Ombra Music in the Eighteenth Century: Context, Style and Signification

Volume 1

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Abstract

Ombra is a term which has been used for an operatic scene involving the appearance of
an oracle or demons, witches or ghosts. Such scenes can be traced back to the early days of opera
and were commonplace in the seventeenth century in Italy and France. Operas based on the
legends of Orpheus, Iphigenia and Alcestis provide numerous examples, extending well into the
eighteenth century, including works by Jommelli and Gluck. Hermann Abert applied the term to
certain accompanied recitatives by Hasse and Jommelli.

Ombra scenes proved popular with audiences not only because of the special stage effects
employed but also because of the increasing use of awe-inspiring musical effects. By the end of
the eighteenth century they had come to be associated with an elaborate set of musical features
including slow sustained writing (reminiscent of church music), the use of flat keys (especially in
the minor), angular melodic lines, chromaticism and dissonance, dotted rhythms and syncopation,
pauses, tremolando effects, sudden dynamic contrasts, unexpected harmonic progressions and
unusual instrumentation, especially involving trombones. Parallels can be drawn between these
features and Edmund Burke's 'sublime of terror', thus placing *ombra* music in an important
position in the context of eighteenth-century aesthetic theory.

Music incorporating ombra elements gradually began to appear outside opera, such as in
oratorios, in parts of mass settings (especially requiems) and in instrumental music, most
frequently in slow introductions to symphonies. *Ombra* therefore provides a source for topical
references for many composers. Mozart especially used the ombra style in his operas (e.g. the
Oracle in *Idomeneo*, the Statue in *Don Giovanni*) and his instrumental writing (the slow
introduction to the 'Prague' Symphony K504). Haydn's 'Representation of Chaos' in *The
Creation* incorporates several *ombra* characteristics, as do the introductions to symphonies by
Krommer and J.M. Kraus, among others.

Abbreviations

CW	Complete Works
DTÖ	Denkmäler Tonkunst in Österreich
ECNRS	Edition Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique
EECM	Early English Church Music
FOSEC	French Opera in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries
GHS	German Handel Society
GSW	Gluck Sämtliche Werke
HHA	Hallische Handel Ausgabe
JHW	Joseph Haydn Werke
KASS	Kritische Ausgabe Sämtlicher Symphonien
MB	Musica Britannica
MMS	Monumenta Musicae Svecicae
MW	Musikalische Werke
NG2	New Grove 2nd edition
NGDO	New Grove Dictionary of Opera
NMA	Neue Mozart Ausgabe
PSE	Purcell Society Edition
SKB	Süddeutscher Kirchenmusik in Barock

CHAPTER ONE

Ombra as a phenomenon in 20th-century musicology. The views of Abert, Ratner, Allanbrook and Moyer. A model of characteristic *ombra* features.

The aim of this chapter is to survey the writings of several twentieth-century musicologists in order to arrive at a fuller understanding of the term *ombra*. It is not a term that appears to have been in use in the eighteenth century, although writers of the time were evidently aware of the phenomenon.[1] The more recent writings on the subject deal with *ombra* as a topical reference in music of the Classical style. It will be seen that *ombra* shares several characteristics with other styles, but that there is a strong argument in favour of regarding it as a distinct style because of the unique way in which these characteristics are combined. Although opinions differ as to what constitutes an *ombra* reference, there is sufficient evidence to make a working definition possible.

The earliest use of the term *ombra* would appear to be by Hermann Abert in his book *Niccolò Jommelli als Opernkomponist*, published in 1908. Examining the influences on Jommelli's style, Abert identifies the operas of Johann Adolf Hasse as significant, especially *Cleofide* (1731), which is mentioned as particularly important because of its 'higher dramatic standards'.[2] He goes on to discuss the accompanied recitative at the end of Act II, in which the despairing princess Cleofide 'hears the howling of the Furies and sees a vision of the bloody ghost of her beloved Poros.' Abert points out that this scene is absent from Metastasio's original libretto, and that it was inserted at Hasse's instigation, thus affording him the opportunity of composing recitative which is 'declaimed in a masterly way, and with an orchestral part which is executed with extraordinary boldness...'.[3]

According to Abert, this type of accompanied recitative at the end of an act was widely imitated, especially by Jommelli. Such scenes he designates as 'Ombra-Szenen', and he notes that they were earlier employed in Venetian opera as well as by the Neapolitan librettists.[4]

At various points later in the book, Abert examines *ombra* scenes in operas by Jommelli.[5] He evidently considers the status of the term *ombra* to be important since it appears in the index with references to all the relevant scenes, but nowhere is there an explicit definition of *ombra*, although his examples provide more than enough evidence for it to be regarded as a distinct field.

In attempting to define more precisely the characteristics that might pertain to *ombra* music, it is necessary to turn to Leonard G. Ratner's book *Classic Music*, in which he identifies a number of musical topics associated with the Classical style.[6] He makes a distinction between what he calls 'types', which are essentially dance forms, and 'styles',

which tend to be smaller-scale figures which are representative of different ideas. In this latter category Ratner discusses fantasia style as follows:[7]

> The fantasia style is recognized by one or more of the following features - elaborate figuration, shifting harmonies, chromatic conjunct bass lines, sudden contrasts, full textures or disembodied melodic figures - in short, a sense of improvisation, and loose structural links between figures and phrases.

It might be argued that any one of these features appearing in isolation would not necessarily constitute a reference to fantasia style, but a combination of such features, either simultaneously or in sequence, would normally be expected to confirm such a reference. The improvisatory nature of fantasia is perhaps its most important defining characteristic.[8] It is certainly the principal feature of the example that Ratner cites, near the end of the second movement in Haydn's Quartet in D minor Op76 No 2.

Significantly, Ratner goes on to deal with the subject of *ombra*, which he presumably sees as a kind of sub-topic within the fantasia style:[9]

> In 18th-century opera, the fantasia style is used to evoke the supernatural - the *ombra*, representing ghosts, gods, moral values, punishments - and to bring forth feelings of awe and terror.

Ratner cites Mozart's *Don Giovanni* as an example, specifically the overture, and the reappearances of this music in the duel (Act I) and the supper scene (Act II). He observes that the music involves the incorporation of elements of church style, such as 'alla breve' and 'stile legato'.[10] It seems that *ombra* might, in this case at least, represent an amalgamation of styles, fantasia and 'church'. It is an interesting fusion, since these two styles would appear to have very little in common; the structural flexibility and improvisatory qualities associated with fantasia are in direct opposition to the strict regulation and smooth melodic and harmonic progressions of 'church' style. Such a fusion might, however, be interpreted as an ingenious method to represent the idea of divine retribution.[11]

Some of the characteristics of fantasia can also be seen to overlap with 'Sturm und Drang':[12]

> Storm and Stress uses driving rhythms, full texture, minor mode harmonies, chromaticism, sharp dissonances, and an impassioned style of declamation.

The principal differences are associated with rhythm (and by implication, tempo), and the emotional content suggested by the use of the word 'impassioned'. This in turn leads to another topic which shares similar characteristics, 'sensibility' or 'Empfindsamkeit'. C.P.E. Bach is the major exponent of this style, as Ratner demonstrates:[13]

> His keyboard music has rapid changes in mood, broken figures, interrupted
> continuity, elaborate ornamentation, pregnant pauses, shifting, uncertain, often
> dissonant harmony - all qualities suggesting intense personal involvement,
> forerunners of romantic expression, and directly opposed to the statuesque unity of
> baroque music.

Apart from the 'elaborate ornamentation', these qualities are not very far removed from those associated with fantasia and, to a slightly lesser extent, 'Sturm und Drang'. Interestingly, Ratner chooses to illustrate 'sensibility' further with an extract from Mozart's Fantasia in D minor K397, which includes:[14]

> ... a plaintive melody, broken by sighing figures... chromaticism... stop-and-start
> continuity.

There is also a reference to the introduction of Mozart's Symphony No.38 in D K504 'Prague':[15]

> Yet Mozart was able to induce a sensibility effect... by using short, contrasted
> figures, with sudden shifts of instrumental color, range, dynamics, and harmony.

The same passage is later cited as an example of fantasia, which indicates that there is indeed some degree of overlap between fantasia and 'sensibility'.[16]

It is clear then that, while individual topics are readily identifiable, they may share certain characteristics, which makes the task of distinguishing clearly between them more difficult. From this, it is reasonable to postulate that *ombra* might be regarded as a separate topic. It undoubtedly shares characteristics with fantasia but also contains elements associated with other styles. By overlapping with several different styles, taking different characteristics from each, *ombra* becomes identifiable as an entity in itself. More importantly, as will become clear, *ombra* displays unique features which prevent it from being defined as merely a 'subset' of the fantasia style.

Wye Jamison Allanbrook's study of Mozart's *Don Giovanni* does much to identify the characteristics of the *ombra* style.[17] She defines *ombra* as 'shade' in both senses of the word, and gives a number of examples, all associated with the stage, including the sixteenth-century intermedii and seventeenth-century Italian (especially Venetian) opera.[18] This tradition is shown to survive in the 18th century in works like Gluck's *Orfeo* and *Alceste* and Mozart's *Idomeneo*. 'Choirs of trombones' are specifically mentioned as the traditional accompaniment in *ombra* scenes.[19] This is an important point, because the presence of trombones is here recognised as one of the most prominent features of the *ombra* style, although Ratner makes no reference to it.[20]

Allanbrook identifies a number of characteristics associated with *ombra* in the first thirty bars of the overture of Mozart's *Don Giovanni*:[21]

> They belong to the genre of the 'ombra' scene, in which, according to operatic tradition, striking and solemn music evokes the domain of shades. The musical elements of the 'ombra' style here are purposeful unorthodoxies: a minor key (always in the musical language of the late eighteenth century the signal of unusual and portentous events); an antique chaconne bass and the ponderous dotted rhythms of an earlier style; chains of syncopations, with no resolution provided to the rhythmic imbalance which they provoke; frequent assertion of the Phrygian half step; sideslipping chromatic progressions and a major place in the harmonic events conceded to the neapolitan sixth; a handful of disconnected "filler" figures...; sudden 'sforzando' shocks in an otherwise 'piano' and muted uneasiness. Figures are laid into the larger structure in chunks, open-ended and repetitive rather than symmetrically rounded off in the departure-return sequence of the dance. Yet all the 'ombra's' unorthodoxies are embedded in a harmonic plan which is only deceptively complex, and ensures the maximum local mystery and indirection with the minimum sacrifice of broad cadential muscle.

Although Allanbrook is describing a specific passage of music here, this would do very well as a catalogue of signifiers of the *ombra* style, to which may be added the use of trombones, since Mozart employs them later. This list goes a long way beyond Ratner's more general fantasia characteristics, and provides sufficient additional details to support a distinction between fantasia and *ombra*.

Allanbrook does acknowledge the close links between fantasia and *ombra* by describing the passage as 'fantasialike', and points to the close resemblance between this overture and the slow introduction to the 'Prague' symphony, with the one significant difference being that the latter begins in a major key.[22] Having made a detailed inventory of features associated specifically with the *ombra* style, Allanbrook can find only one difference between the two styles, and does not make a case for regarding them as separate and distinct. It would appear, then, that both Ratner and Allanbrook regard *ombra* as some kind of offshoot of fantasia. Yet Allanbrook has further observations to make in order to define *ombra* more clearly:[23]

> The 'ombra Andante' is 'alla breve' as 'alla capella' [sic] the slow and somber meter of church fugues and choruses, slowed past the tempo of even the exalted march, and loaded with heavy figuration and complex rhythms.

By alluding both to 'church style' and 'march', Allanbrook introduces further areas where *ombra* overlaps with other styles, as well as making an important point: *ombra* is slow. The question of tempo has not been dealt with directly up until now, but it is crucial. Fantasia does not have to be slow although there are many examples that are. *Ombra*, however, is invariably slow. It also has a clear metrical pattern, which contrasts strongly with the free improvisatory nature of fantasia. This might lead one to suppose that the introduction to the *Prague* symphony has more to do with *ombra* than fantasia.[24]

When Allanbrook examines the music at the end of the opera, she deals with the principles governing the *ombra* music in more detail. The initial impact is made by the

'brooding dotted rhythms' associated with the slow introduction and the 'special sound of the trombones' which, absent from the overture, add a menacing effect.[25] Mozart's achievement is the invention of a new form:[26]

> For the subliminal ordering of what must appear to be an unbridled and chaotic climax - Armageddon forged into an operatic ensemble - he devised a new musical vehicle. Fusing key-area procedure with the old-fashioned fantasy style, he invented a hybrid structure which has the advantage of retaining the taut forensic drama of the key-area layout while introducing via the fantasy the maximum local mystery and uncertainty of tonal direction.

So the *ombra* style - at least in this instance - can be seen as a combination of two apparently opposing forces, the one exhibiting stability (at least in terms of harmony and tonality), the other free and improvisatory in nature. Yet the music is very tightly structured here, and gives no sense of improvisation. Allanbrook explains:[27]

> To control the fantasy material in the *ombra* music Mozart chooses one particular compositional technique - elaboration in the upper parts against a slow-moving stepwise bass line.

Thus the improvisatory quality of fantasia is suppressed and, as Allanbrook goes on to demonstrate in detail, has a rigid structure imposed upon it. The fantasia elements in this music, then, appear as the more localised gestures associated with that genre. The absence of 'galant' phrases is one of the principal means by which this is achieved, but it is the presence of the 'chaconne' bass which, for Allanbrook, is the special feature that provides the tension. The 'antique' associations of this progression are an important referential link. It has already been observed that the *ombra* style incorporates aspects of church style, such as 'alla breve' and 'stile legato'. It is natural that gods and other supernatural powers of the ancient world speak, as it were, in a similar language to their ecclesiastical counterparts. That this style should be 'antique' is also appropriate, and is indicative of a certain dignity and reverence associated with long tradition.[28] Although the 'chaconne' aspect of the bass progression suggests a distinctly secular dimension, a reference, however veiled, to a Baroque dance form would still be regarded by Mozart's audience as 'old-fashioned'. So by identifying the 'chaconne' bass as a principal feature of this music, Allanbrook highlights the dichotomies inherent in the *ombra* style. As well as the tensions between free fantasia and rigid 'church' styles, there is also an interplay between sacred and secular references. The solemnity of the slow-moving stepwise bass descent in a ponderous dotted rhythm contrasts with the levity of a Baroque dance, suggesting ritualised 'dance of death', which is essentially the idea behind this scene in the opera, if not the whole opera itself. Allanbrook summarises this neatly:[29]

... the air of anarchy from moment to moment must be balanced by an unremitting march to the appointed end. This cunning union of the grandiose and the efficient makes Mozart's vision of the damnation of Don Giovanni its most unforgettable realization.

Allanbrook, then, provides persuasive arguments for regarding *ombra* as a distinct style, even though its characteristics are derived from other styles. It stands as 'a combination of pre-existing elements', but with its own unique identity.[30] *Ombra* is more than a mere 'offshoot' of fantasia.

The *ombra* music in *Don Giovanni* provides very clear examples to support Allanbrook's viewpoint, although little mention is made of other pieces in a similar style by Mozart or anyone else. It is a fairly straightforward task to find other examples from eighteenth-century opera, as will be seen in Chapters 3-7. It is rather more difficult, however, to identify references to *ombra* as a topic of musical discourse in instrumental music.

V. Kofi Agawu, in his book *Playing with Signs*, devotes his attention to the interplay between topical and structural signs in music of the Classical period. His use of topics is essentially derived from Ratner, although, significantly, he is prepared to treat *ombra* as a separate topic. Agawu provides a table of twenty-seven musical topics, which he calls 'The Universe of Topic', and *ombra* appears at no. 19, separately from fantasy no. 10 (see overleaf).[31]

Interestingly, the only example of *ombra* that Agawu cites is one already identified by Ratner in bar 16 of the slow introduction to Mozart's 'Prague' Symphony.[32] This tends to emphasise Ratner's view of *ombra* as an offshoot of fantasia, since he regards this introduction as an example of the fantasia style. Unfortunately for the purposes of this study, Agawu does not elaborate further on the subject of *ombra*; nevertheless, despite Ratner's example, it is enough to note that he chooses to record it as a distinct style.

Table 1a: Agawu's 'Universe of Topic'

1. alla breve	15. Mannheim rocket
2. alla zoppa	16. march
3. amoroso	17. minuet
4. aria	18. musette
5. bourrée	19. ombra
6. brilliant style	20. opera buffa
7. cadenza	21. pastoral
8. sensibility (Empfindsamkeit)	22. recitative
9. fanfare	23. sarabande
10. fantasy	24. sigh motif
11. French overture	25. singing style
12. gavotte	26. Sturm und Drang
13. hunt style	27. Turkish music
14. learned	

A more recent article by Birgitte Moyer sets out specifically to deal with the difficulties in separating *ombra* from fantasia.[33] In a festschrift dedicated to Ratner (and edited by Allanbrook among others) she tackles the problem directly. She begins by pointing to the inherent flaw in Ratner's definition of *ombra*, by stating that music as diverse in style as the overture, duel and supper scene in *Don Giovanni* and the introduction to Beethoven's Symphony No. 4 cannot stand as examples of the same style:[34]

> How can the tight, restless motion, the orderly progression of the rhythmic figures, and the relentless drive to the cadences in the *Don Giovanni* music be reconciled with the rhythmic and structural freedom, the harmonic ambiguity, and the sense of improvisation in the Beethoven example? Or are we possibly looking at two different styles?

The answer to the latter question can only be "yes", although not all of the criteria suggested here by Moyer can be regarded as mutually exclusive. The 'restless motion' she ascribes to the *ombra* music in *Don Giovanni* might well apply to the fantasia style in the Beethoven symphony. Similarly, moments of 'harmonic ambiguity' which are present in the Beethoven example can also be found in the Mozart. The inference of binary oppositions is therefore misleading. There are clearly areas of overlap as well as contradistinctions. The problem lies in disentangling them. The fact that Ratner chose such differing pieces in the first place illustrates the difficulty involved in defining the style.

This lack of clarity in pinpointing precise characteristics can be traced back to the writers of theoretical treatises in the eighteenth century, as Moyer shows.[35] Koch, Scheibe, Krause, Brown, Sulzer and Rousseau among others are quoted in order to show the contemporary attitude towards expression of emotions in music. The analogy with rhetoric is also mentioned briefly, with the writings in Heinichen and Mattheson on conventional musical devices. Most importantly, Moyer demonstrates that those writers who attempted to categorise the affects (including Riepel, Quantz, Koch, Daube and Forkel) are far from unanimous about their conclusions. It is not surprising therefore, that the identification of musical topics should prove to be so problematic, and there are implications for attempts at re-classification in the twentieth century. It is difficult to be precise about isolating individual topics when there are differences of opinion among eighteenth-century (as well as twentieth-century) writers. The situation is further clouded by the areas of overlapping that exist between many topics, and especially between *ombra* and other topics.

As far as *ombra* itself is concerned, Moyer can find no specific description of the style by any eighteenth-century writer. Therefore:[36]

> ... the nature of the 'ombra' style has to be deduced from more generalised descriptions of music evoking fear, anger, despair, awe, suspense and so forth.

She goes on to identify a specific genre which explores these emotions in depth:[37]

> There exists a body of music with an expressive intent so obviously suggestive of man's terror and awe of hell that it cannot be overlooked.

This linking of the *ombra* style with the infernal is important, although the horizon might be widened a little to include other supernatural manifestations in opera, such as divine intervention, oracles and even sacred rites.

Drawing on Abert's survey of Jommelli's *ombra* scenes, Moyer is able to provide a brief taxonomy of important features:[38]

> a) unusual instrumentation - often muted strings and muted horns...;
> b) bold harmony; c) a vocal line that is either exclamatory or in slow, sustained notes; and d) orchestral parts in either slow, sustained chords or a majestic march rhythm. Frequently the orchestra contains an important ostinato motive and chromatic bass. Most typically the key of Jommelli's 'ombra' scenes is E-flat major.

Many of these features can be associated with fantasia style, such as the 'bold harmony', the 'exclamatory' vocal line and the 'chromatic' bass, but others cannot. There is nothing improvisatory about the presence of 'majestic march rhythms' or an 'ostinato motive'. The music clearly has special qualities that set it apart. There are two features which are interesting for their lack of a more obvious *ombra* reference, however. The 'unusual instrumentation' does not include the use of trombones in Jommelli's operas, and the use of the key of E-flat major is rather tame in comparison to other examples of this type. Minor keys tend to offer more power and expressivity and easier access to chromatic chords such as diminished sevenths.[39]

That this kind of scene can be recognised as a convention in eighteenth-century opera is evident, and Moyer demonstrates this by reference to Allanbrook as well as a few definitions from music dictionaries.[40] She also points to the importance of 'high style' to enhance feelings of terror and awe, concluding that:[41]

> An elevated style together with the affects of terror, awe, anger, fear, and so forth will produce the 'ombra' effect.

There follows a comprehensive list of examples which demonstrate this combination in action, including extracts from works by Gluck (*Orfeo/Orphée, Alceste* and *Don Juan*), Boccherini (*La casa del diavolo*), and Mozart (*Don Giovanni*, Piano Concerto in D minor, *Prague* Symphony). Some of these are at a faster tempo, which might preclude an *ombra* reference, but these examples serve to illustrate some general observations which might be regarded as a taxonomy of *ombra* characteristics.

Terror and awe, Moyer states, are best expressed by the use of minor keys, which are employed in all of the examples cited. Of these, D minor seems to be quite common, and Moyer notes that some of Gluck's *ombra* music in D minor in *Orphée* was originally in C minor in the earlier *Orfeo*. Jommelli's preference for *ombra* scenes in E flat major is not explained. Apart from the type of key, these feelings of terror and awe are also projected by:[42]

> ... the majestic, full-orchestra call to attention, punctuated by grand pauses or pianissimo passages ...[and also by] Violent outbursts with strong dynamic contrast and full orchestration ...

Fear is usually indicated by familiar devices such as 'concitato' and 'tremolo' writing, as well as by the use of 'restless motion and syncopation'.[43] Anger, exclamation and menace can be expressed with scales or arpeggios, usually rising, but sometimes contrasted by descents or by static chords:[44]

> Exclamation and anger are also indicated by narrow intervals alternating with wide leaps in combination with strong dynamic contrasts...

Aspects of Koch's definition of high style are shown by Moyer to be present in much *ombra* music, such as the 'full and strong harmony' and 'strongly marked rhythm'.[45] Finally, Moyer mentions the use of trombones, and gives some instances where, as in *Don Giovanni*, they are held in reserve until their dramatic impact can be most effective.

Moyer's catalogue of *ombra* characteristics is comprehensive, and is backed by a number of examples which illustrate each of the features. This leads her to the inevitable conclusion:[46]

> From the foregoing it would appear that the 'ombra' style of the Classic period has enough topical conventions and stereotypes to be considered distinct and separate from the fantasia.

In order to prove the point, there follows a survey of writings and examples which refer to the fantasia style. There is a notable absence of:[47]

> the regularity of rhythm and phrase and the cadential drive found in the examples of 'ombra' music.

Instead, all of the fantasia pieces are:[48]

> ... united by a sense of freedom in structure, rhythm, and harmony - in short by a sense of improvisation.

Once again, *ombra* is shown to involve quite rigid structures, including strong rhythms and solid progressions towards cadences. The relative freedom of fantasia in terms of structure, rhythm and harmony sets it apart.

Moyer concludes her article with the intriguing notion that the *ombra* style itself might be further divided between:[49]

> the restless 'concitato' style of 'diabolical' music like Gluck's "Air de furies" and the calm, majestic, though ominous oracular voices of the Underworld in Gluck's 'Alceste' (Act II, Scene 2) or Mozart's 'Idomeneo' (Act III, Scene 9).

This is an important distinction, and one which makes the task of making a clear definition of *ombra* yet more difficult. If there are different manifestations of the *ombra* style, then identifying a possible topical reference will involve the pinpointing of different, possibly even contrasting, features. There are certainly problems of consistency here. My own view is that *ombra* music has to be slow, or at most at a moderate tempo, and that the faster pieces are virtually indistinguishable from 'Sturm und Drang'. It is also apparent that *ombra* has characteristics in common with several styles, including not only fantasia and 'Sturm und Drang', but also French Overture, *Empfindsamer Stil*, *stile antico* and the lament.

Moyer's article is valuable because it sets out clear examples of *ombra* and fantasia style, and places them in their historical context by close reference both to the eighteenth-century theorists and more recent writers on music of the Classical period. The challenge is issued to study *ombra* music more closely, particularly in the operas of Jommelli, Gluck and Mozart. It will be necessary to explore this area in some depth before considering the implications of more localised references to the *ombra* style in instrumental music. Before doing so, I would propose a model for a taxonomy of *ombra* characteristics based on the writings of Abert, Ratner, Allanbrook and Moyer:

Table 1b Characteristics of the *ombra* style

General features	'high' style, slow, sombre, sustained
Tonality	minor keys, shifting
Harmony	'surprise' progressions, bold, chromatic
Melody	exclamatory, narrow intervals contrasting with wide leaps
Bass	chromatic stepwise movement, repeated patterns (ostinato)
Figuration	repetitive, tremolo effects, rising and falling scales
Rhythm	restless motion, syncopation, ponderous dotted rhythms, pauses
Dynamics	strong contrasts, sudden outbursts, unexpected silence
Instrumentation	unusual, especially trombones

My investigations of the *ombra* style in the following chapters will lead to a more detailed version of this model, which will be presented in Chapter 11.

CHAPTER TWO

The place of *ombra* in 18th-century aesthetic theory. The concept of the Sublime, especially the Sublime of Terror. The supernatural in the theatre.

Although the term *ombra* would appear to be a twentieth-century construct, this does not preclude the possibility that eighteenth-century writers recognised the phenomenon, but referred to it in a different way. This raises the questions: does *ombra* map onto some other term or terms used in the eighteenth century, and if not, does this necessarily invalidate the existence of the phenomenon?

Leonard Ratner's system of musical topics has its roots in the association of classical rhetoric with music.[1] Writers such as Heinichen (1728) and Mattheson (1739) drew close parallels between the different sections in oratorical speech and in musical composition, and as late as 1770 J.F. Daube still felt it necessary to point composers towards the rules of oratory.[2] This association of oratory and composition had earlier given rise to the so-called *Affektenlehre* or Doctrine of Affections. Baroque composers were expected, like orators, to move their audiences, to elicit an emotional response:[3]

> During the Baroque period the composer was obliged, like the orator, to arouse in the listener idealised emotional states – sadness, hate, love, joy, anger, doubt and so on – and every aspect of musical composition reflected this affective purpose. While it was easier to appreciate it in music associated with a text, the aim in instrumental music was the same... The Baroque composer planned the affective content of each work or section or movement of a work with all the devices of his craft and he expected the response of his audience to be based on an equally rational insight into the meaning of his music.

By the latter half of the eighteenth century, the affections had come to be identified with the subjective emotions of the composer, and this is significant as far as the *ombra* style is concerned. When a composer like Mozart makes an *ombra* reference in a piece of instrumental music, his motives are different from a Baroque composer making the same kind of reference, because in the latter case all such references normally rely on an extra-musical source.

Birgitte Moyer observes that late eighteenth-century theorists tended to refer to the affects in general terms only. She provides examples by Koch and Forkel in which the affects are divided into four categories:[4]

Koch	Forkel
1) sad feelings ["traurige Empfindungen"]	1) sad affects ["styl der traurigen Affecten"]
2) joyful affects ["freudige Affecten"]	2) happy affects ["styl der fröhlichen Affecten]
3) elevated expressions ["der Ausdruck des Erhabenen"]	3) elevated, tranquil self-satisfaction ["styl der hohen, stillen, Selbstzufriedenheit]
4) pleasant feelings ["die angenehmen Leidenschaften"]	4) agitated affects ["styl der mürrischen, heftigen Affecten"]

Moyer points to the resemblance between these two lists although in fact they only really correspond in the first two categories. The third category displays a difference of emphasis between 'Erhabenen' (sublime) and 'Selbstzufriedenheit' (self-contentment), and the fourth category presents entirely contradictory emotions. Koch's 'angenehmen Leidenschaften' are more closely allied to Forkel's 'Selbstzufriedenheit' than to his 'mürrischen heftigen Affecten', which might better be translated as morose, violent affects.[5] This last category is the region most likely to be inhabited by the *ombra* style, although Koch's 'Ausdruck des Erhabenen' will certainly be involved, as well as elements of 'sad' emotions from the first category of both writers.

This only serves to highlight the problem of pinpointing an eighteenth-century term which might correspond to or overlap with *ombra*. Although rather general in their definitions, Koch and Forkel have at least progressed from the traditional division of styles into high, middle and low as advocated by Scheiber among others.[6] 'High' and 'elevated' are clearly related, and several *ombra* features can be discerned in Koch's definition of an 'elevated' emotion:[7]

> The expression of the elevated requires a relatively slow movement, a very noticeable and strongly marked rhythm, and more dotted than slurred notes, ... a full and strong... harmony, and extremely strong accentuation of the notes.

This echoes an observation made by Quantz half a century earlier:[8]

> Dotted and sustained notes express the serious and the pathetic; long notes, such as semibreves or minims, intermingled with quick ones express the majestic and sublime.

These references to 'elevated' and 'sublime' (*erhaben*) need to be placed in the context of a much wider aesthetic debate during the eighteenth century, and one which, I believe, is of great importance to the understanding of the *ombra* style.[9]

THE SUBLIME

The origins of the concept of the sublime are to be found in a widely-read treatise attributed to the first-century rhetorician Dionysius Longinus entitled *On the Sublime*, translations of which were

published by Boileau in French (1674), and William Smith in English (1739).[10] As well as emphasising the link between the sublime and emotion, Longinus identifies five qualities which should be regarded as sources of the sublime:[11]

I. The first and most excellent of these is a boldness and grandeur in the thoughts...
II. The second is called the pathetic, or the power of raising the passions to a violent and even enthusiastic degree...
III. The third consists in a skilful application of figures... of sentiment and language.
IV. The fourth is a noble and graceful manner of expression...
V. The fifth... is the structure or composition of all the periods, in all possible dignity and grandeur...

It was the first two of these that became the focus of attention for aesthetic theorists in the eighteenth century and these two also share several characteristics with the *ombra* style.

The poet and critic John Dennis was strongly influenced by Longinus, and as early as 1704 was formulating a theory of the sublime based on his six 'enthusiastic passions', namely admiration, terror, horror, joy, sadness and desire. The first two are discussed in greater detail:[12]

First, ideas producing terror, contribute extremely to the sublime. All the examples that Longinus brings of the loftiness of the thought, consist of terrible ideas. And they are principally such ideas that work the effects... that ravish and transport the reader, and produce a certain admiration, mingled with astonishment and with surprise...

Dennis goes on to agree with Longinus that such terror is derived from religious ideas and that nothing is more terrible than the wrath of an angry god. His list of ideas which inspire terror runs as follows:[13]

... gods, daemons, hell, spirits and souls of men, miracles, prodigies, enchantments, witchcrafts, thunder, tempests, raging seas, inundations, torrents, earthquakes, volcanoes, monsters, serpents, lions, tigers, fire, war, pestilence, famine &c.

By 1740 such images were commonplace in poetry, and it is hardly surprising that they became popular with librettists, with their enormous potential for theatrical spectacle.

Other writers were to supply additional sources for elevation to the sublime. Hildebrand Jacob (1735) was the first to include those which might be associated with the sense of hearing '...the fall of waters in cataracts, or heavy showers; the roaring of the sea; the noise of tempests amongst lofty trees; thunder; the clash of arms, and voice of war', and although these are not musical associations, he does later acknowledge that 'the power of music' is a source of the sublime.[14]

John Baillie (1747) is prepared to concede that he is no expert on musical matters, but he is willing to observe that '... all grave sounds, where the notes are long, exalt my mind much more than any other kind; and that wind instruments are the most fitted to elevate; such as the hautboy, the trumpet, and organ...'.[15]

Like Baillie, Edmund Burke had no musical pretensions, but his contribution to the debate is of immense significance. His book on the sublime and the beautiful, first published in 1757, proved to be the most important treatment of the subject in the eighteenth century.[16] For Burke, the origin of the sublime lay in terror:[17]

> Whatever is fitted in any sort to excite the ideas of pain, and danger, that is to say, whatever is in any sort terrible, or is conversant about terrible objects, or operates in a manner analogous to terror, is a source of the *sublime*; that is, it is productive of the strongest emotion which the mind is capable of feeling.

In Part II of the book, Burke deals with the emotional reactions caused by the sublime:[18]

> The passion caused by the great and sublime in *nature*, when those causes operate most powerfully is Astonishment; and astonishment is that state of the soul, in which all its motions are suspended, with some degree of horror.

In the subsequent sections, Burke examines in detail a number of manifestations of the sublime, including terror, obscurity, power, privation, vastness, difficulty, magnificence, loudness, suddenness, intermitting and pain. The way that Burke attempts to isolate the constituent components of a concept so difficult to define as the sublime is not dissimilar to the process of pinpointing the defining characteristics of the *ombra* style. What is striking is that so many of Burke's sources of the sublime can be linked either directly or indirectly to those individual characteristics which contribute to the *ombra* effect.

Attention has already been drawn to the way in which terror is portrayed musically, by the use of restless rhythmic movement and tremolando effects. But for Burke, the feeling of terror is enhanced by obscurity:[19]

> To make any thing very terrible, obscurity seems in general to be necessary... Every one will be sensible of this, who considers how greatly night adds to our dread, in all cases of danger, and how much the notions of ghosts and goblins... affect minds.

In the next section, Burke illustrates clearness and obscurity by suggesting that a drawing of a temple, palace or landscape is 'very clear', whereas a verbal description, however lively, creates only an 'imperfect idea'.[20] This latter, he says is capable of eliciting a stronger emotional response, because words are the best way to communicate emotion. He goes on to say that:[21]

> ... so far is a clearness of imagery from being absolutely necessary to an influence upon the passions, that they may be considerably operated upon without presenting any image at all, by certain sounds adapted to that purpose; of which we have a sufficient proof in the acknowledged and powerful effects of instrumental music.

Obscurity is perhaps best conveyed by the shifting harmony and chromaticism found in the *ombra* style, since clear harmonic progressions and even tonality are undermined.

Power is discussed at some length by Burke, particularly in relation to divine power, and he proposes that power in music is conveyed by full texture and a loud dynamic, with the juxtaposition of soft and loud passages serving to heighten the effect, as is frequently found in *ombra* music.

Privation in the general sense is seen by Burke as 'great' and 'terrible', and he gives as examples 'Vacuity, Darkness, Solitude, Silence'.[22] The use of silences and pauses in *ombra* music frequently creates a sense of unease and expectation.

In the next five sections, Burke deals with vastness and infinity, and with what he calls the 'artificial infinite', which is created by 'succession' and 'uniformity'. Here his observations are confined mainly to matters of physical dimension (height, length, depth etc.), but he returns to the subject of the 'artificial infinite' later in the book, in order to demonstrate that the sense of hearing is especially well suited to experiencing succession:[23]

> When the ear receives any simple sound, it is struck by a single pulse of air, which makes the ear-drum and the other membranous parts vibrate according to the nature and species of the stroke. If the stroke be strong, the organ of hearing suffers a considerable degree of tension. If the stroke be repeated pretty soon after, the repetition causes an expectation of another stroke. And it must be observed that this expectation itself causes a tension... so that here the effect of the sounds is considerably augmented by a new auxiliary, the expectation.

Ombra music often contains repeated notes and stepwise progressions, especially in the bass, and also ostinati, a strong musical representation of both 'succession' and 'uniformity' and the 'artificial infinite'.

Returning to Part II, Burke deals next with the concept of difficulty, and observes that if anything has needed a huge effort to create it, the effect is one of grandeur. One might argue that this could apply to many different styles of musical composition, but the complex rhythms and harmonies of the *ombra* style can certainly be regarded as difficult.

Associated with grandeur is magnificence, by which Burke means a large quantity of 'splendid' or 'valuable' things.[24] He observes that this is rarely achieved in art because a profusion of images creates disorder. Poetry, he suggests, is more suitable, and a passage describing the splendour of the king's army in Shakespeare's *Henry IV* is given.[25] The nearest musical equivalent

would have to be the use of high style, especially the pomp and majesty of the French Overture, which itself shares an important characteristic with the *ombra* style through the use of dotted rhythms.[26]

The next three sections deal with light and colour, and the effect of contrasts. Burke asserts that strong light, such as the sun or lightning, is 'very great'. However, 'A quick transition from light to darkness, or from darkness to light, has yet a greater effect. But darkness is more productive of sublime ideas than light.'[27] This emphasis on the grander effect of darkness is continued in Burke's discussion of colour: 'An immense mountain covered with a shining green turf is nothing... to one dark and gloomy; the cloudy sky is more grand than the blue; and night more sublime and solemn than day'.[28] In the *ombra* style, contrasts in texture, from a single note to dense chords, can occur. Dark instrumental timbres are a prerequisite, such as the use of wind instruments, and especially trombones.

Perhaps the most useful observations are made in the next three sections, because they deal with sounds rather than words or images:[29]

> The eye is not the only organ of sensation, by which a sublime passion may be produced. Sounds have a great power in these as in most other passions... Excessive loudness alone is sufficient to overpower the soul, to suspend its action, and to fill it with terror... The shouting of multitudes has a similar effect.

Suddenness is identified as another source of the sublime:[30]

> ...a sudden beginning, or sudden cessation of sound of any considerable force, has the same power.

Intermitting sounds are also included:[31]

> A low tremulous, intermitting sound... is productive of the sublime. I have already observed that night increases our terror more perhaps than anything else... Now some low, confused, uncertain sounds, leave us in the same fearful anxiety concerning their causes...

Musical features such as sforzati, strong dynamic contrasts, pauses and 'surprise' chords or modulations are suggested here, all of which can be found in the *ombra* style.[32]

A summary of the ways in which Burke's sources of the sublime correspond with the various characteristics of the *ombra* style is given in Table 2a (see overleaf).

Table 2a Correspondences between Burke's sources of the sublime and *ombra* features

astonishment	*sforzando* chords
terror	restless rhythms, tremolando
obscurity	shifting tonality, chromatic harmony
power	full texture, *sforzandi*
privation	silences, pauses, interruptions
vastness	full texture, narrow intervals/wide leaps
infinity, succession, uniformity	repeated notes, ostinato, stepwise progressions
difficulty	complex tonality and harmony
magnificence	majestic dotted rhythms
light, colour	contrasting dynamics, unusual instrumentation
sound, loudness, suddenness, intermitting	dynamic contrasts, surprise modulations, pauses

Taken as a whole, Burke's analysis of the causes of the sublime reads like a catalogue of features found to be associated with the *ombra* style, except that his language is couched in terms not normally applicable to music. Although his examples are drawn mainly from painting and poetry, he might easily have included musical examples if he had had a better understanding of music or at least a wider knowledge of the repertoire. This lack of specific musical allusion makes it difficult to suggest that Burke's sublime and the *ombra* style are equivalent, but it is clear that *ombra* can be regarded as a musical manifestation of the sublime as defined by Burke in relation to painting and poetry.

Writing in 1769, Daniel Webb was able to include music in his thoughts concerning the sublime. He observes that "... in music we are transported by sudden transitions, by an impetuous reiteration of impressions.... a growth or climax in sounds exalts and dilates the spirits and is therefore a constant source of the sublime".[33] This would appear to be in accord with Burke's views on loudness, suddenness and intermitting. He goes on to provide musical examples:[34]

> On hearing an overture by Jommelli [sic] or a concerto by Geminiani, we are in turn transported, exalted, delighted; the impetuous, the sublime, the tender take possession of the sense at the will of the composer.

One gains the impression that Webb is attempting to appear more learned here by indulging in some name-dropping, since these examples are too general to lead to any useful conclusions. Webb is simply restating the Doctrine of the Affections in the broadest terms, yet he does make the explicit link between the sublime and musical composition, which Burke only hints at.

Writing in 1783, James Beattie makes the following observation:[35]

> Musick is sublime when it inspires devotion, courage or other elevated affections: or when by its mellow and sonorous harmonies it overwhelms the mind with sweet astonishment: or when it infuses that pleasing horrour [sic]... which, when joined to words descriptive of terrible ideas, it sometimes does very effectually.

This is even more explicit, and accurately identifies the music as an especially appropriate medium for the sublime of terror.

Perhaps the most detailed attempt to link the sublime with music is in Archibald Alison's *Essays on the Nature and Principles of Taste*, which appeared in 1790. He classified sound into four 'great divisions' which were i) loud and low ii) grave and acute iii) long and short and iv) increasing and diminishing. Of those sounds which he relates to the sublime, he makes the following observations:[36]

> 1. Loud sound is connected with ideas of power and danger...
> 3. Grave sound is connected with ideas of moderation, dignity, solemnity &c...
> 5. Long or lengthened sound seems to me to have no expression in itself, but only to signify the continuance of that quality which is signified by other qualities of sound...
> 7. Increasing sound signifies, in the same manner, the increase of the quality expressed...
>
> The most sublime of these sounds appears to me to be a loud, grave, lengthened and increasing sound.

Meanwhile, on the Continent, compilers of encyclopaedias of the arts were addressing the concept of the sublime. Both de Jaucourt (1765) and Sulzer (1771) provide definitions, but again only in fairly broad terms and without reference to music.[37] Even Kant, whose study of the sublime is very detailed, does not draw on any musical examples. In all these cases the influence of Burke is plain to see.[38]

It was only at the beginning of the nineteenth century that more detailed links are made between music and the sublime. It is worth examining some of these early nineteenth-century writers in order to illustrate the continuation of the trend and the thinking behind the aesthetic theory of the day. These writers were, after all, of the generation brought up on the music of Mozart and his contemporaries and who are therefore well placed to draw on that repertoire to demonstrate their ideas. Christian Friedrich Michaelis (1805) states that:[39]

> Music can *either* seek to arouse the feeling of sublimity through an inner structure that is independent of any emotional expression, *or* portray the state of mind aroused by such a feeling. In the first case the music can objectively be called *sublime*, like untamed nature, which arouses sublime emotions; in the second case, the music portrays what is pathetically sublime.

He makes a more specific observation further on:[40]

> The composer also expresses sublimity through the use of the marvellous. This is achieved by the use of unconventional, surprising, powerfully startling, or striking harmonic progressions or rhythmic patterns. Supposing, let us say, the established tonality suddenly veers in an unexpected direction, supposing a chord is resolved in a quite unconventional manner, supposing longed-for calm is delayed by a series of stormy passages, then astonishment and awe result and in this mood the spirit is profoundly moved and sublime ideas are stimulated and sustained.

Here the relationship between Burke's sublime and the features associated with the *ombra* style is explicitly stated. Emotional responses such as 'surprising', 'startling', 'astonishment' and 'awe' are directly linked to musical elements such as tonality that 'veers', 'unexpected' harmonic resolutions and even 'stormy passages'. However, such features are not solely associated with *ombra* music, so it is not possible to equate the 'sublime' with *ombra*. It can be argued, though, that *ombra* does represent a possible source for the sublime in music.

In France, too, music and the sublime were being linked. Aubin Louis Millin's *Dictionnaire des beaux-arts* (1806) includes an entry on the sublime, which, after reference to various other arts, has the following:[41]

> Music has also its sublime aspects. It has in its power sublime passion and even sublime tranquillity of spirit. Handel, Graun and Gluck have often achieved sublime heights in their compositions.

Rather like Daniel Webb's comment on Jommelli and Geminiani, this is a frustratingly generalised example. If some reference were made as to precisely where these composers might have achieved sublimity, then a more valuable insight might be gained. Nevertheless, this observation lends support to the idea that by the turn of the century, the sublime was widely regarded as having a musical manifestation. The idea became more firmly established as time went by, so that by 1826 Peter Lichtenthal's *Dizionario e Bibliografica della Musica* was offering the following advice:[42]

> The composer who wishes to express the character of the sublime should create melody that has few ornaments and little embellishment, and that moves in bold progressions with many large leaps; he should adopt a measured tempo and extremely energetic harmonies which he intermixes from time to time with harsh dissonances. The

performance of the sublime requires well-accented and well-sustained notes, a sensitivity to grammatical accent and energetic declamation; the notes should be staccato rather than legato, yet sustained and vigorous.

Finally, the work of William Crotch must be mentioned. Although Crotch's *Lectures* were not published until 1831, they were based on lectures which he gave in Oxford and London between 1800 and 1804 and also in 1820. Unlike any of the previous writers, Crotch was first and foremost a musician. He shows himself to be a disciple of Burke in identifying vastness, incomprehensibility, infinity, immensity, uniformity, simplicity and intricacy together and even 'a blaze of light' as sources of the sublime. Unlike Burke, he is able to identify specific musical features which express these ideas:[43]

> In music, the great compass of notes employed in a full orchestra conveys an idea of vastness undefined. A uniform succession of major chords... resembles a blaze of light, while the unintelligible combination of extraneous discords conveys a feeling like that caused by darkness...

His most valuable observations are made in the preface to *Specimens of Various Styles of Music*, published c.1806, where he makes direct links between the sublime and particular musical effects:[44]

> The sublime is produced by various and, seemingly, opposite causes: I shall mention and exemplify four. The Ist, and perhaps the most striking, is when a few simple notes are performed in unison or octaves by a variety of instruments or voices, in the manner of the ancients... II. Another source of the sublime is when the harmony is clear and simple, but the melody and measure dignified and marked... III. When the harmony and modulation are learned and mysterious, when the ear is unable to anticipate the transitions from chord to chord, and from key to key, if the melody and measure are grave, the effect will be sublime... IV. The sublime effect of a multitude of voices and instruments, performing different species of melody and rhythm at once, yet all conspiring in harmony, must be acknowledged by those who are familiar with choral effects.

Paragraph III is certainly highly relevant to *ombra*, and is applicable to at least one composition by Crotch, his oratorio *Palestine* (1805), where the recitative 'Thou palsied earth' (No. 30) has a slow introduction in D minor, followed by the aria and chorus 'Are those his limbs' in F minor.[45] Both exhibit a variety of *ombra* characteristics, including tremolandi, syncopations and strong dotted rhythms as well as 'learned and mysterious' harmony.

It should be clear from the foregoing that by the beginning of the nineteenth century, ideas about the sublime and its associations with terror were in wide circulation, and were being applied to music. The theatre was the principal forum for experiencing the combination of music and stage effects that could produce a response like awe or fear.

THE SUPERNATURAL IN THE THEATRE

Drama which explores the supernatural can be traced back to ancient times. Greek tragedy and mythology regularly involved oracles, prophecies, invocations and rituals, with the Underworld and its associated characters featuring very prominently:[46]

> ...the chorus of Furies in Aeschylus' *Eumenides* numbered fifty, whose singing and dancing was said to have such a terrifying effect that children in the audience were thrown into convulsions from fright.

The rediscovery of Classical literature in the Renaissance led to a renewed exploration of these themes. This was accompanied by a widespread interest in, and ultimately a reaction against, esoteric ideas such as Neoplatonism, Hermeticism, Cabalism and alchemy.[47] Belief in magic and witchcraft was common and lead to censorship and persecution, but the ideas continued to be explored in the literature. Supernatural characters, both good and evil, begin to appear in the plays and pantomimes of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the most obvious examples being the fairies, witches and ghosts in Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Macbeth* and *Hamlet*. In the eighteenth century, the dominant figure on the English stage was Garrick, whose portrayals of horror-struck heroes and villains were famous.[48]

Plays based on Classical models were written well into the eighteenth century. To take one example, there were several versions of *Iphigenia in Tauris* based on Euripides, in which Orestes is tormented by the Furies after he has murdered his mother Clytemnestra. Some examples are shown in Table 2b.[49]

Table 2b Plays based on *Iphigenia in Tauris* (Euripides)

Date	Author	Language
1678	Minato	Italian
1697	Lagrange-Chancel	French
1700	Dennis	English
1724	Stranitsky	German
1737-42	Schlegel	German
1740	Anon.	Latin
1747	Derschau	German
1757	Vaubertrand	French
1757	de la Touche	French
1760	Anon.	German
1779-86	Goethe	German

The story proved equally attractive to opera librettists, and there are many examples in the tradition both of *opera seria* and 'reform' opera, as detailed in Table 2c.[50]

Table 2c Operas based on *Iphigenia in Tauris*

Date	Author	Composer	Language
1704	de Vancy/Danchet	Desmarets/Campra	French
1713	Capece	D. Scarlatti	Italian
1719	Pasqualigo	Orlandini	Italian
1722	Barlocci	Micheli	Italian
1725	Pasqualigo	Vinci	Italian
1728	Pasquini	Reutter/Caldara	Italian
1734	Anon.	Handel	Italian
1756	Pasqualigo	Mazzoni	Italian
1763	Coltellini	Traetta	Italian
1764	Verazi	Majo	Italian
1766	Verazi	Monza	Italian
1768	Coltellini	Galuppi	Italian
1771	Verazi	Jommelli	Italian
1772	Landi	Agricola	Italian
1779	Guillard	Gluck	French
1781	Dubrueil	Piccinni	French
1784	Pasqualigo	Monza	Italian
1785	Pasqualigo	Tarchi	Italian

The most influential librettist of the eighteenth century, Pietro Metastasio, largely avoided supernatural references in his libretti, preferring to concentrate on historical rather than mythological characters.[51] There were certainly those who attacked the popularity of spectacle in opera, such as Benedetto Marcello, who offers the following advice to would-be librettists in his famous satire *Il teatro alla moda* (circa 1720):[52]

> The poet will never enquire into the merits of the actors, but will rather ask whether the impresario will have a good bear, a good lion, a good nightingale, good thunderbolts, earthquakes, flashes of lightning etc...

> It is not essential that the subject of the opera be historical. Rather... the task of the modern poet is to invent a fiction, contriving in it answers of oracles, royal shipwrecks, evil auguries from roast oxen etc.

In the same way, Marcello offers helpful suggestions to the opera composer:[53]

> He will captivate the public with arias accompanied by pizzicati or muted instruments, marine trumpets, cymbals etc...

> Let the modern composer be careful not to neglect the customary chromatic or
> accompanied recitative, and to that end let him oblige the poet... to provide him with a
> scene of a sacrifice, a mad scene, a prison scene etc.

Metastasio's diffidence and Marcello's sarcasm are indicative of a perception, in Italy at least, that spectacle in opera is vulgar, and not in keeping with high art. Yet the very effects that Marcello attacks (lions, thunderbolts, earthquakes etc.) are regarded as sources of the sublime later in the century. There is a further contradiction when *ombra* music is considered. Marcello disapproves of colourful instrumentation, chromaticism, and accompanied recitative, all associated with the *ombra* style. Yet *ombra* also draws on high style through its slow sustained writing and the ecclesiastical sonority created by trombones. *Ombra* then can ultimately be seen to reflect the vulgar/sublime contrast in its synthesis of low and high styles. It can even be said to represent an attempt, possibly subconsciously, to elevate that which was previously thought of as low.

The idea of writing special music for supernatural scenes goes back to the origins of opera itself. Such scenes remained popular in Italian opera throughout the seventeenth century. Melania Bucciarelli has identified seven different types:[54]

1. Hell scenes
2. *Ombra* scenes
3. Statue scenes
4. Sybil scenes
5. Oracle scenes
6. Prophecies of corpses
7. Invocations of Furies

Stage spectacle was a vital and prominent ingredient in the French theatre from the seventeenth century. Initially this was the preserve of the court ballet, but supernatural characters still appear. Two early examples were the *ballet de Mgr de Vendôme* (1610) and the *Ballet de la Délivrance de Renaud* (1617), with music by Pierre Guédron. In both cases, Guédron introduces recitative-like passages to be sung when the sorceresses (Alcina and Armida respectively) address the demons, thus setting the scenes apart musically.[55] By the middle of the century, as Italian influence became stronger, opera began to be performed. The remarkable stage machinery of Jacomo Torelli combined with the expressive music of Luigi Rossi contributed to the huge success of *Orfeo* (1647).[56] Opera in French was not established until the 1670s, but supernatural elements and elaborate stage machinery continued to be popular. Lully was fairly restrained in his settings of supernatural scenes. There are oracle scenes in *Psyché* (1678), *Bellérephon* (1679) and *Phaéton* (1683), and an *ombra* scene in *Amadis* (1684).[57]

Lully's music was highly influential on the next generation of French composers, who showed an increased interest in expanding the role for the orchestra and exploring supernatural possibilities:[58]

> In the next thirty years or so after Lully's death... oracles feature in as many as two thirds of the *tragédies en musique*... *ombres* are to be found in approximately half the operas written between 1687 and 1715. In all, there are about 50 oracle and French *ombres* appearances or descriptions.

The position in England was quite similar, due at least in part to the strong French influence on musical style towards the end of the seventeenth century. There was also a strong tradition of depicting the supernatural on the stage. Shakespeare remained popular through the mid-century revivals of Davenant, who commissioned music by Matthew Locke for *Macbeth* and *The Tempest*. Other examples include Locke's masque based on the Orpheus myth in Elkanah Settle's *The Empress of Morocco* (1673), and John Eccles' music for *The Lancashire Witches* (1681), but the most adventurous settings occur in Purcell's later stage works.[59]

Handel's operas contain no *ombra* scenes in the truest sense, in that there are no examples of appearances, either real or imagined, of ghosts. There are, however, several instances of supernatural scenes, particularly in his five 'magic' operas, *Rinaldo* (1711, revised 1731), *Teseo* (1712), *Admeto* (1727), *Orlando* (1733) and *Alcina* (1735).[60]

CONCLUSION

This survey has attempted to place *ombra* in the context of developments in eighteenth-century philosophy, as well as taking account of trends in the theatre. When composers like Hasse, Jommelli, Traetta and Gluck came to write their supernatural scenes, they were working within a well-established and popular theatrical tradition, and as will be seen, a musical tradition also. They were in an ideal position to take advantage of audience fascination with the supernatural, and to write music which would prove effective in the theatre. The reason for the success of their music lay in the blend of traditional signifiers and innovatory features, so that audiences recognised the musical references while being surprised by new effects. They might not have been familiar with the term *ombra*, but they were well aware of the phenomenon.

CHAPTER THREE

Tonality: Key characteristics. The association of flat keys with the *ombra* style. Aspects of tonal instability. Modulation and tonal organisation. Chromaticism and modal inflection.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

The idea that certain keys were appropriate for establishing particular moods has had currency since the seventeenth century, but there was by no means a universal agreement about which keys conveyed which moods, as Rita Steblin's excellent survey demonstrates:[1]

> This study, while far from implying that every musician, or even a majority of musicians, worried about meanings associated with particular keys, nevertheless suggests on the basis of a sizeable body of literary evidence that the majority of writers on the subject believed that keys signified certain moods.

An important factor in defining the characteristics of a key is identified by Steblin as the 'Sharp-Flat principle':[2]

> This was the psychological association of ever-increasing strength and brightness (or, conversely, weakness and sombreness) with the number of sharps or flats.

It follows from this that *ombra* music might be expected to be found in flat keys. This is certainly true of Jommelli's *ombra* scenes, in which he showed a preference for E flat major.[3] Because minor keys afford greater opportunity for chromaticism, augmented and diminished intervals and other manifestations of instability, it also follows that flat minor keys would be especially suitable for *ombra*. Most of the examples that will be examined are in flat minor keys, with C minor and D minor featuring prominently.

Steblin's study concludes with a very useful appendix which lists all the keys in turn and provides a chronological survey of the descriptions of each one.[4] Table 3a is an extrapolation from this material, and presents the views of four major musicians and theorists on the qualities of flat major and minor keys, encompassing a period of just over one hundred years (see overleaf):[5]

TABLE 3a

Some characteristics attributed to flat major and minor keys

	Charpentier (c1692)	Rameau (1722)	Schubart (c1784)	Galeazzi (1796)
F major	Furious and quick-tempered	Tempests and furies	Complaisance and calm	Majestic, but less so than E flat and C majors; it is also shrill but not piercing
B flat major	Magnificent and joyful	Tempests and furies	Cheerful love, clear conscience, hope...	Tender, soft, sweet, effeminate, fit to express torments of love, charm and grace
E flat major	Cruel and hard	-	The key of love, of devotion, of intimate conversation with God	Heroic, extremely majestic, grave and serious
A flat major	-	-	Death, grave, putrefaction, judgement, eternity	Gloomy, low, deep, fit to express horror, the silence of night, stillness, fear, terror
D minor	Serious and pious	Sweet and tender	Melancholy, womanliness. The spleen and humours brood	Extremely melancholy and gloomy
G minor	Serious and magnificent	Sweet and tender	Discontent, uneasiness, worry about a failed scheme, bad-tempered gnashing of teeth	Frenzy, despair, agitation etc.
C minor	Gloomy and sad	Tenderness and plaints	All languishing, longing, sighing of the love-sick soul lies in this key.	A tragic key fit to express grand misadventures, deaths of heroes, and grand but mournful, ominous and lugubrious actions.

Although there are a few differences of opinion, the table shows the psychological effect of the addition of flats in both major and minor keys. E flat major has religious overtones for Schubart mainly because 'through its three flats it expresses the holy trinity', although he later acknowledged that it 'was the favourite key of the great Jommelli; therefore he poured out his soul so often in this key'.[6] This religious association with E flat major is supported by Jean-François Lesueur in his *Exposé d'une musique* of 1787, although his description sounds very like a reference to *ombra* music:[7]

> The key of E flat (combined, however, with an adagio tempo, low strings, sombre trombones and, at the same time, those wind instruments having a pathetic sound) has a more religious character than the other keys.

Most other eighteenth-century commentators refer to the 'majesty' of E flat major, a quality which is also widely attributed to C major.[8] Both of these keys are related to C minor, the first sharing a key signature and the second a tonal centre. C minor can therefore be regarded as a highly appropriate choice of key for *ombra* music. The features associated with the religious and majestic, such as church style, the tutti 'call to attention', strong cadential drive and dotted rhythms, are combined with unsettling and gloomy characteristics, including restless motion, strong dynamic contrasts and chromaticism. Also the opportunity is available for composers to move from C minor to C major, a device frequently employed to depict a transition from 'darkness' to 'light'.[9]

Among the other eighteenth-century writers that are cited by Steblin concerning C minor, adjectives such as 'sad', 'tender', 'pathetic', 'plaintive', 'lamenting' and 'tragic' appear frequently.[10] Galeazzi's use of terms such as 'grand', 'mournful', 'ominous' and 'lugubrious' would suggest that he may well have had music in the *ombra* style in mind. The other key in which *ombra* music frequently occurs is D minor. Many of the examples cited by Birgitte Moyer are in this key, although little is offered by way of explanation:[11]

> Although many theorists connect specific affects with certain keys, they do not appear to draw a connection between *ombra* music and D minor.

As with C minor, the principle of examining characteristics of the relative major and tonic major is revealing. F major is a key about which opinions vary widely, but for Galeazzi it is 'majestic', although he clearly regards E flat and C majors as more appropriate. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, writing in 1743, also regards F major as 'majestic'.[12] On the other hand, for Schubart, F major expresses calm, a view held by several others, such as Vogler (1779) and Knecht (1792), and this discrepancy may well lie behind the conclusion reached by Grétry (1797), which was

'mixed'.[13] There is much less doubt about D major, which is almost universally regarded as lively, brilliant and martial.[14] D minor, then, for all its 'melancholy' character, shares a tonic with a particularly bright key, but unlike C minor, does not carry the psychological weight of several flats in the key signature.

If the same principle is applied to the remaining flat minor keys, G minor and F minor, the results are less convincing. G minor's relative major B flat throws up a confusing array of divergent opinions, and the tonic major G is generally regarded as pleasing, if somewhat bland.[15] F minor is too remote for any majestic qualities to be retained. The relative major A flat is itself too dark and gloomy, and the tonic major F, as has already been noted, gives rise to some differences of opinion.[16]

C minor and D minor, then, can on balance be regarded as more suitable for *ombra* music than other flat minor keys, despite a few discrepancies among eighteenth-century writers. As a pair, these keys provide an interesting counterpart to the ceremonial keys of C major and D major, whose character has much to do with being well suited to trumpets and timpani. Here another important factor comes into consideration, namely the acoustical properties of instruments and their suitability for particular keys.[17] In the nineteenth century this was considered to be the governing principle behind key characteristics, but by then equal temperament was firmly established. For the majority of writers in the eighteenth century, such characteristics were attributable mainly to the various unequal tuning systems which were in use. Nevertheless, some consideration was given to instrumental qualities, especially string instruments. Some keys were regarded as brighter than others according to the extent to which open strings were employed.[18] As Steblin observes:[19]

> A striking coincidence soon became apparent: the keys which used the most open strings, and thus sounded "bright," "piercing," and "noisy," were the *sharp* keys D, A, and E; the keys which used the most stopped fingerings, and thus sounded "muted," "deadened," and "sorrowful," were the *flat* keys B flat, E flat and A flat. Thus the sharp-flat principle could be accounted for physically by the properties of the string instruments.

Although this may help to explain the tonal colour of C minor, it is less convincing for D minor, where all of the open strings of the violin are still available.

Less attention seems to have been paid to wind instruments, although Steblin mentions the view of F G Drewis, expressed in his *Freundschaftliche Briefe* of 1797, that keys sounded differently because of the properties of instruments. He also observed that some instruments worked well only in certain keys:[20]

> Many instruments are not at all or only a little practicable in many keys... Bassoons are excellent only in flat keys... Clarinets play only in B flat, C and E flat majors; almost as limited is the use of horns.

This is undoubtedly an over-simplification, yet it does illustrate the association of instruments of a darker timbre with flat keys. Such instruments are frequently employed in a prominent manner in *ombra* music, and would therefore have influenced the composer in his choice of a flat key.

THE ASSOCIATION OF FLAT KEYS WITH THE *OMBRA* STYLE

From the observations of the theorists on key characteristics, it would appear that the association of the supernatural with flat keys was beginning towards the end of the seventeenth century. Although Lully's *tragédies en musique* contain several supernatural encounters - including oracle scenes in *Psyché* (1678), *Bellérophon* (1679) and *Phaéton* (1683) - there is little evidence of genuine *ombra* music. His *Alceste* (1674) contains no recognisable *ombra* references for the Underworld scene in Act IV, which is largely in C major. One exception is his use of C minor for the *ombra* scene in *Amadis* (1684), Act III Scene 3, along with low orchestral writing and repeated crotchets in the bass, as the shade of Ardan Canile rises from his tomb before the sorceress Arcabonne.[21] Although Lully showed little fondness for flat minor keys, the tendency became more prevalent in the generation that came after him in France:[22]

> In his works as a whole, Lully makes very sparing use of C minor (and even less of F minor) and the use of 'extreme' keys is always for significant moments in the drama. Later composers venture more freely into F minor and occasionally B flat minor, so that their oracle/*ombres* are more often in those keys than in C minor.

These later composers included Collasse and Desmarets.[23] Another example is in Charpentier's *Médée* (1693), Act III Scenes 5-7, where G minor is used as the sorceress casts a spell to poison a cloak, and later there is a 'bruit souterrain', where the strings play a homophonic ostinato in E flat major.[24]

In England, Purcell seems to have been quite systematic in his use of keys, and Curtis Price has suggested a number of correspondences between keys and subject matter.[25] These include F major and B flat major for pastoral scenes and C major and D major for ceremonial music.[26] His observations on flat minor keys can be summarised as follows (see overleaf):

Table 3b Key associations in Purcell's stage works

A minor	Sexual ardour
D minor	Sexual ardour
G minor	Death
C minor	Melancholy, seriousness, mystery, awe
F minor	Horror, witches etc.

This does not disallow the use of these keys in other contexts, especially within a wider tonal scheme, but there is enough evidence of these associations to rule out mere coincidence. Although Price does not offer a complete explanation, he notes that:[27]

> ... G minor seems to have had a traditional association with death for at least two generations of English theatre composers. Since gamma-ut was still theoretically the lowest note of the scale, one can easily understand how its minor key came to symbolise the grave, the lowest point to which all must sink.

These key correspondences are easily explained by Steblin's 'sharp-flat principle', with an increase in emotional intensity as the keys become more remote. Purcell uses G minor for Dido's Lament and the final tableau in *Dido and Aeneas* (1689), in *Dioclesian* (1690) for the soprano aria 'Charon the peaceful shade invites', and in Act III of *The Indian Queen* (1695) for the incantation by the magician Ismeron. C minor is widely used, with examples including the incantation in *Oedipus* (1678) Act III Scene 1, the 'Song of Devils' in Act V of *The Libertine* (?1692) and the temple scene with druids in *Bonduca* (1695), Act III Scene 2.[28] The famous Frost Scene in *King Arthur* (1691) Act III contains an extended aria in C minor for the Cold Genius, 'What power art thou?', with its shivering effect, bold harmony, and wonderful chromaticism and dissonance:[29]

> The aria is a *tour de force*. Its purposely antiquated chromatic style... helps to paint a picture of the hoary Genius. Yet the carefully calculated, occasionally abstract harmonies are profoundly moving, as they twist a feeling of awe into a vision of agonizing death.

F minor is reserved for the personification of evil in the form of the Sorceress in *Dido and Aeneas* Act II Scene 1, and for the highly expressive chorus at the end of Act V in *The Indian Queen* (1695), 'All dismal sounds'. Given that the prevailing tuning systems at the time involved unequal temperament, F minor represents the most remote key that could acceptably be used.

Purcell was not the first English composer to use flat minor keys to express dark or mysterious moods. Matthew Locke marks the entry of the figure of Death in his masque *Cupid*

and Death by an abrupt shift to G minor from the dominant of A minor.[30] His masque based on
the Orpheus myth in Act IV Scene 3 of *The Empress of Morocco* (1673) moves freely between
F major and D minor, and Humfrey's 'Masque of Devils' in Act II Scene 4 of *The Tempest*
(1674) is predominantly in D minor.[31]

    Handel may well have been aware of this tradition in English theatre music. His operas
contain no *ombra* scenes in the truest sense, in that there are no examples of appearances of
ghosts, either real or imagined, but there are several instances of scenes which draw on the *ombra*
style to express some kind of supernatural encounter. They invariably involve the use of flat keys,
especially in the minor, as Table 3c shows:

Table 3c Keys of *ombra* passages in Handel's operas

Title	Date	Act/Scene	Main keys
Rinaldo	1711/31	II/8	g-c-f
Teseo	1713	III/5	f-c
Admeto	1727	I/1	d-g
Poro	1731	III/12	g-c
Orlando	1733	III/6	F-Eb
Alcina	1735	II/8	various

    As noted earlier, Jommelli's favoured key for operatic *ombra* scenes was E flat major,
although the tonal freedom allowed by his use of extensive accompanied recitative meant that he
could modulate to other keys easily, with the more remote minor keys often reserved for the
dramatic climax. For most other composers that followed Jommelli, flat minor keys
predominated. Table 3d shows the principal keys of those scenes under consideration in this
study, from early examples by Gluck and Traetta up to the death of Mozart (see overleaf):[32]

Table 3d Main keys of selected scenes with *ombra* references 1760-91

Composer	Work	Date	Act/Scene	Keys
Traetta	*Armida*	1761	Sc. 9	C-E*b*
	Ifigenia in Tauride	1763	II/1	E*b*-e*b*-b*b*-c
			II/7	c
	Antigone	1772	II/1	f
Philidor	*Tom Jones*	1765/6	III No.18	g-e*b*
	Ernelinde	1767	II/10	c
Gluck	*Telemaco*	1765	II/2+3	B*b*-g-c-G
	L'Ivrogne corrigé	1760	II/4	E*b*
	Don Juan	1761	Nos. 30 & 31	d...
	Orfeo ed Euridice	1762	I/1	c
			II/1	E*b*-d
	Sémiramis	1765	Overture-No.1	d
			No. 10	e-g
	Alceste	1767	I/4	E*b*...
			II/2	a-d-c
			III/2+3	c
	Orphée et Euridice	1774	I/1	c
			II/1	E*b*-d
	Iphigénie en Aulide	1774	I/2	G-g
	Alceste	1776	I/4	c
			II/3	g-f
			III/1-4	f-E*b*
	Armide	1777	III/2-5	F-c...
	Iphigénie en Tauride	1779	I	a
Paisiello	*Il Grand Cid*	1775	No. 24	E*b*
J C Bach	*Lucio Silla*	1775	I/7+8	c
	Amadis de Gaule	1779	II/2+3	E*b*...
Piccinni	*Atys*	1780	III/6	E*b*-e*b*
			III/8	E*b*
	Iphigénie in Tauride	1781	II/2	var
Salieri	*Armida*	1771	III/1	c
	Les Danaïdes	1784	Overture	d
			II	d-F
	La grotta di Trofonio	1785	Overture	c
			I/10	d
	Tarare/Axur, re d'Ormus	1787	III/2	f
Gazzaniga	*Don Giovanni*	1787	Sc. 24	d-E*b*-e*b*...
Naumann	*Orpheus og Euridyke*	1787	II/1	c-f-d-g
Haydn	*Armida*	1783	III/2	E*b*...
	L'anima del Filosofo	1791	IV/1	f-d
Mozart	*Mitridate, re di Ponto*	1770	III/4	E*b*...
	Lucio Silla	1772	I/7+8	a-c-E*b*-g
	Thamos, König in Ägypten	1779/80	No. 7	d-D
	Zaide	1780	I/2	d-c
	Idomeneo	1781	III/6	c
			III/10	c
	Don Giovanni	1787	Overture	d
			II	d
	La Clemenza di Tito	1791	I/12+13	c-g

It can be seen that the keys which feature most prominently are E flat major and C minor, with D minor and F minor occurring frequently. F major is the only other major key that appears regularly. This seems to confirm a widespread perception among operatic composers in the second half of the eighteenth century that these keys are the most appropriate for supernatural scenes. It can be inferred from this that such keys should be regarded as integral to the *ombra* style. When looking at Mozart's choices of key for *ombra* references, there is a remarkable consistency. The earliest example, *Mitridate*, may owe something to Jommelli's preference for E flat major, but most of the remainder are in D minor or C minor, demonstrating that by the time Mozart had reached his compositional maturity, he clearly associated those keys with supernatural events. An interesting example of the application of flat minor keys to infernal scenes is J.G. Naumann's *Orpheus og Eurydyke* (1787), composed in the same year as Mozart's *Don Giovanni.* Act II Scene 1 presents four choruses for Furies in rapid succession, in C minor, F minor, G minor and D minor respectively.[33]

ASPECTS OF TONAL INSTABILITY

Flat keys can certainly be considered a pre-requisite for an *ombra* reference, but another important feature of the style is tonal instability. This can be achieved in two ways, either by modulating freely, so that new tonal centres are constantly established, or by undermining the tonal centre with chromaticism. While some of the scenes under consideration seldom stray far from the main key, many exhibit a remarkable degree of tonal fluidity. There is a strong psychological factor at work here, namely the unsettling effect of moving the keynote around, sometimes to unexpected places. In accompanied recitative used for *ombra* scenes by composers like Handel, Hasse and Jommelli, rapid modulation was easily achievable. As later composers came to writing *ombra* music, this kind of instability would have been regarded as a valuable device.

Another technique was to distort the sense of key by using both major and minor forms of the same tonic. Minor inflection of a passage in a major key creates the opportunity to use more dissonant intervals, both melodically and harmonically, but without changing the tonal centre. Although this might not be considered modulation in the truest sense, it nevertheless demonstrates another approach to the creation of instability. Examples illustrating both these techniques will be considered below.

MODULATION AND TONAL ORGANISATION

Handel evidently recognised the value of modulation as a psychological device, as can be seen in *Rinaldo* (1711, revised 1731) Act II, Scene 8, where Armida is found alone on stage preparing to resort to magic to win Rinaldo's love.[34] The sustained strings of the first eight bars in G minor give way to tremolando effects and a sequential shift via C minor towards F minor as she expresses her anger. At bars 18-20 the dominant of C minor is resolved unexpectedly onto a lengthier tremolando chord of E flat major as Armida invokes the Furies, followed by a similar passage in B flat major in bars 23-25. The recitative ends on the dominant of G minor, the key of the following aria 'Ah! crudel'.[35] Handel's use of accompanied recitative allows the music to move freely from key to key, but he stays on the flat side throughout.[36] Handel makes use of flat keys in a different way in *Orlando* (1733) Act III Scene 6, in which the magician Zoroastro conjures a change of scene to a 'horrid cavern'.[37] Musically, the transformation is effected by the simple expedient of transposing a dotted oscillating figure down a tone from F major to E flat major.

His last 'magic' opera, *Alcina* (1735) also features F major and dotted rhythms for a transformation scene (Act II Scene 1), but this time without the modulation.[38] Act II Scene 13 is much more adventurous, however. It is set in 'an underground room for the practice of magic, with its various figures and instruments'.[39] After Ruggiero's serene triple-time aria 'Verdi prati' in E major, the key of B minor is something of a surprise, but this is rapidly destabilised as the music passes through A minor, D minor, C sharp minor and back to B minor. Diminished seventh and Neapolitan chords appear frequently, and all this activity occurs in the space of just fourteen bars:

Example 3.1 Handel *Alcina* II/13 bars 1-14

cor e m'in - gan - na - sti! E pur ti a - do - ra an - cor, e pur tia - do - ra an - cor fi -

- do mio co - re. Ah! Rug - gie - ro cru - del, ah! Rug - gie - ro cru - del, sei tra - di - to - re!

There follows a short *concitato* passage as Alcina calls on the spirits of the Underworld to avenge her, framed by agitated unison string writing in G major and then C minor. The subsequent return to B minor is made by the slightly unorthodox route of B flat major, F major and D major. Again the move to the flat side is reserved for the most sinister moment.[40]

Like Handel, Jommelli liked to make extensive use of accompanied recitative for supernatural events. His earliest *ombra* scene is in *Andromaca* (1741) Act II Scene 15, described by Abert as 'Jommelli's first masterpiece on this subject', and the first example of his association of *ombra* music with the key of E flat major.[41] Andromaca encounters two ghosts in this scene. The first is that of her husband Hector summoning her to join him in the hereafter; the second is the bloodstained ghost of Pyrrhus, who has been murdered by Orestes and is seeking revenge. As Hector appears, E flat major is immediately established, horns and violas are introduced, and 'sigh' motifs and pizzicato string figurations are featured prominently. When Pyrrhus appears, Jommelli chooses minor keys, the music moving rapidly through G minor, E flat minor and finally B flat minor, this time with syncopation and tremolando effects. These two manifestations, both featuring strong *ombra* characteristics, are effectively contrasted both in terms of tonality and texture. Other examples by Jommelli show a similar approach to the handling of keys. E flat major is usually the principal key, but other key areas are explored, especially flat minor keys.

Traetta also shows some fondness for E flat major in supernatural situations, as Daniel Heartz has shown.[42] A progressive flattening of keys appears in *Armida* (1761) Scene 9, which begins with Armida and the sleeping Rinaldo in C major, and as her emotions change towards

darker thoughts, the music moves through F major, G minor, E flat major, A flat major and finally D flat major.[43]

Gluck's first use of the *ombra* style emulates Jommelli in the choice of E flat major as a key, although the circumstances of the setting are rather different. *L'Ivrogne corrigé* (1760) is a comic piece, and includes a mock underworld tableau (Act II Scene 4).[44] The drunkard of the title wakes up in his cellar, which his wife has transformed to resemble hell. With the help of neighbours disguised as Pluto and two Furies, she intends to exact her revenge. The music is in E flat major, which is a striking contrast to the previous A minor, and which may well constitute a reference to the 'diabolus in musica'.[45] This example, however, is not typical of Gluck's handling of the supernatural. His references to the *ombra* style are usually made in larger-scale scenes, involving arioso writing, choruses and purely instrumental passages, but still with plenty of freedom in tonality. In the first version of *Alceste* (1767), the first entry of the High Priest in Act I Scene 3 'Dilegua il nero turbine' has a portentous accompaniment on two bassoons, two horns and three trombones, but the sustained C major chords suggest solemnity, even grandeur, rather than anything awe-inspiring.[46] It is only when he begins to summon the Oracle that a more menacing atmosphere is established, and the tonal centre shifts to E flat with a dotted arpeggio figure in octaves in the strings:

Example 3.2 Gluck *Alceste* I/4 bars 43-46

The music passes swiftly through A flat major and B flat minor, arriving back at E flat major in bar 61. The rhythm becomes more agitated as the music passes through F minor and C minor (bars 68-72), and the moment of highest tension is marked by the entry of the three trombones in bar 76 (doubled by oboes and bassoons) playing the earlier arpeggio figure in G minor. Now begins a sequence of rising dominant steps around the circle of fifths, moving through D minor, A minor, E minor, B minor and finally F sharp minor by bar 99. This is a simple enough procedure, but the effect is nevertheless unsettling because the tonality is constantly shifting.

After a cadence in D major at bar 104, the climax of the scene is reached, as the Oracle makes its
fateful pronouncement:

Example 3.3 Gluck *Alceste* I/4 bars 104-112

The angular five-note introduction, played in octaves on bassoons, trombones and muted strings,
gives an eerie effect, and leads into B minor. The vocal part (bass) is intoned on one note until the
final cadence, where the 'ecclesiastical' 4-3 suspension is employed. The portentous feeling is
further enhanced by the three trombones. Perhaps the most unusual feature of this last passage is
that the oracle does not appear in a flat key. This is best explained by looking at Gluck's tonal
plan for the whole scene. The flatter keys are used in the earlier stages, and having used them to
establish a suitably unsettled atmosphere, Gluck is able to move towards his climax by
progressing in a dominant direction around the circle of fifths. The pronouncement of the Oracle
can therefore be seen as the culmination of a tension-building exercise, involving a tonal journey
from the flat to the sharp side.

The same sort of idea occurs in Act II Scene 2, where a different kind of supernatural
encounter takes place.[47] Alceste is alone at night in a forest inhabited by gods of the Underworld.
At first, her uneasiness is reflected by the use of flat keys (E flat major and G minor), along with
dotted rhythms, string tremolandi and diminished seventh chords. As she becomes more agitated,
the modulations move rapidly from D minor to A minor and E minor and then back again through
A minor to D minor, as Alceste calls on the gods of the Underworld (bars 43-65). The reply from
an infernal bass voice is in A minor, and recalls the Oracle with its three trombones and cadential
formula. Again there are dominant modulations as the tension increases, but this time
counterbalanced by some subdominant motion. In both scenes, Gluck's tonal plan is easily

achievable because nearly all the modulations are fifth-related. He chooses to create the instability simply by moving the tonal centre around, rather than by introducing any more adventurous shifts.

In Mozart's supernatural scenes, the tonal plans are usually less free-ranging. His normal approach is to start and end a scene in the same key, sometimes incorporating a few modulations along the way, but never veering too far from the original tonic. *Lucio Silla* (1772) is something of an exception in this respect.[48] Act I Scenes 7-9 are set in a mausoleum, and can be regarded as one large-scale scene to close the act, with a shifting pattern of tempi and keys. The introduction is ambiguous, starting on a chord of B flat major (after an aria in D major) and ending on the dominant of A minor:

Example 3.4 Mozart *Lucio Silla* Introduction to I/7

A minor having been established (spiced by Neapolitan chords in bars 5 and 7), there is then rather an abrupt shift to C minor for Cecilio's recitative (see overleaf):

Example 3.5 Mozart *Lucio Silla* I/7 bars 7-13

Many keys are hinted at in the following bars (A flat major at bar 15, G minor at bar 18, F minor at bar 20), as with most recitatives, but C minor returns at bar 26. Further tonal excursions follow (G minor at bar 29, E flat major at bar 41, dominant of A minor at bar 46) before C is re-established at bar 48, this time in the major. In order to reach E flat major for the chorus 'Fuor di queste urne dolenti', there is a subtle major/minor shift in bar 60 (see overleaf):

Example 3.6 Mozart *Lucio Silla* I/7 bars 58-64

After the chorus, Giunia's aria 'O del padre ombra diletta' is in G minor, and then the chorus re-enters in E flat major. The secco recitative which follows (in which Giunia mistakes Cecilio for the ghost of her father) is typically free-ranging, leading ultimately to A major for the duet that closes the act.

This wide selection of keys exhibits little of the sort of tonal organisation associated with Mozart's mature operas, and is accounted for partly by the substantial passages of accompanied recitative. At least the main key areas are related by thirds, and they do seem to correspond to individual characters as indicated in Table 3e (see overleaf). Nevertheless, the constant shifting of tonality, sometimes rather abruptly, must be attributed mainly to the supernatural implications of the plot.
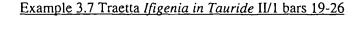
Table 3e Mozart *Lucio Silla* : Association of tonal centres with characters

Character	*Key*
Cecilio	c/C
Chorus	E*b*
Giunia	g
Duet	A

CHROMATICISM AND MODAL INFLECTION

Chromaticism as a device by which composers could express pain and suffering was well-established by the eighteenth century. There are many examples in the Italian and English madrigals of the late 16th and early 17th centuries, and in opera and church music in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. As a vehicle for expressing awe and fear chromaticism is especially appropriate, since it often involves the blurring of tonality and the introduction of dissonance, and it is therefore no surprise that chromaticism in melodies, bass lines and harmony is a pervasive feature of the *ombra* style. A more detailed consideration of specific examples is more suited to the next chapter, so it is sufficient for the moment simply to note the destabilising effect that chromaticism can have on tonality, and the concomitant psychological effect on audiences.

There is a specific type of chromatic effect that can be dealt with here, however. It is quite common for composers to use chromatic notes to give a minor inflection to a passage in a major key, but without changing the tonal centre. This is achieved by flattening the third and sixth degrees of the major scale, and is often accompanied by suitable changes in texture and instrumentation. E flat major was certainly the most widely used major key for *ombra* scenes, so the numerous allusions to the remote key of E flat minor are largely explained by this procedure. Often the change is prompted by a specific word or idea in the text. In Traetta's *Ifigenia in Tauride* (1763) Act II Scene 1, the chorus of Furies, 'Dormi Oreste' is in E flat major, but at the words 'L'ombra mesta sdegnosa...' a dominant pedal is established and E flat minor is strongly suggested (see overleaf. This passage can be seen in contaext in example 6.3):[49]

Example 3.7 Traetta *Ifigenia in Tauride* II/1 bars 19-26

In this case the inflection is used as a springboard for further modulation, first to B flat minor and eventually to C minor. A similar procedure can be seen in Piccinni's *Atys* (1780) Act III Scene 6, where Atys, under a spell cast by Alecton, becomes enraged.[50] Again E flat major becomes E flat minor, before further modulations to F minor and C minor.

The idea of using the dominant to facilitate the tonic major/minor shift is developed by Mozart in *Mitridate, re di Ponto* (1770), Act III Scene 4, for Aspasia's cavatina 'Pallid' ombre'.[51] Starting in E flat major, the music modulates to B flat major and cadences at bar 60 (see overleaf). The route to E flat minor is not a direct one, but involves firstly some chromaticism (bars 60-62) and then a modulating sequence via F minor (bars 63-66) before a tonic minor chord is heard. Even then, the passage at bars 67-72 is really just a prolongation of the dominant, but with minor rather than major modality.

Example 3.8 Mozart *Mitridate, re di Ponto* III/4 bars 60-72

There are some instances of tonic major/minor shifts in other keys. In Gluck's *Iphigénie en Aulide* (1774) Act I Scene 2 there is a straightforward shift from G major to G minor (bar 55) for the invocation of the goddess Diana by the High Priest, Calchas.[52] More interesting is the case

in No. 10 of his ballet-pantomime *Sémiramis* (1765), in which Sémiramis is drawn by the ghost of Ninus into his tomb:[53]

Example 3.9 Gluck *Sémiramis* No. 10

The single loud first inversion chord of B major in bar 1 is a slight surprise after the preceding G major tonality, and might well indicate a move towards E minor, but after the unaccompanied repetition of the single note B in bar 2 there is a firm cadence in G major (bars 3-4). A similar process leads this time to E minor after all (bar 7), and a further restatement takes the music to the dominant of that key in bar 11, followed by a pause. Once more, expectation is defeated, as the following passage is back in G major again. The introduction of the notes B flat and E flat in bars 16-19 suggests G minor, and this is the key for the remainder of the piece. There are two kinds of tonal opposition in play here, the first being the relative major/minor ambiguity of the opening, and the second the tonic major/minor shift that takes place in the middle. This may well have been intended to be a reflection of the two characters on stage, the one weak and submissive, the other strong, irresistible, and of course, supernatural.

CONCLUSION

The evidence of the examples considered in this chapter can leave little doubt that by the second half of the eighteenth century, composers held a strong association between flat keys and supernatural events on stage, and that, of these, minor keys predominated. This was by no means a new idea, as several Baroque examples have shown. Although the gradual adoption of equal temperament would mean that some of the more remote keys were to lose their rougher edges, the old associations prevailed. It would appear that by the end of the eighteenth century, such associations were approaching universal acceptance.

Composers were also fully aware of the psychological effect of undermining the tonality, either by shifting the tonal centre constantly or sometimes by veering in an unexpected direction, and they knew that a similar effect could also be achieved by inflecting the mode of a passage towards the minor without actually altering the tonal centre. In all these cases, the choice of key is directed towards heightened expression. In the light of this evidence, Mozart's choices of keys for his supernatural music are seen to fall within pre-existent patterns and conventions. The consistency with which he chooses D minor and C minor in his later works is a clear indication of his thinking in this respect.

CHAPTER FOUR

Harmony and line: Harmonic language, dissonance, chromatic chords (especially
diminished sevenths). Melodic and bass lines, angularity, chromatic motion, pedals,
repeated notes. The *stile antico* and oracle scenes.

HARMONIC LANGUAGE

Tonal instability is often seen to go hand in hand with harmonic instability. As might be

expected, therefore, harmonic dissonance can be an important ingredient of the *ombra* style, since

it serves to add to the psychological effect of unsettling the audience. Where minor keys are

involved, there are more opportunities for a composer to exploit the harmonic dissonances created

by augmented and diminished intervals, especially as such dissonances would be enhanced in

Baroque music by unequal temperament in the more remote tonalities.

Chromaticism is employed chiefly as a disruptive element, whether to add colour to a

particular key, or as a means of modulation.[1] Chromatic chords (particularly diminished sevenths,

but also augmented sixths and Neapolitan sixths) are commonly used in supernatural scenes in the

eighteenth century. One instance has already been observed in Handel's *Alcina*, involving

diminished seventh and Neapolitan chords.[2] The reaction of Cleofide in Handel's *Poro* (1731)

Act III Scene 13, when confronted by a figure that she takes for the ghost of her supposedly dead

husband, is to cry "ah! l'ombra" over a diminished seventh chord in the continuo:[3]

Example 4.1 Handel *Poro* III/13 bars 1-4

This stylised gesture is often found in *secco* recitatives of the eighteenth century, and is

an example of harmonic imagery prompted not so much by events on stage but simply by a word

in the text. The audience in this instance knows that Poro is not dead, but Cleofide believes it, and

the diminished seventh helps to convey her reaction. The same idea is frequently employed to

colour other words that have horrifying associations such as Jommelli's use of a diminished

seventh chord on the word 'sanguinose' in *Merope* Act III Scene 10 (see Example 6.6). A later

example of this kind of word-painting can be found in Gluck's *Armide* (1777) Act IV Scene 4, where a diminished seventh chord is held for four bars because of a reference to hell:[4]
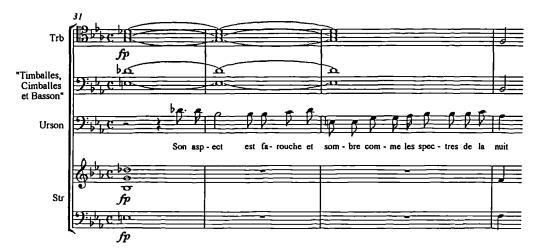
Example 4.2 Gluck *Armide* III/4 bars 152-5

There are numerous other instances where a single chromatic chord is used to underpin a significant word. Sometimes it is an idea or mood that must be communicated. In combination with suitable scoring, a single diminished seventh chord can be very effective in creating an uncertain atmosphere. Salieri's *Tarare* (1787) Act III Scene 2 is 'set in the gardens of a seraglio at night':[5]

Example 4.3 Salieri *Tarare* III/2 bars 31-4

Diminished seventh chords are also useful for choral interjections expressing pain or sorrow. In Mozart's *La Clemenza di Tito* (1791) Act I Scenes 12-13, the cries of the offstage chorus as they suffer in the flames of the burning Capitol are set to single diminished seventh chords, increasing to pairs a few bars later as the main characters are left on stage in a state of frozen horror. Although this cannot be regarded as *ombra* music because of the fast tempo, it serves to demonstrate an association between fear and chromatic harmony.[6]

Example 4.4 Mozart *La Clemenza di Tito* I/13 bars 74-86

More extended passages of chromatic writing have the effect of prolonging the disquieting effect on an audience, and are employed to create tension and expectation. In Jommelli's *Merope* Act III Scene 10, there is an excellent example of the boldness of his harmony (see overleaf):[7]

Example 4.5 Jommelli *Merope* III/10 bars 34-39

As Merope considers the fate of her son Epitide, the sustained string chords shift

kaleidoscopically from a simple A major chord in first inversion, via a diminished seventh chord,

to a dominant seventh to tonic progression in F minor. This is followed by another diminished

seventh chord, leading towards B flat minor, and thence by way of a stepwise descent in the bass

(including an augmented sixth chord) to the dominant. This key (F major) proves to be the key of

the ensuing aria, 'Deh parlate che forse tacendo'. Given Jommelli's almost obsessive devotion to

E flat major for *ombra* scenes, this scene is remarkable for its avoidance of that key.

There are many more examples of this kind of bold harmonic writing in Gluck's theatre

music. No. 1 in *Sémiramis* (1765) is described by Brown thus:[8]

> The beginning of the ballet proper, which depicts the queen's agitated dreams and the
> first apparition of [the ghost of her murdered husband] Ninus... is archaic, resembling a
> species counterpoint exercise, though one capable of inspiring terror, with chromaticism
> and dynamic contrasts.

Two bars of diminished seventh chords introduce the most unsettling passage, with its descending

scale (chromatic to begin with) on 1st violins in semibreves against the faster moving and sinuous

bass line (see overleaf):[9]

Example 4.6 Gluck *Sémiramis* No. 1 bars 31-44

In bars 41-3, it can be see that the bass line is in contrary motion with violas and bassoons, and that the dominant is approached with chromatic alterations to its neighbour notes.

Chromatic writing works particularly well for choruses expressing grief or horror. As a technique, it allows the composer to use the chorus both as participants in the drama and commentators for the benefit of the audience. A good example of this occurs in Gluck's *Iphigénie en Tauride* (1779) Act I, where a chorus of priestesses express dismay as Iphigénie falls upon the altar, but where the music is also intended to elicit an emotional response from the audience (see overleaf):[10]

Example 4.7 Gluck *Iphigénie en Tauride* I 'O songe affreux' bars 301-318

The accompaniment (which includes oboes, clarinets and bassoons) is completely homophonic, and fills out the texture. The opening E minor chord is undermined immediately by the diminished seventh chord in bar 2. If this is a surprise, then the continuation is even more
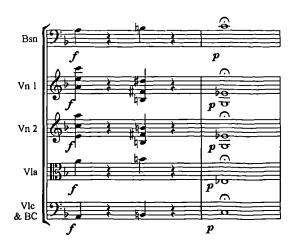
unexpected, as the chord slides downwards by a semitone three times in bars 304-6, moving towards D minor. The progression at bars 313-5 echoes the idea but not the same harmonies, ending on V^7b in A minor.

Mozart uses chromaticism as an expressive device sparingly, but there are prominent examples in *Lucio Silla*, *Thamos, Idomeneo* and *Don Giovanni*, which are discussed elsewhere. Here it will be sufficient to examine some passages in *Zaide*, Act I Scene 2, where Gomatz, who has been cruelly exiled and enslaved, reflects bitterly on his fate:[11]

Example 4.8 Mozart *Zaide* I/2 bars 1-13

Du vermengest mich unter
diese heillosen Verbrecher--

unter sie,   die durch verübte Missetaten
sich selbst ihre verdiente Fessel
geschmiedet haben—

mich Schuldlosen
unter sie!--

Although the music for this melodrama is in D minor, the subdominant harmony in bars 1-3 slightly undermines this tonic. The same sort of contrary motion idea that Gluck uses so often is apparent (2nd bassoon, cellos and basses against 1st bassoon and 2nd violin). The tonic chord in bars 4-6 is major, but darkened by the use of the flattened supertonic. At bar 7 there is a reprise of the opening material, but with the contrary motion reversed and the final note altered to G sharp in the bass and B natural in the 2nd violins. Bars 9-10 repeat this in the dominant, giving way to a sequence of 'sigh' motifs ending on the dominant of E minor, A minor and D minor respectively. The allegro passage which follows shows all the signs of cadencing in E minor, but with a strange twist goes to C minor instead (see overleaf):

Example 4.9 Mozart *Zaide* I/2 bars 20-21

The tonal instability continues, with a notable absence of any chords in root position. Diminished seventh and augmented sixth chords are much in evidence, and dominant sevenths are always in last inversion. Eventually there is a more settled passage in F major (bar 30), but after a while this gives way to D minor again. Following a lengthy speech from Gomatz, the opening material returns, but now in the unexpected key of C minor:
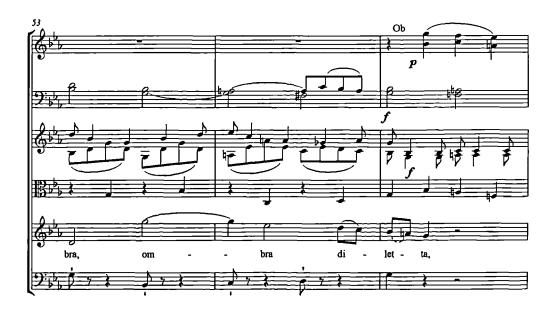
Example 4.10 Mozart *Zaide* I/2 bars 42-47

Pairs of oboes appear for the first time at bar 44, adding colour to the downward sliding diminished seventh progression in bar 45. The harmony hereafter is more conventional, as Gomatz expresses his hopes for the future, but it is this gloomier music that makes the impression on the audience.

MELODIC AND BASS LINES

Unstable elements in the harmony can sometimes be reflected by discontinuity in the melodic and bass lines. The absence of 'normal' linear progressions such as diatonic stepwise motion or triadic outlines can be considered as disruptive in eighteenth-century musical language. Such disturbance may be achieved by angular progressions, wide leaps and dissonant melodic intervals, and also by the use of chromaticism.[12] Examples of unusual bass progressions are comparatively rare, even when the harmony appears obscure. One such instance, a wide leaping in an instrumental melodic line, has already been observed in Gluck's *Sémiramis* No. 10, bars 12-13 and 21-27 (this is given in full in Example 3.9). Such leaps can be difficult for singers to negotiate, so there are few examples in vocal lines, but one notable case is in Mozart's *Lucio Silla* Act I Scene 8, when Giunia addresses the shade of her departed father (see overleaf):[13]

Example 4.11 Mozart *Lucio Silla* I/8 bars 50-55

The phrase 'ombra diletta' would seem to indicate that Giunia is not frightened, but Mozart sets her first 'ombra' low in the register, accompanied by a diminished seventh chord, and the awkward intervals of the vocal line are made more expressive by the slow tempo, sustained bassoon writing and syncopated 1st violin part. A little later in the same scene is an example of another kind of linear disturbance, the chromatic scale (see overleaf):[14]

Example 4.12 Mozart *Lucio Silla* I/8 bars 15-20

The line itself is a smooth progression, but the instability is caused by the use of notes foreign to
the key, resulting in a temporary blurring of the tonality and harmony. The ascending line also
has the effect of building towards a climax. In accompanied recitatives, a chromatically ascending

line in the bass is often the means used to build tension. Jommelli was adept at this, as Abert observes:[15]

> ...in particular Jommelli knows how to strike a quite characteristically pressing and urgent note through chromatically ascending bass lines. With these there is a phrase in the melodic line which is either simply repeated like a sequence on a higher degree of the scale... or repeated with simple variations.

Haydn was certainly well acquainted with this technique, and in *Armida* (1783) Act I Scene 3 he uses it in combination with a string tremolando effect:[16]

Example 4.13 Haydn *Armida* I/3 bars 19-26

Chromaticism is also found in descending lines, especially in the bass, perhaps because of an association with the infernal. It can often be seen as an elaboration of the descending tetrachord from tonic to dominant, which has already been shown to derive from the 'lament'

topos, and appears in an infernal context in operas as early as Act I Scene 1 in Cesti's *Il pomo d'oro* (1668).[17] A diatonic version of this descent appears in J.C. Bach's *Lucio Silla* Act I Scene 7, where Cecilio's reaction to the approaching procession of mourners is expressed in the music by a descending tetrachord in the bass in C minor with repeated notes played as *tremolandi*:[18]
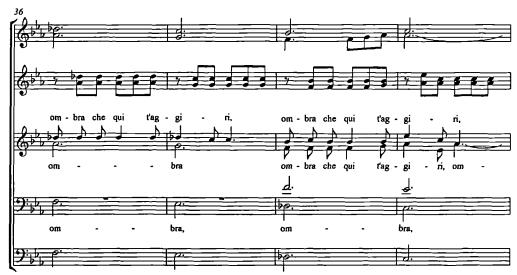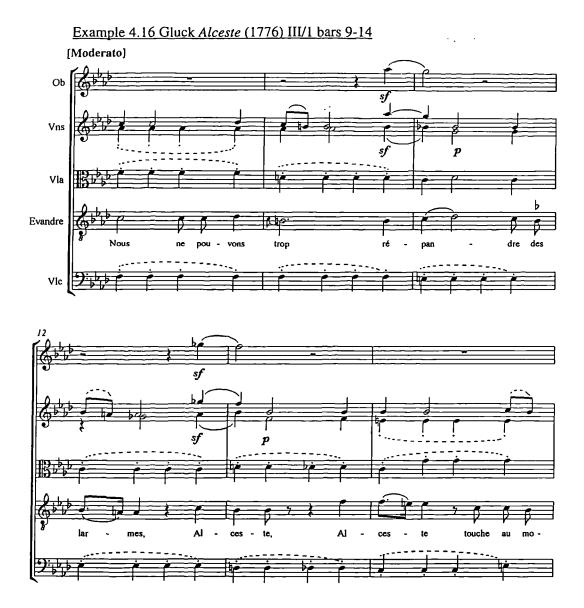
Example 4.14 J.C. Bach *Lucio Silla* I/7 bars 16-19

A diatonically descending bass line is employed very effectively by Traetta in *Antigona* (1772) Act II Scene 1, where a secret burial ceremony at night is taking place (see overleaf):[19]

Example 4.15 Traetta *Antigona* II/1 bars 32-39

In Gluck's *Alceste* (1776) Act III Scene 1 a fully chromatic descent from tonic to dominant is a clear indication of lamentation at the death of Alceste, enhanced by the chromaticism in the vocal line (see overleaf):[20]

Example 4.16 Gluck *Alceste* (1776) III/1 bars 9-14

One aspect of the *ombra* style that has little to do with instability is the use of repeated notes and pedals. It might be thought that such devices would represent a highly stable force, since both involve a focus on a single note. In practice, however, their appearance in a supernatural context provides a firm foundation against which other features are heard as disruptive. At the same time, they have their own expressive value. Repeated notes figure very prominently in eighteenth-century *ombra* scenes, and are highly suitable for conveying a sense of imminent danger.[21] At a psychological level there may well be associations with a heartbeat or footsteps, both of which are linked to a fear response. The insistent repetition of lower frequency sounds certainly relates to heartbeats because of the sympathetic vibrations produced in the chest cavity. A regular rhythm imitating footsteps can indicate some approaching menace, but may also

be associated with solemn processions such as funerals or other quasi-religious ceremonials. This footstep/heartbeat idea may lie behind Gluck's thinking in *Sémiramis* No.8. In one passage, repeated chords are used to accompany the approach of Sémiramis towards the altar:[22]

Example 4.17 Gluck *Sémiramis* No. 8 bars 14-20

This is not especially menacing in itself, and the repeated notes here would seem to represent footsteps, but after a six-bar section depicting thunder and lightning, during which the altar and the statue of Ninus are cast down, everyone flees the temple with a much faster repeated note pattern in the bass:

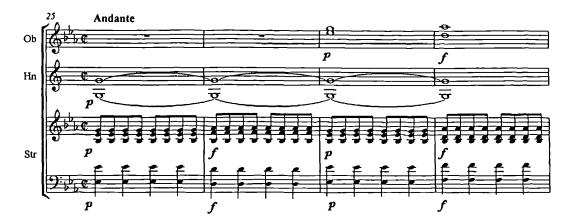Example 4.18 Gluck *Sémiramis* No. 8 bars 27-32

This urgent thudding is consistent with a quickening of the heartbeat, and not only conveys the panic of the crowd but attempts to arouse a corresponding effect in the audience.

The idea of repeated bass notes as a 'heartbeat' motif seems especially appropriate when there is a distressed heroine on stage, as in Mozart's *Mitridate*, where in Act III Scene 4, Aspasia

contemplates suicide. The introduction to her cavatina 'Pallid' ombre' anticipates her anxiety by the repeated bass crotchets in combination with alternating loud and soft bars, the introduction of horns and oboes and the key of E flat major:[23]

Example 4.19 Mozart *Mitridate* III/4 bars 25-28

In *Lucio Silla*, however, the repeated notes that end Act I Scene 8 are there to represent the measured tread of the approaching funeral procession:[24]

Example 4.20 Mozart *Lucio Silla* I/7 bars 58-60

As Giunia leads the chorus of mourners onto the stage at the start of the following scene, the bass idea is retained, but more slowly, and after a few bars the quavers return as the chorus becomes more animated in its expression of grief (see overleaf):

Example 4.21 Mozart *Lucio Silla* I/8 bars 1-12

It is worth comparing this with the corresponding scenes in J.C. Bach's version of *Lucio Silla*, written three years later in 1775. He uses the same music twice to represent the approach and subsequent arrival of the procession, but the repeated bass note pattern is still in evidence:[25]

Example 4.22 J.C. Bach *Lucio Silla* I/7 (No.6a) bars 1-4

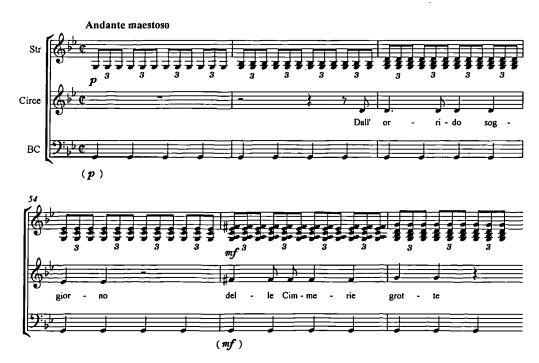In most cases, the repeated notes in the bass have no such direct associations as heartbeats or footsteps, but simply form a feature for other more unstable devices to work around. In the overture to Salieri's *Les Danaïdes* (1784), they underpin a texture which includes syncopation, contrasting dynamics, dark scoring (the only wind instruments being bassoons and trombones) and pauses, all in the key of D minor (see overleaf):[26]

Example 4.23 Salieri *Les Danaïdes* Overture bars 1-12

Pedal points work in a similar way, but without any change in pitch at all. In the case of Circe's incantation aria in Gluck's *Telemaco* (1765) Act II Scene 2, the only contrasts are provided by the changing harmonies, especially the diminished seventh chord in bar 55 (see overleaf):[27]

Example 4.24 Gluck *Telemaco* II/2 bars 51-6

Repeated notes as a pedal can be used in combination with a rising or falling chromatic line.[28] Piccinni does this with a rising chromatic line in *Atys* Act III Scene 8, where there is a mourning chorus in E flat major, sung 'a demie voix' [sic] (see overleaf):[29]

Example 4.25 Piccinni *Atys* (1780) III/8 'O spectacle funeste' bars 1-7

A falling chromatic line is effectively counterpoised by a rising diatonic line in Traetta's *Antigona* Act I Scene 2, all over a tonic pedal, again for a chorus expressing grief (see overleaf):[30]

Example 4.26 Traetta *Antigona* II/1 bars 153-162

In Mozart's *Idomeneo* Act III Scene 6 in the introduction to the chorus 'O voto tremendo' a similar procedure is adopted. The rising triplet figuration and the crescendo over the tonic pedal lead to the climactic choral entry. The chromatic ascent is emphasised by all the woodwind instruments, a technique which he later exploited in *Don Giovanni* (see overleaf):[31]
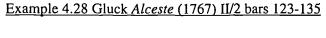
Example 4.27 Mozart *Idomeneo* III/6 bars 1-6

STILE ANTICO AND ORACLE SCENES

The association between *ombra* and the *stile antico* is most evident in those scenes in which an oracle makes a pronouncement. Characteristic features are present in the melodic line, bass line and harmony which derive from ecclesiastical music, as will be seen in the examples below. The oracle represents, as it were, a voice from heaven, and must be awe-inspiring; hence the use of a style which has associations both with ancient grandeur and religious mysticism. Its presence on the stage in the context of a pseudo-religious ceremony would have been instantly recognisable to an audience.[32] There might appear to be a contradiction here between the ecclesiastical and the infernal, but both are really different manifestations of the supernatural, with mystical, other-worldly associations. The frequent use of monotones in the melodic line relates back to chanting and reciting-notes in church, but the slower tempo of these utterances makes them more awe-inspiring. Monotones also function like the pedal notes considered in earlier examples, in that they provide a stable reference point against which other more unsettling characteristics are brought into play, such as harmonic dissonance and chromaticism.

What might be thought of as a church-related style is evident in the infernal scenes in Monteverdi's *Orfeo* and Cesti's *Il Pomo d'Oro*, with an ensemble of cornetti, trombones and regal playing in a predominantly homophonic texture with suspensions preceding the cadences, creating a sort of demonic church organ effect.[33] Whether consciously or unconsciously, Gluck recreates a similar effect in writing his oracle scenes. Two examples in the first version of *Alceste* (in Act I Scene 4 and Act II Scene 1) have already been discussed, but the latter is interesting because of the way it continues after the oracular utterance.[34] The chorus of unseen infernal spirits holds steadfastly to a monotone, while the orchestra (including three trombones) provides a rich homophonic accompaniment.[35] The diminished seventh chord at bar 129 comes as a surprise, and the chromatic downward sliding progression at bars 131-2 creates a moment of true pathos. The slower note values and repeated plagal cadences at the end again provide the 'ecclesiastical' feel (see overleaf):

Example 4.28 Gluck *Alceste* (1767) II/2 bars 123-135

This type of writing must already have been familiar to Gluck's audience, since in one of his earliest operas, *L'Ivrogne corrigé* (1760), he sends the style up. In Act II Scene 4, one of the 'Furies' (actually a neighbour in disguise) makes a mock pronouncement (see overleaf):

Example 4.29 Gluck *L'Ivrogne corrigé* II/4 bars 42-52

The melodic line, tempo, rhythm and sustained accompaniment, even without trombones, make the reference very clear, and in this light-hearted context Gluck is tapping into something that audiences could identify. These examples served as models for similar scenes in Gluck's Paris operas, most notably in his reworking of *Alceste* (1776).

In *Iphigénie en Aulide* (1774) Act I Scene 2, the High Priest Calchas makes an important pronouncement:[36]

Example 4.30 Gluck *Iphigénie en Aulide* (1774) I/2 bars 51-4

Although not a supernatural character himself, Calchas acts as the intermediary to the Gods and is therefore speaking on their behalf, thus fulfilling the function of an oracle. A slow tempo is established, and he intones first on F natural then on E, leading to an 'ecclesiastical' cadence with a 4-3 suspension. The accompaniment is for strings only, which could be taken as an indication that, in Gluck's view, Calchas as a mortal lacks the power of a true oracle and does not merit a weightier accompaniment. G major is certainly not a portentous key.

Gluck uses this style in a slightly different way in *Iphigénie en Tauride* (1779), in the middle of an aria for Thoas in Act I, 'De noirs pressentiments'. The 'voice that cries in his heart' is pronouncing his fate, and after a dramatic pause, he quotes the dreadful words:[37]

Example 4.31 Gluck *Iphigénie en Tauride* (1779) I 'De noirs pressentiments' bars 66-76

The tempo slows from andante to lento, and there is an unexpected shift from C sharp minor to a unison D. Horns are added, but the texture is sparse (just octaves), as the vocal line intones on a high d. Again there is no supernatural character on the stage, but Gluck succeeds in conveying the portent of the message by what amounts to a topical reference to his own well-established oracle style.

The influence of Gluck's oracle writing is very evident in Mozart's *Idomeneo* (1781) Act III Scene 10. The sea god Neptune decrees Idomeneo's fate, and that of Ilia and Idamante, from below. Mozart's correspondence with his father Leopold at the time of composition is revealing:[38]

> Tell me, don't you think that the speech of the subterranean voice is too long? Consider it carefully. Picture to yourself the theatre, and remember that the voice must be terrifying – must penetrate – that the audience must believe that it really exists. Well, how can this effect be produced if the speech is too long, for in this case the listener will become more and more convinced that it means nothing? If the speech of the Ghost in *Hamlet* were not so long it would be far more effective. It is quite easy to shorten the speech of the subterranean voice and it will gain thereby more than it will lose.

It is possible that both Leopold and Wolfgang might recently have seen an adaptation of *Hamlet*, since it was performed at Salzburg on 13th October 1780 by Schikaneder's company.[39] Leopold certainly had some useful advice about the music for this scene:[40]

> I assume that you will choose low wind instruments to accompany the subterranean voice. How would it be if after the slight subterranean rumble the instruments sustained, or rather began to sustain, their notes piano and then made a crescendo such as might almost inspire terror, while after this and during the decrescendo the voice would begin to sing? And there might be a terrifying crescendo at every phrase uttered by the voice.

Mozart seems to have followed this advice. His response to this letter indicates his original concept for the instrumentation:[41]

> The accompaniment to the subterranean voice consists of five instruments only, that is, three trombones and two French horns, which are placed in the same quarter as that from which the voice proceeds. At this point the whole orchestra is silent.

The strength of his opinion on this led to a disagreement with Count Seeau, the intendant of the court opera at Mannheim, about the inclusion of trombones, for which extra expenditure would have been necessary:[42]

> In addition to many other minor rows with Count Seeau I have had a desperate fight with him about the trombones. I call it a desperate fight, because I had to be rude to him, or I should never have got my way.
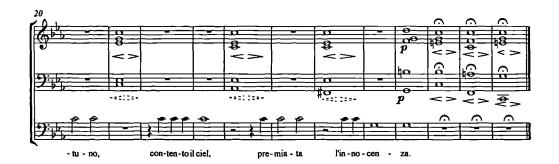
It seems that in the end, Mozart might not have got his way, as a version for Leopold's 'low wind instruments' – i.e. pairs of horns, clarinets and bassoons, but no trombones – is in the Munich performing score.[43]

All this accounts for the existence of four different versions of the music for Neptune.[44] All are slow and in C minor. No. 28a (using the numbering in *NMA*) is the shortest, without Leopold's suggested dynamic effects, but with a dotted rhythmic pattern rather than the sustained single chords in the other versions. The vocal line is a straightforward recitation on either tonic or dominant for most of the time, but ending on the raised mediant for a very ecclesiastical tierce de Picardie, complete with a 4-3-2-3 suspension. This ornamental suspension also appears in No. 28b at bar 21, but not in the last two. Nos. 28b, c and d are of greater length, substantially so in the case of 28c, which is the setting of Varesco's full text that Mozart felt was too long. These longer versions produce more variety in the vocal line, but this is achieved mainly because of the modulations. Within each key, the voice adheres principally to the notes of the tonic triad, and leading-notes are significantly absent (see overleaf):

Example 4.32 Mozart *Idomeneo* (1781) III/10 (*NMA* 28d)

As far as the harmony is concerned, nearly all the chords are in root position, as though to add greater authority to the words of the deity.[45] The only dissonances are provided by the occasional suspension and diminished seventh chord. This is the only scene in any of Mozart's operas that can be classified as an oracle scene, but there are allusions to this style of writing in his mature operas, where some 'oracle' characteristics appear in different contexts.

CONCLUSION

Composers wishing to unsettle their audiences could do so by the use of dissonance in their harmony and discontinuity in their linear writing. In the cases considered here, the tonal centre was frequently undermined, but not usually shifted. The effect was often achieved by the juxtaposition of stable and unstable elements, such as chromaticism versus pedal points. Certain

conventional practices had to be maintained, but the boundaries of what might be considered acceptable were pushed back.

The music written for eighteenth-century oracle scenes can be regarded as a subset of the *ombra* style. It differs from other *ombra* scenes principally in the melodic content, which is limited to a few notes and frequently stays on a monotone, but is calculated to produce an awe-inspiring effect, especially in combination with low tessitura, dark instrumentation and contrasting dynamics, factors which will be considered in the following chapters. After Gluck's powerful oracle scenes, there was a gradual cross-fertilisation with other types of supernatural scene, culminating in the music for the Statue in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, which draws heavily on those features originally associated with oracle scenes.

CHAPTER FIVE

Tempo and Rhythm: Slow tempo, fluctuating tempo, pauses. Motifs, ostinati, dotted rhythms, syncopation. Dactylic rhythms and *versi sdruccioli*.
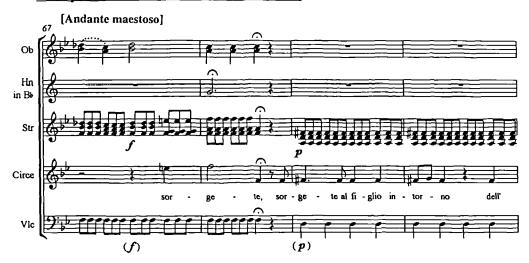
TEMPO

References to the *ombra* style are invariably at a slow or moderate tempo. Some supernatural occurrences require faster music (such as storms, conflagrations, dances of demons etc.), and in later eighteenth-century music the style which became known as 'Sturm und Drang' was employed because of this association.[1] In Chapter One, it was seen that *ombra* shares some characteristics with this style, but the significant difference is tempo. All the other styles that overlap with *ombra* (lament, church style, fantasia and *Empfindsamkeit*) are normally at a slower tempo, and it is clear that a slow tempo is the most appropriate way to convey a sense of awe and mystery. The aim of the composer is usually to create an atmosphere of creeping terror rather than sudden panic. The question remains as to how slow such music should be. *Ombra* scenes range in tempo from lento/adagio to andante/moderato, so it might be more accurate to say that *ombra* music is never fast. Indications of tempo in the eighteenth century can only be taken as a rough guide, and issues of performance practice need to be borne in mind when considering what the 'right' tempo should be.[2]

One way in which composers could add to the discontinuities in tonality and harmony was to change the tempo several times in one scene. The lack of a regular pulse and a constant shifting of speed (including short bursts of fast music) contribute to the audience's sense of disquiet. The *ombra* scenes of Handel, Hasse and Jommelli were written as accompanied recitatives, where the lack of a rigid rhythmic framework allowed for such flexibility. Typically, they incorporated at least two changes of tempo.[3] Later composers continued to vary the tempo even when the metre was more regular.

The use of pauses was another method by which composers could break up the flow of the music by interrupting the regular pulse, either by lengthening a note or a rest. It is difficult to know how long such pauses might have been held, if indeed there was any consistency from one performance to the next, but they were a valuable device for creating the dramatic effect of expectancy. One way of doing this was to pause on a chord that needed to be resolved, such as a dominant seventh or chromatic chord. Another was to interrupt a strong harmonic progression with an extended rest. A sudden silence after a lengthy (and perhaps noisy) passage is as surprising as an unexpected loud chord in a quiet one. In Circe's incantation aria 'Ombre tacite e chete' in Gluck's *Telemaco* (1765) Act II Scene 2 there are two pauses.[4] The first comes on her

command to the infernal spirits to arise, and is on the dominant of an ambiguous B flat major/minor:

Example 5.1 Gluck *Telemaco* II/2 bars 67-70

The pause here leads the audience to wonder if the spirits are about to appear. When they fail to do so, the music moves off again on an entirely unexpected D major chord (which subsequently becomes a dominant seventh chord in G minor). The second pause is a silence following an extended quiet passage on the dominant of G minor:

Example 5.2 Gluck *Telemaco* bars 94-103

This time the harmony after the pause is unchanged, but the dynamic is loud, the figuration is more rapid (semiquavers rather than the triplet quavers that have been virtually constant from the beginning) and horns and oboes are added. The result is a final burst of energy for the climax of the spell. In both these cases, the pause itself has an important function dramatically, and the continuation afterwards enhances the effect by producing something surprising.

Pauses on chords and on rests are an important feature in Gluck's *Sémiramis* No. 10, discussed earlier.[5] The silences occur before the introduction of new material at a loud dynamic (bars 11 and 30), giving greater impact to the 'masculine' gestures for the ghost of Ninus. The chords held are both diminished sevenths, and come at the end of the 'feminine' passages associated with Sémiramis (bars 19 and 25), allowing the audience to dwell on her suffering.

In Haydn's *L'anima del Filosofo* (1791) Act IV Scene 1, a compound metre is used for the chorus of 'unhappy mournful shades', but in the key of F minor, suggesting a conflict of signals between the pastoral and the infernal. In the opening section the rhythmic flow is twice broken by pauses:[6]

Example 5.3 Haydn *L'anima del Filosofo* IV/1 bars 10-26

In bars 23-4, the effect is clearly intended to emphasise the single word 'mai', especially as the second pause is longer and louder than the first. As with the pauses for Sémiramis, these interruptions present an opportunity for audience reflection, and serve to arouse a sympathetic emotional response.

MOTIFS

Certain motifs appear with some frequency in *ombra* scenes. The most common is the tremolando, associated with fear and agitation. The analogy with physical shaking of the body is obvious, and there are also opportunities for comic allusions (knocking knees, chattering teeth etc.). As a convention, tremolando was well-established as a pictorial device by the eighteenth century, although not solely to express fear.[7] As a weapon in the expressive armoury of composers of *ombra* scenes it is widely used. The following is a small selection in which tremolandi are used to convey several different, though obviously related, ideas.[8]

In Gluck's *Alceste* Act III Scene 2, tremolando string writing is used (with sustained trombones) to create 'un suono spaventole' which frightens Ismene, Evandro and Admeto as they approach the Underworld.[9] A similar string figuration accompanies the chorus of Demons soon afterwards, and returns at the end of the scene immediately before the death of Alceste:[10]

Example 5.4 Gluck *Alceste* (1767) III/2 bars 330-338

In J.C. Bach's *Amadis de Gaule* (1779) Act II Scene 2, the sorceress Arcabonne approaches the tomb of her dead brother Ardan Canile and addresses him to the accompaniment of string tremolandi:[11]

Example 5.5 J.C. Bach *Amadis de Gaule* (1779) II/2 bars 175-184

In this context, the tremolando effect combines with the *fp* markings to produce an eerie atmosphere, designed to prepare the audience for the supernatural encounter to come, namely the shade of Ardan Canile rising from the tomb. In the next scene, tremolandi are again used, this time specifically to express the fear of the chorus at having beheld this spectacle:[12]

Example 5.6 J.C. Bach *Amadis de Gaule* (1779) II/3 bars 48-53

Tremolandi are sometimes used as a pictorial device to colour someone's account of something horrifying. This can be seen in Piccinni's *Iphigénie en Tauride* (1781) Act II Scene 2 when Orestes describes to his companion Pilade his vision of Hell opening up to take vengeance on him for his crime:[13]

Example 5.7 Piccinni *Iphigénie en Tauride* (1781) II/2 bars 43-53

Whenever a character utters the words 'io tremo', 'je frémis' or some other expression of fear, a tremolando is virtually obligatory. A typical example is in Philidor's *Ernelinde* (1767), when Ernelinde is confronted by the ghostly apparition of her beloved, whom she imagines to be dead:[14]

Example 5.8 Philidor *Ernelinde* II/10 bars 17-24

In the case of Haydn's *Armida* (1783) Act I Scene 3, he adopts a more imaginative approach by turning the idea into a rhythmic motif (see Example 4.13)

Mozart shows the same kind of response to the text in *La Clemenza di Tito* (1791) Act II Scene 10, although here the reason for Sesto's fear is not caused by the supernatural:[15]

Example 5.9 Mozart *La Clemenza di Tito* II/10 bars 1-16

The tremolandi for Sesto are counterpoised by the majestic dotted rhythm for Tito, who is to decide his fate. An earlier example of Mozart's use of tremolandi is in the recitative after Aspasia's cavatina 'Pallid' ombre' in Act III Scene 4 of *Mitridate, Re di Ponto*:[16]

Example 5.10 Mozart *Mitridate, Re di Ponto* III/4 bars 95-109

The first instance is occasioned by the trembling of her hand (bars 96-100), and the second by her cry 'Oh timor' (bars 104-7). The faster tempo and dynamic effects in the latter contribute to the increasing sense of panic.

One final example illustrates the use of a tremolando figure as part of an ostinato. In Gluck's *Armide* (1777) Act III Scene 5, Armide is left alone on stage having had an unpleasant encounter with the allegorical character Hate and her attendants, whom she herself had summoned with magic:[17]

Example 5.11 Gluck *Armide* III/5 bars 2-6

The texture is very sparse, with the tremolando element accented each time. A strong descending bass line is added below, chromatic at first, and a sustained note above in the oboe. This material is repeated for Armide's next phrase, 'Je frémis, tout mon sang se glace'. Only when she appeals to Love to calm her terror does the ostinato disappear briefly, but it quickly returns to provide a highly disturbing end to the act.

Another common figure is the 'sigh' motif or 'Seufzer', an idea originally associated with the sighs of lovers in Italian madrigals. The physical act of sighing is captured in the music, in the same way that shaking is depicted by tremolandi. This is not unlike the heartbeat/footstep idea suggested by repeated notes discussed earlier.[18] In eighteenth-century music the sigh motif often

featured in the 'Empfindsamer Stil', and is regarded by some writers as a separate topic.[19] In the context of *ombra* music, it is used to depict sighs of sorrow or despair, generally in association with heroines in distress. One instance has already been discussed in Gluck's *Sémiramis* No. 10.[20] Almost contemporaneous with this is Philidor's *Tom Jones* (1765-6), where at one point Sophia finds herself abandoned in the middle of the night. Her aria 'respirons un moment' (Act III No 18) has an introduction with three different sigh motifs, as well as syncopations and harmonic dissonances to express her fear:[21]

Example 5.12 Philidor *Tom Jones* III (No. 18) bars 1-13

The first of these is the Lombardic figure in bars 1 and 3, then the ostinato that begins at bar 5 and finally the quavers in bar 13. Later in the same aria, these three figures return as Sophia's fear begins to grow, but with a fourth sighing gesture in crotchets beforehand:

Example 5.13 Philidor *Tom Jones* III (No. 18) bars 26-43

Jommelli has frequent recourse to sigh motifs when his heroines have supernatural encounters, such as this passage in *Ifigenia in Tauride* (1771) near the end of Act I, which is very similar to the ostinato at bar 5 in the previous example:[22]

Example 5.14 Jommelli *Ifigenia in Tauride* I recit: 'Che resister potria' bars 38-42

It would be true to say that Jommelli tends to prefer this kind of 'sigh ostinato', but as the Philidor example shows, there are several possible variants on the basic idea. Traetta uses two different ones in succession in *Antigona* (1772) at the opening of the night burial scene (Act II Scene 1):[23]

Example 5.15 Traetta *Antigona* II/1 bars 1-7

In a similarly funereal setting, Mozart was clearly prompted by the text when he introduced sighing gestures to the vocal line in Giunia's aria 'O del padre ombra diletta' in *Lucio Silla* Act I Scene 8:[24]

Example 5.16 Mozart *Lucio Silla* I/8 bars 61-8

Sigh motifs for distressed male characters are more unusual, but two examples from the early 1780s illustrate that such gestures are not entirely a female preserve. One is to be found in the melodrama of Mozart's *Zaide* (1780) Act I Scene 2 bars 11-13, discussed earlier.[25] Another is in Piccinni's *Iphigénie en Tauride* (1781) Act II Scene 2, as Orestes expresses his wish to die:[26]

Example 5.17 Piccinni *Iphigénie en Tauride* II/2 bars 22-25

RHYTHMIC PATTERNS

Dotted rhythms are frequently used in *ombra* music. The uneven rhythm, like the tremolando, is a means by which to express fear and agitation, and there may even be an underlying suggestion of

an irregular heartbeat. But when combined with other march-like characteristics, such as triadic melodic lines (associated with fanfares), the effect is one of awe and majesty. There is a direct link here with the French overture, which has its origins in ceremonial music for Louis XIV.[27] It is therefore entirely appropriate as a gesture to show the power of supernatural forces such as oracles, ghosts and walking statues. The link between dotted rhythms in overtures and *ombra* scenes can sometimes be difficult to disentangle. Audiences came to expect dotted rhythms in overtures as a ceremonial topical reference, so they have little impact in an overture where a composer might wish to express something more sinister, unless they appear in combination with other *ombra* characteristics. However, their appearance in *ombra* music is a reminder of this majestic association to the listener. There is therefore a complex meld of agitation and awe wrapped up in the use of dotted rhythms as part of an *ombra* reference. This is evident in Gluck's *Iphigénie en Aulide* (1774) Act I Scene 2 where the high priest Calchas works himself into a frenzy as he addresses the goddess Diana:[28]

Example 5.18 Gluck *Iphigénie en Aulide* I/2 bars 55-64

At bar 61, the vocal line has an animated dotted figure to show the agitation that Calchas feels. The semiquaver ostinato in the strings gives way to dotted figuration in bar 62 as Calchas, 'en fremissant', reaches the climax of his phrase. Both of these gestures might be interpreted as a straightforward piece of word-painting, but the dotted rhythm also serves to convey the majestic

element in the pronouncement he is making. The unison writing at the end certainly lends greater weight to the words.

A similar kind of interplay is at work in Mozart's *Idomeneo* Act III Scene 6. The dotted rhythm of the chorus at the words 'spettacolo orrendo' is accompanied by a different dotted motif on horns, trumpets and timpani, one usually associated with the ceremonial in Mozart's music:[29]

Example 5.19 Mozart *Idomeneo* III/6 (No. 24) bars 9-10

This dual interpretation may also lie behind the use of dotted rhythms in one version of the oracle scene in Act III Scene 10 (No. 28a in *NMA*), although the ceremonial aspect here is rather closer to solemn ritual:[30]

Example 5.20 Mozart *Idomeneo* III/10 (No. 28a) bars 1-5

When the context does not involve any reference to the majestic, dotted rhythms can act as a simple alternative to tremolandi as an expression of fear, and sometimes both are used in succession to provide some contrast. The slow dotted rhythms and sparse texture in the introduction to Act III Scene 3 of Gluck's *Alceste* (1776) convey Alceste's sense of trepidation as she approaches the gates of Hell:[31]

Example 5.21 Gluck *Alceste* (1776) III/3 1-17

Louder and livelier dotted rhythms appear in bars 10-11 as she apparently finds her courage. A few bars later, as her doubts begin to assail her once more, Gluck turns to tremolandi. Haydn also makes use of both devices in his aria *Aria di Beatrice*, in which the character Beatrice encounters the ghost of her father:[32]

Example 5.22 Haydn *Aria di Beatrice* bars 28-38

The introduction of tremolandi at bar 30 coincides with a shift towards B flat minor and occasional loud chords in an otherwise soft dynamic, a very clear portrayal of fear. The threatening presence of the ghost is vividly conveyed by the writing in octaves in bars 36-8, loud upward scales answered by soft descending dotted notes.

Syncopation is even more effective than dotted rhythms as a destabilising influence, because the regular beat is undermined further. The throbbing effect of a strong syncopated pattern is another way by which a possible allusion to a pulsating heartbeat can be made. Most commonly syncopation is used as an accompanying figure, providing a rhythmic counterpoint to the melody and bass. The slow introduction to the overture of Salieri's *Les Danaïdes* (1784) uses syncopation in precisely this way (see Example 4.23). Mozart usually adopts the same kind of approach. In *Lucio Silla* Act I Scene 7, Cecilio's accompanied recitative 'Morte, morte fatal' is introduced with a syncopated figure in 1ˢᵗ violins against semiquaver figuration in 2ⁿᵈ violins:[33]

Example 5.23 Mozart *Lucio Silla* I/7 bars 1-4

In the funeral chorus 'Fuor di queste' at the start of the following scene, a syncopated string motif is a prominent feature:[34]

Example 5.24 Mozart *Lucio Silla* I/8 bars 12-15

In *La Finta Giardiniera* the reference is tongue-in-cheek, as a group of characters find themselves in a dark wood:[35]

Example 5.25 Mozart *La Finta Giardiniera* II/16 bars 1-4

The motif recurs in bars 14 and 17-18, with the addition of a wavering demisemiquaver idea. In all these cases, the syncopated element forms part of a more complex texture, but it can be very effective on its own. According to the libretto published in Vienna in 1767 for Gluck's *Alceste*, the music at the start of Act III Scene 3 expresses 'terror and dismay', immediately following the death of Alceste:[36]

Example 5.26 Gluck *Alceste* (1767) III/3 bars 1-6

The syncopation is a foreground feature here, as there is no melodic material whatsoever, although much of the dramatic impact is provided by the instrumentation (horns and trombones) and the alternation of loud and soft dynamics. There follows a large-scale tableau of mourning.

Gluck uses syncopation as part of a strong rhythmic ostinato in *Armide* Act III Scene 3 for Armide's incantation aria 'Venez, venez, Haine implacable'. Again the scoring (bassoons and horns this time) and the dynamics are important contributory factors:[37]

Example 5.27 Gluck *Armide* III/3 bars 1-4

In some cases, syncopations and dotted rhythms are found in juxtaposition or even simultaneously to increase the effect of rhythmic instability. In Salieri's *Les Danaïdes*, at the start of Act II, the Danaïdes wake in 'an underground place in the palace dedicated to Nemesis'. Their sense of foreboding is evident in the alternation of syncopations and dotted rhythms, along with the slow tempo, crescendo effects and the three trombones:[38]

Example 5.28 Salieri *Les Danaïdes* (1784) II bars 1-16

The effect of combining powerful and majestic choral writing with a fearful response provided by syncopated violins is seen in Traetta's *Ifigenia in Tauride* Act II Scene 4, where a chorus of Furies is tormenting Orestes in a subterranean vault:[39]

Example 5.29 Traetta *Ifigenia in Tauride* II/4 'Chi può frenar le lagrime' bars 1-4

Two rhythmic patterns occur very frequently in *ombra* scenes: ♩ ♪♩ and ♩ ♩♩, both of which can be described as dactylic, in that a stressed beat is followed by two weaker ones. The association between dactylic rhythms and the supernatural lies in Italian verse metres, and in *quinari sdruccioli* in particular. In most Italian poetry, *versi piani* are the norm, with the stress on the penultimate syllable.[40] In *versi sdruccioli*, however, the stress is followed by two weak beats (*sdrucciolo* translates as 'sliding'). A *quinario* is a line of five syllables, but in *quinari sdruccioli* the result is six syllables with the last two unstressed. Writing about the use of *versi sdruccioli* in seventeenth-century invocation scenes, Ellen Rosand observes:[41]

> Fundamental to its identity as a convention, this distinctive meter not only affected the musical setting of invocations but distinguished them from the rest of the operatic text. In addition to its meter, the invocation also involved a distinctive scenic dimension, requiring an infernal or magical setting of its own. In fact, the convention may have originated in part as an excuse for scenic contrast in the early operas. Finally, such scenes often included choruses, either alone or interacting with the soloist.

The poet Cicognini provided verses in this metre specifically for Medea's incantation scene in Cavalli's *Giasone* (1648) Act I Scene 14, where she summons the spirits of the Underworld. This famous scene '…probably serves as a metrical and musical model for the composition of analogous scenes in other operas…'.[42] Cavalli's setting of Medea's aria 'Dell' antro magico' underlines the metre by repeating the *sdrucciolo* rhythm insistently, accompanied by a sparse chordal texture:[43]

Example 5.30 Cavalli *Giasone* I/14 bars 1-21

By restricting the notes of the melodic line to monotones and simple triads, greater emphasis is given to the rhythm. This characteristic of the melody has already been seen to appear in eighteenth-century oracle scenes.[44] Rosand notes that the invocation scene lasted well into the nineteenth century with little stylistic change, and goes on to say:[45]

> Because of its strong metric associations, the invocation imposed greater strictures on composers than any of the other dramatic conventions. While this rigidity may have limited its usefulness, it also contributed something to its effect: unchanging and thus increasingly primitive in its power, its very stylistic anomaly evoked a sense of dark antiquity.

By association with invocations, some other conventional scenes involving magic or demons displayed the same characteristics, both in the metre and the musical setting.[46] The scene in Cavalli's *Giasone* is important, therefore, not only as a model for incantations specifically, but for supernatural references in general. Rosand points out that:[47]

> ... the *sdrucciolo* appealed to something quite fundamental in human experience. It persisted for a long time and in several languages, not only in Italian but in German as well. Its basis was evidently in the affective impact of the accent itself.

This would certainly help to explain its survival into the eighteenth century, despite the many other stylistic changes that took place. The most celebrated of *sdrucciolo* settings in the eighteenth century was Gluck's chorus for the Furies 'Chi mai dell' Erebo' in Act II Scene 1 of *Orfeo ed Euridice* (1762), which is examined in detail below.[48] So popular was this scene, that it is tempting to ascribe subsequent references to the style as a direct imitation of this one instance, but the historical evidence would suggest that any such references probably derive from earlier practice. Audiences must already have been familiar with the style when they first heard *Orfeo*. Traetta was directly influenced by Gluck, and in *Antigona* (1772) Act II Scene 1 his setting of the words 'O voi dell' erebo' bears a strong similarity.[49] Later in the same chorus, the identical rhythm returns for 'Le nostre lacrime', but with a new chromatic progression (see Example 4.26). Naumann's chorus for the Furies in *Orpheus og Euridyke* (1787) Act II Scene 1 uses the rhythm in the same context as Gluck, but again this does not necessarily indicate that the idea was borrowed directly:[50]

Example 5.31 Naumann *Orpheus og Euridyke* (1787) II/1 bars 258-261

These examples serve to demonstrate that the association of dactylic/*sdrucciolo* rhythms with the supernatural was a widely understood convention for more than a century. The characteristics were certainly sufficiently well established to be the subject of parody, such as Paisiello's *Socrate Immaginario* (1775) Act II Scene 10.[51] Comparisons were and are drawn with Gluck's *Orfeo*, but while it was undoubtedly highly influential, it cannot be held wholly responsible for the dissemination of the style.

As observed in Chapter 4, the music for oracle scenes is deliberately old-fashioned stylistically, and dactylic rhythms need to be added to the catalogue of antique references made on these occasions. Examples by Gluck of oracle-type writing that includes dactyls can be seen in *L'Ivrogne corrigé* (1760) Act II Scene 4 and *Alceste* (1767) Act II Scene 2, and in Thoas's aria 'De noirs pressentiments' in *Iphigénie en Tauride* (1779) Act I (see Examples 4.29, 4.28 and

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4.31). When he reworked the material for the oracle in the first version of *Alceste* for Paris, Gluck revised the vocal line so that a continuous dactylic rhythm was used, emphasised by the homorhythmic accompaniment:[52]

Example 5.32 Gluck *Alceste* (1776) I/4 bars 107-116

Even without the presence of an oracle, dactyls can be found when a composer wishes to make a supernatural reference. J.C. Bach uses a dactylic rhythm for the funereal chorus 'Fuor di queste urne dolenti' in *Lucio Silla* (1775) Act I Scene 8 (see overleaf):[53]

Example 5.33 J.C. Bach *Lucio Silla* **(1775) I/8 bars 15-18**

The opening scene of Gluck's *Orfeo* is echoed in Traetta's *Ifigenia in Tauride* (1763) Act II Scene 7 because of the slow tempo, the key of C minor and the repeated notes, but here there is more rhythmic impetus because of the dactylic rhythm[54]:

Example 5.34 Traetta *Ifigenia in Tauride* **II/7 bars 1-11**

CONCLUSION

Issues of tempo and rhythm are clearly important elements in the *ombra* style. The use of a slow
or at least moderate tempo is a vital ingredient in establishing a suitable atmosphere, with changes
of tempo designed to break up the flow. This can even include faster passages, but these should
be separately considered as referring to 'Sturm und Drang'. Pauses can be similarly disruptive,
whether by holding sounds for longer than expected, or introducing silences for dramatic effect.
The latter can be especially suitable for inspiring terror.

A complex web of psychological and referential signs lies behind apparently
straightforward rhythmical features. The use of conventional devices such as tremolandi and
'sigh' motifs helped to convey a sense of fear to the audience, but the origin of the convention
lies in musical depictions of human responses. Similarly, repeated notes can suggest a heartbeat
or footsteps, or perhaps both simultaneously as they are physical experiences that are linked with

a feeling of danger. Dotted rhythms and syncopations threaten the regularity of the main beats, and are themselves suggestive of a more excited heartbeat. Another convention was the association of the dactyl/*sdrucciolo* rhythm with the supernatural, which had gained widespread acceptance before Gluck, but became especially prominent after *Orfeo*. Again the reference has psychological origins, this time at the linguistic level. For speakers of Italian (at least at one time), the ending of a phrase on two weak beats is unnatural, and therefore appropriate for the supernatural. All these features are an integral and vital part of the semiotic code that causes audiences to respond emotionally to the music they hear.

CHAPTER SIX

Texture, dynamics and instrumentation: Monody/homophony/polyphony. Contrasts in dynamics, crescendo and diminuendo, 'double hairpins'. Scoring for strings, woodwind and brass (especially trombones).

TEXTURE

There is no single texture which can be said to be typical of the *ombra* style, but there are certain textures which appear more frequently than others. Passages in unison or octaves are quite common in order to make an emphatic gesture, and they often provide a contrast to a more complex texture. This is exemplified by the dotted rhythms in Haydn's *Aria di Beatrice* bars 36-8, which so vividly convey the menacing presence of her father's ghost (see Example 5.22). One of the more striking examples is the extended passage in octaves in Gluck's *Alceste* (1767) Act I Scene 4, where the same motif is reiterated in several different keys.[1] When the oboes, bassoons and trombones are added, the motif is sounded in four separate octaves (including double basses), with string tremolandi and sustained flutes thickening the texture:[2]

Example 6.1 Gluck *Alceste* (1767) I/4 bars 76-79

Unison writing for a chorus has a similar directness, as in Act III Scene 2, where the demons taunt Alceste as she arrives in the Underworld:[3]

Example 6.2 Gluck *Alceste* (1767) III/2 bars 251-7

The words of the chorus are very clear, and the repetition of dactylic rhythms adds to the effect. Other *ombra* characteristics, such as the key of G minor, string tremolandi and diminished seventh harmony (bar 255) make this a powerful statement. Choruses for Furies or demons are usually sung either in unison or homophonically, but this is not necessarily matched by the accompaniment. The clarity of the text is important, as such choruses are normally part of a confrontational dialogue, and for this to work dramatically the chorus is best treated as a single character. Greater emphasis is given to the words, which is ideal for portentous pronouncements or incantations, an effect which can be enhanced by rich instrumentation such as horns and trombones. For this reason, homophonic textures are a typical feature of oracle scenes and passages in *versi sdruccioli*, and usually provide a strong contrast with the music that precedes and follows.[4]

Imitative writing is used only sparingly in *ombra* music, and again this may be because the words needed to be clear. Imitation is sometimes used in choruses of lamentation, however. Unlike a chorus of demons, a lamenting chorus aims principally to involve the audience in the emotional response to the death of a character, rather than to participate actively in the narrative. Since clarity of text is less important than expression in this situation, imitative textures can come into play. The ritualistic aspect of a lamenting chorus is further reflected by the 'antique' and ecclesiastical associations of imitation, and also the connotations of learned style. An example can be seen in Traetta's *Antigona* Act II Scene 1 bars 32-39, where a midnight burial is taking place, and the word 'ombra' is treated imitatively after a homophonic passage (see Example 4.15). A more unusual imitative texture involving nine separate vocal lines (five solo and four choral) appears in the mourning chorus 'O spectacle funeste' in Piccinni's *Atys* Act III Scene 8 (see Example 4.25). The shades in Act IV Scene 1 of Haydn's *L'anima del filosofo* are expressing

their miserable condition, so their chorus is much like a lament, again with imitative entries (see Example 5.3).

More complex textures are usually the result of a combination of different rhythmic features. Attention has already been drawn in Chapter 5 to the variety of rhythmic gestures made in *ombra* music, such as syncopation, dotted rhythms and tremolando, and these can be employed to produce a constantly shifting array of textures. This is another way for composers to bring a sense of discontinuity to the music. Traetta's *Ifigenia in Tauride* (1763) contains a scene in which Orestes falls asleep in an underground vault beneath the temple where he is to be sacrificed the next day. In his dreams the Furies torment him, and the ghost of his mother Clytemnestra, whom he has murdered, appears. The scenario is familiar from Jommelli's *ombra* scenes, but the musical setting is much closer to Gluck's *Orfeo*, which had enjoyed so much success in Vienna the previous year:[5]

Example 6.3 Traetta *Ifigenia in Tauride* II bars 1-36

Dor - mi Ore - ste Dor - mi Ore - ste ti

Dor - mi Ore - ste Dor - mi Ore - ste ti

Hn in E♭

Scuo - te ti des - ta ti scuo - te ti des - ta

Scuo - te ti des - ta ti scuo - te ti des - ta

Typical *ombra* characteristics are in evidence at the start (slow tempo, E flat major, and a descending conjunct bass line marked 'sotto voce'), but the dream-like quality of the action is conveyed by the variety in the textures. The off-beat semiquaver figuration in violins and oboes gives way to triplets in the strings punctuated by horns and oboes at bar 13. The dotted rhythms in bar 17 serve both as a call to attention (for the word 'desta') and to herald the entry of the ghost of Clytemnestra. In bars 19-26 the mood is darkened by another change in texture, with imitative choral entries, sustained horn writing and violin tremolando effects, with a strong suggestion of E flat minor over a dominant pedal. Further colour is added by the diminished seventh chords (bars 27 and 29) and rising chromatic scale figures (bars 32 and 34), with the chorus ending on the dominant as Orestes wakes from his dream.

Contrasts in texture can be used for characterisation. In Gluck's *Sémiramis* (1765) No.10, the ghost of Ninus draws the heroine into his tomb (see Example 3.9). The music reflects the unequal struggle by the juxtaposition of powerful gestures with weaker ones. Ninus is depicted by the loud block chords at the beginning and end, and the strident and angular melodic lines at bars 12-13 (played in four different octaves by violins, bassoons, cellos and double basses) and bars 25-27. Sémiramis is identified by the unaccompanied repeated notes on violins in bars 1-8 and the sighing figure in bars 16-19 and 28-30, all at a soft dynamic. The antiphonal passage in bars

21-25 can perhaps best be described as confrontational. The dramatic impact of this scene lies not just in the appearance of the ghost from the tomb, but also in the complete helplessness of Sémiramis. The audience identifies with her, and the feeling of terror is enhanced.

DYNAMICS

In his entry on dynamics in the *New Grove 2*, Matthias Thiemel states that:[6]

> In the mid-18th century a new concept of dynamics emerged in conjunction with the genres of the symphony and sonata. The tendency towards intensification and climaxes in the Classical style demanded a more flexible system of dynamics.

This ignores opera altogether and *ombra* scenes in particular. One of the most prominent and recurring features of the *ombra* style in stage music after 1760 is the use of dynamics.[7] Sudden accents, alternating loud and soft passages and crescendo/diminuendo effects are very common, and strongly contribute to the discontinuities found in tonality, harmony, line, tempo and rhythm. An unexpected loud outburst may be an obvious way to startle an audience, but this does not detract from the impact of such an effect in performance.[8]

Many of the examples already considered display loud and soft passages in juxtaposition, such as Gluck's *Sémiramis* No. 10, Mozart's *Zaide* Act I Scene 2, Gluck's *Alceste* Act III Scene 3 and Traetta's *Antigona* Act II Scene 1 (see Examples 3.9, 4.8, 5.26 and 5.15). Jommelli uses this technique in most of his *ombra* scenes. Towards the end of his life, he returned to what was for him the well-worn scenario of an imagined encounter with a ghost in one of his last operas, *Armida Abbandonata* (1770) Act II Scene 10. Inevitably there is a sudden shift to E flat major (from G major), but it is the constant oscillation of dynamic that provides the strongest effect:[9]

Example 6.4 Jommelli *Armida Abbandonata* II/10 bars 55-63

There is a connection with Mozart here, as he saw rehearsals of this opera in Naples and had the opportunity of meeting the composer, but in a letter to his sister shortly afterwards (dated 5th June 1770) he observed that the opera was 'beautiful, but too serious and old-fashioned for the theatre'.[10] Certainly Jommelli's *ombra* writing had changed little in thirty years, but since this was his first piece in Naples for a long time, perhaps he felt disinclined to change. In the same letter, Mozart was very complimentary about the singer who played the title role, Anna Lucia De Amicis. She was later to play Giunia in Mozart's *Lucio Silla* in Milan two years later, a work which also makes effective use of dynamic contrasts in a context involving death. Like Jommelli, Mozart uses E flat major and repeated notes in the bass for the chorus 'Fuor di queste urne dolenti' with alternations between loud and soft, enhanced by a marked difference in texture.[11] The first phrase in the following chorus is also given a loud/soft contrast, although there is nothing in the words themselves that merits this treatment. It is unlikely that a direct influence is at work here. Mozart is simply tapping into a widely recognised formula. His earlier *Mitridate* has plenty of this kind of alternation between soft and loud in Act III Scene 4 for Aspasia's cavatina 'Pallid' ombre' (see Example 4.19 for the opening bars).[12] The melodrama in *Zaide*

(Act I Scene 2) presents a constant alternation between loud and soft dynamics. Even a simple two-note sigh motif goes from p to f (see Example 4.8).

Gradual changes in dynamic are less unsettling than sudden changes, but can still be effective. The crescendo as a dramatic device is ubiquitous and cannot therefore be claimed exclusively as an *ombra* characteristic. Nevertheless, it is an ideal way to anticipate the appearance of some unnamed horror, especially when other *ombra* features are employed. The passage that leads into the mourning chorus at the start of Act I Scene 8 in Mozart's *Lucio Silla* illustrates this very well, with tremolandi, syncopations and repeated notes in the bass all contributing to the building tension (see Example 4.21). Similarly, the introductory bars to the chorus 'O voto tremendo' in *Idomeneo* Act III Scene 6 grow to a huge climax with the aid of a rising chromatic line, an ostinato figure and repeated notes in the bass (see Example 4.32).

Slightly more unusual is the 'double hairpin' or *messa di voce* effect on a single chord. In Philidor's *Ernelinde* (1767) Act II Scene 10, the heroine has been forced to choose between the lives of her father Rodoald or her beloved Sandomir. Having chosen the latter, she falls in a swoon, and as she recovers, she imagines an encounter with the groaning and bloodstained shade of Sandomir. After a short tremolando passage there is a change to a slower tempo as the hideous vision appears (see overleaf):[13]

Example 6.5 Philidor *Ernelinde* II/10 bars 22-30

The notation in the published source shows that after the initial crescendo of the solo horn, a 'double hairpin' effect is required.[14] In bar 26 the instructions *cresc* and *smorz* in the string parts are accompanied by a lopsided triangle notation for the oboes and horn(s), which by bar 29 has become an isosceles triangle. This is most probably an inconsistency by the engraver, and it is unlikely that the dynamics in these two bars are intended to be played differently. The text between these two bars, 'J'entens [sic] de long gémissements' makes it clear that the music is a depiction of the groans of her unhappy lover. The same idea is adopted in the long drawn-out chords in J.C. Bach's *Amadis de Gaule* Act II Scene 2 mentioned below, the three statements separated by 'Qu'entens-je [sic]?' and 'Quel gémissements sort de ce triste monument' (see Example 6.8). The 'double hairpins' on each chord in the four versions of Act III Scene 10 in Mozart's *Idomeneo* are not so obviously pictorial, but the effect is highly ominous nonetheless.[15]

INSTRUMENTATION

One of the most important ways for a composer to create an impression in a supernatural scene was to bring in instruments that could provide a suitable timbre. In Baroque opera, where accompanied recitative was the norm for *ombra* references, only strings and continuo were used, but during the middle part of the eighteenth century there was an increasing desire for composers to explore instrumental colour for certain types of scene, including supernatural encounters. There are some early instances of low-pitched string writing for these occasions, such as Lully's *Amadis* (1684) Act III Scene 3 and Charpentier's *Médée* (1693) Act III Scenes 5-7, but most composers up to and including Handel seem content not to differentiate these scenes from the rest by means of string timbre.[16] Hasse's *Artaserse* (1740) has an *ombra* scene at the end of Act II, where the tyrannical Artabone expresses his remorse after imagining the ghosts of his victims, including a vision of his own son (who is really still alive) ascending the scaffold. He uses only strings, but at the phrase 'Ah, che la pallida ombra' mutes are introduced, followed later by a pizzicato passage.[17] Mutes also feature in Traetta's *Antigona* Act II Scene 1 (see Example 5.15). Gluck normally employs vivid orchestration for his supernatural scenes, but an exception is the hell parody in *L'Ivrogne corrigé* Act II Scene 4 where he uses a low, six-part sustained string texture (see Example 4.29).

Jommelli was the first operatic composer regularly to exploit the special colouring of wind instruments for accompanied recitative passages in *ombra* scenes, sometimes in combination with the darker sonorities of divided violas. He would frequently introduce oboes, horns and bassoons either separately or in various combinations at the first reference to anything supernatural. In *Eumene* (1742) Act III Scene 6, the heroine Artemisia beholds a vision of her

dead husband. Oboes and horns open the scene, and later pairs of oboes and violas accompany the appearance of the ghost.[18] The same kinds of idea are employed in the aria which follows, 'Parmi già che s'appresta il mio bene'. At the end of Act II in *Tito Manlio*, the aria 'Ombre funeste e pallide' features short oboe phrases and solo horn writing, and in Act III Scene 10 Jommelli specifies 'trombe lunghe' in the accompanied recitative which precedes the aria 'Veggo un ombra che orribil' severa', although they do not play in the aria itself.[19] In the latter case, oboes and muted horns also contribute to a funeral march reference, occasioned by Tito Manlio envisaging his son being led to the scaffold. Jommelli clearly modelled his opera *Artaserse* (1749) on Hasse's version of 1740 in departing from Metastasio's libretto by inserting a large-scale *ombra* scene at the end of Act II.[20] This time violas and bassoons feature prominently, and they also appear in the middle section of the aria which follows, 'Ombre fiere, invan fremete'. *Artaserse* also has an Underworld scene (Act I Scene 3) with oboes, bassoons, horns and violas to darken the timbre. In *Merope* (1741) Act III Scene 10, the heroine imagines an encounter with the bloodstained ghost of her husband.[21]

Example 6.6 Jommelli *Merope* III/10 bars 13-24

Here the apparition is accompanied by restless semiquaver figuration in violins and horns (bar 13), followed shortly by a new idea, equally restless, in oboes and violas (bar 18). The change in mood is accomplished by the new instrumentation and texture, as well as the appearance of other *ombra* features, such as the word 'sanguinose' underlined by a diminished seventh chord, leading to a cadence in F minor (bar 24). A much later example by Jommelli, an *ombra* reference in *Armida Abbandonata* Act II Scene 10, shows him working to the same formula, with the introduction of sustained oboes and horns (and also violas) at the imagined appearance of the ghost (see Example 6.4).

Philidor adopts a similar approach to Jommelli for the *ombra* scene in *Ernelinde* Act II Scene 10, using oboes, horns and bassoons to produce a dark timbre. Traetta uses oboes and horns for the scene in *Ifigenia in Tauride* where Orestes is tormented by the Furies, Act II Scene 1 (see Example 3.7).

In J.C. Bach's *Amadis de Gaule* Act II Scene 3, at the point where the shade of Ardan Canile speaks from within his tomb, only bassoons are added to the sustained string writing:[22]

Example 6.7 J.C. Bach *Amadis de Gaule* II/3 bars 15-34

The lack of more interesting orchestration here is almost unaccountable, but the understated accompaniment lends an ethereal quality to the voice from the grave, as well as a contrast to the very rich orchestration just a few bars previously:[23]

Example 6.8 J.C. Bach *Amadis de Gaule* II/2 bars 186-193

This is an unusual and especially striking example of instrumental 'terracing'. The sound builds layer upon layer, beginning with the soft diminished triad on the three trombones, growing in dynamic and expanding in texture from three to eleven parts as the other wind instruments enter in turn, the oboes completing the full diminished seventh chord. The flutes and bassoons are last to enter with the highest and lowest notes of the chord respectively, before the process is reversed and the instruments gradually drop out, although not quite in the same order. This idea is heard three times in close succession, and makes for a very ominous effect in performance.

Arguably the most striking feature of much eighteenth-century *ombra* music is the appearance of trombones. Although Gluck and Mozart are usually credited with their introduction into the theatre, the tradition of using trombones to represent the supernatural is much older.[24] The Florentine *intermedi* of the sixteenth century usually involved depictions of Night or the Underworld in which were specified bass instruments, particularly trombones.[25] In Monteverdi's *Orfeo* (1607), the 'infernal' sinfonias in Acts III and IV employ five trombones and two cornetti, accompanied by regals.[26] The texture is essentially chordal and slow-moving, and both Caronte and Pluto are sung by bass voices. Cesti's spectacular *Il pomo d'oro* (1667) opens with a scene

set in the Underworld, and employs a combination of instruments strongly reminiscent of Monteverdi's *Orfeo*, namely two cornetti, three trombones, bassoon and organ. The same ensemble returns to accompany Charon in Act II Scene 6.[27]

Trombones were highly suitable for 'infernal' music because of their depth and tone, but they were also widely used in church music at least as far back as the 1590s in Venice, and well into the eighteenth century. Groups of trombones in a homophonic texture created a sonorous block of sound, and they were also used to double the lower voices in choral music. Unlike trumpets and horns, their chromatic capability allowed greater flexibility for composers. Trombones were certainly employed in Viennese churches during the early part of the eighteenth century, even for solo passages, but according to Gregory 'this was no more than an isolated and local phenomenon'.[28]

To the audiences of Gluck and Mozart, trombones certainly had an ecclesiastical association, as well as an 'antique' quality, as the design of the instrument had changed very little since medieval times. They were also widely used for civic ceremonies and thus associated with grandeur. For German-speaking people, there is an additional factor, in that the Last Trumpet in German is actually a trombone – die letzte Posaune – giving a very strong suggestion of awe and terror.[29] The complex signals encoded in the use of trombones in *ombra* music are therefore to do with 'high' style because of the ecclesiastical, 'antique' and ceremonial associations, and awe and terror because of the 'infernal' tradition and (for Germans at least) a link with the Apocalypse.

When all this is considered, it is no surprise that trombones feature so prominently in oracle scenes such as in Gluck's *Alceste* (1767) Act II Scene 2 and Mozart's *Idomeneo* Act III Scene 10.[30] They continue to be used by Gluck in infernal scenes also, such as those in both versions of *Orfeo* and *Alceste*, and Mozart famously exploits their sound in *Don Giovanni*. J.C. Bach's first recorded use of trombones is in *Amadis de Gaule* for the tomb scene Act II Scene 2, and again in Act III when Arcabonne is defeated (see Example 6.8). Salieri uses three trombones with a pair of bassoons to produce an especially dark timbre in the overture to *Les Danaïdes*, and at the start of Act II they feature prominently in a depiction of an underground temple (see Examples 4.23 and 5.28). Salieri also makes good use of their tone colour for a sustained diminished seventh chord in *Tarare* Act III Scene 2, where there is a reference to ghosts at night (see Example 4.3). In most of these cases, sustained writing for three instruments is the preferred option. They are seldom used to double another line, which indicates that it is their sonority rather than their flexibility that composers wished to exploit. This is certainly true for three of the versions of the oracle scene in Mozart's *Idomeneo* Act III Scene 10, where his desire for trombones is emphasised in his correspondence.[31]

Perhaps the most surprising aspect about the use of trombones for *ombra* music is the gap that occurs between the late seventeenth century and the 1760s, during which time they seem to have disappeared. This has much to do with convention in Baroque opera, where string accompaniment was predominant (often for reasons of expense), with only occasional contributions from woodwind and horns. Consideration should also be given to the influence of Metastasio, who shunned references to the supernatural as much as possible. Gluck was able to see the potential both of the popularity of supernatural scenes and the role that trombones could play, and his re-introduction of them is an important feature of his many reforms.

CONCLUSION

The aim of any composer wishing to unsettle his audience is to depart from the normal expectations of eighteenth-century style and break up the flow of the music. In earlier chapters, it has been seen that discontinuity is the chief weapon. Tonal and harmonic progressions are undermined, dissonances are exploited, tempo and rhythm become disjointed. The same is true of texture, dynamics and instrumentation. The juxtaposition of full and reduced textures, rapid alternations between loud and soft, sudden accents, and the introduction of special instrumental colours are all methods that were intended to make audiences wonder what was going to happen next.

Eighteenth-century composers recognised the need to indicate dynamics to produce the desired effect, so *ombra* music can be seen to have an important place in the gradual dissemination and standardisation of dynamic markings in scores. The exploitation of texture as an expressive device might more normally be associated with Romantic music, but it is certainly to be found in the *ombra* style. As far as instrumentation is concerned, a clear trend can be seen throughout the eighteenth century. For Handel and Hasse, strings were the norm, although more unusual timbres like mutes, pizzicato and divisi violas were explored. First Jommelli and then Traetta and Philidor brought in woodwinds and horns, while Gluck introduced trombones. A rich palette of orchestral sound was then available for composers like J.C. Bach, Salieri and Mozart to exploit. *Ombra* music can therefore be seen to be closely involved with the development and expansion of the orchestra in the eighteenth century, although the courageous step of introducing trombones into the symphony orchestra would be left to Beethoven.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Case Studies: *Ombra* characteristics in combination. Handel *Admeto*, Hasse *Cleofide*, Jommelli *Vologeso*, Gluck *Don Juan, Orfeo* and *Orphée*, Mozart, *Thamos, König in Ägypten*, Salieri *La grotta di Trofonio*, Gazzaniga *Don Giovanni*, Mozart *Don Giovanni*.

N.B. Full musical examples are given in Volume 2, with the exception of the Supper Scene in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, where a vocal score has been used for ease of reference and reasons of space.

In all of the examples so far considered, no single feature can be said to constitute an *ombra* reference in isolation. The use of a flat minor key does not of itself suggest *ombra* any more than a diminished seventh chord, a syncopated rhythm or even the appearance of trombones. It will be clear from any of the extracts given in Chapters 3-6 that *ombra* requires a combination of such characteristics. In the case studies which follow, entire scenes are examined in order to highlight the effect of combining these various characteristics in different ways. Two Baroque examples (by Handel and Hasse) are briefly considered first, to show that some features were already in place. The example by Jommelli, although fairly late in his career, is typical of his *ombra* scenes of the 1740s and 1750s because his formula hardly changed. Gluck and Salieri are represented as the most prominent opera composers in Vienna apart from Mozart, and two pieces by Mozart himself are examined, one before he arrived in Vienna, the other what must be considered the apotheosis of the *ombra* style, *Don Giovanni*. Gazzaniga's setting is also discussed, because it is useful to compare two works on the same subject written at around the same time, even if there are differences in terms of circumstances of production and the relative gifts of the composers.

HANDEL *ADMETO*

Handel's opera *Admeto* (1727) is a reworking of the *Alceste* myth, and sets off in spectacular fashion. After the D minor overture, Act I opens with Admeto on his sick-bed, and a ballet of demons carrying bloodstained daggers.[1] The dotted rhythms and trills normally associated with the French overture here convey a more sinister meaning, especially in combination with the key of D minor and the sudden contrasts in dynamics. This scene is unlike the other Handel examples so far considered, in that the horrors presented on the stage and in the music are intended to portray the idea of mental torment. The demons, although physically present on the stage, are really in the mind of the ailing king. This device was to be explored by Hasse and especially Jommelli within a few years. As the demons disappear at the end of the ballet, Admeto rises and expresses his anguish in the accompanied recitative 'Orride larve'. It is full of contrasts in tempo,

tonality and dynamics, with sudden unison outbursts, tremolando effects and dissonant harmonies, especially diminished seventh chords. The tonal scheme is particularly bold and is summarised in Table 7a, although there is much chromaticism and tonal ambiguity between these points of articulation:

Table 7a Handel *Admeto* I/1 bars 1-38: Tonal scheme

Bar	Key	Bar	Key
1	g	26	V in f
3-4	c	27	f
6-8	d	28	V in E*b*
9	F	30	c
10	V in F (via *b*IV)	31	IV-V in c
11	E	33	a
16	V in E → e	34	d
20	V-VI in e	37	V in b*b*
23	g	38	B*b*
24	V in g (via *b*II)		(= V in E*b* for following arioso)

It is clear from this that flat keys predominate, and that many of these are minor. The notable exception is at bar 11, where there is a distinct change of mood for the words 'e volete ch'io mora, io morirò'. The unexpected brightness of E major, with slurred pairs of notes in thirds over a tonic pedal, would suggest that Admeto is looking forward to death as a blessed release from his torments. But this is his only moment of consolation, and it contrasts strongly with his air of resignation in bars 36-7, the word 'morir' accompanied by a strong suggestion of B flat minor. These tonalities lie at opposite poles, and show the subtlety of Handel's expressive technique in treating a very similar text in different ways.

HASSE *CLEOFIDE*

The earliest *ombra* scene mentioned by Abert occurs in Hasse's *Cleofide* (1731) Act II Scene 15.[2] This scene is missing in Metastasio's libretto, as one might expect given his lack of enthusiasm for the supernatural. Abert suggests that an addition was made at Hasse's request, presumably so that he can explore the possibilities of special orchestral effects in the accompanied recitative. Furthermore, Hasse was evidently pleased with the result, as he made greater use of accompanied

recitatives in his subsequent works, and other composers were influenced to write in a similar vein, most notably Jommelli. *Cleofide* was the first opera in Dresden to explore an Indian theme. Operas set in exotic locations were always popular, adding a sense of spectacle and adventure to the proceedings. Act II Scene 15 sees Cleofide alone on stage, where at first she imagines that she hears the howling of the Furies, and then encounters the bloodstained ghost of her beloved husband Poro. As Abert observes, 'the recitative is of major dramatic effect, with masterly declamation and extraordinary boldness in the orchestral writing'.[3] The recitative can be divided into three sections:[4]

Table 7b Hasse *Cleofide* II/15 Recitative: 'Qual tempesta d'affetti'

Section	Bars	Text	Keys
A	1-22	Qual tempesta d'affetti...	Eb → F
B	22-33	Poro mio dolce amor...	D
C	32-41	Ma forse de l'Idaspe	D → E

The first section contains a number of *ombra* features, such as the chromatically ascending bass (bars 1-12), unison writing (bars 1 and 4), and dotted rhythms (bars 7 and 9-11), these latter clearly intended to depict the howling of the furies. Overall there is considerable tonal instability, accentuated by the chromatic bass and diminished seventh chords (outlined in bars 1-2 and 4-5, and sustained in bars 15-17). E flat major is suggested by the opening repeated notes and by the cadence in bars 12-13 (although there are just two flats in the key signature). The section closes in F major, however, as Cleofide angrily addresses the Gods, reinforced by *coups d'archet* and dotted rhythms in the strings (bars 19-29).

The second section, marked 'Adagio', is in complete contrast, as Cleofide, in her imagination, is confronted by Poro's ghost. Far from being frightened by the experience, she addresses him with most affectionate tenderness: 'Poro mio dolce amor, ombra adorata'. So faithful is Cleofide to her husband that even the image of him dead holds no terrors for her. This is reflected in the music, which has simple tonic and dominant seventh harmonies over a tonic pedal in the brighter key of D major. The ominous motif of a downward octave leap followed by repeated notes in bar 1 is transformed in bar 22 into a gentle introductory figure, played in a lower register on violas. The effect is enhanced by the use of mutes on all of the strings. The signs are that Poro's innocent shade has not suffered the torments of Hell, and is destined for the Elysian Fields. Cleofide subsequently grows more agitated at the prospect of losing her husband,

and the harmony is therefore more unstable (including a diminished seventh in bar 27 and a half-diminished seventh in bar 30). A sense of urgency is added by the rising arpeggio idea, first heard in bar 26, and by the speeding up of the harmonic rhythm in bars 30-31 before the full cadence in D major at bar 32. The mood of the opening is re-established in the third section, with Cleofide expressing her despair at life without Poro. Again the bass line ascends chromatically (bars 36-39), diminished seventh chords appear (bars 35, 37 and 38), and a climax is achieved by the use of *coups d'archet* (bars 39 and 40). The final cadence on a chord of E major heralds the virtuosic aria 'Son qual misera Colomba' in A major.

The success of this recitative lies in the vivid way that the music shows what is in Cleofide's mind. The ghost does not actually appear on stage, so all of the signals must be conveyed by the music. Although the *ombra* references serve to highlight the supernatural aspect of the scene, the virtual absence of such references in the middle section is accounted for by Hasse's need to show Cleofide's faithfulness and Poro's innocence, despite the potentially harrowing nature of the encounter.

This type of scene was one that Jommelli found highly attractive. Three of his early operas contain such scenes (*Andromaca* Act II Scene 15, *Eumene* Act III Scene 6 and *Merope* Act III Scene 10), and he returned to the same idea in later works.

JOMMELLI *VOLOGESO*

The familiar scenario of a distressed heroine encountering a vision of her supposedly dead husband is explored once more in Jommelli's *Vologeso* (1766), the plot of which is essentially the same as his earlier *Lucio Vero* (1754).[5] Vologeso is the leader of the Parthians, and is captured by the Roman general Lucio Vero, who has fallen in love with Vologeso's wife, Berenice. She has remained steadfastly faithful despite both pleas and threats from Lucio. The Roman soldiers are becoming rebellious, and in a desperate final attempt to win Berenice, Lucio orders his servant Aniseto to stage a macabre performance, where he will present her with what appears to be Vologeso's covered head in a dish. But before this occurs, Berenice has a vision of her bloodstained husband and hears his groans. Ultimately, Lucio Vero does not achieve his aim, since Berenice resolves to die rather than to give in to his demands.[6]

The recitative in which Berenice has her vision (Act III Scene 6) is divided into three sections, each exploring a contrasting mood (see overleaf):

Table 7c Jommelli *Vologeso* III/6 Recitative: 'Berenice, dove sei?'

Section	Bars	Text	Keys
A	1-22	Berenice, dove sei?	E*b*
B	23-37	Ahimè! Sogno, o son destra?	c
C	38-53	E quella oscura caligine profonda	E*b* → c → g

Again it will be seen that E flat major figures prominently, although there is little that is ominous about its use in the first section. The tempo is adagio, an insistent dotted rhythm is heard in bars 1-12, and sudden dynamic contrasts are employed (bar 3 and its repeat, bar 10, bar 13). Yet the sustained harmonies and the predictable nature of the stepwise ascent from tonic to dominant in the bass do not foreshadow the impending horror. Abert suggests that Berenice is here 'as though awakening from a dream', which is certainly a reasonable assumption from her opening words.[7] More importantly, by beginning in this way, Jommelli is able to build up the tension as the scene progresses. The first hint of disunity is at bar 8, when the orchestral restatement of the opening is interrupted, before resuming where it left off in bar 10. Jommelli resists the temptation to do more with the words 'Qual lugubre apparato di spavento e di lutto', but the next line, 'Qual di tenebre d'ombre reggia dolente e fiera' prompts a slightly stronger response. The restated material begins halfway through bar 11, but is interrupted almost immediately. The resumption in bar 12 also breaks off, this time leading to new material, and the first hint of tonal instability. The harmonies in bars 13-18 form a straightforward modulating sequence, passing through the major keys of F, E flat and D flat, but dissonances are created by the semiquaver 'sighing' gesture in the violins.[8] E flat major is re-established, and the section ends with simple chords in the manner of a *secco* recitative.

The next section is marked by the introduction of an entirely new instrumental texture, as well as the key of C minor, and this heralds the appearance (in Berenice's mind) of the bloodstained figure of Vologeso. The staccato semiquavers in thirds played by 2nd oboe and bassoon suggest walking motion, and the falling figure and 'sigh' motif in the 1st oboe portray the 'gemiti di chi langue', which appear in the text later (bars 34-5). It might even be argued that the falling dotted figure in bar 25, along with its fragmentation in the following bar, are separately intended to depict the sobs mentioned in bars 36-7, the 'singulti di chi spira'. The contrast with the previous section is made not just by the new figure, but also by the move to E flat major. Jommelli does retain one device, however, which is to restate the same material, but interspersed with vocal declamation. At bar 34, the 'sigh' motif is given greater emphasis by the D flat on 1st

oboe, and there is more chromaticism at bar 36 in the bassoon. The repetitions of the 'sob' motif in bar 37 lead directly into the final section.

The instrumentation of the opening section (strings and horns) returns, but the faster tempo (andante) indicates a greater sense of urgency. The repeated notes in the bass, the ostinato figuration in the strings and the crescendo from bar 42 add to the effect. The harmony is completely static, however, suggesting simply a dominant chord in E flat major. The unexpected shift to a dominant chord in C minor at bar 44 must be the moment when Berenice recognises that the potentially threatening figure is that of her husband. The climax of the scene arrives at bar 49, where three loud chords in G minor at the much faster tempo indicate Berenice's rising anger towards Lucio Vero for the supposed murder of her husband. Further loud chords punctuate her final declamations.

The whole recitative is a remarkable *tour de force*. Jommelli's achievement is to create a gradual increase in dramatic tension throughout the scene, while successfully portraying Berenice's changes of mood. The variety of instrumental colours and textures and the use of different motivic devices contribute strongly to this effect. Some of these ideas are recalled in the following E flat major aria 'Ombra che pallida', such as the writing for horns and oboes, the 'sob' motif and the melancholy middle section in C minor.

Mattei's observations on the superiority of Jommelli's accompanied recitatives in general might easily be applied to this particular scene:[9]

> We have excellent pieces of obbligato recitative from the old composers Vinci, Pergolesi, Leo, and from the moderns Sacchini, Traetta, Piccinni, but none achieve the force of Jommelli's recitative. He selects a motive, and this is not repeated annoyingly as if in a Barcarolle, but rather, it is divided and interspersed according to the demands of dialogue, and then he unifies these divisions, and mixes in another motive with marvellous energy.

In order to illustrate Jommelli's supremacy, Mattei goes on to be rather scathing about one composer's setting of the scene which follows Berenice's vision:[10]

> The scene, for example, in *Berenice* by Sacchini contains the most beautiful music in the world in that recitative in the third act; but one need not pay any heed to the words and the action that is being represented of the severed head being offered in a basin; since here the music of Sacchini would fit equally well into a scene of *Armida* or *Il pastor fido*.

It should be said that Jommelli's setting of this scene (Act III Scene 7), though undoubtedly expressive, is not as powerful as the preceding scene. He evidently felt that there was more dramatic power in depicting the intangible horrors in Berenice's mind then the very real horror of the bloodstained bowl physically present on the stage.

GLUCK *DON JUAN*

Gluck's ballet *Don Juan* (1761) is an important work not only because it broke new ground in the history of dance in the theatre, but also because of the quality of Gluck's music. It was a great success, not least because of the power of the final scene, as Zinzendorf's diary entry for Monday 8th February 1762 shows:[11]

> Il y a quelque chose de frappant et de lugubre dans la scéne, ou le Spectre lui prêche et lui montre le Ciel.

Gluck's music for these scenes is the principal cause of this impact, and No. 30 is an essay in the *ombra* style.[12] The scene (in a cemetery) is set by the opening eight bars, based on a tonic and then a dominant pedal in D minor, with a restless motif (violins), tremolando writing (violas) and dynamic contrast (suddenly loud at bar 4), and with a pair of horns adding some colour to the pedal. Bar 9 sees the start of a move towards G minor, with the restless motif rising stepwise against a pedal D on the oboes, creating a passing dissonance in bar 10. This stepwise progression is made slightly more uncomfortable by the augmented second leap produced by the harmonic minor form of the scale in the principal melodic line (violin I, bars 10-11). The journey into darker realms is continued, with some loud diminished seventh chords and a unison cadential progression in C minor (bars 13-16). Significantly, this is the first appearance in the whole work of the trombone. A similar process (but this time without the diminished seventh chords) leads to a unison F (bar 22). Although there is some ambiguity as to the mode at this point, a minor feel is engendered by the D flats in bars 18-19, and is confirmed by the continuation in bars 23-24 (with the A naturals in bars 19-20 serving merely to heighten the subdominant briefly). F minor marks the remotest point of tonality in this piece. Two five-bar phrases form a rising sequence, with cadences in G minor and A minor respectively, and employing direct contrasts in texture and dynamics, as well as the ubiquitous diminished seventh chord. The tension mounts further at bar 33, with two loud chords against a loud sustained trombone note, followed by chromatically descending diminished seventh chords in a fierce dotted rhythm. This rhythm is maintained in the last three bars, leading without a break into the Dance of the Furies (No. 31) in D minor. If No. 30 is archetypal *ombra*, then No. 31 is certainly archetypal 'Sturm und Drang', with its scurrying strings and angular lines.[13]

Gluck's *ombra* references are not confined to No. 30. The first appearance of the statue in No. 25 gives rise to a musical depiction of Don Juan's trembling guests, and the duel with the Commendatore in No. 5 makes use of 'ghostly, whole-bar harmonies with repeated notes'.[14] The Commendatore is always accompanied by a musical gesture in the *ombra* style, almost like a

leitmotif, which befits his status as a figure of retribution. Both Gazzaniga and Mozart were to

adopt a similar approach in *Don Giovanni*. Gluck was evidently pleased with the success of his

music for *Don Juan*, since he later recycled substantial passages for his Paris productions of

Orphée et Eurydice (1774) and *Armide* (1777). Other composers recognised the potential of this

music, especially the finale. As Brown observes:[15]

> The vogue for scenes of furies, demons and cataclysm in Viennese theatrical
> works… had repercussions far beyond the Habsburg capital…

The most celebrated example is Boccherini's Symphony in D minor Op. 12 No. 4 'La casa del

diavolo' (1771), which manifestly is not theatrical, but includes a 'Chaconne qui représente

l'enfer qui a été faite à l'imitation de celle de Mr Gluck dans le festin de pierre.'[16]

The librettist Angiolini's stated aim was to express 'the terrible and sublime pathos of

true tragedy'.[17] He explains that for him, tragic meant '… a single action which gradually leads

from the pathetic to the terrible, which wakens horror in me without presenting it'.[18] This view is

almost exactly contemporaneous with Burke's ideas on the 'sublime of terror' (see Chapter 2).

GLUCK *ORFEO* and *ORPHÉE*

Don Juan was undoubtedly a landmark both in the history of ballet-pantomime and in the

development of Gluck's theatrical style. It was closely followed by his even more ground-

breaking opera *Orfeo ed Euridice* (1762), which continued the current obsession with scenes for

furies.[19] The librettist Calzabigi's choice of a mythological subject was a departure from

Metastasian tradition, and closer to the French *tragédie-lyrique*. The revival of Rameau's *Castor

et Pollux* in Paris in 1754 may well have been influential, particularly in the use of a mourning

tableau, a device employed in *Orfeo* and in Traetta's *Ifigenia in Tauride*.[20] Act I of *Orfeo* opens

with just such a scene, and illustrates the close proximity of the lament to the *ombra* style.

Characteristic features include the key of C minor, the repeated notes in the bass, the scoring for

two cornetti and three trombones and a few diminished seventh chords (bars 4, 6, 8 and 13). Yet

crucially the music lacks the more startling features of *ombra*, such as restless rhythm, shifting

harmony and sudden dynamic contrasts. This is because the music is intended to depict funeral

rites, and its function here is therefore ceremonial. The repeated notes in the bass are for the

procession of the mourners, and the key, scoring and occasional dissonance are to convey their

sense of loss. At this stage, there is no suggestion of anything supernatural, and so the music deals

with the pathetic rather than the sublime. Only towards the end of the scene is there a more

unsettled atmosphere, as Orfeo vows to descend into Hell to retrieve Euridice, an action which

combines the taking of a sacred oath with the more terrifying prospect of a journey to the Underworld. The semiquaver string figuration reflects Orfeo's agitated state of mind. Act I closes with a 'Sturm und Drang' reference, as Orfeo exits to thunder and lightning.

Act II is set in the Underworld, and opens with a ballet of 'Furies and Spectres'. Gluck's 'maestoso' marking and the unison gestures on E flat in the opening bars show his intention to convey awe and grandeur. E flat is quickly undermined as the music reaches an uneasy fermata on a diminished seventh chord in bar 5, (which becomes Vb^{b9} in F as a result of the violin quavers which follow). This whole passage is repeated a tone higher, and at bar 11 the process looks set to continue another step, but this time G is held in the bass, functioning as a dominant pedal in C minor. From bar 16, a chromatic descending sequence moves sinuously towards the tonic, with alternations between loud and soft.

After a brief passage for harp and strings (played by a second orchestra to depict Orfeo's approach), the chorus of furies bursts in, singing in unison with a tremolando string accompaniment (bar 24). The tempo and method of execution are clearly indicated by Gluck's directions *marcato* and *andante un poco*, and the insistent use of the *sdrucciolo* rhythm creates a more menacing effect. Although there is much stepwise movement in the melodic line, there is some angularity and chromaticism. The music for the dance which follows is pure 'Sturm und Drang', with a much faster tempo and rapid string scales, still in the key of C minor. There is then a reprise of the chorus, but this time with a significant continuation (bar 61). As the demons curse the intruder, the *sdrucciolo* rhythms remain, but the tension is increased by the rising sequence, which sounds a spine-chilling dissonance in bar 62 by maintaining a pedal C (oboe, violin I and alto) against a Neapolitan chord. At bar 65, the new string figure is intended to depict 'gli urli di Cerbero', adding greater weight to the diminished seventh chords. The unexpected pause at bar 70 is also on a diminished seventh chord. Bars 71-76 form a codetta, with the emphatic unison notes at the end borrowed from the melodic pattern at the end of No. 30 in *Don Juan*.[21]

After a four-bar interlude, the section from bars 61-70 is repeated, again with the fermata on the diminished seventh chord. This time the surprise is greater, since instead of the codetta section, the maestoso ballet music which opened the scene returns, as the Furies and Spectres dance once more. The structure up to this point is therefore very tightly organised, with material carefully recycled and tonality fixed firmly in C minor (despite the considerable chromatic inflection). A continuous flow is achieved by each of the sections closing on a dominant chord of some description (with diminished sevenths functioning as substitutes for the dominant). Table 7d summarises this structure, which can be seen as a self-contained tableau depicting the horrors of the Underworld and the enormity of the task facing Orfeo (see overleaf):

Table 7d Gluck *Orfeo ed Euridice* II/1 : Structure of the Underworld tableau

Section	Dance	Link	Chorus i	Dance	Chorus i	ii	iii	Link	ii	Dance
Bars	1-20	21-23	24-33	34-50	51-60	61-70	71-76	77-80	81-90	91-110
Metre	2/2	4/4	3/4	3/4	3/4					2/2
Tempo	Maestoso	Andante	Presto	Andante						Maestoso

The remainder of the scene involves Orfeo's attempts to calm the demons so that he might be allowed to find Euridice. As at the start of the scene, the ballet moves seamlessly into the next chorus (bars 110-152) in which the opposing forces meet. Orfeo's pleas are accompanied by harp triplets representing his lyre, and are confronted by unison exclamations of 'No!' with brass doubling and *coups d'archet* in the strings. Gluck has managed to keep the cornetto and two trombones in reserve to add weight to these utterances.

The next choral entry (bar 153) marks the remotest point tonally in the opera, E flat minor. It is also the turning point in the drama. Gluck's instruction 'Raddolcito, e con espressione di qualche compatimento' makes it clear that the demons are wavering, although in this and the subsequent two choruses they stubbornly maintain their *sdrucciolo* rhythm. The key for these closing numbers is F minor, and there is some chromaticism in the final chorus (with other parts in contrary motion), but there are no more surprises. In the final bars, the vocal lines become more fragmented as the demons disperse, allowing Orfeo to approach the Elysian fields.

Act II Scene 1 of Gluck's *Orfeo* is the most important operatic example of infernal music before Mozart, and was enormously influential. Although there is some writing in the faster 'Sturm und Drang' idiom, much of the music is at a slow tempo, and is crammed with *ombra* references. The maestoso dance sections contain gestures that might be more normally associated with symphonic slow introductions, which themselves stem from the French overture, and are designed to evoke majesty and awe. The feelings of fear and terror are produced here by the unexpected pauses, chromatic melodic lines and harmonies, contrasting dynamics, *sdrucciolo* rhythms, instrumental colour (especially cornetti and trombones) and the use of remote flat minor keys. More important is the sheer scale of the scene and its dramatic impact. The supreme embodiments of the supernatural powers of Good and Evil are placed in direct confrontation, and although the music for Evil is undoubtedly more effective, Good is seen to triumph, at least for the time being.

Gluck's revision of this scene for the Paris version in 1774 involves a number of significant changes, not least in the key structure.[22] This was necessitated by the role of Orpheus being sung by a tenor, rather than a castrato. The orchestral introduction is the same, apart from an indication of a tremolando effect in violins and oboes (bars 3-4 and 7-8). The first modulation this time is from E flat major to D minor (bar 18), a Neapolitan relationship, and one which enhances the uneasy atmosphere.[23] It also allows an effective change to the melodic line in the subsequent chorus. D minor means that the sopranos can begin in a lower register, leaping up an octave (bar 26) to continue with the descending sequence. The 'Air de Furie' works just as well in D minor, although Gluck alters the ending to close on the dominant, and the choral reprise remains in D minor. Since most of the rest of the scene is transposed up a fifth (or down a fourth), one might have expected Gluck to use G minor in these opening numbers, but the demonic association of D minor evidently proved a powerful attraction. This is confirmed by the insertion of the extra 'Air de Furies' at the end of the scene, borrowed from *Don Juan* No. 31. Gluck retains the original key of D minor, despite following a chorus in F minor (which he chose not to transpose from the Vienna version).

MOZART *THAMOS, KÖNIG IN ÄGYPTEN*

Mozart's incidental music for Gebler's play was first written in 1776, but in the revised version of 1779-80 there is an additional number, 'Ihr Kinder des Staubes' which appears in Act V Scene 3.[24] The text is not by Gebler, but is attributed to Andreas Schachtner, and represents a dire warning by the High Priest Sethos not to anger the gods, lest avenging thunderbolts are hurled down. This is the fate that has just befallen the evil Prince Pheron for trying to usurp Thamos's throne. Mozart's use of *ombra* on a grand scale at the opening of this number is therefore entirely appropriate (bars 1-31).

The key is D minor throughout this section, except for a short sequential passage which briefly undermines the tonality in bars 8-12, and a considerable amount of chromaticism. In bars 1-4 (and in the choral reprise of this material in bars 22-26) some dissonance arises from the changes of harmony over the tonic pedal. Diminished seventh chords are used in bars 8-11 for the reference to the avenging thunderbolt, and they also appear in bars 19 and 29, in the latter case preceded by two bars of diminished triads. Typical *ombra* lines are to be found in abundance. A descending bass tetrachord features in bars 4-7 counterpoised by an ascending chromatic line in flutes, oboes, 2nd violins and violas. There is a full octave of chromatic ascent in bars 13-18, most clearly seen in the 2nd violin line, as halfway through bar 15 the 1st violins jump up to a different octave, and the bass line shifts up a third to provide a more solid harmonic foundation. Bar 26

marks the beginning of a chromatic descent in the bass line, which becomes diatonic in bar 29, concluding with the descending tetrachord from tonic to dominant. The High Priest's melodic line has the kind of triadic writing associated with oracles, with tonic and dominant degrees featuring prominently. There is little stepwise motion, and the line is especially angular and wide-ranging in bars 8-13 for the thunder reference.

It is here that there is a noticeable contrast in the rhythm also, as strong dotted notes blast out from strings and timpani, with a slower dotted rhythm in the vocal part, reinforced by brass and woodwind.[25] Apart from this interjection, the rest of the section has three characteristic rhythmic features throughout, which are the restless syncopated motif in the 1st violins, the tremolando writing in the 2nd violins and violas, and the insistent dactylic rhythm in the bass. In bars 19-21 the dactylic rhythm is heard at three different speeds simultaneously, as the trumpets play it in diminution and the horns (with trombones for the first bar) have it in augmentation.

Mozart has a large orchestra at his disposal, including three trombones and timpani, and he exploits special string sounds by using mutes for upper strings and pizzicato in the bass. There are several contrasts in texture and dynamics, the strongest in bars 8-12, the only place where the bass line is bowed. Trumpets and trombones have *fp* chords in the opening crescendo, an effect which is added to by dynamic contrasts in the chorus for the reprise (bars 25-26). The passage that follows has a reduced texture and dynamic level to express the humility of the chorus. The three verses of text suggest a gradual transition from the terror of retribution via this brief mood of contrition to a hymn of praise to the Sun God, and this is reflected in Mozart's setting. There is no sudden change of character. The move towards D major in bars 33-44 is accomplished very subtly, and the *ombra* features disappear only gradually. String tremolandi (now without mutes) and dotted rhythms are retained, and the chromatically ascending lines and diminished seventh chords are now less threatening. The darkness is finally banished by the bright tonic and dominant chords of 'Höchste Gottheit, milde Sonne' in triple time and in D major (from bar 46). This number can therefore be seen as an early example of the 'darkness into light' idea that is so common in late eighteenth-century sacred and instrumental music, of which the most celebrated was to be the opening of Haydn's *The Creation*.

The last three examples to be considered here are united by their context, in that the dark *ombra* references are offset by the comic action in the opera. It would be true to say that by the 1780s, distinctions between *buffa* and *seria* were becoming blurred. This in no way undermines the effectiveness of the *ombra* writing in these operas. If anything, the effect is enhanced because of the contrasting styles. The question remains, however, as to how such references are to be

interpreted. There may be a serious moral point to be made by casting aside the prevailing mood of levity, or the seriousness of the style itself may be subject to parody. Rice mentions some examples, including a passage in Paisiello's *Socrate immaginario* (1775) which uses *sdrucciolo* rhythms, unison writing and descending chromatic sequences, a ghost scene in Sacchini's *La contadina in corte* (1765) complete with chattering teeth, and an aria in E flat major, 'Pallid' ombre' in Gassmann's *L'opera seria* (1769), which has long notes and wide leaps.[26] Salieri himself uses a chromatically descending bass line for a ghost entering hell in *Le donne letterate.*[27] Whether or not parody is the aim in making an *ombra* reference in the context of comedy, the musical language is the same. Because the *ombra* style involves the use of features that are unusual and, by eighteenth-century standards, extreme, it is difficult to exaggerate it further for the purposes of humour.

SALIERI *LA GROTTA DI TROFONIO*

This *opera comica* is rather different to most *buffa* pieces of the period, and shows the influence that French serious opera had on Salieri's comedies after his return to Vienna from Paris in 1784. His most recent success had been *Les Danaïdes*, in which Salieri makes several *ombra* references.[28] In *La Grotta di Trofonio* the magician Trofonio uses his cave to summon spirits from the underworld in order to transform the personalities of anyone who enters it. As Rice observes:[29]

> Trofonio's cave and its transformations of character dominate the opera to such an extent that the normal emotional dynamics of opera buffa – jealousy, infatuation, seduction, concerns about money and social status – are largely absent. Absent too, the wide variety of picturesque and colourful sets that many opere buffe demand.

Certainly a large-scale scene in the *ombra* style would not have been expected, but that is what is presented in Act I Scene 10.[30] It is essentially an invocation scene of the type seen in many versions of *Armide*, and is predominantly in D minor with several changes in tempo and metre. The main *ombra* features in each section are summarised in Table 7e. The orchestra includes horns, trumpets and timpani, but lacks trombones (see overleaf):

Table 7e *Ombra* features in Salieri *La Grotta di Trofonio* I/10

Tempo	Bars	*Ombra* features
Un poco adagio	1-19	8ves, pauses, *p/f*, sync, trem, rep bass quavers, dotted figs, in d
	20-29	Trofonio has oracle-style melodic line, rep notes, trem
	30-41	Dotted figs, sync, rep bass notes. Mod F →B*b* →E*b* →V in g
	42-57	Dotted figs, rep high d in voice, cadence in g, pause
Andante	58-81	Monotone vocal line, trem, *sf*, sync, chrom ascent, c →B*b*
Un poco ritenuto	82-100	Block chords, sudden *p*, pause. In g
Maestoso	100-103	Pompous dotted rhythms, *f*, wide leaps
Allegretto	104-132	chrom, sync, trem, *sf*, →d
Recitative	133-135	→V in B*b*, interrupted suddenly by demons
Andante sostenuto	136-137	Unexpected shift to *b*VI in bass, trem, timps on G*b* and C (!)
Un poco più di moto	138-145	chrom ascent, →V in F
Recitative	146-160	g →d →a →F
Allegretto ma non molto	161-191	*p/f*, trem, angular lines, pauses, *sotto voce* coda in d

Although the metre of the text is not written in *versi sdruccioli*, Salieri's setting of the words goes a long way to suggest that it might be. He frequently uses the three repeated notes at the start of a phrase even though the crucial two unaccented syllables are missing from the end. So stylised has the reference become that it is possible to create the effect even when the metre is different. Equally impressive is the melodic writing for Trofonio's incantation. To begin with, the notes of the tonic triad predominate (except one submediant in bar 25), and the style is very similar to many oracle scenes. The climax on a repeated high D (bars 42-5 and 50-53) is especially effective, leading both times to strong cadential progressions. Another strong cadential pattern is used at bars 80-81, and is virtually a quotation from Gluck's *Don Juan* No 30.[31] It is certainly evident that Salieri has absorbed the style thoroughly, and is using it seriously as he - wants the magic to be convincing. Any sense of parody is entirely suppressed.

GAZZANIGA *DON GIOVANNI*

In what is essentially a *buffo* libretto, there are three points in the story where the mood is serious, namely the Duel scene, the Cemetery scene and the end of the Supper scene. All three involve encounters with the Commendatore, who is ultimately to be Don Giovanni's Nemesis. As a character who is murdered and who then brings retribution from beyond the grave, he demands the use of the *ombra* style. In comparison with Mozart's version, Gazzaniga's *ombra* references appear understated, yet such a comparison is hardly fair, since Gazzaniga's work is on a much smaller scale, being conceived as a one-act entertainment for the Venetian carnival in 1787. Although both works are styled 'dramma giocoso', this does not necessarily show any intention to address serious as well as comic themes.[32] While we may laugh at the superstitious reactions of the servant Pasquariello/Leporello when confronted by the Statue, the fate of his master needs the full weight of the music to convey the seriousness of the situation. Gazzaniga recognised this, and although his music is entirely eclipsed by Mozart's, it is not without its merits.[33]

The Commendatore first appears at the start of Scene 2, hurling insults at Don Giovanni, with the stage directions indicating that all are plunged into darkness.[34] Although the music is in E flat major and there are sudden dynamic contrasts, this is hardly enough to constitute an *ombra* reference (especially as the previous scene was also in E flat). It is only when the Commendatore is mortally wounded that there is a definite change of mood, with a move into the tonic minor and the introduction of string tremolandi (bar 120). The contrasting dynamics take on greater significance now, along with the dissonances accompanying his cries. In the darkness, the realisation of what is happening comes first to Don Giovanni, singing a dactylic rhythm in B flat minor (bars 128-131), and then to Pasquariello in F minor, with (inevitably) string tremolandi to depict his trembling. The Commendatore's next words are uttered on a monotone, again in dactyls (bars 139-142), and after more interjections from Don Giovanni and Pasquariello (this time in combination), his imminent demise is signalled by the sighing oboes (bars153 and 155), perfunctory string tremolandi (bar 154) and a loud syncopated figure (bar 156) as the music moves back towards E flat minor. A falling diminished seventh arpeggio in bars 165-6 leads to the Commendatore's dying words, which are fragmented, but still employing the dactylic rhythm. His final cadence is approached via a Neapolitan sixth chord and delayed by a pause (bar 172), with a single note in octaves from the horns on his last note to add the final touch (bar 174).

While much of this kind of writing would be expected in a scene involving a fight to the death, there is an additional layer of signification involved here. The Commendatore is to return as a supernatural force, and this is prefigured by Gazzaniga's use of remote flat minor keys, and

the portentous, oracle-like devices such as the melodic lines on a monotone, the dactylic rhythms and the horn effect at the end. The seeds of retribution are already sown.

It is therefore no surprise to find similar references in the Cemetery scene (Scene 20). Despite his superstitious misgivings, Pasquariello's issuing of the invitation to supper to the Statue of the Commendatore is mocking, and so the monotone melody accompanied by unison horns does not (as yet) appear threatening. Neither does the key, B flat major. As Pasquariello's fears begin to take hold of him, the music becomes more agitated, including dotted rhythms (bars 12-14) and sudden dynamic contrasts (passim), and when the Statue nods in response, there is a new dotted figure in the oboes and violas (bar 28) and a loud outburst from the orchestra, consisting of a Lombardic rhythm in 1st violins over tremolando 2nd violins and violas and repeated quavers in the bass, and a sustained octave in the horns (bars 29-32). Pasquariello's horrified reaction is conveyed by a variety of orchestral textures in the next thirty-one bars, leading to a close in F major. A change of tempo (larghetto), key (D minor) and metre (compound) indicates a new direction, as Don Giovanni prepares to address the Statue himself, which he eventually does at bar 74, at a slower tempo and with accompaniment from the horns. This time the Statue responds verbally with a simple cadential figure, but quietly and with just a staccato octave doubling in the strings (bars 87-8), which has the effect of being more menacing. This is enhanced by the sudden shock of a loud allegro passage to close the scene.

The *ombra* references are deliberately understated here, mainly because the chief spectacle is yet to come, but once more there is oracle-like writing in Pasquariello's monotone melody and the cadential figure when the Statue speaks, and the horns are used effectively at the nodding of the Statue's head. The keys are less remote, although Mozart's favourite *ombra* key of D minor comes at a significant moment.

The Supper Scene (Scenes 23 and 24) also features D minor, at the appearance of the Statue (bar 242), again as the tonic minor of the prevailing key.[35] These five bars recall the opening of Gluck's Statue music (*Don Juan* No. 30), although the harmony is not nearly so adventurous, and the orchestration is limited to strings and oboes. Loud single crotchets alternate with soft pairs of quavers in a slow insistent dactylic rhythm as the Statue makes its menacing entrance. When the Statue speaks, however, the mood is anything but menacing. The slow tempo and key of E flat major might seem promising, but the melodic writing and orchestral accompaniment are distinctly *buffa* in character (bars 264-277). This serves to heighten the irony of a supernatural figure of retribution making polite conversation at dinner. Perhaps Don Giovanni really has nothing to fear. After a while, though, the Statue comes to the point, and the mood swiftly changes. As he demands Don Giovanni's hand, strident dotted figures are

introduced, and the vocal line is virtually a monotone (bars 338-9). This is immediately followed by a strong inflection towards the tonic minor, an insistent tremolando figure in the strings, a restless triadic bass and sustained single notes on oboes and horns, enhanced by an alternating loud/soft effect. The tremolando ostinato has the double effect of signifying both fear and cold, Don Giovanni's *sang froid* deserting him for the first time as he is held in the Statue's icy grip. More dotted rhythms appear as the confrontation becomes more frenzied and at bar 357 syncopations are introduced. The climax is reached at bar 363 with the entry of the Furies, in a fast triple-time dance in E flat major as Don Giovanni suffers the tortures of Hell.

Much of this scene counterpoises the Duel scene, particularly the choice of E flat major/minor and the prominence of the tremolando writing. The *ombra* writing is undoubtedly effective in all three scenes, but marred by a lack of harmonic adventurousness. This is certainly true of the Supper Scene, where the confrontation with the Statue has little more than an alternation of tonic and dominant harmonies throughout. It is here in particular that Mozart excels over his contemporary.

MOZART *DON GIOVANNI*

There is so much written about Mozart's *Don Giovanni* (1787), and especially about the supernatural encounters, that it hardly seems necessary to add to the collection.[36] There can be no more powerful essay in the *ombra* style than the encounter with the avenging statue of the Commendatore at the end of Act II; Allanbrook in particular highlights the *ombra* content of this most famous encounter.[37] Like Gazzaniga, Mozart also makes *ombra* references for the other appearances of the Commendatore in the Duel Scene and the Cemetery Scene, but these are not considered by Allanbrook. Where Mozart differs from Gazzaniga is in the provision of an overture, which begins with a slow introduction of thirty bars that is quintessentially *ombra*.[38] All of this music is to be found in the Supper Scene, where the musical gestures are made explicit, but to an audience experiencing this music for the first time, the signals in this purely instrumental version can only be loosely referential. The overture is much like a symphonic first movement with a mysterious slow introduction, and it is no surprise to find parallels drawn between this music and the first movement of the 'Prague' symphony, which was written just a few months earlier, and for the same citizens. One important difference is that in the overture the audience knew the subject matter of the opera, and would therefore have had some idea of the message that this opening conveyed, whereas no such referential link could be inferred from the symphony.[39] The first four bars immediately signal something portentous. The two chords are loud, include syncopation and are in D minor, although Mozart prefers to reserve his trombones

for the genuine supernatural encounters to come. There follows a series of short sections, each displaying different combinations of *ombra* characteristics, as shown in Table 7f:

Table 7f *Ombra* features in Mozart *Don Giovanni* Overture bars 1-30

Bars	*Ombra* features
1-4	I-Vb in d, *f*, sync
5-10	Dotted ostinato in strings, *p*, chrom desc bass, dim 7 (bars 6 & 8), German 6th (bar 10)
11-14	Sync ostinato in Vl 1, no upper woodwind
15-16	*sf/p* effects, sigh figs in woodwind
17-22	Fragmented line in 8ves, angular , $p \to f$ chord (twice), Neapolitan chord (bars 18, 20-21)
23-26	Chrom asc lines, asc & desc scale figs, trem, dotted rhythm in bass, cresc
27-30	Horns & trumpets also dotted, Neapolitan chord in 2nd inv (bar 27), German 6th (bar 28)

One other feature not shown here is the wind writing in bars 5-10, which outlines octave leaps on tonic and dominant, a pre-echo of the Commendatore's vocal line in the finale. It is also worth noting that Mozart's extended vocabulary of chromatic chords allows for more variety of harmonic dissonance than Gazzaniga's often mundane harmonies. For instance, in bars 20-21 the Neapolitan key area of E♭ is heightened by the use of a V^7d-Ib progression in that key.

In the Duel Scene (Act I Scene 1), the Commendatore first appears at bar 134 when the tempo is *allegro molto*, but even here his vocal line is essentially triadic in outline. The *ombra* references come after the three chords in bars 174-5 that accompany him receiving his mortal wounds. The last of these chords is a diminished seventh on B, which Mozart resolves onto the dominant in F minor. The tempo slows at bar 176, and a triplet ostinato in 1st violins is accompanied only by bassoons and horns. At the moment when the Commendatore expires (bar 190), oboes are added with a descending chromatic line, echoed by flutes, bassoons and violas.

Dramatic though the Commendatore's death is, his re-emergence in the Cemetery Scene (Act II Scene 11) is much more exciting. The Statue speaks in the style of an oracle, resonant and sepulchral, with an intoning melodic line, block harmony, and in a rich seven-part texture which includes three trombones for the first time, befitting the supernatural quality that the character has now assumed. D minor is the first key used, the first statement (bars 50-54) ending with a rather ecclesiastical cadential six-four progression and a tierce de Picardie in the dominant. The second statement (bars 58-63) is a step lower and with a tonic major/minor shift in C, and the final cadence has a 4-3 suspension instead. Diminished seventh chords are in evidence once more, at

bars 52, 60 and 61. The only other contribution made by the Statue in this scene is in the following duet 'O statua gentilissima', where the one word "Sì" is accompanied only by a *sforzato* from the horns in octaves. There can be no doubt as to the seriousness of the Commendatore's presence, however comic the reactions of the other characters during this scene.

The arrival of the Statue in the Supper Scene clarifies the references made in the Overture, with bars 433-448 corresponding to the first sixteen bars. The first chord is replaced by a diminished seventh on B, and the three trombones are added, creating yet stronger an impact. The other important difference is the singing, of course, and the Commendatore's line in particular, which is again oracle-like in character, using principally the notes of the tonic triad. His entry at bar 454 ('Non si pasce') is more angular, with a particularly eerie instrumental doubling of oboes, bassoons and trombones in octaves. In bars 462-5 the line is on a monotone, against which the chromatically ascending idea from bars 23-26 of the overture is heard, complete with rising and falling scales. The monotone returns at bar 474, this time with the strong dotted rhythm reinforced by trombones. At bar 487, the line begins a chromatic ascent which culminates in the darkest tonal region of the scene, B flat minor. His final utterance at bars 549-554 is in semibreves, especially angular with two diminished leaps, and once more doubled in octaves. The soft dynamic here makes this especially sinister, and it is answered by the *allegro* for the flames and the demons. The build-up to this last pronouncement (from the *più stretto* at bar 521) is densely packed with *ombra* references, including tremolandi, fast ascending scales in the bass, loud/soft contrasts and highly chromatic harmonies. Diminished sevenths are in abundance (bars 521-2, 528-9, 531, 541, and 547), but there are also Neapolitan chords at bars 538 and 540 and German sixths at bars 544 and 546.[40]

At 120 bars in length, this is is certainly a substantial piece of *ombra* writing. It is a tribute to Mozart's genius that he is able to maintain and increase the emotional pressure, and he is able to do this by skilfully blending and varying the different characteristics in such a way that each new passage is more effective than the last.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Sacred Music: *Ombra* references in oratorios, Masses and Requiems

The evidence presented in the foregoing chapters makes it clear that the origins of the *ombra* style lie in the theatre, although some of its characteristics are attributable to music for the church. These ecclesiastical references in opera and ballet music are rare, and are mainly restricted to *ombra* passages; fugue, the other style most associated with the church, is almost never used in opera, except perhaps occasionally in an overture.

A much stronger musical trend in the eighteenth century was the gradual incursion of theatrical styles into sacred music. This was partly due to the influence of the oratorio, but also to an increasing need for many composers to set texts expressively. In the context of sacred works based on bible stories or texts required for liturgical purposes, there is very little that corresponds directly to the scenarios familiar from opera, such as ghost scenes, oracles, witches etc. Nevertheless, there are some occasions when a composer wishing to convey a sense of awe, mystery or fear might have recourse to the musical characteristics of the *ombra* style. Seldom is there what might be termed a full-blown *ombra* passage in sacred music, perhaps because the extremes represented by the style might have exceeded the bounds of what was considered proper for religious subjects, but there are many instances where certain features are present in sufficient force to constitute an *ombra* reference, and such instances become stronger and more frequent towards the end of the century. The impact may not be as great as in an opera or ballet, but the composer is still seen to be responding to the ideas suggested by the text by drawing on those musical characteristics that have been proved to be effective in the theatre.

ORATORIO

The oratorio is the genre in eighteenth-century sacred music that is closest to opera seria, especially with its recitatives, arias and choruses. Although the action is limited, and staging and sets were not normally used, there is still the playing out of dramatic scenarios, complete with dialogue and emotional expression.[1] The audience has the experience of witnessing 'great events', but ones which are biblical rather than Classical or historical in origin. It is difficult to generalise about the oratorio in the eighteenth century, as there are a number of different types, but a few stories which involved death or a supernatural event proved popular, and provided opportunities for some composers to write music that exhibited *ombra* characteristics. These included Old Testament epics such as those involving Moses and Saul, and New Testament stories like the

raising of Lazarus and the death of Christ. By far the most numerous settings are of the Passion story, but these seem to be lacking in *ombra* references on the whole. This is doubtless attributable to the dignified reverence required in Holy Week, but another factor may be the influence of Metastasio. His libretto for the Passion story, *La Passione di Gesù Cristo*, was set by numerous composers, but his distaste for the supernatural meant that he presented little opportunity for composers to employ the *ombra* style.[2] In fact, most of the Passion texts of the eighteenth century emphasised the meditative rather than the dramatic aspects of the story.

This tends also to be true of the oratorio texts provided by German writers. Ramler's libretto *Der Tod Jesu* was also widely used in Germany, and is almost entirely contemplative. There is one passage, however, which invites some special musical treatment is a description of events immediately following the death of Jesus, including the lament of the seraphim, the earthquake, the darkness and the opening of the tombs:

> Es steigen Seraphim von allen Sternen nieder
> Und rufen laut: Es ist nicht mehr!
> Der Erde Tiefen schallen wieder:
> Es ist nicht mehr!
> Erzittre Golgatha! Er starb auf deinem Höhen.
> O Sonne fleuch! Und leuchte diesem Tage nicht!
> Zerreisse Land, worauf die Mörder stehen!
> Ihr Gräber tut euch auf! Ihr Vater steigt ans Licht!
> Das Erdreich, das euch deckt,
> Ist ganz mit Blut befleckt.
> Es ist nicht mehr! So sage ein Tag dem andern Tage:
> Es ist nicht mehr! Der Ewigkeite klage:
> Es ist nicht mehr!

Three versions will be considered here, by Graun (1755), J.C.F. Bach (1769) and Kreusser (1783).[3] There is a remarkable consistency throughout these three settings, despite the fourteen-year gaps between them. All are accompanied recitatives for solo bass, and each changes texture at the same point in the text, as Table 8a shows. This may be attributable to the influence of Graun's work, which enjoyed immense popularity, but the text of this passage virtually demands this kind of musical imagery. Kreusser's setting shows the most adventurousness as far as tonality is concerned. Although much of this can be dismissed as mere pictorialism, it serves to illustrate how certain musical devices, theatrical in origin, can be used to express ideas such as fear, awe and death.

Table 8a Comparison of three settings of 'Es steigen Seraphim' (Der Tod Jesu)

Composer	Tempo	Key	Time	Introduction	'Erzittre Golgatha'	'Zerreisse Land'
Graun	Adagio	d	C	f/p contrasts repeated notes desc chrom dim 7th chord	tremolando (p) → Eb → Ab	dotted rhythm → Eb
JCF Bach	Larghetto	d	C	repeated notes desc chrom dim 7th chord	tremolando (p) → c	dotted rhythm → d
Kreusser	Largo	f→ c	C	sf/p contrasts syncopation	tremolando (f) Ab→ eb→ g	dotted rhythm → f

Ramler was also responsible for another frequently set libretto, *Die Auferstehung und Himmelfahrt Jesu*, which provided composers with the opportunity of writing a gloomy slow introduction to depict the atmosphere immediately before the Resurrection. One such is by Telemann (1760), opening in G minor:[4]

Example 8.1 Telemann *Die Auferstehung und Himmelfahrt Jesu* (1760) Introduction bars 1-12

The soft dynamic, repeated notes and absence of bass line and continuo in bars 5-7 create an air of uncertainty, and after the dominant chord in bar 8, the loud chord of B flat major and subsequent move towards C minor are surprising. C.P.E. Bach's version of 1777 is particularly striking, as it

is scored only for violas, cellos and basses playing a single line in three different octaves at a very slow tempo:[5]

Example 8.2 C.P.E. Bach *Die Auferstehung und Himmelfahrt Jesu* (1777) Introduction

The first four bars (and a slightly altered repeat in bars 9-12) are based on the descending tetrachord, and the chromatic neighbour notes of the tonic and dominant feature prominently.

Contrary to the general trend of contemplative texts for German oratorio, writers like Patzke and Niemeyer sought to employ operatic features in their libretti. Niemeyer's version of the Lazarus story, *Lazarus, oder die Feyer der Auferstehung*, was typical of this more expressive style. As Smither observes:[6]

> Characteristic of his librettos is the emphasis on the gloom and anguish of the situations, which usually deal with death, and the awesomeness of supernatural events.

This is certainly true of *Lazarus*. Its appeal lasted well into the next century, and Schubert set part of the same text in 1820.[7] The most well-known setting of this libretto in the eighteenth century was by Rolle (1778), but although his writing is undoubtedly expressive, he uses surprisingly few *ombra* devices.[8] Although the main key of the work is E flat major, flatter key areas are seldom explored. C minor is used for Lazarus's recitative in which he foresees his death (No.2), and for the final number in Act I. There is some chromaticism, especially at the start of Act III, where Mary is 'strolling about in deep thought':[9]

Example 8.3 Rolle *Lazarus* Act III (opening) bars 1-5

The character of Simon the Sadducee (described by Smither as 'a characteristic *Sturm und Drang* figure who is tormented by fear of death and annihilation') is given either *secco* recitative or lively *allegro* arias to express his anguish, but no *ombra* music at all.[10] Given Rolle's experience in writing for the theatre, this is perhaps surprising.

By far the most influential oratorio composer in the eighteenth century was Handel. Having suffered some operatic failures, he switched to composing oratorios in the 1730s. They were to have a more lasting impact than the operas, which were largely forgotten by the end of the century. In his oratorios on Old Testament themes, he has occasional recourse to the *ombra* style when the opportunity arises. An early example is in *Deborah* Act III Scene 3, which has a mourning chorus for the priests of Baal, 'Doleful tidings'.[11] It is slow and in C minor, with the opening instrumental writing presenting a ponderous dotted rhythm which permeates the whole number:

Example 8.4 Handel *Deborah* (1733) III/3 'Doleful tidings' bars 1-15

The vocal line is based on a falling sigh motif, and with the descending tetrachord in the bass, the characteristics of the lament *topos* are unmistakable. In bar 7, the chorus takes up the dotted rhythm for 'despair and death', and the soprano line embarks on a chromatic ascent over a tonic pedal, leading to a sustained diminished seventh chord on 'death' in bars 10-11 and a cadence in G minor. The orchestra is silent for the final phrase, which includes a highly expressive Neapolitan sixth chord at the start of bar 13. From the lament references at the outset, there is a definite progression to a stronger emotional level which has rather more to do with *ombra*. The remainder of the chorus is essentially a restatement of the same material, with a return to C minor.

One of the most memorable supernatural experiences in all of Handel's works is Saul's encounter with the Witch of Endor in *Saul* (1738).[12] Part III opens with an introduction in C minor with prominent dotted rhythms, which on a first hearing might suggest a French overture, but Saul's entry after 11 bars indicates that this is accompanied recitative. As he expresses his troubles, the dotted rhythms disappear, only to return at the end as Saul resolves to seek aid from

Hell. The dialogue with the Witch is conducted in *secco* recitative, leading to her incantation aria 'Infernal spirits' in F minor:

Example 8.5 Handel *Saul* (1738) Part III 'Infernal spirits' bars 1-24

Oboes and bassoons are introduced, but the texture remains sparse, with an ostinato figure in the strings that resolutely insists on quadruple time despite the triple metre indicated by the time signature. The bass line (doubled by violas) serves only to reinforce the pair of crotchets until the approach to the cadence in bars 7-8. The vocal line also seems to deny the triple metre, with weak syllables often appearing on the first beat of a bar, but neither does it correspond to the ostinato. Of course, Handel famously gets the stress patterns of syllables wrong in many of his works, betraying his problems with the English language. Whether or not the effect is intended here, the word setting and instrumental writing are certainly unsettling. As with many operatic incantation scenes, the pitches of the vocal line are predominantly triadic, especially at the beginning and end. The harmony is not particularly adventurous, but in bars 21-24 the descending bass tetrachord is given some chromatic inflection.

Judging by the music, the appearance of the ghost of the prophet Samuel is not intended to frighten anyone. The key is E flat major and the scoring at the beginning is for a pair of bassoons and continuo, but there are no elements of instability. Handel's aim is evidently to emphasise the saintly nature of the character rather than his supernatural manifestation. Only when he pronounces Saul's fate at the end is there a hint of anything menacing in the music:

Example 8.6 Handel *Saul* (1738) Part III Recit. 'Why hast thou forced me' bars 35-41

The triadic writing in the vocal line is much in the style that was later to be associated with oracle scenes, emphatic and portentous. This feeling is reinforced by the chromatically ascending bass line and diminished seventh chords in bars 38-40.

Handel's oratorios were certainly well-known to Viennese composers, particularly after the foundation of the Tonkünstler-Societät in 1771. There were regular performances both of complete works and of extracts from Handel oratorios from 1778 onwards.[13] The text was normally translated into Italian or German, and arrangements of the orchestral parts were made. One significant alteration was the addition of three trombones to the C minor chorus of lamentation 'Gl'Israeliti oppressi' ('And the children of Israel sighed') in *Israel in Egypt*.[14] The leading lights of the society were Gassmann, Starzer, Bonno and Salieri, and Haydn was asked to compose his oratorio *Il ritorno di Tobia* for a performance in 1775.[15] Mozart got to know Handel's oratorios during the musical gatherings organised by Baron van Swieten, and his admiration for Handel led him to orchestrate several of his works, although none of these features any *ombra* music.[16] Although Mozart's oratorio composition was limited, it seems likely that he would have been familiar with at least some oratorios by Handel and by others where the *ombra* style is featured.[17]

LITURGICAL MUSIC

When writing music for use in the church, the composer has a rather different aim than when writing dramatic works. Liturgical music is primarily devotional, and the music is a vehicle by which an act of worship can be enhanced. Grand gestures are in general avoided, although there are a number of eighteenth-century Mass settings that are ceremonial in nature, with prominent writing for trumpets and timpani. Opportunities for employing the *ombra* style are rather limited, as liturgical texts are generally not intended to convey ideas like awe and fear, but there is no doubt that *ombra* characteristics do appear. When considering whether or not *ombra* is an appropriate style in church music, it is worth bearing in mind the magnificence and theatricality of

Church rites, especially in the Catholic church of the eighteenth century. Bruce MacIntyre has drawn attention to this:[18]

> In Vienna of the mid-eighteenth century, Mass was quite different from what one witnesses today. There was still an enormous distance between the faithful and the priests celebrating Mass before the altar. The worshippers were mere spectators, having little or no active participation in the service... Thus the average worshipper was merely a viewer and listener. Emphasis was upon the visual (the majestic sanctuary, the instructive stained-glass windows, paintings and sculpture, the priestly vestments, the Blessed Sacrament, etc.) and the aural (intoned psalms, prayers, special music, etc.)... The church sought to inspire devotion by keeping a veil of mystery around the liturgy and exploiting the effects of candles, smells and bells.

The idea of the church as a kind of sacred theatre is certainly supportable, especially as theatrical styles of music began to be heard more frequently, as one anonymous commentator observed in *Über die Kirchenmusik in Wien* (1781):[19]

> It is especially in a [certain] monastic church of our city where things go a bit too far with respect to the music... The clerical choir director himself... composes mostly his own pieces or whatever they are called. There is hardly any opera – *buffa* as well as *seria* – which he does not know how to plunder line by line (as the experts told me) and use most cleverly. On the day of a production the top male and female singers of our stages appear in the middle of the church to be heard...
>
> Really! If we were to be led blindfolded into this church on a feast day... we would have to believe that we had entered a playhouse...
>
> I myself was present in this church when they performed such arias that had been removed from operas and metamorphosed into a *Salve Regina* or a *Regina coeli*... Moreover, an undertone of *Bravo*, *Schön*, and *che viva* was heard from most of the listeners.

While these observations are directed more at solo rather than choral writing, it is clear that the divide between church and theatre was rather narrow, at least in Mozart's Vienna. Any references to the *ombra* style in such an environment would therefore hardly be considered out of place.

The focus of what follows will be on Masses and Requiems in Austria, especially Salzburg and Vienna, although one or two examples from further afield are included. Mozart was obviously open to outside influences, particularly as a result of his travels, but most of his sacred music was written in Austria. This output dates mainly from his Salzburg years, where he was influenced by J.E. Eberlin, A.C. Adlgasser and J.M. Haydn, all prolific church composers. Very little in terms of quantity dates from his time in Vienna, but this period did see the production of two of his greatest choral masterpieces, the *Mass in C minor* and the *Requiem*, although neither was completed.

The part of the Mass where *ombra* references are most frequently made is in the 'crucifixus' passage of the 'Credo', because of the suffering, death and burial of Christ. This allows the composer to produce a dramatic effect immediately afterwards with a contrasting lively 'Et resurrexit'. Sometimes the *ombra* references come a little earlier, for 'Et incarnatus est', which is a way of expressing the holy mystery of the Incarnation. A very early example of this can be seen in the younger Georg Reutter's *Missa Sancta Caroli* (1734):[20]

Example 8.7 Reutter (II) *Missa Sancta Caroli* 'Et incarnatus est'

C minor is firmly established by the short introduction, which has repeated quavers and a descending bass tetrachord. As the sopranos enter, the continuo line drops out, leaving a bare accompaniment of two violins. The repeated quaver motion continues, and there are brief moments of chromatic harmony in bar 8 (augmented sixth) and bar 9 (Neapolitan sixth). There is a contrast in texture for the 'Crucifixus', with the entry of the lower three voices and continuo, the violins now dropping out. After a move into A flat major a chain of suspensions leads to a rising chromatic melodic line and a cadence in F minor, via a diminished seventh chord in the penultimate bar.

Some of the examples given by Macintyre show that expressive devices drawn from the *ombra* style were used regularly by Viennese composers. One is in Ferdinand Schmidt's *Missa Sanctae Caeciliae* (before 1746), and is scored for tenor soloist and strings.[21] It is in G minor, and makes use of a tremolando effect, often on a diminished seventh chord. The word 'passus' is set three times as a descending chromatic sequence of 'sigh' motifs, each time with the tremolando figure in the strings. There are also sudden contrasts in dynamic, ranging from *pp* to *f*.

Albrechtsberger's *Missa Annuntiationis* (1763) has an 'Et incarnatus est' in C minor with a persistent repeated-note motif in the string accompaniment, which continues throughout the

'Crucifixus'.[22] There is also a good deal of chromaticism (including diminished seventh and augmented sixth chords) and dynamic contrasts.

Leopold Hofmann's setting of the 'Crucifixus' in his *Missa in honorem Sanctae Theresiae* (before 1760) is in C minor, and has a bass soloist accompanied by strings and a pair of trombones. The vocal line is particularly authoritative, with its octave leaps and triadic outlines, and would not be out of place for an oracle or statue in the theatre:[23]

Example 8.8 Hofmann *Missa in honorem Sanctae Theresiae* 'Crucifixus' bars 17-24

An early setting by Mozart of the 'Crucifixus' in his *Missa in C* 'Dominicus-Messe' K66 (1769) is in C minor, and opens with a descending arpeggio figure in octaves.[24] In the second bar, the full orchestra bursts in, with triplet semiquaver figuration in the strings, but within a bar the dynamic drops from *f* to *p*, and the atmosphere darkens. This material is then repeated, initially in E flat major, but then back in C minor. The closing bars involve a change in texture, with imitative entries and a greater use of chromaticism, including diminished seventh and augmented sixth chords, but the triplet figuration returns at the end (see overleaf):

Example 8.9 Mozart *Missa in C* K66 (1769) 'Crucifixus' bars 1-5

The 'Crucifixus' may stand out as the obvious place to use the *ombra* style, but examples crop up elsewhere in the Mass. The 'Qui tollis' is a penitential passage in the 'Gloria', and might not seem a suitable candidate, but for some composers at least, penitence needed to be expressed in rather strong terms. Whether this is a response to a perception of the extreme sinfulness of the world, or the awesome miracle of God removing the sins is difficult to say. There may even be a veiled reference in the music to the prospect of damnation for the sinners, but certainly the music often goes beyond simple humility to express some kind of deeper anguish. Georg Reutter again provides an early example in his *Missa Sancta Caroli* (1734), which begins in G minor:[25]

Example 8.10 Reutter (II) *Missa Sancta Caroli* 'Qui tollis' bars 1-16

One of the more striking aspects of this setting is the repeated quavers that run throughout played by a brass quartet of two clarini and two trombones. Although they feature elsewhere in the work, this is the only place where they appear without the strings. The melodic line at the start, with its leap of a diminished fourth, is suitably angular, and it reappears in the bass line. The same happens in the next phrase (bars 4-7) with the intervals outlining a diminished seventh chord. The passage from bars 9-16 contains some extraordinarily bold harmonic writing. The sopranos and tenors have a sighing figure which is extended as a chromatically rising sequence through the

dominant chords of A minor and B minor. This last chord is then altered enharmonically before shifting to the dominant of A flat minor in bar 13. Again there is a chromatic ascent in the bass which leads to F minor in bar 15, but this is immediately cancelled out by the dominant chord of G minor, enabling a return to the original tonic. The passage that follows is a restatement of the opening material a fifth lower in C minor, and this leads into the 'Qui sedes', where the same textures continue, but the key moves first to D minor and then A minor.

MacIntyre's examples of 'Qui tollis' settings include one by Christoph Sonnleithner in his *Missa Solennis in C* (before 1763) which is in C minor with some chromaticism, dynamic contrasts and repeated notes in the bass.[26] A pair of trombones is used, but only to double the vocal lines. Another is in Johann Nepomuk Boog's *Missa in C* (before 1763), this time in F minor, and again with repeated notes and strong dynamic contrasts.[27]

Two of Mozart's Masses have 'Qui tollis' settings with *ombra* features. The first is in the *Missa in C* K66.[28] His choice of key, G minor, needs to be seen in the context of what is otherwise a very straightforward tonal scheme for the 'Gloria', especially as the section ends in a different key, D minor. Although the change of key is a little unusual, it does make for a smoother transition to F major for the 'Quoniam':

Table 8b Mozart *Missa in C* K66 (1769): Tonal scheme of the 'Gloria'

Section	Key
Gloria in excelsis Deo	C
Laudamus te	F
Gratias agimus tibi	C
Domine Deus	G
Qui tollis	g → d
Quoniam tu solus	F
Cum sancto Spiritu	C

The five-bar introduction is essentially an elaboration of the tonic, with repeated quavers in the bass, a restless semiquaver ostinato in 1st violins, and sustained oboes and horns. The dynamics alternate between loud and soft at half-bar intervals (see overleaf):

Example 8.11 Mozart *Missa in C* K66 (1769) 'Qui tollis' bars 1-16

From bar 9, the harmony becomes more unstable, with diminished seventh chords in the first halves of bars 9-11, 13 and 15. A chromatic descent in the melodic line leads to the dominant of B flat at bar 16, the D flat inflecting the key towards the minor. The same texture is maintained

for the rest of the section, the music modulating through F minor and G minor to D minor, with some more chromaticism (especially in the bass line).

By comparison, the 'Qui tollis' in the *Mass in C minor* K427 (1782-3) is on a much grander scale, with double chorus and three trombones.[29] Again the key is G minor, and the introduction uses heavy dotted rhythms with a descending chromatic line in the bass:

Example 8.12 Mozart *Mass in C minor* K427 (1782-3) 'Qui tollis' bars 1-6

The following passages are richly chromatic, and after a sudden drop to *piano* in bar 14, 'miserere' is set to a descending chromatic figure in syncopation (see overleaf).

Example 8.13 Mozart *Mass in C minor* K427 (1782-3) 'Qui tollis' bars 12-18

These two passages provide the material for the whole movement, which incorporates the 'Qui sedes' text as well, which also includes a 'miserere nobis' setting.

Other penitential passages in the text of the Mass are the 'Kyrie' and the 'Agnus Dei', but *ombra* references do not often occur here. They are much more prominent in settings of the Requiem, where there are inevitably more references to death, hell and the Last Judgement. Certainly the keys associated with *ombra* are much in evidence, as table 8c demonstrates:[30]

Table 8c Composers of Requiems c.1750-1810

Albrechtsberger	3 Requiems
Bonno	Requiems in c, E*b*
Cimarosa	Missa pro defunctis (1787) in g
	Requiem in F
Dittersdorf	Requiem in c (before 1787)
Eberlin	9 Requiems
Eybler	Requiem (1803) in c
Gassmann	Requiem in c
Gossec	Grand Messe des Morts (1760) in c
M.Haydn	Pro defuncto Archiepiscopo Sigismundo (Dec 1771) in c
	Pro defunctis (1792–5) draft in c
	Pro defunctis (10 Aug 1806) in B*b*
Jommelli	Requiem (1756) in E*b*
Kozeluch	Klage auf den Tod Marien Theresien (1781)
Kraus	Requiem (1775) in d
Mozart	Requiem (1791) in d
Paisiello	Requiem (perf. 11 Feb 1789) in c
Philidor	Requiem (1764) in memory of Rameau - lost
Reicha	Missa pro defunctis (after 1809)
Reutter	6 Requiems, incl. Requiem (1753) in c
Salieri	3 Requiems in c (1804), d (1805), B*b*(1809) & frag in C
Vogler	Requiem (1809) in E*b*, 4 Requiem settings, c, d, e, E*b*
Winter	Requiem for Joseph II (19 March 1790) in c
	Missa di Requiem

The text of the opening 'Requiem aeternam' would be expected to have a solemn mood. In Gossec's *Grande Messe des Morts* (1760), it is in C minor with repeated notes in the string accompaniment and some chromaticism.[31] In Gassman's setting, after the 'Te decet hymnus', the text of 'Requiem aeternam' returns, but is given a completely different setting from the opening:[32]

Example 8.14 Gassmann *Requiem* (n.d.) 'Requiem aeternam' bars 1-8

Beginning in F minor, there is a move towards A flat major in bar 3, and then through C minor to G minor in bar 6, before closing on the dominant of C minor, the key of the subsequent 'Kyrie'. Repeated quavers in the bass are offset by dotted rhythms in the chorus and syncopations in the strings. Syncopations are also a prominent feature of the introduction to 'Requiem aeternam' in Winter's *Requiem* for Joseph II:[33]

Example 8.15 Winter *Requiem* (1790) 'Requiem aeternam' bars 1-12

In bars 8-10, the descending scale in the bass is not fully chromatic, but the ascending treble line certainly is, the phrase culminating in an augmented sixth chord before arriving on the dominant. The syncopated idea returns later as a *sotto voce* accompaniment to the 'Kyrie eleison'.

The text of the 'Dies irae' contains many images that are awe-inspiring (including the 'Tuba mirum' and 'Quantus tremor'). Gossec, remarkably for the time, uses two separate orchestras for the 'Tuba mirum', the woodwind and brass high up in the church, and the strings outside playing pianissimo and tremolando. Dotted rhythms and tremolandi appear in the 'Quantus tremor', which is in G minor. Dittersdorf uses a slower tempo and soft dynamic at this point, with repeated notes, tremolandi and diminished seventh chords:[34]

Example 8.16 Dittersdorf *Requiem* (before 1787) 'Dies irae' bars 13-16

The Offertorium 'Domine Jesu Christe' includes references to hell and darkness in 'De poenis inferni et de profundo lacu' and later in 'ne cadant in obscurum'. In Jommelli's *Requiem* (1756) he has descending chromatic lines for 'De poenis inferni' and some strong downward leaps and low tessitura for 'et de profundo lacu' immediately afterwards.[35] Michael Haydn uses a reduced texture and dynamic and a diminished seventh chord for 'ne cadant in obscurum':[36]

Example 8.17 J.M. Haydn *Requiem* 'Domine Jesu Christe' bars 30-33

Gossec replaces the traditional Offertorium text with a passage based on Job 10:21, 'Vado et non revertar'. It includes references to fear, an open tomb and a dark voice summoning the sinner to judgement:

> Vado et non revertar:
> aeternitatem pavide conspicio:
> sors immutabilis tamen contigit me,
> jam apertum video monumentum
> vocem tenebrosam audio
> ad judicium evocantem me.

His setting makes much use of chromaticism, 'sigh' motifs and diminished seventh harmonies, with a tremolando figure for 'pavide' and strings in octaves for the open tomb. The voice of judgement comes from a solo horn.

The 'Agnus Dei' in a Requiem Mass is often more expressively set than in the Ordinary of the Mass. The mood of supplication is given greater weight because the departed soul seeks deliverance from the 'sins of the world', and this can be done through chromaticism. Eberlin's *Requiem* in B flat (n.d.) has a solo bass voice that descends chromatically, with repeated quavers in the string accompaniment and a diminished seventh chord as a heightened dominant.[37] Winter uses a chorus in C minor, but the chromatic descent is still present in the bass line, and this time the chromatic chord preceding the dominant is an augmented sixth:[38]

Example 8.18 Winter *Requiem* (1790) 'Agnus Dei' bars 1-4

CONCLUSION

In all the cases considered in this chapter, slow tempi and flat minor keys are an important feature, and several different *ombra* characteristics can be found in each setting in various combinations, even if the result has less impact than the operatic examples considered earlier. In the oratorios, a certain amount of dramatic expression was to be expected in a situation dealing with death or the supernatural, but opportunities for such music were fairly limited. In liturgical music, there was even less freedom, despite the growing influence of operatic musical syles in church.

Many of these examples represent little more than a localised reference to heighten the meaning of the text, in some cases an individual word. The process is rather similar to a topical reference in an instrumental piece of music, where an idea can be briefly brought into play and then dropped again. This will be explored more fully in Chapter 10. Of course, there are plenty of examples of the texts discussed here where no such references are made, but there is a sufficient number of cases that do more than hint at the *ombra* style, enough to show that a trend in this direction existed in the second half of the eighteenth century.

CHAPTER NINE

Choral Music: Case studies. (See Volume 2 for full musical examples.) Handel 'He sent a thick darkness' (*Israel in Egypt*), Linley *Ode on the Spirits of Shakespeare*, Haydn *Missa Cellensis in Honorem B.V.M.*, Mozart *Mass in C minor* K139, Reutter *Requiem*, Mozart *Requiem*, Mozart *Litaniae de venerabili altaris Sacramento*.

A few case studies from eighteenth-century choral works are offered here to illustrate ways in which *ombra* characteristics were adapted. In comparison to the theatrical examples in Chapter 7, these do not appear to be as bold (nor are they as numerous), but they serve to show that composers were prepared to be at least a little adventurous in contexts where a more conservative approach might have been expected. In some cases, there is little more than a passing reference to *ombra*, but such passages are still important, as they represent a way in which composers could send coded signals to the audience in order to enhance receptivity to the text. From here, it is a short step to topical references in instrumental music, which will be explored in the next chapter.

HANDEL 'HE SENT A THICK DARKNESS' (*ISRAEL IN EGYPT*)

Written in 1738, the same year as *Saul*, Handel's *Israel in Egypt* rapidly became one of his most popular oratorios, not least because of the vivid sequence of choruses in Part II portraying the plagues of Egypt. 'He sent a thick darkness' is one of Handel's most remarkable pieces of choral writing.[1] The slow tempo and dark instrumentation (a pair of bassoons and a low string tessitura) help to create a very gloomy atmosphere, and repeated notes are a constantly recurring motif, but the principal effect is the constantly shifting tonality and mysterious harmony. This is a complete contrast to the previous chorus 'He gave them hailstones'. Handel uses the C major tonality of the latter to play an aural trick at the opening, where the repetition of the note C might lead an audience to assume this was the keynote. This is completely undermined by the entry of A flat in bar 2 followed by D flat and F together in bar three, and a chromatic ascent in the bass leads to the dominant of A flat in bar 5. Such movement down a major third became common in the nineteenth century but is rare in the Baroque. The expected tonic is not achieved, however, as the B flat in the bass weakens the chord by putting it in second inversion, and a further chromatic ascent leads to the dominant of F minor at bar 9 instead, a key which is confirmed in the following bar. Straight away, the tonality shifts again, via a diminished seventh chord in bar 12 to a chord of B flat minor, and then another diminished seventh chord leads back to the dominant of F minor again. The next four bars are less adventurous, leading towards E flat major, but again there is no lasting stability.

The choral texture becomes more fragmented as first E flat minor and then B flat minor are suggested, but once more the target is the dominant of F minor, which is achieved by the chromatic ascent in the bass and yet another diminished seventh chord in bars 24-5. This time the bass line continues upwards to C sharp (diminished seventh) and into D minor at bar 28. There then begins a stepwise rising sequence of three dominant chords in first inversion (the last two with sevenths) which appear to be heading towards B minor, but there is to be a further twist. Bar 33 is a dominant seventh chord in third inversion in E minor, and this is the key that proves to be the final destination. By employing a *tierce de Picardie* on the last chord, Handel sounds the dominant of the next chorus, 'He smote all the firstborn of Egypt', in A minor. Considering the simple relative major/minor relationship between the choruses on either side, this extraordinary piece must represent one of the boldest tonal journeys in the eighteenth-century canon.

LINLEY *ODE ON THE SPIRITS OF SHAKESPEARE*

Thomas Linley's musical genius cannot be doubted. Had he not died young in a boating accident, he might well have become one of the leading composers of his age. He was certainly highly thought of by Mozart. They met in Italy in 1770, and they corresponded thereafter.[2] Linley's theatrical masterpiece was undoubtedly the incidental music he wrote for the Drury Lane performances of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* in 1777, but before this he set French Laurence's strange poem *A lyric ode on the fairies, aerial beings and witches of Shakespeare*, and it was performed once in 1776 to favourable reviews.[3] Although not strictly an oratorio, it is included here as being similar generically, in that it is a large-scale setting of a text for concert performance with recitatives, arias and choruses, and quite clearly deals with the supernatural.

The opening of Part II describes an encounter with the witches in *Macbeth*, and starts with an accompanied recitative for bass voice, which contains several changes of tempo. The short string introduction in C minor begins ominously with a single line in octaves, leading to a dominant pedal in bars 4-5 with repeated quavers, diminished seventh chords and dynamic contrasts. There is then a rhythmic contrast provided by the much slower homophonic minims in bars 6-9, with more diminished seventh chords in bars 6 and 8 and a Neapolitan sixth in bar 9. After a reprise of the opening bars, a move towards F minor is effected through a sustained diminished seventh chord in bars 15-17. C minor is re-established in a short piece of *Tonmalerei* in bars 25-7, where the 'gliding spectres' are depicted by quavers in contrary motion with displaced accents. The remainder of the recitative is faster, the semiquaver figuration prompted by the 'hollow trem'lous sound', and the mounting anxiety expressed by the yet faster tempo at bar 36. The vocal line is unremarkable for recitative, with just the occasional dissonant leap

(bar 11 and bars 23-4), and a brief passage on a monotone which might be taken as an incantation reference for 'a solemn mutter'd spell' in bars 30-32.

The quartet which follows, 'By the pale light' is in E flat major and accompanied by just horns and continuo, but the phrases are distinctly *galant* in style, despite the 'scowling fronts and wild attire' in the text. No. 15 is a short *secco* recitative in which the key has to move from E flat major to E minor for the next chorus. This is achieved somewhat abruptly by the shift from V^7d in G minor to V in E minor in bars 4-5, and it may be charitable to suggest that this is meant to enhance the text at this point. However, the 'howling whirlwinds' of the subsequent chorus are given full attention, with a splendid piece of stormy writing.

HAYDN *MISSA CELLENSIS IN HONOREM B.V.M.*

This is the earlier of the two masses bearing the title *Missa Cellensis*, also known as the *Missa Sanctae Ceciliae*, probably dating from 1766, but possibly completed as late as 1773.[4] It is a large-scale *missa solemnis* with lengthy movements, including extended settings of the 'Qui tollis' and 'Et incarnatus'. The 'Qui tollis', marked *adagio* and in C minor, opens strongly with repeated semiquavers in the strings and a diminished seventh chord over a tonic pedal in bar 580 (joined by a brief syncopated figure in the violins). A sudden change in texture and drop in dynamic follows, with angular imitative entries. The final 'peccata mundi' is suddenly loud again, on a German sixth resolving to the dominant, which is held as a pause. New figurations appear for the setting of 'miserere nobis': repeated quavers in the bass now, with a homophonic syncopated entry from the chorus and the return of the syncopated violin figure from bar 580. There is also a new key, G minor, which is not what would be expected after the dominant chord in C minor, but this does not last. Passing through A flat major, the key eventually reached at bar 593 is E flat major, but not without some ambiguities along the way, such as the diminished seventh chords in bars 588 and 592, the latter giving a tonic minor inflection. The soprano line from bar 586 is a stepwise descent which is mostly chromatic, and again there are sudden changes of dynamic (bar 589 and 592). After a short interlude for the strings, the opening material returns at bar 597, but now in E flat major. Instead of the pause, there follows an extended passage in which short solo phrases are interspersed with choral outbursts of 'suscipe', and after another interlude, the opening material returns again. This time it is in A flat major, with the pause on the dominant of F minor (bar 623). As before, the resolution is to the minor of the dominant (now C minor), and the material for the 'miserere' is repeated, but modified to stay in the same key, i.e. without the long descending stepwise idea.

The 'Et incarnatus' is also marked *adagio* and is in C minor, with a move to the still more sombre F minor for 'Crucifixus est'. The vocal line is distinctly *arioso* in character, but an unsettling effect is produced by the repeated string semiquavers and chromatic harmonies (such as the consecutive diminished seventh chords in bar 100). At bar 102 the strings, now muted, have a new figuration of a broken pattern of semiquavers, which maintains the uncertain atmosphere. This is alleviated to some extent by the modulation to E flat major (bars 105-6) and the increasingly decorative vocal line (bars 109-110), matched by the 1st violins in the short interlude that follows. The mood darkens again as the vocal phrases become more fragmented and the tonality grows more unstable, passing through F minor (bars 119-20) and reaching C minor by bar 123. The decorative violin line returns in the next interlude, which leads to a new section in F minor for the 'crucifixus est'. Now there are two solo voices, again with short *arioso* phrases but the tonality keeps shifting, first to A flat major (bar 138), then through B flat minor and E flat minor to D flat major at bar 147. From here, a chromatically ascending bass line leads back to F minor for the closing bars, in which the chromatic neighbour notes of the dominant and tonic appear in the vocal parts (bars 150-1). The low F in the bass at the end is a fitting conclusion.

Neither of the two passages discussed here could be described as strong examples of the *ombra* style, because of the continuity provided by the vocal lines. There seem to be conflicting messages between the *arioso* singing and the more unstable instrumental accompaniment, but the opposition of these elements is entirely appropriate to the text. Haydn's depiction of mystery and death is tempered by the beauty of the melodic line, perhaps because suffering is ultimately to lead to redemption.

MOZART *MASS IN C MINOR* K 139

This is Mozart's earliest complete setting of the Mass, probably written at the end of 1768 and performed for the Viennese imperial court at the opening of the Waisenhauskirche (Orphanage Church). This explains why it exhibits the characteristics of a *missa solemnis*. There are three places in this Mass where Mozart makes use of the *ombra* style.[5] The first is the opening twelve bars of the'Kyrie', a passage which functions rather like a slow introduction to the ensuing major-mode *allegro*. In bars 1-5, the three statements of 'Kyrie' are held as pauses, the second two on chords of the diminished seventh. Each statement is followed by a short instrumental passage, beginning soft with one trombone and two violins, and then suddenly loud halfway through the bar, with violas and the other trombones added. This rather unsettling start to the work has more surprises in store. Bars 7-8 make a loud cadential progression in E flat minor with tremolando

violins and another diminished seventh chord, before a pause on a silence. The texture of bars 2, 4

and 6 then returns for bars 9-10, this time with the choir adding their 'Kyries' to the second half

of each bar, leading to a cadence on the dominant of C minor. Two more diminished seventh

chords are used in bars 9 and 11, bringing the total to five in twelve bars, not including the

instrumental passages at bars 4 and 6, which are essentially a continuation of the harmony in each

of the previous bars. As a grand opening gesture, this passage is very effective, especially as there

is some independent trombone writing.

As with the Mass in F K66 which Mozart was to compose the following year, the 'Qui

tollis' is in an unusual key compared to the other sections of the 'Gloria', and once more he

utilises the minor mode:[6]

Table 9a Mozart *Missa in C minor* K139 (1768): Tonal scheme of the 'Gloria'

Section	Key
Gloria in excelsis Deo	C
Laudamus te	G
Gratias agimus tibi	C → a
Domine Deus	F
Qui tollis	f → f V
Quoniam tu solus	F
Cum sancto Spiritu	C

The movement opens with a crescendo on repeated triplet quavers in the strings, reaching a

climax with the choral entry in bar 140, at which point the bass figuration changes to off-beat

broken chords. The repeated triplet quavers continue in the upper strings until the end of the

movement. Diminished seventh chords appear frequently, but they are used not so much to add to

the meaning of the text, but rather to facilitate modulation by acting as pivot chords. At bar 146

the chord is used to heighten the dominant, at bars 154-5 to move from B flat minor into C minor,

and at 157 to return to B flat minor although this is delayed by the unexpected submediant chord

in bar 159. The closing bars have some unusual harmonic progressions to go with the descending

chromatic soprano line, including more diminished sevenths in bars 161 and 163 before the

arrival on the dominant.

The 'Crucifixus' has perhaps the strongest *ombra* references in the work. Muted trumpets

and timpani play their ominous dotted rhythms at the opening, answered by a syncopated sighing

figure from strings and trombones which uses an *fp* effect. The three statements of this idea gradually increase in dissonance over the tonic pedal, before moving to the dominant via a diminished seventh chord. The entry of the chorus reprises the material of the first two statements, but then gives way to a more subdued setting of 'etiam pro nobis'. In bar 124, the soft, slow pairs of crotchets on trombones are another sighing figure, and represent word-painting for 'passus', and for 'sepultus' the trumpets and timpani return, now soft. This makes it clear that their presence in this movement is to make a kind of topical reference to the funereal. Again the approach to the final dominant chord involves a diminished seventh chord.

Mozart's handling of the *ombra* characteristics in this work shows a remarkable assuredness for a twelve-year old, even given his precocity. Of all the *ombra* examples by Mozart in this study, this is the earliest, yet there is no sense of flawed experimentation. The *ombra* features are fully-formed and integrated, and fulfil their function in enhancing the text admirably.

REUTTER *REQUIEM IN C MINOR*

The *Requiem* by Georg Reutter II is a work dating from 1753, and is important because it shows a higher level of expressivity than the comparatively sterile church music of Fux and Caldara.[7] Reutter had plenty of experience of composing operas and oratorios, and this may be a factor in the sense of the dramatic that appears in these examples. Like a significant number of eighteenth-century Requiems, this one is in C minor. It is scored for strings and organ, with the vocal lines doubled by cornetto, two trombones and bassoon for much of the time.

The setting of 'Requiem aeternam' immediately presents several *ombra* features: repeated quavers in the bass, syncopated repeated notes in the upper strings and a crescendo every half bar, all in the key of C minor. This texture is maintained for the whole of this section (fourteen bars), except that occasionally the crescendo is extended for a whole bar (bars 6-7, 10-11, 12-13 and 13-14). There are modulations to F minor (bars 6-7) and D flat major (bars 8-10) before the return to C minor, but the harmony is not especially chromatic. Dissonance is provided chiefly by the use of suspensions.

Repeated notes are again in evidence in the 'Dies irae', which is marked *adagio* and has much more chromaticism, including a diminished seventh chord in bar 3 which then resolves unexpectedly onto V^7d in C minor (also in the repeat of this material, transposed into G minor, bar 20). At bar 23, the choir is for once entrusted with providing the special effect for 'tremor', including sopranos and altos in thirds (doubled by violins). This part ends on the dominant of G minor, followed by a pause, before a six-bar *allegro* passage leads back to C minor. At one point later in the text of the 'Dies irae', the tone becomes distinctly supplicatory. Reutter's

response is to set 'Juste Judex' in G minor, and then to follow this with a slower setting (*grave*) of 'ingemisco tamquam reus' in C minor, with several diminished seventh chords (bars 222, 225, 227, 229 and 231), the last preceded by a Neapolitan sixth in F minor.

In the F minor Offertorium 'Domine Jesu Christe', Reutter emphasises the penitential mood with unaccompanied sighing figures in the violins between each choral statement. 'Libera animas' is set to a rising chromatic line in the sopranos, answered by descending chromaticism for 'de poenis', involving three consecutive diminished seventh chords in bars 13-14 and one for good measure at the start of bar 15. A low tessitura for 'et de profundo lacu' is enhanced by the absence of instruments at this point.[8] Although faster in tempo, 'ne cadant' is set to falling phrases, leading to the slower 'in obscurum', which starts with a diminished seventh chord, and again lies low in the vocal registers. While this might be considered obvious word-painting, it is nevertheless successful in contributing towards a general sense of solemnity.

MOZART *REQUIEM*

Mozart's *Requiem* might be expected to be a rich source of *ombra* references, but in fact there are remarkably few.[9] His choice of key, D minor, immediately recalls both the slow introduction to the *Prague* Symphony and the supernatural passages in *Don Giovanni*, but there are no places in the *Requiem* which display the *ombra* style to that degree. The opening *Requiem aeternam*, for instance, has a slow tempo, off-beat upper strings, chromaticism and dark instrumentation (including basset horns and bassoons), but the imitative texture means that the discontinuities normally associated with *ombra* are lacking. There are no sudden changes in dynamic or texture, and the harmonic progressions are smooth. The opening of the *Dies irae* is marked *Allegro assai*, and stylistically is very much in the 'Sturm und Drang' tradition. The dotted rhythms of *Rex tremendae* are certainly majestic, but again there are no other *ombra* characteristics present.

The *Confutatis* is really the movement where *ombra* references first appear in some number. The tempo is *Andante*, but the key is A minor. The imitative texture is not typical of *ombra*, but the angular vocal lines and aggressive ostinato in the bass line certainly are. There is a distinct change of mood for 'oro supplex' at bar 25, with a new repeated-note figure in the violins. The text expresses contrition in the face of death, and Mozart's setting is one of his most daring as far as tonality and harmony are concerned. Starting in A minor, the diminished seventh chord in bar 26 sounds like the one built on the raised subdominant that normally resolves to the dominant, but the bass is notated as an E flat rather than a D sharp, and that note becomes a pivot for the unexpected resolution to a dominant seventh in A flat. The addition of a C flat in the next bar confirms that the key is temporarily in A flat minor, and that the tonality has slid downwards

by a semitone. The same process takes the key down to G minor in bars 29-33, and an abbreviated version leads to G flat minor at bar 35, although the tonic chord is left in second inversion, and the confirmatory cadence is omitted. One more diminished seventh leads to F minor, concluding with a tierce de Picardie. This completes a sequence of four downward shifts of a semitone, involving the exploration of some very remote tonalities. Having arrived at F, a dominant seventh in second inversion is all that is needed to lead into the *Lacrymosa* in D minor. Given that the starting point in this tonal journey was A minor, this passage represents a highly original way of achieving a modulation to the subdominant. This chromatically descending sequence is laden with grief and quite literally slips towards death, with the *Lacrymosa* providing the mourning chorus to follow. The eight bars that Mozart sketched introduce sighing figures in the violins and conclude with a rising chromatic soprano line, but these are much more to do with the 'lament' topos than with *ombra*.

The *Domine Jesu* text has sometimes provided *ombra* references, but they are at best fleeting in Mozart's setting. There is a sudden contrast in dynamic for 'de poenis inferni', which is then repeated up a step in C minor. This is then followed by the rather mysterious 'et de profundo lacu', with low tessitura, repeated quavers in the bass and some chromaticism, including a diminished seventh chord in bar 12. Although this amounts to a brief example of word-painting, it serves to demonstrate that *ombra* characteristics can contribute strongly in localised topical references.

MOZART *LITANIAE DE VENERABILI ALTARIS SACRAMENTO*

There are three settings of this text in *NMA*.[10] The first is actually by Leopold Mozart, and is dated 1762, but appears to have been re-orchestrated by Wolfgang. The second in B flat K125 (1772) is closely modelled on another setting by Leopold in C and the third in E flat K243 (1776), while clearly owing much to these earlier works, is certainly the finest.[11] For ease of reference, they will here be designated versions 1, 2 and 3 respectively.

Two passages in the text consistently give rise to *ombra* features in the music. The first, 'Tremendum ac vivificum Sacramentum, miserere nobis', certainly presents an opportunity for word-painting right at the start (demanding the kind of tremolando effects equivalent to 'io tremo'in an operatic opera scene), and possibly invites an interpretation which enhances the mystery of the Sacrament. The second, 'Viaticum in Domino morientium, miserere nobis', with its reference to journeying towards death, requires a solemn setting. The following table offers a brief comparison between the three different versions of these two texts, highlighting the *ombra* characteristics present in each (see overleaf):[12]

Table 9b Comparison of selected passages in three settings of the _Litaniae_

Text	Version 1 (Leopold)	Version 2 (K125)	Version 3 (K243)
'Tremendum'	_adagio_	_adagio_	_adagio_
	d	g	c
	tremolando	tremolando	tremolando
	_f/p_ contrasts	_f/p_ contrasts	_f/p_ contrasts
	diminished 7ths	diminished 7ths	diminished 7ths
		chrom desc bass	chromaticism
	2 horns (Wolfgang)	3 trombones	3 trombones
	'ac vivificum' _allegro_	'ac vivificum' _allegro_	more text, same tempo
'Viaticum'	_adagio_	_adagio_	_andante_
	d	b_b_	g
	repeated semiquavers	repeated semiquavers	pizz. quaver ostinato
	_f/p_ contrasts	_f/p_ contrasts	muted violas
	diminished 7ths	diminished 7ths	diminished 7ths
	pauses	chrom desc soprano	chromaticism
		pauses	
	2 horns (Wolfgang)	3 trombones	3 trombones

In Version 3, the 'Tremendum' setting is considerably longer than the others, because additional verses are set. This allows for a wider range of keys. The opening is slightly unconventional, starting on V^7b in C minor, and after a pause on V^7 in A flat major at bar 7, the continuation is unexpectedly in G minor. At bar 15 the cadence is in F minor, and at bar 21 in E flat major, before the return towards C minor in bars 22-3. A feature of the whole movement is the way in which Mozart uses both chromatic neighbour-notes of the local tonic and dominant, adding a further sense of instability to what is already a piece full of tonal and harmonic twists.

If confirmation were needed of the association of flat minor keys with fear and death, these six settings provide it. B flat minor is a very rare key for Mozart, but its appearance here is obviously prompted by the subject matter. Where modulations occur, flat minor keys still predominate.

CHAPTER TEN

Instrumental Music: Programmatic music. Overtures. Topical references in slow introductions, and in Mozart's chamber and keyboard music. Case Studies. (See Volume 2 for full musical examples.) Haydn *Seven Last Words*, Mozart *Masonic Funeral Music*, Haydn *Symphony No. 75 in D*, Kraus *Symphony in C minor*, Mozart *Symphony No.36 in C, Symphony No 38 in D*.

All of the *ombra* music so far considered has been prompted by an extra-musical stimulus. In dramatic music and oratorio, the scenario as well as the words of the characters provide the source; in church choral music the text alone gives rise to the *ombra* reference. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, the *ombra* style begins to appear in purely instrumental music. Sometimes this is because of some sort of programmatic association, such as when instrumental music was required for church or ceremonial occasions, but often *ombra* appears when there is no external reason. The rhetorical implications of using *ombra* in the slow introduction to a symphony need closer investigation, and for Mozart, *ombra* was also a source of ideas in other contexts, such as his chamber and keyboard works.

In this chapter, the case studies have been incorporated into the main body of the text, but as with the case studies in Chapter 9, the full scores are reproduced in Volume 3.

PROGRAMMATIC MUSIC

One place in operas and oratorios where *ombra* appears with some frequency is in instrumental overtures and introductions. This is explained by the need for composers to establish the right atmosphere before any characters appear or any words are sung; thus the music is in a sense programmatic, with the text providing the programme in retrospect. An opera or oratorio which involves death or the supernatural may open with music which uses the *ombra* style. The subsequent action confirms the references made in the instrumental music. In some operas, the actual music of the overture returns later on, as in Salieri's *La Grotta di Trofonio* and Mozart's *Don Giovanni* (see Chapter 7). This makes explicit the signals that appear in the overture.

In church music, *ombra* references are almost always confined to texted music, but occasionally there are instrumental pieces designed to fill certain liturgical functions. One such case is a series of meditations on the Passion composed by Haydn, *Die sieben letzten Worte unseres Erlösers am Kreuze*.

HAYDN *THE SEVEN LAST WORDS*

Of the three versions of this music, the original is scored for pairs of flutes, oboes and bassoons, four horns (using *basso* crooks in B flat and C) two trumpets, timpani and strings. The vocal and string quartet versions came later. Haydn explained the circumstances of the commission (from a canon at Cádiz Cathedral) in a letter to his publisher in 1801. It underlines the theatricality of certain church ceremonies:[1]

> It was customary at the Cathedral of Cádiz to produce an oratorio every year during Lent, the effect of the performance being not a little enhanced by the following circumstances. The walls, windows, and pillars of the church were hung with black cloth, and only one large lamp hanging from the centre of the roof broke the solemn darkness. At midday, the doors were closed and the ceremony began. After a short service the bishop ascended the pulpit, pronounced the first of the seven words (or sentences) and delivered a discourse thereon. This ended, he left the pulpit, and prostrated himself before the altar. The interval was filled by music...

Haydn provided eight consecutive slow movements, followed by a faster movement depicting the earthquake following the death of Christ, but the introduction is the only one in which *ombra* references are readily discernible.[2] It is in D minor, and as with many introductions, dotted rhythms are prominent. Of rather greater significance are the wide leaps in the opening two bars, the dotted sighing figure in bars 3-5, and the alternations between loud and soft. From bar 7, repeated semiquavers are prominent, although repeated notes run through all the movements as a kind of unifying device. After a pause on the dominant at bar 12, two quiet bars in F major (again with the sighing figure) give way to an unexpected loud F minor passage, but this turns back towards F major with a little more chromaticism. At bar 22, a new syncopated figure appears over repeated semiquavers in the bass, but in F major this is not especially awesome. The shift to D flat major in bar 25 (using the repeated F in the previous bar as a pivot) is a surprise, but again there is not a strong suggestion of *ombra*. It is the beginning of a transitional passage, based on the sighing figure, that leads to the dominant of D minor for the reprise of the opening at bar 35. There are several alterations compared with the opening section, not least the inclusion of a Neapolitan sixth in bar 41, and a pause on an interrupted cadence at bar 44. The sighing figure returns once more, followed by the syncopated idea, which now sounds more menacing in D minor. The close consists of more sighs over a tonic pedal.

Many of these features are commonly found in slow introductions (see below), but here this music has a clear programmatic association with the story of the Passion, so at least some of these features can be attributed to Haydn's need to not only to establish a suitable atmosphere, but also to express (and elicit from his audience) an emotional response. The same can be true for any

instrumental music written for solemn ceremonial occasions, such as Mozart's *Maurerische Trauermusik* K477 (1785).

MOZART *MASONIC FUNERAL MUSIC*

Written for a funeral ceremony in memory of two aristocratic freemasons, the *Maurerische Trauermusik* is an excellent example of how *ombra* can be employed to produce a work of grandeur and solemnity.[3] The aim here is not to frighten the audience, but a mournful reaction would certainly be expected. The use of a large wind section (including three basset-horns and a 'gran fagotto') and a key signature of three flats might be said to be typically Masonic, but the dark scoring and choice of C minor are also typically *ombra*.[4] The four sighing figures on winds that open the piece recall *Idomeneo* Act III Scene 10, especially in the use of 'double hairpins' on the semibreves. The 1st violin line from bar 8 is restless and angular, with more sighs from the wind instruments, syncopation in the accompaniment and constant changes from soft to loud. In bars 14 and 16 the accompanying syncopation is faster (2nd violins and violas) and there is a strong dissonance because of the diminished seventh chord above a tonic pedal. As the music moves towards E flat major, the syncopation continues and dotted rhythms are introduced, but the mode is briefly inflected towards E flat minor in bar 21. Bars 22-24 are on the dominant, with two loud interjections from the wind instruments.

The next passage sees the appearance of the chorale melody on oboes and clarinet, and although this bears a resemblance to the *tonus peregrinus*, it is in fact the chant used for the Lamentations of Jeremiah.[5] This lends an ecclesiastical flavour to the music, although the phrases in the 1st violins are distinctly *galant* in character. Bar 34 sees the return of the syncopations and dotted rhythms and the key of C minor, as well as a series of *coups d'archet* in the 1st violins. At bar 44 the dynamic suddenly drops, and the 1st violins have the syncopations above repeated notes in the bass. This material is used to form a modulating sequence through F minor towards G minor, except that there is then an inflection towards the major, creating a dominant to lead back to C minor. Dotted rhythms reappear in the bass and winds, and this is followed by a passage based on the restless quaver idea from bar 8, but with greater chromaticism. Bars 55-8 are a repeat of bars 13-16, but this time extended to include a move towards the subdominant. This is not to be a modulation, however, as the bass rises chromatically, leading to a perfect cadence in C minor. The remaining bars form a codetta, and include a chromatic ascending figure in the oboes in bars 64 and 66. The 'double hairpin' on the final chord recalls the wind chords from the opening.

OMBRA IN SLOW INTRODUCTIONS

As a dramatic device, the mysterious overture or introduction immediately demands the attention of the audience, creating an air of expectancy. It therefore makes an effective way to start a symphony. As Sisman observes:[6]

> ...the introduction 'previews' some of the contrasts to be found in the first movement: between heroic and lyrical affects, between periods of tension and repose, between major and minor. Second, by virtue of its attention-getting qualities, it offers the possibility of a soft main theme for the Allegro... And it turns that main theme into an arrival, even a resolution of sorts, rather than a straightforward beginning.

Ombra was certainly a well-established convention by the last quarter of the eighteenth century, and given that it was slow, mysterious, even threatening, it served as an ideal contrast not only to the 'soft main theme' but the loud bustling theme as well. Sisman goes on to consider the rhetorical implications of the symphonic slow introduction:[7]

> In the terminology of classical rhetoric... the initial portion of any work is its exordium. The Ciceronian distinction between two types of exordia, the direct and forceful introduction, or *principium*, and the stealthily indirect insinuation, or *insinuatio*, seems applicable both to fast and to slow beginnings depending on their dynamics and scoring... The 'gestural' quality of slow introductions has often been noted, and is especially clear when annunciatory and processional dotted rhythms make their appearance. But because slow-introduction motifs, gestures and topics never knit together to form a coherent thematic statement beyond the transitory and fragmentary, it is on the rhetorical level that they are most effective...

In this context, *ombra* can be seen as ideally suited to the slow introduction. Dotted rhythms represent an overlap between French Overture and *ombra*, which in combination with strong accents and a full texture can make an effective *principium*, while other features such as shifting tonality, restless motion and chromaticism perfectly represent *insinuatio*. Because *ombra* is founded on principles of discontinuity, it signifies a kind of chaos out of which emerges the order provided by the more stable *Allegro*, the journey from 'darkness into light' beloved of nineteenth-century musical writers.

In Mozart's symphonic output, this is nowhere more apparent than in the introduction to the 'Prague' Symphony, but before examining this, brief consideration is needed of some important antecedents.

HAYDN *SYMPHONY No. 75 IN D*

Written around 1779, this symphony is known to be one with which Mozart was familiar, since it was one of three whose incipits he copied out in 1784.[8] It has even been suggested that the slow introduction was used as a model for that of the 'Prague' Symphony.[9] It begins with the dotted rhythms deriving from the French Overture, although they are not especially forceful. After the *fortissimo* D in bar 10, they become more strident in loud octaves and in D minor, ending with two emphatic chords in bar 13. Another pair follows immediately, this time reinforced by horns, trumpets and timpani. There is a sudden drop to *piano* with a chromatic progression (including a Neapolitan sixth and diminished seventh chord) leading to the dominant. The remainder of the introduction is over a dominant pedal, with wide leaps in the 1st violin line, and a German sixth in bar 18. The dotted rhythm is now treated as a sighing figure in a dialogue between violins and cellos.

The structure is typical of symphonic slow introductions of the period, in that there are two distinct sections, one based on the tonic and the other on the dominant. It is not as complex or as lengthy as the introduction to Mozart's 'Prague' Symphony, and the *ombra* characteristics are not as strong, but there certainly are similarities, particularly in the unexpected turn to the tonic minor.

KRAUS *SYMPHONY IN C MINOR*

Although the exact date of composition is not known, this work was written during the latter half of the 1780s, and is based on an earlier symphony in C sharp minor of 1782.[10] The version in C minor benefits from darker orchestration, with flutes replaced by oboes, and the addition of bassoons and an extra pair of horns. The slow introduction is unusual in that it seems to start in F minor. The opening is markedly ecclesiastical in style, and the chains of suspensions bear more than a passing resemblance to the overture to Gluck's *Iphigénie en Aulide*. Certainly the atmosphere is mysterious, but the real *ombra* music begins at bar 24 with the single loud F minor chord followed by a motif based on repeated crotchets, an idea which is treated antiphonally, with the 1st violins answered by the rest of the orchestra. At bar 26 the dynamic suddenly drops, and a chromatic ascent in the bass suggests a possible modulation to C minor, but with a simple stepwise descent from A flat in bar 30, F minor seems to be the destination. The emergence of a strong E flat major chord at bar 32 is therefore a slight surprise, and a new syncopated idea is introduced in the upper strings. By bar 34 the key is A flat major, but this proves to be the submediant of C minor. After a couple of fast upward scales, the music comes to rest on a

diminished seventh chord, followed by a codetta based on the opening suspensions that concludes on the dominant.

The interesting questions here are why Kraus originally conceived this music in C sharp minor, and why he felt the need to transpose it to a flatter key. C sharp minor is itself very unusual, which may have been the attraction, but at some stage he was drawn towards C minor, a key so often associated with the mysterious and awesome. While his original choice might not be considered suitable for *ombra* references, his change of mind would indicate that he may have wished to draw attention to this aspect of the piece.

MOZART *SYMPHONIES No.36 and No.38*

Mozart's slow introductions typically contain a variety of topical references, but two in particular involve the use of *ombra*. The slow introduction to Mozart's Symphony No. 36 in C K425 'Linz' (1783) provides an excellent example of the way in which *ombra* requires several elements to be present.[11] It opens with the dotted rhythms of the French Overture, and at bar 4 patterns of repeated crotchets and quavers are introduced, but this is in C major and there is no suggestion of *ombra*. The atmosphere begins to change at bar 8 with a sudden loud chord, repeated semiquavers in the upper strings and a sinuous bassoon line. A move towards G minor seems likely, but the next two bars are a sequence around the circle of fifths which ends in F minor. From here the return to C minor is made via a chord of D flat major in bar 12, which functions both as the submediant in F minor and the Neapolitan in C minor. The closing bars of the introduction are 'on the dominant' of C minor, with rising and falling chromatic lines in the woodwind and violins.

By comparison, the introduction to the Symphony No. 38 in D K504 'Prague' (1786) offers a much more substantial *ombra* passage.[12] Both Ratner and Agawu have analysed the first sixteen bars, Ratner identifying a sequence of topical references, namely French Overture, sensibility, singing style, learned style, fanfare and finally *ombra* with the unexpected shift to the tonic minor in bar 16.[13] Agawu expands on this, reproducing Ratner's analysis and adding a two-voice contrapuntal framework.[14]

The unexpectedness of the D minor chord at bar 16 is enhanced by the melodic material which precedes it, a decorative triadic figure, almost fanfare-like in its simplicity, which demands resolution to a gentle perfect cadence in D major. The chord of D minor, suddenly forte, produces a startling effect, rather like a 'tierce de Picardie' in reverse. The contrast is not total, however. The ominous dotted rhythm played by the timpani in bar 16 is anticipated in bar 15 by both timpani and horns, but here it sounds martial rather than ominous, particularly in company with

the triadic violin melody. Bar 16 also contains a syncopated figure in upper strings, which further unsettles the mood. Bar 17 provides another contrast, both in dynamic and texture. The upward-moving arpeggio figure played by 1st violins is punctuated by a series of turns which do not have the feel of graceful decorations. The local dissonances created by the inessential notes add to the tension. These two bars provide all the musical material up to bar 27 by a simple process of alternation. The one factor which changes is the harmony, and although Mozart wants to use a suitably dark harmonic progression, he is careful to choose chords which allow the timpani to contribute the ominous dotted rhythm every time. The direct move to the flattened submediant in bar 18 suggests something portentous, although it is rather unusual to strengthen this move by subsequently sounding a dominant seventh chord in that key (bar 20). But there is to be no resolution to B flat major. Instead another dominant seventh is sounded, this time in G minor and in first inversion (bar 22), and with a resolution to a G minor chord (bar 24). From here the music moves via a diminished seventh on G sharp in bar 26 to the dominant of D minor at bar 28. Bars 16-28 can therefore be regarded as a move from tonic (minor) to dominant by an unconventional route, although the progression is underpinned by the chromatic ascent in the bass from bar 20 onwards.

The passage from bars 28-36 is essentially a prolongation of the dominant, with further references to the *ombra* style. There are more sudden accents, this time involving dissonance as well. Diminished sevenths over the dominant pedal are only briefly resolved before sounding again, and as the phrase winds down towards the dominant, the texture is further clouded by the chromatically ascending semiquavers on the oboe and bassoon (bars 29 and 31). This idea is mirrored by the descending chromatic figure on flute, oboe and violin I in bar 34. Dissonance is also created by the reappearance of the turn figure in violins I and II at bars 32 and 33, but this time there is no contrasting *forte* passage to follow. Instead there is a winding-down effect towards the *pianissimo* in bar 35, creating a mood of unease and expectancy. This atmosphere is enhanced by more ominous dotted rhythms (on horns and strings in bar 34, joined by timpani in bar 35), and by the syncopated rhythm played by violins I and II in bar 35, but most of all by the simple expedient of being 'on the dominant'. The ensuing Allegro instantly dispels the mood. Interestingly, the idea of the syncopated rhythm is retained, but at the faster tempo it serves to give a strong forward drive to the music.

OMBRA REFERENCES IN MOZART'S CHAMBER AND KEYBOARD MUSIC

The smaller forces involved in chamber music might be thought to preclude the use of the *ombra* style, since grand gestures and strong contrasts in texture and dynamics would have less of an

impact. Nevertheless topical allusions to the *ombra* style are occasionally found, and are accounted for in much the same way as in symphonies, in that they are used to make rhetorical gestures in slow introductions. One of the most celebrated slow introductions of all is the opening twenty-two bars of Mozart's String Quartet in C K465 (1785), which because of the extensive use of chromaticism has become known as the 'Dissonance'.[15] Several *ombra* characteristics appear, such as shifting tonality and accentuation, repeated notes in the bass, rising and falling chromatic lines, dissonant harmonies and sudden accents, but they do not add up to a full *ombra* reference. The atmosphere is mysterious, but not awe-inspiring or terrifying. As John Irving puts it:[16]

> The suspense created throughout this section is successfully achieved by the withholding of clear tonal (and for a while, accentual) reference points: a blurred image adjusted into sharp focus.

The eighteenth-century listener hearing this for the first time might be momentarily disorientated and certainly surprised, but a stronger emotional response is unlikely to result. For this reason, Ratner and Moyer associate this introduction more with fantasia, even though it lacks the sense of improvisation which is normally associated with fantasia references.[17]

The first section of the *Adagio and Rondo* K617 (1791) is essentially a slow introduction in C minor.[18] Again the atmosphere is mysterious, not least because of the ethereal sound of the glass armonica, which held a fascination for audiences towards the end of the eighteenth century and well into the nineteenth. Anton Mesmer made use of it, and it was generally believed to have an unusual effect on the mind:[19]

> There is ample testimony that the practice of eliciting sounds from the revolving bowls of the glasses was apt to have a deranging effect on the nerves of the player.

In bars 1-16 (and in the reprise bars 40-58) there are repeated notes, contrasting dynamics and chromatic harmonies, but here again this is more like fantasia than *ombra*, especially as the ornamentation of the melodic line helps to create an improvisatory feel.

These two examples serve to demonstrate the complexities involved in identifying some topical allusions. The overlaps between *ombra* and fantasia are sometimes difficult to disentangle. Even in keyboard works by Mozart which are labelled as 'Fantasia', there are passages which are rather closer to *ombra*. In the Fantasia in D minor K397, there is a sudden loud outburst of repeated quavers over a chromatically descending bass which is very portentous (see overleaf):[20]

Example 10.1 Mozart: Fantasia in D minor K397 (1782) bars 20-22

The same material reappears at bars 35-7 a tone lower. The opening of the Fantasia in C minor K475 is similarly ominous, but here the effect is achieved by an angular line in three octaves followed by two sighing figures:[21]

Example 10.2 Mozart: Fantasia in C minor K475 (1785) bars 1-2

This material is treated sequentially, passing through B flat minor and then to A flat major, which becomes the dominant of D flat major.

In both these cases, the music is perfectly in keeping with the kinds of gestures made in the fantasia genre, but displaying characteristics also associated with *ombra*. In fact, there is a problem in differentiating between 'fantasia' as a topic and as a genre. Fantasia as a genre may include references to several topics, including *ombra*. Equally, there may well be 'fantasialike' passages in other genres, such as sonatas or even symphonies.

One other keyboard work by Mozart needs brief attention, the *Kleinere Trauermarsche* K453a, a tongue-in-cheek piece for his pupil Barbara Ployer on which he inscribed 'Marche funèbre del Signor Maestro Contrapunto'.[22] The *ombra* features here include the opening dotted rhythms (to be expected in a march) which reapppear in the second half, the syncopations in bars 5-6, the descending chromatic scale in bars 11-12, the Neapolitan sixth in bar 14 and the contrasting dynamics throughout (see overleaf):

Example 10.3 *Kleinere Trauermarsche* K453a (1784)

CONCLUSION

The music examined in this chapter demonstrates how the characteristics of *ombra* are used as signifiers within a topical reference in instrumental music. What is less clear is what is signified. As with works based on a text, where death or the supernatural are explicitly referred to, the aim of the composer may be to provoke an emotional response from the audience, with the important difference that in instrumental pieces, the music is the sole medium of transmission. *Ombra* references in slow introductions may arise from the composer's need to make a rhetorical gesture early in the work, in order to gain the attention of the listener. There is an added advantage in that the contrast with the ensuing allegro – in practice usually in the tonic major – also gains in rhetorical force by means of contrast. It is perhaps no accident that in his multi-movement Septet in E flat Op. 20 (1799) Beethoven included a second slow introduction of sombre character

before the Finale as contrast, following middle movements of lighter character. In this instance, however, extra-musical associations appear unlikely.

Mozart shows a strong preference for D minor and C minor when he writes in the *ombra* style.[23] D minor is the key of his strongest *ombra* passages, in *Don Giovanni* and the 'Prague' Symphony, and C minor he associates with death, as seen in the *Maurerische Trauermusik* and the *Kleinere Trauermarsche*. This is not to say that these keys will always provide an *ombra* reference in Mozart's music, although they are frequently associated with emotional extremes, if not necessarily with death. Works such as the String Quartet in D minor K421 and the Piano Concertos in D minor K466 and C minor K491 are undoubtedly unsettling and emotional, and these qualities may involve characteristics associated with *ombra*, but in these cases the tempi are too fast for a legitimate *ombra* reference.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Ombra after Mozart: The continuation of the style in vocal and instrumental music into the early nineteenth century and beyond. Conclusion.

The principal aim of this study has been to examine Mozart's *ombra* music in the context of the music that might have influenced him, and to look at some examples by his contemporaries who were subject to similar influences. So far no consideration has been given to any music written after his death in 1791, but in order to place Mozart's contributions in their historical perspective, a brief survey of the subsequent development of *ombra* is required, especially in Vienna. This will principally involve a discussion of those works by Haydn, Beethoven and Schubert which exhibit *ombra* characteristics.

OPERA AND SOLO SONG

In Vienna, the repertoire after Mozart's death included revivals of his operas and those of Gluck (especially *Iphigénie en Tauride*), alongside new works; but despite the revival of *opera seria* in the short reign of Leopold II, the magical strand of Italian opera declined, with a corresponding lack of the kind of supernatural scenes found in classical stories. Ghosts, witches and demons did not figure as regularly as before. Most of the new operatic successes were by French and Italian composers, including Cherubini's *Médée* (1797), performed in Vienna in 1803, where the heroine is a kind of witch/demon; but this was less typical of the repertory than his 'rescue' opera *Les deux Journées* (1800), one of the models for Beethoven's *Leonora* (1805, later *Fidelio*, 1814). At the start of Act II of *Fidelio*, an orchestral introduction in F minor exploits chromatic harmonies, tremolando effects and alternating loud and soft chords, together with timpani tuned in a tritone, an effect anticipated in Salieri's *Il grotto di Trofonio* (see Chapter 7). Schubert's first completed opera, *Des Teufels Lustschloss* (1813-14) contains a short melodrama in C minor, scored for clarinets, bassoons and three trombones and with prominent chromaticism to accompany a dialogue concerning ghosts in an abandoned castle. But these are isolated examples, and the latter was not performed. The characteristics associated with the *ombra* style were to play a more important part in early German, rather than Austrian, Romantic opera, the most prominent example being the Wolf's Glen Scene in Weber's *Der Freischütz* (1821).

The *ombra* style in vocal music was still alive and well at the beginning of the nineteenth century in Vienna. The strongest evidence is a remarkable collection of 68 different settings of the same short text by Carpani, *In questa tomba oscura*, published in 1808 and dedicated to

Prince Joseph von Lobkowitz.[1] The collection arose out of a competition organised by the
Countess Rzewuska, where composers were asked to set the text, which itself had been written in
response to a piece improvised at the keyboard by the Countess at her salon in Baden. The eight
lines of poetry are the words spoken from the tomb of a man who has died of grief and who is
reproaching the maiden who weeps over his grave:

> In questa tomba oscura
> Lasciami riposar,
> Quando vivevo, ingrata,
> Dovevi a me pensar.
> Lascia che l'ombre ignude
> Godansi pace almen,
> E non bagnar mie ceneri
> D'inutile velen.

Contributors included many notable composers of the day, including Salieri, F.X. Mozart,
Zelter, Reichardt and Beethoven. Most of the settings are for voice and piano, although ten by
Zingarelli use a string quartet accompaniment (Nos. 35-44), two use four voices (No. 10 by
Doblhoff-Dier - also with two horns - and No. 66 by Reichardt), and one has the unusual
combination of four muted cellos and piano (No. 58 by Gyrowetz). The characteristics of the
ombra style appear in abundance, not least in the choices of key:[2]

Table 11a: Distribution of keys in settings of *In questa tomba oscura* (1808)

flats → sharps	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
major	-	-	2	11	2	3	1	-	-	1	1	-	-
minor	2	-	18	6	4	4	5	3	2	-	2	-	-

It can be seen that F minor and E flat major appear most frequently, and that other flat keys,
especially minor ones, feature prominently. Two pieces are in the remote key of E flat minor, but
there are no examples on the corresponding sharp side. Of the 68 settings, roughly three quarters
are in flat keys (52), about two thirds in minor keys (46), and exactly half are in flat minor keys
(34). This evidence confirms the association between *ombra* and flat keys.

The songs in *In questa tomba oscura* were generated by a dramatic scenario, but were
evidently intended for the salon. There are numerous other songs which draw on the *ombra* style,
feeding a public demand for a frisson of terror in a domestic setting. These include two by Haydn
written in 1795 during his second visit to London. *The Spirit's Song* is in F minor, and features

repeated notes and chords, dotted rhythms, chromatic lines and chords, sudden changes in dynamic and frequent pauses. *The Wanderer* is generally more lyrical, but where the owls and nightbirds 'add sound to the horror that darkens the glade', Haydn uses repeated semiquavers, diminished seventh and Neapolitan chords, chromatically descending lines and pauses to create, given the domestic context, a scene of remarkable vividness.

With the exception of his setting of *In questa tomba oscura*, Beethoven's songs do not really deal with the supernatural. Texts like *Vom tode* and *Der Bardengeist* do not give rise to *ombra* references, not even in the choice of key (F sharp minor and E minor respectively). For *In questa tomba oscura* (No. 63 in the collection) he chose A flat major, but the accompaniment is mostly chordal apart from some tremolando writing for 'lascia che l'ombre ignude godansi pace almen'.

Schubert's prolific output of songs includes several that deal with the subject of death and the supernatural.[3] Sometimes the reference is metaphorical, such as the lullaby of the stream in *Die schöne Müllerin* or the encounter with the organ grinder in *Winterreise*, but other songs involve the appearance of a supernatural character, as in *Erlkönig* or *Der Tod und das Mädchen*. In 1811, Schubert wrote three settings of texts that deal with death and the macabre, *Hagars Klage*, *Leichenfantasie* and *Der Vatermörder*. It is well known that they are very closely modelled on the ballads of Johann Rudolf Zumsteeg (1760-1802), who also wrote some operas with supernatural references, such as *Armide* (1785) and *Der Geisterinsel* (1798). Three months after completing *Des Teufels Lustschloss*, Schubert wrote his *Szene aus Faust*, which is clearly operatic in concept, even though the final version is intended for one performer. Seeking solace in a cathedral after the death of her brother, Gretchen is tormented by the Evil Spirit, personifying her sense of guilt. The choral interjections quote the text of the *Dies irae*, suggesting that a Requiem Mass is being heard in the background. The use of a homophonic texture with 'ecclesiastical' suspensions and cadences recalls the oracle style of writing. Schubert makes use of the oracle style again in his depiction of Death in *Der Tod und das Mädchen*. The key (D minor), harmony and texture are instantly recognisable, but perhaps the most pervasive feature here is the insistent dactylic rhythm.

Although the figure of Death does not appear in *Der Wegweiser* (No. 20 in *Winterreise*), the symbolism of the signpost in the title is unmistakable. It points 'along the road from which no traveller has returned'. Again the tonality, chromaticism, vocal line and texture at the end of the song derive from the *ombra* style. Two songs in *Schwanengesang* are notable for exhibiting *ombra* characteristics: *In der Ferne* and *Der Doppelgänger*. The poetic metre of *In der Ferne* is relentlessly dactylic, and is identical to the *verso sdrucciolo*. Schubert's rhythmic setting is

equally insistent. In the opening of *Der Doppelgänger*, the tempo, texture and piano tessitura together with the quasi-recitative character to the melodic line, immediately establish an eerie atmosphere. This is enhanced by the four-bar ground bass with the gradual increase in dynamic and the progressive use of dissonance. It might even be said that the vocal line is like an oracle, especially in its gravitational pull towards the dominant, creating in effect an elaborated monotone. The key (B minor) is not typical for an *ombra* reference, although Gluck uses it for the oracle in both versions of *Alceste*.

This necessarily brief survey of Schubert's supernatural songs paints only part of the picture. Taking the issue of tonality alone, Schubert has frequent recourse to flat minor keys for songs that involve death and the supernatural. John Reed has observed that D minor is often used for death (*Der Tod und das Mädchen*, *Freiwilliges Versinken* and *Fahrt zum Hades*) and C minor for the supernatural (*Der Geistertanz*, *Die Krähe* and *Gruppe aus dem Tartarus*).[4] There are numerous other examples in Schubert's songs where his response to these themes is highly expressive.

SACRED MUSIC

In the oratorios of Haydn, Beethoven and Schubert, *ombra* is especially prominent in the instrumental introductions. The famous 'Representation of Chaos' in Haydn's *The Creation* (1799) relies heavily on characteristics of the *ombra* style.[5] Although it is in C minor, the tonality is often blurred by chromaticism, and there are passages in D flat major and E flat major. Repeated quavers and dynamic contrasts are prominent features from the cluster of *ombra* techniques. Haydn also uses C minor for the introduction to 'Winter' in *The Seasons* (1801), a piece 'expressing the thick fogs at the approach of Winter'. The opening bars use the same progression as the chorus 'O voto tremendo' in Mozart's *Idomeneo* (See Example 4.27). Beethoven's *Christus am Oelberge* (1803) has a mysterious slow introduction in E flat minor which draws on effects like pianissimo muted strings in octaves, sudden accents, dotted rhythms, repeated semiquavers, tremolandi and syncopations. Part II of Schubert's incomplete oratorio *Lazarus* (1820) opens in 'a green field with gravestones, palms and cedars planted around', forming a Classical setting for a Biblical burial. The introduction is in C minor, but with a Neapolitan sixth as early as the second chord. The mood is enhanced by more chromaticism, repeated quavers, strongly contrasted dynamics and pauses.

References to the *ombra* style are still much in evidence in the Viennese Mass after Mozart, particularly in the 'Qui tollis' and 'Et incarnatus' sections. In Haydn's last six Masses, the 'Crucifixus' is usually give some kind of special treatment. Repeated quavers appear in both

the 'Heiligmesse' (1796) and 'Paukenmesse' (1796) in E flat minor and C minor respectively, the latter including a chromatically descending bass. Trumpets and timpani make an ominous entry in the 'Nelsonmesse' (1798) in D minor and 'Theresienmesse' (1799) in B flat minor. In the case of the 'Nelsonmesse', they famously return in a more threatening manner in the 'Benedictus', a genuinely spine-chilling gesture in a completely unexpected context. In the 'Theresienmesse', *ombra* features appear in the 'Agnus Dei' for the 'miserere nobis' passages, especially the first in D minor, with syncopations, repeated quavers, chromatic harmonies and an angular violin line.

Beethoven's setting of the 'Et incarnatus' in the *Missa Solemnis* Op.123 (1823) begins in D minor, and after a brief passage in D major for 'et homo factus est', the 'Crucifixus' begins in G minor, moves through D minor and closes on the dominant of C minor. Dotted rhythms and strong dynamic contrasts are important features.

Schubert often uses the *ombra* style for settings of 'Qui tollis'. In both the Mass in F D105 (1814) and the Mass in B flat D324 (begun 1815) he chooses D minor. In the latter, repeated quavers and *fp* effects are used, and for the 'miserere' syncopations appear in the bass. Trombones and bassoons have prominent lines in the 'Qui tollis' of the Mass in E flat D 950 (1828), which begins in G minor and moves to C minor. For some settings of the 'Et incarnatus est', Schubert uses flat minor keys. In the Mass in B flat, the 'Crucifixus' passage is in B flat minor with a chromatically descending bass and syncopations for 'passus' leading to F minor. D minor is the starting point for the 'Et incarnatus' in the Mass in C D452 (1816), moving to C minor for 'passus'. The very remote key of A flat minor is his choice for the 'crucifixus' in the Mass in E flat, with an ostinato figure and very chromatic harmony. The section ends in F minor, but is repeated later, beginning in B flat minor and returning to A flat minor.

SYMPHONIES

Symphonic slow introductions in the 1790s and into the next century continued to exhibit *ombra* characteristics. All but one of Haydn's 'London' Symphonies have slow introductions, (the exception is in a minor key), and include several examples of *ombra* references. No. 98 opens mysteriously in B flat minor only with strings in octaves, and both Nos. 100 and 102 suddenly shift to the tonic minor about halfway. In No. 100, dotted rhythms and repeated quavers are introduced at this point (bar 14) and in No.102 syncopations and a chromatically ascending 1st violin line. The introduction to No.104 is in D minor, and is built almost entirely on a dotted figure and a sigh motif, complemented by pauses, strong contrasts in dynamic and chromaticism.

The opening of Krommer's Symphony in D Op.40 (published 1803) is strongly reminiscent of the overture to Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, and is pure *ombra* throughout. After the

loud dotted tonic chords at the start, an unaccompanied angular string melody in octaves is heard. More dotted chords on the dominant give way to material built on a descending chromatic line with countermelodies in the wind. There follows a passage involving alternate loud and soft bars with repeated quavers and diminished seventh chords over a dominant pedal, the final dominant chord approached via a German sixth. The beginning of Krommer's Symphony in C minor Op.102 (undated) is less obviously in the *ombra* style , but the opening undulating figure on unaccompanied cellos and basses is later treated imitatively, and the final passage on the dominant is preceded by ominous repeated notes on the trombones.

The introduction to Beethoven's Symphony No. 2 Op.36 (1802) has one or two darker passages, including plenty of chromaticism and a modulation to D minor with loud dotted chords, but is less associated with ombra characteristics than its possible model, Mozart's 'Prague' symphony. His Symphony No. 4 Op.60 (1806) begins in B flat minor, with a melody built on a winding pattern of falling thirds in octaves on the strings. Tonal connections become strained when the music modulates to B minor and D minor before the dominant of B flat is established, and there are some striking contrasts in texture and dynamics.

Schubert's Symphony No. 4 in C minor ('Trauer') D417 owes its nickname at least in part to the slow introduction, which bears more than a passing similarity to the 'Representation of Chaos' in Haydn's *Creation*. A repeated quaver motif runs throughout, with occasional *ff* outbursts in an otherwise soft dynamic. There are some surprises in the harmony, such as the unexpected chord of G flat in bar 10. Towards the end the tonality becomes more vague, involving a descending sequential passage and considerable chromaticism. As the dominant of C minor is reached, syncopations are introduced.

By looking at these examples in vocal and instrumental music in the four decades following the death of Mozart, it is hoped that some perspective on Mozart's contribution is gained. In the broader picture, Mozart's *ombra* music can be seen as a vital link between the late Baroque gestures found in Gluck's theatre music and the early Romantic expressivity of Beethoven and Schubert. This is not to belittle the contributions made by Haydn and by Mozart's 'lesser' contemporaries, but it is works like *Don Giovanni* and the 'Prague' Symphony that had the most impact on the next generation. Kenneth Clark has observed:[6]

> The classicists believed in Winckelmann's words that "art should aim at noble simplicity and calm grandeur;" the romantics said that art should excite the emotions, and in particular the emotion of fear, which was the source of the sublime.

Many commentators have drawn attention to the historical importance of 'Sturm und Drang' and *Empfindsamer Stil* as forerunners of Romanticism because they are overtly expressive styles. *Ombra* must be added to these. Although it might be regarded as less suited to a composer's subjective expressivity, *ombra* was certainly intended to elicit a strong emotional response in audiences, something which became a hallmark of Romantic music. The scope of the influence of *ombra* goes far beyond the early Romantics, however, to include a great deal of nineteenth-century operatic and orchestral music, and even film music in the twentieth century, where the style has become a cliché in the horror genre.

CONCLUSION

In Chapter 1, a model was proposed which set out a taxonomy of *ombra* characteristics based on the writings of Ratner, Allanbrook and Moyer (see Table 1b). Their opinions have in part been shaped by a tendency to conflate *ombra* and fantasia, but on the whole they still hold true, and it should by now be clear that the cluster of elements which characterises *ombra*, while intersecting with the fantasia genre and other topics, can be considered to constitute a distinct topic in itself. Having considered in detail a large number of eighteenth-century examples of the *ombra* style in action, it is now possible to refine and amplify this model to distinguish it more clearly from related topics and the essentially improvisatory fantasia genre (see Table 11b overleaf).

It requires a combination of at least three of these features, I would suggest, before any *ombra* reference can properly be identified. The problem of identifying an *ombra* reference occurs when only a few of these features are present, particularly if there is no text to suggest such a reference in the first place. Many of these features are commonplace musical figures, and some have associations with other styles. The issue of signification is therefore a complex one to resolve, since there can be conflicting messages in the music. This accounts for the problems that Ratner, Moyer and Allanbrook have had in disentangling *ombra* from fantasia.

Table 11b Refined model of *ombra* characteristics

General features	'high' style, sombre, sustained, not quasi-improvisatory
Tempo	slow or moderate, never fast
Tonality	flat keys (especially minor keys) occasionally remote, shifting, unusual modulations,
Harmony	'surprise' progressions, bold, chromatic - especially diminished 7ths, sometimes Neapolitan and augmented sixths
Melody	exclamatory, often fragmented, sometimes augmented/diminished leaps, occasionally narrow intervals contrasting with wide leaps, monotones/triadic lines for oracles and invocations
Bass	chromatic stepwise movement, descending tetrachord, sometimes augmented/diminished leaps, repeated notes, pedals, ostinato
Figuration	motivic repetition (including 'sigh' motifs), tremolo effects, sometimes rising and falling scales
Rhythm	restless motion, syncopation, majestic or ponderous dotted rhythms, sometimes dactyls/*versi sdruccioli*, pauses
Texture	sudden contrasts, often dense, sometimes lines doubled in octaves, rarely imitative
Dynamics	strong contrasts, sudden outbursts, crescendo effects, unexpected silence
Instrumentation	unusual, low tessitura, dark timbre, especially trombones

There are also areas of overlap with other styles. 'Sturm und Drang' has many *ombra* characteristics, but the principal difference is tempo. Some of Moyer's *ombra* examples, such as the 'Air de Furies' in Gluck's *Don Juan* (No 31), Boccherini's 'La casa di diavolo' or the first movement of Mozart's Piano Concerto in D minor K466, cannot be regarded as *ombra* for this reason, even though several *ombra* characteristics are present. 'Sigh' motifs are often associated with *Empfindsamer Stil*, but have been seen to be prominent in many *ombra* scenes. Prominent dotted rhythms belong to the French Overture, and this association is important in conveying majesty and awe in an *ombra* reference. Because *ombra* usually involves death in some way, there are links with the lament, such as minor keys, repeated notes, chromaticism and especially the descending tetrachord in the bass.

The code of signification in *ombra* is therefore very complex, involving references to other well-established conventions, and with very few characteristics which of themselves would suggest a reference to the supernatural or to death. The defining feature is the appearance of at least some of these characteristics in combination, and in a context where either the text or the

need for a rhetorical gesture demands its presence. The most normal context, therefore, is a supernatural apparition in a dramatic work, something which reached a climax of imposing complexity in *Don Giovanni*. References in liturgical music focus on the death of Christ, but also on penitence ('Qui tollis'); the supernatural is, of course, an element intrinsic to the beliefs in question. Where *ombra* references occur in instrumental music, therefore, just as when other topical allusions appear, we may be encountering a musical phenomenon – the need for a balance of oppositions, for contrast and controlled change in tension – or we may be being offered a useful key to unlock the 'meaning' of the music. These alternatives are not in any case mutually exclusive, and assessment of their validity is beyond the scope of this thesis.

Endnotes for Chapter 1

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1 The views of these writers will be considered in Chapter 2.

2 H. Abert *Jommelli* pp 120-1.

3 Ibid. This scene is examined in the case studies in Chapter 7.

4 Ibid. Later he traces the origin of the style back to Monteverdi's laments (p 123).

5 These are *Eumene* III/6, *Merope* II/10, *Astianatte* II/15, *Talestri* II/6, *Vologeso* III/6, *Lucio Vero* III/9 and *Ifigenia in Tauride* I/4, pp 136-7, 251-2, 320-331 and 386-9. Some of these will be discussed below, including a case study of the scene in *Vologeso* in Chapter 7.

6 L. Ratner *Classic Music* especially pp 9-29.

7 Ibid. p 24. He goes into more detail on pp 308-14. The German preoccupation with fantasia is examined on p 357.

8 See C. Rosen *The Classical Style* p 91 where he suggests that 'Fantasy' stems from forms where the material implies 'either a markedly asymmetrical resolution or a form... that is relatively unarticulated'. Later he examines Mozart's Fantasy in C minor K475, and concludes that 'it is intended to have something of the quality of an improvisation' (p 92).

9 Ratner *Classic Music* p 24.

10 Although Ratner does not define 'church' style as such, he states that '... the strict and learned styles were associated with the church' (p 23). He goes on to say that 'alla breve' is the the simplest form, using semibreves and minims, and that 'stile legato' is the same as 'bound style' i.e. fugal style.

11 Ratner cites the overture to Mozart's *Don Giovanni* as an example of fantasia style 'in which the ombra style invokes hell instead of heaven, a reversal of the the sense of a 'da Chiesa' introduction' (p 315). Elsewhere, he describes *ombra* as 'one of the principal affects of the opera' (p 65).

12 Ibid. p 21.

13 Ibid. p 21.

14 Ibid.

15 Ibid.

16 Ibid. p 315. This passage is examined as a case study in Chapter 10.

17 W.J. Allanbrook *Rhythmic Gesture in Mozart.*

18 Ibid. p 361.

19 Ibid. She observes that in *Don Giovanni*, Mozart holds them in reserve until the end of the opera, when the statue of the Commendatore appears.

20 Ratner does note that trombones were 'traditional in church music to double voices [and] also were heard in ceremonial brass music and upon solemn occasions...' *Classic Music* p 154. He gives an example from the overture to Gluck's *Alceste*, where in comparison to horns 'their heavier, less mellow tone befits the mood of tragedy with which the opera 'Alceste' begins'. For more on trombones see Chapter 6.

21 Allanbrook *Rhythmic Gesture* pp 197-8.

22 Ibid. p 198.

23 Ibid.

24 See Chapter 10 for an analysis of this passage.

25 Allanbrook *Rhythmic Gesture* pp 292-301. She gives a brief outline of how trombones were used before Mozart. Like Ratner, she points to the church connection, but goes on to say that 'they had been used since the beginnings of opera in the early seventeenth century to accompany spectral voices, solo or choral, in 'ombra' scenes... Thus their appearance here would not have seemed unusual to the contemporary audience, but would have informed it of the immediate presence on the scene of a supernatural power.' (p 292).

26 Ibid. pp 292-3.

27 Ibid. p 293.

28 Allanbrook mentions several 'antique' associations, such as the 'preluding fantasy' the 'Venetian trombones' and the 'tierce de Picardie' all of which are linked to church style. She also observes that 'to Classic musicians the 'stile antico' was virtually synonymous with the 'stile ecclesiastico'.' (p 318).

29 Ibid. p 301.

30 Ibid. p 318.

31 V.K. Agawu *Playing with Signs* p 30. He explains that this list is 'provisional' because it is restricted to those topics covered in the book, and because others may be discovered later.

32 Ibid. p 18 Example 1.1, which itself derives from Ratner *Classic Music* pp 104-5. Agawu goes on to present a voice-leading graph of the same music on pp 21-22. See Appendix A for my own voice-leading graph of bars 16-36.

33 B. Moyer *Ombra and Fantasia in Late Eighteenth-Century Theory and Practice.*

34 Ibid. p 283.

35 Ibid. pp 284-288. Eighteenth-century writers are considered in Chapter 2.

36 Ibid. p 288.

37 Ibid.

38 Ibid. p 289. Various examples by Jommelli are considered in Chapters 3-7.

39 Key characteristics will be examined in Chapter 3.

40 They are from *The New Harvard Dictionary of Music, Das Grosse Lexikon der Musik,* and N. Slonimsky's *Lectionary of Music. The New Grove Dictionary of Opera* has a brief entry for 'Ombra scene', which is defined as 'A scene set in Hades, or one included in 17th-century Italian opera and the French 'tragédie en musique', and remained a feature of 18th-century operas, particularly those based on the Orpheus, Iphigenia and Alcestis themes...'. My own entry in *NG2* expands on this to include topical references and the influence on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Vol 18 pp 407-8).

41 Ibid. p 292.

42 Ibid. p 293.

43 Ibid. p 296.

44 Ibid. p 299.

45 Ibid.

46 Ibid. p 303.

47 Ibid. p 306.

48 Ibid.

49 Ibid.

Endnotes for Chapter 2

1 See George J. Buelow 'Rhetoric and Music' (Sections 2-4) in *NG2* Vol 21 p 262-274. The influence of Greek and Roman thought, especially Aristotle, Cicero and Quintilian, is shown to be strong in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. More detailed observations can be found in Mark Evan Bonds *Wordless Rhetoric*, George A. Kennedy *Classical Rhetoric* and Elaine Sisman *Jupiter*.

2 J.D. Heinichen *Der General-Bass in der Composition* (Dresden, 1728), J. Mattheson *Der Vollkommene Capellmeister* (Hamburg, 1739) and J.F. Daube *Der Musikalische Dilletant* (Vienna [?], 1770).

3 Buelow 'Rhetoric and Music' p 269.

4 Moyer *Ombra and Fantasia* p 287. The examples are taken from H.C. Koch 'Leidenschaft' in *Musikalischer Lexikon* (1802) and J.N. Forkel *Allgemeine Geschichte der Musik* (Leipzig 1788-1801).

5 Collins German-English Dictionary 2nd edn. (Glasgow, 1991) gives for *mürrisch* 'morose, sullen, surly' and for *heftig* 'violent, vehement, intense'.

6 J.A. Scheibe *Der critische Musikus* (Leipzig 1745).

7 H. Koch 'Leidenschaft', quoted in Moyer p 292.

8 J.J. Quantz *On Playing the Flute* pp 125-6.

9 Brief summaries of the sublime can be found in P. Le Huray and J. Day *Aesthetics* pp 4-6 and E. Sisman *Jupiter* pp 13-20. A more detailed study is S.H. Monk *The Sublime*, and there is much useful information in G.A. Kennedy *Classical Rhetoric*. A valuable collection of source readings is edited by A. Ashfield and P. de Bolla *The Sublime*. For the influence of the sublime on music, see R.B. Larsson *The Beautiful, the Sublime and the Picturesque*, A.P. Brown 'The Sublime, the Beautiful and the Ornamental', M. Garda *Musica Sublime*, J. Webster 'The Creation: Haydn's Late Vocal Music and the Musical Sublime' and S. McVeigh *Concert Life in London* pp 153-156.

10 For an outline history of the publication of translations of this work, see Monk *The Sublime* pp 18-28, and for its subsequent influence pp 63-83.

11 Ashfield and de Bolla *The Sublime* p 23.

12 J. Dennis *Grounds of Criticism*, quoted in Ashfield and de Bolla *The Sublime* p 35. Monk explains that admiration here means wonderment or surprise (*Sublime* p 51 n 26). He also explains that Dennis's book was not completed due to a lack of subscribers, and especially regrets that we have nothing on his opinion of the relationship between horror and the sublime (pp 46-51).

13 Ashfield and de Bolla *The Sublime* p 38.

14 H. Jacob *Works* in Ashfield and de Bolla *The Sublime* pp 53-4.

15 J. Baillie *Essay on the Sublime* in Ashfield and de Bolla *The Sublime* p 99.

16 E. Burke *A Philosophical Enquiry* For details on publication, revision and circulation, see the introduction to J.T. Boulton's edition (London, 1958) pp vii-x. The work was translated into French (Paris, 1765) and German (Riga and Leipzig 1773). Although there was no Austrian edition, Burke's ideas were widely disseminated through a translation of Henry Homes's *Elements of Criticism* (Vienna, 1785/6) which draws on his theories heavily. See M. Hörwarthner 'Joseph Haydn's Library' p 421.

17 Burke ed. Boulton p 39.

18 Ibid. p 57.

19 Ibid. pp 58-9. The passage in Milton's *Paradise Lost* (Book II) describing the figure of Death is quoted to illustrate the dread associated with an insubstantial presence. Burke observes that in this description, 'all is dark, uncertain, confused, terrible, and sublime to the last degree' (p 59).

20 Ibid. p 60.

21 Ibid.

22 Ibid. p 71.

23 Ibid. p 140.

24 Ibid. p 78.

25 Shakespeare *Henry IV* Part I Act IV Scene 1, quoted in ibid. p 79.

26 Ratner defines French Overture as 'a distinctive style of ceremonial music [which] uses a slow and heavy march tempo with dotted rhythmic figures'. *Classic Music* p 20.

27 Burke ed. Boulton p 80.

28 Ibid. pp 81-82.

29 Ibid. p 82.

30 Ibid. p 83.

31 Ibid.

32 Burke concludes this part of the book with brief sections on the cries of animals, smell and taste, and on pain, but these have no obvious musical equivalents.

33 D. Webb *Observations* quoted in Le Huray and Day *Aesthetics* pp 118-9. This book was translated into German (Leipzig, 1771). Monk notes that Webb's observations on poetry are dull, but are 'more interesting' on music (*Sublime* p 108).

34 Le Huray and Day *Aesthetics* pp 119.

35 J. Beattie *Dissertations* p 187.

36 A. Alison *Essays* pp 247-250.

37 See Le Huray and Day *Aesthetics* pp 106-7 and 138-9.

38 Ibid. pp 214-229. See also Sisman *Jupiter* pp 18-20.

39 This is a development of Kant's 'dynamical sublime' and 'mathematical sublime'. Michaelis published his thoughts in both the *Berlinische musikalische Zeitung* (1805) and the Leipzig *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* (1806-7), quoted in Le Huray and Day *Aesthetics* p 289.

40 Ibid.

41 Quoted in Le Huray and Day *Aesthetics* p 295.

42 Ibid. p 374. Significantly, Lichtenthal's bibliography includes Webb, Sulzer and Michaelis.

43 W. Crotch *Lectures* Preface, quoted in Le Huray and Day *Aesthetics* p 432.

44 Crotch *Specimens*, preface. He also points to the 'high, lofty, elevated' aspect of the sublime, concluding that 'the grandest style in music is therefore the sacred style'.

45 Novello vocal score pp 163-9.

46 D.J. Grout *A Short History of Opera* p 2.

47 See F.A. Yates *Occult Philiosophy* and R. Donington *Rise of Opera* p 21-31

48 See E.J. Clery *The Rise of Supernatural Fiction*, especially pp 33-49. Hogarth's famous portrait of Garrick as Richard III (c.1740) in an exaggerated state of horror is reproduced on p 45. These examples of the supernatural on stage are paralleled by the rise in popularity of the Gothic novel, such as Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (Dublin, 1765). See G. Cavaliero *The Supernatural and English Fiction* pp 23-27.

49 The information in this table is drawn from R.R. Heitner 'Iphigenia in Tauris'.

50 From ibid., and J.E. Cumming 'Gluck's Iphigenia Operas'. Some versions are given the title *Oreste*, e.g. Handel (1734) and Monza (1766)

51 A. Lewis and N. Fortune (eds.) *New Oxford History of Music* Vol V, p.90

52 O. Strunk *Source Readings* vol III, p 160-161.

53 Ibid. p 169.

54 M. Bucciarelli *Scene di Vaticinio*

55 A. Lewis and N. Fortune (eds.) *New Oxford History of Music* Vol V, p 170-3, including music examples.

56 Donington *Rise of Opera* pp 271-276.

57 See C. Wood 'Orchestra and Spectacle'.

58 Ibid. p 30

59 E.W. White *A History of English Opera* pp 91-3 and 105

60 See W. Dean *Handel and the Opera Seria* pp 77-99.

Endnotes for Chapter 3

1 R. Steblin *A History of Key Characteristics* p 187.

2 Ibid. p 103.

3 Various examples by Jommelli will be discussed in Chapters 4-7.

4 Steblin pp 221-308.

5 The sources, cited in Steblin, are Charpentier, Marc-Antoine, *Règles de Composition* (Paris c.1692), Rameau, Jean-Philippe, *Traité de l'harmonie réduite à ses principes naturels* (Paris 1772), Schubart, Christian Friederich Daniel, *Ideen zu einer Ästhetik der Tonkunst* (Vienna 1806) and Galeazzi, Francesco, *Elementi teorico-pratici di musica* Vol 2 (Rome 1796). Charpentier's original manuscript is now lost, but two early eighteenth-century copies have survived. Schubart's ideas were published posthumously, having been written while he was in prison in 1784. (See Steblin p 34 and p 121).

6 Steblin p 122 and pp 245-6. The later comment is made in his article 'Tonkunst' in the Vaterlands-Chronik of 1789. Curiously, he chooses to employ the enharmonic D sharp, even though such a key would never be used. Elsewhere, Steblin explains that 'D sharp major was a common Baroque spelling for E flat major' (p 208 n).

7 Quoted in Steblin p 138.

8 Galeazzi has for C major: 'Grandiose, military, fit to display grand events, serious, majestic and tumultuous' (Steblin p 223).

9 The most obvious example is the opening to Haydn's *The Creation*, a passage which was almost universally acknowledged as 'sublime'.

10 Steblin pp 227-8.

11 Moyer p 293ff.

12 Steblin p 260.

13 Steblin p 261.

14 Steblin pp 237-9.

15 See Steblin pp 296-7 and 274-5. Galeazzi's view of G major as 'innocent, simple, unemotional, indifferent, and of little effect' is fairly typical.

16 See Steblin p 281 and pp 260-261.

17 Steblin addresses this topic in detail, pp 135-140.

18 Steblin cites examples by Ozamam (1691), Riepel (1755), Koch (1787), Grétry (1797) and Vogler (1779 and 1800) pp 135-138.

19 Steblin p 137.

20 Quoted in Steblin p 139.

21 See C. Wood *Orchestra and Spectacle* pp 32-33, and Lully *Amadis* in *CW* Operas Vol 3 pp 150-3. The scene is described in R. Donington *The rise of opera* p 298.

22 Wood p 32.

23 Wood pp 32-4. Examples are given from Collasse *Enée et Lavinie* (1690) and Desmarets *Théagène et Chariclée* (1695).

24 *ECNRS* Vol IV pp 414-455.

25 C. Price *Henry Purcell and the London Stage* pp 21-26. See also P. Holman *Purcell* pp 38-9.

26 P. Holman suggests that B flat major 'was associated with Bacchic jollity' p 39.

27 Price p 23.

28 The 'Song of Devils' is preceded by the mournful music in C minor for 'flatt trumpets', also used in the *Funeral Music for Queen Mary* (1795).

29 Price p 305.

30 *MB* Vol 2 pp 35-6.

31 *MB* Vol 51 pp 5-16 (Locke) and pp 32-6 (Humfrey).

32 An ellipsis following a key indicates that the scene in question begins in that key, and subsequently passes through several others.

33 Naumann *Orpheus og Eurydyke* (vocal score) ed C.F. Cramer (Kiel 1787) p 45ff. A copy is in the British Library, BL F 382b.

34 *GHS Rinaldo* pp 70-1.

35 The revised version is given in ibid. pp 178-80, where the whole passage is transposed (mainly downwards) into D minor, for a contralto soloist. Although the keys are consequently less remote, a darker effect is created by the lower tessitura. An additional eight bars at the end includes the phrase 'sotto quest'ombra posiamci', but there is no indication of any special musical treatment, as only the melody and bass line are given.

36 F minor and C minor are used for another sorceress, Medea, as she summons the shades of hell in *Teseo* (1712), Act III Scene 5, composed less than a year after the original version of *Rinaldo*. *GHS Teseo* p 61ff.

37 *GHS Orlando* p 87.

38 *GHS Alcina* p 57ff.

39 Ibid. p 97ff.

40 The following aria, 'Ombra pallide' in E minor, contains no references to the *ombra* style. At the end, Alcina 'leaves impetuously, throwing aside her wand, and then the spirits and phantoms appear, and begin to dance.' Unfortunately, the music for this does not exist. See the editor's note in ibid. p 105.

41 Abert, *Jommelli* p 134.

42 D. Heartz, *Traetta in Vienna*.

43 Ibid. p 71, with music example pp 72-3.

44 *GSW* IV Vol 5 p 58ff.

45 See B.A. Brown *Gluck and the French Theatre in Vienna* p 257.

46 *GSW* I Vol 3 p 86ff.

47 *GSW* I Vol 3 p205ff.

48 *NMA* 5 Vol 7 p139ff.

49 Traetta *Ifigenia in Tauride* Garland p 39ff.

50 Piccinni *Atys FOSEC* Vol 65 p 291ff.

51 *NMA* Group 5 Vol 4 p 221ff.

52 *GSW* I Vol 5a pp 47-8.

53 *GSW* II Vol 1 pp 104-5.

Endnotes for Chapter 4

1 One of the advantages of the gradual adoption of equal temperament was the ability to use diminished sevenths as chords to facilitate modulation.
2 See above pp 35-6.
3 *GHS Poro* p 95.
4 *GSW* I Vol 8a p 247.
5 Salieri *Tarare* full score (Paris, 1787) BL Hirsch ii 837 p 272.
6 *NMA* 5 Vol 20 pp 142-4 and 147-9. The inclusion of a chorus at this point is one of Mazzolà's amendments to Metastasio's original plot. Gluck's setting of 1752 (*GSW* III Vol 16) contains no such writing.
7 Jommelli *Merope* MS full score (n.d.) BL Add 16,041.
8 Brown, *Gluck* pp 338-9.
9 *GSW* II Vol 1 pp 83-84.
10 *GSW* I Vol 9 pp 54-5.
11 *NMA* 5 Vol 10 p 5ff.
12 There are several examples in Purcell's operatic writing, most notably in the music for the Sorceress in *Dido and Aeneas* (1689).
13 *NMA* 5 Vol 7 pp 152-3.
14 Ibid. pp 148-9.
15 Abert *Jommelli* pp 154-5. He illustrates this with examples from *Tito Manlio* (1743) I/10 and *Demofoonte* I/5.
16 *JHW* XXV Vol 12 pp 52-3.
17 *DTÖ* Vol 6 p 47. This is what Allanbrook refers to as an 'antique bass'.
18 J.C. Bach *CW* Vol 8 p 83.
19 Traetta *Antigona* ed. Rocchi full score (1962) p 164.
20 *GSW* I Vol 7 pp 256-7.
21 There is an example of repeated notes in an *ombra* scene in Lully's *Amadis* (1684) III/3.
22 *GSW* II Vol 1 pp 98-101.
23 *NMA* 5 Vol 4 p 221.
24 *NMA* 5 Vol 7 pp 146-8.
25 J.C. Bach *CW* Vol 8 p 82.
26 Full score in BL H340.a.
27 *GSW* I Vol 2 p 213.
28 An early example can be seen in the infernal scene of Charpentier's *Médée* (1693) III/5, *ECNRS* Vol IV pp 415-8.
29 *FOSEC* Vol 65 pp 321-3.
30 Traetta *Antigona* ed. Rocchi pp 175-6.
31 *NMA* 5 Vol 2 p 437. *Don Giovanni* is discussed in Chapter 7.
32 Ratner observes that 'the melodic declamation of the *stile antico*, flowing and continuous, was set aside in favor of figured melodies, punctuated and symmetrical'. *Classic Music* p 110.
33 For the use of trombones in church, see Chapter 6.
34 See Chapter 3 pp 37-39.
35 *GSW* I Vol 3 pp 220-221.
36 *GSW* I 5a p 47.
37 *GSW* I 9 p 72.
38 Anderson *Letters* p 674.
39 Ibid. n 3.
40 Anderson *Letters* p 700.
41 Anderson *Letters* p 703.
42 Anderson *Letters* p 706.
43 Rushton *Idomeneo* pp 41-2.
44 *NMA* 5 Vol 11 pp 472-3 and 566-8.
45 This might explain the consecutive fifths in 28c bars 54-5.

Endnotes for Chapter 5

1   The archetype is the 'Dance of Furies' in Gluck's *Don Juan* No 35, which he recycled in *Orphée et Euridice* (1774). This is the dance paraphrased by Boccherini in the finale to his Sinfonia in D minor *La Casa del Diavolo* (1771). See Ratner *Classic Music* pp 381-6 for a comparison.
2   For a detailed consideration of this issue, see C. Brown *Performing Practice* pp 336-361.
3   See the case studies by these composers in Chapter 7.
4   *GSW* I Vol 2 pp 213-218.
5   See Chapter 3 pp 44-47.
6   *JHW* XXV Vol 13 pp 199 –203.
7   Allusions to shaking by the use of tremolando are ubiquitous in Baroque music, including the famous 'Frost Scene' in Act III of Purcell's *King Arthur* and 'Winter' in Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*, Op 8 No 4.
8   Most of the examples here are tremolandi produced by fast reiterations of the same pitch, although a similar effect is produced by fast alternation between two pitches. The various types of tremolo and vibrato effects are discussed in C. Brown *Performing Practice* pp 517-521.
9   *GSW* I Vol 3a p424ff.
10 Ibid. p 431ff and p 445.
11 J.C. Bach *CW* Vol 10 p 185. The passage immediately following this one is discussed in Chapter 6 p 136. Tremolandi in combination with a descending bass line can be seen in J.C. Bach's *Lucio Silla* I/7, see Example 4.14.
12 Ibid. pp 193-4.
13 Piccinni *Iphigénie en Tauride*, Gregg Edition, pp 122-3.
14 *FOSEC* Vol 56 pp 208-9.
15 *NMA* 5 Vol 20 pp 209-10.
16 *NMA* 5 Vol 4 pp 225-7. Tremolandi also feature briefly in a comic episode in *La Finta Giardiniera* (1775) Act II Scene 16 bars 10-11, when Nardo is frightened by the dark, *NMA* 5 Vol 8 p 420.
17 *GSW* I Vol 8a pp 282-3.
18 See Chapter 4 pp 65-6.
19 Ratner mentions 'sighing figures' in association with 'Sensibility' and *Empfindsamkeit*, see *Classic Music* p 22, but there is a separate designation in Agawu's 'Universe of Topic', *Playing with Signs* p 30.
20 See Chapter 3 pp 44-47.
21 Philidor *Tom Jones*, B&H vocal score (1978) p 127. Julian Rushton states that this aria represents 'a significant step in the assimilation of a serious style into *opéra-comique*', *NGDO* IV p 754.
22 The recitative is given in full in McClymonds *Jommelli* pp 342-4.
23 Traetta *Antigona* ed. Rocchi p 161.
24 *NMA* 5 Vol 7 p 153. See also Mozart's letter of 26 September 1781, in which he describes his use of special musical effects in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*: 'Let me now turn to Belmonte's aria in A major, 'O wie ängstlich. o wie feurig'. Would you like to know how I have expressed it – and even indicated his throbbing heart? By the two violins playing octaves... You see the trembling – the faltering- you see how his throbbing breast begins to swell; this I have expressed by a crescendo. You hear the whispering and the sighing – which I have indicated by the first violins with mutes and a flute playing in unison.' Anderson *Letters* p 769.
25 See Chapter 4 p 56-7.
26 Piccinni *Iphigénie en Tauride* Gregg (1972) p 120.
27 Ratner *Classic Music* p 20.
28 *GSW* I Vol 5a p 48.
29 *NMA* 5 Vol 11 p 438.
30 Ibid. p 472. See Chapter 4 pp 79-81 for more on this scene.
31 *GSW* I Vol 7 p 271.
32 Haydn 'Aria di Beatrice' ed H.C. Robbins Landon (1961) pp 4-5. Haydn composed this in 1789 as an insertion aria for Act II Scene 5 of Cimarosa's *I due supposti Conti* (1784) for a production in the Court Theatre at Esterháza.
33 *NMA* 5 Vol 7 pp 139-40.
34 Ibid. p 148.
35 *NMA* 5 Vol 8 p p 418-9.

36 'Precede sinfonia esprimente terrore, e sbigottimento'. *GSW* I Vol 3a p 446 (text in footnote).

37 *GSW* I 8a p 219.

38 BL H 340.a p 66.

39 Traetta *Ifigenia in Tauride* Garland facsimile Act II pp 88-9 (N.B. page numbers start at 1 for each act).

40 For a straightforward explanation of Italian verse metres, see the preface to J.A. Rice *Antonio Salieri* p xvii.

41 E. Rosand *Opera in Seventeenth-Century Venice* p 342.

42 M. Bucciarelli *Scene di Vaticinio* p 18.

43 The full scene is available as a music example in Rosand pp 485-6 and Bucciarelli Vol 2 pp 186-7.

44 See Chapter 4.

45 Rosand p 345. She gives several examples of similar scenes in other operas by Cavalli, e.g. *Didone* I/7, *Pompeo magno* II/16 and *Calisto* I.13, the latter being a case where the 'ugly and boorish' *sdrucciolo* is applied to a rustic setting (pp 343-6).

46 One example is in Melani's *L'empio punito* Act III Scene 16. See Bucciarelli *Scene di Vaticinio* Vol 2 pp 113-4.

47 Ibid. p 344.

48 See Chapter 7.

49 Traetta *Antigona* ed Rocchi p 171.

50 BL F 382b p 55.

51 See W. Osthoff *Mozarts Cavatinen* pp 171-2, and Rice *Salieri* p 93.

52 *GSW* I Vol 7 pp 100-1.

53 J.C. Bach *CW* Vol 8 p 86.

54 Transcribed from the Garland facsimile, pp 111-13. Gluck's *Orfeo* is examined in detail in Chapter 7.

Endnotes for Chapter 6

1 See Chapter 3 p 37. The same motif is used in the French version (1776) Act II Scene 3. *GSW* I Vol 7 pp 93-99.
2 *GSW* I Vol 3a pp 134-5.
3 Ibid. p 431.
4 Various examples are given in Chapters 4 and 5.
5 Traetta *Ifigenia in Tauride* Garland pp 39-42.
6 M. Thiemel 'Dynamics' in *NG2* Vol 7 pp 820-4.
7 Ratner is similarly focussed on instrumental music, and makes no acknowledgement of the influence of opera here. See *Classic Music*, pp 187-190.
8 For an examination of 18th-century dynamics, see C. Brown *Performing Practice* pp 59-95, which, however, contains no examples in the *ombra* style.
9 See McClymonds *Jommelli* pp 336-7.
10 Anderson *Letters* p 143.
11 See Chapter 4 p 61.
12 *NMA* 5 Vol 4 pp 221-5.
13 *FOSEC* Vol 56 pp208-9. This is a facsimile of the 1769 edition. The preceding tremolando passage is given in Chapter 5 pp 93-4.
14 This may be both horns on one note, but there is no indication of this.
15 *NMA* 5 Vol 11 pp 472-3 and 566-8.
16 Lully *CW* Operas Vol 3 pp 150-3 and *ECNRS* Vol IV pp 414-455.
17 See Abert *Jommelli* pp 204-5, where he compares this version with Jommelli's (discussed below).
18 Abert *Jommelli* p 136.
19 Ibid. pp 185-6.
20 Ibid. pp 202-5.
21 BL Add 16,041 pp 170-1.
22 J.C. Bach *CW* Vol 10 pp 191-2.
23 J.C. Bach *CW* Vol 10 p 186.
24 R. Gregory *The Trombone* p 125 and A.C. Baines/A. Myers and T. Herbert 'Trombone' in *NG2* Vol 25 pp 762-773.
25 See R.L. Weaver 'Sixteenth-century instrumentation'. The 'infernal' orchestra is discussed pp 370-2, and details are given in Table 3 p 377.
26 These are discussed in J. Whenham *Orfeo* pp 140-3 and 182-4.
27 *DTÖ* Vol 6 pp 47-53 & Vol 9 pp 33-34.
28 R. Gregory *The Trombone* p 125.
29 This would appear to contradict Gregory's view that by the early eighteenth century the trombone seemed 'to have acquired a plebeian and almost old-fashioned image' (ibid.). Trombones may not have enjoyed the same elevated status as the trumpet, but they can hardly be regarded as 'plebeian'.
30 See Chapter 4 pp 76-77 and 79-81.
31 See Chapter 4 p 80.

Endnotes for Chapter 7

1 *GHS Admeto* pp 5-9.
2 Abert *Jommelli* p 121.
3 Ibid.
4 I am grateful to Klaus L. Neumann of Westdeutscher Rundfunk Köln Alte Musik for providing the score of this scene. This is from the edition used for the recording of *Cleofide* by the Cappella Coloniensis under William Christie issued in 1987 (Capriccio 10 193/96). The full score was reconstructed from a manuscript in the Saxon State Library, Dresden (Mus. 2477-F9) and a variety of other sources.
5 There is an *ombra* scene in *Lucio Vero* (Act III Scene 9) in E flat major. See Abert *Jommelli* p 252. Zeno's original libretto was quite heavily modified by Verazi. *Lucio Vero* was one of the first of more than twenty operas that Jommelli provided for Duke Karl Eugen of Württemberg at Stuttgart.
6 A *lieto fine* is achieved by the Roman soldiers forcing Lucio Vero to marry his betrothed, Lucilla, and Berenice is reunited with Vologeso.
7 Abert *Jommelli* p 321. This scene is discussed pp 318-322.
8 The text here mentions the Fieste banquets, which is a reference to Act I Scene 2, in which Vologeso, disguised as a slave, attempts to poison Lucio Vero. He is forced to reveal himself when Berenice is offered the cup first.
9 Saverio Mattei *La Filosofia della Musica* (1785) translated in McClymonds *Jommelli* p 331.
10 Ibid.
11 Quoted in Brown *Gluck* p 282.
12 *GSW* II Vol 1 pp 56-8.
13 The ballet was soon available as a concert suite, and was played at the Venetian ambassador's residence in Vienna at the end of 1762. Parts were copied for the collections of Prince Esterházy and Prince Schwarzenberg. This was important for the spread both of *ombra* and 'Sturm und Drang'. See Brown *Gluck* p 325.
14 Ibid. p 316. See *GSW* II Vol 1 pp 49-51 and 13-15.
15 Ibid. p 325.
16 Ibid. p 322. For a comparison see Ratner *Classic Music* pp 381-6.
17 Translated in Brown *Gluck* p 285, from Angiolini *Lettere di Gasparo Angiolini a Monsieur Noverre sopra i balli pantomimi* (Milan 1773) pp 15-19. Brown also provides the original text, p 357.
18 Ibid.
19 The scenes discussed here are in *GSW* I Vol 1 p 12ff and p 55ff, and *GSW* I Vol 6 p 63ff.
20 Brown *Gluck* p 363.
21 Ibid. p 316.
22 See F.W. Sternfeld 'Expression and revision in Gluck's *Orfeo* and *Alceste*', in J. Westrup ed. *Essays presented to Egon Wellesz* (Oxford 1966) pp 116-118. A table comparing the keys is given p 117.
23 Sternfeld describes this relationship as a '*mariage de convenance*', which it may well be, but the straightforward relative major-minor relationship of the original is dull by comparison.
24 *NMA* 6 Vol 1 p 135ff.
25 The only other appearance of a dotted rhythm is in the trumpets in bar 6, where the reference is a majestic one to support the Gods mentioned in the text.
26 J.A. Rice *Salieri* pp 93-4.
27 Ibid. pp 137-9.
28 See Chapter 4 pp 69-70 and Chapter 5 pp 112-113.
29 Rice *Salieri* p 363.
30 Salieri *La Grotta di Trofonio* (1785) BL H.340 pp 89-111.
31 See *Don Juan* No 30 bars 20-22.
32 See J. Rushton *Don Giovanni* p 5.
33 Gazzaniga *Don Giovanni* ed. S. Kunze p 14ff, p 112ff and p 143ff.
34 'Alla prima parola del COMMENDATORE DON GIOVANNI con un colpo gli smorza il lume ed all'oscuro si battono' (p 14).
35 D major was established at bar 184, but only after the ambiguity of the knocking rhythm in octaves on D in the two bars before, which after the preceding F major aria represents a moment of instability.

36 For a select bibliography of writings on this opera, see Rushton *Don Giovanni* pp 153-6. The passages discussed below are in *NMA* II/5 Vol 17 pp 5-8, 39-44, 369-70 and 425-454.

37 Allanbrook *Rhythmic Gesture* pp 292-319. Her detailed discussion of the finale is essential reading.

38 Ibid. pp 197-9. Gazzaniga's setting for the Venetian carnival did not need an overture, as other entertainments preceded it.

39 *Ombra* references in symphonic slow introductions are discussed in Chapter 10.

40 Rushton examines these chords and their resolutions in *Don Giovanni* pp 115-7.

Endnotes for Chapter 8

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1 As well as in churches, many oratorios were performed in theatres. This was certainly the practice in Vienna.

2 These include settings by composers well versed in operatic *ombra* references, such as Jommelli (1749), Naumann (1767) and Salieri (1776).

3 *Der Tod Jesu* by Graun (Leipzig, 1760) BL Hirsch iv.750, J.C.F Bach (Bückeburg, 1964) BL G.976.u and Kreusser (Mainz, 1783) BL D.760. Bars 1-18 of Graun's setting are given in Smither *Oratorio* Vol 3 pp 417-421.

4 Telemann *MW* Vol 32 pp 3-4.

5 See H.E. Smither *Oratorio* Vol 3 pp 438-40, where both this and the introduction to Part II are given. The latter is also very slow, with a prominent syncopated figure and contrasting dynamics, but in the key of E minor. Smither also notes that in this oratorio, 'the key of E-flat is one of joy and triumph, an unusual use for this key in oratorios of the time.' (p 438).

6 Smither *Oratorio* Vol 3 p 466.

7 See Chapter 11.

8 Rolle *Lazarus* vocal score (Leipzig, 1779) BL F.384.h. This piece is dicussed in Smither *Oratorio* Vol 3 pp 466-487, with several music examples.

9 Rolle *Lazarus* p 59, Smither Example VIII-23.

10 Smither *Oratorio* p 469.

11 *GHS Deborah* pp 187-190.

12 *GHS Saul* pp 191-199. An important forerunner of this scene is Purcell's setting *PSE* Vol 32 pp 128-136 which is in C minor, with a passage for the ghost in G minor. The final ten-bar chorus in C minor has a chromatically descending bass line. This piece in turn owes something to Ramsey's setting of the same text roughly half a century earlier, in *EECM* Vol 7 pp 121-5. It is in G minor.

13 These are examined in B. Edelmann *Händel-Aufführungen*.

14 Ibid. p 194.

15 M.S. Morrow *Concert Life in Haydn's Vienna* pp 148-9. For *The Creation* and *The Seasons*, see Chapter 11 p 212.

16 These are *Acis and Galatea* K566 (1788), *Messiah* K572 (1789), *Alexander's Feast* K591 (1790) and *Ode for St Cecilia's Day* K592 (1790).

17 *Davidde Penitente* (1785) is really a large-scale cantata, and is mainly a reworking of material from Mozart's incomplete Mass in C minor K427.

18 B. MacIntyre *Music and the Church in Mozart's Vienna* p 39.

19 Quoted in ibid. p 53.

20 *DTÖ* Vol 88 p 39.

21 MacIntyre *Music and the Church* Example 8-14.

22 Ibid. Example 8-13.

23 Ibid. Example 8-1.

24 *NMA* I/1 Vol 1 pp 242-3.

25 *DTÖ* Vol 88 pp 28-9.

26 MacIntyre *Music and the Church* Example 7-22.

27 Ibid. Example 7-27.

28 *NMA* I/1 Vol 1 pp 208-11.

29 *NMA* I/1 Vol 5 pp 49-62. The adaptation of this movement for the text of *Davidde Penitente* can be seen in *NMA* I/4 Vol 3 pp 64-77.

30 Based on various articles in *NG 2*. Where dates or keys are omitted, no information is available.

31 No score is available in this country, but there is a recording on Naxos 8.554750-51.

32 *DTÖ* Vol 83 p 64.

33 Winter *Requiem* vocal score (Leipzig n.d.) BL F.1175.pp p 3.

34 Dittersdorf *Requiem* (Bad Schwalbach, 1990) BL F.743.C.1 p 17.

35 Jommelli *Requiem* vocal score (Leipzig n.d.) pp 36-7.

36 J.M. Haydn *Requiem* (Adliswil, 1979) BL F. 1174.bb.2 p 50.

37 *SKB* Vol 9 p 38.

38 Winter *Requiem* p 36.

Endnotes for Chapter 9

1 *HHA* I/14.1 pp 149-151. There is some speculation as to the use of trombones which is discussed in the preface, p xxxvi.

2 Linley's life and works are discussed in the preface to the edition of the *Ode*, *MB* XXX pp xiii-xx. Letters concerning him are in Anderson *Letters* pp 128 and 160.

3 Trombones are listed as having been used at the first performance, but no parts survive and they do not appear in the score. See the preface in *MB* op. cit. p xviii.

4 *JHW* XXIII Vol 1 pp 105-269. The date of composition is examined in Dack 'Haydn's *Missa Cellensis'*. The *Credo* is discussed in Webster *Haydn's sacred vocal music* pp 56-60. The other *Missa Cellensis* is also known as the *Mariazellermesse*, written in 1782.

5 *NMA* I/1 Vol 1 pp 37-8, 69-71 and 242-3.

6 Compare this with Table 8b p 175.

7 *DTÖ* Vol 88 pp 58-90. This is one of six Requiem settings by Reutter.

8 In bar 17, the first note in the Tenor should be a D natural.

9 Mozart's incomplete version is in *NMA* I/2 Vol 1. The versions by Eybler and Süssmayer are in Vol 2.

10 *NMA* X 28 3-5 Vol 1, *NMA* I 2 Vol 1 p 23ff and ibid. p 251ff respectively. There are some variants to the text in the latter, but none that are relevant to this discussion.

11 See Anderson *Letters* pp 378-9, where Wolfgang asks Leopold to send the parts for a performance at the Holy Cross Monastery in Augsburg.

12 An early sketch of 'Viaticum' in Version 2 is given in the appendix to *NMA* I 2 Vol 1 p 375. Although shorter, it shares all the characteristics of the final version.

Endnotes for Chapter 10

1 Quoted in Landon *Chronicle & Works* p 616.
2 *JHW* Series IV (orchestral version) pp 1-6. No. 6 'Consummatum est' is in G minor, and has some passages in octaves, angular lines and chromaticism, but these are not sufficient to constitute an *ombra* reference (ibid. pp 56-65).
3 *NMA* IV/11 Vol 10 pp 11-22.
4 See the foreword in ibid. p ix for a discussion of the exact nature of the 'gran fagotto'.
5 The same chant is used by Haydn and Eberlin among others. See ibid. pp ix-x.
6 Sisman *Genre, gesture and meaning* pp 34-5.
7 Ibid. p 35.
8 *KASS* Vol VIII pp 53-4. The parts in the Esterházy Archives are dated 1779. See H.C.R. Landon *Chronicle & Works* Vol II p 561.
9 Sisman *Genre, gesture and meaning* p 45.
10 *MMS* 2 Vol I pp 4-8.
11 *NMA* IV/11 Vol 8 pp 3-4.
12 Ibid. pp 63-7.
13 Ratner *Classic Music* pp 104-5.
14 Agawu *Playing with Signs* pp 17-22. See also Moyer 'Ombra and Fantasia' p 300, where there is a reduction of bars 1-37 with chord symbols. My own voice-leading graph, which takes up from the point where Ratner and Agawu break off, is given in Appendix A.
15 *NMA* VIII/20/1 Vol 2 p 145.
16 J. Irving *Mozart: The 'Haydn' Quartets* p 55.
17 In Ratner *Classic Music*, this passage is listed as an example of fantasia in introductions, along with the 'Prague' Symphony, although further on the latter is identified as having an *ombra* passage (p 315). The same list includes the overture to Mozart's *Don Giovanni* and introduction to Beethoven's Symphony No. 4 as displaying *ombra* characteristics. Moyer also regards the introduction to the 'Dissonance' Quartet as fantasia *Ombra and Fantasia* p 304.
18 *NMA* VIII/22/1 pp 146-150.
19 A. Hyatt King 'Musical glasses' *NG2* Vol 17 p 471-3.
20 *NMA* IX/27 Vol 1 p 31.
21 *NMA* IX/25 Vol 2 p 70.
22 *NMA* IX/27 Vol 1 p 35.
23 Not only Mozart. Kraus's *Trauerkantate für Gustav III* (1792) Part I has an introduction in D minor, and Part II another in C minor. The openings of these movements are given in van Boer *Kraus Werkverzeichnis* pp 172 and 175. Kraus also composed a memorial piece to Mozart in the same year, *Öfver Mozarts död*, in E flat major, ibid. pp 263-4.

Endnotes for Chapter 11

1 *DTÖ* Vols 140-141. I am very grateful to the editor, Dr. Walburga Litschauer, for bringing this to my attention. For more details on the circumstances of composition, see her introduction pp vii-ix. Carpani was active as a librettist, and was responsible for the first translation of Haydn's *Creation* into Italian.

2 The top row indicates the number of flats or sharps normally used for the key in question. In a few cases, this does not correspond to the actual key signature given. No. 27 by Adamer is omitted, since it uses a progressive tonality, starting in C major and ending in E minor.

3 For more details, including music examples, see my 'Death and the Composer: The Context of Schubert's Supernatural Lieder' in B. Newbould (ed.) *Schubert the Progressive: History, Performance Practice and Analysis* (forthcoming).

4 J. Reed *Schubert* pp 484-6.

5 A possible interpretation of the musical figures in this introduction is a depiction of the four elements. See my 'Haydn and the Elements: Symbolic References in the Oratorios' in *Haydn Society Journal* 15 (1995) pp 18-27.

6 K. Clark *The Romantic Rebellion* p 20.

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Appendix A

Reductive analysis of

Mozart

Symphony No. 38 in D

K504

First Movement

(bars 16-36)

W.A.Mozart: Symphony No. 38 in D ('Prague') K504

First Movement: Adagio (bars 16-36)