



ASHGATE
INTERDISCIPLINARY
STUDIES IN
OPERA



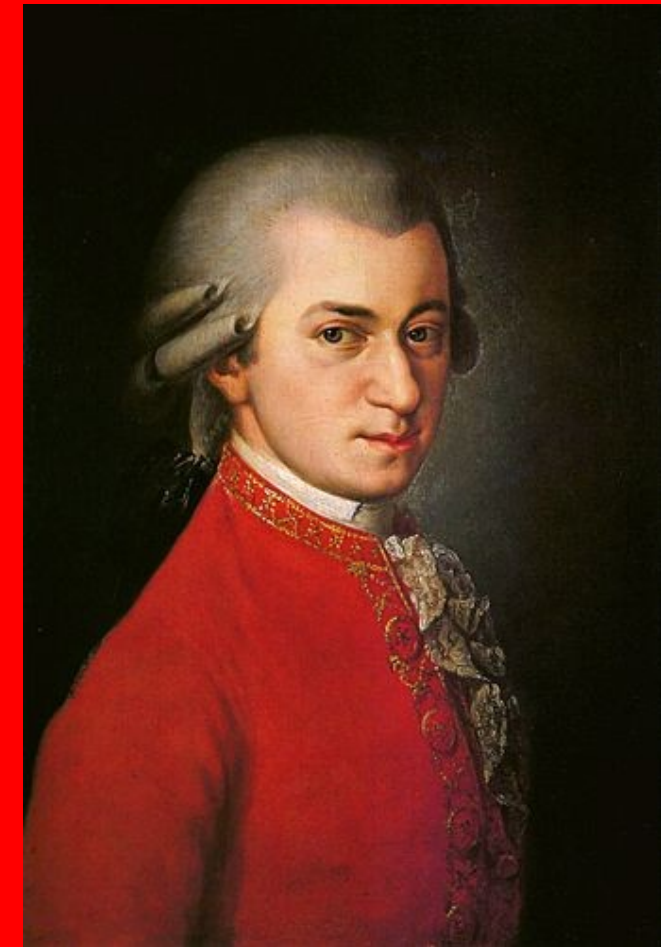
Morality and Viennese
Opera in the Age of
Mozart and Beethoven



Martin Nedbal

Week 3

Nationalism and Exoticism
in Mozart's German Operas



Exoticism in Mozart's *The Abduction from the Seraglio* (1782)

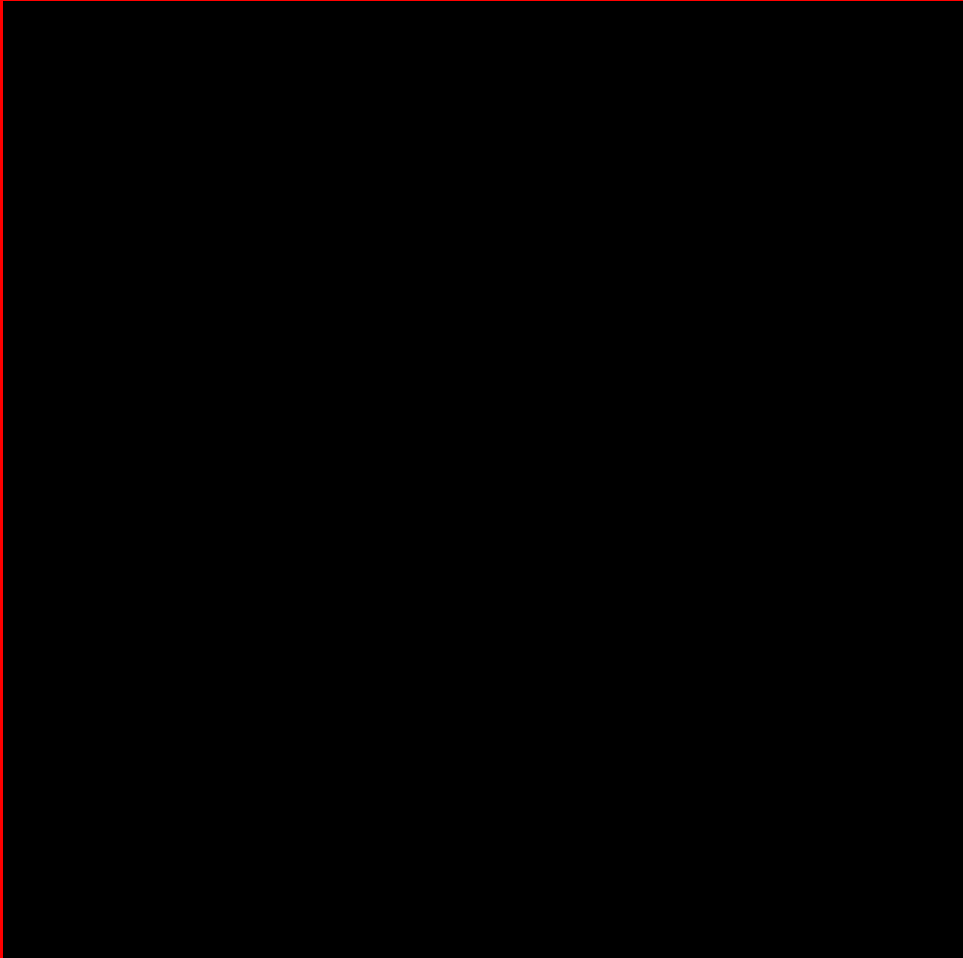
Miloš Forman's
Amadeus (1984)



The *Alla Turca* Style:

Mozart's Overture to *The Abduction*, 1782

Gluck's Overture to *The Pilgrims to Mecca* (*Les Pèlerins de la Mecque*),
1763



Mozart
Overtures

Das Orchester der Zauberflöte
Die Entführung aus dem Serail
L'oca del Cairo
La clemenza di Tito
L'Idomeneo
Lucio Silla
Le Nozze di Figaro

Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra
Concentus musicus Wien
Orchester & Mozart-Orchester
des Opernhauses Zürich
Nikolaus Harnoncourt

elatus

Die Entführung aus dem Serail, K.
384: Overture

Nikolaus Harnoncourt

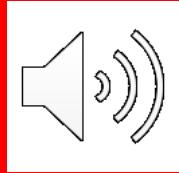
Mozart : Overtures

Alla Turca Stylistic Features

(from Ralph Locke, *Musical Exoticism*, 118–119)

- Duple meter
- Repeated notes (or thirds) in melodies
- Repeated rhythmic patterns
- Unison textures
- Neighbor notes + escape notes
- Long notes at beginnings of phrases
- Quick melodic decorations
- Modal touches
- Percussion instruments

Osmin's Act-1 "Rage" Aria "Solche hergelaufne Laffen"



Coda 1: 3:52 (video)

Coda 2: 4:50 (audio)

Coda 2 TEXT:

First you'll be beheaded

Then you'll be hanged

Then impaled

On red hot spikes,

Then burned,

Then manacled,

Then drowned,

Finally flayed alive.



Osmin vs. Passa Selim

- Savage vs. Noble Savage
- Exotic vs. Endotic
- Schönbrunn: the Millions Room



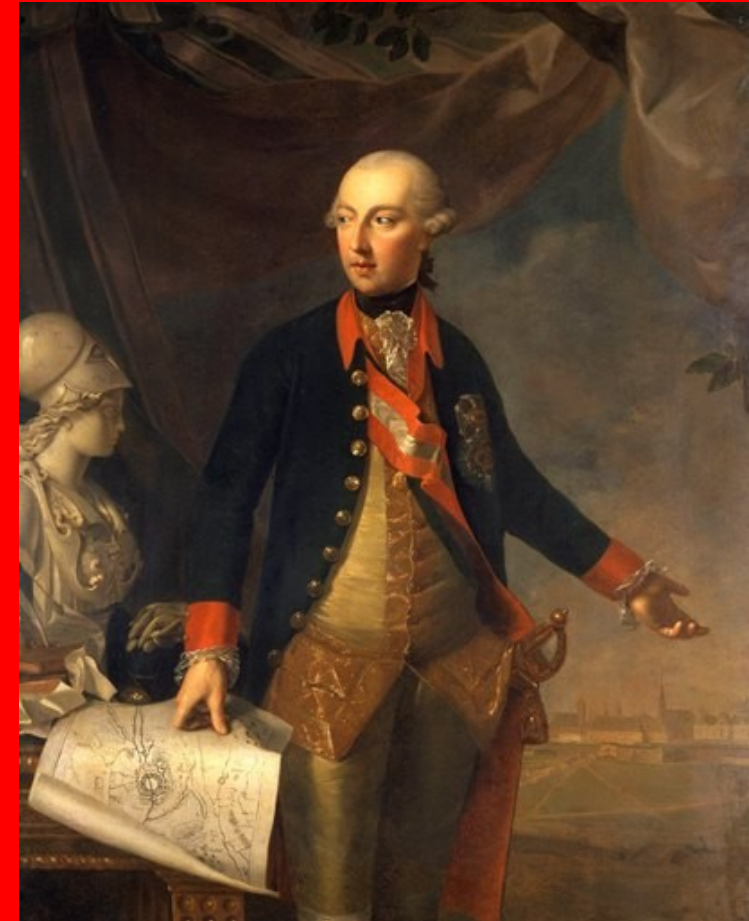
Nationalism in *The Abduction*?

- National Singspiel Company (1778-1783)
- Based on a North-German libretto (by Christoph Friedrich **Bretzner**); revised by **Stephanie the Younger**
- Viennese revision: according to tenets of the Austrian Enlightenment
- Music: Incorporating styles of Italian and French opera into North-German Singspiel



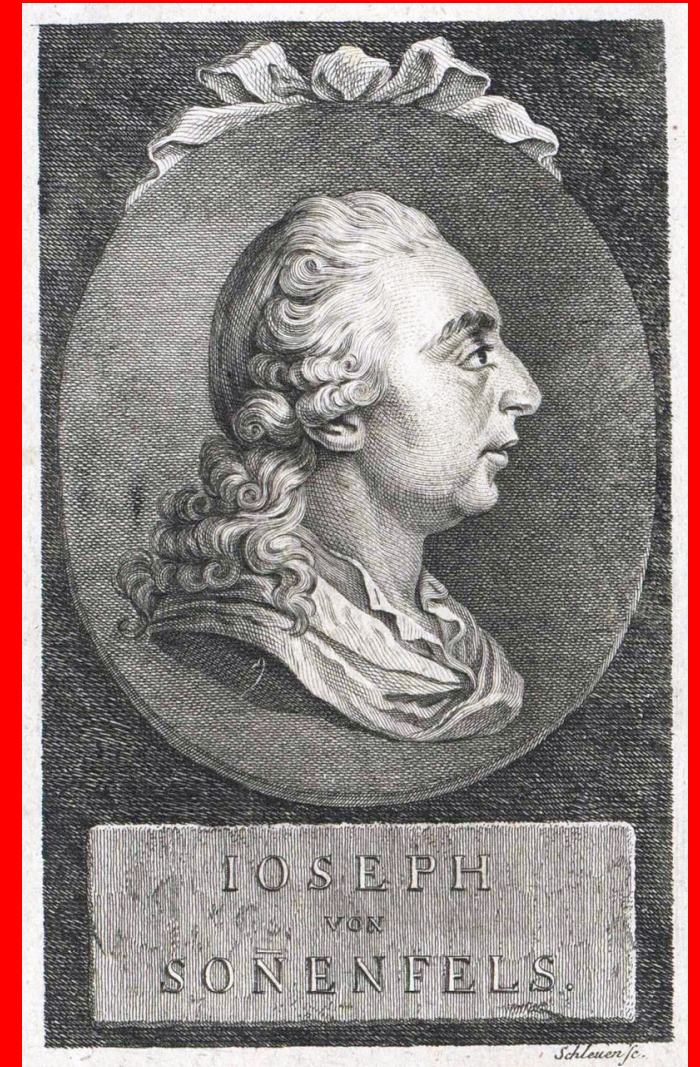
Austrian Enlightenment

- Joseph II (1780-1790)
- Patent of Toleration of 1781 + Edict of Tolerance for Jews in 1782 (same ideals as Lessing, but imposed “from above”)
- Centralization of Habsburg Empire (imposing German as the official language)
- Theater as a means of educating citizens vs. court representation
- National Theater
- Loosening AND strengthening of censorship
- Austrian theater censorship: institutionalized under Joseph II’s supervision in 1770



Late Eighteenth-Century German Theater Reform in Austria

- Joseph von Sonnenfels (1732-1817)
- Criticizes French theater and Italian opera (promoted by the court)
- Accusations of immorality
- Calls for an establishment of German national theater tradition
- German moral superiority
- Financially supported AND supervised (through censorship) by the state
- 1776 Joseph II transforms the Vienna Court Theater into German National Theater
- 1778 establishes National Singspiel (Opera) company



The *Abduction,* Act 2 Finale

- Viennese Plot vs. North-German original plot
- Musical structure: based on Italian opera finale (action + reflection)
- Emotional vs. Didactic Reflection
- Final section: 9:20

The Magic Flute and the Austrian Enlightenment



- 1783 no more *Singspiel* at the Court Theater, replaced with *opera buffa*
- German opera gradually developed in commercial theaters in Vienna (attracting audience through magic, fairy tales, spectacle)
- Wiednertheater (later Theater an der Wien)
- Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, 1791
- Combining commercial (popular) traditions with the National Theater tradition

German Morals in *The Magic Flute*: Act-1 Quintet

