

# The Evolution of Jommelli's Operatic Style

By MARITA P. McCLYMONDS

IT HAS LONG BEEN HELD that Jommelli's style changed radically during his sojourn in Stuttgart, and that the change was due to German influences. The origins of this thesis go back to the early 1770s. Jommelli had completed sixteen years (1753 to 1769) in the service of the Duke of Württemberg, first in Stuttgart and later in Ludwigsburg. He had then returned to his native village of Aversa, and begun to write operas for Naples and Rome. Charles Burney, who was in Naples in 1770 and heard *Demofonte* performed there, claimed that Jommelli had three stylistic periods:

Before he went to Germany, the easy and graceful flow of Vinci and Pergolesi pervaded all his productions; but when he was in the service of the Duke of Württemberg, finding the Germans were fond of learning and complication, he changed his style in compliance with the taste and expectations of his audience; and on his return to Italy, he tried to thin and simplify his dramatic Music, which, however, was still so much too operose for Italian ears.<sup>1</sup>

It is questionable how much of the music from Jommelli's Stuttgart years either Burney or his Italian contemporaries actually knew. Judging from the scarcity of surviving copies of those operas as compared with the large number of extant manuscripts of his early and late works, the Stuttgart operas were probably not widely known outside of Germany. More than likely, Burney was basing the above statements on hearsay rather than on actual knowledge. Certainly, the opinion that Jommelli's music had been corrupted by German influences was strong in Naples at the time Burney was there. As Jommelli's friend, Saverio Mattei, a Neapolitan scholar, poet, and critic observed, "It is being spread abroad that he abused and corrupted his

<sup>1</sup> Charles Burney, *A General History of Music from the Earliest Ages to the Present Period* (London, 1776), IV, p. 565.

style in Germany, taking on a German harshness and forgetting the Italian fluidity."<sup>2</sup>

Lyn Tolkoff is the most recent scholar to hold that the outstanding characteristics of Jommelli's style after 1753 were not in evidence before the composer went to Stuttgart and were, therefore, acquired in Germany.<sup>3</sup> In her efforts to refute Abert's conclusions that Jommelli remained essentially Hasse's disciple,<sup>4</sup> Tolkoff compares two settings of *Demofonte*: one written for Padua in 1743, just three years after Jommelli wrote his first serious opera; the other written for Stuttgart in 1764, and revised for repetition the following year at Ludwigsburg. In the process of successfully showing how far from Hasse's compositional ideals and practices Jommelli had come by 1764, Tolkoff leaves the reader with the understanding that the new stylistic elements apparent in the latter version were acquired after Jommelli went to Stuttgart in 1753.

An examination of Jommelli's operas of the 1740s and early 1750s, rather than supporting this thesis, corroborates the view of Mattei:

Jommelli has neither corrupted nor changed his style although his last pages may be different from his first. Any writer who has exercised his pen for fifty years makes advances in certain virtues and falls behind in others because such are the imperfections of things human, and every age has its virtues and its defects. In his youth you find greater impetus and fluidity but less exactness: in his maturity you find greater exactness, but less impetus and greater [i.e., less] fluidity.<sup>5</sup>

Jommelli was dedicated to a faithful and dramatic expression of the text, upon which he depended for musical inspiration. On October 17, 1769, he wrote to his friend and librettist, Gaetano Martinelli:

<sup>2</sup> "Va spargendo ch'egli ne avea fatto abuso, e che aveasi corrotto lo stile in Germania, affettando un'asprezza Tedesca, e dimenticandosi della fluidità Italiana." Saverio Mattei, *Elogio del Jommelli o sia Il progresso della poesia, e musica teatrale* (Napoli, 1785), p. 120. The *Elogio* is reproduced in Marita McClymonds, "Niccolò Jommelli: The Last Years" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1978), pp. 895-972.

<sup>3</sup> Audrey Lyn Tolkoff, "The Stuttgart Operas of Niccolò Jommelli" (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1974).

<sup>4</sup> Hermann Abert, *Niccolò Jommelli als Opernkomponist* (Halle, 1908), p. 350.

<sup>5</sup> "Jommelli nè ha corrotto, nè ha cambiato lo stile, sebene le sue carte ultime sien differenti dalle prime. Ogni scrittore, che ha tenuto in esercizio la penna per cinquant'anni, si va avanzando in certe virtù, e va mancando in certe altre, perchè tal'è l'imperfezione delle cose umane, ed ogni età ha le sue virtù, ed i suoi difetti. Nel giovane ci troverete un maggior impeto, e una maggior fluidità, ma minor esattezza: nel vecchio ci troverete maggior esattezza, ma minor impeto, e maggior fluidità" Mattei, p. 123.

Be persuaded, therefore, that every effect that you experience, and that you can experience in listening, the composer who writes with soul and mind has experienced first. I do not know how to, nor can I create in myself the illusion that carries me to that grade of passion that I need to write expressive music if my soul itself is not touched and does not feel it. A thousand times, I have found myself in similar, very difficult, straits. It is my absolute duty not to betray the words and to express them well, but it is neither my duty nor within my power to give the words that acumen of sensibility and of passion that they, of themselves, by their nature do not possess.<sup>6</sup>

In his letters to the theatrical director of the Portuguese court, his employer from 1769 until his death, the composer expressed this concern over and over again. On September 4, 1770, he wrote:

I hope the cavatina enclosed here will not be displeasing. The nature of the same cannot be otherwise, owing to the state of mind of the character—somewhat dazed and frozen by the surprise encounter with his supposed-dead Semiramide.<sup>7</sup>

Concerning two new arias for *Nitteti*, “Mi sento il cor trafiggere” (II:8) and “Dicesa è la mia sorte” (III:8), Jommelli commented:

The two arias included here are more for an expressive than a singing musician, but I did not know how I could have done them otherwise. Considering that they suit the words very well, my expedients will probably not be found extravagant or disproportionate.<sup>8</sup>

On September 25, 1770, he admonished:

I repeat on this occasion what it seems to me I have said more than once

<sup>6</sup> “Persuadetevi perciò, che tutto l’effetto che prova, e può provare ogni ascoltante; lo sente prima, e lo prova il compositore della musica, che scrive con anima, e ragione. Io non so, ne posso farmi un’ illusione che mi porti a quel grado di passione che mi è necessaria per fare una musica espressiva; se l’anima mia da se stessa non n’è tocca, e non la sente. Mille volte mi son trovato in simile difficilissimi passi. È mio assoluto dovere il non tradire, e bene esprimere le parole; ma non è ne mio dovere, ne è già nelle mie forze il potersi dare quell’ acume di sensibilità, e di passione, che da per se stesse, di lor natura non anno.” Transcribed in McClymonds, pp. 612–13.

<sup>7</sup> “La cavatina, che in questa accludo, spero che non sarà per dispiacere: il carattere della med:<sup>a</sup> non può essere diverso; stante la situatione dell’ animo dell’ attore, piuttosto stordito, e gelato dal sorprendente incontro della sua creduta morta Semiramide.” Transcribed in McClymonds, pp. 643–4. The cavatina in question was “Vorrei spiegar l’affanno,” from *Semiramide riconosciuta*, Act I, scene 4.

<sup>8</sup> “Queste sud:<sup>e</sup> due arie quì accluso, sono più per un musico espressivo, che per un musico cantante: ma non ò saputo fare altrimenti. Considerate che si saranno ben bene le parole, non si troveranno forse stravaganti, o spropositati i miei ripieghi.” March 20, 1770. Transcribed in McClymonds, p. 640.

before, namely, that my pieces, if they are to have the correct feeling, the exact sentiment that I have given them, must be taken precisely at the tempo indicated. Rehearsals must determine this. A little faster or a little slower can make all the difference. This can hardly be guessed at first sight.<sup>9</sup>

This compositional ideal—the creation of expressive music—manifested itself in many ways: in a carefully shaped, sometimes declamatory vocal line; in the development of ever more powerful motivic, textural, dynamic, and harmonic effects; and in the exploration of orchestral resources. The same applies both to the aria, where the orchestra assumes an increasingly dominant role, and to the obbligato recitative, which steadily gained in importance. Indeed, Vogler declared that Jommelli often went beyond the poet:

Sometimes his fancy took him far above the poet and was not satisfied with his instructions only—also little external incidents were of interest to him, and he knew how to use them. He spoke without words, and let the instruments speak loudly when the poet was silent.<sup>10</sup>

Ultimately, Jommelli developed a wide range of expressive musical options that went far beyond the Italian taste of the time. Thus the Neapolitans complained of learning and complication in his late operas, elements that expressed themselves, not in canons and fugues, as one unfamiliar with his music might assume, but in rich harmonies, sudden modulations, complex textures and motivic elements to which the Neapolitan audience was unaccustomed.

A comparison of Jommelli's settings of *Achille in Sciro* for Vienna (1749) with his setting for Rome (1771)<sup>11</sup> makes it clear that many of the characteristics of Jommelli's style so greatly admired in his operas for Stuttgart and still apparent in his latest works did not originate in Germany but were already present in his pre-Stuttgart operas.

<sup>9</sup> "Riplico in questa occasione, quel che più di una volta mi pare di aver detto: cioè: che le cose mie, perche abbiano il giusto sentimento che io gli ò dato; devono esser prese a quel tale preciso andamento notato: le prove sono quelle che devono fissarlo: un poco più presto, o un poco più adagio; può fare il tutto. A prima vista; difficilmente s'indovina." Transcribed in McClymonds, p. 646.

<sup>10</sup> "Zuweilen flog er kühn über seine Dichter hinweg und begnügte sich nicht blos mit dessen Vorschrift—auch kleine äussere Umstände interessirten ihn, und wuste sie ze benutzen. Er sprach ohne Wörter, und liess die Instrumenten fort declamiren, wenn der Dichter schwieg." Georg Joseph Vogler, *Betrachtungen der Mannheimer Tonschule*, V-VI (October-December, 1778), p. 160.

<sup>11</sup> *Achille in Sciro* (Pietro Metastasio), Vienna, Burgtheater, August 30, 1749 (MS score in A-Wn, 18000; libretto in A-Wn, 25825-A); Rome, Aliberti Theater, Carnival, 1771 (MS scores in D-B, F-Pn, I-Nc, and Acts I and II in I-Mc; libretto in I-Rsc). Library sigle are those of RISM.

Pressed for time in composing the 1771 version, Jommelli borrowed freely from the Viennese setting, adopting much of the large-scale tonal plan (Jommelli devised such plans for his operas from the very beginning of his career),<sup>12</sup> vocal incipits from arias, and other ideas as well. All of these borrowings the still creative mind of the composer transformed into a mature work.

Jommelli's short-breathed, declamatory vocal lines and motivic use of basses and violas did not originate during the Stuttgart period, for they can be found in passages from the 1749 setting, such as the one at the beginning of Deidamia's first aria, "No ingrato! amor non senti" (I:2) (Ex. 1). Granted, such interpolations in the bass line as are found in the first two measures are the exception rather than the rule in Jommelli's early operas, where the bass is relegated to repeated notes and beat-keeping much of the time. Still, the seeds of Jommelli's future style are here in both the vocal and instrumental parts. Motivic dialogue between parts, whether imitative or not, placed within the context of a homophonic texture (Ex. 1, mm. 18 and 19, between upper and lower parts) appears early in Jommelli's work and continues to be a textural option throughout his career. While these dialogues are more likely to appear in the upper parts, the lower parts are never entirely excluded from such activity even in Jommelli's earliest operas.

Still other characteristics of Jommelli's mature style appear in the aria of 1749. There is no need to look further than the opening phrases for a four-part harmonic texture and strong dynamic contrasts. Here also one finds the practice of scoring for a single violin part plus viola and continuo in the opening ritornello, changing to two violins and continuo for most of the vocal sections. In addition, each line of text receives a different treatment, as often in Jommelli's later operas. Consistently with Jommelli's mature style, the four-part harmony in the aria of 1771 (Ex. 2) is maintained for a longer period of time, and the parts are balanced in such a way that the continuo is no longer necessary to fill in the middle register with missing tones of the harmony. The melody has become more elaborate, ornamented, and rhythmically varied, and the bass line has assumed a more important role, providing contrary motion, dropping the double bass for some figuration with the violin and viola, and later holding sustained tones. Passages where the late version is actually simpler than the early one are not infrequent. In this aria, the contrapuntal string writing in mea-

<sup>12</sup> For a fuller discussion of large-scale tonal planning in Jommelli's operas, see McClymonds, pp. 436-68.

## Example 1

Jommelli, *Achille in Sciro* (1749): "No, ingrato! amor non senti", mm. 18-25Source: A-Wn, 18000, fols. 25<sup>v</sup>-26<sup>r</sup>

Allegro

The musical score is set in G major and 3/4 time. It features a vocal line for DEIDAMIA and a basso continuo line for B.C. The instrumental parts include Violins (Vln. I and II), Viola col basso, and Violoncello (Vcllo). The score is divided into four systems. The first system (mm. 18-20) shows the vocal line with lyrics 'No, in - gra - to, in -' and the basso continuo line. The second system (mm. 20-22) continues the vocal line with 'gra - to a - mor non sen - ti; O,' and the basso continuo line. The third system (mm. 22-24) shows the vocal line with 'se pur sen - ti a - mor, o,' and the basso continuo line. The fourth system (mm. 24-25) shows the vocal line with 'se pur sen - ti a - mor' and the basso continuo line. The score includes various musical notations such as dynamics (p, f), articulation (tr), and phrasing slurs.

Vlns.  
Vla. *p*  
DEIDAMIA  
No, in - gra - to, in -  
B.C. *p* *f* *p* *f*

20  
*p* *tr*  
gra - to a - mor non sen - ti; O, \_\_\_\_\_

Vln. I *tr* *tr* *tr*  
Vln. II  
se pur sen - ti a - mor, o, \_\_\_\_\_  
Viola col basso

25  
se pur sen - ti a - mor

(No, ingrate! you do not love me; or if you do, . . .)

## Example 2

Jommelli, *Achille in Sciro* (1771): "No, ingrato! amore non senti", mm. 28–30

Source: I-Nc, Rari 7.6.20 (old no. 28.6.21), fol. 15<sup>v</sup>

Allegro moderato

Vlns.  
Vla.  
DEIDAMIA  
sen - ti; o, se pur sen - ti a - mor,  
Vcl.  
B.C.

tures 21 to 24 were replaced with simple, oscillating thirds (Ex. 2).

Jommelli was already experimenting with orchestral effects long before he was given the unique opportunity to form his own famous band in Stuttgart. The use of arpeggios and pizzicato strings to depict the harp accompaniment for Achille's song, "Se un core annodi" (II:7), originated in the 1749 version. In Jommelli's early operas the winds were already given independent soloistic and motivic parts and scored for color, as for example in Achille's cavatina, "Si ben mio" (I:8), where in both versions the flutes play in alternation with the violins and coupled with the voice.

Jommelli's propensity for responding harmonically to emotionally charged words can also be traced to the pre-Stuttgart operas. These harmonic effects are not at all confined to the traditionally more modulatory B sections of the da-capo aria, but can also be found in the normally consonant compound A section. In Ulisse's aria "Quando il soccorso apprenda" (*Achille*, II:3) of 1749, the words *Ettore impallidir* ("Hector to turn pale") elicit a turn to the minor and Neapolitan harmony. In 1771, Jommelli responded with a diminished seventh harmony in one place and with a chain of suspensions in another.

Multiple repetition of the text is another practice that Tolkoff includes among later developments in Jommelli's style. Again, such repetitions had become necessary by the 1750s in order to stretch an aria to the length fashionable at that time. Furthermore, textual scrambling and fragmentation were among Jommelli's compositional resources in 1749 just as they are in 1771.

Jommelli won early recognition for his orchestrally punctuated obligato recitative, the style of instrumentally accompanied recitative

most commonly used in Italian opera. He also occasionally wrote accompanied recitative in which the orchestra continues to sound during the vocal declamation. In the simplest form of such accompanied recitative, the strings sustained the chords normally sounded by the harpsichord. In its most elaborate form the instruments played a measured accompaniment for the vocal part in a style otherwise found only in arias. In Italian opera, the latter form was used rarely and only for special effects.

Several applications of measured accompaniment to recitative found in Jommelli's *Achille* (1771) can be traced to the 1749 version. In the first instance (II:8), a tremolo increases the intensity of the recitative as Achille, who is hiding in female attire, expresses the overwhelming desire to take up arms. The tremolos of 1749 become even more dramatic in 1771 with the addition of oboe, trumpet, horn, and viola. In the same scene, Ulisse has a syncopated, repeated-note accompaniment as he mocks Achille in his female disguise, but the music has become much more cynical in 1771 with its gallant triplet arpeggios. The abrupt change of key at the beginning and the end of the accompanied portion also appears in both 1749 and 1771. In 1749, a transition from G major to G minor marks Ulisse's description of Achille wrapped in women's clothes, buried among the maids of Sciro, and lulled to sleep by the deeds of others (this last idea is represented by a move to D major). Jommelli followed the same plan in 1771, but, as usual in his late style, the key changes are much more drastic—from E to C at the beginning, and from B flat to D at the end.

Not even the realization of the first line of an aria text in obbligato recitative originated in Stuttgart. An example of this device can be found at the beginning of Achille's aria of 1749, "Involarmi il mio tesoro!" (I:3; Ex. 3). It was used in the same aria in 1771. As is to be expected, the instrumental obbligato is a great deal more highly developed and dramatic in 1771; nevertheless, the idea for an obbligato opening, as well as for the declamatory measures in  $\frac{3}{8}$  that follow, was all there in 1749, even including the irregular phrasing, the gradual addition of the winds, the independent viola, and the strong dynamic contrasts.

Abert recognized full well that the German influences in Jommelli's music were not so easy to isolate as the French elements that his operas acquired in Stuttgart. Choral and ballet scenes, programmatic orchestral pieces, and scene complexes which combined recitative, aria, chorus, and ensemble are unquestionably French in origin and in keeping with the taste of Jommelli's employer, the Duke of Württemberg. On the other hand, the German contribution to Jom-



## Example 3

*Achille in Sciro* (1749): "Involarmi il mio tesoro", mm. 1-13

Source: A-Wn, 18000, fols. 36<sup>r</sup>-37<sup>v</sup>

Adagio Allegro spiritoso

Vln. I  
Vln. II

ACHILLE

In-vo-lar-mi in-vo-lar-mi il mi-o te-so-ro! Ah!

Vla.  
B.C. *p*

5

Vlns.  
Hns. *p*

dov' è, dov' è quest' al-ma ar-

10

*mf* [mp] *più for.* *f assai*

di-ta? dov' è, dov' è,

*più for.* *f assai*

(My beloved stolen from me! Ah, where is this audacious one? where?)

melli's style was more developmental than innovative. By his own admission, none of the German influences that Abert enumerates actually originated there. Abert was also well aware that Jommelli had departed radically from Hasse's compositional ideals during the course of his own artistic development. In saying that Jommelli remained essentially Hasse's disciple, Abert was insinuating that because Jommelli continued to set Metastasian texts concurrently with French-inspired librettos that contained characteristics later associated with Gluck's "reform," he was not as dedicated to the "reform" ideals as was Gluck. In his attempt to protect Gluck's primal position as "reformer," Abert fails to mention that he also interspersed more conventional works among his "reform" pieces, that one of Jommelli's French-inspired operas predates Gluck's *Orfeo* by nearly ten years (*Feronte* for Stuttgart, 1753), and that Jommelli's work shows that his compositional ideals were very near to Gluck's own as set forth in 1769 in his preface to *Alceste*.

The hallmarks of Jommelli's style are apparent even in his earliest operas. Tolkoff does not apprise her reader of the wealth of expressive elements found in *Demofonte* (1743).<sup>13</sup> But they are there, and not hard to find at that. They are the same elements that Jommelli was to hone and polish in succeeding decades—the judicious use of four-part harmony (independent of the vocal part), independent and motivic viola and winds (the latter particularly for expressive purposes), the strong dynamic contrasts and the crescendo, harmonic recognition of strongly emotional words and ideas, and finally, a short-breathed, declamatory, orchestrally punctuated style for moments of extreme emotional agitation. There could be no better link between Jommelli's early and late styles than Dircea's emotionally distraught "mad" aria in Act III, scene 7, "Che mai risponderti." The violent changes of mood depicted there—from Andante to Presto in the A section and from sustained, four-part chords to short-breathed sighs in the B section, followed by da capo—make this aria an unmistakable forerunner to Armida's paranoid aria, "Ah ti sento mio povero core," for Naples (1770)<sup>14</sup> and the aria, "Ira dispetto amore," that Jommelli wrote on the same pattern for Deidamia in his *Achille in Sciro* for Rome (1771).<sup>15</sup>

<sup>13</sup> *Demofonte* (Metastasio), Padua, Obizzi Theater, June 13, 1743 (autograph score in D-Sl, H.B. XVII 239 A/C, with another copy, H.B. XVII 241 A/B; a copy in F-Pn, X. 778; libretto in US-Wc).

<sup>14</sup> *Armida abbandonata* (Saverio de Rogati), Naples, San Carlo Theater, May 30, 1771 (MS scores in B-Bc, D-DIb, D-Mbs, D-MÜs, F-Pn, GB-T, I-Mc, I-Nc, and P-La, 44-IX-46-48; libretto in I-Nc): Act II, scene 5.

<sup>15</sup> Act I, scene 12. For a discussion of the last two arias, see McClymonds, pp. 499-501.

While recognizing that the basic characteristics of Jommelli's style had already appeared before he went to Stuttgart, Abert still believed that he had discovered evidence of an extraordinary stylistic leap forward between the two French-oriented operas that Jommelli wrote for Stuttgart in 1755, *Pelope* (February 11) and *Enea nel Lazio* (August 30). Abert attributed this apparently sudden development in the composer's style to the influence of German music, although he was unable to specify what music. In reality, the manuscript of *Enea nel Lazio* that Abert consulted in Naples corresponds with the libretto of 1766 rather than with that of 1755, a fact that he chose to ignore. But any such fact in regard to Jommelli's work is of the utmost importance in making accurate stylistic observations because of his almost compulsive habit of completely rewriting even what he had set out to borrow or revise. He preferred to rewrite or revise an aria for a new singer rather than to transpose it, in order to retain the carefully worked-out overall key scheme. A comparison of the two versions of *Demofonte* (1764, 1765) illustrates this.<sup>16</sup> A scholar comparing only incipits may be misled because, while Jommelli may start out to borrow from himself, the requirements of a new singer, or his own fertile imagination, soon leads him in new directions, and the piece becomes an almost entirely new creation.

To take only one example, Achille's Act I aria in the 1771 version of *Achille in Sciro*, "Passaggio che sulla sponda," was borrowed from Jommelli's *Semiramide riconosciuta* (I: 11), where it was also a substitute aria.<sup>17</sup> The vocal line of 1771 goes along with the original of 1762 for about four measures before the revisions begin. By the eighth measure the music has become completely different. The first three measures consist of sustained tones in the voice filled with figuration in the first violin—figuration that is much changed in 1771. In the later version, the second violins are given a harmony part in thirds, and both sixteenth notes and triplets are combined in each measure, replacing the predominant triplets of 1762. Meanwhile, the violas play a syncopated figure. From this point on in the aria of 1771, Jommelli builds powerful orchestral effects depicting the fear and indecision upon which the text of this sea simile is based. There are some obvious borrowings such as the upward slides on *onda* (wave) and *si trattiene* (to hold oneself

<sup>16</sup> Jommelli's autograph of *Demofonte* in D-SI has the new arias and ensembles of 1765 bound in, preceding the originals of 1764. This MS was published in 1978 by Garland Press as part of their series, *Italian Opera 1640-1770*, edited by Howard Brown.

<sup>17</sup> Metastasio and Jommelli, *Semiramide riconosciuta* (3), Stuttgart, 1762 (MS score in F-Pn, D 6254; libretto in US-Wc).

back) and the contrary scales on *gitarasi* (to throw oneself). The three-against-two rhythmic pattern is found in both scores (triplets in the violins and duplets in the bass), and in the second half of the A section of 1762 the textural second violins accompany motivic work in the firsts as they do early in the score of 1771. Even so, there is nothing in the 1762 score approaching the textural and rhythmic complexity of the later version.

There is no reason to think that the differences between the two versions of *Enea nel Lazio*, 1755 and 1766, were any less striking.<sup>18</sup> Thus, in comparing *Pelope* of 1755 with *Enea* of 1766, Abert was actually observing the results of ten years of compositional development rather than a sudden artistic awakening, as it were, produced as a result of an exposure to some unidentified German music.

Tracing Jommelli's stylistic development in the late 1750s has been difficult, due to the lack of extant manuscripts of his operas for Stuttgart between 1755 and *Olimpiade* of 1761. Manuscripts of the two operas for Italy of 1757, *Creso* and *Temistocle*, do survive to provide a developmental link between the two dates, but Abert chose to consider them separately from the German output. I have been able to locate at least a representative sampling of the music written for Germany during the late 1750s.<sup>19</sup> Two copies of *Artaserse* (1756) have survived—one in an Italian hand in the Biblioteca da Ajuda, Lisbon, and a second in the Stuttgart Landesbibliothek attributed to Graun.<sup>20</sup> The Dresden Landesbibliothek has several individual arias from Jommelli's *Nitteti* (1759) along with some arias from *Ezio* that are ascribed to Jommelli but differ from arias on the same text in the extant versions of 1741, 1748, and 1771. In the same collection there is a duet with the substitute text appearing in the libretto of 1758, "Mio bel nome, ah pensa, oh Dio" (I: 10).

<sup>18</sup> The only known MS score of Jommelli's *Enea nel Lazio* that corresponds with the libretto of 1755 in B-Bc and D-S1 is found in the Biblioteca da Ajuda, Lisbon (P-La). It was done by the same hand as were those MSS in P-La that contain extensive revisions by João Cordeiro da Silva for productions at the Portuguese court in the 1760s and '70s. It is, therefore, unsuitable for formal and stylistic studies of Jommelli's music.

<sup>19</sup> Like the MS score of *Enea nel Lazio* in P-La, the MS scores of *Nitteti* (Stuttgart 1759) and *Alessandro nel Indie* (Stuttgart 1760) cannot be used for stylistic study because they appear in the same Portuguese hand as do those MSS that were revised by João Cordeiro da Silva for production at the Portuguese court. For a discussion of the revisions made in the twenty-five operas by Jommelli that were done at the court, as revealed in the Portuguese MSS, see McClymonds, pp. 218-50.

<sup>20</sup> Cheryl Sprague, "Artaserse Transformed: The Metamorphoses of a Metastasian Libretto During the 18th Century," paper read at a joint meeting of the Northern and Southern California chapters of the American Musicological Society, May, 1978.

Arias for *Nitteti* can be verified with the revised version in the Biblioteca da Ajuda, but the arias for *Ezio* are more problematic, since there is no known complete copy of the 1758 version of that opera. One of the Dresden arias, "Ah, non son io che parlo" (*Ezio*, III: 10), had an unusually long history considering how little verbatim borrowing Jommelli did from one setting to the next, for it is very nearly like its counterparts in the settings of 1748 and 1771.<sup>21</sup> In comparison with the 1748 version, the Dresden aria shows a few changes in the accompaniment—some motivic work added in the second violins and a flat sixth and diminished seventh added to the harmony. The most consequential difference between the two settings is the addition of horns and oboes in the Dresden score. The 1771 version is exactly like the Dresden aria but with a bridge added at the end, which leads back to a sign midway through the A section, changing the form from da capo to dal segno. Such clear and unmistakable links with the settings of 1748 and 1771 not only confirm the authenticity of the Dresden aria as a fragment of the lost setting of 1758, but also provide a strong basis for assuming that the rest of the *Ezio* arias and the duet in the Dresden collection come from that setting. Since *Ezio* was one of the few operas with multiple settings spaced over Jommelli's lifetime, scholars will now have at least a few sample arias from the important missing score of 1758. These arias, viewed together with the extant operas of 1756 and 1757, show no evidence of a sudden shift in style in the late 1750s. They do show a steady and logical course of development leading from the two French-inspired operas of 1755 to *Cajo Fabrizio* (for Mannheim, 1760) and *Olimpiade* (for Stuttgart, 1761).

While the differences in Jommelli's style between his early operas and those for Stuttgart have perhaps been overstated, the significant stylistic modifications that took place in the late 1760s have been entirely overlooked. They may not have been apparent to Abert because of his distorted view of Jommelli's stylistic development in the 1750s. They are most easily seen by comparing *Demofonte* in the versions of 1764–5, written just four years before Jommelli left Germany early in 1769, and the version of 1770,<sup>22</sup> his second opera for Naples after his

<sup>21</sup> Metastasio and Jommelli, *Ezio*: (1) Bologna 1741 (MS scores in D-SI; GB-Lbm; and I-Nc, Rari 7.8.1/2; libretto in US-Wc); (2) Naples 1748 (MS scores in I-MC (autograph); I-Mc; and I-Nc, Rari 7.8.3 (lacks simple recitatives); libretto in I-Nc); (3) Stuttgart 1758 (MS scores lost, some arias and a duet in D-DIb, 3032-F-5 Nos. 1, 3, 4, 5 and 8; libretto in D-SI); (4) Lisbon 1772, completed in Naples in 1771 (MS scores in A-Wn, Sm 9952; F-Pn; I-Nc, Rari 7.8.4, Rari 7.8.5 and Rari 7.8.6/7; score as revised for Lisbon in P-La; libretto in US-Wc).

<sup>22</sup> Metastasio and Jommelli, *Demofonte* (4), Naples, San Carlo Theater, 1770 (MS scores in D-B; F-Pn; I-Mc; I-Nc, Rari 7.7.16/18, Rari 7.7.19/21; P-La 44-IX-46/48; libretto in I-Nc).

return. Tolkoff missed the striking differences between the two versions because she assumed that the second was simply a revival of the first, a dangerous assumption where Jommelli is concerned, as we have already seen.

The most striking difference between the two versions is in the nature of the violin parts. In 1770, much of the figuration—the sweeping scales, arpeggiation, and repeated notes—has been replaced with less spectacular motivic and textural effects. The *crescendo il forte*, with its attendant figural acceleration, repeated notes, and rockets, has given way to such devices as gradually thickening texture, *rinforzando*, and *forte-piano* accents. The vocal line is often more heavily decorated or elaborated. The basses and violas in 1770 are integrated into the motivic structure rather than being relegated to repeated notes. They also more frequently contribute to a richer, four-part harmony than they did in 1764. Generally, the orchestra is less stratified in 1770. Various instrumental parts take different roles in the course of the piece rather than assuming one role for the entire composition. In short, Jommelli's scores of the 1770s are less flamboyant and expansive and more intense motivically, harmonically, and texturally.

For many of these characteristics, the differences are only a matter of degree. To say that rockets and repeated notes are often replaced by motivic material does not mean that the former are completely discarded. To say that there are more four-part textures and richer harmonies in 1770 does not mean that one seldom finds these in 1764. Declamatory, short-breathed vocal lines can be found in 1764, but they are more noticeable in 1770. Basses make an occasional motivic contribution in 1764, but they do so more often in 1770. Disjunct melodies are written for expressive purposes in both operas, but in 1770 motivic and rhythmic intensity may be substituted. Jommelli had gained better control of his musical materials. Large musical gestures are no longer necessary to express violence, but they are still among the available options. Some characteristics carry over from 1764 nearly unchanged, such as *forte-piano* accents, ornamentation for expression and emphasis, and the dropping of the bass viols from the bass line for *piano* passages.

A few measures of Dircea's poignant and tragic aria, "Se tutti i mali miei" (*Demofonte*, II: 6 (1764), II: 7 (1770)) will serve to illustrate the differences that had taken place in Jommelli's musical thinking in the late 1760s. The chosen section contains the parallel sixths that were first heard in Timante's obligato recitative earlier in Act II, where he is describing the gushing out of his beloved Dircea's life's blood should his father carry out the planned sacrifice. In Dircea's aria

of 1764 (Ex. 4), for the first four measures of this example, Jommelli wrote a nicely balanced, but not intense, vocal line, using a repeated slur to the flat second as an expressive device. The chords in the strings waver between major and minor thirds (notice that the viola is above the second violin). The parallel sixths appear in the repetition of the word *tenerrezza*. The flat second in the vocal line becomes an anacrusis rather than forming part of a trochaic rhythm, as before. The passage ends with a questioning dissonant neighbor tone followed by a fermata.

Example 4

Jommelli, *Demofonte* (1764-5): "Se tutti i mali miei", mm. 33-8

Source: D-SI, HB XVII 24ob, fols. 44<sup>r</sup>-45<sup>r</sup>

Andantino

Vlins. 35

Vla. 7

DIRCEA

Per te - ne - rez - za, per te - ne - rez - za il cor,

B.C.

(In sympathy your heart [would break])

In 1770 (Ex. 5), Jommelli's setting shows a great deal more sensitivity in the use of rhythmic and motivic elaboration, as well as a general advance in the control of his musical materials, producing a much more intense effect. Jommelli placed the parallel sixths on the first *tenerrezza*, adding the dissonant, dotted *échappées*. The repeat of *tenerrezza* is built upon the same melodic tones as the first (*c''*, *b'*, *a'*, *g''*), this time newly elaborated and harmonized. This second rendering of *tenerrezza* is initiated with a dissonant second in the violins on *per*. In the first half of the subsequent measure, the Lombardic rhythm and its disjunct resolution throw emphasis to the second beat, emphasis that is, in turn, absorbed into the two thirty-second notes of the second half of the beat. The rest of the measure proceeds so normally that one expects a normal cadence, but the *a'* is displaced with an *f''*. While the voice holds this unexpected pitch, the orchestra builds a *rinforzando*, which is supported by the addition of the viola, by syncopation in the first violins, and by quickened rhythmic motion in all of the orchestral parts. The *rinforzando* is followed by the next sur-

## Example 5

Jommelli, *Demofonte* (1770): "Se tutti i mali miei", mm. 51-6Source: I-Nc, Rari 7.7.17 (old no. 28.6.39), fol. 60<sup>r</sup>

Andantino affettuoso

Vlns.

DIRCEA

per te - ne - rez - za il cor, per

Vla. Vcl.

B.C.

55

rinf.

p

te - ne - rez - za il / cor

f

p

prise move—a sudden drop in dynamics for the downbeat of the following measure, allowing the vocal *échappée* to be clearly heard as the dominant seventh is transformed into a diminished chord.

In the version of 1764 (Ex. 4), the melodic and rhythmic elaboration, which Jommelli perfected in subsequent years, is applied to the repetition of "per tenerezza il cor" (mm. 39 and 40). Flutes have been added, doubling the vocal line, and the phrase ends in a deceptive move leading to the most intense measures of this passage. At measures eight and nine, a diminished seventh precedes the voice, and a diminished chord falls on the downbeat at "tutti." The next two measures are a variation of the previous two. The initial flat in the vocal line is elaborated with an ascending arpeggio followed by descending scale-wise motion, and the trochee of the following measure gains an anacrusis to accommodate the word *potessi*, which concludes on another diminished seventh. The third trochee and its anacrusis (m. 45)



comes a measure early, the first measure having been left out, giving a stretto effect. The momentum generated is somewhat absorbed by the fermata, but is given renewed force by the subsequent succession of repeated measures (46–8). The anacrusis and trochee rhythm ♪|♪♪ becomes ♪♪♪♪, with added tension supplied by an accented, syncopated pattern in the accompaniment. A cello motive leads to two beautifully balanced measures of melisma on *tenerrezza* including a flat second (mm. 49 and 50). In neither measure do the melodic high points coincide with the strong beats. This serves as a propelling force driving towards the dominant on the third beat of measure 50 and the tonic on the downbeat of measure 51.

In the 1770 version, the concentrated harmonic and melodic intensity contrasts markedly with the no less beautiful, but considerably broader, more consonant style of the 1764 version. The concluding five measures are permeated both harmonically and melodically with diminished color beginning with the anacrusis on *per* (m. 56). The first half of the next measure contains only pitches of the diminished seventh, and the voice dwells on the minor thirds. In the following measure of elaboration on the tonic (m. 58), the melodic high point of the passage arrives on a weak beat by way of an *échappée*. Measure 59 again returns to predominantly diminished color for the word *tenerrezza*. For pathetic effects Jommelli often omits the root of a dominant seventh, avoiding the major color that the root would produce. Here, even the strong dominant in the bass on the third beat scarcely dilutes the diminished color, which is reconfirmed by the diminished seventh outlined in the vocal part on the fourth beat. The melodic outlines of a diminished seventh rising on the first beat and falling on the last half of the second beat in measure 59 appear again a tone lower in the next, this time compressed into the first measure in preparation for the final cadence.

The beginning of Timante's aria "Prudente mi chiedi" (II: 3) illustrates differences in orchestral style between 1764 (Ex. 6) and 1770 (Ex. 7). Jommelli began both versions in obbligato recitative, even going so far as to borrow verbatim the first sixteen measures of the vocal part. On the other hand, the orchestration proves to be quite different. In 1764, the violins begin with a sweeping scale ("Mannheim rocket") and subsequent decelerating arpeggios and chords typical of a ritornello in obbligato recitative. In 1770, the ritornello begins in full orchestral chords with triplet motives in the strings. The basses take over with a dotted-note pattern, and the violins add short ascending slides that lead to a dotted, chordal tutti. The violin parts are much more spectacular and difficult in 1764, while the 1770 version is

## Example 6

*Demofonte* (1764-5): "Prudente mi chiedi", mm. 1-24Source: D-SI, HB XVII 240b, fols. 16<sup>r</sup>-17<sup>v</sup>

Allegro di molto

Vlns.

TIMANTE (Recitativo)

B.C. Vla. col basso

Pru -

den-te, pru-den-te mi chie - di? Mi

bra-mi, mi bra-mi inno-cen-te? Lo sen - ti, lo

ve - di, lo ve - di, lo sen - ti, lo ve - di, lo

Vlns. Ob.  
15  
f  
Hns.

ve - di, lo sen - ti, di - pen - de, di - pen - de da te, da te, da

f

Vln. I  
Vln. II  
p

te. Lo ve - di, lo

p

sen - ti, lo sen - ti, lo ve - di, lo

20  
Vlns.  
Ob., Hns.  
p  
crescendo al forte

ve - di, di - pen - de, di - pen - de da te, da

f

p

te, — di - pen - de, di - pen - de da te, da te.

*f*

(You ask me to be prudent? You desire me guiltless? Hear, see that it all depends on you.)

more motivic, harmonically richer, and makes prominent use of the bass. Both of the arias then continue in typical obbligato style, repeating a variation of the ritornello after the vocal statement.

### Example 7

*Demofoonte* (1770): "Prudente mi chiedi", mm. 1-25

Source: I-Nc, Rari 7.7.17, fols. 31<sup>v</sup>-34<sup>r</sup>

*Allegro spiritoso*

Vlns.

Ob., Hns.

TIMANTE

B.C. Vla. col basso

*f*

Pruden - te, pruden - te mi chie-di?

Vlns.  
Ob. *p*

Mi bra-mi, mi bra-mi in-no - cen-te? Lo

10 Vlns.

sen - ti, lo ve - di, lo ve - di, lo sen - ti, lo

*f p f p f p*

sen - ti, lo ve - di, di - pen - de, di - pen - de da

15 Ob. Hns. *f* Vln.I Vla. Vln.II *f p*

te, da te, da te. Lo

ve - di, lo sen - ti, lo

sen - ti, lo ve - di, lo ve - di, lo sen - ti, di -

pen - de, di - pen - de da te, da te, di -

pen - de, di - pen - de, da te, da te, da te.

(You ask me to be prudent? You desire me guiltless? Hear, see that it all depends on you.)

After the fermata, the music proceeds in the manner of an aria. The A section of both arias has only one complete statement of the text. In 1770, there are three textural and dynamic climaxes before the B section, whereas in 1764, there are only two. Each climax is greater than the one before. Again, the means of building the climax differs. For the first eight measures, Jommelli discarded the contrary arpeggiation in the basses that he had used in 1764 and placed the bass instruments in octaves with the violins. He thus brought out the inverted relationship between the motives for the voice and the orchestra. Punctuating string chords replace the violin's three-note motive in thirds for measure 12, and accented slurs in contrary motion replace the descending staccato thirds in the next two measures. In other words, Jommelli gave Timante a stronger accompaniment in 1770. For the second eight measures he kept the repeated-note texture in the second violins. But rather than place the violins, supported by the bass, in motivic alternation with the voice, he placed the violas and basses in the more prominent position of alternating with the voice, while the violins double the voice. Note that there were no violas scored here in the original version. The 1764 version drives to a single crescendo climax, with a softening just preceding the final *forte* chords. The whole effect is achieved without winds. The 1770 version drops to a *subito piano* at measure 21; the subsequent unmarked crescendo is achieved by accompanying the gradually ascending vocal line first with violins only, then with added basses and oboes for *fortepiano* accents, and finally with the horns joining in for the concluding chords.

The scales, the arpeggios, and the repeated-note crescendo-diminuendo may have been abandoned because Italian orchestras simply were not up to them. On the other hand, these effects appear no more often in the works for Lisbon, where players were used to performing Jommelli's earlier music. Thus, it is equally possible that their infrequency in the late works represents a change of preference on Jommelli's part.

The textural complexity, dramatic intensity, and harmonic richness of Jommelli's late style has received so much attention that it is easy to overlook one aspect: his continued ability to write lovely, moving, and lightly accompanied melodies. Indeed, his skill in handling melodic materials increased significantly in his later operas. In Cherinto's aria "Il suo leggiadro viso" (*Demofonte*, I: 11), the melody of 1770 (Ex. 9), though indebted to that of 1764 (Ex. 8), was rewritten, and the instrumental accompaniment reduced for the most part to beat-keeping, basic harmony and vocal doubling. In 1770, the first

## Example 8

*Demofonte* (1764-5): "Il suo leggiadro viso", mm. 45-57Source: D-SI, HB XVII 240a, fol. 88<sup>r</sup>

Andantino

Vlins. *p*

Vlins. a 2

CHERINTO

Il suo leg-gia-dro vi-so no,

Vla. *p*

B.C. *p*

no, non per-de mai bel - - tà,

no, no, non per-de mai bel - tà:

(Your charming face never loses its beauty)



two-measure interpolation of vocal declamation and violin elaboration (1764, mm. 47–8) has been eliminated, and the second reduced to a single measure (1770, m. 32; 1764, mm. 52–3). That single measure is dramatically intensified by choosing the melodic high point from measure 30 for vocal prolongation, elaborated with violin turns from the same measure.

Jommelli's typical ABB' plan for the initial phrases still obtains in 1770, but there is a great deal more sophistication in the development of musical materials in the new version. In the version of 1764, the last two measures of all three phrases are nearly the same, whereas in 1770, the second phrase (mm. 29–31) is an expansion of the last two measures of the first (mm. 26–8), and the third phrase (mm. 33–5) is a variation of the second. The pitches of the second and third beats of measure 27 in the first phrase have been compressed into the third beat of measure 29 in the second phrase. In measure 30, the melodic high point is pitched one tone higher than in the previous phrase and is placed on the first rather than on the second beat. An *échappée* emphasizes the drop to the tonic for extended cadential elaboration. Thus, the stress on the second beat in the first phrase is displaced to the first and third beats in the second phrase, emphasizing the melodic high point much more than in 1764. The melodic climax receives even greater emphasis in the third phrase because of the rhythmic *stretto* in the previous measures. In short, the musical materials from 1764 were condensed, with the string figuration replaced by a simple homophonic accompaniment.

Jommelli was pressed for time in writing *Demofonte* for Naples in the fall of 1770. He had been drafted to do it when Gian Francesco de Majo's failing health made it impossible for him to fulfill the original commission.<sup>23</sup> With time at a premium, it would have been expedient to borrow at least the recitatives from the earlier version.<sup>24</sup> But a comparison of the new version with the old shows that by 1770 Jommelli's

<sup>23</sup> Letter from Giuseppe Aprile to Gaetano Martinelli, September 30, 1770, in C-Lu; transcribed in McClymonds, pp. 648–9.

<sup>24</sup> The borrowings from the 1764 version may very well have been from memory because the Duke of Württemberg had not allowed Jommelli to take his scores with him when he left Germany. Letter from Jommelli to Duke Karl Eugen, February 24, 1769, in the Hauptstaatsarchiv, Stuttgart; transcribed in McClymonds, pp. 822–7. If Jommelli had had his own score, he surely would not have requested a copy of the trio and an aria from Portugal—a request that could not be granted because the score was in the queen's own jealously guarded, personal library. Letters from the Portuguese theatrical director, Giuseppe Botelho, to Jommelli, October 16 and 30, 1770, in the Arquivo Histórico do Ministério das Finanças, Lisbon, transcribed in McClymonds, pp. 745–51.

## Example 9

Demofonte (1770): "Il suo leggiadro viso", mm. 26–35

Source: I-Nc, Rari 7.7.16, fols. 90<sup>r</sup>–90<sup>v</sup>

Andantino affetuoso

*p*

CHERINTO

Il suo leg - gia - dro vi - so non per - de

*p*

30

Vlins.

Vla.

*tr*

mai — bel - - tà, no,

*tr*

35

*f*

non per - - de mai — bel - - tà:

Detailed description: The image shows a musical score for a scene from the opera Demofonte. It consists of three systems of music. The first system (mm. 26-35) features a vocal line for Cherinto and a basso continuo line. The tempo is 'Andantino affetuoso'. The vocal line begins with the lyrics 'Il suo leggiadro viso non perde' and ends with a fermata. The basso continuo line provides harmonic support. The second system (mm. 30-35) includes two violin parts (Vlins. and Vla.) and the vocal line. The vocal line continues with 'mai — bel - - tà, no,'. The violin parts play a rhythmic pattern with trills. The third system (mm. 35-40) continues the vocal line with 'non perde mai — bel - - tà:'. The violin parts continue their pattern, and the vocal line ends with a fermata. Dynamics include piano (*p*) and forte (*f*).

(Your charming face never loses its beauty)

ideas had changed even concerning the declamation and harmonization of the recitatives. For example, in Timante's solo scene, Act I, scene 4 (5 in 1764), Jommelli had placed the melodic high point of the declamation on the name Dircea in 1764. In 1770, he made the speech more dramatic by reaching the first melodic high point on the exclamation "Oh stelle" (oh stars), and dropping for "la povera Dircea" (the poor Dircea). Two ascending melodic tritones arrive at an even higher point for "sventure" (misfortunes), and disjunct motion concludes the statement.

There is noticeably less obbligato recitative in 1770; apparently it was not in great demand in Naples. Act II, scene 4 (3 in 1764) and Act III, scene 2 were set in obbligato in 1764 but not in 1770. In addition, several scenes set entirely in obbligato in 1764 were only partially so in 1770 (Act II, scenes 3 and 10 (2 and 9 in 1764) and Act III, scene 5). Still, *Demofonte* has more scenes containing obbligato recitative than any other of Jommelli's operas of the 1770s.

A comparison of the obbligato recitatives for the two versions further illustrates the continuing maturation of Jommelli's genius. Some of the more felicitous ideas from 1764 were adopted for 1770, but seldom verbatim: they were normally transformed and integrated into the essentially new creation that is the *Demofonte* of 1770. Jommelli's obbligato ritornellos are sometimes programmatic, such as Dircea's death processional in Act II, scene 6 (5 in 1764) and rescue scene in Act II, scene 9 (8 in 1764). They are likely to retain the original tonality and instrumentation. Still, the ritornellos themselves took on a different character—the elaborate arpeggiated figuration of 1764 were replaced with a more intense, rhythmically and figurally contrasting style. In the rescue scene of 1770, for example, Jommelli's scoring for strings only in strong upward-moving scales followed by angular motives, harmonic modulations, and full, three-part harmony suggests an intense struggle, even if not so loud and flamboyant as the chordal winds and arpeggiated strings of the battle music provided in 1764.

Jommelli's obbligato recitatives of 1770 are often more modulatory and chromatic, make greater use of the minor mode, and venture into more remote keys than the recitatives of 1764. Returning to Timante's lurid description of Dircea's impending execution in Act II, scene 3 (2 in 1764), the idea of using descending parallel sixths to depict the flowing of Dircea's blood originated in 1764, where they were written in E flat major (Ex. 10).

In 1770 (Ex. 11), Jommelli replaced the preceding diminished seventh in accompanied recitative with graceful turns in major mode describing Dircea's innocence and youth. He then turned to E flat minor

## Example 10

*Demofonte* (1764-5): Obligato recitative from Act II, scene 2Source: D-SI, HB XVII 240b, fols. 8<sup>v</sup>-9<sup>r</sup>

The musical score consists of three systems. The first system shows the beginning of the piece with a long, sustained note in the strings (Vlns. and Vla.) and the vocal line starting with the lyrics "sen - za di - li - to, nel fior de - gli an - ni suoi, su l'a - re - a -". The second system continues the vocal line with the lyrics "tro - ci ve - der - le a - go - niz - zar; ve - der - le a ri - vi sgorgar" and includes a Violoncello (Vcl.) line. The third system continues the vocal line with the lyrics "tie - pi - do il san - gue dal mol - le sen;" and includes a Violoncello (Vcl.) line.

(Without offence, in the flowering of her life, on the atrocious altar, to see her anguished suffering, to see her warm blood surge in streams from her soft breast;)

and augmented sixths in motivic sighs to depict her agony. The descending parallel sixths depicting her flowing blood begin in that tortured key, with momentary major color on *sanguē* (blood) for the dominant of B flat minor. Another motivic augmented sixth and its resolution in B flat minor precede a return to the major mode in the equally extreme key of D flat. The setting of this passage in 1764 is heartbreaking, but

## Example 11

*Demofonte* (1770): Obbligato recitative from Act II, scene 3Source: I-Nc, Rari 7-7.17, fols. 24<sup>r</sup>-24<sup>v</sup>

Vlns.  
Vla.

TIMANTE

sen-za de-lit-to, nel fior de-gl'an-ni suoi, su l'a-re a-tro-ci

B.C.

ve-der-le a-go-niz-zar; ve-der-le a ri-vi sgor-gar

Vcl.

tie - pi-do il san-gue dal mol-le sen;

*f* *tutti* *p* *fz*

(Without offence, in the flowering of her life, on the atrocious altar, to see her anguished suffering, to see her warm blood surge in streams from her soft breast;)

that of 1770 is horrifying in the juxtaposition of sweet major harmonies with a dread combination of minor mode, repeated augmented sixths, and coursing parallel sixths in remote and difficult keys.

To sum up: evidence strongly suggests that a revised view of Jommelli's career is in order—a view positing slow and logical stylistic

maturation rather than sudden and radical change. First of all, an examination of Jommelli's music of the 1740s and early 1750s shows that his basic style and compositional ideals were already established when he went to Stuttgart. Second, the German contribution to Jommelli's career was twofold: the incorporation of spectacular elements borrowed from French opera, and the appreciation and encouragement of his already established interest in the exploration of orchestral resources, whether in the development of expressive harmonic, textural, and motivic techniques, or in the exploitation of coloristic and programmatic possibilities. That Jommelli's artistic development in Germany was neither radical nor sudden can be shown by viewing his German output in chronological order: the significant maturation of his style after 1764 is apparent.

Finally, the years after Jommelli returned to Italy from Germany have always seemed anticlimactic, partly because of the outstanding achievements of the Stuttgart years and partly because of the less-than-enthusiastic reception of his music by his countrymen, where a different operatic style was in vogue. This view is also in need of revision. A comparison of Jommelli's late operas with settings of the same texts done both before and during his sojourn in Germany makes it clear that the works of the 1770s represent a fruition, a culmination of three decades' experience. They reveal a mature master in total control of his musical materials and still in search of ever more effective means of expression. Regardless of the reception accorded them in his native land, the operas of the 1770s contain some of Jommelli's greatest and most expressive music.

Berkeley, California