



# How Shall I Impart the Gods' Decree? Musical Rhetoric in *Dido and Aeneas*

Edna Holywell, University of London

In c. 1689 *Dido and Aeneas* was performed at Josias Priest's Chelsea school for young gentlewomen possibly as a revival. By 1930 an arrangement for brass band of 'When I am laid in Earth' (Dido's lament) had become part of the U.K. annual Remembrance Sunday service a tradition which continues today. This article explores why this relatively succinct piece of music still has so much significance. It argues that a large part of the opera's appeal arises out of discrepancies between Tate's implied affects and those suggested by Purcell's musico-rhetorical settings considering not only instances when the music supports or conforms to *Dido's* poetic text but also occasions when Purcell's music contradicts Tate's text — topoi underlying the poetic narrative vs musical portrayal. Since mechanisms of affective musical topoi representation have changed over time the article interprets source alterations as rhizomatic framings ascertaining that source variation reflects contemporary understandings or 'meanings' which were influenced by the cultural, socio-political and musico-historical contexts in which they were created. The article calls for consideration of *Dido's* surviving sources not as contaminated but from a rhetorical perspective extracting evidence to changing conventions of musical-rhetoric and its relationship to *Affekt*.

**Keywords:** *Henry Purcell, Nahum Tate, Early Modern opera, Dido and Aeneas*



Purcell's preface to *The Prophetess, or, The History of Dioclesian* (1690) published a year or so after *Dido* was performed in Priest's Chelsea school offers a popular view on musical expression and poetic association.

Musick and Poetry have ever been acknowledg'd Sisters, which walking hand in hand, support each other; As Poetry is the harmony of the Words, so Musick is that of Notes: and as Poetry is a Rise above Prose and Oratory, so is Musick the exaltation of Poetry. Both of them may excel apart, but sure they are most excellent when they are joyn'd, because nothing is then wanting to either of their Perfections: for thus they appear like Wit and Beauty in the same Person.<sup>1</sup>

The *Dioclesian* preface depicted song-writing synergy generally from a micro to a macro level but the overall concept could be applied to *Dido*. In the libretto Tate's 'words' were elevated in verses surpassing speeches and prose as Purcell's harmonies uplifted individual musical notes. Tate's libretto of verses was in turn exceeded by Purcell's vocal music transcending the poetic text. Both libretto and 'pure' music are exceptional individually but become excellent when allied as then each is fully realised. The result of such complete collaboration equals the perfect relationship between *head* and *heart* in a personality. This article assesses the musico-rhetorical and textual apparatus behind this type of shared production including not only instances when *Dido*'s poetry is supported by Purcell's music but also occasions where there are discrepancies between Tate's implied affects and those suggested by Purcell's musico-rhetorical settings.

In order to investigate that in this article I deconstruct the extant *Dido* musical sources surviving from the period before 1811 (six manuscript scores copied between c. 1775 – c. 1810) together with a nineteenth-century edition published in 1870 pursuing two lines of enquiry.<sup>2</sup> First I evaluate the extent to which Purcell's music represents *topoi* which either

---

<sup>1</sup> GB-Lam 1115117273: John Fletcher; Joseph Beaumont; Francis Fane; Henry Purcell; Robert Spencer, *Epistle dedicatory to the vocal and instrumental musick of The Prophetess, or, The History of Dioclesian* (London: Jacob Tonson, 1690). It is believed that the preface was ghost-written by Dryden. For more information see Rebecca Herissone, "Playford, Purcell, and the functions of music publishing in Restoration England," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 63, no. 2 (Summer 2010): 276 n. 81 and Andrew Pinnock, "'From Rosy Bowers': Coming to Purcell the Biographical Way," in Burden, *Complete texts*, 59–60. *Dioclesian* was the first English theatre work to be published in full score and Purcell's only semi-opera to be printed at the time. Holman, *Purcell*, 202. It was also the first large-scale musical work of William and Mary's reign and the first new semi-opera to be produced since 1677. King, *Purcell*, 177.

<sup>2</sup> GB-Lcm D144: Nahum Tate, *Dido and Aeneas* [libretto] (c. 1689); GB-Ob Tenbury MS 1266: Henry Purcell, (unknown copyist), *The Loves of Aeneas and Dido* (Tenbury Wells, Worcestershire: St Michael's College, donated to Bodleian Library, Oxford, c. 1775), 1–79; US-NYj Julliard MS F770: Henry Purcell, Samuel Howard (copyist), Thomas Bever (copyist), *Dido and Aeneas* (New York, NY: Lila Acheson Wallace Library at The Julliard School, c. 1778); GB-KNt Tatton Park MR 2–5.3: Henry Purcell, Philip Hayes (copyist), *The Loves of Dido and Aeneas* (Knutsford, Cheshire: Tatton Park Library, National Trust, 1784), 1–72; GB-Lbl British Library Add MS 31450 fols. 57r–116r: Henry Purcell, J. P. Hobler (copyist), *Dido and Aeneas* (London: British Library, 1784); GB-Lbl British Library Add MS 15979 fols. 2r–62r: Henry Purcell, Edward W. Smith (copyist), *Dido and Aeneas* (London: British Library, c. 1790); J-Tn Okhi MS N4/4: Henry Purcell, *Dido and Aeneas* (Wakayama, Japan: Nanki Music Library of the Wakayama Prefectural Library, c. 1810; GB-Lbl



confirm or contradict Tate's text termed *topoi* underlying the poetic narrative vs musical portrayal. Second I clarify how mechanisms of musical *topoi* representation have changed over time. Since the investigation concerns how source discrepancies demonstrate varied representations of *topoi* (as culturally conditioned not abstract entities) I interpret alterations within the surviving sources as rhizomatic framings to ascertain the extent to which contemporary understandings or 'meanings' reflected in source variations were influenced by socio-political and musico-historical contexts at their inception.<sup>3</sup> In terms of a paradigm shift I consider *Dido's* surviving sources not as contaminated versions of an autograph but from a rhetorical perspective extracting evidence to changing conventions of musical rhetoric.

The seventeenth-century doctrines of the affections detailed in methodology 1 which I consulted when compiling section 2 describe the emulation in music of some of the *pathē* [emotions] in Aristotle's *Rhetoric book II* — *anger, calm, confidence, enmity, fear, indignation, kindness, pity and shame* — discrete states aroused and managed by poetry and music.<sup>4</sup> By the mid-eighteenth century *Affekt*<sup>5</sup> treatises had become more broadly related to changes of *Affekt* within individual movements adding representational categories (musical textures, instrumentation and notation) making eighteenth-century theoretical doctrines more applicable to *Dido's* late eighteenth-century concert sources critiqued in section 3.<sup>6</sup> *Topoi* were mechanisms by means of which an orator could persuade or 'move' an audience from place to place according to the argument.<sup>7</sup> Musico-rhetorical treatises were indebted to theories of classical rhetoric appropriating terms from the discourse which were codified and developed also intended to 'move the audience' by generating *Affekt*.

My first method of topical analysis (section 2) considers Purcell's *Dido* music and Tate's text investigating issues of musico-textual affective agreement through the identification of rhythmic or harmonic gestures and poses which interact with or oppose each other to create

---

BLL01004594542/E.137: Henry Purcell, *Dido and Æneas, a dramatic Cantata*, ed. Edward Francis Rimbault (London: Musical Antiquarian Society/Metzler, 1870).

<sup>3</sup> Michael Gallope, *Deep Refrains: Music, Philosophy and the Ineffable* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2017), 25.

<sup>4</sup> Aristotle, *Art of Rhetoric*, trans. Robert C. Bartlett (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2021); David Konstan, "Rhetoric and Emotion," in *A Companion to Greek Rhetoric*, ed. Ian Worthington (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2007); Amy M. Schmitter, "Ancient, Medieval and Renaissance Theories of the Emotions." *Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy online*, 2021.

<sup>5</sup> *affekt* [emotion]: *Cambridge English Dictionary online*, 2022; *mit affekt* [with warmth/passion]. In Germany in the Baroque era the term was used to describe the expressive character of a piece. *The Oxford Companion to Music online* ed. Alison Latham, 2011.

<sup>6</sup> GB-Lbl BLL01001640187/L.244: Johann David Heinichen, *Der General-Bass in der Composition [introduction]* (Dressden, Freyberg [printed], 1728) trans. George J. Buelow, *Thorough-Bass [sic] Accompaniment According to Johann David Heinichen*, rev. ed. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), 307–80 (appendix B); A-Wn SH.Theoretica.80 MUS MAG: Johann Mattheson, *Der Volkommene Capellmeister / The Perfect Chapelmaster* (Hamburg: Christian Herold, 1739); Claude Palisca, "Music and Rhetoric," in *Music and Ideas in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2006), 205; GB-Lbl BLL01018848698/1423.d.6: Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Dictionnaire de musique* (Amsterdam, 1768). Rousseau's *Dictionnaire* evaluated and codified theoretical descriptions based upon earlier practices.

<sup>7</sup> Most and Biagio, "Topos."



musical discourse.<sup>8</sup> Adding a category to this theoretical framework: the interaction and opposition between textual topoi understood as clichés or archetypes and musico-rhetorical topoi also termed gestures and motifs. Currently musicological studies somewhat confuse definitions of topos and *tropus* [trope] often employing the terms interchangeably.<sup>9</sup> I define moving between musical topoi as ‘troping’ which can be achieved by means of musico-rhetorical mechanisms.

Recently music semiologists have added to the catalogue of musico-rhetorical topoi. But what are often depicted by these classifications are tropes which develop existing topoi functioning as rhetorical systems entailing transformation of meaning. W. Dean Sutcliffe’s description of Scarlatti’s: ‘succession of distinct musical images describing a gradual shift in style or topic’ could more accurately interpret Scarlatti’s musical phrase (which is presumably a melodic sequence) as troping ‘gradual shift’ on a topos ‘distinct musical image[s].’<sup>10</sup> Sutcliffe alludes to a sequential progression creating a succession of *shifted* topoi. What Sutcliffe terms Scarlatti’s *shift in topic* I understand to be a sequence of gestures troping on a musical topos which retains its style and form also defined as a series of posed tropes — differentiating between musical topoi and their alterations: topos vs *tropus*.<sup>11</sup> In this article I use ‘trope’ to define dramatic, musical and literary ‘meaning/s’ conceptually as follows. 1. Those which are generated when *tropus* inspires topos: when a trope creates a figure.<sup>12</sup> 2. Those which arise out of a sonic effect.<sup>13</sup> 3. Those which create affective discrepancies between textual representation and musical rhetoric.<sup>14</sup> Identifying *Dido*’s musico-rhetorical affective mechanisms: *anabasis*, *anaphora*, *antitethon*, *hypotyposis*, *suspiratio* and *symploce* I detail musical settings of Tate’s textual topoi *grief*, *love* and *piety* incorporating into my analysis scansion, prosody, *vers* and *musique mesurée* concluding at the end of this article that in some cases Purcell’s music subverts Tate’s poetic meaning/s.

## 1. Methodologies

In this section I justify the methodologies for the two enquiries which I discuss in detail in sections 2 and 3.

---

<sup>8</sup> William Drabkin, “Analysis,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Opera* ed. Helen M. Greenwald (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2015), 253.

<sup>9</sup> Hatten found that tropes could function as compositional premises. Hatten, “Troping of topics.” 516.

<sup>10</sup> W. Dean Sutcliffe, “Topics in Chamber Music,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Topic Theory*, ed. Danuta Mirka, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 122–23.

<sup>11</sup> *trope* in philosophy is an instance of a property as occurring at a particular time and place; a particular unrepeatable property as opposed to a universal. As a transitive verb *trope* means to embellish or decorate and as an adjective *troped* means embellished with or containing tropes. *Oxford English Dictionary online*, 2022.

<sup>12</sup> Emphatic repetition is illustrated in images 3.8 and 3.9. Purcell’s musical rhetoric gestures towards the *fanfare* figure by generating a motif which tropes on Tate’s imperative ‘see’ transforming a simple instruction into a conventional musical figure which offers additional symbolic representation than that implied by the text alone.

<sup>13</sup> The *echo* effect becomes a trope or a series of poses when transferred from libretto to score not only because of the sound ‘effect’ but also as the chorus of witches illustrate Tate’s words with affective music suggesting their compassion which tropes on characterisation.

<sup>14</sup> Tate’s *pity* becoming *piety* when set to music alters the literary pose. The seventeenth century saw the culmination of a gradual philological differentiation between ‘pity’ and ‘piety’ (see portion 2e).



### 1a. Methodology 1

In order to understand how musicians and theorists of Purcell's time recognised 'affections' in relation to music in this segment I outline the musico-rhetorical treatises which arose when sixteenth-century methods for the elaboration or revelation of sacred texts were combined by seventeenth- and eighteenth-century music theoreticians with classical rhetorical terminology as a means of categorising compositional devices. The term *figurenlehre* was first used in this context by Arnold Schering in 1908.<sup>15</sup> Conventional *figurenlehre* included falling chromatic scales (*sadness*) rising scales (*questioning*) and upward leaps (*exclamation*).<sup>16</sup> The argument in this article refers to the third of Cicero's five divisions of rhetoric or *loci topici* [topics of invention]: *elocutio* [eloquence or style] which inspired an orator to move the affections using figures of speech.<sup>17</sup>

The idea that oratorical grammar could supply musical rhetoric was not new. Guido of Arezzo (eleventh century) and commentator Johannes (twelfth century) organised plainchant's various levels of closure termed *distinctiones* by Latin rhetoricians drawing on the language of prosal punctuation: full-stops, commas and colons for cadences. Setting text to music therefore dictated the strength of phrasal endings with a full-stop representing a strong cadence a colon fairly strong and a comma a weak ending. Similarly in twelfth- and thirteenth-century early polyphony *punctus* designated both the end of a musical section and a full stop in grammatical terminology while the verbal or musical phrase preceding a cadence came to be known as *clausula* [close]. The belief that music had emotional or affective power to move, stir or persuade which could also be expressed by means of rhetorical vocabulary arose much later.<sup>18</sup>

Restoration composers like Purcell relied on Cicero's first stage or division *inventio* predominantly the technique of *imitatio* the study, analysis and emulation of works by admired authors.<sup>19</sup> Utilising seventeenth-century didactic/interpretative doctrines to identify Purcell's musical mechanisms selecting occasions where the musico-rhetorical representation of a topos reinforces the textual together with situations where the music contradicts the text or at the very least has different affective connotations.<sup>20</sup> In section 2 applying the early

---

<sup>15</sup> Dietrich Bartel, *Musica Poetica: Musical-Rhetorical Figures in German Baroque Music* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997) review in John Butt, *Early Music History* 18 (1999): 398.

<sup>16</sup> George Pratt, "Historical Background," in *A Performers Guide to Music of the Baroque Period*, ed. Anthony Burton (London: ABRSM, 2017), 5–6.

<sup>17</sup> Palisca, "Music and rhetoric," 205.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 204.

<sup>19</sup> Rebecca Herissone, *Musical Creativity in Restoration England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 32–34.

<sup>20</sup> Musico-rhetorical figures which represent Tate's text are: 2a. mimetic figures signifying hunting and thunder. 2b. hypotyposis figures word painting *shake* and *flowing*. 2c. interval figures representing *grief*. 2d. *musique mesurée* (*love*). 2e. a rhythmic figure setting pity/piety and 2f. repetition figures. Purcell's echo effect conflicts



modern theoretical treatises below framed within the discourse of classical oratory to categorise Purcell's musical equivalents of *inventio* (finding the argument) *dispositio* (ordering the argument) *elocutio* (style) *memoria* (memory) and *pronuntiatio* (delivery) with the aim of moving (*movere*) delighting (*delectare*) and instructing (*docere*) the audience.<sup>21</sup>

To this end I appraise Henry Peacham senior's *The Garden of Eloquence* (1577), Joachim Burmeister's *Musica Poetica* (1606), Henry Peacham junior's *The Compleat Gentleman* (1622), Charles Butler's *Principles of Musik in Singing and Setting* (1636), Marin Mersenne's *Harmonie Universelle* (1636), Athanasius Kircher's *Musurgia Universalis* (1650), René Descartes' *Compendium Musicæ* (1650), Christopher Simpson's *Compendium of Practical Musick* (1667), Thomas Salmon's *A proposal to perform musick in perfect mathematical proportions* (1688) and Henry Playford's *An Introduction to the Skill of Musick* twelfth edition edited by Purcell (1694) since these works explore relationships between musico-rhetoric and associated 'affections' represented in *Dido*.<sup>22</sup> René Descartes' *Les Passions de l'âme* (1649) published in Paris a year before the *Compendium* influenced seventeenth-century philosophy and aesthetics becoming foundational for German music theory.<sup>23</sup> French *divertissements*, overtures and opera also made an impression on English

---

with Tate's text setting 'In our deep vaulted cell' which contains the final line 'too dreadful a practice for this open air' whilst mimicking a cave's acoustics.

<sup>21</sup> Herissone, *Creativity*, 4; Blake Wilson, 'Middle Ages and Renaissance,' in "Rhetoric and music," *New Grove Dictionary of Music online*, ed. Blake Wilson, George J. Buelow and Peter A. Hoyt (2001); George J. Buelow, 'Baroque,' in "Rhetoric and music," *New Grove Dictionary of Music online*, ed. Blake Wilson, George J. Buelow and Peter A. Hoyt (2001); Arnold Schering, "Die Lehre von den rausikalischen Figuren im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert," *Kirchenmusikalisches Jahrbuch*, 21 (1908): 106–14, in Butt, *Early Music*, 398; Uri Golomb, "Rhetoric in the Performance of Baroque Music," *Goldberg Early Music Magazine* 51 (April 2008): 57.

<sup>22</sup> D-B VD17 39: 123563T: Joachim Burmeister, *Musica Poetica* (Rostock: S. Myliander, 1606); GB-Lcm 826453553: Charles Butler, *Principles of Musik, in Singing and Setting* (London, Printed by J. Haviland, for the author, 1636); GB-Lbl BLL01000916959/8403.bb.45: René Descartes, *Les Passions de l'ame* (Paris: Chez Henry Le Gras, 1649); GB-Lbl BLL01000916954/556.c.21: René Descartes, *Compendium Musicæ* (Trajecti ad Rhenum [Ütrecht]: typis G. à Zijll and T. ab Ackersdijck, 1650); GB-Lbl BLL01001974302/59.e.19: Athanasius Kircher, *Musurgia Universalis* (Rome: Francisci Corbelletti, 1650); GB-Lbl BLL01002467223/47.g.14-15: Marin Mersenne, *Harmonie Universelle* (Paris: S. Cramoisy, 1636); US-SM 34756828: Henry Peacham, the Elder, *The Garden of Eloquence* ([London]: Anno. 1577. Imprinted at London, in Fleetestrete, beneath the Conduite, at the signe of Saint Iohn Euaungelist, by H. Iackson); US-SM 1203224299: Henry Peacham and Francis Delaram, *The Compleat Gentleman* ([London] : Anno 1622 Imprinted at London [by John Legat] for Francis Constable, and are to bee sold at his shop at the white lio[n] in Paules churchyard, [1622]); GB-Lbl BLL01004584436/1042.e.11.(1.): Henry Purcell, ed., *An Introduction to the Skill of Musick. In three books...the twelfth edition. Corrected and amended by Mr. Henry Purcell.* [Henry Playford] ([London] : E. Jones, for Henry Playford, 1694); GB-Lbl BLL01004595093/K.4.g.10: Henry Purcell, *Sonnata's of iii Parts* (London: Printed for the Author: and sold by I. Playford and I. Carr, 1683); GB-Lbl BLL01004594512/K.1.c.5: Henry Purcell, *A choice collection of lessons* (London: Printed on Copper Plates for Mrs. Frances Purcell ... and ... Sold by Henry Playford, 1696); US-AAU B1478025: Thomas Salmon, *A proposal to perform musick in perfect mathematical proportions* (London: printed for John Lawrence, at the Angel in the Poultry, 1688); GB-Lbl 004658846: Christopher Simpson, *Compendium of Practical Musick* (London: William Godbid, for Henry Brome, 1667).

<sup>23</sup> GB-Lbl BLL01000916959: René Descartes, *Les Passions de l'ame* (Paris: Chez Henry Le Gras, 1649); George J. Buelow, "Music, rhetoric and the concept of the affections: A selective bibliography," *Notes* 30, no. 2 (December 1973): 252.



music at this time adding what Claude Palisca famously described as an unmistakable French flavour to *Dido*'s instrumental music.<sup>24</sup>

*Elocutio* in *Dido* was formed in part by musico-rhetorical figurae outlined in those sixteenth- and seventeenth-century musical doctrines notably Butler's *Principles*, Mersenne's *Harmonie* and Kircher's *Musurgia*. The first part of Butler's *Principles* addressed singing — concords, discords, duration, harmony, intervals, melody, notation and pitch. The second part "Uses of music" appended instruments and word-setting principles:<sup>25</sup>

The art of modulating notes in voice or instrument, having a great power over the affections of the mind, by its various modes produces in the hearers various effects.<sup>26</sup>

Butler believed that music's affective capabilities could be enhanced by verse.

Good voices alone, sounding onely the notes, are sufficient, by their Melodi and Harmoni, to delight the ear: but being furnished with soom laudable *Ditti* they becom yet more excellent.<sup>27</sup>

Mersenne supposed that each affection had its proper accent recommending that *anger*, *joy* and *sadness* be conveyed distinctly *anger* by cutting off end syllables abruptly. Kircher used the language of classical rhetoric to label figurae claiming that the principal affections musically represented in monody were *joy*, *piety* and *compassion* associated categories were *love*, *desire*, *modesty* and *religious devotion*:

Just as rhetoric through various arguments and reasons as through the complex of various figures and tropes now delights, now saddens, now provokes anger, pity, indignation, revenge, vehement passion and other affections, and, in sum, inclines the consenting listener completely to whatever commotion the orator intends, so music through the construction of a variety of musical periods excites the soul to diverse states.<sup>28</sup>

For the first query I divide Purcell's musico-rhetorical mechanisms into two categories. 1. those establishing a general mood and 2. specific musico-rhetorical devices representing text

---

<sup>24</sup> Claude V. Palisca, *Baroque Music* (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1991), 250–51.

<sup>25</sup> Ian Spink, "Early Principles," review of *The Principles of Musik in Singing and Setting*, by Charles Butler, *The Musical Times* 112 no. 1537 (March 1971): 241.

<sup>26</sup> Butler, *Principles*; Beulow, 'Baroque.'

<sup>27</sup> Butler, *Principles*; Sally Sanford, "National Singing Styles," in *A Performer's Guide to Seventeenth-Century Music*, ed. Stewart Carter (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2012), 22, n. 94.

<sup>28</sup> Kircher, *Musurgia*; Palisca, "Music and rhetoric," 220; Bruce Haynes argued that early music should more properly be termed rhetorical music indicating that Haynes considered rhetoric to be the most significant aspect of Baroque style and fundamental to a baroque aesthetic. Alon Schab, "Harmony and Counterpoint in the Service of Rhetoric," in *The Sonatas of Henry Purcell: Rhetoric and Reversal* (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer and University of Rochester Press, 2018), 44.



— finding junctures where musical and textual topoi converge (*grief* and *love*) or diverge (echo) thus discerning when Purcell confirms or contests Tate's topoi.

### 1b. Methodology 2

The second enquiry investigates *Dido's* changing meanings.<sup>29</sup> To assist this exploration I collect and compare the only six manuscript copies of Purcell's *Dido* known to exist famously none is an autograph together with one nineteenth-century edition.<sup>30</sup> Although audience tastes differed in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries some of the musical elements I refer to may seem similar. Among superficial resemblances in *Dido's* later sources are metric signs, dynamics and numerous historically conventional *figurenlehre* but because eighteenth-century theoretical treatises developed the notion that composers must learn from earlier exemplum stimulating their creativity by studying the 'consequences' of a dramatic text there were inevitable changes — a theme which I develop in this article's final segment.

For the second study I adapt the stemma and source description determined by Bruce Wood in the 2021 (3<sup>rd</sup>) edition for the Purcell Society as a point of departure with minor alterations summarising and critiquing relevant details about those sources and their derivations.<sup>31</sup> In appendix A I survey the sources recording all discrepancies to determine how *Dido's* musico-rhetorical topoi were represented and understood in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Extant *Dido* sources form three distinct chronological groups. The earliest GB-Ob Tenbury MS 1266, US-Nyj Julliard MS F770 and GB-KNt Tatton Park MR 2–5.3 were copied between c. 1775–1784. As *Tenbury* is the earliest preserving some features of seventeenth-century notation it is believed to be the most authoritative source.<sup>32</sup> *Tatton Park* was included in volume three of a four volume set of Purcell's music copied between 1784–5 and was very

---

<sup>29</sup> Traditionally scholars have compared *Dido* sources attempting to 'reconstruct' Purcell's original. My approach detects how meaning changes over time.

<sup>30</sup> Robert Shay and Robert Thompson, *Purcell Manuscripts: The Principal Musical Sources* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), xiv. The most recent view is that Purcell's autograph which may have been an unbound gathering for each act was destroyed in the Whitehall Palace fire of 1697. Wood, *Preface*, xiv.

<sup>31</sup> Bruce Wood, ed. *Dido and Aeneas* [Henry Purcell] (London: The Purcell Society/Stainer & Bell, 2021).

<sup>32</sup> Stephen Rose, "Performance Practices," in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Henry Purcell* ed. Rebecca Herissone (Abingdon: Routledge, 2012), 124. Scores produced before 1710 use sharps and flats but no natural signs and a tenor violin clef. *Tenbury's* paper derives from Angoumois in southwest France which developed an advanced paper industry until the late 1680s with financial help from Holland. After this time paper was exported directly from Holland itself. *Tenbury* has an *Arms of Strasbourg* watermark — a *fleur-de-lys* on a crowned shield also known as an Angoumois *fleur-de-lys*. This type of paper is often termed *Rochelle Paper* since it was exported from the port of Rochelle or *Dutch paper* either because it was sold by Dutch merchants or as it had Dutch watermarks. The paper has a 'J WHATMAN' countermark similar to the watermark on manuscripts produced towards the end of the eighteenth-century probably reproducing the name of the papermaker. Most music manuscripts produced between the Restoration and the end of the 1680s are written on Angoumois paper. Advertisements in publications printed for John and Henry Playford throughout Purcell's lifetime indicate that the Playfords sold Rochelle paper in their shop and it is likely that Purcell bought his paper from them. Shay and Thompson, *Principal Sources*. 8, 10–12, 17, 233.





close to *Tenbury*.<sup>33</sup> Both *Tenbury* and *Tatton Park* were copied in the eighteenth century but they recorded some features of seventeenth-century performance. *Julliard* was the earliest concert-version manuscript copied from a corrected version.<sup>34</sup> The *Academy* sources (1784–c. 1790) form the next group. GB-Lbl British Library Add MS 31450 and GB-Lbl British Library Add MS 15979 were produced towards the end of the eighteenth century for concert performances organised by the Academy for Ancient Music a musical society that met in London between 1726–1792.<sup>35</sup> The third group consists of only one manuscript: J-Tn Okhi MS N4/41. *Okhi*'s music seems to derive from both *Tenbury* and the *Academy* sources. The hand scribing most of *Okhi* indicates a date c. 1810 but the first three pieces seem to have been written in a mid-nineteenth century hand.<sup>36</sup> Wood dates *Okhi* c. 1770 concluding that *Okhi* is an antecedent of *Tatton Park* and probably also *Tenbury*.<sup>37</sup> Edward Francis Rimbault's 1870 edition for voice and piano provides a record of nineteenth-century *Dido* concert performance incorporated here for a general similarity to *Okhi* both scores reflecting nineteenth-century practices.<sup>38</sup> The stemma codicum below illustrates the derivations of extant sources and copying associations between them.<sup>39</sup> I have amended Wood's stemma

---

<sup>33</sup> Harris, *Dido and Aeneas*, 151; Margaret Laurie, "Allegory, sources and early performance history," in *Henry Purcell's Dido and Aeneas: an Opera: an Authoritative Score, Historical Background, a Critical Edition of the Libretto, Criticism and Analysis, Production and Interpretation*, ed. Curtis A. Price (New York: Norton Critical Scores, 1986), 48; Robert Thompson, "Sources and Transmission," in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Henry Purcell*, ed., Rebecca Herissone (Abingdon: Routledge, 2012), 53; Wood, *Preface* xvi–xviii.

Differences between *Tenbury* and *Tatton Park* are: 3 vs  $\frac{3}{4}$  When Monarchs unite, To the hills and the vales, In our deep vaulted cell, Thanks to these lonesome vales, Sailors' prelude; C vs C Echo dance. c dorian/aeolian, f dorian, F ionian, g dorian, a aeolian, Bb ionian, c dorian vs c min, f min, F, d min, a min, Bb, g min in various pieces (see appendix A).

<sup>34</sup> Harris, *Dido and Aeneas*, 150–51; Wood, *Preface*, xvi, xxi–xxii.

<sup>35</sup> H. Diack Johnstone, 'The Academy of Ancient Music (1726–1802): Its History, Repertoire and Surviving Programmes,' *Royal Musical Association Research Chronicle* 51 (January 2020); Andrew Woolley, "Ancient music and its advocates," *Early Music* 43, no. 2 (May 2015): 327.

<sup>36</sup> Nigel Fortune and Franklin B. Zimmerman, "Purcell's Autographs," in *Henry Purcell: 1659–1695 Essays on his Music*, ed. Imogen Holst (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), 121; Harris, *Dido and Aeneas*, 151 n. 247; Laurie, "Sources," 48, 58; Shay and Thompson, *Principal sources*, 234, n. 14; Robert Thompson, "Sources," 53.

<sup>37</sup> Wood, *Preface*, xvi.

<sup>38</sup> Rimbault's piano score was taken from George Alexander Macfarren's 1841 edition published by The Musical Antiquarian Society (1840–47) which in turn derived from one or more of the *Academy* sources. Macfarren (1813–87) a composer, musicologist and professor of composition at the Royal Academy of Music between 1937–47 was one of four Musical Antiquarian Society board members who worked at the Royal Academy. GB-Lbl BLL01004594537/R.M.7.c.7: G. Alexander Macfarren, ed., *Dido and Aeneas, a tragic Opera*. Henry Purcell [and Nahum Tate] [full score] (London: Musical Antiquarian Society [Chappell], 1841). Harris believes that Macfarren's score derives exclusively from the *Academy* sources but according to Wood *Julliard* and *BL31450* were Macfarren's sources, Rimbault consulted Macfarren and *BL15979*. Harris, *Dido and Aeneas*, 167–68; Wood, *Preface*, ix.

In 1872 the Camden Society published Rimbault's *Book of remembrance of the Chapel Royal*. GB-Lbl BLL01002224851/Ac.8113/97: *The old cheque-book, or, Book of remembrance of the Chapel Royal, from 1561 to 1744 / edited, from the original ms. preserved among the muniments of the Chapel Royal, St. James's Palace* (St. James Palace. Chapel Royal. [Westminster]: Printed for the Camden Society, 1872).

<sup>39</sup> Margaret Laurie and Thurston Dart, eds., "Preface," *Dido and Aeneas: an opera*. Henry Purcell [and Nahum Tate] [vocal and full score] (London: Novello, 1961), iii; GB-Lbl BLL01005246108/H00/1389: Michael Tilmouth, Michael. *Ten sonatas of four parts* [Henry Purcell] edited under the supervision of the Purcell

considering *Okhi* as an early nineteenth-century source scribed c. 1810 rather than a source pre-dating *Tenbury* and *Tatton Park* scribed c. 1770 as Wood suggests.<sup>40</sup>

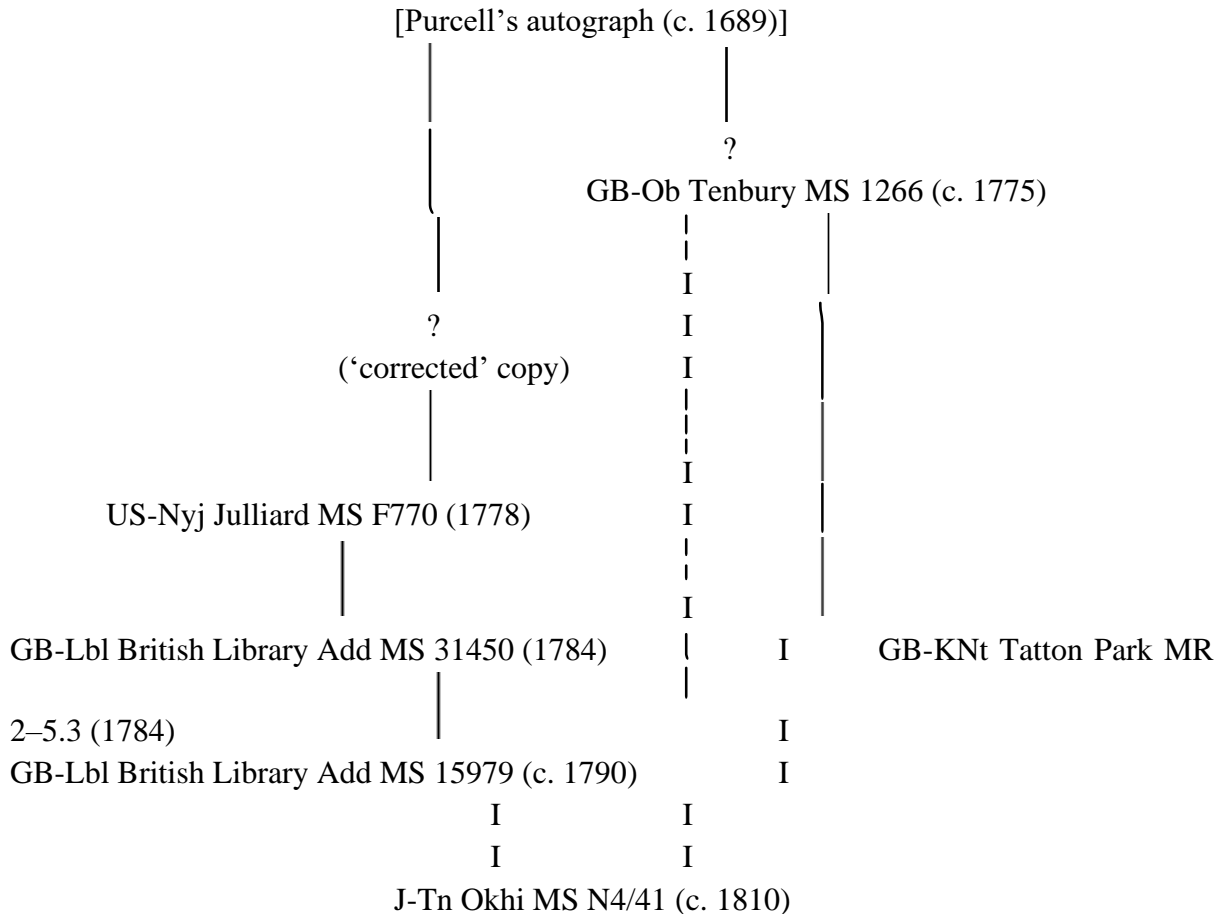


Figure 3.1: *Dido and Aeneas* source stemma.

Conventionally *Dido* sources were utilised in attempts to recreate an authoritative ‘authentic’ score best representing Purcell’s original which led codicologists to a ‘source hierarchy.’<sup>41</sup> Like previous scholars I regard the *Tenbury* and *Tatton Park* manuscripts which form the basis of Wood’s edition as *the* traditional *Dido* musical text but by surveying source discrepancies I seek the changing meanings of topoi in a musico-rhetorical sense taking into

Society. Sevenoaks, Kent: Novello, c. 1981; Harris, *Dido and Aeneas*, 149 n. 4; Shay and Thompson, *Principal sources*, 234; Wood, *Preface*, xx–xxii. Laurie and Harris consider *Tatton Park* to be a close relative of *Tenbury*, both derived from an additional source (now lost). Harris’ stemma displays *Julliard* possibly deriving from the same source. Harris, 150 figure 7.1. Shay and Thompson believe that *Tenbury* and *Tatton Park* probably derive from the 1704 performance. Shay and Thompson, *Principal sources*, 233.

<sup>40</sup> Wood also finds it likely that *Julliard* was copied from *Okhi* for the 1774 Academy performance. Wood, *Preface*, xvi.

<sup>41</sup> Wood uses the phrase ‘this too surely reflects Purcell’s intentions’ when describing part allocation. Wood, *Preface*, xviii. Stemmatics/stemmatology relies upon such a hierarchy maintaining that *community of error* implies community of origin.



consideration each source's background. Investigating *Tenbury* and *Tatton Park* and comparing those manuscripts to the *Academy* sources, *Okhi* and *Rimbault I* trace changing understandings of *Dido's* topoi.

## 2. Musico-rhetorical mechanisms

In this section I evaluate Purcell's affective mechanisms categorising specific musico-rhetorical figurae to identify when topical and structural signs interact identifying devices which I attribute to musico-rhetorical principles: 2a. mimetic representations of hunting, echo and thunder. 2b. melismatic onomatopoeic settings of 'shake' and 'flowing.'<sup>42</sup> 2c. *grief* topoi created by intervals. 2d. *musique mesurée* representing *love*. 2e. Purcell's setting of Tate's 'pity' rhythm and 2f. repetition figures.<sup>43</sup>

A notable distinction between the two sources is that act 1 of *Tenbury* ends after the Triumphant dance whilst act 1 of *Tatton Park* ends after the Echo dance a difference which I attribute to staging.<sup>44</sup> As dramatic structure is a musico-rhetorical mechanism I shall unfold an explanation.<sup>45</sup> A production using *Tenbury* beginning the second act with the Witches' prelude would have required a chorus singing 'To the hills and the vales' then dancing in the Triumphant dance ending act 1.<sup>46</sup> After or during a scene change from palace to cave there would have been instrumental music: the Witches' prelude followed by the Sorceress' recitative 'Wayward sisters you that fright' giving the chorus singers/dancers time to change into their second witches costumes before 'In our deep vaulted cell' and the Echo dance assuming that they were in role rather than functioning as a neutral 'Sophoclean' chorus commenting on the action.<sup>47</sup> The same temporal requirement for a costume change would apply even if the chorus and dancers were different performers. *Tatton Park* beginning act 2 with the Grove scene makes more dramatic sense but since the Triumphant and Echo dances must have been performed in the same costumes the idea that the chorus/dancers were characterised as witches/by two groups of performers is invalid.

---

<sup>42</sup> *melisma*: a group of more than five or six notes sung to a single syllable. *New Grove Dictionary of Music online*, 2001. *shake*: an old term for a trill. *The Oxford Dictionary of Opera* ed. John Warrack and Ewan West (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 653.

<sup>43</sup> Kofi V. Agawu, *Playing with Signs: A Semiotic Interpretation of Classic Music* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014), 27.

<sup>44</sup> All act and scene divisions are taken from the libretto.

<sup>45</sup> Harris, *Dido and Aeneas*, 150; Roger Savage, "Producing *Dido and Aeneas*: An Investigation into Sixteen Problems," *Early Music* 4, no. 4 (1976). Wood, *Preface*, xv.

<sup>46</sup> *Tenbury's* stage direction gives 'at the end of the dance thunder and lightning.'

<sup>47</sup> For further explanation about spellings of 'wayward' and their significance see Wood, *Preface*, xiii. Likewise a discussion of the semantic choices pertaining to 'furies,' 'fairees,' 'witches' and 'enchantresses' among the sources. Joseph W. Kerman, *Opera as Drama* (London: Faber & Faber, 1989), 43; Robert E. Moore, *Henry Purcell and the Restoration Theatre* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1974), 44.



Diverse music within the same source enabled Purcell to depict the protagonists.<sup>48</sup> Aristotle identified three artistic variables: the *medium*, the *objects* and the *manner*.<sup>49</sup> In *Dido* the *medium* was musical form both imitating and representing character — Dido represented in Purcell's overture together with the Sorceress in the Witches' prelude. Aristotle's *objects* were musical portrayals although arguably Dido and the Sorceress were character-types not 'individuals.' The significance of Aristotle's *manner* is contingent upon aesthetic/expressive interpretation.<sup>50</sup> *Dido*'s overture provided a sonic counterbalance to the Witches' prelude incorporating dynamic aspects of musical movement reflecting demeanour, carriage or gait creating musico-dramatic 'personality.' The overture in its double aspect contained both 'sad' music which was dragging, clouded and heavy with unresolved tension and 'happy' music which was fast, light and tension free.<sup>51</sup>

*Affektenlehre* or the language-like representation of emotion in music is one of many interpretative frameworks.<sup>52</sup> In segments 2a. and 2b. I explore Purcell's musico-rhetorical textual settings mimicking realistic sounds (*hunting/echo/thunder*) and sonically representing textual 'meaning' by generating onomatopoeia through vowel elongation (*shake/flowing*) investigating *Tenbury* and *Tatton Park* but there are not many meaningful differences between them apart from slightly altered mensural signs and 'modernised' key signatures.<sup>53</sup>

## 2a. Mimetic figures (*hunting/echo/thunder*)

Among Purcell's most familiar musico-rhetorical devices are those which mimic certain sounds expected to be heard in and anticipated by scenes presented in the libretto.<sup>54</sup> Some of these figures were somewhat conventionalised in the Early Modern era.<sup>55</sup> Hunting was

---

<sup>48</sup> Eero Tarasti, *Signs of Music: A Guide to Musical Semiotics* (Berlin, Germany: De Gruyter Mouton, 2002), 11.

<sup>49</sup> Aristotle, *Poetics*, trans. Anthony Kenny (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 4.

<sup>50</sup> Raymond Monelle, *The Musical Topic: Hunt, Military and Pastoral* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2006), 32, 273.

<sup>51</sup> Stephen Davies, *Musical Understandings and other Essays on the Philosophy of Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 37–8; Drabkin, "Analysis," 253.

<sup>52</sup> Otto M. Christensen, "Interpretation and meaning in music," in *Musical Signification*, ed. Eero Tarasti, (Berlin, Germany: De Gruyter Mouton, 1995), 1; Gallope, *Deep refrains*, 34.

<sup>53</sup> *onomatopoeia*: the formation of a word from a sound associated with the thing or action being named. *Oxford English Dictionary online*, 2021. 'When we invent, devise, fayne, and make a name, imitating the sound of that it signifyeth, as hurliburly, for an uprore, and tumultuous stirre.' Peacham, *Garden of Eloquence*.

<sup>54</sup> Mimetic *echo* functioned as a trope in *Dido* but Purcell's use of sonic echo effects in *The Fairy Queen* (1692) suggests that musico-rhetorical figurae were understood as topoi in late seventeenth-century opera (matching Ratner's type classification: echo as a type of sound-effect). British Library [no catalogue number]: Henry Purcell, *The fairy-queen an opera, represented at the Queen's-theatre by Their Majesties servants: with alterations, additions, and several new songs. Fairy queen. Midsummer night's dream* (England Printed for Jacob Tonson, at the Judges-Head, in Chancery-Lane, 1692); Edward J. Dent. *Foundations of English Opera: A Study of Musical Drama in England during the Seventeenth Century* (London: Da Capo Press, 1967), 194; Monelle, *Musical topic*, 67; Stephen Rumph, *Mozart and Enlightenment Semiotics* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2012), 11; Stephen Rumph, "Topical Figurae: The Double Articulation of Topics," in *The Oxford Handbook of Topic Theory*, ed. Danuta Mirka (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 498.

<sup>55</sup> A topic is a *familiar style type with easily recognizable musical features*, ranging in complexity from a simple figure (fanfare, horn call), to a texture[...]Whenever a composer makes an allusion to a topic, we already

connected to courtly love representing Tate's offstage narrative in *Dido* but hunting was also a preparation for war.<sup>56</sup>

Technically Tate's libretto did not present a hunt scene — Aeneas' hunting expedition occurred whilst Dido and attendants waited in the grove — but the Sorceress (1<sup>st</sup> witch in *Tenbury*) referred to the hunt which was an 'off-stage' event concurrent to *Dido*'s first *ombra* scene.<sup>57</sup>

*Sorc.*            The Queen and He are now in Chase,  
                      Hark, how the cry comes on apace.<sup>58</sup>

Purcell represented hunting with the *fanfare* figura:<sup>59</sup>

The Queen and He are now in chase	(mechanism representing horn call)
Hark	(mechanism representing horn call)
hark the Cry comes on a-pace	(mechanism representing horn call)

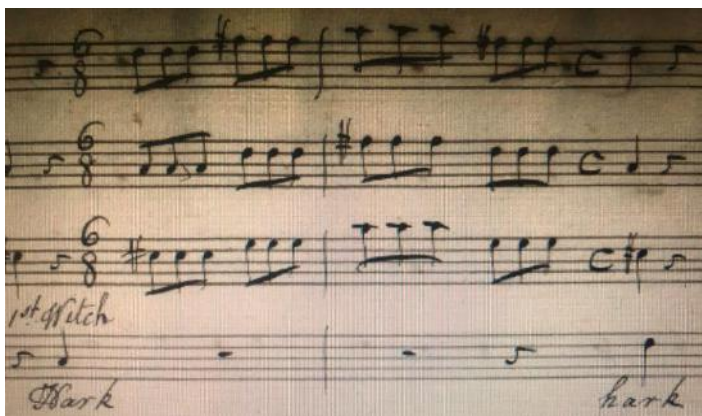


Image 3.1: Mimetic fanfare. *Dido and Aeneas*. Tenbury MS 1266, act 2, sc. i, 33 © Bodleian Library, University of Oxford.

---

recognize the trope of synecdoche (part for whole; a species of metonymy). Robert S. Hatten, "The Troping of Topics in Mozart's Instrumental Works," in *The Oxford Handbook of Topic Theory*, ed. Danuta Mirka (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 514, 525.

<sup>56</sup> GB-Lbl BLL01019660471/LF.31.b.15572/MS M.1044: Gaston III Phœbus, Count of Foix, 1331–91, *Le livre de chasse / que fit Fébus Comte de Foix et Seigneur de Béarn / Book of the hunt* (Paris: Citadelles & Mazenod Éditions, c. 2019 [1387]) in Monelle, *Musical topic*, 67.

<sup>57</sup> *ombra* has been used as a musical style descriptor since 1908 when Hermann Abert first used the term to analyse operatic ghost scenes. Clive McClelland, "Ombra and Tempesta," in *The Oxford Handbook of Topic Theory*, ed. Danuta Mirka (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 279.

<sup>58</sup> Burden, *Complete texts*, 108.

<sup>59</sup> All act and scene divisions in score labels are taken from Tate's libretto in Burden, *Complete texts*, 103–111.

In the first short phrase below Purcell famously applied musico-rhetorical techniques *hypotyposis* and *anabasis* to Tate's 'cry' sonically generating mimetic representation which musically reinforced the libretto text:<sup>60</sup>

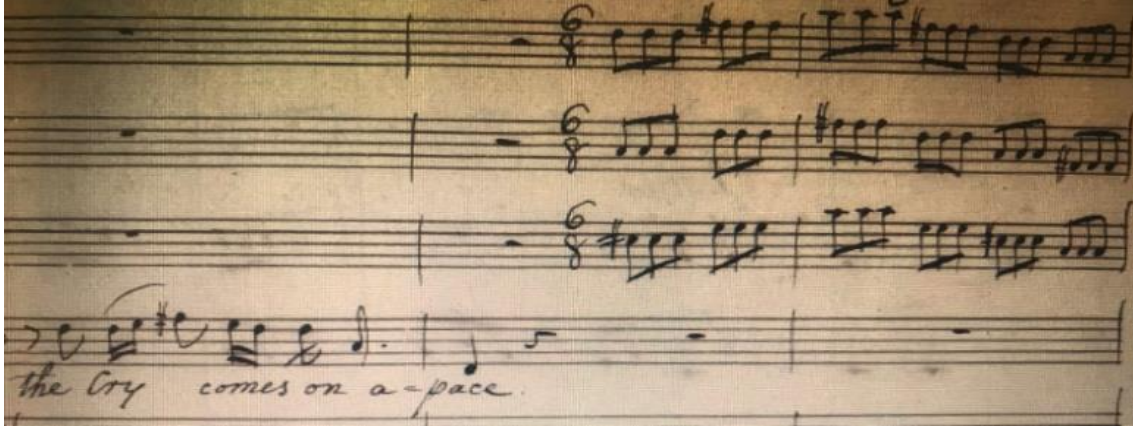


Image 3.2: *Anabasis hypotyposis*. *Dido and Aeneas*. Tenbury MS 1266, act 2, sc. i, 33 © Bodleian Library, University of Oxford.

The ornamental 'crying' figure was common stock-material. Purcell employed a similar device setting the Sorceress: 'Deprived of Fame, of *Life* and Love' (my italics) and during the Spirit's visitation: 'Stay Prince and hear great *Joves* Command[.]'<sup>61</sup>

According to my findings Purcell's hunting figure had a prototype in "Measures of blowing" the last chapter of Jacques du Fouilloux's manual *The noble art of venerie or hunting* published in Limousin in 1611.<sup>62</sup>

The strake to the field. To be blowen with two windes<sup>63</sup>

---

<sup>60</sup> *anabasis* occurs when a voice part or musical passage reflects the textual connotations of *ascending*. Kircher, *Musurgia*, (1650); Beulow, 'Figures,' fig. 39; *hypotyposis*: word or text-painting which in rhetoric is used to evoke an object or event's image; a large class of musical-rhetorical figures serving to illustrate words or poetic ideas, frequently stressing the pictorial nature of words. Burmeister, *Musica*; George J. Beulow, 'Music figures,' in "Rhetoric and music," *New Grove Dictionary of Music online*, ed. Blake Wilson, George J. Beulow and Peter A. Hoyt (2001), n. 38. Beulow, "Rhetoric," 252–53; Palisca, "Music and rhetoric," 214.

<sup>61</sup> Burden, *Complete texts*, 108, 109.

<sup>62</sup> US-SM 69715: Jacques du Fouilloux, *The noble art of venerie or hunting*, ed. George Gascoine (London: Thomas Purfoot, 1611).

<sup>63</sup> *windes* refers to the *trompe*, a hunting horn made in a crescent shape with a single coil in the tubing. For more information about the *trompe* in *La vénerie* see "Horn: History to c. 1800," Renato Meucci and Gabriele Rocchetti. *New Grove Dictionary of Music online*, 2001.

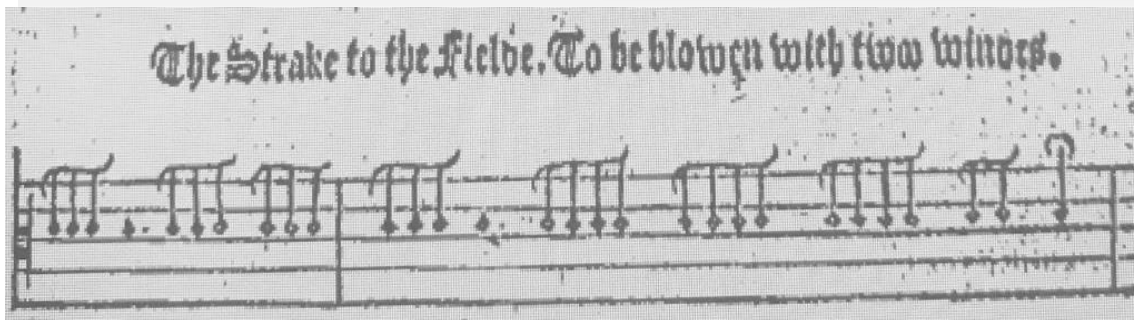


Image 3.3: ‘The strake to the felde.’ Jacques du Fouilloux, *The noble art of venerie or hunting*, ed. George Gascoine. London. Thomas Purfoot, 1611, 251 © The Huntington Library.

*Echo* simulated an unstated sonic effect in Tate’s couplet utilising terraced dynamics to represent the cave setting:<sup>64</sup>

*Cho.* In our deep Vaulted Cell the Charm wee’l prepare,  
Too dreadful a Practice for this open Air.<sup>65</sup>

The Grove scene continued the off-stage hunt ‘heard’ by the Sorceress using a *tempesta* mechanism.<sup>66</sup> Tate both quoted the Sorceress’ ‘hark’ self-referentially and alluded to Virgil’s oak tree topos:<sup>67</sup>

*Æneas.* Behold upon my bending Spear,  
A Monsters Head stand bleeding,<sup>68</sup>  
[...]

*Dido.* The Skies are Clouded, heark how Thunder  
Rends the Mountain Oaks asunder.<sup>69</sup>

Purcell’s *tempesta* figura generated a sonic effect:

---

<sup>64</sup> Hatten argues that a topic’s semantic field (and hence its expressive correlation) is often situated oppositionally referring to organisational features like major–minor mode, fast–slow tempo, or duple–triple meter. Hatten, “Troping of topics,” 514.

<sup>65</sup> Burden, *Complete texts*, 108.

<sup>66</sup> McClelland adopts the term *tempesta* for all storm-related references. McClelland, “*Ombra and Tempesta*,” 281.

<sup>67</sup> Emily Gowers, “Trees and Family Trees in the *Aeneid*,” *Classical Antiquity* 30, no. 1 (April 2011): 90.

<sup>68</sup> Burden, *Complete texts*, 108.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, 109.

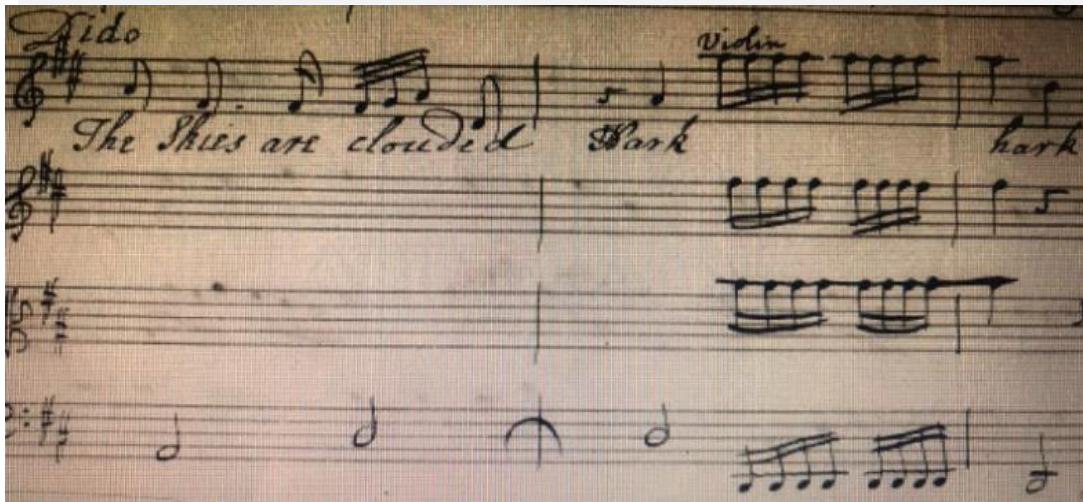


Image 3.4: *Tempesta figura. Dido and Aeneas*. Tenbury MS 1266, act 2, sc. ii, 48 © Bodleian Library, University of Oxford.

## 2b. *Hypotyposis figures (shake/flowing)*

*Dido* contains thirty conceptual nouns like *peace*, *virtue*, *pity* and *destiny* in act 1 alone. Purcell's musical mechanisms support most of these. Tate referred to *fate* nine times including Dido's last word. In the first couplet Tate used three of the four rhetorical master tropes — metaphor, metonymy and synecdoche: *cloud* (metaphor) *brow* (synecdoche) and *fate* (arguably metonymy). Letters denote Tate's rhyme scheme:

Bel.	SHake the Cloud from off your Brow,	(A)	[sic]
	Fate your wishes does Allow.	(A)	
	Empire Growing,	(B)	
	Pleasures Flowing,	(B)	
	Fortune Smiles and so should you,	(C)	
	Shake the Cloud from off your Brow. <sup>70</sup>	(A)	

Purcell's overlay applied *hypotyposis* and *symploce*:<sup>71</sup>

Bel.	shake [ <i>hypotyposis</i> ] the Cloud from of your Brow	[sic]
	fate your wishes does al...low	
	Empire growing	
	pleasures flow.....ing [ <i>hypotyposis</i> ]	
	fortune smiles and so shou'd you	[sic]
	shake [ <i>hypotyposis</i> ].....the Cloud from of your Brow	[sic]
	[ <i>symploce</i> ] shake [ <i>hypotyposis</i> ]....the Cloud from of your Brow <sup>72</sup>	

<sup>70</sup> Burden, *Complete texts*, 105–6.

<sup>71</sup> *symploce*: repetition at the end of a melody or a whole musical section from the beginning. Kircher, *Musurgia*; Beulow 'Figures,' n. 16, n. 5.



In *Tenbury* (c. 1775) ‘shake’ is underlaid melodically dipthong / eɪ / extending over seven and then ten notes at the end of the stanza.<sup>73</sup> First in *Julliard* (1778), then in *Tatton Park* (1784) and the remaining concert versions (1784– c. 1810) the first two phonemes / sh // eɪ / of Tate’s first *ictus* became a scotch snap (see image 3.12).



Image 3.5: Reverse scotch snap. *Dido and Aeneas*. Tenbury MS 1266, act 1, sc. i, 4 © Bodleian Library, University of Oxford.

Both rhythmic patterns elongated the / eɪ / but the scotch snap had a more fluid effect than its reverse representing an altered representation of musico-dramatic and actual character.<sup>74</sup> *Tatton Park* and the concert versions both musically and dramatically portrayed a less ‘realistic’ depiction of Anna/Belinda as greater realism was given by the more speechlike iambic imperative.<sup>75</sup>

The final example of *hypotyposis* mechanisms in this segment exemplifies vowel elongation constructing a line of trochaic pentameter extending / i / in ‘flowing’ melodically over five beats.

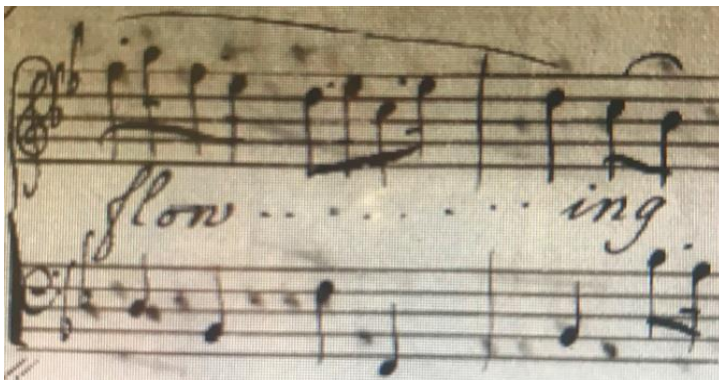


Image 3.6: Vowel elongation. *Dido and Aeneas*. Tenbury MS 1266, act 1, sc. i, 15 © Bodleian Library, University of Oxford

<sup>72</sup> Transcribed from *Tenbury*.

<sup>73</sup> All phonetic symbols in this article are taken from: [www.ling.upenn.edu/courses/Fall\\_2014/ling115/phonetics.html](http://www.ling.upenn.edu/courses/Fall_2014/ling115/phonetics.html) (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania).

<sup>74</sup> Dorottya Fabian and Emery Schubert, “Musical character and the performance and perception of dotting, articulation and tempo in 34 recordings of Variation 7 from J.S. Bach’s Goldberg Variations (BWV 988),” *Musicae Scientiae* XII, no. 2 (Fall 2008): 177.

<sup>75</sup> See section 3.

In the segment above I concluded that Purcell's musical settings reinforced the 'meanings' of Tate's verbs *shake* and *flowing* generating *hypotyposis* figurae delivering melismatic sound. In the next three segments (2c. *grief* 2d. *love* and 2e. *piety*) I clarify how Tate's textual topoi informed and influenced Purcell's interval, sound and rhythmic figures.<sup>76</sup>

### 2c. Interval figure (*grief*)

The first textual representation of *grief* hinted at a general mood of optimism:

*Cho.* Banish Sorrow, Banish Care,  
Grief should ne're approach the Fair.<sup>77</sup>

Purcell musically reinforced Tate's textual affect repeating and varying the lines:

*Chorus* Banish Sorrow, Banish Care,  
Grief should ne're approach the Fair.  
Banish Sorrow, Banish Care,  
Grief should ne're approach, should ne're approach the Fair.  
Grief should ne're approach the Fair.

First setting 'grief' under one crotchet then under three crotchets finally under five crotchets troping on *seufzer* [sigh] motif.<sup>78</sup>

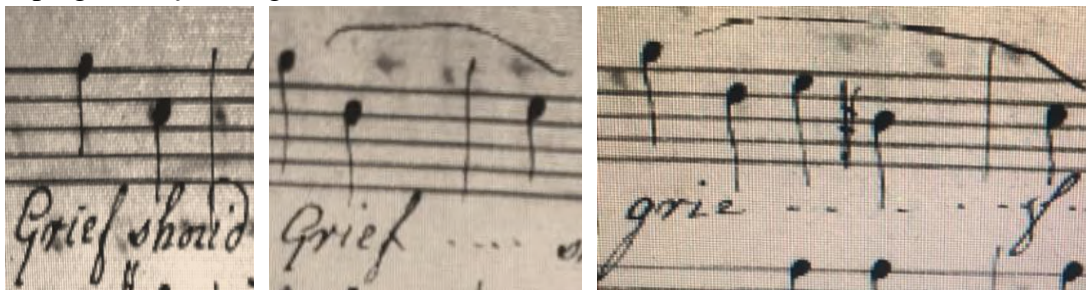


Image 3.7: 'Grief' extended. *Dido and Aeneas*. Tenbury MS 1266, act 1, sc. i, 2-3 © Bodleian Library, University of Oxford.

Purcell's *grief* representational mechanism was generated by melisma in 'Banish sorrow.' *Dido's* *grief* interval figure was located in Dido and Belinda's corresponding recitative:

*Bel.* Grief Encreasing, by Concealing,  
*Dido* Mine admits of no Revealing.  
*Bel.* Then let me Speak the *Trojan* guest,  
Into your tender Thoughts has prest.<sup>79</sup>

<sup>76</sup> Monelle, *Sense of music*, 3.

<sup>77</sup> Burden, *Complete texts*, 106.

<sup>78</sup> McClelland, "Ombra and tempesta," 284.

‘Increasing’ and ‘by concealing’ are set under a rising perfect fourth followed by a rising single chromaticism representing *grief*.

Bel.            Grief Encreasing,      ( $g^1, g^1, c^2, c^2$ ) (rising perfect fourth)  
                  By Concealing,<sup>80</sup>      ( $d^2, eb^2, c^2, c^2$ )<sup>81</sup>      (single rising chromaticism)



Music example 3.1: *Grief* figure. Bruce Wood, ed. *Dido and Aeneas* [Henry Purcell]. London: The Purcell Society/Stainer & Bell, 2021, 9.

In the next segment I explore how Purcell’s *antitheton* offered affective contrast representing *love* topos in ‘Fear no Danger’ thought by some editors to denote the end of act 1, scene i although Tate’s libretto did not divide the first act into two scenes.<sup>82</sup>

## 2d. *musique mesurée* (love)

The affective musico-rhetorical mechanisms representing *doubt* and *fear* in Dido’s preceding recitative were notoriously transformed by Purcell into *musique mesurée* setting long vowels to minims in imitation of *vers mesurés* and the classical poetry it emulated. In the sixteenth century the *Academie de Poesie et de Musique* [Academy of Poetry and Music] founded by Jean-Antoine de Baïf (1532–1589) initiated a humanist focus on the interaction between music (*musique mesurée*) and text (*vers mesurés à l’antique*) to generate classical effects.<sup>83</sup>

<sup>79</sup> Burden, *Complete texts*, 106.

<sup>80</sup> Burden, *Complete texts*, 106.

<sup>81</sup> In this article, pitch is denoted using the Helmholtz system in which  $c^1$  indicates middle C.

<sup>82</sup> *antitheton*: a musical contrast, to express things contrary and opposite. Kircher, *Musurgia*; Beulow, ‘Figures,’ fig. 48; Beulow, *Rhetoric*, 252, 254; Harris, *Dido and Aeneas*, 86.

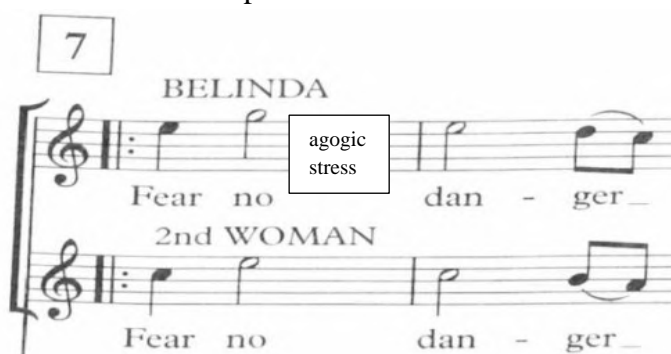
<sup>83</sup> *vers mesurés*: French verses, written in the last third of the sixteenth century by Jean-Antoine de Baïf, a member of the group of poets known as the Pléiade, and by his followers. Baïf attempted to apply the quantitative principles of Greek and Latin poetry to the French language, by its nature accentual, and worked out an accentual version of classical metres – hexameters, Sapphic strophes, and so on – by equating long with accented syllables and short with unaccented syllables[...]. Baïf and his musical associates – Thibault de Courville, Jacques Mauduit, Guillaume Costeley and the brilliant Claude Le Jeune – devised a technique for setting *vers mesurés* to music. In *musique mesurée à l’antique* (or, more simply, *musique mesurée*), the composer followed the metre of the verse exactly; each long (accented) syllable was set to a minim and each short (unaccented) syllable to a crotchet. To ensure that the words would not be obscured the verses were set syllabically in an almost strictly homophonic texture broken occasionally by very brief melismas often no more than two notes long. Because of the complex patterns of classical verse *musique mesurée* moves in irregular

*Bel.* Fear no danger to Ensue,  
*2 Women.* The *Hero* Loves as well as you.  
*Cho.* Ever Gentle, ever Smiling,  
And the Cares of Life beguiling.  
*Cupid* Strew your path with Flowers,  
Gathered from *Elizian* Bowers.<sup>84</sup>

Purcell's repeated first couplet organised the musical structure into *rondeau* form suggesting it was a dance.<sup>85</sup> Letters denote musical structure.

Fear no Danger to Ensue, [A]  
The Hero Loves as well as you.  
Fear no Danger to Ensue, [A]  
The Hero Loves as well as you.  
Ever Gentle, ever Smiling, [B]  
And the Cares of Life beguiling.  
Fear no Danger to Ensue, [A]  
The Hero Loves as well as you.  
Cupid Strew your path with Flowers, [C]  
Gathered from Elizian Bowers.  
Fear no Danger to Ensue, [A]  
The Hero Loves as well as you.

Purcell's minor third 'fear no' reinforced by agogic stress famously divided Tate's metrically iambic verse into triple time music.<sup>86</sup>



Music example 3.2: 'Fear no danger.' Bruce Wood, ed. *Dido and Aeneas* [Henry Purcell]. London: The Purcell Society/Stainer & Bell, 2021, 13.

rhythmic groupings, alternating between two and three beats. Howard Mayer Brown, rev. Richard Freedman, "vers mesurés, vers mesurés à l'antique." *New Grove Dictionary of Music online*, 2001.

<sup>84</sup> Burden, *Complete texts*, 106.

<sup>85</sup> Wood, *Preface*, xiii.

<sup>86</sup> Bruce Wood, "Purcell and his poets," *Early Music* 43, no. 2 (May 2015): 227.



The initial trochaic substitution or the inverted first foot alternated iambs and trochees | ~- | -~ |.<sup>87</sup> The next segment demonstrates how Purcell's versified 'pity' to give 'piety.'<sup>88</sup>

### 2e. Rhythmic figure (piety)

In Tate's libretto the second woman used the word 'pity.' Instead Purcell set the word 'piety' a tri-syllabic dactyl over dotted quaver, semiquaver, crotchet: *ictus, non-ictus, non-ictus*.

2. *Women.* What stubborn Heart unmoved could see,  
Such Distress, such pity.<sup>89</sup>

Tate's application of 'pity' signalled either that Aeneas *pitied* Dido or that Aeneas was *pitiful* meriting Dido's sympathy.<sup>90</sup> When Purcell set 'piety' he may have indicated various 'meanings.' Dido's answer linguistically troped on 'pity' providing a more definitive connotation.

*Dido.* Mine with Stormes of Care opprest,  
Is Taught to pity the Distrest.<sup>91</sup>

The notion that Dido was expressing self-awareness was exploited by Tate's use of 'taught' — recognising that her entourage had put her into a particular predicament.

### 2f. Repetition figures

In this final segment I analyse musical *anaphora* figurae and a supplementary melismatic *hypotyposis* figure in Aeneas and Dido's first partner recitative. Belinda announced Aeneas:<sup>92</sup>

*Bel.* See your Royal Guest appears,  
How God like is the Form he bears.<sup>93</sup>

---

<sup>87</sup> Termed a brilliant lilt created by false verbal accents by Peter Pears in Imogen Holst, *Henry Purcell: 1659-1695 Essays on his Music* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), 1.

<sup>88</sup> *pity*: classical Latin *pietās*. The sense of Latin *pietās* 'piety' was in post-classical Latin extended so as to include 'compassion, pity.' Gradually these forms were differentiated. In Middle English both *pity n.* and *piety n.* are found first in the sense 'compassion', and subsequently in the sense 'piety', and the differentiation in sense is not complete until the 17th century. *Oxford English Dictionary online*, 2022.

*piety*: classical Latin *pietās* dutifulness, piety, in post-classical Latin also the mercy of God, mercy, compassion shown by people. *Oxford English Dictionary online*, 2022.

<sup>89</sup> Burden, *Complete texts*, 106.

<sup>90</sup> *pity*: 5a. a condition calling for pity; pitiable state; sad fate. *Obsolete* (1628); 5b. an object of pity. *Obsolete* (1767). *Oxford English Dictionary online*, 2022.

<sup>91</sup> Burden, *Complete texts*, 106.

<sup>92</sup> *anaphora*: the repetition of a melodic statement on different notes in different parts. Kircher, *Musurgia*; Beulow, 'Figures,' fig. 2.

<sup>93</sup> Burden, *Complete texts*, 107.

Purcell's imperative used *suspiratio* to insert a rising perfect fourth ( $g^1$ ) ( $c^2$ ) or fanfare.<sup>94</sup>

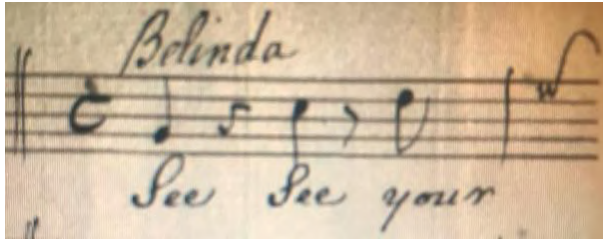


Image 3.8: . *Dido and Aeneas*. Tenbury MS 1266, act 1, sc. i, 14 © Bodleian Library, University of Oxford.

'God' is set under the highest note in the phrase ( $g^2$ ) possibly evoking loftiness to support Tate's text.

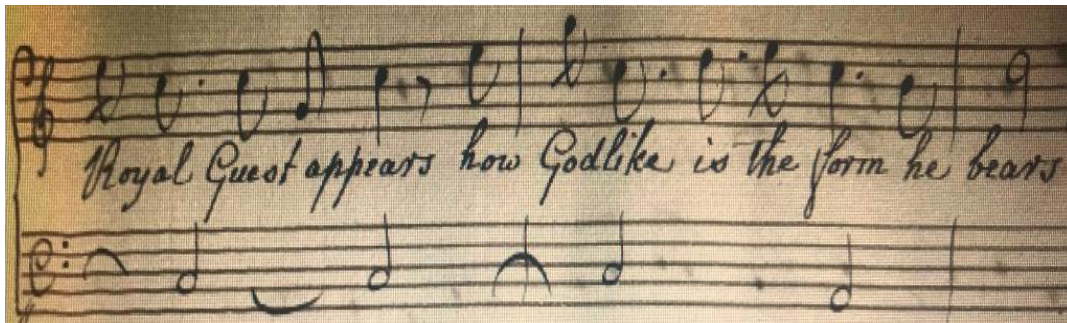


Image 3.9: 'How godlike.' *Dido and Aeneas*. Tenbury MS 1266, act 1, sc. i, 15 © Bodleian Library, University of Oxford.

Aeneas' enjambed first line:<sup>95</sup>

*Æn.*            When Royal Fair shall I be blest,  
                    With cares of Love, and State distrest.<sup>96</sup>

*Anaphora* making interrogative 'when' more insistent.

When, *when* shall I be blest (my italics)

'Fall' is set under consecutive semi-quavers ( $e^1$ )–( $d$ ) to end Aeneas' first scene.

*Æn.*            Ah! make not in a hopeless Fire,

<sup>94</sup> *suspiratio*: the breaking up of a melody to illustrate the text. Kircher, *Musurgia*; Beulow, 'Figures,' fig. 60; Beulow, "Rhetoric," 252, 254. Fanfare is associated with Hatten's *victorious heroic* mode. Hatten, "Troping of topics," 514, 523.

<sup>95</sup> *enjambement*: the continuing of a sentence from one line of a poem into the start of the next line. *Cambridge English Dictionary online*, 2011.

<sup>96</sup> Burden, *Complete texts*, 107.

*A Hero fall, and Troy once more Expire.*<sup>97</sup>



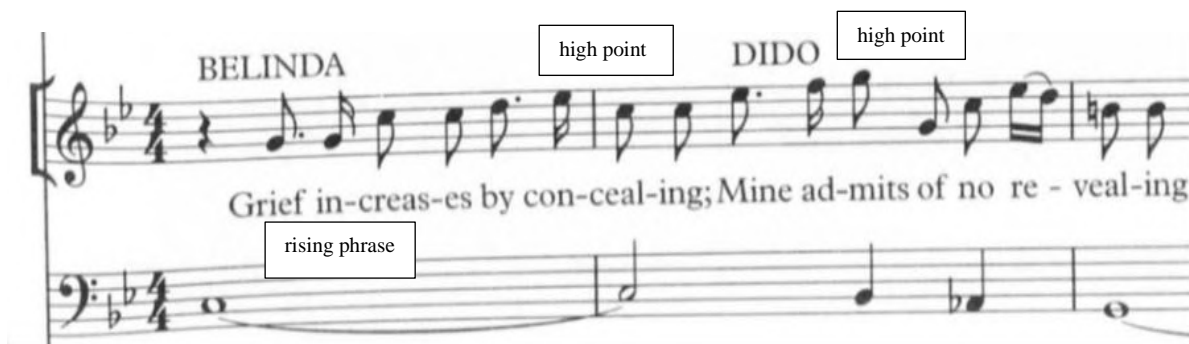
Image 3.10: Fall figure. *Dido and Aeneas*. Tenbury MS 1266, act 1, sc. i, 18 © Bodleian Library, University of Oxford.

At times music and text diverged so that musical rhetoric undermined textual topoi initiating a different affect or general impression to that alluded to in the libretto. Dido and Belinda's 'Grief increases by concealing' illustrates this contradiction.

*Bel.* Grief Encreasing, by Concealing,  
*Dido.* Mine admits of no Revealing.

*Bel.* Then let me Speak the *Trojan* guest,  
Into your tender Thoughts has prest.<sup>98</sup>

Tate's homoioteleuton ('guest,' 'prest') and Belinda's interjection increased the strength/coerciveness of her statement.<sup>99</sup> The musical overlay placed the semitone at the high point of Belinda's rising phrase on 'concealing' ( $e^2$ ) extended by Dido's answering phrase ( $g^2$ ) on 'admits:'



Music example 3.3: 'Grief increases.' Bruce Wood, ed. *Dido and Aeneas* [Henry Purcell]. London: The Purcell Society/Stainer & Bell, 2021, 9.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

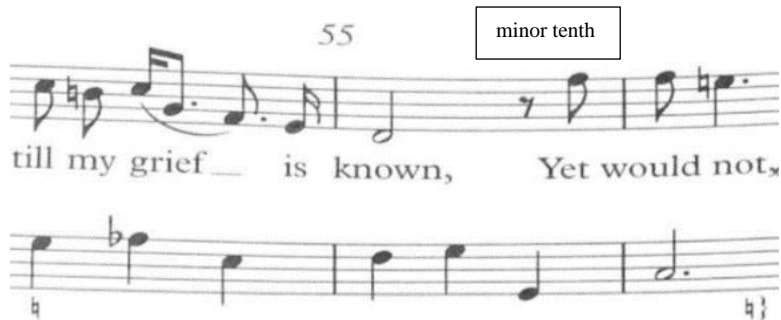
<sup>98</sup> Ibid., 106.

<sup>99</sup> Bartel, *Musica poetica*, 295.

Belinda appeared to urge Dido to conceal while telling her to admit and Dido's musical line rose to imply a confession but she wished to keep something hidden. The paradox exposed a complex relationship between Dido and Belinda.<sup>100</sup>

*Dido.* I Languish till my Grief is known,  
Yet wou'd not have it Guest.<sup>101</sup>

Although Dido 'wou'd not' or did not wish the cause of her *grief* to be imagined by her courtiers that is precisely what happened. 'Yet wou'd not' popped out of the musical landscape due to the pitch and rhythm of the setting. 'Yet' ( $f^2$ ) followed 'is known' ( $d^1$ ) after an upward minor tenth.



Music example 3.4: 'Yet would not.' Bruce Wood, ed. *Dido and Aeneas* [Henry Purcell]. London: The Purcell Society/Stainer & Bell, 2021, 8.

In this section I answered the first query by investigating how *Dido's* musico-rhetorical *figurae* interacted with textual *topoi* exploring the sonic manifestation of Tate's libretto.

### 3. Discrepancies among the sources

Not everything in Tate's libretto appeared in the musical sources. In addition to the Triumphant and Echo dances the Grove, Basque and Cupids' dances together with the Guitar chaconne and the Guitar ground were all missing.<sup>102</sup> Tate's libretto concluded act 2 with the Sorceress and witches' sestain 'Then since our charms have sped' (ll. 245–50)<sup>103</sup> which was followed by the Grove dance both elements creating a bridge between the spirit and Aeneas, and the start of act 3. None of the sources set Tate's text or gave music for the act ending dance.<sup>104</sup> To provide musical continuity Britten, Holst, Laurie, Dart, Price and Wood added music supplied by Purcellian works which they selected and edited together with some

<sup>100</sup> Belinda also influenced the second woman's attitude towards Dido: *2 Women*. What stubborn Heart unmoved could see, / Such Distress, such pity. *stubborn*: difficult to treat or manage. *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology online*, 2003.

<sup>101</sup> Burden, *Complete texts*, 106.

<sup>102</sup> Wood, *Preface*, xv n. 48.

<sup>103</sup> Burden, *Complete texts*, 109. See Appendix A for the complete text.

<sup>104</sup> In 1951 the musical omission led to a debate in *The Times* letters to the editor column.





original compositions.<sup>105</sup> Most recently Wood composed a chorus setting Tate's verse 'Then since our charms have sped' and set the Magicians' dance in *Circe* in the grove to end act 2.<sup>106</sup>

The Triumphant dance, the Echo dance and the Witches' dance were not included in *Julliard* or the *Academy* sources because those sources were reduced for concert performance. *Okhi* omitted the Triumphant dance but reintroduced the Echo dance and the Witches' dance — evidence of its conflation of sources.<sup>107</sup> The Guitar chaconne (towards the end of act 1 between Belinda's 'Pursue thy conquest' and the chorus 'To the hills and the vales') and the Guitar ground (towards the beginning of the Grove scene between Belinda's 'Thanks to these lonesome vales' and the second woman's 'Oft she visits') probably never had music written specifically for them as instrumentalists would have extemporised over Purcell's grounds repeated in closely located sections like the Triumphant dance (Guitar chaconne) and 'Oft she visits' (Guitar ground).<sup>108</sup> 'Oft she visits' immediately followed the Guitar ground which meant that audiences would hardly have noticed the transitions. Thematically the Guitar chaconne and the Guitar ground may have been located in significant places signalling a change in mood or environment. Guitar accompaniment created an intimate effect: 'In vain the am'rous flute and soft guitar, / Jointly labour to inspire wanton heat and loose desire.' ('Hail! Bright Cecilia!').<sup>109</sup>

---

<sup>105</sup> GB-Lbl BLL01004594540/b.211./728: Benjamin Britten and Imogen Holst, eds., "Preface," *Dido and Aeneas, an Opera in three acts*, Henry Purcell [and Nahum Tate]. Ludwig Landgraf, Ger. trans (London: Boosey & Hawkes, 1961), v; Laurie and Dart, "Preface," iii; Curtis A Price, ed., "The Score," *Henry Purcell's Dido and Aeneas: an Opera: an Authoritative Score, Historical Background, a Critical Edition of the Libretto, Criticism and Analysis, Production and Interpretation*, (New York, NY: Norton Critical Scores, 1986), 81; Michael Tilmouth, "A Newly-Composed Finale for the Grove Scene," in *Henry Purcell's Dido and Aeneas: an Opera: an Authoritative Score, Historical Background, a Critical Edition of the Libretto, Criticism and Analysis, Production and Interpretation*, ed. Curtis A. Price (New York, NY: Norton Critical Scores, 1986), 183; Wood, *Preface*, xv n. 50; Zimmerman, *Henry Purcell*, 298. Price reproduces Laurie and Dart's edition in all but a few details adding Michael Tilmouth's chorus and Grove dance taken from the act 5 prelude in *The Fairy Queen*.

<sup>106</sup> John Bryan, "Dido restor'd," review of Henry Purcell, *Dido and Aeneas*, ed. Bruce Wood. Purcell Society Edition 3. *Early Music* (3 January, 2023); GB-Lbl BLL01015027171/W87/7936: Henry Purcell, *Dramatic music: part I*, ed. Alan Gray (London: Novello, 1906); Wood, *Preface*, xv.

<sup>107</sup> Wood suggests that Tate's stage direction cuing the Witches' dance 'Jack of the Lanthorn leads the Spaniards out of their way among the Inchanteresses. A Dance' may have arisen because those costumes were readily available to performers. Wood, *Preface*, xv n. 47.

<sup>108</sup> Andrew Parrott, "Performing Purcell," in *Composers' Intentions?: Lost Traditions of Musical Performance* (London: Boydell & Brewer, 2015), 250; Laurie and Dart, *Preface*, iii; Wood, *Preface*, xiii.

<sup>109</sup> GB-Lbl BLL01004594239/R.M.15.c.11.(2.): *Orpheus Britannicus: a collection of all the choicest songs for one, two, and three voices / compos'd by Mr. Henry Purcell. Together with such symphonies for violins or flutes, as were by him design'd for any of them: and a through-bass to each song; figur'd for the organ, harpsichord, or theorbo-lute. All which are placed in their several keys according to the order of the Gamut.* Henry Purcell, 1659-1695 (London: Printed by J. Heptinstall, for Henry Playford, in the Temple-Change, in Fleet-street, MDCXCVIII [1698] England London); Parrott, *Performing Purcell*, 250.

The guitar was popular with singer/actors since it was easy to carry on stage, relatively easy to play and effective as a self-accompanied instrument.<sup>110</sup> Parrott found: ‘only in *Dido and Aeneas* is the instrument expressly called for by Purcell’ but it was Tate’s libretto that specified the guitar. In a diary entry on 23 September, 1680 John Evelyn reflected on a visitor who had: ‘sung admirably to a Guitarr’ at Evelyn’s home.<sup>111</sup> A guitar was: ‘brought for his Mats service in his Bed-Chamber’ costing £10 in a 1686 source and on 10 November, 1690 an advertisement in *The London Gazette* offered tuition: ‘playing upon the Gittar, either by Letters or Notes.’ When Charles II needed an accompanist the Duke of York would play the guitar.<sup>112</sup> Sandra Tuppen’s theory that Tate added the Guitar chaconne and the Triumphant dance at the last minute is supported by smaller type face in the libretto indicating that these dance cues were ‘a late arrival at the printer’s shop’.<sup>113</sup> The hasty additions may have signalled that *Dido* premiered at court before the performance at Priest’s Chelsea school necessitating the extra dance. It is also possible that one or more of Priest’s pupils improvised accompanying music on the guitar requiring the supplementary musical cue in the libretto.<sup>114</sup>

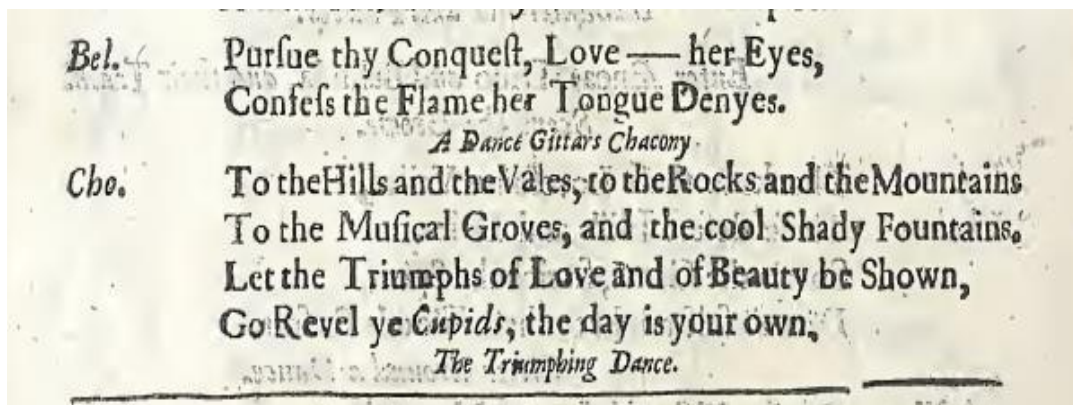


Image 3.11: Dance cues. *Dido and Aeneas* libretto, act 1, sc. ii, 5 © Royal College of Music, London.

The music underlying the *ombra* scenes was one musico-rhetorical feature which separated *Tenbury* and *Tatton Park*, and the concert versions whilst a treble clef Sorceress role as in *Tenbury*, *Tatton Park* and *Okhi* would have suited schoolgirl performers more readily than a bass Sorceress.

<sup>110</sup> Parrott, *Performing Purcell*, 250 n. 59.

<sup>111</sup> GB-Lbl BLL01014688327/RB.23.a.33170: John Evelyn, *Diary* (London: Frederick Warne, 1879?).

<sup>112</sup> Parrott, *Performing Purcell*, 250 n. 58.

<sup>113</sup> Wood, *Preface*, xiv n. 39.

<sup>114</sup> Wood, *Preface*, xiv, xv n. 48. *Triumphant Dance* and *Echo Dance* in *Tenbury* and *Tatton Park*. "DIDO AND ÆNEAS." *Era*, 23 November 1895. British Library Newspapers, 9; Harris, *Dido and Aeneas*, 172; BLL004594538 / F.659.i.(3.): Margaret Laurie and Thurston Dart, eds., *Dido and Aeneas: an opera*, Henry Purcell [and Nahum Tate] [vocal and full score] (London: Novello, 1961), iii; Andrew Pinnock, "Deus ex Machina: A Royal Witness to the Court Origin of Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*," *Early Music* 40, no. 2 (2012): 274; Wood, *Preface*, xi, xiii–xiv.

In appendix A I tabulate discrepancies between the six *Dido* musical sources *Tenbury*, *Julliard*, *Tatton Park*, the *Academy* sources, *Okhi* and *Rimbault's* edition recording information about modes/keys, clefs, voice types, metric signs, tempo, dynamics, rhythm, nomenclature, orthographic variation, lacunae and structure.<sup>115</sup> I also provide information about Tate's prologue, verse forms, rhyme schemes and meter. In the portions below I group *Dido's* sources into those descended from the late eighteenth-century *Academy* concerts (the *Academy* sources *BL 31450* and *BL 15979*) and those evolving out of early and late nineteenth-century performance practice (*Okhi* and *Rimbault*).<sup>116</sup>

The four concert versions (*Julliard*, the *Academy* sources and *Okhi*) had several things in common.<sup>117</sup> Perhaps the most significant difference between these sources and *Tenbury* and *Tatton Park* was the name of *Dido's* lady-in-waiting which was changed from *Belinda* to *Anna* bringing *Dido* more in line with one of its classical sources by referring to *Dido's* sister *Anna* in *Virgil's Aeneid*.<sup>118</sup> In *Tatton Park* which was scribed contemporaneously with *Academy* source *BL 31450* *Anna* was pencilled above *Belinda's* name cuing 'Shake the cloud.'

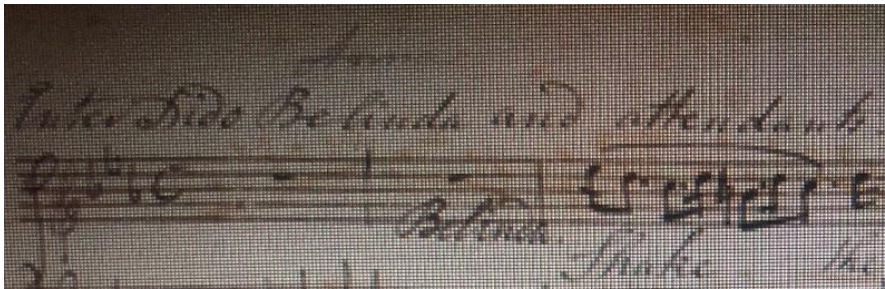


Image 3.12: *Belinda/Anna. The Loves of Dido and Aeneas. MR 2–5.3 act 1, sc. i, 3*  
© Tatton Park Library, National Trust.

*Anna* was used consistently in these sources whenever the character was named so that in *Julliard*, both *Academy* sources, *Okhi* and *Rimbault Dido's* first aria was cued by: *Anna* 'Shake the cloud' and the second aria (sung by *Dido*) contained 'Ah! my *Anna*.' *Anna's* role in these sources was within an alto's tessitura one octave below *Tenbury*. In the concert versions *Anna's* role had become that of confidante or 'sister' rather than soubrette-like servant as she may have been portrayed by singers using *Tenbury* or *Tatton Park*.

<sup>115</sup> In the late-eighteenth-century texture, notation and instrumentation were thought to be *loci topici* which could inspire invention even in purely instrumental music. Mattheson, *Der vollkommene capelmeister*, 121–32 pt. 2, ch. 4: "Von der Erfindung," in Palisca, *Music and rhetoric*, 205 n.5.

<sup>116</sup> *Rimbault's* piano/vocal score exemplified the trend for popular amateur versions of operas which could be played at home by enthusiasts. Piano (or piano-forte) transcriptions proved to be highly profitable items for music publishers enabling the distribution of opera music (including *Dido*) to a wider public. Thomas Christensen, "Soundings offstage," in *The Oxford Handbook of Opera*, ed. Helen M. Greenwald (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2015), 899–900.

<sup>117</sup> Harris, *Dido and Aeneas*, 147.

<sup>118</sup> Harris, *Dido and Aeneas*, 146; Wood, *Preface*, x. According to Wood *Dido's* popularity in the eighteenth century was largely a result of the mythical narrative.



Restoration-era writers frequently adapted pre-existing literature sometimes modifying the works unexpectedly.<sup>119</sup> Tate was famously criticised for giving *King Lear* a happy ending. Admiration of authoritative textual antecedents resulted in re-invention. This trait was exemplified by the early modern tradition of commonplace books a feature of classical rhetorical education which continued into the eighteenth century. This *zeitgeist* was demonstrated in music and outlined in contemporary theoretical treatises recommending that opera composers study the antecedents, concomitants and consequences of a dramatic situation or text to stimulate creativity.<sup>120</sup>

It is likely that not only the authors of treatises but also professional musicians became acquainted with the rudiments of rhetoric during their choir school training.<sup>121</sup>

One notable discrepancy between the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century concert versions was that more nuanced expressive markings were present in the latter. Purcell's overture was given various tempi: the fugato section was marked 'quick' in the *Academy* sources but *allegro moderato* in *Okhi* and *Rimbault*. 'Shake the cloud' was marked *allegretto grazioso* both in *Okhi* and by Rimbault who added performance directions marking 'Ah! Belinda' *larghetto*, 'When Monarchs unite' *moderato* and 'To the hills and the vales' *allegro assai*. These additions indicated that expressiveness became important in the nineteenth century which alluded to a dissimilar but not unrelated set of aesthetic values from that of *Affekt*. The *BL 31450* scribe marked 'To the hills and the vales' in pencil 'for, allegro mod.'. 'for' was possibly an abbreviation for forte although all other dynamics were of the 'soft/very soft/loud/very loud' type as in *Tenbury*. The pencilled addition which might have been written on to the score by a performer during a rehearsal for the 1784 concert at the Royal Academy of Music, London (the venue used for Academy concerts) suggests that due to their origins in public performance the concert versions were more musically expressive than those produced for court or school stagings.<sup>122</sup>

Structural changes in the later concert versions may mean that nineteenth-century audiences sought dramatic coherence offered by varied act and scene endings. Rimbault reached right back to *Tenbury* (and Tate's libretto) concluding act 1 in the palace and beginning act 2 in the

---

<sup>119</sup> GB-Lbl BLL01003352326/841.d.39.(7.): Nahum Tate, *King Lear* (London: E. Flesher, 1681); GB-Lbl BLL01014824047/644.f.67: Nahum Tate and William Shakespeare, *Richard II* (London: Richard and Jacob Tonson, 1681).

<sup>120</sup> Heinichen, *Introduction Der General-Bass* in Palisca, *Music and rhetoric*, 205 n.4. *zeitgeist*: a borrowing from German. The defining spirit or mood of a particular period, esp. as reflected in the prevailing ideas, beliefs, and attitudes of the time; the social or cultural trends prevalent at a particular time. *Oxford English Dictionary online*, 2023.

<sup>121</sup> Schab, *Rhetoric and reversal*, 44.

<sup>122</sup> *expression*: in its simplest sense, the term 'expression' is applied to those elements of a musical performance that depend on personal response and that vary between different interpretations[...]i.e. to play a piece with a certain articulation, tempo and phrasing. Nancy K. Baker, Max Paddison and Roger Scruton, "Expression." *New Grove Dictionary of Music online*, 2001.



cave where the Witches' prelude increased the dramatic impact of *ombra*.<sup>123</sup> *Okhi* referred to *Tatton Park* beginning act 2 in the grove after the first *ombra* scene which gave the supernatural characters less prominent roles but increased the significance of the grove. *Julliard* and the *Academy* sources did not specify act or scene division. Rimbault considered the sailors' part of the ships scene to be the act 2 conclusion beginning act 3 after the Sailors' chorus. Rimbault's alteration reduced the 'meaning' of the sailors' roles perhaps to create an equivalent transition between the two later acts which both commenced with the supernatural. Rimbault's customers may also have preferred to place less emphasis on the sailor's roles because of a reluctance to engage with 'comic' characters.<sup>124</sup>

Voice-typing varied between sources created for full stagings and those used in concert performances. Lead characters' vocal ranges in *Tenbury* and *Tatton Park* were changed by subsequent copyists which may have given the 'pantomime' characters less significant roles.<sup>125</sup> The sailor's song was given to a soprano in *Tenbury*, *Tatton Park* and *Okhi* and a lower female voice in *Julliard* and the *Academy* sources.<sup>126</sup> Audiences at stagings using the earliest sources and *Okhi* may not have identified with a female sailor assuming that the performer sang the part at pitch not transposed down an octave.<sup>127</sup> Anna's lower pitched voice-typing in *Okhi*, *Julliard* and the *Academy* sources which were all concert versions may imply that the score was adapted to suit the performers available and made Dido's role as *prima donna* more distinguished.<sup>128</sup> In *Okhi* Dido was a soprano and the Sorceress was a mezzo-soprano so Anna's vocal range may have been lower than those of the two female lead characters.<sup>129</sup> Anna's dramaturgical persona may have been perceived differently by the late nineteenth-century audiences possibly as having with more depth and gravitas. Audiences listening to earlier stagings would have heard a higher voiced character named Belinda. *Tenbury* and *Tatton Park* specified three sopranos in the roles Dido, Belinda and the Sorceress (mezzo) meaning that the lowest female voices would have been heard in the choruses alone. Sonically listeners might have understood an equality between the three protagonists given by musico-rhetorical features characterising each voice.<sup>130</sup>

Sorceress and sailor roles composed for female voices were an area in which *Okhi* resembled scores on the *Tenbury* stemma branch but like the concert versions Anna's role was voiced at

---

<sup>123</sup> In 1<sup>st</sup> century CE Dionysius Longinus considered the possible sources of the sublime and Edmund Burke's treatise *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Sublime and the Beautiful* (1758) introduced the idea of the *sublime of terror*. McClelland, "Ombra and tempesta," 291.

<sup>124</sup> Sophie Fuller, "The Finest Voice of the Century"1: Clara Butt and Other Concert-Hall and Drawing-Room Singers of Fin-de-siècle Britain," *The Arts of the Prima Donna in the Long Nineteenth Century*, eds. Rachel Cowgill and Hilary Poriss (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

<sup>125</sup> Harris, *Dido and Aeneas*, 148–49; Laurie, "Sources," 58.

<sup>126</sup> Robert Mullalley, "A Female Aeneas?" *The Musical Times* 130, no. 1752 (1989): 80.

<sup>127</sup> Irena Cholij and Curtis A. Price, "Dido's Bass Sorceress," *The Musical Times* 127, no. 1726 (1986): 616.

<sup>128</sup> For more information about eighteenth-century singers participating in *Dido* concert performances see Harris, *Dido and Aeneas*, 148 n. 239–41.

<sup>129</sup> Wood, *Preface*, xx.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, xviii.



a lower pitch amending her character so that the performer was no longer representing a protagonist named Belinda singing within a higher tessitura like a soubrette. Voice typing in *Julliard* and the *Academy* sources represented Dido as a soprano, Anna as a mezzo/alto and the Sorceress as a bass. A contemporary prompt book from the 1774 Academy of Ancient Music performance of *Measure for Measure* when Dido was performed as a masque named a bass Sorceress but these later sources conflict with *Tenbury* voice-typing.<sup>131</sup>

The *Academy* sources were produced for late eighteenth-century concerts probably commencing the first Purcellian revival.<sup>132</sup> ‘Fear no danger’ was *Dido*’s most popular song in eighteenth-century England frequently performed in concerts of early music as a stand-alone work.<sup>133</sup> It was also one of only three songs from *Dido* published before the nineteenth century.<sup>134</sup> In *Tenbury*, *Tatton Park* and *Okhi* ‘Fear no danger’ was given to two sopranos and the attendant named ‘2<sup>nd</sup> woman’ quoting Tate’s 1689 libretto. ‘Fear no danger’ became popular as eighteenth-century audiences preferred shorter lighter sounding pieces of music to complete musical drama. Large scale theatrical works were hardly ever performed in full but due to its length and small-scale *Dido* was often performed in concert versions frequently ‘sandwiched’ between works.<sup>135</sup>

---

<sup>131</sup> US-NYp. Mus. Res. \*MZ: Nahum Tate, *The Loves of Dido and Aeneas, an Opera* [libretto in *Measure for Measure*] (London: Academy of Ancient Music, 1774); Elizabeth Jane Violet Holland, “Purcell and the seventeenth-century voice: an investigation of singers and voice types in Henry Purcell’s vocal music” (PhD diss., University of Sheffield, 2002); Pinnock, “From Rosy Bowers,” 85. *Dido*’s first recorded professional performance was 1700 possibly in February when it was arranged into four ‘entertainments’ and inserted into Gildon’s adaptation of *Measure for Measure* (published in March). GB-Lbl BLL0100335295 /163.i.2: Charles Gildon, William Shakespeare [and Nahum Tate]. *Measure for Measure* [*Dido and Aeneas* libretto] (London: D. Brown and R. Parker, 1700). It was performed again twice in 1704, 29 January and 8 April as an ‘afterpiece’ (neither performance is associated with extant libretti or details about performers). Irena Cholij, “*Dido and Aeneas* with *The Loves of Dido and Aeneas* in *Measure for Measure*,” in *Henry Purcell’s Operas: The Complete Texts*, ed. Michael Burden (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 98 n. 8, 99 n. 12, n. 14; Shay and Thompson, *Principal sources*, 232; Wood, *Preface*, x.

<sup>132</sup> US-NYp Mus. Res. \*MZ: Nahum Tate, *The Loves of Dido and Aeneas, an Opera* [libretto in *Measure for Measure*] (London: Academy of Ancient Music, 1774); GB-Ob Vet. A5 d.298 (1): Nahum Tate, *Dido and Aeneas* [libretto/concert programme] (London: Academy of Ancient Music, 1785); GB-Lcm B460/6: Nahum Tate, *Dido and Aeneas* [libretto/concert programme] (London: Academy of Ancient Music, 1787); Wood, *Preface*, x.

<sup>133</sup> For more information see Ellen Harris, “The Late Eighteenth Century: Revival and Adaptation,” 143–44 in Harris, *Dido and Aeneas*.

<sup>134</sup> The earliest known publication date for one of *Dido*’s songs is 1698 when ‘Ah! Belinda’ was published in volume 1 of *Orpheus Britannicus*. GB-Lbl BLL01004594239/R.M.15.c.11.(2.): *Orpheus Britannicus : a collection of all the choicest songs for one, two, and three voices / compos'd by Mr. Henry Purcell. Together with such symphonies for violins or flutes, as were by him design'd for any of them: and a through-bass to each song; figur'd for the organ, harpsichord, or theorbo-lute. All which are placed in their several keys according to the order of the Gamut* (London: Printed by J. Heptinstall, for Henry Playford, in the Temple-Change, in Fleetstreet, MDCXCVIII [1698] England London); Cholij, “*Measure for Measure*,” 99 n. 15; Wood, *Preface*, x.

<sup>135</sup> Harris, *Dido and Aeneas*, 145.

The title of the 1774 libretto demonstrates that late eighteenth-century audiences understood *love* to be the most important topical referent.<sup>136</sup>

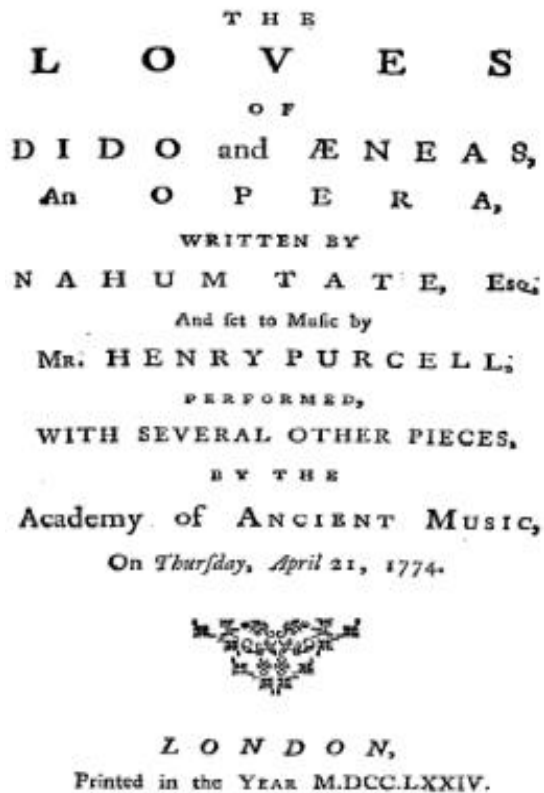


Image 3.13: Libretto front page.  
Academy of Ancient Music, 1774.

The Academy of Ancient Music was founded in 1726 as the Academy of Vocal Music by professional musicians who were attempting to bring older music back into the public arena.<sup>137</sup> Much like today *Dido's* popularity as a complete work in the eighteenth century may have been inspired by audiences wanting to experience dramatic situations which invoked unpleasant emotions but were enjoyable nonetheless.<sup>138</sup> Aesthetics as a discipline was described by Aristotle in his discussion of rhetoric in 4 BCE when he explained that the orator's role is to change the mind of an audience by changing the emotion in the listeners' minds. In *Poetics* Aristotle explored how emotional responses could be 'directed' at certain kinds of characters. Whilst audiences appreciated music representing positive *Affekt* catharsis

<sup>136</sup> The loves of Dido and Aeneas, an opera written by Nahum Tate esq. and set to music by Mr Henry Purcell performed with several other pieces by the Academy of Ancient Music on Thursday April 21, 1774.

<sup>137</sup> Harris, *Dido and Aeneas*, 143; Wood, *Preface*, x.

<sup>138</sup> Aristotle, *Art of Rhetoric*; Aristotle, *Poetics*; Schmitter, "Theories of the Emotions," 2021.



(or the ‘discharge’ of unpleasant emotions like fear and pity) became an important concept in eighteenth-century aesthetics associated with tragedy. From this perspective the listener’s or audiences emotional reaction intellectually anticipated is the composers and performers starting point.<sup>139</sup>

In this article I described how *Dido*’s topoi changed over time critiquing first how Purcell utilised conventional baroque musico-rhetorical techniques to either represent or contradict Tate’s text. I determined that Purcell’s representational methodologies created *Dido*’s sound ‘effects’ simulating hunting horns, evoking an echo in a cave, mimicking thunder and presenting ‘shake’ and ‘flowing’ onomatopoeically. I assessed Purcell’s representations of *grief* and *love* by analysing musico-rhetorical mechanisms. Unlike earlier *Dido* scholars I included textual topoi in my study of *Dido*’s musical rhetoric. In addition I identified tropes finding dramatic and musico-rhetorical ‘meanings’ discovering that Purcell’s textual repetition devices enriched Tate’s characterisations and arguing that discrepancies among the musical sources (expressive schema, dramatic structure and voice typing) which were sometimes influenced by pragmatic decisions about practical issues also altered *Dido*’s topoi. The twentieth-century historically informed performance movement attempted to ‘reconstruct’ an original *Dido* score best representing Purcell’s hypothetical ‘intentions’ generating a source hierarchy.<sup>140</sup> This article demonstrated that the authenticity paradigm is counter-productive to deconstructive interpretations of *Dido* as it detracts from the significance of each source. Purcell’s musical rhetoric whether analysed by creative process or contemporary conventions may indicate intent but seeking Purcell’s intentions by reconstructing the autograph assumes that intention is more important than interpretation and generates only one set of meanings.<sup>141</sup> Like any opera or musical work *Dido* is reconstructed by each reading leaving a mark on subsequent documents, a network of material determinants and a trace on the sound object.<sup>142</sup> The aim in this article was a paradigm shift to deconstruct the model of source hierarchy which existed to reconstruct Purcell’s original.

---

<sup>139</sup> Paul Hindemith, *A Composers World: Horizons and Limitations* (London: Creative Media Partners LLC, 2018), 37.

<sup>140</sup> Charles S. Brauner, “Reconstructions,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Opera*, ed. Helen M. Greenwald (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2014), 990.

<sup>141</sup> Drabkin, “Analysis,” 253.

<sup>142</sup> Brauner, “Reconstructions,” 989; Françoise Delande, “Meaning and Behaviour Patterns: The Creation of Meaning in Interpreting and Listening to Music,” in *Musical Signification*, ed. Eero Tarasti (Berlin, Germany: De Gruyter Mouton, 1995), 222; Fairtile, “Sources,” 969; Gallope, *Deep refrains*, 25. Fairtile, “Sources,” 969.