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POWER AND PATRONAGE IN
MOZART'S *LA CLEMENZA DI TITO* AND *DIE ZAUBERFLÖTE**

I

GIOVANNI DE GAMERRA, PLAYWRIGHT AND LIBRETTIST, wrote in his 1790
Osservazioni sullo spettacolo:

Theatrical spectacle, established on the basis of wise laws and of careful reform, can be regarded as a means always available to the sovereign power to inculcate in his subjects the most useful and important beliefs. ... Has our century not seen an emperor at a performance of *La clemenza di Tito* listening to the voices of humanity and forgiveness?¹

These words do not actually refer to Mozart's *La clemenza di Tito*, whose music would be composed the following year, but to an earlier setting of Pietro Metastasio's text. The Metastasian tradition of court performance, old-fashioned but not obsolete, presented the monarch with the ideal of a benevolent, moral ruler, which, identified with himself, he would then re-present to the audience.

De Gamerra's first libretto, amended by Metastasio, was that to Mozart's – and subsequently Johann Christian Bach's – *Lucio Silla*. It achieved the near impossible task of redeeming Plutarch's tyrannical Lucius Sulla, transforming him into an agent of Stoic clemency. 'Theatrical spectacle' was remote both from mere entertainment and from *l'art pour l'art*; it was a compulsory class in a school for ruler and ruled. Culture and power were inextricably intertwined in eighteenth-century opera, in terms of commission, composition, characterisation, performance, and reception. These different aspects of the 'work' need not always work together; claims are contested as well as reconciled in the operatic arena.

* I should like to thank the participants in the *Cultures of power* conference for their papers and discussion, and especially Derek Beales and the editors of this volume for their subsequent advice and criticism.

1. Quoted in J.A. Rice, *La clemenza di Tito* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 11.

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The perceived power of opera is illustrated by Leopold II's denunciation of the proposed appointment of De Gamerra as librettist to La Scala. Leopold warned his brother Ferdinand, governor of Lombardy, of De Gamerra's revolutionary inclinations: 'fanatic to excess, hot-headed, imprudent concerning ... liberty, very dangerous'.² A public platform for a 'fanatic' might imperil the House of Habsburg – until, that is, De Gamerra prudently modified his behaviour and the Habsburgs graciously revised their opinion, resulting in re-appointment in 1794 as court librettist in Vienna and renewed collaboration with Salieri. De Gamerra's skill and even Mozart's genius would come to naught without commission or performance. Artists must deal with authority, and it with them.

Both parties must also contend with the audience. De Gamerra's words indicate how Mozart's work would shortly be received, or rather its intended reception; the eighteenth-century public was far from a passive, uncritical receptacle. Indeed, as Tim Blanning has written, 'both the musician and the society are involved in the creative process.' Thus, 'whether Mozart was performing in palaces or public rooms, the audience consisted mainly of nobles. ... if it would be pushing the argument too far to classify Mozart's work as "aristocratic", it would certainly make more sense than to call it "bourgeois".'³ The word 'aristocratic' might seem more appropriate to *Tito*, an *opera seria* (an Italian opera based upon a time-honoured tragic or heroic subject), than to *Die Zauberflöte*, a 'popular' *Singspiel*. Such a work might seem to have less obvious connection with issues of culture and power, at least as introduced above, but such a conclusion would be misleading. These issues and some of their implications are the concern of this essay.

II

MOZART'S OPERAS WERE WRITTEN with a variety of patrons and audiences in mind – which is not to claim that they were *only* written with them in mind. Let us consider a few examples. The aforementioned *Lucio Silla* was composed in 1772 for Milan's Regio Ducal Teatro and premièred on St Stephen's Day, opening the Carnival season. Archduke Ferdinand's prolonged attention to family correspondence resulted in a two-hour delay, yet this was followed by the success of twenty-five further performances, after which silence ruled until the 1929 Prague revival. Metastasio's *Il re pastore*, a celebration of Alexander the Great, was first set in 1751 by the court composer, Giuseppe Bonno for Maria Theresa at Schönbrunn, and subsequently by about twenty-five other composers, including Gluck, whose

2. Letter of 10 January 1791 in the Vienna Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Sammelbande, Kart. 20, quoted in J.A. Rice, 'Giovanni de Gamerra,' *Grove Music Online*, ed. L. Macy (accessed 27 February 2006), <http://www.grovemusic.com>.

3. T.C.W. Blanning, *The culture of power and the power of culture: old regime Europe 1660-1789* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 178-9.

1756 version celebrated the birth of Archduke Maximilian Francis. The archduke's 1775 visit to Salzburg occasioned Mozart's serenata, which thereafter fell immediately into obscurity. *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* was composed for Vienna's National Singspiel, founded by Joseph II and based at the Burgtheater. It ran until the Singspiel's closure in 1783, its fame spreading rapidly, witnessing first-year productions in Prague, Bonn, Frankfurt, Leipzig, and Warsaw. Vienna, moreover, swiftly revived the piece in 1784, under the aegis of the German company at the Karntnertor. The idea for an operatic version of Beaumarchais' anti-aristocratic – 'bourgeois'? – *Le mariage de Figaro* may have been Mozart's own; it was written in 1785-6 for the Burgtheater, the Singspiel having sold out to an Italian company. Although its fame took a little longer to spread than the more obviously 'popular' and 'German' *Entführung*, *Le nozze di Figaro* would soon be the toast of Europe, nobles included. The Emperor's notorious prohibition of excessive encores attested to rather than denied its popularity; the success of its 1789 Vienna revival helped elicit the imperial commission for *Così fan tutte*.

First, then, we should consider the immediate context to our two operas, composed and premièred in 1791, the year of Mozart's death. He had never stood more isolated from the Viennese court theatre. Commissions fell to Salieri rather than to him, and the final blow came in March, when the latest in a line of scandals led to dismissal from his court post of Lorenzo da Ponte, greatest of Mozart's librettists. Recipients of such largesse as Joseph II could muster would not always find favour with Leopold II and his consort. They did, however, share an interest in *opera seria*; a successful setting might help secure subsequent commissions.

Tito arose from the Bohemian Estates' commission to the impresario Domenico Guardasoni and the Nostitzsches Nationaltheater in Prague to stage an opera in celebration of Leopold II's coronation as King of Bohemia. Despite having commissioned *Don Giovanni* for Prague in 1787 and presented it subsequently in Leipzig and Warsaw, Guardasoni's preference had been to engage Salieri, who, perhaps mindful that his operatic style would not please the Emperor, declined five times.⁴ Guardasoni then offered Mozart 250 ducats which, given his straitened circumstances, proved ample persuasion. The 8 July contract with the Estates makes interesting reading

4. J.A. Rice, *Antonio Salieri and Viennese opera* (University of Chicago Press: Chicago and London, 1998), p. 507.

for post-Romantic readers convinced of artistic autonomy. Clauses include:

1. I promise to give ... [the Estates] a *primo musico* [castrato] of the first rank, such as ... Marchesini, or Rubinelli [etc.] ... Likewise I promise to give them a *prima donna* ... of the first rank and certainly the best of that level free of other engagements. . .
2. I promise to have the poetry of the libretto composed on [one of] the two subjects given to me by His Excellence the Burgrave and to have it set to music by a distinguished composer; but in the case it should not be at all possible to accomplish that in the short time remaining [two months], I promise to procure an opera newly composed on the subject of Metastasio's *Tito*.⁵

Mozart had far from a free hand and was firmly put in his place by the greater importance allotted to exemplified singers than to 'a distinguished composer'. He nevertheless set to work with haste, as needs must. *Tito* was composed between late July and September 1791 and received its first performance on 6 September, following the coronation. Admission was free, although restricted to ticket-holders. The *Krönungsjournal für Prag* reported: 'The house holds a great number of persons, and yet ... the demand for tickets was on such an occasion so great, that the supply came to an end, because of which many natives and visitors, among them persons of quality, had to go away again.'⁶ Thereafter, however, performances were poorly attended – with the exception of the final evening, which coincided with the premiere in Vienna of *Die Zauberflöte*.⁷ Though not immediately popular, the number of performances increased from 1795, cannily promoted by Constanze Mozart to the public as a 'last work'.

Die Zauberflöte was born into a very different tradition: Viennese popular theatre. Despite Maria Theresa's disapproval, the genre had survived and in the 1780s experienced a revival. This was the first – and last – occasion that Mozart composed an opera for a non-court theatre. The suburban Freihaustheater auf der Wieden opened in 1787. Its audiences were mixed, as was its repertoire; alongside ephemeral popular fare, works

5. Rice, *La clemenza di Tito*, p. 5.

6. E.O. Deutsch (ed.), *Mozart, a documentary biography*, trs E. Blom, P. Branscombe, and J. Noble (London: Black, 1965), p. 405.

7. See letter to Constanze Mozart, 7-8 October 1791, in W.A. Bauer and O.E. Deutsch (eds.) *Mozart: Briefe und Aufzeichnungen. Gesamtausgabe*, 7 vols. (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1962-75), vol. IV, p. 157.

by Goethe and Schiller were staged, including *Don Carlos* in 1791. Direction of the Freihaustheater had been assumed in 1789 by Emanuel Schikaneder, Mozart's librettist and creator of the role of Papageno. Music had always played a role in popular theatre; Haydn had set *Der neue krumme Teufel* for Gottfried Prehauser's Hanswurst company in about 1752. Schikaneder, a composer of sorts, nevertheless placed greater emphasis upon music than had generally been the case. He was, moreover, an old friend of Mozart.

Surprisingly little is certain about genesis and composition. Legend has it that Schikaneder, himself in straitened financial circumstances, came to Mozart to plead with the ailing and impecunious composer for assistance, whilst cynically denying our divine genius the sole rights from performances outside the original theatre. There is no basis to this, and considerable reason to doubt it. Much remains mysterious: no contract has survived, and Mozart's thematic catalogue simply dates the work 'im Jullius'.⁸ Intensive research has nevertheless presented no reason to doubt the tradition that Schikaneder approached Mozart personally at some time during the spring. Studies of the autograph paper-types have shown that most of the music was written before the end of July – not, as used to be thought, after Mozart's return from Prague.⁹

Reception was largely rapturous: this, too late, was Mozart-the-composer's greatest popular success. Salieri attended a performance and declared it 'worthy to be performed at the greatest festival and before the greatest monarch'.¹⁰ The first month saw twenty performances. Soon almost every German city would stage the work. The Prague Nationaltheater did in October 1792, and a Czech version followed from the Vlastenské Divadlo (Patriotic Theatre) company in 1794. This year witnessed De Gamerra furnish a translation, *Il flauto magico*, performed in Leipzig, Dresden, and Prague (for the carnival) in Guardasoni's travelling production. The world of Italian opera could readily appreciate the opportunities afforded by *Die Zauberflöte's* critical and commercial success. By 1797, Mozart's *Singspiel* had reached St Petersburg; its light has shone ever more brightly since.

8. Ibid., p. 154.

9. See P. Branscombe, *Die Zauberflöte* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 67-86. [These pages on "The writing of *Die Zauberflöte*" can be found in Peter Branscombe's article elsewhere in the *Apropos Mozart* website.]

10. Letter to Constanze, 14 October 1791, in *Briefe*, vol. IV, pp. 161-2.

III

TITO IS IN MANY RESPECTS a typical late *opera seria*.¹¹ Its text is by Metastasio, albeit in a revised version. As Daniel Hertz notes: 'Massive rewriting and substitution was the rule, not the exception.'¹² Metastasio continued to be regarded as the author: 'poet' rather than 'librettist', as was the case in more 'popular' forms. The Caesarian court poet in Vienna, he had published the *Tito* text in 1734. First set by Antonio Caldara, Vice-Kapellmeister, to celebrate Charles VI's birthday that year, we know of forty subsequent settings prior to Mozart's, notably by Johann Adolf Hasse (1735, heard by Mozart in Cremona in 1770), the pre-reformist Gluck (1752), and Josef Mysliveček (1773). The text would continue to attract composers after Mozart's death; its final composer would seem to have been Antonio del Fante, in 1803. This celebrated text provided manifold connections with what has been dismissed as an 'outdated' musical tradition, yet which, Gluck's reforms notwithstanding, stubbornly continued to thrive, especially in Italy.

Wolfgang Hildesheimer describes *Tito* as 'probably the last *seria* in music history,' therefore possessing 'only a museum-piece kind of beauty'.¹³ This judgement, whilst plausible *a priori*, is dated. London had famously rejected *opera seria* during the 1730s, prompting Handel's decisive turn towards oratorio, but this was not typical of Europe. Joseph II's unwillingness to pay the extravagant sums commanded by the stars of *opera seria* had been the exception even in the German speaking world. His successor wished to define himself in opposition to the predecessor who had apparently brought the Habsburg lands so close to the precipice, not least so that some of Joseph's reforms, particularly those relating to education and religion, might quietly be salvaged. *Opera seria*, far from being a throwback, might present a contrast of benevolent tradition. Jean-Pierre Ponnelle, whose productions did much to reintroduce *Tito* to the repertoire, declared it the genre's crowning example.¹⁴

11. The term was infrequently used at the time; *dramma per musica* is the usual description on printed libretti.

12. D. Hertz, 'Mozart and his Italian contemporaries,' in *Mozart's operas*, ed. with contributing essays by T. Bauman (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), p. 301.

13. W. Hildesheimer, *Mozart*, tr. M. Faber (London: Dent, 1982), pp. 308-9.

14. Quoted in D. Borchmeyer, *Mozart oder die Entdeckung der Liebe Insel* (Frankfurt and Leipzig: Insel Verlag, 2005), p. 220.

However, the situation is not quite so straightforward. *Tito* incorporates formal aspects characteristic of comic opera (*opera buffa*) and French *tragédie lyrique*.¹⁵ In Caterino Mazzolà's sometimes drastic revision of the text, three acts become two and plentiful blank verse is transformed into musical ensembles, creating a first-act-finale on a scale hitherto considered appropriate only to *opera buffa*. Rewriting of the text was one thing, such structural transformation another. 'Small wonder,' as one commentator has written, that the work 'took its imperial audience aback. Nothing like this ... had ever been done to the great poet laureate of the century.'¹⁶ Originality was not universally considered a virtue; yet, in this respect, Romantically-inclined writers such as Hildesheimer allow 'a kind of genius,' lauding Mozart's opening up 'the static tableau of these scenes and the hollow rhetoric of these puppets, ... breathing into it a refreshing *buffo* spirit'.¹⁷ The classical conception of *opera seria* as spoken theatre with additional music came into conflict, both in work and reception, with later-eighteenth-century aesthetics, which ascribed greater importance to music.

Returning to the occasion for which the work was written, Leopold's coronation was important in affirming both the power of the monarch and of tradition, and the consent and privileges of the Bohemian Estates. Having regained control of the Austrian Netherlands, Leopold was not inclined to repeat Joseph's refusal to recognise traditional privileges and therefore to be crowned King of Bohemia, as all of his Habsburg predecessors had been. We should nevertheless err to consider Leopold a supplicant; he had already rejected some of the Estates' constitutional claims, not least those to represent the 'nation' and to determine Bohemian citizenship. It behoved the Estates to win Leopold's favour, for no one suspected that he would die the following year, ruling for no longer than the historical Titus.

Titus Flavius Vespasianus (79-81 AD) had been acclaimed by many eighteenth-century writers as a model, proto-Enlightenment ruler. Montesquieu called him 'the delight of the Romans'.¹⁸ Gibbon held that,

15. On problematical aspects of the commonplace distinction between *buffa* and *seria*, see Hertz, 'Mozart and his Italian contemporaries,' pp. 299-300.

16. M.P. McClymonds, 'Mozart's "La clemenza di Tito" and opera seria in Florence as a reflection of Leopold II's musical taste,' *Mozart-Jahrbuch* 1984/85,66.

17. Hildesheimer, *Mozart*, p. 307.

18. C.L. de Secondat, Baron de Montesquieu, *Considérations sur les causes de la grandeur des Romains et de leur décadence*, ed. G. Truc (Paris: Garnier-Flammarion, 1954), p. 83.

under the 'mild administration of Titus, the Roman world enjoyed a transient felicity, and his beloved memory served to protect, above fifteen years, the vices of his brother Domitian'.¹⁹ If only the equally short reign of Leopold-Titus had *preceded* Joseph-Domitian's 'vices'. Even when Joseph's careful stewardship of public money is echoed, Tito's response is gracious rather than puritanical. Publio announces the Senate's decision to erect a temple for worship of the god Tito, to which the *emperor* Tito responds: 'Romans, the only object of Tito's desires is your love.' The spoils of recent campaigns would be better spent aiding victims of Vesuvius's recent eruption.

Yet we should beware positing too strong an opposition between our Habsburg Titus and Domitian. Adam Wandruszka argued that *Tito* glorifies the Habsburg tradition of enlightened rule, the idea of *clementia austriaca*, although his article says little about the work itself.²⁰ Joseph and Maria Theresa had identified a specifically Habsburg clemency with the retention of under-performing ministers. Drawing upon Seneca's *De clementia*, specifically intended to persuade Nero of the need for imperial clemency, the transformation of an argument from utility to one based upon Christian virtue was not arduous. A broad, traditional conception of clemency as an imperial virtue encompassed availability to all citizens and willingness to discard the panoply of empire, to behave as a citizen oneself. Indeed, Tito's words might have sprung more readily from Joseph's mouth than Leopold's. *Tito* reaffirms Habsburg tradition against the excesses of the 1780s, whilst echoing Joseph's clemency in the traditional sense. It is not a full-scale rehabilitation of the late Emperor yet, the audience, Leopold included, would recall Joseph's positive attributes.

This is the time-honoured tragic realm of conflict between love and duty, public and private: AMOR/ROMA. The classical, subsequently Petrarchan, dilemma is resolved by a noble, in this case imperial, character judiciously exercising will over private inclination. Tito's momentary desire to avenge his betrayal by Sesto and Vitellia yields to the clement duty to act *pro bono publico*. Annio tells Vitellia: 'Tito has command over the world and over himself.' These two forms of power are coincident. Having avowed her love for Annio, Servilia agrees to marry Tito, should this still be his wish.

19. E. Gibbon, *The decline and fall of the Roman Empire*, 2 vols. (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1952), vol. I, p. 30.

20. A. Wandruszka, 'Die "Clementia Austriaca" und der aufgeklärte Absolutismus. Zum politischen und ideellen Hintergrund von "La clemenza di Tito",' *Österreichische Musikzeitschrift*, 31 (1976), 186-93.

Tito lauds her honesty and instructs that she yield to the one she loves, occasioning a reminder to subjects of their reciprocal duties:

Ah, would that all those
close to my throne were so sincere;
this vast empire would bring me
happiness instead of torment.
Rulers should be relieved
of the painful task
of distinguishing between
deceit and flattery.

The dotted-rhythm martial figure, which, from the Overture through the festal March, has suggested and accompanied various manifestations of Tito's power, occurs once again, when he tells of his 'vast empire'. This serves to remind both ruler and ruled of their responsibilities, their good fortune, and their interdependence. The elaborate development section of the Overture has already presented 'learned' counterpoint and fugue, which, in eighteenth-century Austrian music from Fux onwards, had been specifically identified with the House of Habsburg.²¹

Tito offers a resounding affirmation of traditional monarchy against revolution in France and revolt within the Habsburg Monarchy. Even if the internal situation upon Leopold's accession had seemed worse than it actually was, it had definitely seemed this way – and continued to do so in retrospect.²² Mazzolà's revision emphasises the shame and violence of revolt, warning potentially fractious subjects that a compact imposes responsibilities upon both parties. Whereas Metastasio had been 'able to enliven his opera with some moving talk in favour of revolution,' Vitellia's original references to breaking of the fatherland's shackles and the need for 'our century [to] have its own Brutus,' now must be jettisoned.²³ Joseph had enlivened the Austrian Netherlands and Hungary more than enough, whilst France was producing a surplus of Brutuses. In the transformation from three acts to two, revolt is shifted to a more prominent position: the Act I finale. The conspiracy in which Sesto, owing to his passion for Vitellia, has involved himself has gone too far for either of them to halt it. Her change of heart is

21. See M. Bent and W. Kirkendale, *Fugue and fugato in Rococo and Classical chamber music* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1979).

22. Blanning, drawing on Pavel Mitrofanov's inaccessible, fragmentary biography of Leopold (*Leopold II avstriiskii: vneshniaia politika* (Petrograd, 1916)), argues that the threat of disintegration was exaggerated. ('An old but new biography of Leopold II,' in T.C.W. Blanning and D. Cannadine (eds), *History and biography: essays in honour of Derek Beales* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 62.) See also M.Z. Mayer, 'Leopold II, the Prussian threat, and the Peace of Sistova, 1790-1791,' *International History Review*, 26 (2004), 473-514.

23. Rice, *La clemenza*, pp. 40-41.

owed to the news that Tito would now make her Empress, Sesto's to consideration of the Emperor's virtue and patronage. 'And whom do you betray? The greatest, the most just, the most merciful prince in the world, to whom you owe your power and all that you are.' The Capitol is now, however, ablaze; rebels must answer for their treachery.

Mozart's portrayal of the chaotic terror of rebellion is masterly. Trumpets, drums, and string tremolos underline the sudden tonal wrench to C minor, already prefigured in the dark opening of the recitative in which Sesto wrestles with his conscience. C minor is the key Haydn would employ for the Representation of Chaos that opens his *Creation*, leading towards the celebrated C major of 'And there was Light'. So ultimately will Mozart's tonal plan, though we must await the final scene for the definitive restitution of the C major Overture's festal triumph. We are still mired in the minor mode of rebellion, and it is the Roman people, not the authorities, who provide the true voice of suffering horror. As the trumpets and drums of previous rejoicing have turned to despair, so has the populace. The off-stage chorus interjects several times *in distanza* the cry 'Ah!' upon diminished-seventh chords, furthering dissolution of the tonal stability so sturdily represented in earlier pomp and circumstance. Each cry brings with it another key in which the soloists try and fail to find resolution. After such frenetic activity and dislocation, the strange *Andante* with which the first act concludes - most unusual practice for an eighteenth-century operatic finale - sounds all the more funereal. 'O black betrayal, O day of sorrow!' intones the desolate populace, joined by the perpetrators, who believe themselves guilty of regicide. Chromatic betrayal ('tradimento') bursts forth *forte*, from chorus, soloists, and orchestra, to the dotted-rhythm of imperial power. A former stronghold sure has, it seems, been corrupted and transformed into a threat to the tonal and political peace. The finale ends in E-flat major; yet, punctured by chromaticism and darkened by dolorous instrumental colours, it is a major tonality as sombre and resigned as one might conceive: E-flat first and foremost as the relative major of C minor.

These conflicts are resolved in the final scene. Vitellia's rondò, in which she resolves to seek the Emperor's mercy, leads directly into Tito's entrance into 'a magnificent square before a vast amphitheatre'. Delivered from misfortune, he is acclaimed by the Romans as 'the thought and love of the heavens and gods'. This magnificent chorus has been described as:

... the greatest compliment ever paid to the aspirations of Metastasian opera to idealise the worth and dignity of those who hold temporal power. ... the chorus and the sovereign it celebrates assume a far-reaching scope of vision that extends back over the preceding darkness, as if the whole course of Vitellia's agonised self-searching lay already within Tito's ken - a benign omniscience that in *The Magic Flute* is invested in Sarastro.²⁴

24. T. Bauman, 'At the north gate: instrumental music in *Die Zauberflöte*,' in Hertz, *Mozart's operas*, p.296.

Indeed, Tito, like Sarastro, lays claim to omniscience, even if both fall short of that divine quality. Rebellion having been suppressed and Sesto having confessed his guilt, Tito has resolved upon clemency rather than adhering to the letter of the law, yet this is at first known only to himself and to the audience. Trumpets, drums, and the martial rhythm of imperial power appear for the first time in the second act. On the verge of announcing Sesto's pardon, Tito is confronted with Vitellia, arrived to confess her guilt. Having despaired that he will ever 'find a loyal soul,' he resolves that his mercy must prove more constant than the treachery of others. 'Let it be known in Rome,' Tito resolves, 'that I am the same and that I know everything, absolve everyone, and forget everything.'

This is a public pronouncement of clemency ancient and modern. Leopold had insisted on Beccaria's presence on the commission for the revision of Joseph's 1787 draconian *Strafgesetzbuch*.²⁵ Beccaria, himself a Habsburg subject, had argued against *Tito-style* absolution on account of its arbitrary nature. Clemency was 'the most beautiful prerogative of the throne, ... the most desirable endowment of sovereignty'. So far so good. 'But one ought to bear in mind that clemency is a virtue of the lawgiver and not of the laws' executor, that it ought to shine in the legal code and not in particular judgements.' To pardon was to make 'a public decree of impunity,' through 'a private act of unenlightened kind-heartedness'.²⁶ Whilst this constitutes a rational assessment of the *AMOR/ROMA* dilemma, the Enlightenment house boasted many salons, some less rationalistic than others. These might hold a strong political interest in asserting that the quality of mercy should not be strained, that Seneca's justification for leniency regarding punishment of an inferior was not obsolete.

A prince's personal justice upheld both understandings of clemency better than a modern state's indifferent administration. Frederick the Great had intervened in judicial proceedings to correct what he perceived to be an unjust verdict in the Miller Arnold case. Such intervention seemed less of a 'judicial catastrophe' to contemporaries, at least outside Berlin, than to subsequent historians, given Frederick's 'strong suspicions of a socially lopsided jurisprudence'.²⁷ To respond to direct petitions and to grant a personal audience, as Frederick had in this case and Joseph II had in many others, was far from an outmoded form of communication between monarch and subject. Modern clemency was at worst a minor sin whose advantages in

25. A. Wandruszka, *Leopold II: Erzherzog von Österreich, Grossherzog von Toskana, König von Ungarn und Böhmen, Römischer Kaiser*, 2 vols. (Vienna and Munich: Verlag Herold, 1963-5), vol. II, p.142.

26. C. Beccaria, *On crimes and punishments and other writings*, tr. R. Davies, eds. R. Bellamy et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 111-12.

27. D.M. Luebke, 'Frederick the Great and the celebrated case of the Millers Arnold (1770-1779): a reappraisal,' *Central European History*, 32 (1999), 380, 401.

a particular case might readily outweigh ideological objections. A touch of personal monarchy, Hohenzollern or Habsburg, tempered suspicion of a bureaucratic machine-state and reminded subjects of the monarch's benevolent power. *Princeps legibus solutus est*. Only Tito – this 'great, generous soul' – has the power of clemency, just as only Frederick could have delivered his celebrated fiat against the insubordination of the Prussian *Kammergericht*. The prince's majesty is maintained and enhanced; there is more to Enlightened conceptions of law than codification and strict observance thereof.

This final ensemble restores the C major tonality of prior rejoicing, the dark chromaticism of revolutionary chaos replaced by bright and sturdy diatonic harmony, tonic and dominant so prevalent that even the Beethoven of the Fifth Symphony's finale might have blanched. Trumpets and drums once again re-present the panoply of imperial power and rejoicing. Tito shuns praise and honour to declare that, should the day come 'when the good of Rome is no longer my sole care,' the eternal gods should end his days. Selflessness can serve *and* increase power – and *vice versa*. This is the great lesson taught in *Tito's* school for ruler and ruled.

IV

DIE ZAUBERFLÖTE IS A DIFFERENT BEAST: a *Singspiel* and a *Zauberoper*. What does this mean in terms of structure? Not much in itself, for these forms are less clearly defined than *opera seria*. By the late eighteenth century, *Singspiel* usually entailed a work in the vernacular, combining musical numbers and spoken dialogue. Mozart, however, simply used the word *Oper* to refer to both *Die Entführung* and *Die Zauberflöte*. The latter's hybrid character enables it to draw without fear from almost every operatic and instrumental genre; but the miraculous synthesis that emerges can only be ascribed to Mozart. Wagner, for whom this constituted the first true German opera, remarked admiringly: 'This is folklorish. If it can be said of us Germans that we have no art, we can at least reply that we do have a folk tradition; art stands midway between academicism and folklore, for there have really been no genuine artists since the Greeks.'²⁸

The clearest example of this is the simplest form on offer: that of five strophic songs, which are nonetheless often varied with great subtlety. It is no coincidence that two of these songs are sung by the *Naturmensch*, Papageno, and that he is a duettist in another. This does not straightforwardly relate to social status, however, since other examples are Sarastro's 'In diesem heil'gen Hallen,' and his aria with chorus, 'O Isis und Osiris'. Nobility as well as naïveté can reside in simplicity; great art, moreover, can lie in the appearance of simplicity, often deriving from musical sources most 'unfolklorish'.

28. M. Gregor-Dellin and D. Mack (eds.), *Cosima Wagner's diaries*, tr. G. Skelton, 2 vols. (London: Collins, 1978-80), 8 March 1872.

As befits a *Singspiel*, Italian-style *recitativo secco* is avoided, but not only in favour of spoken dialogue. Some of the work's most 'expressive' *dramma per musica* comes through a highly-developed style of orchestral recitative, in which so much of the drama lies in the orchestra that one is tempted to look forward to Wagner as much as to discern origins in Gluck's reform operas. The recitative exchange in the Act One finale between Tamino and his priestly interlocutor presents a prophetic dialectic in which vocal line and orchestra increasingly influence and come to resemble each other. Even the staid Second Priest's vocal line occasionally blossoms into *arioso*; for Tamino, the more dynamic character, this happens more frequently. Introducing a choral element into this exchange, Mozart further breaks down those often-tedious boundaries, omnipresent in earlier *opera seria* and yet so foreign to the heyday of Venetian opera, between recitative, aria, and chorus. This is not unique to *Die Zauberflöte*; yet it is more advanced than in Mozart's coronation opera, which, for all its radical revision of *seria* form, could never have progressed quite so boldly. In restoring opera's Monteverdian dignity and anticipating its Wagnerian destiny, there can be no question of a *primo musico* or *prima donna* constituting the main attraction.

Adorno suggests why this might be so:

Prior to the emancipation of the subject, art was undoubtedly in a certain sense more immediately social than it was afterward. Its autonomy, its growing independence from society, was a function of the bourgeois consciousness of freedom that was itself bound up with the social structure. Prior to the emergence of this consciousness, art certainly stood in opposition to social domination and its *mores*, but not with an awareness of its own independence.²⁹

One might cautiously say that *Tito* is 'old', and *Die Zauberflöte* is 'new'. *Tito* stands in opposition to an emerging world of commercial self-interest, in favour of a modified traditionalism. *Die Zauberflöte* presents what Adorno viewed as the greater integration of bourgeois art into society, the 'influx of experiences that are no longer forced into *a priori* genres, the requirement of constituting form out of these experiences, that is, from below. This is "realistic" in purely aesthetic terms, regardless of content.³⁰ Hence the Romantics believed Beethoven to have burst formal, schematic forms; this, however, preceded Beethoven, the owl of Minerva spreading its wings only at dusk. Transitions are more blurred than has often been recognised, but they do not vanish completely. What has often been overlooked is that the

29. T.W. Adorno, *Aesthetic theory*, eds. G. Adorno and R. Tiedemann, tr. R. Hullot-Kentor (London: Athlone, 1997), p. 225.

30. *Ibid.*, p. 225.

musico-historical impetus originates perhaps as much in 'aristocratic' *tragédie lyrique* – Gluck and, beyond him, Rameau – as in 'progressive', 'bourgeois' *opera buffa*.³¹ Wagner commented:

Mozart is the founder of German declamation – what fine humanity resounds in the Priest's replies to Tamino! Think how stiff such high priests are in Gluck. ... consider this text, which was meant to be a farce, and the theatre for which it was written, and compare what was written before Mozart's time ... – on the one side the wretched German *Singspiel*, on the other the ornate Italian opera – one is amazed by the soul he managed to breathe into such a text.³²

Wagner unsurprisingly found the birth of German declamation in French tragedy impossible to swallow in 1870, but he was otherwise aware of the precedents or lack of them for Mozart.

The musico-dramatic emergence of the subject is not universal. Nietzsche would write memorably of the 'type of man [who] *needs* to believe in an unbiased "subject" with freedom of choice, because he has an instinct of self-preservation and self-affirmation in which every lie is sanctified'.³³ Papageno is not wicked, but lacks the cultivation necessary to attain such freedom. He will live a contented if un-exalted life without it: clemency less magnificent than Tito's, yet still clemency, for transgression of Papageno's vow of silence is treated leniently. The rhetoric of the subject is nevertheless reiterated throughout by Sarastro, his priests, and those who will be converted, to the entire spectrum of morality: from the Queen of the Night and Monostatos, through Papageno, to Tamino and Pamina. The Queen is driven by passion: she is 'a proud woman,' as Sarastro admonishes Pamina. He repeats this phrase at the beginning of the Second Act, elucidating: 'That woman hopes to bewitch through deception and superstition, and to destroy the sure foundation of our temple.' Tamino, he continues, will help strengthen the order and, once initiated, will himself reward virtue and punish vice. The celebrated *dreimalige Akkord*, its ritual, almost Brucknerian silences as crucial as the chords themselves, is intoned, reminding us that Freemasonry informs this Enlightenment individualism.

31. During Rameau's lifetime, composers and librettists preferred the term *tragédie en musique*. The arrival in Paris of Gluck's operas during the 1770s definitively changed this. See G. Sadler, 'Tragédie en musique,' *Grove Music Online*.

32. Gregor-Dellin and Mack (eds.), *Cosima Wagner's diaries*, 29 May 1870.

33. F. Nietzsche, *On the genealogy of morality*, tr. C. Diethe, ed. K. Ansell-Pearson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 29.

Indeed, silence is very important throughout *Die Zauberflöte*. The Three Boys counsel Tamino, successfully, and Papageno, unsuccessfully, to observe it. Mozart told Constanze that the usual numbers were encored, 'but what gives me most pleasure is the *silent approval*,' indicating 'how this opera is becoming more and more esteemed'. One should not exaggerate, but this might represent a harbinger of Romantic, even bourgeois, attitudes towards how one ought to behave. It contrasts with Mozart's report from the same letter of tremendous applause during the final Prague performance of *Tito*.³⁴ The mystical importance of silence in *Die Zauberflöte* suggests that it is the only Mozart opera truly to exhibit signs of German Romanticism. One might argue for a precedent in the instruction to Gluck's Orpheus not to speak in Hades; this is not, however, absolute silence, but a character's silence, relying upon the extended communicative power of music. Both forms are important in *Die Zauberflöte*. Poetry, incorporating but not limited to reason, would be mankind's tutor, drawing sustenance from mystical currents of eighteenth-century culture. Mesmerism had informed the comedy of *Così fan tutte*. Now the hermetic, esoteric mysteries of Rosicrucianism, an order of celebrated secrecy, might move Enlightenment beyond mere logical deduction to discovery of hidden meanings comprehensible only to initiates. Alchemy could be spiritual as well as physical; the goal of Tamino's trials of purification is spiritual perfection, even divine wisdom.

The Queen and her cronies fall physically and tonally through a C minor chromatic sequence: 'Our power is shattered; we are all plunged into eternal night!' Mozart's music then turns decisively to the tonic of E-flat as Sarastro guides us into the final chorus, declaring: 'The sun's rays chase away the night; the hypocrite's devious power is vanquished.' So far this seems to represent a straightforward victory of Light over Darkness; in a sense, it is. However, the chorus sings of strength (*Stärke*) victorious, crowning with its 'eternal crown' not the power of reason, whether *Verstand* or *Vernunft*, but *Schönheit und Weisheit*: 'Beauty and Wisdom'. Reason has not vanished; it is *aufgehoben*. The words 'Weisheit ... Schönheit ... Stärke,' occur in the St John Masonic ritual, and form the central triangle of the Thirty-third Degree of the Masons' so-called Scottish Ritual, of partly Rosicrucian inspiration, its motto *Ordo ab Chao*.³⁵ To construct order out of chaos is now more of an artistic deed than Enlightened Absolutism would have held. Tito is no artist or magician; Sarastro *is*, if far from a perfect example. An unidentified writer, perhaps Hegel or Schelling, wrote in 1796 or 1797 that the idea uniting all others should be beauty. 'The highest act of reason is an aesthetic act since it comprises all ideas, ... *truth and goodness*

34. 7-8 October 1791, in *Briefe*, vol. IV, p. 157.

35. H.C.R. Landon, 1791: *Mozart's last year* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1990), pp. 128-30.

are fraternally united only in beauty.' Poetry would thereby 'gain a higher dignity, ... again become ... the *teacher of humanity*'. Not only the 'great multitude' needed a 'religion of the senses,' but the philosopher too.³⁶

Sarastro must therefore learn from his mistakes and from the example of others, that he might create order out of his own chaos. His role in acquiring Pamina appears murky: taken for her own 'protection', she is not free to leave, and it is hinted that he may have had amorous intent. Pamina and Tamino – a prince, but crucially, in an echo of traditional clemency, *ein Mensch* – therefore purify not only themselves, but also Sarastro; their love is divinely ordained and thus trumps any alternative Sarastro might have entertained. This is Enlightened in that it would purify the mythical realm, but proto-Romantic in its conception of love. Schleiermacher would soon argue that love, not the rational self-interest of Enlightenment utilitarianism, was the most powerful engine of human activity. The individual must constantly look to the rest of mankind, not least in order to 'maintain consciousness of his selfhood'. 'Without love,' Schleiermacher claimed, 'the dreadful disproportion between giving and receiving will soon unhinge the mind in its first efforts at self-realisation, driving it from its proper course.'³⁷ The *raison d'état* of Tito renouncing his beloved Berenice in favour of Rome appertains, by contrast, to another age. Tamino's loss of Pamina is temporary, a stage in his trials; it is never their purpose. Thomas Bauman accurately observes that Mozart's music renders Tamino a much more reflective character than Schikaneder's libretto would otherwise suggest.³⁸ From his Portrait Aria onwards, Tamino is no cipher, but a character of great nobility and integrity, who will attain greater heights through initiation into the order's mysteries.

In *Die Zauberflöte*, the agency of historical subjects is stronger than in Tito's opera. Nevertheless, there remains a striking similarity, for Tito as well as Sarastro may be seen, to quote Paul Nettl, to embody the 'all-forgiving ... principles of Masonic tolerance'. Whilst the impetus for its more extended equivalent in *Die Zauberflöte* came more directly from composer and librettist, it is worth remembering that 'those who had the last word concerning the choice of the subject might also have been motivated by these same thoughts: the Counts Thun, Canal, Pachta,' *et al.*, were all Freemasons, 'who, through their vows, were obliged to propagate humanitarian ideals whenever possible'.³⁹ Such men also comprised a good number of the first audience.

36. Anon., 'The oldest systematic programme of German idealism,' in *The early political writings of the German Romantics*, tr. F.C. Beiser (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 4-5.

37. F.D.E. Schleiermacher, 'Monologues,' in Beiser (ed.), *Early political writings*, p. 179.

38. Bauman, 'At the north gate,' p. 281.

39. P. Nettl, *Mozart in Böhmen* (Prague: Verlag Neumann, 1938), pp. 184-5.

The authorities' attitude towards the Craft was uncertain. Although Francis I had been a Mason, Maria Theresa – who may have had something of the Queen of the Night about her – repressed the movement after his death. Joseph II instituted a more liberal regime for the first five years of his sole rule, but his 1785 Masonic Patent rationalised the number of lodges and imposed severe limits on membership. This led many, though not Mozart, to resign from the order. One who did was Ignaz von Born, master of Haydn's lodge, 'Zur wahren Eintracht,' and dedicatee of Mozart's cantata, *Die Maurerfreude*, KV 471. Born has often been claimed as a model for Sarastro. Leopold kept his cards close to his chest, whilst many of his advisors were actively hostile. Confusion persisted until Francis II closed down the lodges in 1794-5.

If we should beware too emphatic a Masonic interpretation of *Tito*, there are nevertheless clear correspondences between Tito's Act I aria, in which he asks, 'If I am deprived of showing mercy, what is left to me?' and Sarastro's Act II 'Within these sacred halls, revenge has no place'. Both of these 'mercy' or 'forgiveness' arias are in F major, in moderately slow quadruple time (*Andante* and *Larghetto*), and the harmonic contours of their opening bars are identical. Given that Tito is a tenor and Sarastro a bass, the vocal lines are surprisingly similar too. Where Tito's form of address is monarchical, Sarastro's is fraternal: 'Within these sacred walls, where man [*Mensch*] loves man, no traitor can lurk, for enemies are forgiven. He who does not delight in this teaching is undeserving of the name of Man.' This difference should not surprise, however, given the divergence of dramatic context and audience, and Sarastro's brotherhood remains unashamedly autocratic. Tito also wishes that no traitor should lurk in his kingdom, that men should forgive their enemies; this is secured by clement example, engendering moral improvement in Sesto and even in Vitellia. Just exercise of power and the constitution of a just society evoke a strikingly similar response in both works.

Sarastro and Tito are both lauded in their respective first-act-finales for their dispensation of justice. Both show forgiveness, although ambiguously in Sarastro's case, when one considers his treatment of Monostatos. (Perhaps different rules apply to Moors.) According to the contemporary *Charakter und Eigenschaften eines echten Freimaurers*, an initiate 'should have an honest, true, humanity-loving, tender, and feeling heart, be sympathetic to the misfortunes of others,' and evince neither hatred nor vengefulness. This is not exclusively Masonic. One might say the same about a Christian – which is often the point. What may subsequently have been taken as opponents, competitors even, were not necessarily thus considered by contemporaries, certainly not in Mozart's case. Indeed, the first point of the *Charakter und Eigenschaften* was that a member should be 'a freeborn man, raised a Christian, and not under twenty years old'.⁴⁰

40. E. Grossegger, *Freimaurerei und Theater, 1770-1800: Freimaurerdramen an den k.k. privilegierten Theatern in Wien* (Vienna: Böhlau, 1981), p. 11.

A significant difference between our two works relates to the social hierarchy presented through the characters. Stark differentiation was unlikely to arise in an *opera seria* dealing with no one of less than noble rank, but hierarchy is clearly delineated in *Die Zauberflöte*. Papageno and Papagena are the humblest characters. Depicted in straightforward, often folk-like music, they will lead a decent life together. They will never be admitted, however, to Sarastro's order. Instead, they will find domestic bliss with 'first a little Papageno... then a little Papagena,' and so forth. They do not reappear in the final scene, having nothing to do with the initiates' future.

At the other extreme is the Queen of the Night. She is essentially a *seria* character, kept apart from 'popular theatre' aspects of the action. Her music puts one more in mind of *Idomeneo's* furious Electra than of any intervening character, with the possible exception of Vitellia. All three characters are not only seekers after power, but are women who have some degree of justification to their claims; their lust for power nevertheless leads them to abandon reason, to become hysterical. The richness of the Queen's orchestral recitative is in keeping with *seria* tradition rather than formally innovative as a Gluckian development of *opera buffa*; it introduces what she is about to sing, the presentation of an emotion or decision, rather than furthering the action. Yet her arias paint a different picture. As early as *Idomeneo*, Mozart had displayed impatience with the formal imperative of recapitulation; but here, as Erik Smith noted, 'vestigial recapitulation ... becomes the rule'. Even in her Second Act aria, the return of the tonic D minor presents not a repeat of the opening, which in fact never returns, but a figure extracted from the second subject.⁴¹ Ferocity is not denied but heightened by such economy; there is a dialectical relationship between restraint befitting royal dignity, and a constraint that verges upon Romantic dissolution of formal bonds. One might expect to find formalism more evident in the classicising *Tito*. However, whereas both the Queen and Electra are dispensed with immediately prior to their works' celebratory final scenes, Vitellia's rondo leads into the concluding rejoicing. She has shown contrition, is shown mercy, and participates for justifiable dramatic reasons. Relative fluidity of genre is highlighted by the fact that there is a more *buffo* character to this villainess's music than to that of her *Zauberflöte* counterpart.

It is worth dealing here with charges of misogyny. There is certainly an unreconstructed attitude within Sarastro's order towards women, but we should not confuse characters' voices with that of the composer. For instance, the priests' duet at the beginning of Act II both marks both a stage in Tamino's journey – something to be overcome – and presents them as objects of ridicule. Anyone taking at face value the warning 'Guard yourself from women's tricks; this is the first duty of the Order!' would have been minded to do so anyway. Mozart's frivolous setting suggests no portentous

41. E. Smith, 'The music,' in Branscombe, *Die Zauberflöte*, p. 115.

message, but rather a *divertissement* prior to the real trials Tamino must undergo. If the Queen is driven by her passions, Pamina remains the very model of feminine *Bürgerlichkeit*. It is unreasonable to expect her to accept Tamino's silence towards her, for unlike Tamino and Papageno, she is not informed of the nature of her trials. Unlike Papageno, however, she succeeds, and is admitted on equal terms with Tamino, which must have given a jolt to Masons in the audience. Born, in his 1784 essay, *Ueber die Mysterien der Aegyptier*, had specifically excluded women. Egyptian priests, he argued, had doubted female discretion with good reason.⁴² The Priests heed Born and Egypt; Mozart does not. A role for women was not unprecedented: Parisian Freemasons had created a subordinate order for women, 'Les Loges d'Adoption'.⁴³ There was no precedent, however, for raising Pamina to the level whereat she and Tamino finally appear bedecked in priestly robes, subordinate only to Sarastro. No longer her mother's daughter, she seems set to become Queen of the Light. Tamino and Pamina together, as man and wife, have overcome both the deceptions of the feminine world of the Night and the hidebound traditions of Sarastro's brotherhood. It would be exaggerated to see those two worlds as equivalent; Pamina renews the latter, whereas Tamino eschews the former. Nevertheless, the work recognises that, to paraphrase Lampedusa, for at least some things to stay the same, some will have to change.

Both finales restore their works' opening tonalities: C major in *Tito* and E-flat major in *Die Zauberflöte*. Both works also allot a special role to C minor: the fundamental tonality's tonic minor in the former work, and its relative minor in the latter. In *Die Zauberflöte*, C minor has been associated with darkness and death from the very first scene, in which Tamino enters, pursued by a great serpent. Things are not quite what they seem, however, for although the Three Ladies slay the serpent with their javelins, they threaten to send the novice prince along the wrong path, that of darkness and therefore ultimately of death. As James Stevens Curl explains, the serpent is a symbol of Freemasonry, slain by the 'Three Veiled Ladies (veiled because Enlightenment cannot reach them)'. Tamino is terrified of the serpent, the crucial points being that 'his terror is due to ignorance,' and 'the ladies show their true colours right at the start by attacking the Craft and trying to annex the young man for their cause.'⁴⁴ Another danger and potential triumph comes early in the Act Two Finale, with the archaic contrapuntal severity of the Bachian C minor chorale prelude for the Two Armoured Men. Startlingly for Catholic Vienna, though less so for ecumenical – or heretical – Freemasonry, this employs the melody of a Protestant

42. Branscombe, *Die Zauberflöte*, p. 23.

43. See R. le Forestier, *Maçonnerie féminine et loges académiques* (Milan: Arche, 1979).

44. J.S. Curl, *The art and architecture of Freemasonry* (London: Batsford, 1991), p. 143.

hymn, a setting of Luther's metrical version of Psalm 12, 'Ach Gott, vom Himmel sieh darein'. This closely corresponds to the Armoured Men's talk of elemental purification:

He who travels along these paths so full of troubles is purified by fire, water, air, and earth. If he can overcome his fear of death, he will raise himself heavenwards from the earth; he will be enlightened, at this level, to dedicate himself wholly to the mysteries of Isis.

This is more than a benevolent ruler's clemency. On the one hand, we see the agency of the enlightened subject, and on the other, the abstraction of general principles of benevolence. Tamino and Pamina succeed in walking, 'by the power of music, in joy through death's dark night,' to reach the 'joyful moment' in which 'the joy of Isis is accorded to us'. They bring us to an interim chorus of triumph in the tonic major, also a key of Light, although not our final destination. Now the chorus from within invites them to enter the Temple itself. Mozart's symbolism of Darkness and Light is clear in the final transformative scene-change from the C minor machinations of the Queen, the Three Ladies, and the renegade Monostatos, to the E-flat celebration of the failure of their attempt to destroy the Temple of Wisdom. The Masonic tonality of three flats represents two sides of the same coin. Enlightenment surpasses yet incorporates *the* Enlightenment. One can only attain the wisdom of beauty, truth, and enlightenment when there remains an opposing force; for what could Light mean without Darkness? About as much as culture could mean without power, or power without culture. Beauty, truth, and enlightenment further the cause of social, cultural, and political advancement – but not for all. Such is the dialectic of enlightenment.

V

BOTH WORKS AFFIRM HIERARCHY; in this sense, both are 'aristocratic'. In the case of *Tito*, there remains a paradox, for the work's initial 'courtly audience rejected or looked indifferently upon... [it], whilst the bourgeois [*bürgerlich*] public around 1800 emphatically approved'.⁴⁵ The social structure had not been transformed within a decade, but the audience differed significantly from that at the coronation premiere. *Bürgerlich* approval was owed in no small part to the extent to which *opera buffa* had informed the spirit and style of Mozart's coronation opera. London presented the first performance outside Germany and, more surprisingly, its first production of any Mozart opera in 1806. Yet by the 1830s, fashions had changed across Europe; *Tito* would be revived only occasionally, as Hildesheimer's museum-piece.

45. Borchmeyer, *Mozart*, pp. 221-2.

Mozart's da Ponte operas, especially *Figaro*, evinced a different attitude from both works considered here. Beaumarchais' social criticism is toned down but still present. The servant's triumph over his master is explicit, as is that of the wronged wife over her husband, even if one suspects that the Count will fight another *folle journée*. Perhaps this has led many commentators to view *Die Zauberflöte* either as standing in this line, or else as an apolitical fairy-tale, whilst skirting past *Tito* as Mozart's late *seria-Cinderella*. Yet, whilst there remains a case for differentiating between the two in terms of a modified opposition between 'aristocratic' and 'bourgeois', this is not it. For instance, having described *Tito*, otherwise accorded scant attention, as 'a justification and celebration of the monarchy,' Brigid Brophy contrasted *Die Zauberflöte* as a justification of 'the proletariat'.⁴⁶ Mozart never sympathised with such a social class, nor with anything approximating thereto, reporting dismissively of Joseph II's inclusion of the 'Viennese rabble' (*Pöbel*) at a Schönbrunn Ball. Such rabble, he wrote, would always remain just that.⁴⁷ The social conditioning of Tamino and Pamina aids their initiation, just as that of Tito has prepared him to be Emperor; likewise, Papageno's lowly birth helps deny him constancy, the cultural accomplishment requisite for admission to the order. This is neither lamented nor lauded, but presented as the natural state of affairs. Abuse of position is, hardly surprisingly, abhorred in both works, but not position itself. The relationship between culture and power is as pronounced a theme in Mozart's *Singspiel* as in his final *opera seria*.

The influential Leipzig professor of poetry and philosophy, Johann Christoph Gottsched, instructed that the poet must first decide upon the moral claim to be advanced by his work. Everything else – plot, characters, and so forth – followed from this central thesis.⁴⁸ It is not unduly fanciful to see this aesthetic applying to, perhaps even influencing, both operas. The message of *Die Zauberflöte* is Enlightened and Romantic. Light's victory over Darkness presents a strong rather than a weak defence of hierarchy, as consonant with Pope as with Novalis. Whereas *Tito* is very much of the eighteenth century, standing towards the end of an 'aristocratic' line, *Die Zauberflöte* is ultimately more the work of its time, in that it looks back and looks forward. The former work is classicistic, the latter so timely, so rare, that it qualifies as classical.

46. B. Brophy, *Mozart the dramatist: the value of his operas to him, to his age and to us*, revised edn (London: Libris, 1988), p. 231.

47. Letter to Leopold Mozart, 5 December 1781, in *Briefe*, III, p. 178.

48. J.C. Gottsched, *Versuch einer critischen Dichtkunst* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1962), p. 161.

Blanning, whilst acknowledging his debt to Habermas, is rightly critical of his historical understanding.⁴⁹ When dealing with particular artworks, it may be more helpful to think in terms closer to Adorno. Not only might the history be more accurate, but the works themselves may yield some of their historical secrets. In *Die Zauberflöte*, the historical subject and individual freedom seem to constitute reality; if Kant could never prove the moral law's logical necessity, Mozart appears effortlessly to demonstrate it. Johann Jacob Breitinger had formulated, in his 1740 *Critische Dichtkunst*, a literary theory of the wondrous and its relationship with both the natural world and the human mind. Imagination was the crucial faculty in literary composition, creative rather than imitative. This would better enable literature to fulfil its role as a 'school for the reader,' promoting truth and virtue, and punishing vice.⁵⁰ Wieland suggested, in his 1789 preface to the third volume of *Dschinnistan*, that fairy tales could bring one as close to the 'palace of *Wahrheit*' as any other form of literature.⁵¹ Mozart showed that a fairy-tale opera, its libretto indebted to Wieland's collection, could do better still. It is no coincidence that Romantics such as E.T.A. Hoffmann considered Mozart almost as much as Beethoven to be one of them, for *Die Zauberflöte* shows how art might vanquish antinomy. 'Mozart,' Hoffmann declared, 'calls for the superhuman, the wondrous element'.⁵² 'The operas that most purely satisfy the requirements of the genre,' Adorno would claim, 'almost always correct myth through music.' *Die Zauberflöte* thus witnessed and exemplified opera's participation in Enlightenment 'as a total societal movement'.⁵³ If late Beethoven would tragically reveal that what was necessary in terms of human freedom was or had become impossible, Mozart's *Zauberoper* signalled the wondrous moment of its dramatic immanence.

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49. Blanning, *Culture of power*, pp. 5-14.

50. J.A. McCarthy, 'Philosophy and literature in the German Enlightenment,' in *Philosophy and German literature, 1700-1990*, ed. N. Saul (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 38-9, 44.

51. C.M. Wieland, 'Dschinnistan,' in *Gesammelte Schriften* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1909-), part I, vol. XVIII, p. 12.

52. E.T.A. Hoffmann, 'Beethoven's instrumental music,' tr. O. Strunk, in J. Hermand and M. Gilbert (eds.) *German essays on music* (New York: Continuum, 1994), p. 61.

53. T.W. Adorno, 'Bourgeois opera,' in *Sound figures*, tr. R. Livingstone (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), p. 21.