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# Unfoldings

*Essays in  
Schenkerian Theory  
and Analysis*



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Edited by Joseph N. Straus

New York      Oxford

Oxford University Press

1999

# The Adventures of an F#

*Tonal Narration and Exhortation in  
Donna Anna's First-Act  
Recitative and Aria*



In a well-known letter to his father, Mozart discussed how he went about writing an opera, in this case *The Abduction from the Seraglio*. Osmin's uncontrollable rage, for instance, was to be expressed by a sudden and unexpected change in key and time. Just after the apparent end of his F-major aria, following a bit of dialogue with Pedrillo, Osmin launches into the aria's A-minor pendant, composed in a new meter and tempo and with new orchestration *alla Turca*. Mozart pointed out that he avoided the most closely related key, D minor, as inappropriate to Osmin's violent outburst, but emphasized that he would not choose a remote key either, for Music, he said, must remain Music and must please the hearer even in the most frightful situations.<sup>1</sup>

It is significant that Mozart regarded the F-major and A-minor music as parts of a single aria, despite the changes of key, time, and instrumentation, and the brief dialogue in between. Most modern analysts would infer two separate pieces, and with regard to tonal structure they would be right. But the two pieces form a dramatic unit: they are phases in the unfolding of a single situation. Mozart's calling them one aria might seem to support the currently fashionable rejection of musical unity as an analytic presumption, especially in the criticism of opera. Until we remember, that is, that Mozart did insist upon moving to a related key, so the notion of unity, or at least one of its aspects, the relatedness of parts, informed his description after all. Mozart writes nothing about other sources of musical continuity between the aria's two sections. But a link between the two key areas certainly exists: it is constituted by the pitches F and E, the only contrasting sounds in the two tonic triads. These sounds form a two-note motive that occurs prominently in both parts, as we can see in Example 9.1.<sup>2</sup>

Originally published in *Theory and Practice* 16 (1991), pp. 5–20. An earlier version was read at the Second International Schenker Symposium at the Mannes College of Music in March 1992.

When writing *Don Giovanni*, Mozart confronted a libretto that contained far more "frightful situations" than anything in *Seraglio*, and the music for its violent and tragic episodes is correspondingly closer to the edge. His words to Leopold, however, can still serve as a useful point of departure for the exploration of even as extreme a piece as the accompanied recitative that precedes Donna Anna's Act I aria (see Example 9.2). The recitative, like many others, is tonally open both at the beginning and at the end. Thus it begins *in medias res* with the B $\flat$  major of the preceding music, and after two transitional measures breaks into C minor, its real starting point. It then traverses several subordinate keys before closing into the aria's D major, a goal pretty remote from the recitative's C minor.

As the example shows, the recitative takes its tonal point of departure from the two preceding pieces: the quartet "Non ti fidar" and Don Giovanni's brief secco recitative. His effusive farewells in this recitative unmistakably bring to Anna's mind the voice and manner of the disguised assailant who had entered her rooms, tried to rape her, and killed her father. Donna Anna's accompanied recitative begins still in B $\flat$  with only the low strings playing—horrificed recognition taking shape in the depths of her mind before bursting into consciousness in the full orchestra's C-minor outburst two measures later. She proclaims Giovanni's guilt to Don Ottavio, who is incredulous and asks for an explanation. Her narrative begins in G minor and, after prolonging that harmony, modulates to A minor, tacitly setting up a preparatory dominant for the D-major aria.

With Example 9.3 we begin a more detailed study of the recitative; the numbers under the graph identify the various subdivisions of its tonal structure and form. In No. 1 we see the two measures of transition and the first main section (measures 1–16). That the transitional measures continue the key of Giovanni's farewell speech suggests to me that they also represent the time frame of that speech; therefore Anna's realization can be understood as taking place while Giovanni is speaking. (If these measures had begun, say, with a preparatory dominant of C minor, such an impression could hardly have arisen.)<sup>3</sup> At the arrival on C, her horror is embodied in a powerful musical symbol: the main melodic line begins with a startling dissonance, F $\sharp$  (#4) as an upward-resolving appoggiatura. Although the resolution to G takes place immediately, the force of this tritone is by no means spent, for the F $\sharp$ –G becomes a middleground motive that permeates the recitative's first half and even helps to direct its modulatory plan. Note in particular the chromaticized voice-exchange (measures 10–14) that brings the F $\sharp$  into the bass line, where it leads into the cadential dominant. Unlike any of the later key areas of the recitative, this C minor is composed with both a full cadential closure and a large-scale linear descent in the upper voice. This solid foundation in the middleground supports a powerful foreground presence, especially in the orchestral textures, which have an almost symphonic fullness. The tonal continuity of the passage is provided by the orchestra more than by the singers, whose broken-off interjections punctuate the otherwise continuous orchestral discourse—the opposite of the usual figure/ground relationship in a recitative.

The next segment of the recitative is a brief secco passage; in it Anna assures an incredulous Ottavio that she is not mistaken, and he asks her to recount her story. As Example 9.3 indicates (see No. 2), this passage modulates from C minor to its dominant key, G minor, the bass line consisting only of the notes F $\sharp$  and G; our primary motive becomes a structural element. The beginning of Anna's narrative (No. 3) resumes orchestral accompaniment, but with only the strings and continuo playing. Here the locally governing G chord

EXAMPLE 9.1: Mozart, *The Abduction from the Seraglio*, Osmin's Act I aria, F–E motive

Allegro con brio

F E F

Sol- che her-ge lauf-ne Laf-fen

Allegro assai

*sf* *sf* *sf*

dann ver-brannt, dann ge-taucht zu-letzt ge-schun-den, ge-schun-fen

EXAMPLE 9.2: Mozart, *Don Giovanni*, Act I, Nos. 9–10, key plan and dramatic situations

|  |  |  |                     |   |
|--|--|--|---------------------|---|
| No. 9: quartet.<br>Elvira warns<br>Anna about<br>Giovanni. | Secco recit:<br>Giovanni<br>offers Anna<br>his help-<br>then goes off. | No. 10: Accompanied<br>recit. Anna<br>recognizes Giovanni as<br>her father's killer. | Anna's<br>narrative | Aria: Anna<br>urges Ottavio<br>to avenge her<br>father's death. |
|--|--|--|---------------------|---|

  

6 b b b g a D: V I

Keys: B $\flat$

EXAMPLE 9.3: Mozart, *Don Giovanni*, Act I, No. 10, recitative

3 11 16 24 31

**No. 1**  
DA recognizes DG  
Tutti

**No. 2**  
Dialogue  
Secco

**No. 3**  
Narrative: Night, intruder attacks her  
Strings

B $\flat$  c: I  $\sharp$ IV v I g: V<sup>6</sup> I (Octave divided into Major thirds) I $\sharp$

38 44 49 53 62 66 69

No. 4  
DA resists, vainly at first,  
Tutti, then strings

No. 5  
Then frees herself  
Strings

No. 6  
Pursues DG onto street  
Tutti, strings

No. 7  
DG kills DA's father  
Tutti

g: I (b)

a: V I #IV V→(VI) I D: (VI II<sup>6</sup>) V

is extended by a chain of descending major thirds through an octave: G minor, E $\flat$  minor, B minor, G major changing to minor. Surely this is one of the earliest examples in the literature of chord progression by the equal subdivision of the octave. As the graph indicates, the triadic roots are connected by applied dominants: the bass line thus produced harbors a whole-tone scale, whose even-numbered notes support the  $\frac{4}{3}$  position of the applied dominant chords.

Less striking than the implicit whole-tone line but more significant for the compositional design is a disguised reference to the F $\sharp$ –G motive. When the E $\flat$ -minor chord arrives, the uppermost note in the orchestra is the first violins' G $\flat$  (measure 29), a note which holds for three measures before it mutates to F $\sharp$  over the V of B minor. The F $\sharp$ , in turn, continues for seven measures more, making the G $\flat$ /F $\sharp$  the most persistent orchestral sound in the entire passage; the resolution to G occurs in measure 35.<sup>4</sup> The enharmonic transformation of the motivic F $\sharp$  into G $\flat$  is perhaps an iconographic symbol of Don Giovanni's disguised identity, and the whole passage is a remarkable portrayal of Anna's confusion and disorientation. Note that she begins her narration in the second measure of the passage, over the E $\flat$ -minor triad. Thus the passage is well under way as she begins to sing, beautifully fitting her words, "Era già alquanto avanzata la notte." The E $\flat$  minor, replacing an expected major chord, gives a peculiarly dark musical color to the fateful night whose events she recounts.

G major, the end point of the descending major thirds, is the place in her narration where she describes Giovanni's grabbing hold of her. She then tells how she cried in vain for help, and the full orchestra takes up her cry with a quotation of the recitative's C-minor motive, but now in G minor. That brings us to No. 4, which shows a modulation from this G minor to A minor. The key change symbolizes a turning point in Anna's struggle with Giovanni. G minor represents an offshoot of C minor, the key associated with Giovanni's attempted rape. As long as G is the center of tonal orientation, Giovanni has the upper hand. A minor, by contrast, belongs rather to the domain of D, the key of Anna's aria, and the A tonic arrives as she describes her success in freeing herself from his embrace. In depicting this "terrible situation," Mozart did not blanch at juxtaposing these two remotely related keys, despite his earlier words to his father. The hinge of the modulation is the tacitly reinterpreted diminished seventh of measure 40, whose D $\sharp$  is first heard as an E $\flat$  belonging to G minor, but then resolves to E, eventually as dominant of A. At a deeper level the V of A minor represents the addition of a harmonic root to G $\sharp$ , which forms a chromatic connection between the two local tonics, G and A.

At the arrival on A minor (No. 5, measure 49), she describes her wrenching herself free. The strings close off this seemingly successful phase of her narrative with a cadence, but a deceptive one on F. Thus Mozart depicts her success as somehow incomplete; and in fact she is not content merely to escape but immediately takes the offensive. The full stop on A occurs only when she has chased Giovanni out of the house and onto the street. But after she describes her escape from Giovanni's clutches and over the F chord of the deceptive cadence, Ottavio exclaims, "Ohimè, respiro." I cannot help feeling that he is relieved at least partly because he will not be marrying "damaged goods." That much I am willing to read into the libretto, but I do not share E. T. A. Hoffman's notion that Giovanni actually had had his way with Anna. Nothing in the libretto supports this idea, as far as I can see. If there is any possible justification for it *in the music*, however, it would be the irony one might infer from an inconclusive cadence at just this juncture of the drama.

For the third time in the recitative, the full orchestra enters with a version of the opening C-minor outburst (No. 6, measure 54). The ensuing tutti passage is transitional, adding to the bass E and F of the deceptive cadence an ascending line through F# and G# that fills in the V–I progression in A minor. The harmonic closure corresponds to the end of this important phase of her story: her driving Giovanni out of her house. The next and last phase—the arrival and death of her father—is necessarily brief, for she witnessed only its very beginning and its aftermath. As the graph (No. 7) shows, the prolongation of A is effected by neighbor-note chords that mostly belong to D major, so that when A returns at the very end of the recitative, it is unmistakably a V of D.

We are now in a position to take a somewhat longer view of the recitative (Example 9.4). Since C minor is the first and the most fully developed key area in the recitative and since it forms a stepwise link between Bb and D, I regard Bb–C–D as the guiding bass progression (Example 9.4a). The G minor and A minor can be understood harmonically as minor dominants of the C and D (and the A actually becomes a major chord). From a contrapuntal perspective, these “dominants” function as unfolded upper fifths of the C and D, and the A forms a sixth above C that leads from one fifth to the other. Thus the key sequence C minor, G minor, A minor, D major represents a huge enlargement of a 5–6–5 contrapuntal progression unfolded in the bass line. And as Example 9.4 shows, even the transition from Bb to C hints at another 5–6–5, for the Bb of measure 2 would normally support a  $\frac{6}{3}$  or  $\frac{5}{2}$  chord.

EXAMPLE 9.4: Recitative as unfolded 5–6–5 progression

a)

b)

Keys: B $\flat$  C g a D

Time: Present Past Present



The bass unfolding has a dramatic as well as a musical purpose: it allows Mozart to compose on two tonal planes, one representing present, the other past, dramatic time. The primary bass line, B $\flat$ –C–D models three phases of an evolving present. B $\flat$  is the time before Anna recognizes Giovanni as her assailant and her father's killer; C minor is her recognition; D is her trying to bend the future to her will through Ottavio. The secondary component of the unfolded bass, G–A, models past time in the manner of a flashback; only Ottavio's interjections bring us back to the present, but they are hardly what is essential here. Curiously, the G minor could evoke something like a memory in real-time for listeners who know the opera very well. In the first scene, Anna leaves the stage as her father enters, and the music at this juncture has just turned to G minor. In fact, the father's first words to Giovanni are sung over F $\sharp$ –G in the bass, the same notes that lead into her narrative. It is as if she is returning to the very place she had left in the earlier scene.

The large-scale motion of the upper voice does not show a bifurcation like the bass, but it, too, might suggest a dipping into a deeper region of consciousness. The descending  $\hat{5}$ -line of the C-minor part represents a motion into the inner voice. As Example 9.4b shows, this is followed by a gradual ascent effected by a series of melodic progressions, each one reaching over the one before and gradually building a tension that is released only with the closure of the line on the aria's F $\sharp$ . That closure occurs, of course, at the same time the bass arrives on its D, returning us to present dramatic time with the completion of the big 5–6–5 progression.

EXAMPLE 9.5: (A) Contrapuntal structure

(B) conflicting hypermeters

Curiously enough, and perhaps not coincidentally, the aria begins with a sequential foreground progression that continues a 5–6–5 ascent, as if the vast intervallic structure deep underneath the recitative's modulatory plan rises to the surface and becomes an immediately perceptible element of the aria's design (Example 9.5a). Now, of course, the 5–6 exchanges occur as vertical rather than as horizontally unfolded intervals, and the ascending sequence remains in one key.

In "Or sai," the 5–6 progression has an unusual rhythmic shape (Example 9.5b). Each 5–6 pair is deployed within a two-measure hypermeasure, and the cello and bass line clearly defines the fifths as accented, for only their bass notes appear on downbeats (measures 70, 72, 74, and 76). The accentual pattern is, of course, usual for a 5–6 series, conforming as it does to the fourth species of Fuxian counterpoint. But the singer's first downbeat contains a powerful accent on a high note, starting a pattern that repeats at two-measure intervals. These accents occur in the orchestra's weak measures, setting up a conflicting pattern of two-measure hypermeter. This makes the singer swim against the tide, as it were, of the surging and turbulent accompaniment, and suggests an enormous force of will controlling powerful emotions; note that the orchestra's pattern gives way to the singer's at the beginning of the next phrase. In the course of composing "Or sai," Mozart revised the vocal line so that these high notes, representing tenths above the rising bass, would fall on downbeats, and this revision sharpens the metrical conflict between singer and accompaniment (Example 9.6).<sup>5</sup>

Mozart's revision eliminated a foreground motivic connection of considerable beauty. In his original conception, the rising sixths that are so prominent a melodic feature of both the vocal line and the orchestra (in measures 76–77 and 79–80 and many parallel places) were prepared by the vocal line's beginning gesture; in the revised version, the connection disappears. This loss is more than offset, however, not only by the intensified conflict between metrical schemata but also by the projection of a deeper-level design element. I refer specifically to our F#–G idea, which surfaces again in a completely new context and with reversed tonal functions—G is now dependent on F#. Example 9.7, a middleground graph of the aria, points out the salient instances of this compositional idea.

Of course it would be difficult to compose a piece in D major that refrained from juxtaposing F# and G, but the rhetorical emphasis these pitches receive in the aria goes far beyond the necessities imposed by the tonal system. That emphasis begins together with the vocal line, whose first two prominent notes are F# and G.<sup>6</sup> It continues in the large melodic connection linking all three phrases of the aria's A section. F# in the first phrase (measure 70) moves to its upper neighbor G in the second phrase (measure 77), which in turn resolves to F# at the beginning of the third phrase (measure 80). In this third phrase F# and G take on the illusory appearance of a self-contained two-note figure, as in the recitative. This is because the resolution of G to F# occurs across parts, transferred from voice to orchestral bass and back to voice. The last G (measure 82) also resolves into the bass, allowing the vocal line

EXAMPLE 9.6: "Or sai," original form of melody



EXAMPLE 9.7: Middleground graph of the aria

Form: **A1**

70 76 80 83 86

1 6 IV<sup>5</sup> 6 V I V<sup>7</sup> I V<sup>7</sup> I 6 V<sup>7</sup> I

Fgd I 6 IV<sup>5</sup> 6 V I V<sup>7</sup> I  
 Mdgd I  
 Bckgd I

Form: **A2**

86 90 94 99 100 106 125 130 137

Unfolding (13) 2

I (V) VI V I V I

Mdgd I f d: III (IV<sup>6</sup> V) IV<sup>5</sup> V  
 Bckgd I (D)

to "reach over" F# and achieve high A as a climax note. The high note, overcoming the downward pull to F#, perhaps embodies Anna's resolute efforts to persuade a still resistant Ottavio to take up her quest for retribution. It is especially in this third phrase with its apparent F#-G figures that the associative connection to the recitative becomes clear. The boldness of this connection takes one's breath away. Unlike Osmin's aria, whose F-E motive emphasizes the relatedness of the two key areas, this composite piece uses as its link an initially disturbing sound, foreign to the recitative's first key but integral to the key of the aria.<sup>7</sup> Thus the invariant pitches bring out the distance between the keys. The aria assimilates the strident, dissonant F# of the recitative into a consonant structure; it looks forward to a resumption of normal life after Don Giovanni's disruptions of the moral order will have been avenged. In the aria, the G becomes associated with C#, and the resultant diminished fifth becomes an important new element, enhancing the attractive power of F# supported by D as a consonant goal (Example 9.8).

The aria as a whole is a modified da capo piece, whose symmetrical and closed form opens up at two places: the fermata at the end of the B section and the expanded big cadence and coda that end the second A section. The contrast between the two main sections allows Mozart to reveal Anna's contrasting feelings: her "giusto furor" at Giovanni's crimes and her grief over the loss of her father. In general, the A sections express her anger, and the B section, with its turn to the tonic minor, expresses her sorrow. But the inner form of each main section shows a similar alternation of expression, with the predominant affect of the section giving way to the other emotion. The A section's second phrase, set to the words "che il padre mi tolse," is the most moving of these mood changes, for its softer melodic contour and quieter orchestration come right in the middle of a syntactic unit (between a noun and its modifying relative clause). This makes Anna's feelings of outrage and grief appear to occur simultaneously rather than in mere succession.

The F#-G motive is absent from the B section—almost inevitably so, because the turn toward D minor reduces opportunities for introducing F# in any very prominent way. The background of the big melodic line is a movement from  $\hat{3}$  through  $\hat{3}\hat{1}$  to  $\hat{2}$  as goal of an interrupted structural progression. This line, however, is delayed almost to the end of the section by means of a large-scale unfolding: D-C#, F#-E. It is D-C#, the lower component of the unfolded melodic line that forms the structural core of most of the section. The goal note (the  $\hat{2}$  of the interrupted *Urlinie*) is suppressed in the foreground in favor of a downward arpeggiation to the inner-voice region at the fermata (measure 99). This is very reminiscent of the melodic contour at the end of the recitative, a resemblance heightened by the recitative-like rhythms of both the vocal line and the orchestra. Thus the da capo enters with much the same kind of preparation as did the corresponding material at the beginning of the aria.

Except for a bit of rhythmic foreshortening at the beginning, and some slight changes of orchestration, the return to the opening material follows the same course it did originally. But just where we would expect a final resolution to the tonic (measure 116), Mozart surprises us with a deceptive cadence. The brief turn to B minor gives Mozart an opportunity to bring in his F#-G idea, and he does so with a vengeance, as it were. The B-minor context gives it a much more intense and agitated character than in D major, a character further promoted by Mozart's dynamics: fortes on the G neighbor-notes and pianos on the F#s, creating the impression that the figure is now G-F# answering F#-G.

EXAMPLE 9.8: "Or sai," diminished fifth

71  $f^\#$  -  $f^\#$  -  $d5$

71  $-g-$   $f^\#$   $d5$   $f^\#$   $g$   $f^\#$   $g$   $d5$

81  $-f^\#$   $d5$   $f^\#$   $g$   $f^\#$   $g$   $d5$

Vc, Cb

Even here, however, Mozart is not yet done. He goes on into a long coda, where both the vocal part and the orchestra use the F#–G and G–F# figures very prominently. Particularly moving is the writing at the very end. The orchestra ends with a long G resolving to F#. In a sense these last two melody notes form the delayed answer to the urgent and demanding F#–G at the beginning of the recitative. But the musical and dramatic resolution is not yet complete. After the great energy and forte dynamics of the preceding music, the subito piano and the failure of the melody to return to *l* subvert the sense of closure, and they propel the listener to the next episodes, where Don Giovanni is seen to be very much alive and flourishing.

## Appendix

Translation of *Don Giovanni*: Act I, No. 10

*Recitative:*

DONNA ANNA: Don Ottavio! I am dead!

DON OTTAVIO: What's wrong?

DA: For pity's sake, help me!

DO: Dearest, have courage!

DA: O Gods, O Gods! That man is the murderer of my father!

DO: What are you saying?

DA: Don't doubt it any longer; the last words that evil man uttered, the whole way he spoke, reminded me of that villain in my rooms who—

DO: Heavens! can it be that under the sacred mantle of friendship—but what happened? Tell me about this strange event.

DA: The night was already somewhat advanced when, unfortunately alone in my rooms, I saw a man enter, wrapped up in a cloak. At first I thought it was you, but then I saw how deceived I was.

DO: (*agitated*): Heavens! continue!

DA: He approaches me silently and wants to embrace me; I try to free myself. And he holds me tighter. I shout! Nobody comes; with one hand he tries to muffle my voice, and with the other he holds me so tight that I think I'm lost.

DO: Traitor! and then?

DA: Finally the pain, the horror of the attempted outrage increase my strength so that by dint of wriggling, twisting, and bending, I free myself.

DO: Oh! I can breathe.

DA: Then I cry out more loudly, call for help. The criminal runs away; boldly I follow him onto the street to stop him; and I become the assailant of my assailant. My father comes running, demands to know who he is, and the villain, who is stronger than the poor old man, completes his misdeeds by killing him.

Aria:

[A section] Now you know who tried to steal my honor, who the traitor was that robbed me of my father. I demand vengeance of you, your heart demands it.

[B section] Remember the wound in that poor breast, think of the ground covered with blood if the ardor of your righteous anger should abate!

[Da capo] Now you know who tried to steal my honor, who the traitor was that robbed me of my father. I demand vengeance of you, your heart demands it. [At deceptive cadence, measure 116] Remember the wound; think of the blood. [Then, measure 119 to end] I demand vengeance of you, your heart demands it.

## Notes

1. Letter of 26 September 1781. See Wilhelm A. Bauer, Otto Erich Deutsch, and Joseph Heinz Eibl, eds., *Mozart: Briefe und Aufzeichnungen*, vol. 3: *Gesamtausgabe* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1962–75), pp. 161–64. Mozart's words are: "Die Musick, auch in der schaudervollsten lage, das Ohr niemals beleidigen, sondern auch dabei vergnügen muß folglich allzeit Musick bleiben muß." The letter is quoted in translation and with interesting commentary in Alfred Einstein, *Mozart: His Character, His Work* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1945), pp. 384–86.

2. By a curious coincidence, an even better-known F-major/A-minor piece—Chopin's Second Ballade—links its two keys by means of the same two pitches. I believe, however, that the Chopin, unlike the Mozart aria, is best understood as the composing-out of a single background tonic in A minor.

3. A similarly non-naturalistic representation of time—succession standing for simultaneity—occurs in some of Shakespeare's dialogues, for instance, in the exchange between Kent and Lear after Cordelia is disinherited. In a realistic dialogue, Lear would hardly give Kent time to finish his speeches before interrupting with his furious outbursts.

4. The famous cycle of major thirds in the first movement development of the *Appassionata* also projects a fundamental motivic idea: the neighbor-note figure Eb/D#–E♭–Eb represents Eb–F♭–Eb—the transposition into the mediant of the  $\hat{5}$ – $\hat{6}$ – $\hat{5}$  whose primary form is, of course, C–D♭–C.

5. A recent and highly important article by James Webster, "The Analysis of Mozart's Arias," in *Mozart Studies*, ed. Cliff Eisen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), pp. 101–99, presents a multifaceted approach to these works, including a great deal of information about the rhythmic aspect of text–music relationships, especially in the operas with Italian texts (pp. 133–37). Webster maintains that the prosodic structure of the verse line normally translates into a two-measure musical unit (he calls it a phrase). There are two main accents, of which the second is, in principle, the stronger. If one applied this idea to "Or sai," one would read the primary accent not on "sai" (the first downbeat) but on the "no" of "l'onore" (the second downbeat). And consequently one would acknowledge no rhythmic conflict between singer and orchestra. To my ear, such a conception of the aria would rob it of much of its dramatic power. In general, I think that Webster derives his accentual schemes too exclusively from the text and overlooks the diversity of musical accentuations; many aspects of the music can contribute accentual patterns of various sorts, often in conflict with each other. Especially at the beginning of an aria, what I call "tonal rhythm"—the rhythmic aspect of tonal combination and succession—can produce important structural accents on the tonic harmony that falls on the first downbeat of the vocal part. Webster's first example is "Voi che sapete" from Act II of *Le Nozze di Figaro*. According to his explanation, the "pe" of "sapete" gets the primary stress. But that syllable falls on a passing tone within an initial ascent, supported by V $\hat{5}$  neighbor-note chord between two tonics. Furthermore, the pronoun "Voi" is placed in apposition to "Donne" a few measures later on, and the text becomes intelligible only if that connection is projected. For me, therefore, the primary accent in these two measures should fall on the singer's first downbeat, "Voi."

6. The motivic implication is, I think, a reason not to sing an appoggiatura on the first of the repeated Gs of "l'onore."

7. An exclusively reductive approach to the analysis of this work would result in the elimination of the recitative's F# perhaps as the very first step in the analysis, thereby blocking access to the primary compositional idea that connects recitative and aria. On the other hand, hypothesizing background and middleground structures as a point of departure would not lead any more readily to a recognition of this idea, which does not conform to any such structures. What is needed at the outset is a close reading of the foreground as it unfolds, event by event, and an ear that can take in associations between events—an ear like that of an intelligent and sensitive performer. An understanding of background and middleground will, it is hoped, eventually take shape from this reading of the foreground, and that understanding will, in turn, clarify the foreground. In this later process, of course, both reduction and the inference of underlying structures (e.g., the big 5–6 unfolding in the recitative's bass) will play a part.