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**Joseph Martin Kraus's *Soliman den andra*
A Gustavian Turkish Opera**

By Bertil van Boer Jr.

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Joseph Martin Kraus's *Soliman den andra*. A Gustavian Turkish Opera

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One of the most interesting and popular genres within the realm of eighteenth century opera was the so-called Turkish or Janissary opera.¹ This type of work, generally based upon a simple love story or rescue drama, was usually set in a fantasy-filled environment complete with harems, stock comic characters taken from more familiar commedia dell'arte models but clothed in exotic costumes, and Europeanized principal characters. The locations of these operas, mostly set in Turkey or lands under Islamic rule, and the interpolations of pseudo-Arabic utterances offered a parody of actual life in the Middle East of that time.² More importantly in terms of the music, scores to these works, whether simple opéras comiques and Singspiele or more dramatic operas, broadened the scope of the eighteenth century orchestral palette by introducing unusual instruments such as piccolos and percussion (cymbals, triangles, the Schellenbaum, drums of various sorts) to the instrumentation. Further, librettists found that the Turkish opera would allow them some leeway to avoid governmental censorship by reason of its "foreign" setting, and they used the genre frequently to depict morals and principles, such as Westernized rulers who governed according to Enlightenment thought, for the edification of both the aristocracy and the general public. Indeed, so popular did the genre become that few of the composers of that period did not write at least one such work. For example, the names Gluck (*La rencontre imprévue*, *Le caducé*), Mozart (*Zaide*, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*), Haydn (*Incontro improvviso*), Grétry (*La fausse magique*, *Panurge*, *Le caravane de Caire*), Piccinni (*Il finto turco*), André (*Belmonte und Constanze*), and others reflect the widespread fame of the genre. Moreover, during the latter half of the century, as the Turkish instruments became more commonplace, their use was increased to represent virtually anything of an exotic nature; for example, the Chorus of the Scythians in Gluck's *Iphigénie en Tauride* (1779). Given this popularity, it is not surprising to find examples of the genre spread throughout Europe, from Spain to Scandinavia,

¹ The scope and influence of the so-called Turkish music of the eighteenth century has yet to be explored fully. Brief and concise overviews are given in *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, s.v. "Janitscharenmusik" by Henry George Farmer and *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, s.v. "Janissary Music" by Henry George Farmer and James Blades, the former with a good selected bibliography. See also Edward Harrison Powley III, "Turkish Music: an historical study of Turkish percussion instruments and their influence on European music" Master's thesis, Eastman School of Music, 1968.

² Walter Priebisch, "Quellenstudien zu Mozart's 'Entführung'," *Sammelbände der IMG* 10 (1909): 430–76. With respect to the "accuracy" of this fad in terms of authentic Turkish music, see Christian Friedrich Daniel Schubart, *Ideen zu einer Ästhetik der Tonkunst*. Vienna 1806, p. 330–31.

from England to Russia. Each of the more out-of-the-way locations added their own interpretations of the genre, often achieving interesting and innovative variations on the genre. Perhaps one of the most unusual of these occurred in Gustavian Sweden; a Turkish opera entitled *Soliman den andra eller de tre sultaninorna*, translated from Charles Simon Favart's *Soliman II ou les trois sultannes* by Johan Gabriel Oxenstierna with music by Joseph Martin Kraus.

The concept of Turkish music was by no means new to Sweden. From 1774 the Swedish military had its own Janissary ensemble, and Dahlgren noted that during the 1770s and the preceeding decade, Turkish operas by Gibert (the original setting of Favart's libretto), Grétry, and Dalayrac were performed in Stockholm.³ Moreover, as the *Nyheter från Kongliga Theatern* frequently reported, works with Turkish subjects were a perennial staple of the resident French theatrical troupe. For example, in the August 1789 issue, the *Nyheter* stated: "Fransyska Theatern har uppfört Le Barbier de Seville, Mahomet Sécond och L'Étourdi alla med Divertissement af Balletter."⁴ But, as scholars like Richard Engländer have noted, the concept of a Turkish opera did not fit in well with the Gustavian operatic ideal; it had neither the dramatic, mythological nor the historical content needed to turn it into a sort of *Gesamtkunstwerk* like *Aeneas i Cartago* or *Gustaf Wasa*.⁵ But given the Gustavian opera's dependence upon French models, it is not surprising to learn of the long-standing popularity of Favart's text, nor is it particularly strange that a Swedish author would dare to use it as the model for his own libretto. *Soliman*, however, differs from other Gustavian works in that it is not an opera built upon the foundation of Favart, but rather is a more literal translation, one that seeks not to exploit the original but only make it more accessible to a Swedish audience.

The history of *Soliman* began in 1775 when Oxenstierna first made a translation of Favart's text.⁶ Why the Swedish author was attracted to the work to such an extent cannot be determined, nor can his original reasons for making the translation. It may, however, be a speculative attempt of his part based both on the original's popularity in Sweden and the trend of the Gustavian opera during its first years towards the Swedification of pre-existent works.⁷ Whether or not Oxenstierna be-

³ Fredrik Dahlgren, *Anteckningar om Stockholms Theatrar*. Stockholm 1866, p. 128 and elsewhere; the dates of the performances are listed according to the title of the work. See also Richard Engländer, *Joseph Martin Kraus und die gustavianische Oper*. Uppsala: 1943, p. 131 and Eugène Lewenhaupt, *Bref rörande teatern under Gustaf III 1788–92*. Uppsala 1894, p. 88.

⁴ Lewenhaupt, p. 119. The *Barbier* is by Beaumarchais, *Mahomet* by Chateaubrun, and *L'Étourdi* by Molière. It should be noted that Lewenhaupt's work is a collection of various documents associated with Gustavian theater during this period, and as such is invaluable as a source of primary information for future research.

⁵ Engländer, *gustavianische Oper*, p. 16–17, 132. See also the present author's "Kraus's *Aeneas i Cartago*: a Gustavian *Gesamtkunstwerk*", in *Kraus und das Gustavianische Stockholm*, Stockholm 1984, p. 91, 98 and Engländer, "Från rokokomusik till romantiska opera", *Det Glada Sverige*. Stockholm 1947, p. 888.

⁶ Engländer, *gustavianische Oper*, p. 130².

⁷ Lewenhaupt, p. 88. Gibert's original opéra comique was first performed in Stockholm in 1761, within five years of its French premiere. Kapellmeister Francesco Antonio Baldassare Uttini set Favart's libretto

lied at that time that a possibility of the translation being set to music existed cannot be determined. G. J. Ehrensvärd reported that an amateur performance of the work was given at Drottningholm on 30 August 1779; however, his brief statement does not mention what, if any, music was performed, nor does he state when the translation was actually made.⁸ Following this single performance, a ten-year curtain of silence descended over the work. On 15 May 1788, Queen Sophia's nameday, *Soliman* was revived, once again as an occasional piece performed for the court.⁹ This performance is better documented. The performers were all students from the Kungliga Teater, and the work had a lengthy prologue by Didrich Björn appended. The premiere, also limited to a single performance, took place at the theater of Ulriksdahl.

Precise details about *Soliman*'s transition from private performance to popular entertainment are lacking; however, the work was released to the public and had its second premiere on 22 September 1789 at the Bollhus theater in downtown Stockholm. Engländer ventured the opinion that the decision to stage Oxenstierna's translation was based upon the changing fortunes of the royal spectacle in which comic opera, long suppressed in favor of more dramatic and serious works, was revived as a measure to prevent the demise of the theater:

"Der Auftrag, eine neue Musik zu 'Soliman II' für die Bühne . . . zu schreiben, hängt mit der besonderen theatralischen Situation um 1788 eng zusammen. Die Gattung der Opéra comique mit schwedischem Text, in der Kgl. Oper seit langem verdrängt, wurde in dem Schwesterinstitut, dem neugegründeten 'Kgl. Sv. Dramatiska Teater' freudig begrüsst. Umso mehr, als die Zeitlage keine grossen Opernpläne zuließ."¹⁰

The correspondence between Johan Henrik Kellgren and Abraham Clewberg-Edelcrantz reveals that the "besonderen theatralischen Situation" was far more complex, however.¹¹ During this period, the Royal Opera was in direct competition with Carl Stenborg's popular theater, the repertory of which was almost exclusively devoted to opéras comiques and Singspiele, most if not all in Swedish translation. Stenborg made a concentrated effort to woo audiences away from the main theater, sparing, as Baron de Besche noted, no expense on costumes or scenery.¹² Moreover, his efforts were successful, and Edelcrantz reported ruefully several times in 1787 and 1788 that the Opera was nearly empty of people.¹³ The result of this competi-

in 1765. The French work remained on stage in Stockholm, mainly as the province of the resident French troupe, as late as 1788; Lewenhaupt records that "*Les trois Sultanes* repeteras dageligen [*The Three Sultanas* is rehearsed daily]." See Engländer, *gustavianische Oper*, p. 132 and Marie-Christine Skuncke, *Sweden and European Drama 1772–96*. Uppsala 1981, p. 13–15, 170.

⁸ Gustaf Johan Ehrensvärd, *Dagboksanteckningar förda vid Gustaf III:s hof*. Stockholm 1877, p. 302.

⁹ Johan Flodmark, *Stenborgska skådebanorna*. Stockholm 1893, p. 292. See also the frontispiece to the libretto for Didrich Björn's Prologue *Promenaden*. Stockholm 1788.

¹⁰ Engländer, *gustavianische Oper*, p. 131–32.

¹¹ See especially Nils Personne, *Svenska Teatern under Gustavianska Tidevarfvet*. Stockholm 1913, p. 199–200.

¹² Lewenhaupt, p. 124.

¹³ Lewenhaupt, p. 59, 64, 82. See also Baron de Besche's remark on p. 176 in which he counted a grand total of 6 people at a performance.

tion was the creation of the so-called Royal Swedish Dramatic Theater—a misnomer since, as Edelcrantz noted, much of its energy was spent on the production of comic plays and operas intended to compete with Stenborg and regain its lost audience.¹⁴ By 1789 the effort had achieved some success, and the decline in numbers of people had been reversed. To pander to the public taste, however, was a bitter pill for the directors of the opera to swallow, as Edelcrantz noted in a piece of French doggerel:

“On ne scait ce que c’est que de paier ses dettes
Et de sa bienfaisance on remplit les Gazettes.”¹⁵

Soliman proved remarkably successful immediately. On 1 October 1789 the *Nyheter* reported:

“Soliman II uppfördes för första gången den 22 September, med mycket åskådare och en oväntad succés. Allmänheten var i synnerhet förtjust.”¹⁶

The best actors of the theater were cast in the leading roles: Fredrika Löv as Roxelane, Olof Ahlgren as Soliman, Christina Neuman as Elmire, Gertrud Haeffner as Delia, and Lars Hjortsberg as Osmin. The critics too appeared to receive the work well, though to be sure with the usual reservations; Ahlgren was considered too comic for the more dramatic role of Soliman, and Neumann’s monotone delivery of her lines and strident quality of voice were deplored.¹⁷ Nils von Rosenstein, however, was not amused by the work and wrote to Gustav III on 23 September:

“Mamsell Neuman var Elmire, Madame Haeffner Delia och Mamsell Löf Roxelane; Ahlgren Soliman och Hjörtsberg Osmin. Då undantager jag den sistnämnda speltes pielen i mitt tycke illa . . . Publiken tycktes dock vara nöjd men den nuvarande Publiken är ej särdeles utmärkt af smak.”¹⁸

¹⁴ Lewenhaupt, p. 79. Madam Price was a circus star.

¹⁵ Lewenhaupt, p. 109.

¹⁶ Lewenhaupt, p. 107–8. “Soliman II was performed for the first time on the 22nd of September with many in the audience and an unexpected success.”

¹⁷ Lewenhaupt, p. 108. Clewberg-Edelcrantz noted:

Han [i.e. Ahlgren] säger sina verser väl, men tyckes dock i sin diction och äfven i sitt spel sätta en vis emphase, som ofta är outrerad och stundom comique . . . Mlle Neuman spelar Elmire’s role . . . hennes diction i denna piece lika monotone och hennes röst lika sträf som förr. Hon sätter något för mycket tact i sin röst, och något för litet i sin dants, så att om hon kunde dantsa med läpperne och declamera med fötterne skulle hon i denna role bli charmante.

Ahlgren speaks his lines well, but is still thought in his diction and also in his acting to set an emphasis that is often exaggerated and at times comic . . . Miss Neuman plays Elmire’s role, . . . her diction in this piece is equally monotone and her voice as strident as before. She speeds up a bit much in her voice and slows down in her dance so that if she would dance with her lips and speak with her feet she would be charming in this role.

¹⁸ Lewenhaupt, p. 107. “Miss Neuman was Elmire, Mrs. Haeffner Delia and Miss Löf Roxelane; Ahlgren was Soliman and Hjörtsberg Osmin. With the exception of the latter, the piece was badly played in my opinion . . . the public appeared to be pleased, but today’s public is not especially known for its taste.”

The long *divertissement* entitled *Roxelane’s proving* (Roxelane’s trial) that forms the final and portrays Roxelane’s triumphant coronation was further criticized as “too long”. But despite this minor opposition, *Soliman* soon became more or less a permanent part of the repertory, performed, according to Dahlgren, over thirty-one times between 1789 and its final performance on 14 February 1817.¹⁹

A summary of the plot of *Soliman* reveals many of the features that enhanced its popularity and accessibility:

Act I. Soliman II, the most powerful ruler of Turkey, is distressed; his guest, the Spaniard Elmire, is on the verge of leaving. He confides to Osmin, the overseer of his harem, that he cannot seem to return her professed passion. Elmire, however, is playing a game designed to increase Soliman’s love for her to the point where he will wed her and make her his Sultana; the latest guise is that of a spurned lover. Soliman makes her an expensive gift, which she receives all too readily. The latest crisis solved, and Delia, a Caucasian slave, sings for their enjoyment. But her song strikes too sympathetic a chord in Soliman, and Elmire leaves in a jealous rage. Osmin then approaches with news that a new French slave, Roxelane, is giving him trouble by being insolent and refusing to obey him. Further, she delights in antagonizing him. Soliman, his interest aroused, asks that she be brought in. Roxelane is as forward with the Sultan as she was with Osmin, and the act ends with her insolence.

Act II. Soliman soliloquizes about his harem and the differences between Roxelane and Elmire. His musings are interrupted by Roxelane, who rushes in unannounced and is insolent to the Sultan once more. She tells him that his progress in the world requires him to abandon his Turkish ways and become more European in manner and behavior. This talk intrigues Soliman, and he accepts her brash invitation to lunch. Expecting a quiet meal alone with Roxelane, Soliman is surprised to find that she has invited both Elmire and Delia to dine with them. He compares all three during an entertainment and finds that he is most taken with Roxelane. But when he attempts to give her a silk scarf as a token of his affection, she embarrasses him by forcing him to acknowledge each of the other women in turn. Delia is bewildered, Elmire rushes off in a jealous rage, and Soliman, at last pushed as far as he can be, orders Roxelane’s arrest.

Act III. Elmire recognizes that Soliman is passionately attracted to Roxelane and that her own wiles have been in vain. But Soliman still seethes from Roxelane’s presumption and tells Elmire to punish her in any way she sees fit. Elmire’s judgment is to send Roxelane from the harem in disgrace, and Osmin rushes out to fulfill the orders. Soliman, still unsure of his wisdom in this matter, sends for her once more. He realizes finally that he is in love with Roxelane, and, during the course of their final audience, she confesses that she too loves him. He rescinds the expulsion order joyously. Elmire, realizing that her suit is hopeless, writes Soliman a letter renouncing her claims, and the opera ends with a portrayal of Roxelane’s coronation as the new Sultana.

As an opera, *Soliman* suffers from a number of problems with respect to the text and music. First, Oxenstierna’s translation may in fact be divided into three separate versions; the 1775 original translation possibly with music intended to be taken from Gibert’s score of 1761 or cobbled together pasticcio style, the 1788 Ulriksdal private performance and subsequent Stockholm premiere with at least some of the music by

¹⁹ Dahlgren, p. 346.

Kraus, and the revisions of 1789 for general use at the Royal Opera. Second, there exist a prologue to the work which contains only the most cursory relevance to *Soliman*. The exact relationship of this prologue to the opera needs elaboration and explanation. Third, there exist a number of indications in the libretto for music (ballets, arias and choruses) which cannot be found in either Kraus's autograph score or the authentic parts. Finally, there is the overriding question of the proportion of music to text in the opera. *Soliman* is a long, three-act work containing relatively little actual music. Even when the musical numbers not found in the autograph are added, the sum total is far fewer than one might expect in a conventional opera. The most blatant example of this is in the third act; the entire musical portion is limited to the admittedly lengthy finale, with no other music whatsoever appearing anywhere throughout the rest of the act. The first, third, and last of these text-critical problems are to some degree intertwined. The tangled skein of interrelationships is a complex issue. Perhaps the easiest to deal with is the issue of the prologue.

Björn's prologue, entitled *Promenaden*, contains a plot of utmost simplicity. It concerns the visit to two women of the minor nobility of a pompous old boor, Baron Sporrenflygt, who manages to antagonize virtually everybody in the household until put in his place. At the end, the Baron's awkward situation is relieved by the entrance of Björn himself, who "previews" a laudatory ode written to commemorate Queen Sofia's birthday.

This little *pièce d'occasion* conforms quite closely to its title; there is no set destination to the plot, so subject of lasting impact. It is a series of tableaux which, if they do not satirize, at least display a comic side to courtly life in Gustavian Stockholm. The prologue in fact rambles, and it is clear at the end that the entire action serves no other purpose than to present Björn's ode. Despite the lack of continuity and plot development, Björn does manage occasionally to poke fun at the francophilic attitudes of King Gustav's court, using the senile old Baron as the pretentious foil. Concerning the Royal Opera, the Baron states:

"Men Spectaclet är aldeles inte min sak, ty jag är gladast till slutet då jag får höra Overturen—Franska Spectaclet är det enda—Det röjer intet den mishageliga tomhet som med Svenska Scene är införlifvad."²⁰

Considering the extensive debt of the Gustavian opera to French models and the variable fortunes of the resident French troupe, such a statement contains considerable irony. Italian music, however, fares no better under the critical eye of the opinionated Baron. When the singing master, Herr Drillerus, appears to give the children of one of the women, the Countess, their daily lesson, the Baron interrupts vehemently with: "Men för Guds skull ingen Italiensk musik [For God's sake, no Italian music]!" To this, the Countess counters drily: "Kanske man kan börja hönsgummans visa [Perhaps we could begin with the hen lady's song]?" To the

²⁰ Björn, *Promenaden*, p. 9–10 (see Note 9). "But the Spectacle is really not my thing, for I am most happy at the end when I hear the overture—French spectacles are the only things—they do not promote the undesirable emptiness that permeates the Swedish stage."

Gustavian audiences, such as reference would immediately have conjured up an obvious comparison; the long, florid Italian aria versus the simple, folk-like song from Abbé Vogler's *Gustaf Adolph och Ebbe Brahe*. But the Baron's prejudices stem mainly from his arrogance and ignorance. To him, knowledge is simply the ability to judge everything in order to become popular with the ladies and to differentiate one's station above the masses:

"Kundskap—det är det minsta, men att veta lefva hvad man kallar, att kunna döma om alt, att känna det folk man har att göra med, att veta göra sig älskad af Damerna."²¹

But his musical ignorance, by which Björn is poking fun at the ignorance of the Gustavian court, becomes apparent when Drillerus sings an aria, *Lunghi da te ben mio*, by Giuseppe Sarti. "Af hvem är musiken [Who wrote the music]?" asks the Baron, enchanted. "Den är af Sarti [It is by Sarti]," answers Drillerus, to which the Baron responds: "Ja, det må jag tro, ty att han inte var Italiensk kunde jag nog höra [Yes, I believe it, for I could tell at once that he wasn't Italian]!" Is this perhaps a veiled reference to Sarti's concurrent employment in Denmark and Russia?

The only direct reference to *Soliman*, apart from the Baron's failure to have acquired tickets for the upcoming performance, is a short verse sung by the Countess's daughter Charlotte:

Lifva med er blick de lekar
Så vi våga helga Er;
De behag den konsten nekar,
Oss Ert bifall återger.
(*Promenaden*)

Lifva med en blick de lekar
Unga hjärtan offra opp;
Med den ömhet du ej nekar
Upfyll deras tysta hopp.
(*Soliman*, Act II)²²

A comparison between this verse and its counterpart in the main opera demonstrates considerable differences in tone and to whom it is addressed. Here it would seem that Björn is parodying Oxenstierna, maintaining a portion of the rhyme-scheme and metrical rhythm, but altering the text to suit the new context. Whether or not Björn allowed the audience to receive a preview of Kraus's music at this point cannot be determined.

Due to the subject matter of this lengthy prologue and the extensive ode that concludes it, it would seem clear that Björn did not intend for it to become an inseparable part of the opera itself. Both the setting and context, i.e. the special appearance of the Queen's birthday ode as the *raison d'être* for the piece, indicate its

²¹ Björn, p. 18. "Knowledge, that is the least, but to know how to live what one says, to be able to judge everything, to know the people with whom one traffics, and to know how to make oneself beloved by women."

²² Compare Björn, p. 21 with Charles Simon Favart, *Soliman den andra*, trans. by Johan Gabriel Oxenstierna 1789, p. 73.

Enliven with your glance those games
Which we dare to consecrate to you;
The pleasure that art denies
Gives back to us your approval.

Enliven with a glance those games
Which youthful hearts sacrifice;
With the tenderness you don't deny
Fulfills their silent hope.

one-time-only function, and therefore it inevitably belongs only with the private 1788 performance.

Favart's original text to *Soliman* has been thoroughly analyzed by both Auguste Font and Wilhelm Preibisch, who have noted the extensive popularity it achieved during this period.²³ Oxenstierna's translation, however, has received scant attention. Engländer noted in 1942 that Oxenstierna chose specifically to translate Favart as closely as possible, at the same time reforming the libretto to fit a Swedish linguistic mold.²⁴ In this endeavor he was extraordinarily successful, for the most part even retaining a word-for-word correspondence, as a comparison of Delia's air *Jeunes amans* from Act I, Scene 7 demonstrates:

*Jeunes amans, imitez le Zéphir.
Il caresse l'oeillet, l'anémone
et la rose,
Jamais son vole ne se repose;
Nouvel objet, nouveau desir.*

*Var, älskare, som västanvänder är.
Från liljan, från en rose han till
jasmin ilar,
Uti sin fart han aldrig hvilar;
Nytt föremål, ett nytt begär.*

As Engländer succinctly states:

“Der Dichter had ein altes Paradestück der Opéra comique, ein klassisches Beispiel des alla turca hervorgeholt, und hat es im engen Anschluss an den berühmten Text Favarts übersetzt.”²⁵

The close resemblance therefore represents a departure from the more traditional Gustavian norm; that is, that an author frequently only used the original as a model which he expanded or adapted to fit the circumstances.²⁶ Oxenstierna's rendering is thus unusual, and it may be suggested that he deliberately chose *not* to try to create a “new” version for two reasons: first, Favart's original was too well-known in Stockholm and therefore too popular to tamper with; and second, that any further elaboration or alteration might lead to inevitable, perhaps not too happy comparisons. In retaining Favart mostly intact, Oxenstierna unwittingly placed the burden of making *Soliman* “new and unique” squarely upon the shoulders of his musical collaborator, Joseph Martin Kraus.

Within the text, Favart-Oxenstierna has created essentially an Enlightenment setting with stock characterizations. Roxelane is portrayed as the quintessential eighteenth century soubrette—insolent and free-spirited, with a firey temperment undaunted by the power of the Sultan—Soliman, her opposite, is an enlightened ruler tormented by a most Western *Liebesangst*. Osmin, the overseer of the harem, is a stock servitore from the commedia dell'arte, and of the remaining two women,

²³ Auguste Font, *Essai sur Favart et les origines de la comédie*. Toulouse 1894; idem., *Favart*. Paris 1894; Preibisch, “Quellenstudien”, 442–444. Preibisch (p. 446–47) notes that Favart's text is, like many opéras comiques, based upon an English ballad opera; Isaac Bickerstaffe's *The Sultan*. Preibisch gives a plot summary of this work which makes for an interesting comparison with Favart.

²⁴ Engländer, *gustavianische Oper*, p. 131.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ See Skuncke, p. 62. Skuncke notes that Oxenstierna has added numerous ballets and “choruses” to Favart. However, a comparison reveals that this expansion is much less than it first appears.

Delia and Elmire, the former is virtually a non-entity whose sole function is to entertain the other principals, and the latter is rival who seeks to achieve her goals through deceit. But it is only with the greatest difficulty that *Soliman* can be characterized as either a pure comedy or something closer to the *dramma giocosco*. For example, the scene in the second act in which Roxelane invites Soliman to dine with her and her rivals clearly shows the dramatic-comic duality. Roxelane orders wine, and the first person she gives a glass to is none other than Osmin, her old nemesis, who, as a moslem, is forbidden to touch it. When Osmin declines, Soliman orders him to drink. “O Mahomet! slut ögat till [O Mohammed, close your eyes]!” Osmin mumbles in alarm; but after the first sip, he asks for more until he is quite tipsy. In the end of this comic scene, however, Roxelane embarrasses the Sultan, and Soliman explodes in rage with a dramatic command: “Dig ur min åsyn för, Du otacksamma! ren du nog min plåga gör: Jag här för mycket tålt; min hämd skal uppenbaras [Lead her from my sight, you ingrate who does nothing but plague me; I have had too much patience, my vengeance will be revealed]!”²⁷ The scene is no longer comic, and the feeling of tragedy permeates the scene as Roxelane is born off by four eunuchs. Soliman, ignoring Elmire who is trying to capitalize on Roxelane's *faux pas*, then reveals the conflicting emotions within his heart as he weighs his love with his power as the Sultan.²⁸ The third act, in which Soliman and Roxelane at last declare their love for each other, is devoid of a comic element, and the long coronation ceremony which concludes the opera, called a Divertissement with choreography by Marcadelt, is not the expected *lieto fine* of an opera buffa or the vaudeville of an opéra comique, but rather a visually-expanded scene with ballet and chorus more at home in Gluck. Why Favart-Oxenstierna chose to deemphasize the comic element is uncertain, but it may be suggested that Roxelane's coronation may have had a political motive: her triumph over the Spaniard Elmire representing France's ultimate victory over rival Spain. Such blatant symbolism would not have been lost on a French audience, and moreover, the blending of drama, comedy, and spectacle in the Gustavian sense would have been consistent, however inconsequential the uniquely French sentiments of the original. Whatever the reason for this dramatic-comic mixture, the eventual triumph of drama in *Soliman* demonstrates the unusual position of Favart's text; it must be considered a Turkish opera owing to its plot and setting, but, on the whole, it transcends the conventional opéra comique by blending various stylistic elements into a cohesive entity.

As was noted previously, Oxenstierna's adherence to Favart in his translation meant that the burden of revising the opera rested upon Kraus and his music. But there was ample opportunity due to the tragicomic elements for far more musical expression than there might have been in a more commonplace opéra comique. The text offers examples of many types of music, from choral numbers to ballet to

²⁷ Favart, *Soliman*, p. 75 (see Note 23).

²⁸ Favart, *Soliman*, p. 76. Soliman's indecision can be seen in his hesitancy: “Ja, jag älskar . . . jag begär . . . Jag dyrkar henne [Yes, I love . . . I beg . . . I honor her],” showing the descending degrees of affection for Elmire, while he wrestles with the “pain and anguish” caused by his encounter with Roxelane.

Table 1. Comparison of the indicated musical numbers between Johan Gabriel Oxenstierna's printed libretto and Joseph Martin Kraus's autograph score to *Soliman den andra*

Libretto (S Uu Oxenstierna Vol. x) (Overture)	Score (S St Operettor S 8) Overture (D Major)
<i>Act I</i>	
1. Ballet of Slaves	—
2. Chorus "Du fäster, med den magt"	—
3. Aria "Stundom du" <i>Delia</i>	1. Aria "Stundom du" <i>Delia</i>
4. Aria "Var, älskare" <i>Delia</i>	2. Aria "Var, älskare" <i>Delia</i>
<i>Act II</i>	
5. Chorus "Med myrten"	3. Chorus "Med myrten"
6. Aria "Omkring vår syn" <i>Delia</i>	—
7. Ballet divertissement representing the various nations	—
8. Aria "I som förägten" <i>Roxelane</i>	4. Aria "I som förägten" <i>Roxelane</i>
9. Elmore's Dance	5. Elmore's Dance
10. Duet "Lifva med de blick" <i>Delia, Roxelane</i>	6. Duet "Lifva med de blick" <i>Delia, Roxelane</i>
<i>Act III</i>	
11. <i>Divertimento Finale</i> ²⁹	7. <i>Divertimento Finale</i>
<i>Miscellaneous</i>	
Instrumental Interlude (F Major): Used as a substitute for No. 8 (4) Aria "I som förägten" (Ms. S Skma O/Sv-R)	

extensive arias and ensembles to a divertimento finale. For *Soliman*, however, the task of providing music is more difficult due to the proportional relationship between text and music. Although the work is in three acts, there are relatively few indications for music, as may be noted in Table One. Indeed, there are only twelve musical numbers, including the overture, for the entire opera, of which four are ballet numbers. When compared with other operas of that time, this amount of music appears relatively minimal. Moreover, Kraus's autograph score and the authentic parts, preserved in the Kungliga Teaterns bibliotek (now Kungliga Musikaliska Akademiens Bibliotek, Operettor S 8) in Stockholm, omits some of these numbers, making the total amount of music even smaller. This score, consisting of two arias in the first act, four numbers in the second, and the finale, must have placed a considerable amount of strain on Kraus to produce appropriate music that would both enhance and be different from Favart-Gibert's original. Unfortunately, Kraus's own feelings towards *Soliman* are unknown—he does not mention the work

²⁹ For a more detailed look at the individual numbers of this finale, see Table Two. Why this long ballet-cum-vocal-ensemble was entitled *Roxelanes provning* (*Roxelane's trial*) is unknown; it is nothing more than an extended coronation and homage scene.

in any of his numerous letters³⁰—but it may be suggested that he may not have considered it to have been an opera in the sense that his other works *Proserpin* and *Aeneas i Cartago* were. The libretto is overwhelmingly devoted to spoken dialogue, and indeed, music only seems to be called for in situations where one of the characters is being entertained, such as Roxelane's dinner party. Nowhere does it contribute to or comment upon the plot itself. For this reason, *Soliman* is perhaps best not considered a true opera, opéra comique, or the like, but rather as a hybrid form, the *drama med sång* which appears fairly frequently in Gustavian theater. This view is supported by Kraus's further limitations of Favart-Oxenstierna's musical indications, in addition to the preponderance of dialogue. As an example, one only need look at the third act in which not a single musical number appears until the finale.

Whatever the problems in classification, and despite the relatively minimal musical content, *Soliman* represents one of Kraus's most ingenious scores. In this opera, the composer attempted to integrate the mandatory Janissary music with all of its exotic instrumentation into the fabric of the work, rather than simply use it to generate noise and atmosphere. Thus the various percussion instruments each have their own independent parts. As Engländer notes: "Er erweist sich besonders in zweierlei Hinsicht, an der ungemein feinen Rhythmik und an der raffinierten Orchesterpalette."³¹ Such can be followed throughout the entire work, beginning with the overture.

Unlike Mozart, who begins his *Entführung* with a three-part Italianate Sinfonia, Kraus opts for a single movement in sonata-ritornello form. It is built upon two contrasting themes, a unison melody which lends itself to variation in the episodes and a "Turkish" centerpiece comprising three more or less equal chords in the tonic D Major (Example 1). This dual division itself is a miniature portrait of the principal characters, the mercurial, ever-changing first theme representing the variable moods of Roxelane with the many unisons demonstrating her iron resolve, and the stable, recurring second theme *Soliman*, a point underscored by the orchestra: the Turkish instruments appear only in conjunction with the latter. The winds, pairs of piccolos, clarinets, bassoons and horns, are used sparingly as pedal tones or, as Engländer noted, for special effects such as the horn octave entrance above the staccato strings in the second ritornello (Example 2).³² The overall effect of the overture is more than just noise; it is a preview of the coming clash of East and West that lies ahead.

Delia's first aria "Stundom du" is highly conventional without any special noteworthy features. A Da capo aria in C Major, it appears almost halfway through Act I and so is not precisely a conventional musical introduction that usually follows an overture. Her second aria in the same act is much more effective. Here Kraus

³⁰ Kraus's surviving letters have been published in *extenso* in Irmgard Leux-Henschen, *Joseph Martin Kraus in seinen Briefen*. Stockholm 1978.

³¹ Engländer, *gustavianische Oper*, p. 132.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 133².

a)

Perc.

Cor. in D

Str.

B.

Lif-va med en blick de le-kar, un-ga hjer-ten of- fra opp.

b)

Ob.

Cor. in D

Str. (Va omitted)

B.

Fö-re-nen er ska-ra till So-li-mans ro.

Example 5. Kraus, *Soliman*, No. 6 Duet "Lifva med en blick", a) mm. 27–30 (Va. omitted); b) mm. 34–37.

which take over their rhythmic function in almost pastoreale fashion. This can be noted in the first interlude where Kraus changes the meter to 6/8 and plays off the voices and strings to achieve a Baroque-like antiphonal effect to the words "förenen er skara till Solimans ro" (Example 5b). The voices are mostly in parallel thirds and sixths; however, Roxelane generally sings the upper voice, further underscoring her predominance in the text.

The divertimento finale is a lengthy spectacle during which most of Soliman's court enters, each to his own special music, to praise and bless the marriage of

Table 2. Numerical Order of the Divertimento Finale to *Soliman den Andra* by Kraus

No.	Title (Character, Text)	Key	Tempo, Meter	Instrumentation
1.	March of the Slaves	D	Andante, 4/4	Str.
2.	March of the Janissaries	A	Allegro, C	Pic, Ob, Fag, Perc., Str.
3.	March of the Dervishes	D	Allegretto, C	Ob, Cor, Str.
4.	March of the Sultan	D	Maestoso, 4/4	Ob, Cor, Perc Str.
5.	March of Roxelane	A	Allegretto, C	Fl, Str.
6.	Air (Mufti) <i>O Mahomet</i>	D	Andante comodo, C	B, Fag, Str.
7.	Chorus of Priests <i>O Mahomet</i>	A	Andante, C	MCh, Str.
8.	Air (Mufti) <i>I krig vårt stöd</i>	A	Andante, C	B, Str (same music as 7)
8a.	No. 7 da capo			
9.	Air and Chorus (Mufti) <i>Men bland ett folk</i>	D	–, C	B, MCh, Fag, Str.
10.	Air (Mufti) <i>O du!</i>	D	Largo, 3/4	B, Ob, Cor, Str.
11.	Chorus of Dervishes <i>Kärlek och nöje</i>	D	Largo, C	MCh, Fl, Cor, Perc, Str.
12.	Air (Dervish) <i>Som när af en gynnande väder</i>	G	Andante, 6/8	T, Fl, Str.
12a.	No. 11 da capo			
13.	Air (Mufti) <i>Du som vår dyrken vunnit</i>	A	Larghetto, 3/4	B, Fl, Cor, Str.
14.	La coronazione	D	Larghetto, 3/4	Fl, Ob, Fag, Cor, Str.
15.	La Strombettata	A	Andante, 4/4	Fl, Ob, Fag, Str.
16.	Ballet	D	Allegro, 2/4	Pic, Ob, Fag, Cor, Perc, Str.
17.	Ballet	b	Con alterezza, 3/4	Ob, Cor, Str.
18.	Ballet	G	Andante, 3/4	Fl, Cor, Str.
19.	Chorus <i>Eyuvallah, Eyuvallah</i>	D	Allegro, 2/4	DCh, tutti

Notes: Instrumental designations are as follows:

Str. Strings (= 2 violins, violas, cellos, bass, bassoon where not otherwise noted)
 Pic Piccolo Fl Flute Ob Oboe Fag Bassoon
 B Bass voice T Tenor MCh Male Chorus
 Perc Percussion (= Schellenbaum, cymbals, triangle, drums)
 DCh Double Chorus

Soliman and Roxelane.³⁴ Janissaries and Dervishes, the former lead by a Mufti, sing praises to the beauty and intelligence of their new queen, interspersed with choral interludes. The coronation itself occurs amid a ballet spectacle and the opera ends with a chorus of Turks and Franks, the former singing a pseudo-Turkish salute "Eyuvallah, eyuvallah, salem aleikim" while the latter alternate antiphonally with more comprehensible language (Table two). Kraus weaves a gigantic musical tapestry throughout this finale. Indeed, the differentiation of the various movements is the closest the composer has come to a conventional opera in the entire work. The entire edifice is in the key of D Major, and Kraus takes great pains to depart from this tonal center as little as possible. Rather, he concentrates upon contrasting the

³⁴ Lewenhaupt, p. 109; Skuncke, p. 62.

a)

Example 8a shows a musical score for the final chorus of Kraus's *Soliman*. It features a violin (vln.) part with a highly ornate, melodic line characterized by frequent trills and ornaments. The piano accompaniment is in the lower register, providing a steady harmonic support. The lyrics are: E-gu-val-lah, E-gu-val-lah E-gu-val-lah sa-len-g-lei-kim.

b)

Example 8b shows the melody-only score for the final chorus of Mozart's *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*. It is written for a bass (Bas) voice. The melody is simpler and more direct than Kraus's, with a clear rhythmic pattern. The lyrics are: Bas-sa Se-lim le-ba lan-ge, lan-ge, lan-ge, lan-ge.

Example 8. a) Kraus, *Soliman*, Final Chorus, mm. 1–8; b) W. A. Mozart, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, final chorus, mm. 1–11, melody only.

the music indicated in the libretto. Missing are two ballets, a chorus, and an aria for Delia from the first and second acts. From a performance practical standpoint, this raises two important questions; why didn't Kraus set them and if he didn't, as appears to be the case, how is any reconstruction to take the missing numbers into account? The first question is unanswerable. It seems odd that Kraus, a composer always interested in opportunities for musical expression, did not think of the possibilities of, for example, the Ballet of the Various Nations in Act II, even if he may not have been particularly interested in some of the other "missing" numbers.³⁷ Were these perhaps interpolated from earlier sources such as Favart-Gibert's French original or Uttini's setting? While interpolations of this sort were not uncommon during this period, Kraus himself promoted continuity within his dramatic works and thus would not have been in favor of such. Moreover, the qualitative difference between Kraus and the interpolation would have been noteworthy and therefore hardly likely to contribute to the success that *Soliman* enjoyed on the Stockholm stage. None of the critics, however, mention this point, and the only obvious possibility remaining is that these numbers were simply omitted, and, furthermore, intended from the very first to have been cut. If this is the case, then can some light be brought to bear on the question of text and music in relationship to the various versions noted above? The answer to this question, which has a direct bearing upon

³⁷ See Table One for a comparison of the published libretto and autograph score. Kraus's score is bound in a single, consecutively-numbered volume and corresponds with the authentic parts (also Operetter S 8), so there is no questions that it represents his final version. There do exist other interpolative numbers in the parts, but these, mostly drawn from Kraus's music to *Amphitryon*, appear to have been added at a later date (perhaps as late as 1800) and are principally ballet numbers.

the problem with the missing numbers, lies in the curious circumstances surrounding the premiere in 1789.

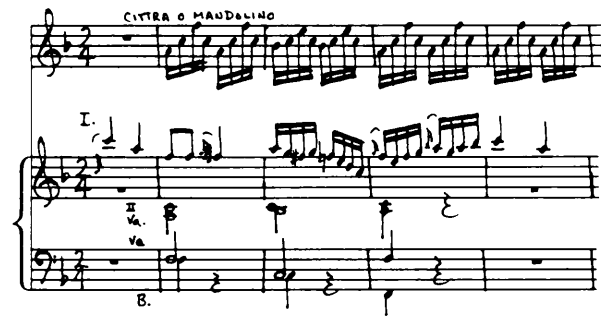
The work was accepted, as has been noted earlier, by the Dramatic Theater, a newly-established sub-organization of the Royal Opera whose function was both to perform dramas and lighter operatic entertainments. When the work was originally cast, it appears that the Roxelane, Frederika Löv, was a popular and versatile actress but was unable to sing. According to the text used for this production, now in possession of the Kungliga Dramatiska Teater in Stockholm, all of her vocal numbers were cut, as were extensive portions of the music.³⁸ This lack of singing ability on the part of Löv was noted by Edelcrantz, who wrote in the October *Nyheter*: "Roxelane, som *ej kan sjunga*, sökte genom sin Zittra att fångsla Sultanens upmärksamhet [Roxelane, who *can't sing* (*Italics added*), sought to capture the sultan's attention through her cittern]."³⁹ This would indicate that, at least in the first few performances, Roxelane's enchanting aria "I som förägrten krigets fara" was replaced by an instrumental number containing a solo cittern or mandoline, and further, that extensive changes in the musical portion were undertaken to accommodate Löv's role. This in turn would seem to indicate that this premiere was substantially different from both Oxenstierna's printed text and Kraus's autograph, and that this amounts to nothing less than a separate version of *Soliman*, later restored to its "operatic" form when singer-actresses became available.⁴⁰ The text for this "version" can be reconstructed simply by following the edited libretto at the Dramatiska Teater, but the music may indeed be more difficult. Fortunately, a heretofore overlooked score of the musical changes for the first and second acts has been preserved, and thus makes the reconstruction possible.

In the Kungliga Musikaliska Akademiens Bibliotek can be found a small oblong format score (O/Sv-R I:1) in the hand of the Royal Opera copyist Gottlob Friedrich Ficker containing pieces from *Soliman* as well as an aria by Johann Friedrich Reichardt, *Bell piacer l'aria*. The ex libris indicates that it came from Oxenstierna's personal library. The order of the numbers—"Stundom du", the chorus "Med myrten", etc.—appear in exactly the same order as in Kraus's autograph. In third position, where one would expect to find Roxelane's aria, is an instrumental piece featuring a solo cittern (written "citra o mandolino"). That this is the substitute instrumental number for a non-singing Roxelane can be seen by the

³⁸ The prompters text, now at the Royal Dramatic Theater in Stockholm (uncatalogued), clearly shows these changes by generous use of paste-overs and crossouts.

³⁹ Lewenhaupt, p. 108.

⁴⁰ Engländer, *gustavianische Oper*, p. 130². Engländer refers to Volume 6 of a collection *Pièces de Theatre* now in Uppsala (Universitetsbiblioteket) on which are penciled the cast of *Soliman*: Carl Stenborg as Soliman, Gustava Charlotta Slottsberg as Elmire, Lovisa Sofia Augusti as Delia, and Elisabet Olin as Roxelane. Engländer, however, fails to note whether or not this cast represents one of the later versions of *Soliman* by Kraus/Oxenstierna or Favart's original which, as has been mentioned elsewhere in this article, enjoyed continuing popularity in Stockholm up through 1789 (and perhaps later). The notations do not clarify this issue, and their appearance in connection with the French original would rather suggest that this cast of singers was associated with some performance of Favart's original.



Example 9. Kraus, *Soliman II*, No. 4 Instrumental substitution for Roxelane's aria "Som i föräkten krigets fara" (S Skema O/Sv-R I: 1), mm. 1–4.

orchestration (flutes, horns, solo plucked instrument, strings), the fact that the solo cittern or mandolin has the same broken arpeggio accompanimental patterns as the aria, and by key (both are in F Major). But, unlike the more serenade-like aria, this instrumental interlude is more dance-like and faster (*Allegro*), which may indicate a closer relationship to Elmire's dance that follows (Example 9). Since the Reichardt interpolation follows Elmire's dance, it may be suggested that the Roxelane/Delia duet "Lifva med en blick" was omitted in favor of the solo aria. The appearance of this small score thus allows the differences between the autograph, printed libretto, and descriptions of the premiere to be resolved. Moreover, its existence means that it is once more possible to reconstruct the "original" version presented to the Swedish public in 1789. But the problems concerning the variances between the autograph score and libretto with respect to the missing pieces remain to be solved pending new source discoveries and more research.

Soliman den Andra is an interesting and provocative work from many points of view. First, it represents yet another facet of the Gustavian opera that is at the same time a version based closely upon a French forebear and an individualistic work in its own right. Second, Oxenstierna's translation shows the dependence upon French models that is sometimes obscured in the texts by his fellow authors like Kexel, Hallman, Kellgren, and even Gustav III. Third, the opera's curious mixture of comedy and drama is unusual even by eighteenth century standards in the way they are treated. Unlike other works in the genre, such as Mozart's *Entführung*, the dramatic element predominates. Fourth, *Soliman* is an unconventional representative of the Turkish opera genre, at least in terms of its music. Kraus's scoring treats the added instrumentation not just as local, exotic color, but as an integral part of his orchestral palette, thus enhancing the dramatic content of the music. Despite some still unresolved problems with the text and music, and the proportional difficulties, *Soliman* remains a milestone in Gustavian opera literature. Far from being the quintessential example of French Enlightenment envisioned by Engländer forty years ago, the curious mixture of comedy and high drama, appropriately under-

scored by Kraus's innovative music, contains a universal appeal that transcended the class divisions of the time. It is precisely this mixture that is one of the foremost attributes of the Gustavian Opera, and Kraus's *Soliman* demonstrates that such opera could be a worthy and popular part of the repertory of the Swedish theater, in addition to being a unique representative of a more widespread operatic genre of that period.