

10 | The Dialogue as Indispensable

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Complaints about the libretto have long shadowed *The Magic Flute*. The spoken dialogue especially has been disparaged, both for its contribution to a purportedly incomprehensible plot and because of traditions that exalt music and devalue speech in an operatic context. Criticisms of this type were immediate. Berlin's *Musikalischen Wochenblatt* reported in 1791 that "*Die Zauberflöte* . . . fails to have the hoped-for success, the content and the dialogue [*Sprache*] of the work were just too terrible."¹ Count Zinzendorf wrote in his diary that "the music and the decorations are pretty; the rest an unbelievable farce."² A review of a French adaptation of 1865 also targeted the spoken word, expressing the wish that "everything in Schikaneder's dialogue that is unnecessary or makes no sense" had been cut, leaving only "the sung part, which has the delicate and ideal meaning that Mozart's genius adds to the hollow words."³ By 1913, Edward J. Dent could famously conclude: "The libretto of *Die Zauberflöte* has generally been considered to be one of the most absurd specimens of that form of literature in which absurdity is only too often a matter of course."⁴

While this unfortunate reception history has often been used to justify broad cuts in the dialogue in modern productions, not everyone subscribes to this view. Conductor René Jacobs has championed the dialogue: "No opera loses so much as *Die Zauberflöte* if one strips it of its drama, and that means also and *above all* the spoken dialogue."⁵ Even if it is accepted that the spoken text is important, there is, however, an additional consideration for modern scholars and audiences. Recent criticism of the text has been focused less on the supposed absurdity of the plot and more on issues of gender and race. And even though the sung portions of the libretto contain much of what is deemed offensive, the dialogue remains an easy target for excision. Of course, the spoken word in opera has always been more controversial than what is sung, hence the disparity between the level of censorship of plays and their transformations as operatic texts.

The critic Walter Bernhart asks, "What is the significance or the benefit of the absence of music in the spoken sections?" He concludes that "it is only in spoken dialogue that wit and intellectual brilliance can find

comprehensible expression, and . . . that a rational argument which tries to explain and interpret the dramatic situation can meaningfully be developed; whenever such reflections are done in singing they are bound to fail.”⁶ Wit is essential to *Singspiel*, and the dialogues in *The Magic Flute* provide a range from slapstick humor to more sophisticated wordplay. While the spoken words may not always aim for “intellectual brilliance,” they do “interpret the dramatic situation” with nuanced treatment of controversial issues that are essential to understanding the opera as a whole and also to evaluating modern claims of moral superiority. To put this another way, close reading of many passages demonstrates that words and phrases cannot be cut without consequence.

The dialogue provides a wealth of detail with respect to character and plot that needs to be understood as essential to the whole dramatic action. To illustrate, let me begin at the end of Act 1, scene 1. When, according to the stage directions, Tamino “awakens and looks timidly about,” the audience has already watched the Three Ladies kill the serpent.⁷ In the ensuing exchange, Tamino unwittingly feeds Papageno the language with which to claim credit for the women’s action: “So you strangled [*erdrosselt*] it?” Papageno confirms, “Erdrosselt!” and delivers a comic aside to the audience: “I’ve never been as strong in my life as I am today.”⁸ When Tamino says of the Three Ladies, “I suppose they’re very beautiful,” Papageno insults them, alluding to their veils: “I don’t think so, because if they were beautiful they wouldn’t cover their faces.” The Ladies return in scene 3, and he makes an about-face: “You ask if they’re beautiful, and I can only reply that I never saw anything more charming in my life”; then aside, “There, that should soon calm them down,” reinforcing his duplicity. He is punished as the Ladies deliver a maxim about the importance of truth. While the women are demeaned, it is clearly men who have failed: Tamino arrived with a bow but no arrows (explicit in stage directions) and Papageno lied. Thus, within this vaudevillian context, perhaps we are meant to question male superiority even before we meet the Queen. The dialogue reframes our view of a singularly misogynistic text.

In this scene and others, comedy appears to make palatable the more progressive, as well as the more problematic, aspects of the text. This chapter offers a number of close readings, centering on Monostatos, the Queen, and Sarastro. Each of these characters is given important dialogue that conveys in speech a desire to be understood as more than a stereotype, and each takes grave action when their words are disregarded. By letting them speak, we allow them to transcend their prevailing two-dimensional characterizations to appear as fully formed (and flawed) characters.

Monostatos: “Because I Am the Same Color As a Black Ghost?”

The power of comedic dialogue to engage serious issues lies at the heart of the brief but crucial interaction in Act 1, scene 14, just after we, along with Papageno, meet Monostatos for the first time. The presumptions based on appearance expressed there have a corollary in the spoken exchange of scene 2 when Tamino asks Papageno’s identity and he replies: “A man, like you!” When Papageno asks the same question, Tamino identifies himself by rank: “Then I would answer that I am of princely lineage.” Papageno underscores their class divide: “That’s too high-flown for me.” Tamino presses, “I’m not sure whether you are human.” Papageno’s feathered garb is a visible reason for Tamino’s query (“To judge from those feathers that cover you”); yet it may also signal the folly inherent in judging humans by class and appearance.

That folly is first explicit in song when Papageno and Monostatos are equally startled by each other’s difference and they sing in short comic bursts: “That is the devil there’s no doubt!” (scene 12). The presumption of danger in the Other is treated as ridiculous. In that light, the ensuing spoken words – often cut in modern performances – can be understood as a critique of racist assumptions. Papageno reflects, “Am I not a fool to take fright like that? After all, there are black birds in the world, why shouldn’t there be black men too?” Before judging that line, note that he admits ignorance (confirmed in scene 2, he was unaware of lands and people beyond his own) and realizes that humans can have black skin. While these and other lines have seemed too problematic to stage in contemporary productions, in this case it is not just an analogy to the animal world – which in isolation would certainly be problematic – but a matter-of-fact blackness that suggests the problem is in the perceiver, Papageno, and in white members of the audience, then and now.

The hypocrisy of such censorship could not be more starkly revealed than when compared to US officials in Los Angeles, California, who originated the abhorrent abbreviation NHI – no humans involved – in cases concerning young Black men of low economic status.⁹ The title of Ava DuVernay’s 2019 film, *When They See Us*, captures a similar perspective: before the trial of the later exonerated teens who were falsely accused and convicted for a brutal 1989 rape, they were dubbed a “wolf pack,” a characterization with roots in the centuries-old branding of non-Europeans as savage.¹⁰ In 2020, while global police brutality was protested at unprecedented levels, American news host Tucker Carlson asked, “Why

doesn't anybody stand up for the rest of us, for civilization?"¹¹ and the French far right embraced the word *ensauvagement* to stoke fears that immigration would remake France as an uncivilized place.¹²

Relegating racism and misogyny to an uncomfortable past ignores both their persistence today and their resistance in Mozart's time. In 1772, Diderot called out the cognitive dissonance of claiming Enlightenment while enslaving fellow human beings.¹³ This context informs Monostatos's speech preceding his strophic aria (Act 2, scene 7). However, his reflections are tainted with sexism – "here I find the cold beauty" – as though because Pamina is beautiful she has no right to her indifference.¹⁴ In 1792, Mary Wollstonecraft pinpointed this trap: "I lament that women are systematically degraded by receiving the trivial attentions, which men think it manly to pay to the sex, when, in fact, they are insultingly supporting their own superiority."¹⁵ Monostatos then asks, "But really, what was my crime? . . . And what man . . . could remain cold and unfeeling at such a sight?" He seeks the same entitlement as white men regarding nonconsensual acts. The hypocrisy of excising those words is exposed by Tatyana Fazlalizadeh's "stop telling women to smile" campaign: "Women have talked to me about how things can jump from a seemingly nice comment to instantly becoming an insult and becoming an assault if the woman doesn't respond the way the man wants her to."¹⁶

Monostatos verbalizes that escalation: "That girl will make me lose my senses yet. The fire that smoulders within me can still consume me. If I knew . . . that I was completely alone and unobserved . . . I'd risk trying it again." Blaming the victim for his physical response, the Black overseer is a convenient stand-in for white Europeans such as George Booth, who wrote in a pamphlet of 1739: "If Nature . . . has given the Fair-Sex stronger Inclinations; it has also given them a natural Modesty and Check upon them, which we [men] have not."¹⁷ Not only do women censor their desires, but, according to John Burton in 1793, they have a sensor for impropriety: "Modesty is a female Virtue; . . . Nature herself gives the alarm at any improper conversation or behaviour."¹⁸ Quaint in retrospect, fallacies concerning female physiology have consequences. And this is still true. Here is US representative Todd Akin (Republican – Missouri) in 2012: "If it's a legitimate rape, the female body has ways to try to shut that whole thing down," preventing pregnancy; and in 2016, a judge asked whether the victim had attempted to prevent her assault by "closing her legs."¹⁹ This book goes to press in the wake of the US Supreme Court decision overturning *Roe v. Wade*, for which Justice Samuel Alito repeatedly cites seventeenth-century British jurist Matthew Hale to claim an "unbroken

tradition of prohibiting abortion on pain of criminal punishment.” Positioning him as one of the “eminent common-law authorities,” Alito omits Hale’s view of marital rape as exempt from criminal prosecution, of rape in general as “an accusation easily to be made and hard to be proved, and harder to be defended by the party accused, tho never so innocent,” and his decisions that were used as precedent for the Salem witch trials. Historian Lauren MacGivov Thompson notes that even for his time Hale “was particularly misogynistic. For a Supreme Court Justice to be [citing him] in 2022 is really astonishing.”²⁰

Parallels between Mozart’s time and ours do not cancel the misogyny of Monostatos’s speech, but cutting his spoken lines worsens matters, as it isolates the racial content of his ensuing aria: “White is beautiful! I must kiss her.” He has just expressed in dialogue the sexist attitude that was spelled out by Booth and Burton, and yet if that gendered justification – with which white males would identify – is cut, then we are left only with the sung text that racializes desire. Without the dialogue, then, it is understandable that many modern productions choose to cut or sanitize the aria, but that reaction may also stem from the extremes with which his character has traditionally been painted.

Monostatos has appeared to be the leering Black male caricatured as “the evil principle, a real monster with splendid white teeth.”²¹ Exaggeration is not the fault of the opera – in which we have noted Papageno’s lesson about white misperceptions of blackness – but of white reactions to the onstage accosting of a white woman by a Black man: “U.S. history is rife with the consequences of widespread White complicity in the propagation of racist stereotypes portraying Black men as beast-like sexual predators, lying in wait to violate White women.”²² The discomfiting persistence of this “danger” narrative underpins whitewashing the character. Thomas Rothschild recognized “an enlightening twist in the libretto when Monostatos complains elsewhere that he should avoid love ‘because a black man is ugly!’ And Papageno argues: ‘There are black birds in the world, why not black people too?’” But Rothschild complicates matters when he continues: “If one does not want to delete these passages of text at the expense of the dramaturgical logic, they fail to completely conceal the black skin of Monostatos. At least in the metaphorical sense, the blackness must be indicated.”²³

This raises an important question: How should Monostatos be represented on stage? Perhaps the perspective gained by a reevaluation of the dialogue can inform directorial decisions. One thing is certain: if Monostatos is portrayed true to text, Black singers need to be represented

in other roles too.²⁴ Censorship in the name of color blindness is no solution to this problem; I submit that whites are actually color mute. For philosopher Kate Manne, “those who are included in . . . our ‘common humanity’ are also capable of reducing us to shame when we wrong them. . . . No wonder then that avoidance – a deliberate attempt to ‘miss’ the other . . . – is subsequently so common.”²⁵ Shameful performance traditions include blackface and the monkey-like costumes in 2001 for the Paris Opéra. In 2019, for Berlin Opera’s first new production of *The Magic Flute* in twenty-five years, Yuval Sharon’s characters are marionettes with wide-open whites of the eyes, creating an unintended minstrel effect against Monostatos’s brown skin. Sharon added dialogue that signals present-day virtue around presumably extinguished racism: “There are these critical moments . . . where they . . . say . . . ‘This doesn’t seem right, you don’t tell stories like this today . . . this must be a very, very old text.’”²⁶ We might see these words as a trope on the work’s moralistic statements; as Martin Nedbal reminds us, “Even from the earliest operatic works . . . characters turn to the audience to deliver instructional reflections drawn out of onstage occurrences.”²⁷ But Sharon contorts this tradition to distance the present, concluding: “So then it just becomes part of the play, but it’s not a comfortable part of the play.”²⁸

That swerve ignores the role of the dialogue in questioning racist ideas. After the Queen’s climactic revenge aria, the dialogue of Act 2, scene 9, gives Pamina space to reflect: “Must I commit murder? Ye gods, that I cannot do. I cannot! (*She remains sunk in thought.*)” Monostatos reappears: “Put your trust in me! (*He takes the dagger from her. Pamina cries out in fright.*)” He does not yet threaten; continuing the racial remonstrance from his aria, he asks, “Why do you tremble? At my black colour, or at the murder that is planned?” Unlike the accusers documented by Ava DuVernay, Pamina does not buy into the danger narrative. To his either/or question – Is it race or your guilty conscience? – she chooses the latter, saying “Then you know?” expressing fear only of what he might disclose. He will reveal the plan to Sarastro unless she “loves” him. Faced with defiance, he returns to race: “No? And why not? Because I am the same color as a black ghost? Is it not so? Ha, then die!”

Without this very uncomfortable dialogue, we miss nuance. While Monostatos condemns rejection based on race, he resorts to physical threat that justifies fear regardless of race. And while Sarastro interrupts the threat to Pamina, he does so with a puzzling reaction to Monostatos: “I understand only too well. I would have you know that your soul is as black as your face. And I would have punished you with the utmost severity for this

black crime had not a wicked woman . . . forged the dagger for it. You may thank the evil behaviour of that woman if you now escape unpunished.” Sarastro creates an intersectional hierarchy: he *would have* punished the man he has just insulted, but does not; however, without having witnessed the woman’s order, he *does* judge her harshly enough to exonerate Monostatos, even though he saw Monostatos threaten to kill Pamina. In context, Sarastro’s words to Monostatos are not as harsh as they have sometimes been thought to be.

As he is fleshed out in the dialogue, then, Sarastro is not a benevolent caricature, but just as flawed as the Queen. In fact, the plot device of using speech to interrupt a threat to Pamina is just one point of similarity that connects these two authority figures.

The Queen: “With Your Father’s Death My Power Too Went to the Grave.”

The dialogue preceding the Queen’s iconic aria “Der Hölle Rache” offers an explanation – not an exoneration – of her murderous order and her threat to disown Pamina. Without it, the operagoer might conclude either that the Queen is thoroughly evil or that she inexplicably transforms into a caricature of malevolence after the intermission. Yet her Act 2, scene 8, appearance actually begins as a rescue: according to the stage directions, just as Monostatos “creeps slowly and softly” up to Pamina, the Queen physically shields her daughter by emerging “from the central trap door amid thunder, so that she is standing right in front of Pamina.” While the Queen easily dispatches Monostatos, the ensuing dialogue shows that she is no match for Sarastro’s power.

One word is especially significant in this dialogue: *entreißen*, which denotes a violent tearing away, but its secondary meaning is to rescue, complicating the way in which both Sarastro and the Queen deal with Pamina. Here is the passage:

QUEEN . . . Unhappy daughter, now you are torn [*entrissen*] from me forever.
 PAMINA Torn from you? Oh, let us flee, dear mother! Under your protection
 I will brave any danger.
 QUEEN Protection? Dear child, your mother cannot protect you any longer.
 With your father’s death my power too went to its grave.
 PAMINA My father . . .
 QUEEN . . . of his own free will gave the sevenfold circle of the sun to the initiates;
 Sarastro now wears that potent sign on his breast. When I spoke of it with

your father, he said with furrowed brow: "Woman! My last hour has come. All the treasures I alone possessed are yours and your daughter's." – "What of the all-consuming circle of the sun?", I hurriedly interrupted. – "It is destined for the Initiates," he replied. "Sarastro will wield it as manfully as I did until now. And now, not a word more. Do not delve into mysteries that are unfathomable to a woman's mind. Your duty, and that of your daughter, is to submit to the guidance of wise men."

Unpacking these words, we see that the transfer of power is complete – Sarastro wears its symbol. The Queen flouts expectations, growing impatient at the offer of treasure, asking instead about the conveyance of power.²⁹ Her request is denied due to a presumed inability to lead; her husband's negation of female speech ("not a word more") resonates with John Fordyce's 1766 claim that only a despicable woman "talks loud[ly], contradicts bluntly, looks sullen . . . and instead of yielding, challenges submission."³⁰

This dialogue is not a relic. The speech of today's female Supreme Court justices is so devalued that they are interrupted three times more frequently than their male counterparts.³¹ When 2016 US presidential candidate Kirsten Gillibrand questioned Fox News reports on reproductive rights, anchor Chris Wallace scolded, "I'm not sure it's frankly very polite [of you] when we've invited you here."³² Journalist Yamiche Alcindor probed President Trump's response to the pandemic in 2020 and he admonished, "Be nice. Don't be threatening."³³

This dialogue also clarifies that it is only after learning that Pamina is aligned with those who would destroy her that the Queen calls for Sarastro's murder. The elements of rescue and the wish to protect Pamina presented in Act 2 are thus consistent with the Second Lady's dialogue in which she describes the "motherly heart" of the Queen in Act 1 (scene 5). These dialogues challenge a trope of inconsistency so influential that some modern directors present the sympathetic Queen of Act 1 as a skillful deception. For example, in Barrie Kosky's production she is animated as a spider from the get-go. Perhaps that notion is inspired by Sarastro's drawing an analogy between prejudice against his men and a spider's web in the dialogue at the beginning of Act 2, to which we now turn.

Sarastro and the Priests: "That Woman Thinks Herself Great."

The Queen's dual loss – her daughter and her claim to power – puts into perspective Sarastro's words to the Priests at the start of Act 2: "The gods intend the gentle, virtuous maiden Pamina for the gracious youth; that is

the main reason why I snatched [*entriß*] her from her arrogant mother. That woman thinks herself great; she hopes to beguile the people by means of deception and superstition and destroy the firm foundations of our temple. But she must not succeed.” While the rescue aspect of *entreißen* serves the view that Sarastro saved Pamina from her mother, his dialogue clarifies that he abducted her for Tamino and that the Queen’s ambition is offensive to him. But there is no evidence for the accusation that she is deceptive.³⁴ The refusal to accept a nuanced Queen is linked to today’s “ethical pedestal”: “If voters even perceive that a woman has been dishonest or acted unethically, regardless of her actual actions, the cost is high.”³⁵ The words of a perpetrator of the 2020 plot to kidnap Michigan’s governor Gretchen Whitmer are a profanity-laced version of Sarastro’s statements: “This tyrant [expletive] loves the power she has right now.”³⁶ During the 2020 US vice presidential debate, then Senator Kamala Harris was characterized by commentator Harlan Hill as “an insufferable power-hungry smug [expletive].”³⁷ It is important to remember Sarastro’s reductive view of the Queen as an “arrogant” woman who “must not succeed,” when, in Act 2, scene 12, Pamina begs him not to punish her mother. He replies, “You will see how I am revenged on your mother.” Without this revelatory dialogue, we might believe the message of his beautiful ensuing aria, “Within these halls we know no vengeance . . . we forgive our enemies.”

The spoken words provide necessary context for the pageantry of Act 2, scene 1, which is emphasized by its placement at the start of the second act. Mozart himself called this the “solemn scene” in a letter of October 8, 1791, in which he reported that he was so offended by his companion’s laughter at this moment that he “called him a Papageno and cleared out.”³⁸ The Viennese audience often took the work’s moral lessons seriously.³⁹ Yet, could Mozart’s companion have been the only spectator to find humor here? Might it have been provoked by words that seemed pompous and hypocritical? Perhaps we, too, can simultaneously question Sarastro’s judgment against female ambition and admire his humility as a conveyor of a higher power, charging the Speaker to “teach both men by your wisdom what the duty of humanity is; teach them to acknowledge the power of the gods.” He is not a clichéd dominant male, yet his dialogue still begs the question: On what basis does he, like the Queen’s husband, declare that she could not wield power as well as he could?⁴⁰ Tinged with the same arrogance of which he accuses the Queen, Sarastro’s words reveal a flawed human, complicating the serious intent alluded to by Mozart in his letter and for which he wrote such effective music.

The Queen's explanatory dialogue is often cut, leaving the impression that she is driven solely by a need for control; while, paradoxically, Sarastro's words are left intact, even though they reveal his controlling nature. In Act 1, scene 5, the First Lady tells Tamino that the Queen "has heard each word" before she asks him to rescue Pamina. But in scene 18 Sarastro presumes to divine Pamina's thoughts: "For without needing to press you I know more of your heart." When she does speak, he interrupts to demonstrate his disrespect for her mother (and by extension all women):

PAMINA My mother's name sounds sweet to me; she is . . .

SARASTRO . . . a proud woman. A man must guide your hearts, for without one every woman tends to step out of her natural sphere.

This dictum foreshadows the Queen's rescue dialogue, where her husband insists that she "submit to the guidance of wise men."

It may be more than coincidence that Sarastro's words follow the moment where significant text about the hypocrisy of those in power had been penned for Papageno and Pamina at the conclusion of scene 17 (but were cut): "The truth is not always good, Because it harms the great ones." Nedbal attributes Mozart's omission of these lines to his wish to support Enlightenment ideals.⁴¹ Conversely, perhaps it was safe to let the Three Ladies question the "falsehoods of these Priests" (Act 2, scene 5) since, as females, they would not be believed. Just before that claim, another outsider, the lower-class Papageno says, "Hey, let's have lights here! . . . It's really strange: every time one of these gentlemen leaves us, however wide you open your eyes, you can't see a thing." In the context of the Three Ladies' speech, we might consider Papageno's joking style as a comedic literalism that also hints at institutional hypocrisy.

When, in Act 2, scene 3, Tamino confirms that he seeks "friendship and love," he is asked, "Are you prepared to fight for them with your life?" His affirmation might give us pause, given both his capitulation in the opening scene and his use of Papageno as a surrogate in the first attempt to find Pamina. Those scenes reveal that physical confrontation does not come easily to Tamino. Still, in language reminiscent of the Queen's husband, Sarastro feeds the masculine power narrative in his culminating scene 21 dialogue: "Prince, your conduct thus far has been manly and calm; now you still have two dangerous paths to tread. If your heart still beats as ardently for Pamina, and if you wish one day to reign as a wise prince, the gods must accompany you further. . . . Let Pamina be brought in!" Thus, Tamino is twice rewarded: he gets Pamina and the power to govern that was denied the women, although Pamina actually leads him through the final trials.

Undervaluing the abilities and contributions of women remains relevant to this day: for example, the gender gap in the sciences is due partly to “women systematically receiving less credit for their work.”⁴²

What I hope to have shown here is that we must let the dialogue speak to us and, just as important, we must speak back – not to judge the eighteenth century but to learn from its contradictions as we continue to learn from our own. As this reading has shown, despite differences in gender, race, and class among the characters of the Queen, Monostatos, and Sarastro, they have in common the wish to be understood. And each conveys that wish most clearly in spoken words. Each also resorts in speech to a grave action when their words are ignored: the Queen orders a murder; Monostatos threatens one; and Sarastro, while keeping his own hands clean, banishes the Queen and excludes her from the benevolence afforded to the rest of humanity.

Conversations around gender, race, and class are essential for musicology to remain relevant, as we will long reckon with the societal tipping point of 2020. For *The Magic Flute*, a reevaluation of the dialogues is a good place to start.

Notes

I am deeply grateful to Jessica Waldoff for guiding this essay into its final form with consummate wisdom and warmth.

1. *Musikalisches Wochenblatt*, December 10, 1791. MDL, 358; MDB, 409.
2. Viennese diarist Count Zinzendorf, November 6, 1791. MDL, 360; MDB, 412.
3. William Gibbons, “(De)Translating Mozart: *The Magic Flute* in 1909 Paris,” *Opera Quarterly* 28/1–2 (2012): 47.
4. Edward J. Dent, *Mozart’s Operas: A Critical Study* (London: Chatto, 1913): 327.
5. Liner notes for *Mozart: Die Zauberflöte*, Akademie für alte Musik Berlin, René Jacobs, Harmonia mundi, 2010, 3 compact discs (emphasis added).
6. Walter Bernhart, “Absence of Words and Absence of Music in Opera,” in *Meaningful Absence across Arts and Media: The Significance of Missing Signifiers* ed. Werner Wolf, Nassim Balestrini, and Walter Bernhart (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 180.
7. Into the 1780s, female Masons declare faithfulness “while they also ritually and triumphantly slay the serpent.” Janet M. Burke and Margaret C. Jacob, “French Freemasonry, Women, and Feminist Scholarship,” *Journal of Modern History* 68/3 (1996): 527.
8. Translations follow Charles Johnston, included in the liner notes cited *supra* n. 5.

9. Sylvia Wynter, "No Humans Involved: An Open Letter to My Colleagues," *Knowledge on Trial* 1/1 (1994): 42–71. See also Taja-Nia Y. Henderson and Jamila Jefferson-Jones, "#LivingWhileBlack: Blackness as Nuisance," *American University Law Review* 69/3 (2020): 863–914.
10. This case is the subject of Anthony Davis's Pulitzer Prize-winning opera *The Central Park Five* (2019).
11. Michael M. Grynbaum, "Floyd Case Presents Ideological Challenge for Law-and-Order Conservatives," *New York Times*, May 30, 2020.
12. Norimitsu Onishi and Constance Méheut, "A Coded Word from the Far Right Roils France's Political Mainstream," *New York Times*, September 4, 2020.
13. Denis Diderot, *Histoire*, bk. XIX, chap. 15, in Abbe Guillaume-Thomas Raynal's *Histoire des Deux Indes* (1780), cited in Sankar Muthu, *Enlightenment against Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003). Still, many abolitionists believed Black people were intellectually inferior. Rana Hogarth, "Of Black Skin and Biopower: Lessons from the Eighteenth Century," *American Quarterly* 71/3 (2019): 837–47.
14. For "die spröde Schöne," I depart from Johnston's "coy beauty," which implies a flirtatious complicity not justified in the text. In a structural parallel, we saw Tamino question Papageno's humanity after the latter's strophic aria.
15. Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (London: Johnson, 1792), chap. 4.
16. www.theguardian.com/world/2013/oct/03/stop-telling-women-to-smile-tatyana-fazlalizadeh.
17. George Booth [2nd Earl of Warrington], *Considerations upon the Institution of Marriage* (London: John Whiston, 1739).
18. John Burton, *Lectures on Female Education and Manners* (London: Johnson, 1793), I:212.
19. Marie Cramer, "Judge Who Asked Woman if She Closed Her Legs to Prevent Assault Is Removed," *New York Times*, May 28, 2020.
20. Deanna Pan, "Who Was Matthew Hale, the 17th-Century Jurist Alito Invokes in His Draft Overturning Roe?" *Boston Globe*, May 6, 2022. Pan cites Jill Hasday, constitutional law professor at the University of Minnesota Law School: "There are many themes running through America's legal traditions that have deep injustices embedded within them. We have to decide how we're bound by the past. And nothing is forcing us to carry the consequences of women's legal subordination forward in time."
21. Günter Meinhold, "*Zauberflöte*" und *Zauberflöten-Rezeption: Studien zu Emanuel Schikaneders Libretto "Die Zauberflöte" und seiner literarischen Rezeption* (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 2001), 121.
22. Ashley C. Rondini, "White Supremacist Danger Narratives," *Contexts* 17/3 (2018): 60–62.
23. Thomas Rothschild, "'Das ist der Teufel sicherlich.' Papageno trifft Monostatos: Ein Vergleich," in *'Regietheater': Konzeption und Praxis am*

- Beispiel der Bühnenwerke Mozarts* ed. Jürgen Kühnel, Ulrich Müller, and Oswald Panagl (Salzburg: Mueller-Speiser, 2007), 337.
24. Inclusion will require systemic change: “The real issues involve altering the systems of education and access so that anyone in the United States can feel entitled to work hard, recognize if they have an exceptional talent, and expect a fair chance of having a career in the arts.” Naomi André, *Black Opera: History, Power, Engagement* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2018), 14.
 25. Kate Manne, “Melancholy Whiteness (or, Shame-Faced in Shadows),” *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 96/1 (2018): 238.
 26. Ben Miller, “New Magic for a Classic Opera in Berlin,” *New York Times*, February 17, 2019.
 27. Martin Nedbal, *Morality and Viennese Opera in the Age of Mozart and Beethoven* (London: Routledge, 2017), 1.
 28. I do not presume to speak for underrepresented people. According to Charisma Lucario, a Black student in my class, “If I were to have watched this version it would have made me uncomfortable knowing that they highlighted the dialogue by stating the views about black people were not their own but did nothing to change it. If you didn’t want to change it then just leave it be and have the audience deal with the dialogue in their own way. Adding extra dialogue puts an unnecessary spotlight on it.”
 29. Rejecting treasure is a feminist act. William Alexander, in 1779, praised women for their charity and then charged “the same women with ‘levity, dissipation, and extravagance.’” Barbara Taylor, “Enlightenment and the Uses of Women,” *History Workshop Journal* 74 (2012): 81.
 30. James Fordyce, *The Character and Conduct of the Female Sex* (London: T. Caddell, 1776): 83, cited in Rosalind Carr, *Gender and Enlightenment Culture in Eighteenth-Century Scotland* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014), 14.
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