

Tonal and Structural Design in the Finales of the Savoy Operas, with Some Suggestions as to Derivation

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In a broadcast of *The Vocal Scene* of some years ago, George Jellinek presented a program called "The Very Models of Gilbert and Sullivan" in which he illustrated many of the musical and stylistic borrowings in the Savoyard operas. These commonly-acknowledged borrowings occupy a relatively minor place in these highly original scores and tend to be used mostly for parody. Given their presence, however, one might wonder to what extent Sullivan may have been consciously adapting structural elements as well in the operas, especially in those places in nineteenth-century comic opera which seem to be the most highly organized: large *scenas* and act finales. It is the purpose of this essay to investigate the Gilbert and Sullivan finales and then attempt to place them in the continuum of the comic opera finale tradition from Rossini to Offenbach.

With the exception of *Princess Ida*, all the operas are in two acts with the Act I finale in every case being the longer and more complex. In eight of the ten operas, the last act ends with a perfunctory finale consisting entirely of music from earlier in the opera, often from the

first act finale, and serving dramatically only to bring the work to a satisfactory happy ending. *The Yeomen of the Guard* and *The Gondoliers* are exceptions to this rule in that both have second-act finales of considerable complexity; that of *Yeomen* is comparable in length to its first-act finale.

Considering the first-act finales as a group, they range in length from 285 bars (*The Pirates of Penzance*) to 667 bars (*Iolanthe*). Five of the ten finales are closed tonally in a manner characteristic of Mozart and Rossini. The other finales are tonally progressive. Figure 1 shows the opening and closing keys of each of the Act I finales.

Figure 1. Keys of Act I Finales

OPERA	OPENING KEY	CLOSING KEY
<i>The Sorcerer</i>	A	B
<i>H.M.S. Pinafore</i>	E \flat	E \flat
<i>Pirates of Penzance</i>	g	G
<i>Patience</i>	D	D
<i>Iolanthe</i>	G	E \flat
<i>Princess Ida</i> (II) ¹	E \flat	E \flat
<i>The Mikado</i>	G	G
<i>Rudiggore</i>	C	E \flat
<i>The Gondoliers</i>	B \flat	D
<i>Yeomen of the Guard</i>	E \flat	C

Gondoliers and *Princess Ida* maintain a single mood, uninterrupted by complexities; the others have one or more mood shifts brought about by some kind of plot twist. The descriptive analyses

¹This chart reminds us of the interesting series of "P" titles running from *Pinafore* to *Princess Ida*, interrupted only by *Iolanthe* which was at one time to be called "Perola" and which is still subtitled "The Peer and the Peri." Whether by chance or intent, four of the five operas with the closed tonal finales are "P" operas.

following will show how these facts influence the design of the finales.²

With this general survey as a point of reference, the finales of *The Pirates of Penzance*, *Iolanthe*, and *The Gondoliers* will be discussed in some detail; the rest will be summarized. The first of these is the briefest of the ten and relatively uncomplicated. *Gondoliers* is about average in length at 495 bars and presents a single unbroken plot thread. Finally, *Iolanthe* is both the longest and most complex, falling into seven clearly defined sections.

The Pirates of Penzance

The finale of Act I divides into three unequal sections. Section one opens with a recitative (Moderato, 4/4), moving from G minor to C as V/F, then continues with Major General Stanley's song (Andante Moderato, 4/4, F) and a repeated refrain. A Coda sung by Samuel and the Pirate King and a final "Poor fellow!" from the pirates conclude the first subsection. The song is divided into units of 3+3+2 bars; the refrain is 4+4 bars with a one-bar interjection between phrases. The coda is 6+1 bars; the single bar in both cases is the "Poorfellow" interjection.

An abrupt shift to D and an Allegro vivace 6/8 signals the start of subsection two. General Stanley's song is a 16-bar period repeated by the ensemble and followed by a twelve-bar coda. In a sixteen-bar solo the Pirate King expresses his belief that life "without a touch of poetry in it" is not worth living. After the rousing chorus "Hail Poetry" (D, 4/4) the king pardons the General and makes him an honorary Pirate (recitative: D to F).

Part two opens with the chorus and soloists, led by Samuel, praising the "orphan boy" to the tune of the Pirate King's solo from earlier in the act. After 12 bars, a new musical idea is heard (Allegro non troppo, 6/8, F) with chorus and soloists alternating four-bar then

²Since the plots of the Savoy operas are generally well-known, only enough of the story will be included to set the stage and remind the reader of the dramatic action.

two-bar units, before the final cadence.

To this point the finale has moved ahead without serious problems. At the start of section three, however, the entry of Ruth pleading with Frederick not to leave her brings the action to a momentary stop. As the music reaches its climax and the key of G is firmly set, Ruth is forced to leave and the act ends with the full ensemble repeating the gist of the first chorus of pirates and maids from earlier in the act. This chorus, two 16-bar verses with a choral coda and instrumental close, brings the act to a rousing conclusion. Figure 2 summarizes the tonal and structural design of the finale.

Figure 2. *Pirates of Penzance*, Act I Finale, Summary

1a.	Major General	Recitative, Solo	g-C-F
1b.	Tutti	Solo, Ensembles	D
	Pirate King	Recitative	D to F
2.	Tutti	Chorus of Praise	F
3.	Ruth, Tutti	Final Chorus	G

The Gondoliers

Gilbert's dramatic design for the finale of Act I—a central ensemble bracketed by solos for the two ladies—is unique in the Savoy operas. Gianetta opens the finale pleading with the Grand Inquisitor not to separate them from their spouses. Her song (Allegro moderato, 2/4, B \flat) is in two verses, each comprising a pair of breathless 16-bar periods with a 10-bar refrain in which the orchestra echoes the opening. Tonal variety is achieved by brief tonicizations of F major, B \flat minor, and D \flat major. In a brief recitative, Don Alhambra, the Grand Inquisitor, tells her that all will soon be put right and the quartet rejoices at the news.

A shift to F, Allegro con brio, ushers in the second section of the finale—a lengthy quartet in which the couples imagine the joys of being a “regular, Royal Queen.” Each of the four has a 16-bar verse, followed by a 14-bar refrain. Gianetta's and Marco's verses provide an A to a large binary form; their verses are generally triadic and largely

diatonic. Tessa and Giuseppi provide a B and B' to the design with Tessa's verse in D \flat and Giuseppi's in d, both leading to the refrain in the tonic of F. The final refrain is extended to 27 bars and is followed by an eight-bar instrumental tag bringing on the chorus.

Our two Gondoliers illustrate their joint tenancy of the throne in hocket as they alternate measures through a 20-bar duet in B \flat . The chorus reacts in total disbelief at this heresy; their *sotto voce* music shifts the key from B \flat to E \flat which remains the key for the balance of the ensuing ensemble, sufficiently important to warrant a more detailed examination.

This focal ensemble begins with a 4-bar vamp following which Marco begins with an 8-bar phrase in E \flat moving from I to V; Giuseppi responds with a similar 8-bar unit in B \flat (an almost exact repetition of the first eight, but having a different cadence). Marco continues with another 8-bar phrase in G \flat to conclude the first part of the duet. Part 2 of the duet consists of a series of 4-bar phrases in contrast to the 8-bar units of the first part. The opening now returns as the two sing together for the first time. The 8-bar phrase is extended to 10 1/2 bars, leading to the first significant tonic cadence of the duet. In the chart on Figure 3, the continuation is clearly shown.

Figure 3. Structural summary of focal duet, *The Gondoliers*

Mm: 1-4	Instrumental vamp
5-28	A (a, a', a'') E \flat , B \flat , G \flat (8-bar units)
29-44	B (a, b, a, b') E \flat (4-bar units)
45-55	A' (a extended) E \flat , first strong cadence
55-66	C1: contrasting refrain, 8+4 bar design; duet; E \flat
66-78	C2 = 55-66, chorus
79-105	BA' = 29-55, chorus
106-134	D: Choral hymn of praise
134-146	Instrumental Coda

Apart from the modulations noted during the first 24 bars of the duet, the key remains E \flat with relatively little chromaticism.

After this grand climax, our joint monarchs are ready to leave for

their island kingdom. In a brief recitative, they take leave of their wives and the dramatic circle closes as Gianetta sings to Marco and Tessa to Giuseppe, pleading with them to be faithful. Each woman in turn sings a series of twelve-syllable lines, each a single bar. These lines continue for eight bars, followed by a 5-bar closing, considerably slowed in rhythm. Gianetta's verse is in G, Tessa's in D, the latter featuring a highly chromatic melodic line. The song concludes with the quartet repeating the refrain and coming to a rest on G.

The act concludes with an Allegretto moderato ensemble in D as Giuseppe and Marco take their leave. This chorus, with incidental solo parts, opens with a main theme of two 5-bar phrases followed by a 4-bar work chant and a 4-bar conclusion on the dominant. The opening music, shortened to nine bars, brings the first section to a close. As the barcarolle-like accompaniment resumes, Marco sings a brief solo of farewell with full ensemble backing and the final chorus concludes with a repetition of the opening music, now 11 bars, thereby restoring the missing bar from prior to Marco's solo. Twelve bars of instrumental close bring down the curtain on this somewhat melancholy finale. Figure 4 summarizes the design of this finale.

Figure 4. *Gondoliers*, Act I Finale, Summary

I.	Gianetta solo, Grand Inquisitor response	B \flat
II.	Solo Quartet	F (D \flat , d)
IIIa.	Duet: Marco, Giuseppe	B \flat
IIIb.	Grand ensemble	E \flat (B \flat , G \flat)
IV.	Soli: Gianetta, Tessa	G-D-G
V.	Ensemble with soli	D

Iolanthe

This first-act finale is the longest and most complex of all the Savoy operas. There are certain dramatic surprises but no sudden plot turns. Indeed, apart from its progressive tonal design, this is a very Mozartean finale. Just prior to the finale, Strephon's suit to the Lord

Chancellor to marry Phyllis has been rejected and Iolanthe has promised her help. As the finale begins, the two are comforting each other; Phyllis and the Peers enter and overhear their conversation with predictable misunderstandings.

An 11-bar introduction in G sets a languid mood for the opening duet. Strephon sings four bars, interrupted by Phyllis's question; Mountararat replies in four bars, followed by four bars of chorus. A 2-bar bridge leads from G to B \flat where the pattern is repeated by Iolanthe and Tolloller. The section is rounded off with a 10-bar madrigal.

At this point Phyllis shows herself and in a brief impassioned phrase (*Allegro agitato*, 4/4, C minor) condemns Strephon; his explanations are greeted only by derision from the Peers. The irregularity of the phrasing—3+6+3+5 bars—underlines the agitated nature of the whole passage. At this opportune moment, the Lord Chancellor enters, accompanied by the Handelian fugato that attends him wherever he goes. His entrance initiates a polyglot discussion of the likelihood of a 17-year old woman having a 25-year old son. The music moves in irregular steps from c—E \flat —A \flat —E as the conversation continues. As the key reaches D, Strephon sings of his youth. A 16-bar period is followed by a 3 1/2 bar response by the Lord Chancellor and a 3 1/2 bar echo by the peers. A parallel 16-bar phrase by Mountararat expresses the Peer's view, continuing into the refrain and Peer's response. At the conclusion of this ensemble, Phyllis, in recitative, sends Strephon packing and offers herself to one of the Lords.

Up to this point in the finale, the music has been workmanlike but not especially memorable; the dialogue has been such that extended solo passages have not been practical. Now, however, the musical nature of the finale changes as Phyllis sings a strophic aria (*Moderato*, 6/8, B \flat). This twice 19-bar solo is followed by a 30-bar cabaletta with choral interjections. A brief choral passage leads to a short coda.

Strephon now reenters, calling for aid; the answer is immediate. The fairies and the Queen enter to the same tripping music of their first entry. A move to E \flat and a quicker tempo introduce the next section of the finale—a series of solos separated by choral responses. Strephon opens, singing agitated 2-bar phrases, interrupted by “Taradiddles”

from the Peers. The Queen and fairies support Strephon's story, but the Peers, led by the Lord Chancellor, followed by Lords Tolloller and Mountararat, argue against him. At the end, E \flat having been restored after a brief excursion to G minor, the full ensemble less Iolanthe, Strephon, and the Queen, brings this section to a close with a final unison statement of the main theme setting a text which clearly puts Strephon's case in a bad light.

It has often been noted that Sullivan's music is, in one respect at least, at odds with the late nineteenth century—its eschewal of minor. There are few extended minor passages in the Savoy operas; what follows is the longest stretch of minor in all of these works. This bubbly triple meter Allegro vivace in G minor brings us to the dramatic high point of the finale—the direct confrontation of the Lord Chancellor and the Fairy Queen. The Lord Chancellor opens the battle with a 16-bar sentence answered by the Fairies. The Queen responds with a contrasting 16-bar sentence, opening in E \flat and cadencing on V/g. Phyllis sings a dramatic 8-bar aside over a dominant pedal, following which she and the Queen join forces in typical Sullivan counterpoint. The last phrase initiates an extended coda in which the tension continues to rise as the two sides press their own points.

Now the Queen threatens the Lord Chancellor directly. Her threat takes the form of a 17-bar period in g answered by 4 bars of Peer in B \flat . The Lord Chancellor's reaction is cast in an equivalent 17+1 bar period with identical refrain. At the conclusion of this passage, the minor mode yields to Sullivan's more usual major. In recitative, accompanied by brass chords, sentence is pronounced on the Peers.

In a jaunty G, 2/2, the Queen announces that Strephon will go to Parliament and that his wishes will be law. Her song has an 8-bar verse and refrain of unusual phrase design—4+2+4+2+6 bars, the last a whispered repeat of the previous six measures. This sentence, bad enough from the Peers' point of view, is only the beginning. In a passage of melodrama, the Queen hands down the rest of her sentence: loss of several of the Peers' preferred "perks" and the opening of membership in the House of Lords to competitive examination. Her statements are accompanied by a rising chromatic bass line drifting slowly to the final key of E \flat . Following anguished cries of "oh,

horror!” from the Peers and some fairy gloating, the act closes with a jolly march-like rondo. Thus, the act ends with Strephon and the fairies in the ascendant with the Peers momentarily defeated but defiant to the end. Figure 5 provides a brief summary of this complex finale.

Figure 5. *Iolanthe*, Finale, Summary

1.	All but Lord Chancellor	G
2a.	Same	c
2b.	Same, add Lord Chancellor	c-A \flat -E \rightarrow
2c.	Strephon, Lord Chancellor, Mountararat	D
2d.	Phyllis	D-F \rightarrow B \flat
3.	Phyllis and Peers	B \flat
4a.	Strephon, Fairies	B \flat
4b.	Tutti ensemble	E \flat
5.	Tutti	g
6a.	Tutti	g (B \flat)
6b.	Queen, Celia, Leila	B \flat \rightarrow G
6c.	Queen, Chorus	G
6d.	Queen, Chorus	G \rightarrow E \flat
7.	Tutti	E \flat

Having looked into three of the finales in some detail, we shall now briefly glance at the remaining seven to complete our survey of Act I finales. Each of these finales falls somewhere along a continuum of complexity from the relatively straightforward finale of *The Gondoliers* to the musically and dramatically complex finale of *Iolanthe*.

The Sorcerer and *Princess Ida* (Act II) both have finales in which a single dramatic thread dominates. That of *The Sorcerer* is in four musical sections moving in an unbroken line from the opening to the final chorus as the love potion begins to work its spell. The finale opens with a through-composed chorus (Allegretto, 6/8, A) in which the guests move from the signing of the wedding document to a feast in honor of the lovers. A recitative by Sir Marmaduke leads to the key

of D and the “Teapot Brindisi” whose two verses are interrupted by a *sotto voce* trio. The finale continues with a brief duet by Aline and Alexis in praise of love (Andante, 3/4, G) after which the finale concludes with an ensemble (Allegretto, 2/4, B) in which the guests react to the potion, stumbling drunkenly about as the curtain falls.

Princess Ida has an Act II finale somewhat more complex than that of *The Sorcerer*, yet one in which a single plot line governs the whole. The sons of King Hildebrand have entered Castle Adamant in disguise and become a part of the women’s troop. One of the three, Hilarion, has saved Ida from drowning and for his pains is condemned to death. The opening section of the finale is in two large parts, the first of which is mostly a preliminary to Hilarion’s aria (Andante moderato, 6/8, B \flat) in which he states that he prefers death to a life without Ida. At the conclusion of the aria (a much longer set piece than common within these finales), a shift to Allegro vivace (4/4, E \flat minor) signals the arrival of the forces of King Hildebrand who, in spite of Ida’s call for defiance, breach the walls and enter the castle. A shift to G minor introduces the men’s chorus in which they tell the girls to recognize the *fait accompli* and stop their complaining; their only answer is a marvelous wailing chorus over misterioso chords in the orchestra. This section ends with the two groups in counterpoint.

King Gama’s sons, held hostage by King Hildebrand, tell Ida, their sister, that they will be killed if she does not agree to Hildebrand’s demands. This ensemble, a limping 2/4 in G, opens with Arac singing four phrases of 4+2 bars each followed by a brief trio and a trio repetition of Arac’s music. After Gama’s sons have their say, Ida and the ensemble engage in a passage of free dialogue in which she continues to defy Hildebrand’s demands. Throughout this passage, the music drifts from G minor to E \flat major, through brief sections in B minor and G minor. The act ends with a chorus in which all parties continue to voice the ideas which they have espoused throughout the finale: Ida defiant to the end, Hildebrand and his sons determined to win, the sons of Gama hopeful that Ida will yield to save them. The tonal circle closes on a last vigorous statement of “Defiance!” in the E \flat in which the finale opened.

Each of the other finales is characterized by some turn of plot,

introduction of new character, or striking event that changes the direction of the finale. While none of these finales have moments quite as striking as those Rossinian touches such as the entrance of Cenerentola or the identification of the Count in *The Barber of Seville*, comparable events in the Savoy operas have much the same effect.

Perhaps the simplest instance of this kind of plot shift occurs in the finale of *H.M.S. Pinafore*. Prior to the opening of the finale, Ralph has presented his suit to Josephine and has been rejected out of hand (albeit somewhat ambiguously). As the finale opens, he enters to tell the ensemble of Josephine's decision and his desire to end it all. Just as he is about to shoot himself, Josephine enters and stops the suicide attempt by telling all that she does love Ralph. Despair is turned into joy and the finale proceeds to the end on a high note, interrupted only in the most inconsequential way by the muttering and implied threats voiced by Dick Deadeye whose rebuff brings the finale to its climactic point just before the final choruses.

The simplicity of the dramatic line is mirrored by the character of the music. After a brief opening dialogue in E \flat , Ralph's suicide and Josephine's acceptance of Ralph take place in A \flat minor, moving to E \flat as dominant. A trio of Josephine, Cousin Hebe, and Ralph continues in A \flat (*Allegro vivace*, 4/4). Dick Deadeye provides the middle section of the trio with his warnings. The trio is repeated, joined by a continuation of Deadeye's mutterings. A \flat continues as the ensemble plots an elopement. After one final threat by Dick Deadeye, the music returns to E \flat for a dance chorus and a reiteration of Sir Joseph's madrigal from earlier in the act. The curtain falls on a scene of total happiness at the prospect of the coming marriage of Ralph and Josephine.

Patience presents a more complex dramatic situation in which not one but two significant plot twists take place. Here, as in *Pinafore*, tonal unity gives a sense of cohesion to the six sections of the finale. As the finale opens, Bunthorne enters, escorted by the lovesick maidens. His suit to Patience has been rejected and he has arranged to raffle himself off to be married. At the conclusion of the somewhat pompous procession (*Allegretto moderato*, 3/4, D) the Dragoons enter and the story of the raffle unfolds with appropriate comments by each

of the parties (4/4, G). The Dragoons plead with the ladies to return. A short choral introduction in B \flat leads to the only tenor solo in the opera, a brief Andante in E \flat sung by the Duke, responded to by the maids who only momentarily weaken. The mood is broken as Bunthorne begins the raffle (Allegro vivace, 2/2, C). As the maids all rush to buy their tickets, the Dragoons sing an insouciant chorus (Vivace, 6/8, F) in which they say that they don't care. Lady Jane is the last to buy and she is asked to pick the winning ticket (recitative, chorus, A \flat). The tonal design to this point has been a descent by fifths (D-G-C-F) with G momentarily decorated by its upper third B \flat and the keys of E \flat and A \flat acting as mid-points between the keys of G and C, and F and C, respectively.

Just as Lady Jane is about to draw, Patience bursts in and the plot takes its first twist. Patience sings a 16-bar solo (Allegro, 4/4, C) in which she accepts Bunthorne's proposal. Bunthorne's smug reaction leads to one of the melodic high points of the finale: Patience's "True love must singlehearted be" (Andante, 4/4, E \flat), sixteen bars with interjections by Bunthorne and the Dragoons. At the end of the solo, Saphir asks if the decision is final and upon learning that it is, she and the other ladies join the Dragoons for the madrigal "I hear the soft voice" (Andante con moto, 4/4, G) to bring this portion of the Finale to a quiet close.

All seems right with the world: Bunthorne has Patience, the Dragoons have been reunited with their ladies and peace reigns. But the plot now twists rather violently. Reginald Grosvenor saunters onstage; as soon as the ladies discover that he is a poet, they immediately leave the Guards and flock around him. His entrance is accompanied by a tonal shift from the G of the madrigal through a highly chromatic transition centering on A and A \flat back to G for a passage of dialogue and thence to D in which key the entire ensemble reacts in their several ways to the dramatic turn of events. The ladies are happy to have found a new focus for their estheticism; the Guards are duly upset at the ladies' responses to this interloper; Lady Jane, Bunthorne, and Patience have no idea what to make of all the furor; and the act ends with a rousing chorus of total chaos.

In this finale, note the carefully worked-out tonal arch. The finale

begins and ends in D, opening with a descending circle of fifths which, upon reaching F, returns to D by a rising pattern of fifths, in both cases using third-related keys as mid points.

In each of the Savoy operas you may be sure to find Gilbert's distinctive treatment of certain character types. Of these, one which has perhaps caused the most comment is his treatment of elderly spinsters. The entrance of the *Mikado's* version of that character, Katisha, provides the turning point for the action of the finale, and her presence colors events to the end of the opera.

As the finale approaches, Ko-Ko has been instructed to have someone beheaded within a month. Nanki-Poo is persuaded to become the "Lord High Substitute" and the finale opens with a solemn chorus (*Allegro moderato*, 4/4, G) in which this is announced. The chorus sings its congratulations, and in a brief solo Ko-Ko keeps his end of the bargain by giving Yum-Yum to Nanki-Poo. A quick shift to E \flat and an *Allegro con brio* opens the second stage of the finale, a lengthy, joyful chorus celebrating the coming wedding. The chorus has a modified strophic plan in which the first two verses are related and the third verse is a pompous solo by Pooh-Bah, complete with cadenza. Each verse is followed by a *tutti* refrain.

A dance following the final refrain is suddenly interrupted as Katisha enters demanding the help of the ensemble in returning Nanki-Poo to her. Throughout this passage, a trend toward E minor is developing, confirmed at the point where Nanki-Poo tells Yum-Yum what is happening. Katisha now addresses Nanki-Poo directly in a brief aria (*Allegro agitato*, 4/4, E minor). Her agitation is reflected in the music by a nervous accompaniment, short, irregular phrases and several mood shifts in the vocal line. The song has two verses of 25 measures each, followed by brief choral responses. Verse two, directed at and threatening Yum-Yum, is followed by a longer choral refrain by way of a coda.

Pitti Sing, completely unintimidated by Katisha, tells her to quit protesting and join in the fun for "He's [Nanki-Poo] going to marry Yum-Yum" (*Allegretto grazioso*, 6/8, E). Katisha responds in another brief aria (*Andante*, 4/4, E), followed by a lengthy passage in which she tries valiantly to tell the group of Nanki-Poo's identity; her efforts

are foiled by choral outbursts. All of this manages to build tension as the tonality drifts back to the opening key of G in which Katisha sings one final solo of vengeance. The chorus merely insists that she do whatever she wishes but that “joy reigns ev’rywhere around.” The finale closes with the ensemble expressing its joy as Katisha continues to threaten and bluster.

A similar plot shift also characterizes *Ruddigore*. As the finale opens, Robin and Rose Maybud are to be married. In a barcarolle-like opening the chorus of Bridesmaids welcomes Rose; the Bucks and Blades then welcome Robin. Both of these choruses are in C, establishing the initial tonal center. As is so often the case at static plot points, Sullivan introduces a madrigal. The present one, “When the buds are blossoming,” is the longest and one of the finest of the Savoy madrigals. A brief introduction leads to the opening solo sung by Rose (Allegretto, 4/4, G). Her three 4-bar phrases are answered by a pair of 8-bar “Fa-la” refrains and a 1-bar unaccompanied chorus. A change of accompaniment ushers in verse two sung by Dame Hannah whose verse has an irregular 14-bar format brought about by an extension of phrase two. The remainder of the madrigal reiterates the previous “Fa-la” choruses and refrain. The madrigal is followed by a Gavotte danced by the guests.

A sudden diminished seventh interrupting the dance brings on Sir Despard, and the plot twists rather violently as Robin is shown to be the rightful Baronet of Ruddigore and heir to its attendant curse. Despard’s announcement is given in recitative, leading in a round about way from G minor to G major. A conversation ensues in which Rose asks Robin to deny the charges. Robin answers that the charge is true but refuses to acknowledge that he is a BAD Baronet. Throughout this passage the music has wavered around tonally but finally settles back into G as Robin makes his explanation.

In a type of patter song (Vivace, 6/8, E \flat) the ensemble plays with the idea of being a bad Bart. This bubbly ensemble is broken as Zorah demands to know who betrayed Robin. When informed that Richard Dauntless is the guilty party, the ensemble demands death. Richard, however, explains that he has always followed the dictates of his heart and it was this that led him to make the terrible disclosure. He explains

all this in a lyric solo with choral coda (Allegretto maestoso, 3/4, B).

At the conclusion of Richard's song, Rose shows her (read: Gilbert's) true colors. Since she wants no part of a bad Bart, she offers herself to Despard (chorus of Bridesmaids). He refuses, claiming a prior commitment to Mad Margaret (Andante, E, followed by the chorus of bridesmaids, by now beginning to grow tedious). Finally, she offers herself to Richard and his acceptance triggers yet another chorus by you know who, still in E. The deed is done and the wedding can proceed, albeit with a changed cast. The finale ends with a series of solo ensembles (Allegro con spirito, 9/8, E♭), to words beginning "oh, happy the lily when kiss'd by the bee." First come Richard and Rose, then Margaret and Despard, finally Zorah, Hannah and Adam. A final brief solo by Robin in G minor leads to a last choral statement and an extended dance. The finale thus ends happily, the only sour note being Robin's total rejection by the ensemble.

In many ways *The Yeomen of the Guard*, the last of the operas being considered here, is an exception to the usual Savoy creation. Its ending is the only one to be less than joyful, and the style throughout is on a much more "operatic" level. These facts are reflected by both finales. As the first finale opens, Colonel Fairfax in his disguise as Leonard Meryll is being introduced to the Guards. After a brief orchestral introduction based on the Tower motive, the chorus sings its welcome, answered by Sergeant Meryll. Another choral welcome concludes this phase of the opening. Fairfax plays down the adulation offered by the Guards who respond properly. Thus far the music has moved in a martial 4/4 in E♭, broken only by Fairfax's recitative response.

Part one of the finale is divided into two sections, the first of which has just been described. Section two is a three-verse song interrupted by a brief recitative. In the song two Yeomen recall Meryll's deeds of derring-do with choral responses. The first two verses are quite similar: an 8-bar solo period and a 4-bar choral response. The key is A♭, moving to a strong cadence on the dominant at the end of verse two. Verse three, sung by Fairfax, is considerably longer. It opens with an 8-bar recitative, reflecting upon his recent marriage to an unknown girl, then responding to the earlier solos by

again disclaiming any desire for glory. Here the verse has been expanded from 4+4 bars to 4+6+2 and the chorus has doubled from four to eight bars. All ends solidly in A^b with orchestral cadentials and a link to part two.

Part two of the finale is a happy interlude which presents complications only in that it introduces Phoebe and Wilfred into Fairfax's life. Phoebe is Leonard's sister but is, of course, a stranger to Fairfax.

After a certain amount of prodding, Fairfax takes his cue and gives her appropriate greetings. This scene takes place in a combination of recitative and song. At the conclusion of the passage, Wilfred commends Phoebe to the care of Fairfax (i.e., Leonard) and the scene concludes with an ensemble "To thy fraternal care." This ensemble (*Allegro non troppo*, 6/8, C) opens with Wilfred singing a passage with highly irregular phrasing. In both his verse and Phoebe's answering verse set to the same music, there is a sense of hesitancy finely expressed by the irregularity of phrasing and halting vocal lines. Both verses end with an 18-bar refrain in the text "She (I) shall not quit thy sight from morn to afternoon." The last eight bars of the refrain are echoed by the Yeomen. Fairfax's verse, set to contrasting music, has a similar character and phrase structure. His verse is followed by a similar refrain and choral echo leading, through a somber deceptive cadence, into the last of the three parts of the finale.

At this moment, a bell begins to toll, announcing the impending execution of the prisoner, Colonel Fairfax himself. In a solemn procession (*Andante*, 4/4, C minor) the chorus enters, followed by the headsman. The chorus intones a dirge over a repetition of the funeral march, ending with a prayer for mercy. At the conclusion of the march, Elsie offers her own prayer, and the chorus concludes the first section of the final scene with another cry for mercy, now in C major.

Now the plot takes an unusual but not unexpected turn. In a nice bit of dramatic irony, Fairfax has been put in charge of the detail to bring himself as prisoner to Tower Green. In a sudden shift to *Allegro agitato*, 2/2, G minor, the guard rushes in with the news that the prisoner has escaped. After the initial breathless reporting of the news with appropriate crowd reactions, Fairfax and the guards settle down

to tell their story in a constant stream of eighth-notes broken only once by the ladies' voices.

The Lieutenant immediately places the blame for the escape on Wilfred (accurately as it happens, although he does know this at the time). Wilfred reacts in recitative, pleading that rather than set Fairfax free, he would sooner see him—a rival for the affections of Phoebe—dead. A modulation to G initiates a passage of dialogue between the various characters as each offers his or her thoughts about the events. Jack Point, who feels himself betrothed to Elsie and who was not overjoyed at her wedding to Fairfax, now realizes that with Fairfax free the earlier bargain is null and void and that Elsie is truly married. He sings his own anguished verse, reflecting the music of the guard's report. The act ends with the full ensemble singing "All frenzies with despair they rave / The grave is cheated of its due." A reward has been offered for the capture of Fairfax and after a final shout of "Alive or dead" in C major, the curtain falls as the crown disperses and Elsie lies fainting in the arms of Fairfax, her unknown and unknowing husband.

Second Act Finales

If Act I finales present various levels of musical and dramatic complexity, those of last acts tend to be simple to the point of often being only brief recapitulations of music heard at various stages of the opera, almost invariably with new text. To illustrate the simplicity of the majority of these finales, a brief summary of *Trial by Jury* and eight others follows.

Trial by Jury, the only one-act Savoy opera, is concerned with a breach of promise suit. After spending the entire opera trying to solve the problem, the Judge cuts the knot by offering to marry the plaintiff himself. The finale recapitulates a portion of the song in which the Judge introduced himself. The brief closing brings the opera to a satisfactory finish.

The Sorcerer ends with a finale of 128 bars, divided into three sections. In the first, J. W. Wells receives and accepts punishment for

doing his job; in the second, the couples mixed up after the administration of the love potion return to their rightful partners. Finally, the opera ends with a return of the chorus “Now to the banquet we press” which opened the first-act finale. This finale is one of three that are in the same key as the overture, providing a Mozartean tonal closure to the opera.

H.M.S. Pinafore has a 146-bar finale divided into five sections, each of which recapitulates earlier music: “oh joy, oh rapture” (Act I finale), “I am the Captain of the Pinafore,” “I’m called little Buttercup,” “I am the Monarch of the sea” (each of these are Act I entrances of the characters involved), and “He is an Englishman” (the only return of Act II music). The finale presents a tonal flow from A \flat to C to F, none of which are significant in the opera as opening or closing keys.

The case of *The Pirates of Penzance* is somewhat more complicated. Two different finales exist, both of which are made up entirely of earlier music. The usual finale consists of an extended return of Mabel’s “Poor wandering one” from Act I. The alternate finale, used in the New York premier and also in the Joseph Papp New York production, uses a modified version of the Major General’s song from Act I with appropriate verses to bring all cast members together in proper pairings. This finale also ends with Mabel’s song. The first of these finales is in A \flat throughout; keys in the alternate finale are E \flat and A \flat .

Patience is the second of the three operas showing tonal closure between overture and Act II finale, in this case E \flat . This finale is only 64 bars long and consists entirely of the recapitulation of a portion of the quintet “In that case unprecedented” from earlier in Act II. The longest of the simple finales is that of *Iolanthe*, which also had the longest first-act finale. This comprises 150 measures and is a return of two of the three verses of “He who shies” from Act II with an extended choral refrain.

By contrast, the shortest of the finales is that of *Princess Ida*. Its third-act finale of only 58 bars returns a portion of the song “Expressive glances” from the first act finale. Since there are three acts in this opera, the finale of the first act should be mentioned here.

This finale revolves around an attempt by the sons of King Hildebrand to gain entrance to Castle Adamant. There are three sections, the first of which is a strophic song with choral refrain in which the two kings encourage their sons to act politely. Part two is the response by the sons of Hildebrand that “expressive glances” shall be their weapons in the coming conflict. The finale ends with the sons of King Gama being taken off to prison and bemoaning the fact that this is a “poor outlook for a soldier stout.” The three sections are in the keys of G, E, and C, a somewhat unusual key progression for Sullivan who tends to favor subdominant key relations for his finales.

The Mikado’s last finale is 105 measures long, in the overture key of E \flat . It returns two of the songs from the Act I finale: “He’s going to marry Yum-Yum” and “The threatened clouds have passed away.” *Ruddigore* is another case of two finales. The one printed in the Chappel vocal score consists only of a return of “Oh happy the lily” and a concluding dance. This finale was the one used in the revival of the opera in 1920. The original finale, much longer, is based on new music and allows each of the characters to present final thoughts, much in the manner of the vaudeville that closes Mozart’s *Don Giovanni*. This finale ends with a duple-meter version of the same music as the shorter version, thus giving us a single case where both acts end with the same music in the same key.

There is a common dramatic situation immediately prior to the finales of the nine operas just discussed. In each case all of the plot threads have been gathered together, all problems solved, and couples happily paired off. What remains is only to bring the music to a satisfactory close, and this is done by simple return of appropriate music from earlier in the opera. Such is not the case with either *The Gondoliers* or *The Yeomen of the Guard*. In both cases significant plot lines are left unresolved to be worked out during the finale. The two operas take quite different routes to the final close, reflecting in both music and text the contrasting resolutions of the plots.

The Gondoliers revolves around the identity of the King of Barataria, and the solution to this mystery governs the direction of the finale. Sullivan has indicated in the music that the last number is a “Quintet and Finale.” Since there is no break between the two

sections, we shall consider the finale to begin with the quintet. In the quintet “Here is a fix unprecedented” (Molto vivace, 6/8, D \flat with a middle section in E), the Gondoliers and their wives along with Cassilda (who still thinks herself married to one of the two) try to work out the arithmetic of three wives divided between two husbands. At the conclusion of the quintet, four unison D \flat 's are followed by a sudden diminished seventh chord and a march-like Allegro vivace in C which brings on the full cast to begin the denouement. Don Alhambra announces that the king's foster mother has been found and will soon tell all who the real king is. The announcement, still in C, is followed by an excited passage generally in F minor in which the characters express their anxieties. Finally, Inez, the foster mother, tells the long awaited news: the true king is neither Marco nor Giuseppe, but Luiz.

This news is greeted as one might expect. Cassilda, long in love with Luiz and not at all happy about being married to someone else, is overjoyed. Our gondoliers and their wives, after a bit of initial sadness at seeing their chances at royalty vanish, realize that being able to resume their interrupted marriages is worth that small loss. All of these comments, as well as those of the Duke and Duchess and chorus, close the tonal circle of D \flat opened by the quintet.

The act closes, Allegro con brio, with returns of earlier music beginning with “We're called Gondoliere” from Act I interwoven with the Cachuca from Act II. Interestingly enough, after all the tendency toward D \flat in the finale to this point, the act closes in F, the opposite mode of the key in which the happy news of Luiz's kingship was announced. This reflection makes the final key somewhat less surprising.

The dramatic situation in *The Yeomen of the Guard* is more complicated. It would seem at first glance that all the plot lines had been worked out before the finale. The couples have been united and the finale opens with the approaching marriage of Elsie Maynard to “Leonard Meryll.” We hear first a bridal chorus sung by the women (Andante grazioso, 9/8, F). This is followed by a madrigal for Elsie, Phoebe, and Dame Carruthers (the latter two soon to be brides themselves) with a fourth bass voice in the orchestra. After a brief choral response, the atmosphere suddenly changes as the Lieutenant

announces that Elsie's original husband, Colonel Fairfax, is alive and has come to claim her as his bride. In keeping with the character of the announcement, the music shifts to C, and in a section marked "un poco meno mosso ed agitato" first Elsie then all assembled voice their shock and amazement at this turn of events.

As the ensemble repeats its refrain "Day of terror! day of tears!" Fairfax enters to make his demand. Elsie, in recitative, begs him to give up his claim. When he refuses, she calls pleadingly for Leonard (Andante, 4/4, D \flat). Then, in a brief turn to A, she yields, however unwillingly, to Fairfax's demands. It has to be noted that even though both Elsie and Fairfax are on stage, she has not to this point seen him. Now she recognizes that Fairfax and her Leonard are one and the same, and all break forth in a chorus of joy (Allegro vivace, 4/4, D).

The only unhappy person present is Jack Point whom all seem to have forgotten. Since he only agreed to the first wedding under the assurances that Fairfax would be put to death and since he has followed Elsie's courtship by "Leonard" with less than great joy, he is more than a little upset. His entrance initiates the conclusion of the finale, a recapitulation of "I have a song to sing, O!" from his Act I entrance. His lines are interrupted by affective choral responses as he pleads eloquently to Elsie in the only way that seems natural to him. As the ensemble repeats its sustained "Heighdy!" Fairfax and Elsie embrace as Jack Point falls senseless.

At this point we return to our original question. What were the structural and tonal models which Sullivan had to follow in the construction of his finales. We will grant at once that the poetic designs of William Gilbert play a large role. Still, the musical designs of the finales are as they are in spite of the design of the poetry. Three models might be proposed. The first of these should be Mozart. The tightly constructed finales of his operas, especially his comic masterpieces, would seem to be a logical place to begin. These finales are typically built around a sonata design and are characterized by a number of sections unified by a closed tonal design. Five of the opera's first act finales are closed tonally, but none show any significant influence of sonata design on their construction. Three of the operas

have act two finales that end in the key of the overture, but this is of little significance since many of the overtures are medleys of tunes from the operas compiled by others. In short, Mozart seems unlikely to have been the chief source of structural inspiration.

In Italian opera of the early nineteenth century, the most important successor to Mozart was probably Gioachino Rossini. It is known that Sullivan knew Rossini and admired his works. And we can see some Rossinian features in Sullivan's act one finales. The sectioning and pacing, the introduction of plot twists causing the direction of the finale to shift drastically—these are traits of Rossini operas also found, in one degree or another, in half of the Savoy operas.

Closer to Sullivan's own time we find a composer whose influence on these operas is almost inevitable: Jacques Offenbach. There is no reason to suspect that Sullivan was ignorant of these works, and the character of last act finales especially, is more characteristic of Offenbach than of any other important opera composer of the time.

We must at last conclude that the designs of these finales are uniquely Sullivan's own, but that they are imbued with strong elements of both Rossini and Offenbach. This mixture of elements has left us an unmatched legacy in the realm of comic opera.