

The Analysis of the Queen of the Night

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Abstract: Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* stands as one of his masterpieces, characterized by a significant Freemasonic influence. Within the opera, the Queen of the Night's aria serves as a defining moment for the soprano singer. Portrayed as the mother of the heroine Pamina, she undergoes a transformation in her personality, transitioning from a loving mother to an evil one. This paper will delve into the elements of Freemasonry that shape her character, such as the inclusion of Egyptian motifs, the conflict between fatherhood and motherhood, and the rituals of the Freemasons. Furthermore, it will conduct a psychological analysis of her motives using the theory of archetypal women. The archetype of the Great Mother has been expressed through various symbols throughout history, predating humanity's understanding, manifesting in forms such as fairy tale fairies, witches, and stepmothers. *Die Zauberflöte*, as a fairy tale, also includes these elements. This paper uses the Great Mother God theory to explore the reasons and rationality of her transformation and how music describes her psychological movement.

Keywords: *Die Zauberflöte*, Queen of the Night, the great mother

1. Introduction

Die Zauberflöte is the last two opera composed by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart with Emanuel Schikaneder as the librettist. It premiered at the Weiden Theatre in Vienna in 1791. The motivation behind creating this opera was Schikaneder, who, as the theatre manager, desired Mozart to compose an opera to save his financially troubled theatre. Both of them were members of the Freemasonry, so Mozart acquiesced to his request.

Die Zauberflöte is a super-nature fairytale. The story describes the love experience of a prince named Tamino in ancient Egypt and the young girl Pamina he loves with the help of the bird catcher Papageno and Sarastro, the priest of the Kingdom of Wisdom and Light. At the critical moment, they depend on the enchantment of the magic flute to endure numerous rigorous trials, culminating in their marriage. The Queen and the Moors, representing the forces of evil, were hurriedly driven away.

Die Zauberflöte was performed outside Vienna on September 30, 1791. After more than two hundred years of precipitation and testing since its premiere, it is still one of the most popular and staged operas. From the perspective of its cultural connotation, *Die Zauberflöte* is not a simple opera work, and its plot and central idea have far-reaching significance.

2. The Original Story and Adaptation

The origin story of *Lulu oder die Zauberflöte* is a fairy tale created in the 18th century, which is about a young prince named Lulu who gets lost in the forest. In the forest, the radiant fairy entreats Lulu to rescue her daughter, abducted by an evil magician, and bring her magic power “Firesteel” back. To finish his risk, the fairy gives him a magic flute to help him. This magic flute helps him overcome difficulties. At last, the prince marries the fairy’s daughter, and the fairy destroys the magician’s castle.

Schikaneder is not the only one who uses *Lulu* as original work. There is another opera, *Kaspar der Fagottist, oder die Zauberflöte*, which also used it and was popular a few years before, so Schikaneder modified a lot to avoid repetition in the plot. When Schikaneder created a sequel to *Die Zauberflöte*, he looked at another fairy tale in Dschinnistan - Das Labyrinth [1]. In the magic flute, the Schikaneder exchanged justice and evil. The abductor is a noble priest, and her mother turns to evil. The portrayal of Queen of the Night has a dramatic reversal at the end of Act One. At the outset, a noble and just woman transforms into an antagonist, her heartbreak turning her into one suddenly.

3. Factors Affecting the Image of the Queen of the Night

3.1. The Influence of Freemasons

This opera refers to some elements of Freemason. Borrowing symbols from older mystical thought, Freemasons of the eighteenth century placed them within the framework of Enlightenment rationality and social order [2]. After the Freemason Herder, a Freemasonic interpretation of the plot stressed the unmistakable basic idea of the conflict between light and darkness as early as 1794 [3]. Sarastro and the Queen of the Night are the conflicts in this opera.

For consistency, the script adopts the mystical elements of Freemasonry to lead the plot development. Freemasonry claims to be the inheritor of the ancient occult, especially the Egyptian, and the image of Isis gradually plays the most important role [4]. When *Die Zauberflöte* premiere in Paris in 1801, it used the name *Les mystères d’ Isis* [5]. In the magic flute’s world, Sarastro’s temple is dedicated to Isis and Osiris. Tamino is a prince of Egypt. Isis also influences the image of Queen of the Night in the black veil.

The neophytes in Freemasonry are called “seekers after light”, who come out of the darkness of life and enter the light [3]. At the beginning of the ceremony, the subject must blindfold his eyes and enter a room. After waiting for three knocks on the door, someone will lead him to the hall, tie his neck with a rope, put a long sword against his chest, and ask the subject: “Why come here?” At this time, the person being tested must answer that the purpose of coming here is to “escape from the darkness and move toward the light.” Next, the subject must meditate on falling from a height into the fire and accept the test of fire. Finally, what must be accepted is the teachings of Freemasonry, emphasizing “brotherly love”, “truth”, “relief”, and “justice”, and every member must believe that God is the great architect of the universe. This progress of enlightenment is like Tamino’s adventure. At first, his easily deceived ignorance represents all mortals’ trance in life. This process describes a person’s state from isolation and ignorance to social responsibility and acceptance of the law, from instinct to altruism. This enlightenment path is similar to traditional heroes’ adventures in Greek myth. To gain self-awareness and principles, Heroes embark on the path of enlightenment. On the way, they must fight against the dark forces of the unconscious, pass the test, and obtain the new true meaning of life. Those experiences can help them be freed from the unconscious’s bondage and reborn. The three boys’ words tell Tamino, “*This path leads to your goal [...] be constant, patient, and discreet!*”. The representation is based on society’s cultural mandate that a boy must give up his mother and turn toward his father when he internalizes his father’s [6].

3.2. The Antagonism Between Paternity and Maternal

The principle of patriarchy is that fathers are inextricably linked to society's values. Paternity, therefore, is not only the power of one's biological father but also the power of all fathers. This power is also the source of the spiritual image of divine power. The spiritual side of the human psyche is always represented by the luminous bodies, which are always symbols of consciousness. They are always placed in a strong position in mythology, religion and ritual [7]. This path of "seekers after light" carries strong patriarchal overtones, so the male character of Sarasto is a symbol of virtue. "*dein Vater vor seinem*" is held by Sarasto, and he lives in the sun temple with his priests. He represents the light and the highest humanity, and his priests also represent wisdom, beauty and strength, which are also beliefs of Freemasonry. Their attitude towards women is contemptuous and arrogant, a Freemason doctrine that women are superior to men [1]. Sarastro's comment about the character of the Queen of the Night as "*a proud woman*" holds the power of evil. The lunar spirit of matriarchy is not the immaterial and invisible spirit, "While the feminine is by nature unable to cast off materiality, the man becomes wholly removed from it and rises to the incorporeality of the sunlight" [8]. This attitude illustrates the arrogant attitude of men towards archetypal women under the patriarchal concept: "*A man must guide your hearts*". Thus, the Queen of the Night's reversal can be arranged as misleading lies to deceive this credulous young man. The two priests' duet motioned, "*Beware of womanly wiles: this is the brotherhood's first duty!*"

The matriarchal view considers that the day and the sun are the children of the woman, and she is the mother of the light. Jung believes that consciousness is derived from the subconscious mind. As the center of consciousness, the self is a part of the subconscious mind. The archetypal woman, known as the Great Mother, was only recently identified, but this does not mean that her history is short. Opposite, the image of the Great Mother was expressed through countless symbols long before it was understood by mankind. They are goddesses and fairies, banshees and witches, friendly and unfriendly, and her basic characteristics, like those of other archetypes, combine positive and negative attributes [7]. The Queen of the Night is the negative side of the "Great Mother". When she sings her aria "*Der Hölle Rache kocht in meinem Herzen*", the eternal conflict theme emerges: between the great mother God, the Lord of the night and the father's world, the master of the sun.

3.3. The Great Mother

When analytical psychology speaks of the primordial image or archetype of the Great Mother, it refers to an inner image that is working within the human psyche, not a concrete image in space and time. It is difficult for archetypes to be directly understood and often needs to be transformed into archetypal images to appear. The energy processes within the psyche reflect the effect of the archetype, which occurs in both the unconscious and between the unconscious and consciousness [7]. Consciousness is confronted with the symbolic form of an image when the unconscious content is perceived. It can be represented if it has the quality of an image [9]. Jung believed there was a more profound impersonal collective psychological root behind the works of art, and the production and development of culture and art depended on the collective unconscious's symbolization (symbolic) activities. Archetype expressions of this psychological phenomenon can be found in human mythology and works of art common in myth and fairy tales.

3.3.1. Positive and Negative Sides

The positive image of the Great Mother God is for feeding and nurturing, so caves, abdomens, wombs, abysses, and canyons all become symbols of her. However, the Great Mother Goddess is not only a positive image; she can both give life birth and take life back, so she is in charge of life and death at the same time. The opposite of fertility and release is holding, gripping and trapping. She needs to

take back the blood she gave, so the Queen of the Night emphasizes “*bonde*”. In the Book of the Dead, there is the twenty-one gate in the house of Osiris. Through that unique description, we can see the Great Mother’s terrible side with “*Blazing fire*”. These images are all related to fire, so the aria of the Queen of the Night also uses *Der Hölle Rache*.

3.3.2. Mother’s Gripping

In the Queen of the Night’s appearance, she appears as a positive mother figure. She cried to Tamino about the loss of her daughter. Pamina also testified that she was not satisfied with Sarasto, so she tried to escape several times.

There is another fairy tale law of wisdom: All evil tends to create a chain reaction, which may be suicide, revenge, or return to evil, and the smartest way is to stop it from happening [10]. In Act II, the Queen of the Night coerces her daughter to kill Sarastro. The relationship between the Queen and Pamina contains the “gripping” character of the Great Mother of Darkness. She never wants to abandon her daughter. She controls her daughter with love, so she never hopes her daughter will be independent. The operating principles of the Great Mother god of Horror is all or nothing. She told her that “if you didn’t follow my words, the bond between mother and daughter would end immediately”. She completely disregarded her daughter as an independent personality. Although she spoke of revenge, she did not act alone, so she is not blood revenge but blood suppression. When the mother’s love conceals a desire to possess her children and find emotional fulfilment through the mutual dependence of mother and child. Jung aptly named ‘the devouring mother’, the other side will be revealed by the struggle for freedom [11]. This type of mother believes she possesses the authority to control her daughter as she deems appropriate; her daughter is essentially treated like her subordinate. She possesses the authority to influence or hinder her daughter’s marriage, career and even compromise her daughter’s integrity for her personal benefit.

3.3.3. Daughter’s Struggle and Awake

Tamina’s relationship with the Queen involves the girl’s escape from mother’s control. She is not a traditional princess given as a reward after the hero’s hard work. Her first encounter with Tamino occurs because she escapes. Instead of appearing helpless, she eventually takes command, explains the origin of the magic flute, and guides Tamino. Pamina’s awakening, although not the central plot, also undergoes a painful discovery. She broke free from the bondage of her mother, got rid of the harassment of Moors and survived the silence of Tamino. Her perception is becoming clearer, and she walks to him equally, passing the last test with Tamino. The key step in her awakening involves departing from the maternal world for the man she loves and sacrificing herself in a way that undeniably constitutes a betrayal of the maternal. The dagger she used represents the revenge of the Mother of Terror because she said: “*Mother, my suffering comes from you, and your curse pursues me*”. She broke free from her mother, who symbolized the primitive unconscious and was guided by Isis toward to the light of rationality. Isis and Osiris symbolize the highest form of union, and Tamino and Pamina have completed the trial together in the image of this couple. So far, the union Tamino and Pamina is completed perfectly.

4. The Analysis of Two Arias of the Queen of the Night

4.1. The Premiere Soprano

Mozart always adjusts the arias for the singer, so those two arias perfectly fit the singer’s vocal condition. The Queen of the Night was performed in the premiere by Maria Josepha Weber, who happened to be Mozart’s sister-in-law, and the role had been composed by Mozart specifically for

her. According to contemporary reports, she commanded a very high tessitura but had a rough edge to her voice and lacked stage presence [12]. The Queen of the Night has a very high note as F4 and through in two octaves rapidly. The two arias of the Queen of the Night are a good representation of her technical.

4.2. “O zittre Nicht, Mein Lieber Sohn!”

In the recitative of the Queen of the Night, In this scene, she calls Tamino “*my lieder Sohn*”. Actually, Tamino is an adult who can get married. It can be seen that the Great Mother god tried to reduce the hero to infantile helplessness. “*du bist unschuldig, weise, fromm*” may sound kind, but it is a veiled attack. She wants to weaken the hero’s power, treat him like a young boy, and then deceive him into rescuing her daughter.

She is not dishonest; her anguish over losing her daughter is genuine. This aria begins in G minor. There is a six interval in mm.23-24 with the words “*anerkoren*” meaning be chosen because her daughter’s left not her willing. From mm.27-31, she repeats “*durch sie ging all mein Glück verloren*” twice, the second time raising one interval to emphasize her sorrow. Another strong emotion in mm.31-34 with the words “*ein Bösewicht*” twice—a villain. The clarity of the musical accusation suggests external coercion on the part of a malefactor. Beginning at measure 35, the 16-note passage performed by the viola portrays the daughter’s trembling and helplessness, coinciding with the modulation to C minor. In mm.37, an octave in II describes “her trembling fearful shaking”, then contact with V7-V chord with “fearful shaking”. In measures 41-45, Mozart employs a half-step descent from C minor to G minor, concluding on the dominant (V). In measure 46, a V7-I progression is utilized to convey the theme of powerlessness. The resolution culminates on the lowered A within the diminished seventh chord of C minor, transitioning gracefully to the tonic (I) in measures 46-47. Flat A also expressed her daughter’s despair in Pamina’s aira “*ach ich fulhs*”. She mimicked his daughter perfectly. At the outset, Tamino is pursued by a serpent, and he employs a musical score for assistance. In this paragraph, we observe that when the Queen of the Night refers to herself in the key of G minor and when she discusses her daughter’s suffering, the musical theme shifts to C minor. In the late 18th century, Christian Schubart’s book *Ideen zu einer Aesthetik der Tonkunst* described the different key characters. C minor is often associated with the sighs of a love-stricken soul, while G minor is characterized by feelings of discontent, unease, and concern over a failed plan, often accompanied by a bad temper [13].

In the second part, the model transitions to Bb major, commencing with the major note Bb. The vocal line in this section evolves around this note, symbolizing her agitation despite her lack of anger at this moment. Her coloratura begins at measure 79, with the syllable “a,” as she commits to her promise to Tamino. Her commitment to this promise is reflected in the unfolding coloratura at this point. Throughout the entire aria, a linear, legato vocal line is employed to convey her virtuous maternal character.

4.3. *Der Hölle Rache Kocht in Meinem Herzen*

The emotional excitement of the first act eventually turned into anger. Emotion, or its contagious power, poses a significant threat and results in significant malevolence. In Act II, the Queen of the Night discards her disguise and transforms into the Great Mother of Horror. She sings her famous aria *Der Hölle Rache kocht in meinem Herzen* to force her daughter to avenge.

This aria expands I chord of d minor. In mm.7-10, there is a diminished 7th chord(#C-E-G-Bb) when she sings *Tod und Verzweiflung*. The same chord appears three times—mm.7-10, mm.79-81, mm.89-91, and mm.83-86, and there is another diminished 7th chord (A-#C-Eb-G). These discordant

chords are distributed with words, death, despair, revenge, and bond. Those terror, negative, aggressive words also represent the terror of the Great Mother.

From bar 11, in the key of F major, the music employs six intervals to emphasize the name of Sarastro. The principle of “all or nothing” finds expression in its coloratura. The emphasis lies in asserting that the mother-daughter relationship is founded on obedience. The chord progression of I-IV6-V-I is accompanied by arpeggio movement. In the coloratura part, Mozart did not arrange syllables on it. The dramatic and psychological reasons for the absence of text - perhaps that the passages represent the Queen’s darkest, most inscrutable or unnamable unconscious drives, pushing her to accomplish her evil schemes [14]. In mm.55-64, she uses octaves to warn her daughter like an alarm. Up to this point, it is evident that the Queen exhibits the qualities of a neglectful parent, viewing her daughter as a possession to be discarded should she fail to meet her expectations. Back to the first aria, when she says *so sei sie dann auf ewig dein*, She declares her daughter’s permanent dominion, which is a property right, not a human. She also gives her daughter to Monostatos because he can help her. Her second coloratura is 68-78 with the words *bande* (bond). Feminine principles are usually connected, giving, and containing, and the reverse side of these positive qualities is the possession, control, and devouring of women, and the connection, giving, and containing need to be displayed by the recipient.

The ending of this piece mirrors her initial aria, where a single word is reiterated three times using the same chord (Bb-D-F) but in various keys. This chord progression is employed within this aria to link a sustained note, while the accompanying instruments contribute a 16-note pattern to convey emotion. Following the powerful vocal performance, the accompaniment harmoniously combines to propel the composition to a thrilling and distinct conclusion.

The melody of this piece is characterized by simplicity, employing extensive chord progressions and octaves. It conveys her anger through vast leaps and abrupt shifts. When the Great Mother of Terror becomes enraged, minimal words suffice. She employs diverse techniques, reaching high pitches that seem accompanied by lightning and thunder. This approach sharply contrasts Sarastro’s rationalism, devoid of intellectual embellishments.

5. Consolation

Schikaneder’s adaptation of the script subverts the original story and adds the Freemason element to avoid repetition with competitors. He reversed the original positive and negative characters. He added the ritual of Freemasonry to the original enlightenment of the hero’s path, making the goal of pursuing truth clearer. Because of the patriarchal nature of the hero’s path and control of the power, the mother power is opposed to it, which is the necessity of setting the character of the Queen of the night. Like many fairy tales, the hero’s trial must involve the Great Mother because the hero must step out of his mother’s arms and gain independence under the guidance of his father, so the mother figure is cast as the villain. The mother figure comes from the female archetype, the great mother, exists in the unconscious and has positive and negative characteristics. The Queen of the Night initially fooled Tamino with positive influences and then turned negative. Without resorting to self-revenge, actions were taken to manipulate her daughter due to her weakness. This also highlights the distressing mother-daughter relationship. Mozart’s music portrayed the contrasting images of an affectionate mother and a malevolent one. Although they both have coloratura, the feeling is completely different, but to give a hint, the two pieces will use similar musical genres. Due to space reasons, we can only focus on the role of the Queen of Night. It cannot analyze Pamina’s awakening as a woman and the myth archetype of Demeter and Cole. It is hoped that the subsequent analysis can be further combined with the archetype of the kidnapping myth, and the significance of the magic flute and dagger can be explored.

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