

MASCULINE AND FEMININE SUB-STYLES IN MOZART'S OPERATIC MUSIC

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Introduction

This essay concerns the music of four of the five of Mozart's operas: *Le Nozze di Figaro* (1785), *Don Giovanni* (1787), *Così fan tutte* (1790) and *Die Zauberflöte* (1791). In particular I am concerned with the differences between male and female characters' music.

In order to distinguish men's and women's music I turn first to the ideas of the Enlightenment. Troughly speaking, the European Enlightenment ran from the 'Glorious' English Revolution of 1688 to the somewhat less glorious French Revolution of 1789. Throughout at least the first half of the eighteenth century, the three principal centres of the Enlightenment were Edinburgh, London and Paris. Its philosophy, science and literature were utilitarian, pragmatic and optimistic: not the least concerned with metaphysics or questions of being.

Above all else, the Enlightenment was secular: it sought to build a philosophy in the absence of God. No such metaphysical notions, no assumptions, no preconceptions and no hypotheses were to be tolerated, for all such 'first principles' muddled the *tabula rasa* of the new empirical scientific method. Laurence Sterne in his extraordinary and highly influential novel, *Tristram Shandy*, summarised the problem with trenchant irony:

It is the nature of an hypothesis, when once a man has conceived it, that it assimilates every thing to itself, as proper nourishment; and, from the first moment of your begetting it, it generally grows the stronger by every thing you see, hear, read or understand. This is of great use. (STERNE, 1767, p. 165)

But in the absence of God to mediate between man and nature, to guarantee the 'truth' of man's reason with respect to nature, to make nature intelligible by means of faith, this project was doomed to failure (see HEIDEGGER, 'The Essence of Truth', 1930). Underlying the thinking of the Enlightenment, and generating that thought, there are a series of logical oppositions.



positive	negative
subject	object
science	nature
reason	feeling
concepts	intuitions
dynamic	static
self	other
man	woman

Nothing is held in common between these oppositions. They are absolute, in the sense that each is only what the other is not. Furthermore, each side can be bundled together, so that any term on one side can be opposed to any on the other.

Now, in but a few steps, it is possible to do what is so often thought to be impossible: to relate music to ideas. I call this way of thinking musical ‘microholism’, the attempt to find the historical and cultural whole in fleeting moments of music.

Oppose the bundle — man/reason/dynamism/history — to a bundle on the other side of these simultaneous oppositions — woman/nature/feelings/stasis. These primary philosophical dualisms can now be ‘translated’ into musical ones:

	men’s music	women’s music
harmony	towards sharp/dominant (reason)	towards flat/subdominant (‘nature’)
melody	linear	arpeggiated/monodic
rhythm	dynamism	stasis
structure	articulates (active)	follows (passive)

In these four operas, male characters’ vocal lines tend to articulate dominant modulation, and to change key in that direction. Dominant modulation requires reason, tonal reason. First, the harmony has to move to the supertonic — D minor in C major. Then this chord of D minor has to be changed to D major, and then a seventh must be added to give the dominant seventh tetrachord of G major, which in itself signifies C major. Women’s music, on the other hand, tends towards the subdominant, which requires nothing more than the addition of a flattened seventh to C major, and at once the key has changed to F major. Continuous subdominant modulation ‘flatwards’ around the

cycle of fifths sounds ‘natural’: almost as if that is what tonality would do if left to its own devices! Indeed, merely repeating a chord, because it will eventually demand change, is enough to suggest its subdominant. So, whereas, what I shall hereon refer to as the ‘masculine operatic sub-style’, involves (musical) reason, the feminine operatic sub-style is in accord with nature. This equation will become clearer as I proceed.

Men’s music is also more directed than women’s, being linear and more processual. Women’s music tends to be, at a middleground level, monodic or arpeggiated, more static. And these differences are supported by similarly opposed rhythmic structures. Furthermore, whereas men tend to articulate structures, most especially moments of dominant modulation, women tend to follow structural changes, and almost never articulate dominant modulation. I will illustrate these characteristics in the following analytic examples.

The masculine operatic sub-style

Figaro: *Le Nozze di Figaro*, No. 3, ‘Se vuol ballare’

In the first scene of *Il Nozze di Figaro*, Figaro learns from his betrothed, Susanna, that the Count desires her, and that he will exercise his ‘*droit de seigneur*’ — his right as a nobleman to ‘deflower’ any of his staff, by force if necessary, on the night before their wedding: institutionally legitimated rape. The narrative of the opera takes off from Figaro’s refusal to allow this privilege, which he challenges in the third number of the opera, ‘*Se vuol ballare*’ (‘If you want to dance’).

Sigmund Levarie pointed out that Figaro’s use of a *cavatina* made a mockery of this aristocratic dance for two reasons. Firstly, this version lacks the dance’s characteristic upbeat, and thereby turns it into an English, and by inference, modern, democratic (for the Enlightened Viennese), dance. Secondly, Figaro extends the first theme to $4+4+4+8=20$ bars, which makes nonsense of the dance’s standard figures. (LEVARIE, 1952, pp. 29, 35)

Figaro’s melodic material consists of repeated notes, scale sections and arpeggios — the basic stuff of the style. His melody across these first twenty bars is based on a scalar ascent from **1** to **5** [1-9], followed by a symmetrical descent [9-20]. Example 1 shows the structural notes in circles.

Example 1 *Le Nozze di Figaro* No. 2 'Se vuol ballare'
Allegretto, Figaro

Se vuol bal - la - re si-gnor con - ti - no, se vuol bal - la - re, si-gnor con - ti - no,
il chi-tar - ri - no le suo - ne - rò, il chi-tar - ri - no le suo-ne - rò, si,
le suo-ne - rò, si, le suo-ne - rò.

The clear melodic middleground, in combination with an integrated intervallic structure comprising eight falling and two ascending thirds, lends Figaro credibility, confidence and dynamism.

From Figaro's words '*Se vuoi venire nella mia scuola*' ('If you want to come to my school') [23], there is a middleground scalar descent, involving repeated groups, through a seventh from b^b to C [21-30], followed by an arpeggiation of C major across twelve bars [32-42] to affirm the dominant, and to set Figaro's resolve to take revenge. Here then is a good example of a man articulating the dominant modulation.

Figaro's cadence on the last syllable of '*la capriola le insegerò*' ('I'll teach you the dance steps') forms an elision with the orchestra, driving the music forwards. His detached repeats of '*Saprò*' ('I will') stretch across one huge 14-bar period [42-55], in which a further middleground 7-pitch ascent from c to b^b [42-51] is followed by seven quick steps down for the repeated word '*piano*' ('quietly') [51-55]. This passage seems to have returned to the tonic, but swings away to the submediant, D minor, all the way through to the *Presto* [53-64], repeating a's as a dominant pedal for the last four bars. Charles Rosen heard the new theme as an accelerated transformation of the first, since 'the melodic elements move twice as fast in a phrase which sums up the whole aria at top speed.' (1971, p. 308f).

Figaro begins the *Presto* by climbing through a 5-note scale from 1 to 5 and falling back to 2 [75], then ascending again through a middleground scale from D to d^1 [64-77]. The first *Allegretto* theme returns, abbreviated in true *cavatina* fashion. Overall, the music of '*Se vuol ballare*' is a model of simple, regulated middleground continuity and clarity. The linear, integrated and dynamic structure of his aria lends Figaro masculine credibility.

At a foreground level, there are many set numbers and ensembles that begin with assertive descending arpeggios: the Count's rage aria, '*Vedrò mentre io sospiro*' (*Le Nozze di Figaro*, no. 17); Don Giovanni's '*Fin ch'han dal vino*' (*Don Giovanni* no. 11), and his opening to the Act II Finale; and

in *Così fan tutte*, Don Alfonso's 'Tutto accusan le donne' (no. 30). The theme of Don Giovanni's 'Fin ch'han dal vino', decorates, largely rhythmically, a descending D major arpeggio (Example 2).

Example 2 *Don Giovanni* No. 11 'Fin ch'han dal vino'
Presto, Giovanni

Fin ch'han dal vi - no cal - da la te - sta, u - na gran fe - sta fa pre - pa - rar.

By far the most dynamic of these arpeggiated beginnings is the second finale of *Don Giovanni*. In Example 3 the notes of the middleground arpeggio are encircled.

Example 3 *Don Giovanni* No. 24 Act II Finale
Allegro vivace, Giovanni

woodwind, brass, timp. tutti

f

p *f* *p* *f* *p*

cresc.

Giovanni

Gia la men - sa è pre - pa -

-ra - ta. Voi

woodwind, brass, timp.

p *fp*

The first few bars are destabilised by an irregular 5-bar hypermetre, and elided with the minims that follow. They become a fanfare-style opening to Giovanni's first theme, the first three notes of which repeat those of the opening two bars, but at double speed, giving a sense of acceleration no sooner than he has begun. This is why it sounds as if the finale begins like a greyhound leaving a starting-gate. I will return to arpeggiated melodies when I come to discuss the feminine operatic sub-style.

However, men's music in Mozart's late operas is inwardly differentiated, in connection with a literary and philosophical shift away from objective science to the creative subject enlivened not by the ideas of reason, but by his inner feelings. Now, the scientific orientation of the Enlightenment turns away from objective reason to subjective feelings. This shift is apparent in the English sentimental novels of the 1770s, in Rousseau's philosophical soul searching of the 1780s, and in the plays by Klinger, Lenz, Wagner and Schiller of the German *Sturm und Drang*, and perhaps most importantly Goethe's novel *The Sufferings of Young Werther* (1774). Here is Rousseau in one enormous sentence that corresponds directly with the broader temporal spans of Mozart's writing for lyric tenors.

But if there is a state where the soul can find a resting-place secure enough to establish itself and concentrate its entire being there, with no need to remember the past or reach into the future, where time is nothing to it, where the present runs on indefinitely but this duration goes unnoticed, with no sign of the passing of time, and no other feeling of deprivation or enjoyment, pleasure or pain, desire or fear than the simple feeling of existence, a feeling that fills our soul entirely, as long as this state lasts, we can call ourselves happy, not with a poor, incomplete and relative happiness such as we find in the pleasures of life, but with a sufficient, complete and perfect happiness which leaves no emptiness to be filled in the soul. (ROUSSEAU, *Reveries of a Solitary Walker*, 1782, p. 88)


The same sentimental or expressive shift is marked in Mozart's operas by the advent of arias by lyric tenors: Ottavio, Ferrando and Tamino. There are none in *Le Nozze di Figaro* (1785), two in *Don Giovanni* (1787) and three in *Così fan tutte* (1790). But here I want to turn to the last, and arguably the greatest of Mozart's arias for lyric tenor in *Die Zauberflöte* (1791).

Tamino: *Die Zauberflöte* No. 2 'Dies bildniss ist bezaubernd Schön'

Tamino's melody, far from being linear and directed, is poised around a timeless high note (Example 4).



Example 4 *Die Zauberflöte* No. 3 'Dies bildniss ist bezaubernd Schön'
Larghetto, Tamino



Dies Bild-niss ist be-zaubernd schön, wie noch kein Au-ge je ge-sehn! Ich fühl'es, ich fühl'es, wie dies
Göt-terbild mein Herz mit neu-er Reg-ung füllt, mein Herz mit neu-er Reg-ung füllt.

The melody begins with a $b^{b1} - a^{b1} - g^1$ middleground scalar descent across the first four bars. Above this, separated by parallel sixths, another longer term scalar descent through $g^2 - f^2 - e^{b2}$ begins, which latter line is not completed until Tamino's cadence point [15]. But this scalar, steady, $2 + 2 = 4$ -bar movement is brought to a halt by two accented appoggiatura fragments. Across these static dyads there is a middleground neighbour note formation — g^1 [6] - a^{b2} [8] - g^2 [13] —, though displaced by an octave.

These two dyads and Tamino's high *sforzando* dominant seventh a^{b2} are together rhythmically ambiguous. Whilst this 3-bar group is linked at a middleground melodic level to the preceding dyads by its neighbour-note function, it does not lead to a fourth hypermetrically symmetrical group, but is halted by a strong, orchestrally supported upbeat. So, rather than being a metric upbeat to the next bar, this is a hypermetric downbeat into the second and last hypermetric period of Tamino's 11-bar melody. Thus, from the aural perspective of the downbeat into the second half of the melody, the 3-bar group with the high a^{b2} is the end of the first $4+3=7$ -bar period. However, as an outstanding dissonance requiring resolution this note, together with the preceding dyads, is associated with the $6+3=9$ -bar second half. So these three bars are overlapped at the centre of the 13-bar melody.

The high a^b , which sets the word ('*wie dies*) *Götterbild*', 'heavenly image', is not resolved by the next 3-bar group, but by the g^2 that begins the final one. In retrospect this high, dissonant note was the still point, around which seven and nine-bar groups interlock to give an expanded sense of subjective presence. The moment, which imbues the whole melody, has very little to do with the masculine operatic sub-style that I have described.

The feminine operatic sub-style

The feminine operatic sub-style is, above all else, static in comparison with that of men. Women tend not to articulate the essential moment of dominant modulation in Mozart's arias and

ensembles, and either follow the orchestra or leave it to be sung by men. Rather than modulating, operatic women tend to drift into subdominant keys, in accordance with the nature that flows through them. Their melodies are not linear, directed by middleground scalar lines, but tend to decorate single notes and arpeggios. There are two types of music that are given to women that do not follow this pattern, one I discuss below, whilst the other is given to the soubrettes: the maids and peasants. So it is that music for Susanna in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Zerlina in *Don Giovanni* and Despina in *Così fan tutte* tends to take on some masculine attributes in accordance with their, albeit limited, power. Now I turn to two examples of the feminine operatic sub-style: a duet from *Così fan tutte* and an aria from *Le Nozze di Figaro*.

Fiordiligi and Dorabella, *Così fan tutte* no. 4 'Ah guarda sorella'

In *Così fan tutte* we first encounter this feminine sub-style in the A major orchestral introduction to the second scene (Example 5).

Example 5 *Così fan tutte* No. 4 'Ah guarda sorella'

Andante

clarinets & bassoons

vln. I

p *dolce*

fp *fp* *fp*

During the first scene there are three moderate to fast men's ensembles, each with no introduction. Now the two sisters are on stage the speed drops, and slowly oscillating clarinet and bassoon thirds sound languidly over a rocking motion in the strings and a sustained horn pedal. This

music contrasts dramatically with the strong middleground structures and brilliant vitality of the preceding festive trumpet and drum music. There is no sense of middleground melodic direction here, merely a static expansion of the tonic A major chord. Gently dissonant, accented *fp* leading notes spice a hypermetric downbeat [6], before dissolving in a flurry of demisemiquavers.

The dropping away of the bass beneath these demisemiquavers smudges the next hypermetric downbeat [10], and expands the grouping to form seven bars of timeless decorativeness. Indeed, [9-10] could be simply excised to give a more regular 6-bar group. The equally functionless, chromatic, post-cadential violin figures add a further two bars to the already irrational, asymmetrical hypermetre: $4+7+2=11$ bars.

Even without any singing, this is feminine music. The pages of the score are black with demisemiquavers. There is no men's music that even looks anything like this in the three operas. The very presence of an orchestral introduction, and one so laden with decorative expansiveness, sounds a malleable and irrational subjective temporality, quite opposed to the structured and directed music of the three men. This is the music of the dangerously inward and amorphous realms of Enlightenment feelings — the music of femininity.

Fiordiligi expands the demisemiquaver trope even further to give a 9-bar period, ending with a descending triplet-semiquaver B minor arpeggio. Dorabella's entrance does not the articulate dominant modulation, but follows on from the woodwinds' key change immediately before. It is not within women's remit to modulate in a sharpwards direction. Now the violins play spiky *marcato* demisemiquavers by way of contrast to Fiordiligi's lyricism. Dorabella's melody, like her sister's, is an expanded chord, and her oscillations between E and A major — the tonic and dominant of the dominant [39-45] — despite the violins' $d\#2$'s, are typical of the feminine musical tendency to modulate flatwards in the direction of the 'natural' flow of tonality. Also typical is the way that Fiordiligi's fragments answer the woodwinds' rather than the other way round, which tends to be the case in men's music.

Fiordiligi's following celebration of militaristic virtues [50-56] is quite opposed to Alfonso's Enlightened pacifism. Its antiquity is underlined by the quasi-heroic, dotted orchestral interjection [63-64], which invokes the (unreasonable) mythological world of *opera seria*. She shifts through D minor in a mini-development [56-65], an irrational six steps flatwards from the dominant key, in a characteristically feminine, since subdominant direction, before resting with her sister on E^7 in preparation for the return to the tonic. The apparent strength of her militaristic fantasy is destabilised by asymmetric 5-bar periods [57, 62, 67, 72].

The *Allegro* [72], in marked contrast to the preceding, is written entirely in multiples of 4-bar periods through to the final vocal cadence. This music is archetypically feminine in its sacrificing of middleground lines to the prolonged pitches and arpeggiations of primary and dominant triads. This easy, regular conventionality sounds the sisters' joy in the freedom of love, rather than their oaths of moral commitment, which are glossed over after much melismatic luxuriating on the word *amore*. The sisters' fragmented quaver 'sighs' just before the end sound five other times in the women's music of *Così fan tutte*. The final high, unresolved dominant seventh e^3 's in the orchestral playout [478, 480] ameliorate the finality of the perfect cadence, leaving the sisters vulnerable to whatever flatwards modulation might await them next.

Susanna, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, no. 27 'Deh vieni'

Susanna's most sexually powerful moment is at once her most beautiful. She is waiting, disguised as the Contessa, for a sexual assignment with the Count. She knows that Figaro is jealously watching her, and is arousing his jealousy so as to punish him for his suspicions. 'Deh vieni' has the least middleground direction of all the music for women that I discuss, and is in this sense the most musically 'feminine' (Example 6).

Example 6 *Le Nozze di Figaro* No. 27 'Deh vieni'

30 Andante, Susanna

Deh vi-ni non tar-dar, o gio-ja bel-la, vie-ni o-ve a-mo-re per go-der t'ap-pel-la, fin

chè non splen-de in ciel not-tur-na fa-ce, fin-chè l'a-ria è an-cor bru-na, e il mon-do ta-ce.

So whilst she holds power over the world of scandal and intrigue throughout the opera, she can also turn on her feminine charms at ease.

The orchestral introduction in F major opens up a tonic arpeggio, which Susanna prolongs by tiny escaped-note implications and chromatic inflections throughout her first $2 \times 3+3 = 12$ -bar super-group [30-42] (Example 81). The only sense of shape is her expanded arpeggio down to the low mediant [38-39], and her following affirmation of the dominant. The regular rocking motion of an irrational, asymmetric, yet stable 3-bar periodicity with congruent, expansive, since indivisible 3-bar groups, is barely ruffled by the alternation of vocal groups with and without upbeats. These, though always blurred by woodwind fills, continue throughout the piece, sounding Susanna's

sensuous, detailed and delicate feminine integration with the charms of nature, which, as she says in her preceding recitative, echo and foreshadow her every word.

Notice that, unlike the aristocratic female characters, Susanna, rather than the orchestra, articulates the dominant modulation. Two bars of contrary motion *staccato* woodwind scales, which recall the introduction, form a 5-bar period that expands the sense of the musical present, and affirms the dominant modulation. Susanna, again unlike the leading ladies, directs the music with a c² [46] – b^{b1} [51] – a¹ [53] – g¹ [54] – f¹ [56] middleground scalar descent back to the tonic. This line is enlivened by minimal rhythmic differences: repeated g¹'s on the half-bar of [48]; simple syncopation in the next bar; and dotted quavers, grace notes and a lower chromatic auxiliary two bars later [51-53]. Whilst these decorations are as 'feminine' as her arpeggiations, the ascending and descending middleground suggests she has more control than any of the ladies. She has the alchemical power to turn feminine intuition into *quasi* male power, and thereby turn Enlightenment on its head.

The first real rhythmic change begins from her perfect cadence [56]. Susanna's b^{b1} [57] is the first downbeat to have neither an orchestral nor a vocal upbeat, and extends across the half-bar, stretching forwards for '*Vieni ben mio*' ('Come my darling'). This change, which is marked up by that from plucked to bowed strings, results in the first 'normal' 4-bar group. It is further extended by the return of the woodwind scales to form a 6-bar period. Then there is an isolated bar with a *fermata* and new, 3-crotchet upbeat figures in the voice.

These slight irregularities continue through to the final vocal cadence, suggesting a subtle breaking-down of linear time into a blissful, narcissistic dwelling-amidst the abundant plenitude of nature. The orchestral playout rises again to the high register tonic, re-opening Susanna's expanded pitch space, and leaving a silence in which there is no trace of movement.

When Enlightened men excluded desire from that deemed worthy of attention, they at once lost any possibility of ever understanding, and thereby controlling it. Consequently, women presenting themselves as sexual objects, rather than submitting to the sexual gaze of men, threaten Enlightened men's precious autonomy. I call this, women's limited, since only sexual power: the 'irony of sexual otherness'. Thomas Mann expressed this irony with characteristic elegance:

... though the human being, both male and female, was endowed with sex, and although the localization of the daemonic in the limbs fitted the man better than the woman, yet the whole curse of fleshliness, of slavery to sex, was laid upon the woman. Sex was her domain, and how should she not, who was called *femina*, which came half from *fidus* and half from *minus* — that is, of lesser faith — why should she not be on evil and familiar footing with the obscene spirits who populated this field

and quite particularly suspect of intercourse with them, of witchcraft? (Thomas Mann, *Doctor Faustus*, 1947, p. 104)

Susanna plays one of the few cards available to Enlightened femininity: the potential for cruelty implicit in the idea of natural determination as total license. If Enlightened men are in thrall to their senses, then they are open to female manipulation, and liable to blame it on the witchcraft of women. By opening up the possibility of such a union with nature, whilst at the same time seeming to offer it to another, Susanna reminds Figaro, and every other Enlightened man, of the brittle vulnerability of his alienated, autonomous subjectivity, and his consequent dependence on its feminine negative — a woman — for any real quietitude amidst, or resolution with nature.

The image of a nubile young woman, basking in her own sexuality amidst a beneficent, landscaped Enlightened garden, complete with pavilions, is a reworking of the Rococo's central aesthetic obsession into a more modern conception of the feminine role (HAUSER, 1951, p. 304). Far from having anything to do with Susanna's impatient expectation of her lord to come and take his noble privilege, Susanna's ecstatic fantasy of surrounding Figaro with flowers invokes the proto-romantic, pre-bourgeois conception of marriage as a reconciliation with nature. The sanctity of conjugal bliss is expected to protect man's jealously guarded autonomy from all contingency and change: for better or for worse. Pamina uses similar imagery to celebrate leading Tamino through nature's trials at the end of *Die Zauberflöte*.

Feminine musical sorrow, guilt and hysteria

The single most important fact concerning eighteenth-century ideas about femininity was the identification of women with nature. Enlightenment thinkers, following Socrates' example, prided themselves in their ability to transcend the fear of death by understanding nature in a secular, scientific and distanced manner. But since women had been disallowed this capacity for scientific alienation, since they were identified with, rather than opposed to, the material continuum of nature, their relationship with death was thought to be directly opposed to men's.

Before the Enlightenment, in the age of rationalism, the cyclic instability of female physiology had lead medicine to speak of hot, volatile 'animal humours' rising from the womb to the brain, and determining feminine sensibilities from within (FOUCAULT 1971, pp. 98, 149, 149). Whilst the empirical Enlightenment rejected such physiological hypotheses, it nonetheless held onto the idea of women's temperaments being controlled by their nature, rather than by reason. Individual freedom to

reason, to transcend and dominate nature, were qualities to which women could not aspire. In this one respect, and there are others, the Enlightenment unwittingly carried over some *a priori* first principles. in the form of presuppositions concerning women's ontology — their very being.

Like poets and madmen, women all too easily confuse reality with the products of their imaginations, which can easily be enflamed by the hot vapours of the womb, causing their own particular madness — hysteria (literally 'of the womb'). This madness was expressed through the metaphor of death — 'morbid hysteria' — the rising of the 'animal humors' to cloud the brain, and dissolve all reason, thereby inducing fears of loss of self and the death of consciousness.

Just as masculine music is inwardly differentiated, so too is feminine music, largely because of women's dramatic roles within Da Ponte's libretti. We rarely find female characters in the contented state of the sisters in '*Ah guarda sorella*'. Rather, the female characters in these operas are usually turned in on themselves, sorrowful, guilty, hysterical and/or morbid. Whatever the case, they always lack objective consciousness because they cannot separate themselves from the nature of which they are thought to be a part. Consequently, in their many accompanied recitatives, female characters are given barely related fragments of highly dissonant music, full of *sforzando* diminished sevenths: in Mozart's terms music that is mad, barely music and almost 'unmusical', since so tonally 'unnatural'.

Donna Anna R10 '*Don Ottavio, son morta!*'

At the end of the immediately preceding *secco* recitative Giovanni bade the others farewell, '*Amici, addio*'. From these two words, Anna suddenly recognises the voice of the man who attempted, and most probably succeeded in raping her, and her father's murderer. At this moment, the orchestra enters. As is typical of feminine hysterical accompanied recitatives, Anna's harmonic structure is highly unstable. There are eight different tonal centres, all but one of which are in the minor mode, and twelve bars of unidentifiable harmony:

C minor [3-17]
 G minor [18-24]
 E^b minor [25-27]
 B minor [28-32]
 G major [33-38]
 E minor [40-44]
 A minor [47-49]
 unstable [50-62]
 E minor [63-69]

The details of her story are all, suitably, within the 12 bars of unstable harmony.



Anna ‘ <i>e piegami, da lui misciolsi</i> ’	‘I twisted and freed myself from him’
Ottavio: ‘ <i>Ohi me! Respiro.</i> ’	‘Oh me! I breath’
Anna ‘ <i>Allora rinforzo i stridi miei, ciamo soccorso</i> ’	‘Then I screamed louder and called for help’

A pained high violin figure, which rises a semitone and then falls through a wide interval, sounds eight times across the first fourteen bars, each separated by Anna’s cries. The following patch of *secco* recitative [15-23] has no identifiable melodic material. When the strings re-enter she begins her story with a descending E^b minor arpeggio [25f], that extreme flat key which Elvira’s hysteria touches on in her aria ‘*Mi tradi*’ (Don Giovanni, no. 21B). This section [26-37] begins ambiguously and then shifts through B minor and G major. The opening string figure returns [38], and Anna continues her story, moving into a passage of unidentifiable harmony [50-62] which incorporates the opening string gestures. Whilst the dissonant violin figure lends unity to the recitative, Anna’s melodic line, along with the harmony, lacks all unity. Anna is in extreme trauma.

Conclusion

I hope to have demonstrated that Mozart wrote different music, or sub-styles, for men and women, and that it is therefore reasonable to talk about masculine and feminine operatic sub-styles in his late operas. However, these sub-styles are internally differentiated. Mozart began to write far more expansive and lyrical music for men, in line with the Enlightenment’s shift towards subjectivism in the late eighteenth century. Meanwhile, his music for women is divided between filigree, more-or-less static melodies on the one hand, and fiery, barely coherent music, sounding feminine hysteria and moral vulnerability, on the other.

Mozart sublated and transcended the Italianate rococo style, together with contrapuntal techniques learnt from J. S. Bach and his contemporaries, and the fiery gestures of the German *Sturm und Drang* tendencies. This synthesis was an essential part of his compositional achievement. But this synthesis fell apart in his music for female characters, who are given either rococo or *Sturm und Drang* music, never that happy Viennese synthesis heard in his music for men.

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