial. According to literary critic Paul Ramsey's analysis of Pope's *Essay*, judgment

<sup>21</sup> See Louis Chenette's description of treatises dealing with consonance and dissonance by John Blow, William Holder, Godfrey Keller, Alexander Malcolm, John Frederick Lampe, and others in his Ph.D. dissertation *Music Theory in the British Isles During the Enlightenment* (Ohio State University, 1967).

<sup>22</sup> William Holder, *A Treatise on the Natural Grounds and Principles of Harmony* (London: Heptinstall, 1694). As quoted in Chenette, *Music Theory*, 189-90.

<sup>23</sup> *An Essay on Criticism* in John Butt, ed., *Alexander Pope*, 151-52.

was regarded as "a gift of Heaven to be humbly accepted and [was] more important than any branch of learning, since the proper use of learning requires it."<sup>24</sup>

The mid-eighteenth century witnessed no slackening in the number of general inquiries into questions of artistic appreciation and aesthetic judgment. One of the most well known period studies of beauty in art was undertaken by William Hogarth in his treatise *The Analysis of Beauty* (1753). This tract railed against the rise of connoisseurship as manifest in the perceived authority of academic opinion in judging artistic production.<sup>25</sup> In his zeal to refute such elitist opinions, Hogarth attempted his own formalization of beauty, the principles of which consisted of:

... Fitness, Variety, Uniformity, Simplicity, Intricacy, and Quantity; - all which co-operate in the production of beauty, mutually correcting and restraining each other occasionally.<sup>26</sup>

The first three of these principles require little comment and are drawn from previous aesthetic theories already discussed. Fitness refers to fitness of design in suiting its intended purpose, and thus roughly corresponds to previous notions of utility. Variety and Uniformity are, likewise an echo of former theories as outlined by Addison, Shaftesbury and Hutcheson. Simplicity, "when variety is joined to it...enhances the pleasure of variety. . . as it makes it more easily understood."<sup>27</sup> Simplicity amidst variety is perhaps an ideal most noticeably attained in Eccles score, with its straightforward melodies and homophonic textures which help project the variety of Congreve's poetry.

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<sup>24</sup> Paul Ramsey, "The Watch of Judgment: Relativism and an Essay on Criticism," *Studies in Criticism and Aesthetics: Essays in Honour of Samuel Holt Monk* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1969), 128-139.

<sup>25</sup> See Joseph Burke, ed., introduction to Hogarth, *The Analysis of Beauty* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1955).

<sup>26</sup> Hogarth, *Analysis*, Introduction, 31.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 39-41.

Intricacy provides a type of pleasure in beauty which arises out of the triumph over “difficulties.” The presence of such a value is difficult to measure in terms of the works studied in this dissertation, though it might be said that the intricacies of Arne’s rhythms or Purcell’s orchestrations outweighed the others. Likewise, Weldon’s contrapuntal designs could be said to exhibit intricacy in comparison to his competitors. Likewise the florid melismata of both Weldon’s and Purcell’s settings might often qualify as intricate. The final principle, quantity, is described by Hogarth in terms of grandness of scale:

Forms of magnitude, although ill-shaped, will however, on account of their vastness, draw our attention and raise our admiration.

Huge shapeless rocks have a pleasing kind of horror in them. . . but when forms of beauty are presented to the eye in large quantities, the pleasure increases on the mind, and horror is softened into reverence.<sup>28</sup>

Hogarth here seems to wander into a pre-Romantic conception of the sublimity of nature. Nonetheless, the precept of quantity might best be applied to Weldon’s winning entry with its reliance on an abundance of large choruses, exhibiting quantity in the sheer numbers of performers and grandness of sonic display.

Another influential treatise on taste, specifically musical taste and beauty, was Charles Avison’s *An Essay on Musical Expression* from 1752. In one of the more interesting and opinionated passages from the *Essay*, Avison attempts a classification of various composers according to their usage and combinations of melody, harmony, and expression. “When these three are united in their full Excellence, the Composition is then perfect: if any of these are wanting or imperfect, the Composition is proportionally defective.”<sup>29</sup> As in the “Prize” competition, each composer could be rated or judged on a

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 46.

<sup>29</sup> Charles Avison, *An Essay on Musical Expression* (London, 1752), 29.

scale. According to Avison, Palestrina, for example, neglects melody for harmony while Pergolesi neglects harmony for melody and Vivaldi, apparently, neglected both. The third of Avison's parameters for judgment, "expression," is however highly ill defined and, as Lawrence Lipking observes, is "a wild card used to trump any opinion with which he disagrees."<sup>30</sup>

The general subject of musical "taste," of course, occupied much of the discourse of aristocrats and men of letters alike. Such dilettantes latched on to the ambiguity of "taste" which allowed them to offer their own particular definitions. One anonymous English author of a series of rough verses entitled *Taste and Beauty* (1732), having remarked that "All talk as if the Standard [of taste] were their own, and each enjoyed the sacred Text alone" then proceeded to offer his own definition.

Taste to the Mind like the Mode in Dress  
What all, admire, and covet to possess;  
But oft deceived in both, the publick voice  
Mocks its own Fondness by an Idiot Choice;  
In vain light fancy roams a random Guide;  
Opinion alter, Fancy know no Bound;  
Error begins, and Folly ends the Round:  
The Want of Beauty Want of Taste betrays,  
and Elegance alone can merit Praise.  
True Taste's the Relish which the Mind receives  
From Harmony, the Joy which Beauty gives!  
'Tis born of Genius, but 'Tis nurtured by Art,  
The Head's the Fountain, tho' it reach the Heart;  
It forms the Image in the Mind,  
'Tis Taste Corrects what Genius has design'd:  
Nature's the Body, Genius the Soul,  
But Taste unites them both and reconciles the whole:  
As from the Stars, that gem the Brow of Night,  
Descends one common Stream of blended Light,

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<sup>30</sup> Lawrence Lipking, *The Ordering of the Arts in Eighteenth-Century England* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), 225.

so Taste must flow from Wisdom's Rays divine,  
And in one gen'ral Constellation shine.<sup>31</sup>

Taste is here offered as the conciliation of Genius and Nature. Taste is also again recognized by this author as a public judgment or "publick voice."

The notion of public taste and public judgment also played a large role in Joseph Addison's thinking on musical aesthetics. In contradiction to Plato's elitist notions of musical judgment Addison writes:

. . . Taste is not to conform to the Art but the Art to the Taste. Musick is not design'd to please only Chromatick Ears [a trained musician], but all that are capable of distinguishing harsh from disagreeable Notes. A Man of ordinary Ear is a Judge whether the Melody of those Sounds be more or less pleasing.<sup>32</sup>

Addison thus concludes that the common untrained listener is equally capable of judging music as a musical expert. Such a view strongly resonates both with political libertarian and egalitarian notions discussed by Locke and others and also with the allegory of a commoner's aesthetic judgment as presented in The Judgment of Paris story.

As first propounded by the ancient Greeks, the use of music to control and influence judgment and affect the creation of a harmonious state was actively practiced in seventeenth-century France in support of the Monarchy. Likewise music was equated with the ability to remove the discords of the state in eighteenth-century England, though now in support of individual political empowerment as manifest in an elected Parliament. As indicated in the writings of authors such as Addison, Pope, Avison, and Hogarth, and by philosophers such as Hutcheson and Shaftesbury, aesthetic judgment and taste, both

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<sup>31</sup> Anonymous, from Thomas Gilmour, *Early Eighteenth-Century Essays on Taste* (New York: Scholar's Facsimiles and Reprints, 1972), 172-73.

<sup>32</sup> Joseph Addison, *Spectator* No. 29 April 3, 1711. As reproduced in Boomgaarden, *Musical Thought in Britain and Germany*, 137.

public and individual, also provided a powerful analogy for political empowerment.

Works such as *The Judgment of Paris*, and other masques based on judgment and choice plots, thus drew on both the traditional use of music to influence judgment and plots involving aesthetic judgment to provide a double barreled analogy of political harmony as seen to be achieved through the opportunity to make individual political judgments. Of course such works were, to some degree, disingenuous. In the manner of subtle propaganda, these works while promoting and representing the value of individual aesthetic and political judgment simultaneously attempted to influence and control individual judgments in favour of libertarian political agendas.

## CONCLUSION

Congreve's *The Judgment of Paris* and the "Prize Musick" competition offers a unique insight into the political influences on cultural production in the early eighteenth century. Written, sponsored, and promoted by Whig party members during the midst of heated election campaigns and general socio-political upheaval the competition actively reflected Whig party ideology in the empowerment of audience members to vote for the composers of their choice. Congreve's libretto also reflected Whig ideals of individual liberty and freedom from tyranny as Paris was empowered to, ostensibly, vote for the most beautiful of the three competing goddesses. As such the event and Congreve's libretto reflected contemporary aesthetic theories of Shaftesbury, Toland, and Hutcheson also based on Whig and Lockean notions of individual liberty, and more general writings by Addison, Hogarth, Pope, and others propounding the value of the subjective experience of artistic judgment.

In the period following Henry Purcell's death William Congreve's *The Judgment of Paris* and the "Prize Musick" competition also offers us a glimpse into period conceptions of musical beauty. It represented a unique chance for English composers to step into the limelight. The three extant settings by Daniel Purcell, John Weldon and John Eccles each offer individual attempts to distinguish themselves from Henry Purcell and from each other. Daniel Purcell focused on orchestral extravagance and preferred to take a progressive yet foreign (Italian) influenced approach in his use of motto and ritornello techniques. Weldon, new to London's musical scene, preferred to cultivate English tastes for choruses and florid arioso. Eccles, on the other hand, produced the

most restrained setting emphasizing simple lyrical melodies, a balanced use of orchestral and choral numbers, and a sympathetic setting of Congreve's varied poetic structure.

The "Prize" was a significant event in London's musical life and it was the focus of musical attention for almost four months, from March to June of 1701. The work was one of the earliest instances of a stand-alone masque. With the rise in Italian opera the "Prize" settings and Congreve's libretto were largely forgotten save for a limited number of revivals and references in Gay's *Beggar's Opera*. Its significance was felt once again some forty years later when Frederick, Prince of Wales commissioned Giuseppe Sammartini to compose a new setting of Congreve's libretto in 1740. This in turn inspired another new setting by Thomas Arne in 1742, likely composed in response to Sammartini's earlier setting. Both composers were influenced by The Patriots, a movement led by Frederick and Viscount Bolingbroke who supported the goals of a benevolent elected monarchy in opposition to the perceived tyranny of George II and Robert Walpole. Both of these new settings are thus also the result of nostalgia, both for the forms and librettos of turn-of-the-century works such as Congreve's and for the political ideals of individual liberty originally propounded by the Whigs during the same period. Sammartini's and Arne's settings of Congreve's libretto thus served to promote much the same political message of individual empowerment as in its original Whig inspired conception, though now in support of the Patriot agenda.

Both Sammartini's and Arne's settings were as lavishly set as the originals. Indeed Sammartini was aware of at least some of the earlier settings as he used Eccles' score as a model for his declamation. Arne was also aware of the earlier settings as he



later rescored Weldon's aria for Juno, "Let ambition" for *Love in a Village*. Arne's setting, though generally more florid and rhythmically complex, even models some melodic motives and orchestrational features of his setting on Sammartini's work. Arne's setting was the most popular of any version of *The Judgment of Paris* as it was revived some sixteen times by 1771. With the exception of a setting by James Fisin in 1809, interest in Congreve's libretto waned towards the end of the eighteenth century.

Despite the greater popularity of Arne's setting, Sammartini's and Arne's versions of *The Judgment of Paris* manifest a great degree of similarity. In their settings we are able to see how mid-century conceptions of musical beauty changed from the original 1701 versions. The early "Prize" settings, though each taking an individual tack, generally feature florid arioso with an abundance of ornate melisma, ground basses, closed harmonic plans with close attention given to key and motivic representations, and free, irregular phrasing. Sammartini and Arne's settings, in contrast, are more similar to each other and exhibit far more concern for pre-classical balance and regularity. They feature far less ornamentation and emphasize repeated balanced phrasing, static harmonic accompaniments, extended *da capo* arias, fully blown Italianate recitative and a concern for recitative - aria pairings. Such a shift reflects a changed concept of musical beauty - away from the variety of individual, often effusive and passionate, expressions of musical beauty as manifest in the early century *Judgment of Paris* settings and towards a new pre-classical concern for formal clarity, symmetry, and regularity. To some degree this shift represents the fruition of the politically influenced aesthetic ideals, propounded by Shaftesbury, Hutcheson and others, that artworks exhibit uniformity amidst variety and

that individual empowerment could be achieved through aesthetic judgment. Much as England's politicians sought to ensure a unified society based on the recognition of individual liberties so too did theatre music composers, subject to the pressure of public judgment, turn towards more universally recognized conventions of musical beauty involving tighter formal unity and structural balance.

The Judgment of Paris myth served as the basis for a numerous musical works throughout the eighteenth century including plays, ballets, operas, and burlesques.<sup>33</sup> By far the dominant genre of production employing the myth, however, was the masque. Indeed "The Prize" competition, and Congreve's libretto in particular, spawned a host of works and revivals of the story throughout the eighteenth century. In addition to the repertoire of musical works based on The Judgment of Paris a number of other masques and dramatic works, such as Handel's *The Choice of Hercules*, were also similarly based on the notion of allegorical "judgment" or "choice." In short the numerous *Judgment of Paris* settings and revivals along with other judgment and choice works combined to form a significant topical repertoire during the eighteenth century.

The concern with artistic, moral, and political judgment was intimately bound up with the psyche of eighteenth-century England. Indeed it is this fascination with judgment which inspired and maintained interest in "judgment" masques throughout the century. Proper discernment and the freedom to exercise one's individual judgment were concepts which manifested themselves in Locke's Whiggish libertarian political philosophy, in the aesthetic theory of Shaftesbury and Hutcheson and, ultimately, in artistic and musical productions such as Congreve's *The Judgment of Paris*. Judgment

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<sup>33</sup> See Appendix B.

was viewed as a two edged sword, a faculty by which individuals could exercise their own subjective liberty while calling on the communal sensibilities of others. Musical audiences and their opinions were also equated with the electorate and political/electoral process as a whole. In eighteenth-century England, as William Weber points out "from the assumption that all privileged persons were their own musical judges came an anthropomorphic idea of the public [musical audience] as a unitary, self-governing body."<sup>34</sup> In this manner judgment, musical judgment in particular, provided a model of the English Parliamentary system and reflected and aided the maintenance of a sense of order within the state. In contrast to the French monarchy's attempts to use music to divert its citizens from political uprising, English politicians used music to empower their citizens, to promote the fact that they had a political choice and to sanction the exercise of individual judgment, be it aesthetic, moral or political. In an era when the notion of individual liberty was struggling to assert itself in English society "judgment" and "choice" masques, in particular those based on the Judgment of Paris story with its analogous political and aesthetic judgments, provided powerful allegories with which to reinforce this concept. Judging from interest in Congreve's libretto throughout the century, it was an allegory which had wide-ranging and continuing appeal.

Political, moral, and aesthetic judgments stood at the heart of eighteenth-century English philosophy and culture much as they continue to occupy our contemporary society. It was the freedom to exercise the faculty of individual judgment which the Whigs and their supporters, such as Congreve, relied upon in attempting to liberate

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<sup>34</sup> Weber, "The Contemporaneity of Eighteenth-Century Musical Taste," *The Musical Quarterly* 70 (1984), 193.

eighteenth-century England from the tyranny of both neoclassical reason, requiring demonstrative proof, and the political oppression manifest in the monarchy and, later, Walpole's administration. As Samuel Johnson states, "The faculty which God has given man to supply the want of certain knowledge, is *judgment*..."<sup>35</sup>

This dissertation provides the first comprehensive comparative analysis of settings of William Congreve's *The Judgment of Paris*. It additionally exposes the presence and significance of a consequential repertoire of musical works based on "judgment" and "choice." Finally it also illuminates the significance of these works as documents of period concepts of musical beauty and as vehicles to promote the social and political empowerment of individual judgment and choice which was taking hold in England during the eighteenth century. Indeed this dissertation has shown that the librettists and, in particular, the composers of "judgment" and "choice" works were not as alienated or disassociated from the political world as is commonly believed. Rather than renouncing the world of politics, meekly ignoring it, or actively publicizing their political beliefs they chose to make it the very subject of their art. As such these works reflect something of our current struggle to understand the relationship of cultural production to the state and, though further scholarship needs to be done, expose some of the roots of the heavy emphasis currently placed on the autonomy of art and subjective aesthetic and political judgments.

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<sup>35</sup> Samuel Johnson, *A Dictionary of the English Language*. 2 vols. London, 1755.

## Appendix A

### Congreve's Libretto: *The Judgment of Paris*<sup>1</sup>

Mercury:

From high *Olympus* and the realms above,  
Behold I come the Messenger of *Jove*;  
His dread Commands I bear,  
Shepherd, arise and hear;  
Arise, and leave a while thy Rural Care,  
Forbear thy woolly Flock to feed,  
And lay aside thy tuneful Reed;  
For thou to greater Honours art decreed.

Paris:

O *Hermes*, I thy Godhead know.  
By thy winged Heels and head,  
By thy Rod that wakes the Dead,  
And guides the Shades below.  
Say wherefore dost thou seek this humble Plain,  
To greet a lowly Swain?  
What does the mighty Thunderer ordain?

Mercury:

This radiant Fruit behold,  
More bright than burnish'd Gold;  
Three Goddesses for this contend,  
See now they descend,  
And this way they bend.  
Shepherd, take the golden Prize,  
Yield it to the brightest Eyes.

Paris:

O Ravishing Delight!  
What Mortal can support the Sight?  
Alas, too weak is Human Brain,  
So much Rapture to sustain.  
I faint, I fall! O take me hence,  
Ere ecstasy invades my aking Sense:  
Help me, *Hermes*, or I die,  
Save me from Excess of Joy.

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<sup>1</sup> Based on John Eccles' setting published by Walsh and Hare (London, 1702). Note italics are retained from this edition and are used for airs.

Mercury (Air)

*Fear not, Mortal, none shall harm thee,  
With my sacred Rod I'll charm thee;  
    Freely gaze and view all over,  
    Thou may'st every Grace discover.  
Though a thousand Darts fly round thee,  
fear not, Mortal, none shall wound thee.*

Mercury and Paris (Duet)

*Happy thou of Human Race,  
Gods with thee would change their Place;  
With no God I'd change my Place;  
Happy I of Human Race.*

Juno

*Saturnia, Wife of Thundering Jove am I,  
Belov'd by him, and Empress of the Sky;  
Shepherd, fix on me thy wond'ring Sight,  
Beware, and view me well, and judge aright.*

Pallas:

*This way, mortal, bend thy Eyes,  
Pallas claims the golden Prize;  
A Virgin Goddess free from Stain,  
And Queen of Arts and Arms, I reign.*

Venus (Air)

*Hither turn thee, gentle Swain,  
Let not Venus sue in vain;  
Venus rules the Gods above  
Love rules them, and she rules Love;  
    Hither turn thee, gentle Swain,*

Trio:

*Pallas: Hither turn to me again;  
Juno: Turn to me, for I am she;  
All Three: To me, to me, for I am she.  
Venus: Hither turn thee gentle Swain;  
Juno and Pallas: She will deceive thee;  
Venus:  
They will deceive thee, I'll never leave thee;  
    Hither turn to me again,  
    To me, to me, for I am she;  
    Hither turn thee gentle Swain.*

Paris (Air)

*Distracted I turn, but I cannot decide,  
So equal a title, sure never was try'd,  
United your Beauties so dazzle the Sight,  
That, lost in Amaze,  
I giddily gaze,  
Confus'd and o'erwhelm'd with a Torrent of Light.*

*Apart let me view each heavenly Fair,  
For three at a time there's no Mortal can bear;  
And since a gay Robe an ill shape may disguise,  
When each is undrest,  
I'll judge of the best,  
For 'tis not a Face that must carry the Prize.*

Juno (Air)

*Let Ambition fire thy Mind,  
Thou wert born o'er Men to reign,  
Not to follow Flocks design'd,  
Scorn thy Crook and leave the Plain.*

*Crowns I'll throw beneath thy Feet,  
Thou on Necks of Kings shalt tread,  
Joys in Circles, Joys shall meet,  
Which way e'er thy Fancy lead.*

*Let not Toils of Empire fright,  
(Toils of Empire Pleasures are)  
Thou shalt only know Delight,  
All the Joys, but not the Care.*

*Shepherd, if thou'lt yield the Prize,  
For the Blessings I bestow,  
Joyful I'll ascend the Skies,  
Happy thou shalt reign below.*

Chorus:

*Let Ambition fire thy Mind,  
Thou wert born o'er Men to reign,  
Not to follow Flocks design'd,  
Scorn thy Crook and leave the Plain.*

Pallas:

Awake, awake, thy Spirits raise,  
Waste not thus thy youthful days,  
    Piping, toying,  
    Nymphs decoying,  
Lost in wanton and inglorious Ease.

Hark, Hark! The glorious Voice of War  
Calls aloud, for Arms prepare,  
    Drums are beating,  
    Rocks repeating,  
Martial Musick charms the joyful Air.

Pallas (Air)

*O what Joys does Conquest yield!  
When returning from the Field,  
    Oh how glorious 'tis to see,  
The Godlike Hero crown'd with Victory!  
Laurel Wreaths his Head Surrounding,  
    Banners waving in the Wind;  
Fame her golden Trumpet sounding,  
    Every Voice in Chorus join'd;  
And Fame and Conquest shall be thine.*

Chorus:

*Oh how glorious 'tis to see,  
The Godlike Hero crown'd with Victory!*

Venus:

Stay, lovely Youth, delay thy Choice,  
Take heed lest empty Names enthral thee,  
Attend to *Cytherea's* Voice;  
Lo! I who am *Love's* Mother call thee.  
    Far from thee be anxious Care:  
    And racking Thoughts that vex the great,  
    Empire's but a gilded Snare,  
    And fickle is the Warrior's Fate;  
One only Joy Mankind can know,  
And *Love* alone can that bestow.

Chorus:

One only Joy, &c.



Venus (Air)

*Nature fram'd thee sure for Loving,  
Thus adorn'd with every Grace;  
Venus' self thy Form approving,  
Looks with pleasure on thy Face.*

*Happy Nymph who shall enfold thee,  
Circled in her yielding Arms!  
Should bright Helen once behold thee,  
She'd surrender all her Charms.*

*Fairest She, all Nymphs transcending,  
That the Sun himself has seen;  
Were she for the Crown contending,  
Thou would'st own her beauty's Queen.*

*Gentle Shepherd, if my Pleading  
Can from thee the Prize obtain,  
Love himself thy Conquest aiding,  
Thou that matchless Fair shalt gain.*

Paris:

*I yield, I yield, O take the prize,  
And cease, O cease th' enchanting Song;  
All Love's Darts are in my Eyes,  
And Harmony falls from thy Tongue.*

(Air)

*Forbear, O Goddess of Desire,  
Thus my ravish'd Soul to move,  
Forbear to fan the raging Fire,  
And be propitious to my Love.*

Grand Chorus:

*Hither all ye graces, all ye Loves;  
Hither all ye Hours resort,  
Billing Sparrows, cooing Doves;  
Come all the Train of Venus' Court.  
Sing all great Cytherea's Name;  
Over Empire, Over Fame,  
Her Victory proclaim.*

*Sing and Spread the joyful News around,  
The Queen of Love is Queen of beauty crown'd.*

## Appendix B

### Chronological Survey of Musical Works Based on the Judgment of Paris Myth

- 1581 *The Arraignment of Paris*, George Peel. An epilogue celebrating the glory of Queen Elizabeth (all three goddesses forfeit claim to the apple in favour of the Queen's beauty).
- 1646 *The Triumph of Beauty*, James Shirley (play with music).
- 1676 *Beauties Triumph*, Thomas Duffet and John Bannister. Half-spoken, half-sung dramatization of the Judgment of Paris. Staged at Chelsea School for Girls.
- 1701 "The Prize" music competition. *The Judgment of Paris*, libretto by William Congreve and settings by John Weldon, Daniel Purcell, John Eccles, and Gottfried Finger. All original settings performed at Dorsett Gardens: Eccles, 21 March, Finger, 28 March, Purcell, 11 April, Weldon, 6 May. All four versions were presented in turn 3 June.
- 1702 *The Judgment of Paris*, Johanne Wolfgang Franck's setting of Congreve's libretto. Given at York Buildings, 2 February.
- 1708 *Love's Triumph*, Motteaux. All-sung Italianate opera.
- 1722 *Love Triumphant; or the Rival Goddesses*, Daniel Bellamy. Pastoral opera based on Congreve's libretto. Performed at Mrs. Bellamy's School, 26 March.
- 1731 *The Judgment of Paris; or The Triumph of Beauty*, author unknown, possibly Colly Cibber. Pastoral ballad opera. Lincoln's Inn Fields, 6 May.
- 1733 *The Judgment of Paris; or The Triumph of Beauty*, author unknown set to music by John Weaver and Seedo [sic]. Pastoral Ballad Opera (with additional characters to 1731 version listed above). Drury Lane, January - February.
- 1733 *Judgment of Paris*, Ballet, performed at Covent Gardens, 28 March. (Note significant revivals in 1757, 1758, 1760, and 1764).
- 1740 *The Judgment of Paris*, Giuseppe Sammartini's setting of Congreve's libretto. Given at Cliveden with Arne's *Alfred* for Frederick, Prince of Wales.
- 1742 *The Judgment of Paris*, Thomas Arne's setting of Congreve's libretto. Performed at Drury Lane, 26 March.

Appendix B Continued,

1768 *The Judgment of Paris*, Françoise Barthelemon. Burlesque version of story staged at Little Theatre in the Haymarket, 24 August.

1773 *The Golden Pippen*, John Abraham Fisher and Kane O'Hara. All-sung burlesque involving the three goddesses engaged in a game of cards.

1809 *The Judgment of Paris*, James Fisin's setting of Congreve's libretto. Music with accompaniments for the piano forte, violin or flute, and cello published by Richard Burchall.

## Appendix C

### Chronological Survey of Other 18th-Century Works Involving "Judgment" or "Choice"

1740 *Judgment of Hercules*, Maurice Greene, libretto by Hoadly based on poem by William Shenstone.

? *Choice of Hercules*, John Stanley. Narrative cantata, composition date unknown.

1751 *Choice of Hercules*, Handel, libretto by Thomas Morell (?). Performed at Covent Garden, 1 March.

1752 *The Judgment of Midas*, masque text by Christopher Smart.

1765 *The Choice of Apollo*, William Yates, libretto by John Butler. Staged at Little Theatre, 3 March 1765. Apollo chooses poetry over painting, and music.

1775 *The Theatrical Candidates*, William Bates, written by David Garrick. Staged at Drury Lane, 23 September 1775. The character portraying Pantomime wins out over Tragedy and Comedy.

1775 *The Rival Candidates*, Bate Dudley. Staged at Drury Lane, 2 January 1775.

1781 *The Choice of Harlequin*, Michael Arne. Pantomime chooses between virtue and pleasure.

## Appendix D

“The Prize” settings of “O Ravishing Delight!”

- i. Daniel Purcell<sup>2</sup>
- ii. John Weldon<sup>3</sup>
- iii. John Eccles<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> GB-Lbl I.325. Reproduced by permission of the British Library.

<sup>3</sup> W.b. 526. Reproduced by permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library.

<sup>4</sup> GB-Lbl 11.226. Reproduced by permission of the British Library.

i. "O Ravishing Delight!," Daniel Purcell

[illegible][illegible]

"O Ravishing Delight!," D. Purcell con't.

THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS 19

18 THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS





iii. "O Ravishing Delight!," John Eccles

## THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS

The musical score for "The Rose Tree" is presented in five systems. The first system is for the Soprano voice, with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The lyrics "The Rose Tree" are written below the staff. The second system is for the Alto voice, also with a treble clef and one flat. The lyrics "The Rose Tree" are written below the staff. The third system is for the Tenor voice, with a bass clef and one flat. The lyrics "The Rose Tree" are written below the staff. The fourth system is for the Bass voice, with a bass clef and one flat. The lyrics "The Rose Tree" are written below the staff. The fifth system is for the Piano accompaniment, with a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and one flat. The lyrics "The Rose Tree" are written below the staff. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and bar lines.

Musical score for "Hymn to the Virgin Mary" by J. Haydn, Op. 14, No. 1. The score is in G major and 3/4 time. It features a vocal line (Soprano) and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "Gloria, my A - long Sea, Help us Helms or I dy O dy I".

[illegible]

# THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS

The Rose Tree, the Rose Tree, O Rose Tree, the light of my life

PARIS

[illegible][illegible]

"O Ravishing Delight!," John Eccles con't

THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS 17

Saw me from Exile & joy, O saw me from Exile & joy.

## Appendix E

### "The Prize" settings of "Nature fram'd thee"

- i. Daniel Purcell<sup>5</sup>
- ii. John Weldon<sup>6</sup>
  - Version No.1
  - Version No.2
- iii. John Eccles<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> GB-Lbl I.325. Reproduced by permission of the British Library.

<sup>6</sup> W.b. 526. Reproduced by permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library.

<sup>7</sup> GB-Lbl 11.226. Reproduced by permission of the British Library.

[illegible]

i. "Nature fram'd thee," D. Purcell con't

66. THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS

*Slow*  
Gentle Shep-herd of my Pleading, Gentle.

Gentle Shep-herd of my Pleading, can from thee the Prize obtain, Love him

Whom thy Conquest ending, thou that Matchless that match-

less sure still give, Love him self thy Conquest ending, thou that

Matchless that Matchless Fair, shall

gain, that Matchless that Matchless

Fair, shall Give.



ii. Version No.2, "Nature fram'd thee," John Weldon

The musical score is arranged in two systems. The top system contains the vocal parts and piano accompaniment. The bottom system contains the vocal parts and piano accompaniment.

**Top System:**

- Vocal Part A:** "Nature fram'd thee... in the face of every flower... if thy grace." (Lyrics: Nature fram'd thee, in the face of every flower, if thy grace.)
- Vocal Part B:** "I am appearing around thee, yet, I am appearing." (Lyrics: I am appearing around thee, yet, I am appearing.)
- Vocal Part B':** "Should bright visions, when I look on thee, shall surrender all thy charms." (Lyrics: Should bright visions, when I look on thee, shall surrender all thy charms.)
- Piano:** Accompaniment for the vocal parts.

**Bottom System:**

- Vocal Part A:** "I am appearing around thee, yet, I am appearing." (Lyrics: I am appearing around thee, yet, I am appearing.)
- Vocal Part B:** "Should bright visions, when I look on thee, shall surrender all thy charms." (Lyrics: Should bright visions, when I look on thee, shall surrender all thy charms.)
- Vocal Part B':** "Should bright visions, when I look on thee, shall surrender all thy charms." (Lyrics: Should bright visions, when I look on thee, shall surrender all thy charms.)
- Piano:** Accompaniment for the vocal parts.

Version No.2. "Nature fram'd thee," J. Weldon con't.

Handwritten musical score for "Nature fram'd thee," J. Weldon con't. The score is written on ten staves, organized into five systems of two staves each. The notation includes treble and bass clefs, a key signature of one flat (B-flat), and a common time signature (C). The lyrics are written below the staves. The score is divided into sections labeled A, B, and B'.

**Section A:** (Staves 1-2)

Sweetest the all happy moment, that the low kind of love seen.

**Section B:** (Staves 3-4)

were this for the Crown ascending, thou wouldst an the Mount of Zion.

**Section B':** (Staves 5-10)

Gentle Shepherd if my pleading can prove thee the Prince of Peace.

For himself thy conquest yielding, then that thou wilt be our shield of my pleading.

can prove thee the Prince of Peace. For himself thy conquest yielding.



iii. "Nature fram'd thee," John Eccles.

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A Venus

Fairest She of Nymphs transcending, that the Sun himself has seen

B

where She for the Crown contending, thou wouldst see her Beauty Queen

C

Gentle Shepherd if you, Pleading can from the Prize ye take Love true

Love himself thy Conquest aiding thou that Matchless Fair shalt Gain

C

Love true Love himself thy Conquest aiding Thou that Matchless

Fairest shall Gain

THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS 63

A Venus

Nature fram'd thee sure for Loving, thou a dower dost give of Grace,

Venus self thy form approving, looks with pleasure, in thy Face, Fair

B

Happily Nymph who shall, on gold thee, Circled in her yielding Arms

C

should bringa Hellen once he hold thee, shed surrender all her charms, shed

surrender all all shed surrender all all shed surrender all all her charms

C

Shed surrender all all shed surrender all all shed surrender all all her charms

Ritornell

## Appendix F

Giuseppe Sammartini: Settings of "O Ravishing Delight!," and "Nature fram'd thee"<sup>8</sup>

- i. "O ravishing Delight!"
- ii. "Nature fram'd thee"

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<sup>8</sup> GB-Lbl Add. 17860. Reproduced by permission of the British Library.

i. "O Ravishing Delight!" G. Sammartini

Violin I

Violin II

Tenor

Bass

Cello/Double Bass

*p*

*f*

*f*

*f*

*f*

O Ravishing delight O Ravishing de- light what mortal what

mortal can support the sight Alas! Alas, too weak is human

Handwritten musical score for the first system, featuring five staves. The lyrics are in German and English. The first staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The second staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The third staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The fourth staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The fifth staff has a bass clef and a key signature of one flat. The lyrics are: *tain so much rap - ture so much rapture to me tain*

Handwritten musical score for the second system, featuring five staves. The lyrics are in German and English. The first staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The second staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The third staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The fourth staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The fifth staff has a bass clef and a key signature of one flat. The lyrics are: *I faint I fall I take me hence For Potency in - vades my DR - - ing sense*

Handwritten musical score for the third system, featuring five staves. The lyrics are in German and English. The first staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The second staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The third staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The fourth staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The fifth staff has a bass clef and a key signature of one flat. The lyrics are: *Helf - el. Flamm.*

Handwritten musical score for the fourth system, featuring five staves. The lyrics are in German and English. The first staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The second staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The third staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The fourth staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The fifth staff has a bass clef and a key signature of one flat. The lyrics are: *helf me or die For - mes help me or I die*

i. "O Ravishing Delight!" G. Sammartini con't.

Handwritten musical score for the first system of "O Ravishing Delight!" by G. Sammartini. The system consists of five staves. The first four staves are for instrumental parts, and the fifth staff is for the vocal line. The vocal line includes the lyrics: "save me from excess - - of joy - - - O save me O save - -". The music is written in a single system with a double bar line at the end.

Handwritten musical score for the second system of "O Ravishing Delight!" by G. Sammartini. The system consists of five staves. The first four staves are for instrumental parts, and the fifth staff is for the vocal line. The vocal line includes the lyrics: "me from excess of joy." The music is written in a single system with a double bar line at the end.

i. "Nature fram'd thee," G. Sammartini

Handwritten musical score for the piece "Nature fram'd thee" by G. Sammartini. The score is written on ten staves, organized into two systems of five staves each. The vocal parts are labeled on the left: Soprano, Alto, Tenore, and Bass. The instrumental parts are labeled on the right: Violino I, Violino II, Viola, and Cello/Bass. The music is written in a single system, with the vocal parts and instrumental parts each having a staff. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and clefs. The score is written in a single system, with the vocal parts and instrumental parts each having a staff. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and clefs. The score is written in a single system, with the vocal parts and instrumental parts each having a staff. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and clefs.

Handwritten musical score on ten staves. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and clefs. There are several lyrics written in cursive across the staves. The handwriting is somewhat messy and appears to be a working draft or a personal manuscript.

Lyrics visible on the staves:

- Na true from the pure for loving
- Thus adorn'd with every grace thus adorn'd with every - every grace - with lo - my
- grace,
- Denies self they form approving
- Looks with plea

sure on thy face

looks with pleasure looks with pleasure on thy face

for:

for:

for:

for:

looks with plea

sure on thy face

fin

Allegro & Rhythmic



*Solo*

who shall unfold her  
 (rolled in her yielding arms her yielding arms) (rolled

*Tutti* *Solo*

in her yielding arms: Should bright Helen Once be

hold thee should bright Helen. once behold thee should surrender all her

*Tutti* *Da Capo*

Charmus should surrender all her charms. *Segno*

*Fine*

"Nature fram'd thee," G. Sammartini con't.

*Air Venus*

Flauti 1  
Flauti 2  
Viola 1  
Viola 2  
Tenore  
Violoncello  
Fagotto  
Tenore  
Basso

*Fairer! thee all Symphonies*

*ascending* *that the sun himself himself has seen were she for the*

Crown contending thou wouldst own her beauties Queen wouldst own her — Beauties

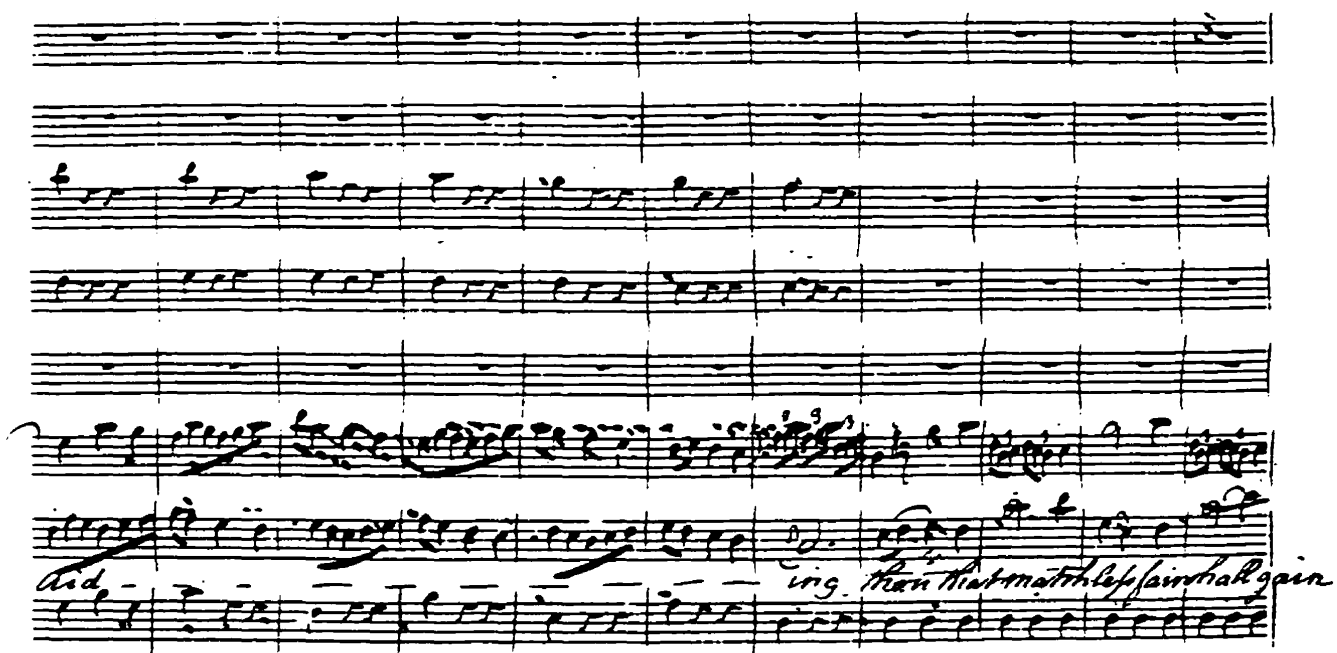
Queen Gentle Shepherd if my pleading

Handwritten musical score for a vocal piece. The score consists of eight staves. The first four staves are for a vocal line, and the last four are for a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are written below the vocal staves.

Can from thee the prize the prize obtain  
Love himself thy conquest

Handwritten musical score for a vocal piece. The score consists of eight staves. The first four staves are for a vocal line, and the last four are for a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are written below the vocal staves.

riding thou that matchless fair shall gain  
Love himself thy conquest



Handwritten musical score system 1, featuring six staves. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and clefs. The lyrics "And - ing. then that matchless fair shall gain" are written below the staves.



Handwritten musical score system 2, featuring six staves. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and clefs. The lyrics "then that matchless fair shall gain" are written below the staves.

Handwritten musical score for a piano piece, featuring seven staves. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The word "for" appears three times on the first three staves, and "gain" appears on the sixth staff. The music is written in a single system, with a double bar line at the end of the seventh staff.

Handwritten musical score for a piano piece, featuring seven staves. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The word "Pia:" appears on the third staff, and "Pia." appears on the fourth staff. The music is written in a single system, with a double bar line at the end of the seventh staff.

Conclusion, "Nature fram'd thee," G. Sammartini



## Appendix G

Thomas Arne: Settings of "O Ravishing Delight!" and "Nature fram'd thee"<sup>9</sup>

- i. "O Ravishing Delight!"
- ii. "Nature fram'd thee"

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<sup>9</sup> © 1978 The Musica Britannica Trust. Reproduced by permission of Stainer & Bell Ltd., London, England.



i. "O Ravishing Delight!" T. Arne

Violin 1  
Violin 2  
Viola  
Flute  
Bass  
Harpsichord

*Andante*

O ravishing delight! What sweetest melody  
I feel from such a voice, my heart is glad to hear  
The voice of love, the voice of love, the voice of love

*Allegro*

Violin 1  
Violin 2  
Viola  
Flute  
Bass  
Harpsichord

*Andante Largo*

O voice most sweet, my heart is glad to hear  
The voice of love, the voice of love, the voice of love

i. "O Ravishing Delight!" T. Arne con't.

The musical score is arranged in two systems, each containing five staves. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like *Allegro* and *Adagio largo*. The score is written in a style typical of 18th-century musical notation, with a focus on melodic and harmonic development. The first system includes a vocal line with lyrics, and the second system continues the instrumental and vocal parts. The score is presented in a clear, legible format, suitable for a printed edition.

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