

# GEMINIANI STUDIES

# AD PARNASSUM STUDIES 6

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# GEMINIANI STUDIES

*Edited by*

*Christopher Hogwood*

*Ad Parnassum Studies*

APS 6

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## PREFACE

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY had problems with Geminiani, not least with his name: “Geminiany”, “Germiniani”, “Jeminiani”, “Gimeniani”, “Geminiary”, and even “Mr. Jammaniana” were some of the attempts to pin down a much-admired but elusive genius in their midst. His music proved in the end almost as intractable as his name — initial admiration became more dilute as Geminiani failed to behave as was expected of a star-pupil of Corelli — indeed, he was even reluctant to give public concerts at all. Then there was general suspicion at his open admission that he preferred dealing in paintings to being a musician. And when he turned to writing treatises, public bafflement was complete.

Geminiani himself compounded the problem; Tartini described him as “furibondo” (presumably meaning as a performer), and Sir John Hawkins noted delicately the “versatility of his temper”. His unwillingness to appear in public concerts was overcome only, Burney acidly pointed out, when forced by circumstances and he even demurred over playing at Royal command unless Handel were recruited to accompany him (Handel agreed). Throughout his life he valued his independence, turning down a pension from the Prince of Wales and preferring to support himself by art dealing. He was also, it now appears, fiercely litigious — two essays in the present volume provide new evidence of his legal battles with employees who he felt had failed to hold to an agreement.

The conventional verdict on Geminiani’s career is that ‘he failed to fit accepted norms and therefore fell from public favour’. Today, of course, this might be construed as a measure of his genius, but his most quoted contemporaries decided that it indicated a deficiency of ambition or inspiration (or both). Although Burney once admitted to Thomas Twining that “Handel, Geminiani & Corelli were the sole Divinities of my Youth”,<sup>1</sup> in the end his grudging epitaph rose no higher than “[...] he was a great Master of Harmony, & very useful in his Day”. Even Hawkins, who knew and supported Geminiani

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<sup>1</sup> Burney to Thomas Twining, 14 December 1781 in: *The Letters of Dr Charles Burney*, edited by Alvaro Ribeiro, SJ, 4 vols, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1991, vol. I, p. 328.

## PREFACE

rather more enthusiastically than Burney, diagnosed “the want of an active and teeming imagination”.

Succeeding generations have accepted the negative verdicts of Burney and Hawkins without noting the discrepancies with other evidence. Burney’s view, for example, that Geminiani was a “bad timist” and had (according to hearsay) been demoted on this account in the Naples opera was gleefully repeated, while Mrs Delany’s first-hand report of his playing as late as 1760 has been ignored: contrary to Burney, she specifically noted “the sweetness and melody of the tone of his fiddle, his fine and elegant taste, and the perfection of time and tune”. Even she, however, subscribed to the public belief that he was 86 when in fact he was a mere 72 — yet another area where Geminiani sowed confusion. It was left to the lesser-known Charles Avison, a pupil of Geminiani, to lead an attempt to preserve and promote his mentor’s music. He swept all criticism imperiously aside:

This extraordinary Man had a Genius in all the Arts of Taste. Music, Painting, and Sculpture, were the principal Objects of his Mind; and he was sensible in them all. He spoke all the European Languages, and his Conversation was lively and entertaining to the latest of his Life time. He had seen many Courts, many Men, many Customs. After all his Long Experience, his general Sentiments were, — “That none should be elated with Praise, when unconscious of deserving it — nor too much depressed, when their Merit is neglected. — And, that the only Power of defeating a Rival, is to excel him.” Such were the Sentiments of the ingenious Geminiani. He loved the Arts, and assisted many Artists. I speak for one, and revere his Memory in this very Expression which I have often heard him repeat, — “That Truth and Simplicity are the best Criterion of the fine Arts, as they are of the good Conduct in human Life”.<sup>2</sup>

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Geminiani was more international even than Handel, and his speaking “all the European Languages” was, like his art dealing, a necessity rather than a hobby. He can be traced at various periods to Lucca, Rome, Naples, Bologna, London, Edinburgh, Newcastle, Dublin, Paris, Amsterdam and The Hague, and it seems very probable (though not yet investigated) that he would also have visited his brother, who was employed as leader of the royal orchestra in Madrid. Certainly his one recommendation for a textbook on

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<sup>2</sup> *Newcastle Courant*, 17 September 1768.



harmony and counterpoint — *El Porqué de la musica* by Andres Lorente<sup>3</sup> — optimistically assumed that his English pupils would be as fluent in Spanish as himself. He was equally at home in Italy, France, Holland, England and Ireland, and in the following essays a largely geographical organisation of topics seems natural with so footloose a subject. Disappointingly for national pride, neither London nor Dublin appear to have had much musical effect on Geminiani — certainly less than the strong influence Paris had, both on his music and on its printed appearance.

However, his sheer internationalism and what was seen (in contemporary terms) as the ‘hybrid’ character of his style had the predictable effect of making him no nation’s favourite. John Potter observed in 1762 that “his taste is peculiar to himself”,<sup>4</sup> and even Hawkins doubted “whether the talents of Geminiani were of such a kind, as qualified him to give a direction to the national taste” (1776). There were few attempts at critical measurement in any broader sense; William Hayes ventured a brief comparison with the obvious target, concluding that, “In short GEMINIANI may be the *Titian* in Music, but HANDEL is undoubtedly the *RUBENS*”,<sup>5</sup> and only an anonymous ‘Scale to Measure the Merits of Musicians’ published in *The Gentleman’s Magazine and Historical Chronicle* in 1776 attempted any sort of broader rational evaluation: it was noted that, although “an ingenious Frenchman”<sup>6</sup> had some years previously made a table evaluating and comparing the scores for some fifty-six major painters, judging them on their composition, drawing, colour and expression, nothing similar had been attempted for composers. The criteria and score-card (given on pp. xiii-xiv) explain how an otherwise almost equal balance between Handel and Geminiani is upset by the sheer quantity of the former’s works — under “quantity published or known” Handel scores 18,

<sup>3</sup> The full title of this treatise is *El Porque de la musica : en que se contiene los quatro artes de ella, canto llano, canto de organo, contrapunto y composicion y en cada uno de ellos nuevas reglas, razon abreviada, en utiles preceptos, aun en las cosas mas dificiles, tocantes a la harmonia musica, numerosos exemplos...* and (for the interested) it can be found in a modern facsimile edition (Alacante, Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes, 2006).

<sup>4</sup> POTTER, John. *Observations on the present state of music and musicians; with general rules for studying music, in a new, easy, and familiar manner; [...] to which is added, A scheme for erecting and supporting a musical academy in this Kingdom*, London, 1762, p. 54. He added in a footnote “I believe he is still alive, but if he is, he must be very old, and past doing any thing now”.

<sup>5</sup> [HAYES, William.] *Remarks on Mr. Avison’s Essay on Musical Expression. Wherein The Characters of several great Masters, both Ancient and Modern, are rescued from the Misrepresentations of the above Author; and their real Merit asserted and vindicated. In a Letter from a Gentleman in London to his Friend in the Country...*, London, 1753, p. 128.

<sup>6</sup> DE PILES, Roger. *Cours de peinture par principes avec un balance de peintres*, Paris, 1708; Caravaggio, interestingly, scores 16 for colour but 0 for expression.

## PREFACE

Geminiani only 4. Although a little partiality may be suspected when we find Jackson of Exeter scoring higher than anyone else in most categories, as a measure of contemporary taste this table offers a well-argued system for incorporating both musical and extra-musical criteria.

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Geminiani has benefited surprisingly from modern technology; our first essay lists some of the many recordings that have appeared over the last 45 years and, unexpectedly, we now find a higher proportion of Geminiani's works available in facsimile editions than of any other eighteenth-century composer's output — all his treatises and almost all of his other opus numbers, some several times over; only the miscellaneous concerti (*Select Harmony* and *Unison*) and the arrangements of Corelli Opp. 1 and 3 appear to have missed the net. At the moment he is, in fact, far better represented in facsimile than in modern editions — possibly a compliment to his scrupulous insistence on fine production and accurate engraving, but a certain deterrent to modern performers.

In fact, of all the leading composers of the 18th century, only Geminiani is lacking a complete modern critical edition of his music and writings. The on-going *Geminiani Opera Omnia* is designed to fill this gap, presenting all his works, instrumental, vocal and didactic, in full critical editions, with the composer's first versions, revisions and re-workings presented consecutively by opus number, and including a full critical commentary and facsimiles, together with complete performance material for the orchestral and chamber works. The didactic treatises issued in English are accompanied by Italian, French or German translations of the period, where these exist, together with full commentaries from modern authorities. A thematic catalogue, which will complete the 17 volumes, can already be found in a beta-version online, together with a database calendar of references extracted from newspapers and periodicals published in Britain, France and Holland between 1700 and 1800 (see <<http://www.francescogeminiani.com>>). The opening and closing essays of the present volume offer two differing views on the 'Geminiani revival' which it is hoped this edition will promote — only with a more widespread circulation of his music can the idiosyncratic composer hope to meet with the necessarily unconventional performer. The final essay in particular focuses on the difficulty of finding suitable proponents and practitioners today.

For academic researchers, Geminiani's life still contains many biographical puzzles and lacunae. There are his so far undocumented travels (just recently

it came to light that he was in Bologna in 1749 signing up a young singer for London concerts), few letters and no will. Neither his patrons nor his pupils have been systematically investigated, nor the wider phenomenon of the Italian musician employed in Britain during the eighteenth century. New here are details of his Masonic activities, the complexities of his international publishing operations, his legal tussles with performers, his highly successful dealings in art-works and his fascination with Scotland. His “re-heatings” of earlier works, so derided by Veracini, are re-interpreted here in a more positive light and his constant faith in the power of teaching is underlined in the two essays on violin playing.

Dilemmas and disagreements are also beginning to appear — a sign of health in research and a symptom of “cognitive discord” to be encouraged. Was Geminiani promoting the Corellian model or disputing it? — both theories are espoused in this volume. Was he more French than Italian? Why does so little documentary evidence survive from the four years or more he spent in Paris? Is *The Enchanted Forest* more than simply an enhanced series of concertos? Are the Op. 7 concertos really Geminiani’s transformation of Rameau’s *Scenes de Ballet*? Do literary programmes perhaps lurk behind his apparently ‘abstract’ music (as with Tartini)? — we find such a hint in William Hayes’ mysterious mention of “his *historical or poetical Plans*, which, the Advocates for GEMINIANI are so fond of saying, his Concertos are built upon.”<sup>7</sup>

Overarching all these activities is Geminiani’s lifelong faith in the power of teaching, and the tractability of intelligent pupils — everything, in his world, could be transmitted by demonstration and example, including good taste, style, technique and musical theory. But even in his own day such faith in the improvability of musical souls was questioned; John Gregory commented in 1774:

Geminiani, who was both a composer and performer of the highest class, first thought of reducing the art of playing on the Violin with Taste to rules, for which purpose he was obliged to make a great addition to the musical language and characters[.] The scheme was executed with great ingenuity, but has not yet met with the attention it deserved.<sup>8</sup>

This volume therefore offers not a last word on Geminiani but a means of opening the door to further research; as with all essay collections, what we

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<sup>7</sup> HAYES, William. *Op. cit.* (see note 5), p. 124.

<sup>8</sup> GREGORY, John. *A Comparative View of the State and Faculties of Man with Those of the Animal World*, 2 vols, London, 1774, vol. II, pp. 30–31.

## PREFACE

have here is a series of snapshots, rather than a rolling film. It is very unlikely that Geminiani will ever meet with unconditional endorsement — as William Blake shrewdly observed, “the tree which moves some to tears of joy is in the Eyes of others only a Green thing that stands in the way”<sup>9</sup> — but while his music may never induce universal tears of joy, we hope these essays may rescue Geminiani from being seen solely as an obstacle to the smooth forward flow of musical history.

*Christopher Hogwood*  
Cambridge (UK), December 2011  
hogwood@hogwood.org

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Also to Heather Jarman and Damian Penfold for editing and production assistance, and to Ryan Mark for fathoming the complexities of house style and footnote formatting.

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<sup>9</sup> Letter to Rev. John Trusler, 23 August 1799; see *Blake’s Poetry and Designs*, edited by Mary Lynn Johnson and John E. Grant, New York, Norton, 1979, p. 448.

# SCALE TO MEASURE THE MERITS OF MUSICIANS

*The Gentleman's Magazine*, XLVI (December, 1776), pp. 543-544

Mr. URBAN,

Some years since, an ingenious Frenchman, in his Lives of the Painters, gave us a scale to measure their different abilities, which, of late, has been imitated and applied to poets, orators, and even to beauties. Musicians have as yet been unweighed in the critical balance: but the time is now come for them, and I have undertaken the office; which I shall immediately enter upon, after professing a strict impartiality in the execution of it, (though, no doubt, many will differ from me in opinion,) and explaining a few necessary preliminaries.

All the columns (except one) suppose 20 for the point of ideal perfection, 19 for the utmost pitch of human attainment, and 18 for the greatest height to which it has yet been carried. The second column alone supposes 4 for the maximum. There was a necessity for this difference: for if natural and imitated melody were upon the same proportion, a composer who excels as much in the latter, as another in the former, might seem of equal rank; whereas natural melody is superior to imitated, at least, in the rates of 5 to 1, as I have put it. The seventh column is of more consequence than may at first appear; for many productions shew a fertility of genius, and give a larger scope for criticism. No one can put Gray and Pope upon the same footing, supposing them equal in all other respects, on account of the latter exceeding the former so much in the quantity of his poetical works. Handel seems by this balance to outweigh Geminiani but little, until you throw in the bulk of his works, and then the scale of the latter “kicks the beam.”

The sixth column only notices such musicians as have appeared in *public* as performers, otherwise their merit in this respect is supposed to be unknown. The other parts explain themselves.

Yours, &c.

JUSTICE BALANCE.

	Original melody	Imitated melody	Expression	Knowledge	Correctness	Performance	Quantity published or known
	20	4	20	20	20	20	20
	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Abel	6	3	12	10	8	18	3
Arne	17	2	12	15	14		9
Avison	10	2	10	8	6		4
Bach, John	6	3	13	10	6	13	9
Blow	4	2	4	12	10		4
Boyce	14	1	10	17	17		9
Corelli	18		8	17	18	14	4
Croft	9	1	8	10	12		6
Dibdin	6	3	10	8	6		6
Fischer	6	3	11	8	6	18	1
Garth	10	2	6	9	6		3
Geminiani	17	2	12	17	18	15	4
Giardini	13	3	14	1	1	18	4
Greene	10	2	7	12	13		7
Handel	18	2	12	18	16	18	18
Howard	8	2	4	12	15		4
Jackson	17		18	17	18		5
Marcello	12	2	9	6	4		9
Paradies	11	2	10	12	12	15	1
Piccini	6	3	10	12	14		9
Purcel	16	1	12	15	15		9
Sacchini	9	3	10	12	12		8
Scarlatti, Domenico	14	2	9	12	10	16	1
Schobert	12	3	14	3	4	18	3

## ABBREVIATIONS

- BURNEY* BURNEY, Charles. *A General History of Music from the Earliest Ages to the Present Period, to which is prefixed, a Dissertation on the Music of the Ancients*, 4 vols, London, 1776–1789
- CARERI* CARERI, Enrico. *Francesco Geminiani (1687-1762)*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1993
- DNB* *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, edited by Brian Harrison, 60 vols, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004  
<<http://www.oxforddnb.com>>
- HAWKINS* HAWKINS, Sir John. *A General History of the Science and Practice of Music*, 5 vols, London, 1776
- H. References to the *Thematic Catalogue of Works by Francesco Geminiani*, compiled by Christopher Hogwood (*Geminiani Opera Omnia*, vol. 17). A beta-version of this catalogue can be consulted online at <<http://www.francescogeminiani.com/catalogue>>
- NG* *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, edited by Stanley Sadie, 29 vols, London, Macmillan, 2001  
<<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>>
- RISM* *Répertoire International des Sources Musicales*
- SMITH1* SMITH, William C. *A Bibliography of the Musical Works Published by John Walsh during the years 1695–1720*, London, The Bibliographical Society, 1948
- SMITH2* SMITH, William C. – HUMPHRIES, Charles. *A Bibliography of the Musical Works Published by the Firm of John Walsh during the years 1721–1766*, London, The Bibliographical Society, 1968





# THOUGHTS ON THE 250<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF GEMINIANI'S DEATH

*Enrico Careri*  
(NAPLES)

IF WE CONSIDER RECEPTION HISTORY TO BE the degree of interest that the life and works of an artist attract, bearing in mind also the number of writings devoted to him and not only their 'critical' content, then we can certainly say that what I wrote twenty years ago in my Ph.D. dissertation and also in my book on Geminiani still remains substantially valid today, although the present volume and in particular the critical edition of his *Opera Omnia* (Ut Orpheus Edizioni) are important initiatives that will soon bear fruit.<sup>1</sup> Geminiani, I wrote then, has never received from musicology the same level of attention that Handel or Corelli have enjoyed in modern times, although he was considered their peer by his contemporaries.

Before I embarked on my research, the number of publications specifically dedicated to Geminiani was very small. This is what I wrote in the preface of my dissertation:

When I began my investigation, I soon found how limited the existing knowledge of the composer and his music was: his biography remained largely in the state in which it had been inherited from Hawkins and Burney, his music had been examined only fragmentarily and often very superficially, and nothing resembling a complete catalogue of his works existed. Part of the reason for this unsatisfactory situation was the wide dispersal of the relevant biographical and musical sources, a result of Geminiani's activity in four different countries: Italy, England, France and Ireland. This dispersal encouraged a

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<sup>1</sup> CARERI, ENRICO. *A Controversial Musician: The Violinist, Composer, and Theorist Francesco Geminiani (1687-1762)*, Ph.D. Diss., 2 vols, University of Liverpool, 1990; CARERI; Italian translation, *Francesco Geminiani (1687-1762)*, Lucca, LIM, 1999, repr. 2009.

corresponding fragmentation of research on the part of scholars, who were rarely in a practical position to undertake primary research in situ in more than one or two of those countries. This meant that Geminiani's music was often analysed without due reference to the biographical and historical background, and that his multifarious activities as violinist, composer, theorist, and small-scale entrepreneur were never considered in their full interrelationship.<sup>2</sup>

Once one moved beyond the writings of Hawkins and Burney, there was a truly meagre harvest of musicological studies concerning the composer, and this was certainly one of the reasons why my supervisor, Michael Talbot, suggested this topic to me. The initial basis for research was almost non-existent, and while this made the project more difficult, it also guaranteed its originality. Since the historiographical fortunes of an artist are inevitably linked to the biography of any scholar who decides to devote many years of his life to him, I think it is appropriate to start by outlining the circumstances that at the end of the 1980s led me to trace the path of Geminiani from his native Lucca to Rome, Naples, London, Paris and Dublin.

At the beginning of 1987 I was on the point of finishing a historical-documentary study of the Italian violinist-composer Giuseppe Valentini. My musicological experience at that time was limited to a study of the eighteenth-century cantata in Rome, and a thesis on Italian vocal technique during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, an abstract of which had already been published. My article on Valentini was my first mature work; the result of long and arduous studies in many archives and libraries in Rome, Lucca and Florence. For this reason, I sent a copy, before it was published, to one of only two scholars (the other being Albert Dunning) who had worked on Valentini before me: Michael Talbot, at that time and until a few years ago Professor of Music at the University of Liverpool. I was expecting from him merely suggestions, corrections or additions, but he wrote me a letter with an unexpected invitation: to come to Liverpool and write a Ph.D. dissertation under his supervision, with the lure of a scholarship for three years. This was a very good opportunity for me, so in July 1987 I went to Liverpool for a few days to discuss with him what the topic of my dissertation should be. We were in the garden of his house in Liverpool when he suggested that I write a life-and-works study of Francesco Geminiani. I will never forget that I was initially quite puzzled, since I then knew little music by this composer except his Op. 3 concertos and *The Enchanted Forest*, through recordings by

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<sup>2</sup> ID. *A Controversial Musician* (see note 1), p. v.

the Academy of Ancient Music and I Solisti Veneti, respectively; this was all that was generally available of Geminiani's music at the time. Only later did I come to understand the reasons behind his suggestion. With my article on Valentini I had demonstrated enough competence in archival research to be able to reconstruct from scratch the life of a composer of whom almost nothing was previously known. To be a native-born Italian was a distinct advantage for my research in Italian archives, primarily those of Lucca and Rome, while my knowledge of English and French would certainly help me to track down and evaluate documentary sources in London, Paris and Dublin. Talbot knew very well something that at that time I did not know; one of the reasons for Geminiani's indifferent critical reception in modern times was the inconvenient dispersal of the relevant sources between Italy, England, Ireland and France, the four countries in which the composer at some point lived. In practical terms, what was needed was a person well versed in archival research, possessing the necessary musicological and linguistic qualifications and young enough to have the time and stamina that such a task demanded.

When, in September 1987, I moved to Liverpool and started to collect sources, my worries increased even further; the bibliography was almost non-existent and mostly unhelpful, particularly on the biographical front. However, I did not lose heart, and after three years of work, thanks to the prompt assistance and valuable suggestions of my supervisor, I was finally able to complete the thesis. It contained three biographical chapters, one dealing with the composer's critical reception, five covering his main compositions (concertos, sonatas, *The Enchanted Forest*, reworkings and transcriptions, vocal music), one on his treatises and, as an appendix, the first ever thematic catalogue of his manuscript and printed works. With minimal changes, this thesis was published as a book, which is still today the standard monograph on Francesco Geminiani.

When I started my research, the biographical studies specifically devoted to Geminiani, leaving aside the references in Hawkins' and Burney's histories and their later incarnations, were limited to a short article by Adolfo Betti (1934), which stopped at the discovery of Geminiani's date of baptism, and a study by William H. Grattan Flood (1910), which conveyed vague information about his activities in England and Ireland.<sup>3</sup> All the biographical information quoted in articles referring to his compositions and treatises repeated uncritically the few things that were already known. I therefore had to start almost *ex novo* by pursuing the few promising leads in a number of European archives,

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<sup>3</sup> BETTI, Adolfo. *Francesco Geminiani*, Lucca, Giusti, 1934, pp. 7-20; FLOOD, William Henry Grattan. 'Geminiani in England and Ireland', in: *Sammelbände der Internationalen Musikgesellschaft*, XII/1 (1910), pp. 108-112.

but, of course, this same lack of information about the composer's life had consequences for the quality of the hardly more numerous analytical studies then existing, which examined his music in ignorance of the historical context in which it was written. I am referring here not only to the essay of Newell Jenkins (1967) on *The Enchanted Forest*, in which, for lack of historical reference points, the author mistakenly considered this composition “the largest form Geminiani ever attempted” — thanks to the discovery of various sources, we know today that this work was something quite different<sup>4</sup> — but also to studies of the concertos, sonatas, transcriptions and treatises which, though in part still valid today, are impaired by a lack of in-depth knowledge of the composer's life — in particular his activities as virtuoso, composer, theorist, teacher and dealer in paintings but also his pioneering role as a musician independent of institutions and patrons.

Some studies of Geminiani's compositions also suffered from the defect of repeating the negative prejudices inherited from the eighteenth century without undertaking a new, thorough analysis of the musical sources. The first trace of these prejudices can be found in a letter that Charles Burney wrote to Thomas Twining on 30 August 1773, in which — although conceding that “the advancement of the Violin, & its Family, towards perfection in this Country, for the 1<sup>st</sup> 40 or 50 years of this Century, in short, till the arrival of Giardini, was in a great Measure the Work of Geminiani” — he observes:

As a player, he was always deficient in *Time*; as a composer, *laboured*; & as a Critic, *jamais de bonne Foi*, changing his opinions according to his Interest, as often as Caprice. One Day he w<sup>d</sup> set up French Music against all other — the next, English — Scots — Irish, anything but the best Compositions of Handel & Italy. You know, I dare say, how much he preferred the Character of a Picture-dealer, without the least knowledge or Taste in Painting, to that of a Musician, by which he had acquired his reputation & importance. I am afraid there is such a *penchant* in the generality of Italian artists towards Chicane, that they w<sup>d</sup> rather trick a Man out of a Guinea than get it fairly, in a John-Trot way. & when Geminiani's Musical decisions ceased to be irrevocable, he tried his Hand at Painting.<sup>5</sup>

The topics contained in Burney's correspondence with Thomas Twining concerning Geminiani later appeared in his *General History of Music* (1776–

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<sup>4</sup> JENKINS, Newell. ‘Geminiani's *The Enchanted Forest*: A Conspectus’, in: *Accademia Musicale Chigiana*, xxiv (1967), p. 171.

<sup>5</sup> The letter is quoted in *The Letters of Dr Charles Burney: Volume 1: 1751-1784*, edited by Alvaro Ribeiro, SJ, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1991, p. 144.

1789), becoming the basis of the composer's critical reception, which can be summarized as follows: rhythmic and melodic irregularity, asymmetry of musical phrases, and above all "a confusion in the effect of the whole, from the too great business and dissimilitude of the several parts".<sup>6</sup> To these we must add Veracini's charges concerning the composer's musical plagiarism and recycling (in *Il trionfo della pratica musicale*, c1760),<sup>7</sup> and Hawkins' criticism of his lack of musical imagination: "It is to the want of an active and teeming imagination that we are to attribute the publication of his works in various forms".<sup>8</sup>

These critics had a negative effect on musicological research. At the end of the eighteenth century the only compositions of Geminiani still admired and played were his Op. 3 concertos; soon afterwards the music and the name of the composer underwent a prolonged period of oblivion, never enjoying in modern times a 'rediscovery' comparable to that of Albinoni or Vivaldi.

The prejudices inherited from Burney — asymmetry, irregularity, confusion — were compounded by a clear lack of interest in analysing the scores at first hand, remembering also that most of the latter were not available in libraries. Before 1996, the year of the first modern edition of *The Enchanted Forest*, those who wished to study or perform this work could do so only from Johnson's original printed edition. The difficulty of locating the musical sources certainly bore some of the responsibility for the scant attention given to the composer, but of course this situation creates a vicious circle, for the editors of old music and those who write on it are in most instances the same persons: they are part of the same community. One exception, however, should be made: the dissertation of Marion E. McArtor (1951), who, despite having the same difficulties we have already mentioned — the lack of a biographical framework, a catalogue and access to several scores — was the first scholar to try to understand the style of the composer through analysis of his music. The results of his dissertation are still interesting today, although his methodology is rather mechanical and not linked closely enough to the historical and musical context; nor is there any discussion of Opp. 2, 5 and 7, which amounts to almost one half of Geminiani's musical production.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>6</sup> BURNEY, IV, p. 645.

<sup>7</sup> VERACINI, Francesco Maria. *Il trionfo della pratica musicale o sia Il maestro dell'arte scientifica dal quale imparasi non solo il contrappunto ma quel che più importa insegna ancora con nuovo e facile metodo l'ordine vero di comporre in musica Studio di Francesco M.<sup>a</sup> Veracino Opera III*, manuscript, Florence, Conservatorio di Musica Luigi Cherubini, Biblioteca [I-Fc], f. I. 28/29, II, ff. 381-383.

<sup>8</sup> HAWKINS, V, p. 424.

<sup>9</sup> MCARTOR, Marion Emmett. *Francesco Geminiani: Composer and Theorist*, Ph.D. Diss., Ann Arbor (MI), UMI Research Press (51-107), 1951.