

INTRODUCTION

In the twenty years before Johann Christian Bach wrote *Temistocle* (Warb G 8), Elector Palatine Carl Theodor had brought some of the most innovative Italian opera composers to Mannheim to write opere serie to celebrate his name day on 4 November.¹ His own Kapellmeister, Ignaz Holzbauer, also occasionally contributed to the exceptionally extravagant festivities, and among the works specifically written for Mannheim were operas by Niccolò Jommelli (*Cajo Fabrizio*, 1760), Tommaso Traetta (*Sofonisba*, 1762), Gian Francesco de Majo (*Ifigenia in Tauride*, 1764; and *Alessandro nell'Indie*, 1766), Niccolò Piccinni (*Catone in Utica*, 1770), and Holzbauer himself (*Adriano in Siria*, 1768). One commentator applauded the eclectic tastes of Carl Theodor:

*If Naples was distinguished by its splendor, Berlin by its critical precision, Dresden by its grace, Vienna by its tragic-comic, Mannheim gained the admiration of the world by its diversity. The elector's theater and his concert hall were virtually an Odeon, where the masterpieces of all artists were featured. The alternating whims of the elector contributed very much to this taste. Jommelli, Hasse, Graun, Traetta, Georg Benda, Sales, Agricola, the "London" Bach, Gluck, Schweitzer—alternated from year to year with the compositions of his own composers, so that there was no place in the world where one could cultivate his musical taste so quickly and surely as in Mannheim.*²

1. This introduction, with slight modification, is based on Paul Corneilson, "Temistocle and Lucio Silla," in *Operas of JCB*, 107–25. For further background, see Paul Edward Corneilson, "Opera at Mannheim, 1770–1778" (Ph.D. diss., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1992); Nicole Baker, "Italian Opera at the Court of Mannheim 1758–1770" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1994); Bärbel Pelker, "The Palatine Court in Mannheim," in *Music at German Courts, 1715–1760: Changing Artistic Priorities*, ed. Samatha Owens, Barbara M. Reul, and Janice B. Stockigt (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2011), 131–64; Eugene K. Wolf, "The Mannheim Court," in *The Classical Era*, ed. Neal Zaslaw (London: Macmillan, 1989), 213–39; and the foundational study by Friedrich Walter, *Geschichte des Theaters und der Musik am kurpfälzischen Hofe* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1898).

2. "Wenn sich Neapel durch Pracht, Berlin durch kritische Genauigkeit, Dresden durch Grazie, Wien durch das Komischtragische auszeichneten; so erregte Manheim die Bewunderung der Welt durch Mannigfaltigkeit. Das Theater des Churfürsten und sein Concertsaal waren gleichsam ein Odeum, wo man die Meisterwerke aller Künstler charakterisirte. Die abwechselnde Laune des Fürsten trug sehr viel zu diesem Geschmacke

J.C. Bach was undoubtedly brought to the attention of the music-loving Carl Theodor by two of his prized musicians: the venerable tenor Anton Raaff, who joined the Hofkapelle in 1770, and the virtuoso flutist Johann Baptist Wendling, who was the spouse of the *prima donna*, Dorothea Wendling. Raaff sang in Bach's *Catone in Utica* (Warb G 2) and *Alessandro nell'Indie* (Warb G 3) at Naples in 1761 and 1762, respectively, and Wendling was in London in the spring of 1772 to perform at the Bach-Abel concerts, including the premiere of Bach's serenata *Endimione* (Warb G 15) for Wendling's benefit on 5 April. Perhaps the two of them convinced Carl Theodor to commission an opera seria from Bach for November 1772.³

The operas at Mannheim were given in one of the largest opera houses of the mid-eighteenth century, holding approximately 2000 people (see figures 1 and 2).⁴ Visiting dignitaries added to the pomp as described by the Saxon ambassador to the court: "The spectacles and other entertainments that have been scheduled to be given and especially the magnificent opera, *Temistocle*, with music by the famous Bach, chapel master of the Queen of England, have attracted to this court many visitors, who tomorrow will have the honor to pay their respects to the elector on his name day [4 November]." Two days later, the same diplomat reported: "Thursday [5 November] they performed

bey. Jommelli, Hasse, Graun, Traetta, Georg Benda, Sales, Agricola, der Londoner Bach, Gluck, Schweitzer—wechselten da Jahr aus Jahr ein mit den Compositionen seiner eignen Meister ab, so daß es keinen Ort in der Welt gab, wo man seinen musikalischen Geschmack in einer Schnelle so sicher bilden konnte, als Manheim." Christian Friedrich Daniel Schubart, *Ideen zu einer Ästhetik der Tonkunst*, ed. Ludwig Schubart (Vienna, 1806), 129–30. All translations are my own unless otherwise noted.

3. Wendling might have had an ulterior motive to bring Bach to Mannheim, and apparently Bach fell in love with his daughter Elisabeth Augusta Wendling. For more details see Paul Corneilson, "A Context for Mozart's French Ariettes: The Wendling Family and Friedrich Schiller's *Kabale und Liebe*," *Current Musicology* 81 (2006): 53–72.

4. See Paul Corneilson, "Reconstructing the Mannheim Court Theatre," *Early Music* (1997): 63–81. Unfortunately, most of the performing materials and any contracts for operas were likely lost when the court opera house was destroyed in November 1795, when the Austrian army attempted to drive the French occupying forces from the city. See Wolf, 41–43. Other copies of operas were lost during World War II; see Wolf, 199–200.

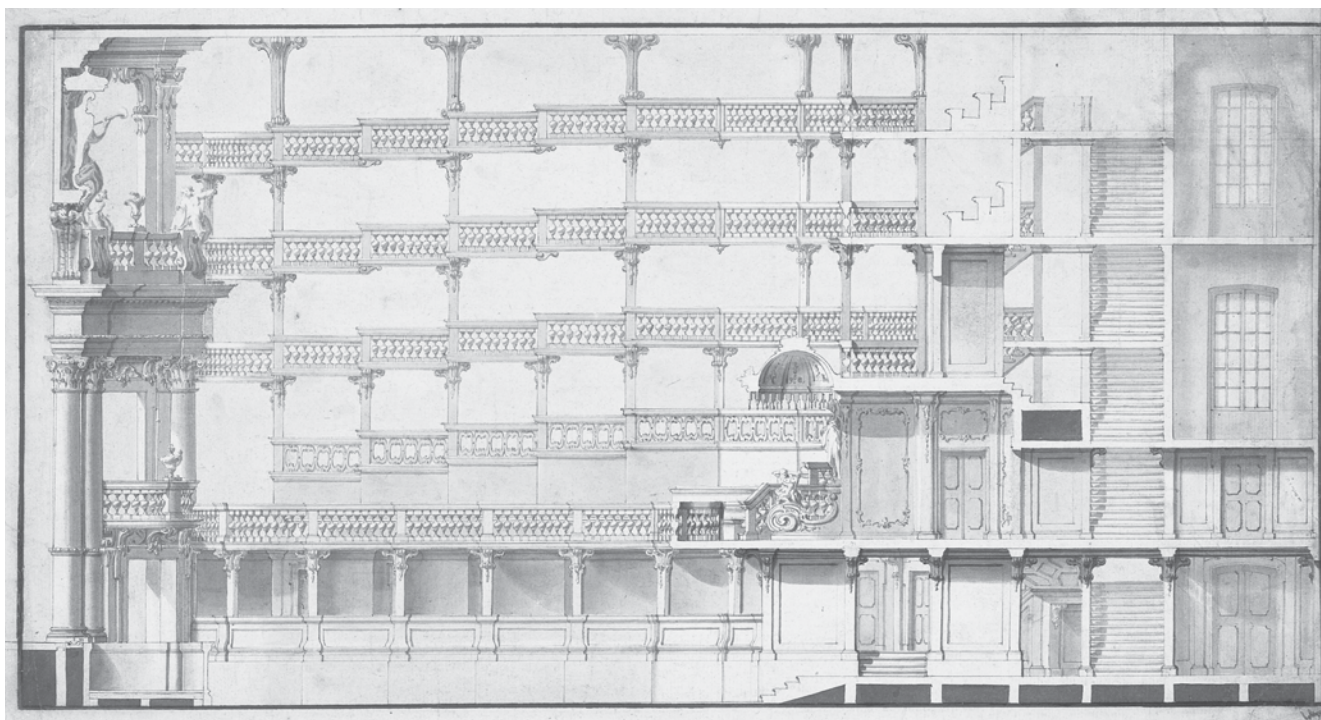


FIGURE 1. Interior view of the Mannheim Court Theater; courtesy of the Rijksmuseum, RP-T-1998-8

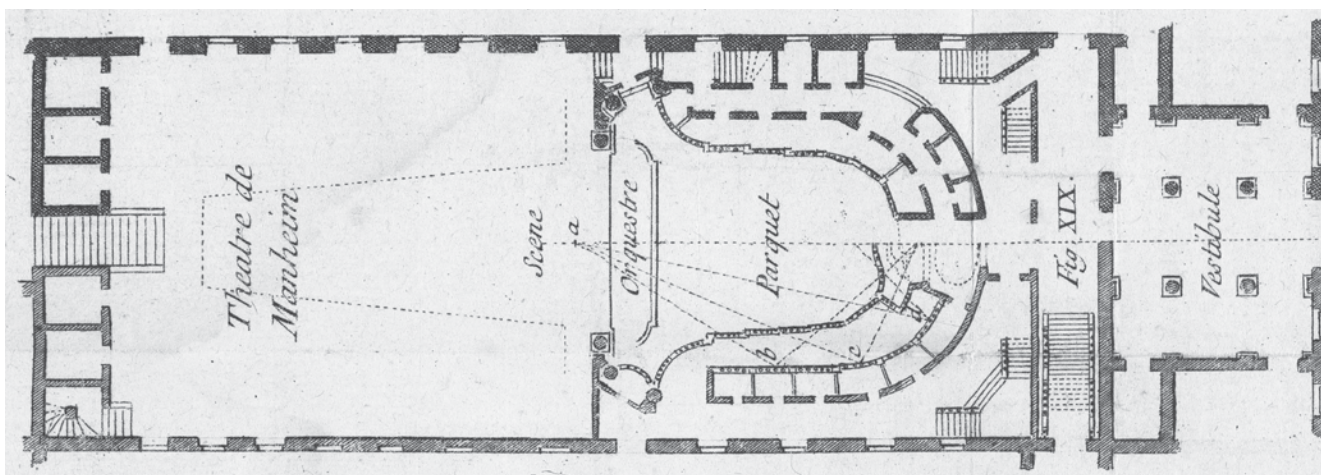


FIGURE 2. Plans for the Mannheim Court Theater, designed by Bibiena; reproduced from a plate in *Essai sur l'architecture theatrale* (Paris, 1782); courtesy of Houghton Library, Harvard Theatre Collection, Thr 1150.4.65*

the new opera, *Temistocle*, which won the general approbation for the excellence of the music as well as for the beauty and richness of the decorations. The ballets, entitled *Roger [dans l'isle Alcine]* and *Médée et Jason*, contributed very much to enhance the beauty of the spectacle, which was attended by a large number of visitors of all ranks.”⁵ The

5. Count Andreas von Riauour, report in Dresden, Staatsarchiv, Geheimes Kabinett, Loc. 2622–2628; quoted in Corneilson, “Opera at Mannheim,” 112–13, and appendix B, nos. 20–21. Ballets were gener-

ally given between the acts of operas, and these were mostly written by Christian Cannabich and Carl Joseph Toeschi. The surviving music, including Cannabich’s *Médée et Jason*, has been published in *Ballet Music from the Mannheim Court*, parts 1–5, ed. Floyd Grave et al. (Madison and Middleton, Wis.: A-R Editions, 1996–2018).

ally given between the acts of operas, and these were mostly written by Christian Cannabich and Carl Joseph Toeschi. The surviving music, including Cannabich’s *Médée et Jason*, has been published in *Ballet Music from the Mannheim Court*, parts 1–5, ed. Floyd Grave et al. (Madison and Middleton, Wis.: A-R Editions, 1996–2018).

the “Opera” performed on 17 January and 7 February, with other comic operas (“Operette”), ballets (“Bal”), and concerts (“Académie”) interspersed. *Temistocle* proved so successful that Bach was invited back to write a second opera, *Lucio Silla* (Warb G 9), two years later (see JCB:ODW, vol. 11).

Original Cast

The Mannheim court had a distinguished group of singers. It was a relatively stable company that tended to sing for several years, and some singers stayed for their entire careers. The original cast of *Temistocle* featured:

Anton Raaff (tenor)	Temistocle
Giovanni Battista Zonca (bass)	Serse
Silvio Giorgetti (soprano castrato)	Lisimaco
Dorothea Wendling (soprano)	Aspasia
Francesco Roncaglia (soprano castrato)	Neocle
Elisabeth Wendling (soprano)	Rossane
Vincenzo Mucciolo (alto castrato)	Sebaste

The German tenor Anton Raaff spent most of his career in Italy, where he was the leading tenor in the 1750s and 1760s (see figure 3). According to Schubart, Raaff was:

One of the foremost and best-grounded singers in Europe. His is one of the most beautiful tenor voices that can be heard. Its range spans from alto to bass. His tones are all thick, full, and pure. He sings everything set before him with inimitable polish, and varies an aria repeatedly with indescribable artistry. His embellishments and cadenzas, like his musical taste in general, are of unparalleled beauty; whatever he sings, he sings with deepest feeling and his lovely heart seems to reverberate in his song. Furthermore, perhaps only a few singers in the world know their art as thoroughly as Raaff. Unfortunately, this exceptional singer is growing old and has already begun to warble his tone.⁶

Mozart wrote the role of Idomeneo for Raaff in 1780, and while in Mannheim and Paris in 1777–78 he came to ap-

6. “Einer der ersten und gründlichsten Sänger in Europa. Seine Stimme ist der schönste Tenor, den man hören kann. Er steigt bis in die Sphäre des Alts hinauf, und eben so glücklich hinunter in die Regionen des Basses. Seine Töne sind alle dick, voll und rein. Er singt mit unachahmlicher Fertigkeit alles vom Blatt weg, was man ihm vorlegt, und variiert eine Arie mehrmalen mit unbeschreiblicher Kunst. Seine Verzierungen und Cadenzen, wie überhaupt sein musikalischer Geschmack, sind unerreichbar schön; was er singt, singt er mit dem tiefsten Gefühl und sein schönes Herz scheint in seinem Gesange widerzuhallen. Ausserdem wissen vielleicht nur wenige Sänger der Welt so gründlich über ihre Kunst zu sprechen wie Raff. Schade, dass dieser seltne Mann jetzt altert, und schon anfängt mit seiner Stimme zu schettern.” Schubart, *Ideen*, 136–37.



FIGURE 3. Anton Raaff, engraved by G. F. Touchemolin, with a poem signed “M. H.”:

“Ce moderne Amphion charma la Germanie;
il sut flatter encor la superbe Ausonie:
Artiste vertueux et sublime Chanteur,
on admira sa Voix, on estime son Coeur.”

(This modern Amphion charmed the Germans; he knew how to enchant the proud Italians: a virtuous artist and sublime singer, one admired his voice and esteems his heart.)

preciate the elderly singer’s special talent for *portato* singing, which Raaff learned while studying with Antonio Bernacchi in Bologna.⁷ Raaff sang the title roles in four of Bach’s operas: *Catone*, *Alessandro*, *Temistocle*, and *Lucio Silla*, over the course of a dozen years. Each of these operas has four arias for Raaff (with a cavatina in *Temistocle* that morphs into a finale). Most of the arias are dal segno,

7. See Mozart’s letters discussing Raaff on 14 November 1777, 28 February 1778, and 12 June 1778; see *MBA*, 2:125, 303–4, and 377–78, respectively. While working on *Idomeneo*, Mozart commented that “Raaff is like a statue”; letter of 8 November 1780; *MBA*, 3:13. See also Pierluigi Petrobelli, “The Italian Years of Anton Raaff,” *Mozart-Jahrbuch* 1973/74, 233–73.

and many have a middle section in Allegretto $\frac{3}{8}$ —the type made popular by composers of Hasse's generation.⁸ They are predominantly in major keys (with one in C minor and one in G minor), and five of the seventeen arias are in B-flat or E-flat. Wind instruments are featured prominently in his arias, and in *Temistocle* there is an aria with obbligato bassoon, and in *Lucio Silla* his last aria has obbligato oboe, bassoon, and horn.

Dorothea Wendling and her sister-in-law, Elisabeth Wendling, shared the first and second female roles in the 1760s and 1770s, and eventually created the roles of Ilia and Elettra in Mozart's *Idomeneo* in Munich in 1781.⁹ Dorothea was an effective actress, and she excelled at cantabile singing. She had a range from e_b' to b_b'' and only rarely sang c''' and never above this pitch. Over the course of her career, composers exploited the strength of her tessitura (b_b' to f''), and a striking number of arias written specifically for her are in flat keys, especially B-flat, E-flat, and G minor. She could sing *passaggi*, although the brilliant style of *fioriture* embellishment was not one of her strengths. Her specialty was the pathetic style and its attendant rhetorical gestures.¹⁰

After hearing Dorothea during rehearsals for Anton Schweitzer's *Rosamunde*, which Mozart also attended, Christoph Martin Wieland wrote to Sophie La Roche on 24 December 1777:

The acquaintance with Madame Wendling, who will be my Rosamunde, and the hour in which she sang and acted her role for me for the first time, belongs among the most pleasant of my life. Her style of singing surpasses anything I have ever heard, even the famous Mara. This alone is true song—language of the soul and the heart, every note a living expression of the purest, most intimate feeling; the entire song a continuous line of beauty.—In short, I could talk for hours about this magnificent woman and never tire of it.¹¹

8. See Daniel Hertz, "Raaff's Last Aria: A Mozartean Idyll in the Spirit of Hasse," *MQ* 60 (1974): 517–43.

9. See Paul Cornelson, "Mozart's Ilia and Elettra: New Perspectives on *Idomeneo*," in *Mozart's Idomeneo und die Musik in München zur Zeit Karl Theodors*, ed. Theodor Göllner and Stephan Hörner (Munich: Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2001), 97–113.

10. Mozart's concert aria K. 295a written for her in Mannheim in February 1778 is a clear example of her vocal characteristics; see Paul Cornelson, "An Intimate Vocal Portrait of Dorothea Wendling: Mozart's Concert Aria K. 295a," *Mozart Jahrbuch* 2000, 29–45.

11. "Die Bekanntschaft mit Madame Wendling, die meine Rosamund seyn wird, und die Stunde, worin sie mir ihre Rolle zum erstenmal sang und agierte, gehört unter das Angenehmste meines Lebens. Ihre Art zu singen übertrifft alles, was ich jemals, selbst von der berühmten Mara,

Elisabeth was ten years younger than Dorothea and was married to Franz Wendling, a violinist in the Mannheim orchestra and brother of Johann Baptist. Elisabeth often played the rival to Dorothea's roles. She had a somewhat wider range than Dorothea (d' to d''') and a higher tessitura. In general, Elisabeth's arias have more coloratura than Dorothea's, and composers usually wrote arias for her in sharp keys (G, D, A, and E major). Mozart heard her sing the role of Anna in Holzbauer's *Günther von Schwarzburg*, originally written for another soprano, Franziska Danzi, and "consequently it is not suited to her voice but is too high for her."¹²

After singing in Italy from 1757 to 1761, the bass-baritone Giovanni Battista Zonca went to London, where he sang mostly comic operas but also the role of Alessandro the season before Bach arrived.¹³ He came to Mannheim in 1764, and two years later he sang Alessandro again in de Majo's setting. Charles Burney heard Zonca in Mannheim and was not impressed.¹⁴ But this was in a comic opera, *La contadina in corte*, that was not written for him. Though he performed in many comic operas throughout his career, the music written for him in opere serie is more impressive, to the point that he rivals the principal tenors who sang with him. Serse in particular is a prominent role, almost equal to Temistocle in Bach's opera. Mozart might have preferred to write the role of Idomeneo for Zonca (see his letter of 27 December 1780).

Silvio Giorgetti began singing in Rome in 1752 and first appeared in Mannheim as Poro in de Majo's *Alessandro* in 1766. Burney heard Giorgetti in *La contadina in corte* in 1772, and thought his "voice was but feeble, nor were his

gehört habe. Dies allein ist wahrer Gesang—Sprache der Seele und des Herzens, jeder Ton lebendiger Ausdruck des reinsten, innigsten Gefühls; der ganze Gesang eine fortwallende Schönheits-Linie.—Kurz, ich könnte Stundenlang von dem herrlichen Weibe schwatzen, und würd es nicht müde." *Wielands Briefwechsel*, vol. 5, *Briefe der Weimarer Zeit* (21. September 1772–31. Dezember 1777), ed. Hans Werner Seiffert (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1983), 693.

12. Letter to Leopold dated 14 November 1777; *MBA*, 2:125. Danzi was in London at the time, and sang in Bach's *La clemenza di Scipione* in the spring of 1778.

13. Zonca's career is summarized in Saskia Willaert, "Italian Comic Opera in London, 1760–1770" (Ph.D. diss., King's College, University of London, 1999), 70–73.

14. Charles Burney, *The Present State of Music in Germany, The Netherlands, and United Provinces*, 2 vols. (London, 1773), 1:90: "an Italian tenor [*sic*], who was in England some years ago; his highest praise is, that he does not offend." In Sacchini's *La contadina in corte*, Zonca sang the role of Berto, with Silvio Giorgetti (Ruggiero), Franziska Danzi (Sandrina), and Magdalena Allegranti (Tancia).

abilities very considerable in other particulars.”¹⁵ He also sang Cesare in Piccinni’s *Catone in Utica* in 1770, and in several comic operas at Mannheim through 1776. Joining Giorgetti as the second castrato in *Temistocle* was Francesco Roncaglia, who after making his debut in Italy in 1765 and spending four years in Munich (1768–71), where he was the *secondo uomo*, arrived at Mannheim in May 1771.¹⁶ He replaced Giorgetti as *primo uomo* in *Lucio Silla*. Bach must have liked his voice enough to bring him to London in 1777–78 as *primo uomo*. Burney heard Roncaglia in London in 1778:

Roncaglia had an elegant face and figure; a sweet-toned voice, a chaste and well-disciplined style of singing; hazarded nothing, and was always in tune. The best part of his voice, which was a soprano, was from D to A; he sometimes went to C, but not easily. Both his voice and shake were feeble; and of the three great requisites of a stage singer, pathos, grace, and execution, which the Italians call *cantabile*, *grazioso*, and *bravura*, he was in perfect possession only of the second.¹⁷

Rounding out the company was Vincenzo Mucciolo as Sebaste. There is not too much to say about Mucciolo, who seems to have sung mainly in the electoral chapel at Mannheim. Bach gave him only one aria in *Temistocle*, at the beginning of act 2.

Drama and Music

Although the poet Mattia Verazi had written several original libretti for Mannheim and Stuttgart in the 1760s,¹⁸ the works of Metastasio had not fallen completely out

of favor at the court. There is some evidence that Raaff brought a copy of Piccinni’s *Catone in Utica* with him from Naples to Mannheim in 1770, and he made his local debut in the title role.¹⁹ The tenor was comfortable with certain roles. He also sang Catone in Bach’s setting for Naples in 1761, as well as *Temistocle* in Andrea Bernasconi’s setting in Livorno in 1741. Perhaps Raaff was eager to revisit the role of *Temistocle* with Bach’s music. In any event, many changes were made in order to bring *Temistocle* in line with local tastes. A note in the Mannheim libretto states that the elector requested changes to the original drama: “La poesia è del celebre METASTASIO: per ordine di S.A.S.E. adattata al presente bisogno, ed arricchita d’arie, duetti nuovi, e finali d’atti contrassegnati con il seguente asterisco* da MATTIA VERAZI, segretario intimo, e poeta aulico di S.A.S.E.” (The poetry is by the celebrated Metastasio; by order of His Serene Electoral Highness adapted to the present need and enriched with arias, duets, and finales marked with an asterisk [in the libretto] by Mattia Verazi, private secretary and court poet of His Serene Electoral Highness.) Verazi condensed large sections of recitative, and cut and added new numbers to shape the narrative as economically as possible. Naturally, some of the alterations in the recitatives were necessary because of the changes in the number and content of the arias. Only ten of Metastasio’s original twenty-six aria texts appear in Verazi’s version; two of these were moved, including Aspasia’s aria no. 10 (from act 1 to act 2) and Rossan’s aria no. 11 (from the end of act 2 to the middle of the act). (See table 3 in the critical report for a comparison between Metastasio’s original and Verazi’s revisions for Bach.)²⁰ Verazi replaced three of Metastasio’s arias in act 1, he replaced three arias and added a duet and quartet in act 2, and he replaced two arias and added the finale no. 20 in act 3.²¹ While each act of Metastasio’s version has only one scene change, Verazi’s libretto has eight different scene changes, with sets designed by Lorenzo Quaglio.

Bach takes full advantage of the famous Mannheim orchestra, beginning with the overture where he employs pairs of flutes, oboes, bassoons, trumpets, horns, and tim-

15. Burney, *Present State of Music in Germany*, 1:90. At Mannheim in 1771, Giorgetti also sang the role of Rinaldo in Baldassare Galuppi’s *Il filosofo di campagna*, with Dorothea Wendling (Eugenia) and Elisabeth Wendling (Lesbina).

16. Raaff reported to Padre Martini on 5 May 1771: “L’Elettore ha preso al suo servizio il Soprano Sig^e Roncaglia che pia-ce al Padrone generalmente, cosa che deve far piacere al nostro Sig^e [castrato and composer Lorenzo] Gibelli suo Maestro.” (The Elector has taken to his service the soprano Roncaglia, who generally pleases our patron, a fact that must certainly be a great pleasure to his teacher Gibelli.) Petrobelli, “Italian Years of Raaff,” 261.

17. Charles Burney, *A General History of Music*, vol. 4 (London, 1789), 508. Burney adds that Roncaglia had studied with Bernacchi, Raaff’s teacher; but Raaff credits Gibelli as Roncaglia’s “Maestro” (cf. n. 16).

18. On Verazi, see Marita P. McClymonds, “Mattia Verazi and the Opera at Mannheim, Stuttgart, and Ludwigsburg,” *Studies in Music from the University of Western Ontario* 7 (1982): 99–136; and McClymonds, “Transforming Opera Series: Verazi’s Innovations and their Impact on Opera in Italy,” *Opera and the Enlightenment*, ed. Thomas Bauman and Marita Petzoldt McClymonds (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 119–32.

19. See Wolfram Enßlin, *Niccolò Piccinni, “Catone in Utica:” Quellenüberlieferung, Aufführungsgeschichte und Analyse* (Frankfurt: P. Lang, 1996).

20. Metastasio’s libretto was first set by Antonio Caldara and performed in Vienna in 1736; see Sartori, no. 22925.

21. For some examples of Verazi’s revisions, see Corneilson, “Opera at Mannheim,” 174–92.

pani, plus strings in the outer movements.²² In the Andante middle movement, he uses flutes, bassoons, and three clarinetti d'amore (also used in Aspasia's aria no. 19). Obligato solo winds are used in two arias—bassoon in no. 7 (probably played by Georg Wenzel Ritter) and oboe in no. 11 (played by Ludwig August Lebrun or Friedrich Ramm)—and most of the other numbers include one or more wind instruments.²³ Only four arias (nos. 3, 10, 12, and 18) have only string accompaniment.

Act 1 begins with Temistocle and Neocle in Serse's palace, where they are in effect prisoners of the Persian king. Neocle tries to convince his father to flee from his enemy, but Temistocle insists on staying. In aria no. 1 (Allegro non tanto in G major), Neocle fears for the future. Aspasia (Temistocle's daughter) enters with Sebaste, Serse's confidant, who tells her that Serse has offered a reward for Temistocle. Temistocle asks Sebaste how he can see King Serse, but is dismissed with contempt as a foreigner. Aspasia does not recognize her father at first; Temistocle had sent her away from the war in Greece, but her ship was wrecked at sea and she was rescued and taken as a prisoner to serve Rossane, the royal princess. But when Aspasia eventually recognized Temistocle, she warns him to leave at once. In aria no. 2 (Andante con moto in E-flat major) Temistocle insists that he is not afraid to face his enemy, Serse. Rossane enters and accuses Aspasia of trying to steal Serse from her. Aspasia explains that she loves someone else, when Sebaste tells them that Lisimaco (Aspasia's beloved) has arrived from Egypt. In aria no. 3 (Andante in A major) Rossane admits she is paranoid. Now alone, Aspasia assumes that Lisimaco has forgotten her and will betray Temistocle; she laments her misfortune in aria no. 4 (Andante espressivo in G minor). In the throne room of Serse, Temistocle with Neocle, still undetected, hear the king threaten Temistocle. Lisimaco enters and claims he is also searching for Temistocle to bring him back to Athens as a criminal, but Serse will not cooperate with the Greeks. In aria no. 5 (Largo in E major) Lisimaco warns that Serse's actions will lead to a potentially disastrous war with Greece. Temistocle now confronts Serse and identifies himself. At first Serse does not believe him, but eventually embraces Temistocle and offers his protection in aria no. 6 (Andante in D major). Temistocle reflects on

his fate in an accompanied recitative followed by aria no. 7 (Allegro in B-flat major).

Act 2 opens with Serse telling Sebaste that he wants to marry Aspasia to cement the ties between him and Temistocle. Sebaste must prepare Rossane for this news and anticipates that she will comply in aria no. 8 (Allegro in D major). Serse meets Rossane and warns her that his heart is divided in aria no. 9 (Andante in B-flat major). Rossane confronts Aspasia, but Serse tells Aspasia that he has embraced Temistocle. In aria no. 10 (Andante di molto in E-flat major)—moved by Verazi from act 1 to act 2—Aspasia worries that her excessive pleasure might be an illusion. Sebaste tells Rossane to forget about Serse but offers to help her get revenge. Sebaste gives Rossane a letter, which she accepts, and promises to punish Serse in an accompanied recitative followed by aria no. 11 (Allegro in C major). (Again, Verazi moved this aria from the end of act 2 to the middle.) Neocle and Aspasia debate what to do, and in aria no. 12 (Allegretto in F major) Neocle expresses doubt about Aspasia's feelings for Lisimaco. Aspasia and Lisimaco now meet, and Aspasia accuses her lover of betraying her father. Lisimaco informs her that Serse will turn over Temistocle to him, and that he is only doing his duty to bring him back to Athens. Aspasia threatens to give herself to Serse, and she and Lisimaco plead with each other in duet no. 13 (Andantino—Allegro in E major). The scene changes to Serse's throne with an army visible in the background. Sebaste tells Serse that Aspasia refuses to marry him. Serse offers Temistocle the opportunity to take command of his army instead of sending him back to Greece with Lisimaco. When Temistocle realizes that Serse wants him to lead the army against his homeland, he gives the scepter back to Serse, who promptly has him arrested. Temistocle, bound in chains during the ritornello (according to the libretto), states that he is not afraid to die in aria no. 14 (Andante in C major).

Next follows one of the most significant additions by Verazi: the quartet no. 15 (Allegretto moderato in E-flat major) to end act 2.²⁴ Almost by definition, with four characters expressing different emotions, a quartet was a more dramatic form than an aria, which might express different emotional states of a single character. Bach's quartet in *Temistocle* features Aspasia, Rossane, Neocle, and

22. For an overview of the Mannheim orchestra, see Eugene K. Wolf, "On the Composition of the Mannheim Orchestra, ca. 1740–1778," *Basler Jahrbuch für historische Musikpraxis* 17 (1993): 113–38.

23. In 1774, J. C. Bach published his Quintets, op. 11, with a dedication to Carl Theodor. See Roe, DL Appendix 3.5.

24. Quartets were not common in opera seria, and Bach had already written quartets in *Catone* and *Zanaida*. For a summary of the repertory, see Marita P. McClymonds, "The Great Quartet in *Idomeneo* and the Italian Opera Seria Tradition," in *Wolfgang Amadè Mozart: Essays on His Life and His Music*, ed. Stanley Sadie (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 449–76.

Serse; notably absent is Temistocle, whose fate is about to be decided after refusing to lead the Persian army against Athens. Bach treats the characters individually while pairing different voices in imitative writing as Aspasia and Neocle plead for their father's life, and Rossane vents her jealousy toward Aspasia. Eventually, the other three characters exit, leaving Aspasia alone on stage. She has an accompanied recitative, full of expression, then an aria in E-flat major that begins *Larghetto* and eventually changes to *Allegro assai*, to depict Verazi's stage directions: "indi passando insensibilmente all'agitazione smaniosa, che va crescendo sino al fine" (then slowly with a feeling of anxiety that grows in a crescendo until the end).

Act 3 begins with Temistocle in prison, and his initial accompanied recitative anticipates Mozart's *Idomeneo* with the title character invoking his compatriots ("O patria" in *Temistocle*; "Popoli" in *Idomeneo*). Sebaste asks what Temistocle has decided; he responds that he is prepared to die. Lisimaco, Aspasia, and Neocle enter, and Temistocle announces that he is prepared to commit suicide rather than betray Greece. In aria no. 16 (*Andante* in E-flat major) Lisimaco admires his courage. Temistocle bids farewell to his children in aria no. 17 (*Allegro maestoso* in C minor), expecting to triumph over his fate. Neocle hopes his father will give him courage in aria no. 18 (*Andante* in C major), while Aspasia, in an accompanied recitative followed by aria no. 19 (*Allegro con spirito* in G major), struggles between courage and cowardice. In the king's palace, Rossane shows Serse the letter that Sebaste had given her, thus betraying his act of treason. Before Sebaste can be sentenced, Temistocle enters with Lisimaco. Serse asks Temistocle to swear his allegiance to Persia, but he refuses and begins the finale with cavatina no. 20a (*Largo* in D major). Aspasia and Neocle interrupt Temistocle before he can drink poison from the cup, and this transitions directly to no. 20b (*Allegro* in D major) with the entire cast. Serse is so moved by Temistocle's fidelity to Greece that he makes peace with his former enemy. Temistocle in turn praises Serse and asks that heaven remember such a

great king; this is echoed in the final chorus no. 20c. Thus, Temistocle falls in a long line of elder statesmen that Raaff portrayed at Mannheim—Catone, Temistocle, Lucio Silla, and Günther von Schwarzburg—leading to his last role as Idomeneo in Munich.

Sources and Reception

The popularity of *Temistocle* is evident in the relatively large number of surviving sources, more-or-less complete scores as well as individual arias.²⁵ Acts 1 and 3 of Bach's autograph are extant (in GB-Cfm, MU. MS. 214; facsimile in CWJCB, vol. 7). There are complete eighteenth-century copies in Berlin (D-B, Mus. ms. Bach P 388), Darmstadt (D-DS, Mus. Ms. 62; act 2 is reproduced in facsimile in CWJCB, vol. 7), Dresden (D-Dl, Mus. 3374-F-1), and New Haven (US-NH, Misc. ms. 140). Count von Sickingen owned a copy of *Temistocle* that Mozart likely played through while he was in Paris in 1778.²⁶ In addition to libretti published in Italian and German (sources OT 1 and OT 2), a French libretto of the *Ballets executés à l'opéra de Themistocle* survives (in D-MHrm, Mh 1765).

The opera was revived in 1965 in Stuttgart (and recorded) based on an edition by Edward O.D. Downes and H.C. Robbins Landon; this version, which is a pasticcio incorporating numbers from Bach's other operas, was published in 1965 by Universal Edition in Vienna.²⁷ BBC Radio broadcast a slightly shortened version of the opera in 1972, conducted by Charles Mackerras, and it was also performed by Bel Canto Opera Company in New York in 1982. Staged productions were given at the Théâtre du Capitole in Toulouse and Oper Leipzig in 2005, conducted by Christophe Rousset, and at the Mannheim National Theater in 2012–13, in a thoroughly revised version, conducted by Reinhard Goebel.²⁸

Paul Corneilson

25. The MS scores and individual pieces and brief descriptions are given in CWJCB, vol. 48, pt. 2, 297–98. The overture was published as No. 1 in *Trois Symphonies . . . composées par différents auteurs*, op. 1 (The Hague, n.d.).

26. See Wolf, chap. 8, and Paul Corneilson, "Count Sickingen's Music Collection," *Newsletter of the Society for Eighteenth-Century Music* 19 (2012): 1, 9–12.

27. See Stanley Sadie's review in *Musical Times* 107 (1966): 526–27.

28. See the reviews by Evan Cortens, "Distracted Fragments: J.C. Bach's *Temistocle* in Mannheim," *Newsletter of the Society for Eighteenth-Century Music* 20 (2012): 4–7, and Stephen Roe, "Mannheim," *Opera* (October 2012): 1242.