

BYU

STUDIES

A Multidisciplinary
Latter-day Saint
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Mozart with the Order of the Knight of the Golden Spur (Mozart mit dem Orden des Ritters vom Goldenen Sporn). Artist unknown, 1777. Original oil painting located at the Conservatorium, Bologna, Italy. In 1770, Pope Clement XIV conferred on W. A. Mozart (1756–1791) a papal knighthood, and the fourteen-year-old became a Knight of the Order of the Golden Spur. In the same year, Mozart was examined and admitted to the prestigious Accademia Filarmonica of Bologna, although he was not yet twenty, the minimum age of membership.

Preface

Paul E. Kerry, Guest Editor

The multidisciplinary appeal and what Goethe called the “generative force”¹ of Mozart’s opera *The Magic Flute* (*Die Zauberflöte*, 1791) is abundantly evident in the diversity of perspectives represented in this special issue of *BYU Studies*: anthropology, art history, comparative literature, the classical tradition, Egyptology, English, German, history, management studies, law, music, religion, theater and media studies, and vocal performance.

Each of these articles offers fresh views from BYU faculty and other scholars on *The Magic Flute*. The many images from archives spanning Vienna, Munich, Weimar, Berlin, London and elsewhere are themselves a visual testament to the many interpretations that this opera has inspired, as well as the diverse sources that scholars turn to for insights into *Die Zauberflöte*. Of course, no single volume can exhaust the possible approaches to this opera. Adding to the broad corpus of literature about this classic, this issue of *BYU Studies* reflects the scholarly expertise and interests of its contributors. Following Hans-Wilhelm Kelling’s chronology of Mozart’s life and times, the articles group into four sections: introductory essays and then analyses of themes, characters, and receptions.

Introductory Essays

Gideon Burton’s essay describes how the operatic tradition, and in particular Mozart, have helped to shape the cultural production and imagination of Latter-day Saints. As he argues, LDS history and doctrine creates culturally specific readings of this opera while at the same time the opera opens up new perspectives on crucial topics of LDS interests and identity. Kaye Hanson recalls her ambivalent attitudes towards opera growing up in a small Utah town as she considers the enthusiasm her grandchildren show

when she exposes them in family settings to *The Magic Flute*. Lawrence Vincent shares his thoughts on performing the role of Tamino with the world-renowned Wiener Staatsoper, the Vienna State Opera.

Themes

Alan Keele finds in the opera an aesthetic search for meaning, and he locates striking parallels to LDS doctrines such as eternal marriage and the apotheosizing potential of divine love. John Fowles asserts that *The Magic Flute* can be read as an allegory of life's journey, a common theme found in eighteenth-century German thought, and he examines this pattern in light of Latter-day Saint teachings about the plan of salvation. Paul Kerry's study takes a historical approach and analyzes how the opera was informed by and contributed to eighteenth-century Masonic and Enlightenment discourses. It was during the eighteenth century that popular and scholarly interest in "the Orient" began to soar and *The Magic Flute* was a part of this cultural trend. Kerry Muhlestein places *The Magic Flute* in the context of European fascination with Egypt during this time. John Gee comments on the Egyptian ritual motifs in the opera and traces their probable mediated origins to classical sources that drew on ancient Egyptian ones.

Characters

The Magic Flute is memorable not least owing to the range of characters that Mozart and his librettist Schikaneder created and that have become familiar names to opera goers. Michael Evenden senses in the figure of the high priest Sarastro the trap that religious leaders can fall into when they succumb to pride, but as a dramaturg he also sees the liberating possibilities of humility and repentance available to Sarastro and, by extension, to all. David Crandall situates the opera's construction of Monostatos within the typical European stereotypes prevalent in the popular culture of the day, but also detects an ethical lesson embedded in the characterization of the Moor. Victoria Webb reads against the grain to call into question the prevalent view that the Queen of the Night is deceptive and power-hungry by considering her relationship to Pamina and seeing the Queen as a hurt, discouraged, and betrayed mother who cannot understand her daughter's choices. And in a richly illustrated article, Harrison Powley considers the magical instruments in the opera—the magic flute and magic bells—and examines the kinds of instruments that Mozart and Schikaneder might have chosen to represent them, reminding readers that these instruments were not afterthoughts, but integral to the expression of the opera's meanings.



W. A. Mozart manuscript (Mus.ms.autogr. W. A. Mozart 620). This is an original manuscript of one of *The Magic Flute*'s best known and spectacular arias, no. 14, the Queen of the Night's "Der Hölle Rache kocht in meinem Herzen" (The wrath of hell seethes in my heart). © Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin–Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Musikabteilung mit Mendelssohn-Archiv.

Reception

One of Mozart's contemporaries, and perhaps the only composer to vie with him in popular esteem, Ludwig van Beethoven, praised *The Magic Flute*, and many well-known individuals in fields from science to literature have continued to laud it. In some instances, the opera has influenced the creative work of great intellects. Indeed, no less a figure than Johann Wolfgang von Goethe sought to write a sequel to it. Robert McFarland's article analyzes how Goethe's unfinished sequel to *The Magic Flute* contributed to the modern articulation of model gender and family identities. The acclaimed Jewish artist Marc Chagall said, "For me there is nothing that approaches those two perfections, *The Magic Flute*, and the *Bible*," and this sentiment serves as the introduction to Philipp Malzl's study of Chagall's

artistic interpretation of *The Magic Flute* in a neglected but evocative poster. Next, Dean Duncan reminds readers that operas are designed to be performed and reinterpreted for future generations, and he uses Ingmar Bergman's film version of *The Magic Flute* (*Trollflöjten*, 1974) as a case study of just such a rejuvenation of the opera. No exploration of *The Magic Flute* would be complete without a word on the opera as a vocal performance. Aaron Dalton explains why Deutsche Grammophon's 1964 Karl Böhm production of *The Magic Flute* remains a perennial favorite.

The final recitative in *The Magic Flute* contains the famous words of Sarastro: "The rays of the sun dispel the night" (Die Strahlen der Sonne vertreiben die Nacht) (2.30). A conceit of scholars is that they see themselves as directing light on dark places. Yet the very processes of criticism that help reveal meaning can prevent us having an authentic experience with the work of art itself. These articles may enhance one's experience of the opera but do not pretend to replace it.

As George Steiner suggests, "Everything we recognize as being of compelling stature in literature, art, music is of a religious inspiration or reference," and "Music and the metaphysical, in the root sense of that term, music and religious feeling, have been virtually inseparable."² A work of art worthy of that name will always say to us, "Change your life."³ Thus, *The Magic Flute* helps us to see ourselves and our circumstances in a new light—as with all great art, the study of this opera is a "summons. . . . The shorthand image is that of an Annunciation, of a 'terrible beauty' or gravity breaking into the small house of our cautionary being. If we have heard rightly the wing-beat and provocation of that visit, the house is no longer habitable in quite the same way as it was before. A mastering intrusion has shifted the light."⁴

As guest editor, I thank each of the many contributors, peer reviewers, and members of the *BYU Studies* editorial team who have made this special issue possible.

1. *Mozartiana. Two Centuries of Notes, Quotes and Anecdotes about Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart*, collected and illustrated by Joseph Solman (London: Macmillan, 1991), 86.

2. George Steiner, *Real Presences* (London: Faber and Faber, 1991), 216.

3. Steiner, *Real Presences*, 142.

4. Steiner, *Real Presences*, 143.

A Chronology of Mozart and His Times

Hans-Wilhelm Kelling

1756 Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart is born on January 17 in a flat located at what is now Getreidegasse 9 in Salzburg, Austria.

Leopold Mozart, the father of Wolfgang, publishes his *Violin Method*.

This year sees the commencement of the Seven Year War. When it ends in 1763, Prussia has defeated Austria, France, and Russia and has become the strongest military power in Europe.

1757 Domenico Scarlatti, the well-known Baroque Italian composer, dies in Madrid.

1759 Georg Friedrich Händel, composer of *Messiah*, dies in London on April 14. Mozart, who admired Händel's compositions, performs several of them at the age of eight for King George III of England in 1764.

Friedrich Schiller, Germany's foremost dramatist (*Don Carlos*, *Wallenstein*, *Maria Stuart*, *Wilhelm Tell*), who lectures and writes on history at the University of Jena (*History of the Revolt of the Netherlands*, *History of the Thirty Years' War*), is born. He publishes *On the*



Aesthetic Education of Man in a Series of Letters, a key philosophical text, in 1795.

Adam Smith publishes *Theory of Moral Sentiments*.

- 1760** King George II of England dies, and his grandson, George III, assumes the throne. During George III's reign, the American Revolutionary War leads to the independence of the United States in 1783.

Oliver Goldsmith publishes *Citizen of the World*.

Laurence Sterne publishes parts of *Tristram Shandy*.

In London, the Botanical Gardens in Kew are opened.

Josiah Wedgwood founds his pottery works in Staffordshire, England.

- 1761** Franz Joseph Haydn (1732–1809), the “father of the symphony” who composes over 100 symphonies and 83 string quartets in his lifetime, is appointed Kapellmeister to Prince Esterhazy in Eisenstadt near Vienna. About 1790 he moves to Vienna. Mozart acknowledges Haydn's formative influence. Haydn calls Mozart the greatest composer known to him.

- 1762** In January, Leopold Mozart takes his son and daughter (Nannerl, 1751–1829) to perform before the Bavarian Elector in Munich.

In October, the children perform at the Schönbrunn Palace in Vienna before Empress Maria Theresa (1717–1780). Six-year-old Wolfgang jumps on her lap and kisses her. She receives Mozart several more times but does not promote his career.

The Sorbonne Library opens in Paris.

Jean Jacques Rousseau's *Social Contract* is published.

Christoph Willibald Gluck's opera *Orfeo and Euridice* premieres.

- 1763** The Mozart family travels and performs in Frankfurt, Munich, Brussels, Paris, and London.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832), Germany's foremost author and thinker, attends a concert given by the children in Frankfurt. Toward the end of his life he still remembers the little Mozart “with his wig and sword.” Goethe admires Mozart, and under Goethe's direction 280 performances of Mozart's operas are performed in Weimar. Mozart's most famous song, *Das Veilchen*, is based on Goethe's text.

The Seven Year War ends in Europe, and France relinquishes its colonial claims in North America to Great Britain, which now claims Canada and all territory east of the Mississippi.



Approximation of Europe during the 1780s. The Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation was a conglomeration of kingdoms and principalities (which at times changed) in central Europe that existed from medieval times until 1806. For hundreds of years, it was ruled by the elected Hapsburg emperors in Vienna and functioned as a kind of confederation. The powerful archbishops of Salzburg were also princes in the Empire.

Treatise on Tolerance, by Voltaire (1694–1778), a key figure in Enlightenment thinking, is published.

1764 In April the Mozart children perform for King George III; their performance includes compositions by Händel. During these early journeys, Mozart meets many composers, musicians, and singers at the various courts and attends concerts, operas, and performances of religious music. For example, in 1764 Mozart meets Johann Christian Bach (1735–1782), son of Johann Sebastian Bach.

Cesare Beccaria publishes *On Crimes and Punishments*.

J. J. Winckelmann publishes *History of Ancient Art*.

Brown University is founded in the American colonies.



Salzburg, birthplace of Mozart, shown from the Kapuzinerberg, Austro-Hungarian Empire, photograph ca. 1890–1900. Salzburg has always been the gateway to the Alps. In the venerable city center, on the right, are the magnificent Baroque cathedral (one of the largest north of the Alps), the Palace of the Prince Archbishop, and the University of Salzburg.

1765 The Mozart family leaves London for the Netherlands, where the children become seriously ill.

Joseph II (1741–1790), son of Maria Theresa, is crowned Holy Roman Emperor and becomes co-regent with his mother. He appoints Mozart Court Composer in 1787.

1766 Jean-Honoré Fragonard paints *The Swing*.

Adam Ferguson publishes *Essay on the History of Civil Society*.

1767 Christoph Willibald Gluck's opera *Alceste* premieres.

1769 Mozart travels to Italy, where he is celebrated everywhere. On October 27, he is appointed Konzertmeister at the Salzburg court on an honorary basis.

Napoleon is born on August 15 in Corsica. He crowns himself Emperor of France and defeats Austria in 1806. He is defeated at Waterloo in 1815 and dies in exile in 1821.

William Robertson's *History of Charles V* is published; *History of America* will be published in 1771.

- 1770** Pope Clement XIV confers on Mozart the Order of the Golden Spur. Mozart directs his opera *Mitridate, Re di Ponto* in Milan on December 26. It is a great success and is repeated twenty times. Ludwig van Beethoven is born in Bonn; he dies in Vienna in 1827.
- 1771** The first edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* is published. Benjamin West paints *The Death of Wolfe*. Jean-Antoine Houdon sculpts *Diderot*; in 1785 he will create a sculpture of George Washington. On July 12, Joseph Smith Sr. is born in Topsfield, Massachusetts.
- 1772** Mozart is formally appointed Konzertmeister in Salzburg at an annual salary of 150 gulden. Johann Gottfried von Herder publishes *On the Origin of Speech*; in 1791 he publishes his influential *Ideas on the Philosophy of History of Humanity*. He publishes his *Volksliedsammlung*, a collection of folk songs; many of these are set to music by German Romantic composers.



Bridge over the Salzach River, Salzburg, Austro-Hungarian Empire, photograph ca. 1890–1900.

- 1773** Mozart composes the Salzburg Symphonies.
The Boston Tea Party leads to controversy between Great Britain and the American colonies.
- 1774** *Die Leiden des Jungen Werther*, Goethe's first novel, causes a sensation in Europe. During this time he is also working on *Faust*. As Director of the Court Theater in Weimar from 1791 to 1817, he will have *The Magic Flute* performed eighty-nine times. In 1795 he will begin to work on a *Magic Flute* sequel, which he will never complete.
The First Continental Congress convenes on September 26 with representatives from twelve of the thirteen American colonies.
- 1775** Mozart completes five violin concertos, which are still regularly performed today.
The American War of Independence begins at Lexington and Concord, Massachusetts.
Lucy Mack, Joseph Smith's mother, is born on July 8, 1775, in Gilsom, New Hampshire. She marries Joseph Smith Sr. on January 24, 1796.
- 1776** In July, Mozart's Haffner Serenade is performed in Salzburg. Mozart also composes several piano concertos.
On July 4, representatives of the Second Continental Congress approve the Declaration of Independence, primarily authored by Thomas Jefferson.
David Hume (born 1711), known for ideas of philosophical empiricism, skepticism, and natural religion, dies in Edinburgh, Scotland.
- 1777** Mozart completes the significant Piano Concerto in E-flat Major.



Courtesy Library of Congress

Mozart monument, Vienna, Austro-Hungarian Empire. This monument is today found in the center of Vienna, in the gardens of the Hofburg (Imperial Palace). Mozart is here portrayed at the height of his power, as a secular saint who stands sovereign over the musical instruments laid at his feet.

1778 In March, Mozart and his mother travel to Paris, where the composer unsuccessfully seeks employment. He composes his Symphony in D Major.

On July 3, Maria Anna Walburga, née Pertl, Mozart's mother, passes away. She was born in 1720.

1779 Mozart is appointed Cathedral Organist in Salzburg at an annual salary of 450 gulden.

Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729–1781), the famous German author of the Enlightenment, publishes his drama *Nathan der Weise*, a model for religious tolerance.

1780 In Salzburg, Mozart meets Emanuel Schikaneder (1751–1812), who later provides the libretto for *The Magic Flute*.

Empress Maria Theresa dies, and her son Joseph II becomes sole ruler of the Hapsburg possessions. He carries out major social reforms, among them the emancipation of the serfs, the abolition of feudalism, and the promotion of religious toleration.

Christoph Martin Wieland (1733–1813) publishes the epic poem *Oberon*.

1781 In January, Mozart's opera *Idomeneo* is first performed in Munich. This year is a major turning point in Mozart's life. He is outraged by the Archbishop of Salzburg's treatment of him, desires to become independent, and moves to Vienna.

Mozart enjoys composing and giving concerts in Vienna. In July the very successful premiere of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (*The Abduction from the Seraglio*) takes place, and the opera is repeated several times.

On August 4, Wolfgang marries Constanze Weber (1762–1842). It is a happy marriage, and Constanze bears six children, only two of whom live to adulthood.

Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) publishes his *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, proclaiming the limitations of rational knowledge.



Courtesy Hagen Haltern

Kant, by Hagen Haltern. The German Enlightenment is often associated with Immanuel Kant's famous philosophical treatises. But another one of its achievements, through Lessing, Goethe, Schiller, Mozart, and others, was an aesthetic synthesis of European Enlightenment principles, such as is found in *The Magic Flute*.



Courtesy Library of Congress

The grand staircase of the Vienna State Opera House, where Mozart's works are regularly performed today. Photograph ca. 1890–1900.

In Vienna, the Holy Roman Emperor of the Germanic Nation, Joseph II, grants a patent for religious toleration throughout the Hapsburg lands.

- 1783** Mozart's son Raimund Leopold is born in June but dies on August 19. In Linz, Mozart composes the Linz Symphony.
Moses Mendelssohn publishes *Jerusalem*, a plea for religious toleration.
France, England, and the United States of America sign a peace treaty ending the American Revolutionary War.
- 1784** Mozart's son Carl Thomas is born. As an adult, Carl Thomas moves to Milan and dies there in 1858.
On December 14, Mozart is admitted as Apprentice into the Masonic Order. On January 7, 1785, he passes as Fellow Craft Mason and later is raised to Master Mason.
Mozart becomes acquainted with Ignaz von Born, a well-known Master Mason and Imperial Counselor of Mints and Mines in Vienna. Von Born's article *Ueber die Mysterien der Aegyptier*, which was published in the Masonic periodical *Journal für Freymaurer*, is believed to be the inspiration for important aspects of *The Magic Flute*. Ignaz von Born is thought to be the model for the wise Sarastro.
John Wesley creates the charter of Wesleyan Methodism.
- 1785** In April, Mozart's cantata *Die Maurerfreude* is performed in honor of Ignaz von Born, and in November the *Maurerische Trauermusik* is played in honor of the Masonic Order.
Jacques Louis David paints *Oath of the Horatii*.
- 1786** On May 1, *Le Nozze di Figaro* (*The Marriage of Figaro*) is performed in Vienna.
Mozart's son Thomas Leopold is born but dies in infancy.
Frederick the Great, King of Prussia, dies on August 17.
Joshua Reynolds paints *The Duchess of Devonshire*.
- 1787** Mozart is celebrated in Prague, where he watches performances of his *Figaro*. Mozart writes his Prague Symphony.
Mozart composes *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*.
On May 28, Mozart's father dies in Salzburg.
Mozart is appointed Chamber Musician at a salary of 800 gulden annually.

On December 27, Mozart's daughter Theresia Constanzia is born. She dies six months later.

Beethoven comes to Vienna for the first time.

Wilhelm Tischbein paints *Goethe in the Roman Campagna*.

In the United States, the Constitutional Convention convenes.

- 1788** The premiere of Mozart's *Don Giovanni* is held on May 7 in Vienna. During the summer, Mozart completes his last three symphonies. Mozart's financial problems increase.

- 1789** Mozart travels to Berlin and plays before the King of Prussia at the royal palace.

On November 16, Mozart's daughter Anna Maria is born but dies the same day.

With the storming of the Bastille on July 14, the French Revolution begins, ending the French monarchy and establishing a republic. Marie Antoinette (1755–1793, daughter of Austrian Empress Maria Theresa) and her husband, Louis XVI, King of France, are guillotined in 1793.

George Washington is inaugurated as the first president of the United States.

William Blake publishes *Songs of Innocence*.

- 1790** Mozart's *Così fan tutte* premieres in Vienna. Mozart attends a farewell concert for Joseph Haydn, who departs for London. Benjamin Franklin (born 1706), perhaps the most popular American in prominent European circles of his time, dies on April 17 in Philadelphia. Franklin was also the inventor of the "glass armonica," a musical instrument popular for a time in Europe and for which Mozart composed music including his "Adagio and Rondo," composed in May 1791.

- 1791** Mozart's final concert appearance occurs on March 4. On July 26, Mozart's last son, Franz Xaver Wolfgang, is born. Mozart receives the commission for the *Requiem* from a supposedly unnamed person who is believed, however, to have been Count Walsegg-Stuppach. On September 30, the premiere performance of Mozart's *The Magic Flute* takes place in Vienna.



Distinguished Masons of the Revolution. George Washington and other prominent men of the American Revolution were Freemasons, as were prominent Europeans of the Enlightenment, such as Mozart, Goethe, and Lessing.

In late November, Mozart falls seriously ill. From his sickbed, together with friends, he rehearses parts of the *Requiem* and instructs the composer Franz Süssmayr to finish the work.

On December 5, Mozart dies at the age of 35. His wife, Constanze, who survives her husband by 51 years, receives a modest pension from the Austrian emperor and makes do by selling many of Mozart's manuscripts.

On December 15, the Bill of Rights becomes part of the United States Constitution.

C. G. Langhaus completes work on the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin.

1802 Brigham Young is born on June 1 in Whitingham, Vermont.

1803 Robert Livingstone and James Monroe sign the Louisiana Purchase in Paris on April 30. Napoleon sells this tract of land—larger in area than England, France, Germany, Spain, Portugal, and Italy combined—for \$15 million to help fund his military campaigns.

1805 Friedrich Schiller dies in Weimar.
Joseph Smith is born in Sharon, Vermont, on December 23.

1809 Constanze remarries; she moves to Copenhagen and later to Salzburg.

1842 Constanze dies. On September 4, 1842, six months after her death, a statue of Mozart is unveiled in Salzburg. Mozart's two surviving sons, Carl Thomas and Franz Xaver Wolfgang, are present. Mozart's Mass in C Major and his *Requiem* are performed in the Salzburg Cathedral.

On April 21 in Vienna, another statue of Mozart is unveiled. It now stands in the center of the city. The *Köchel Verzeichnis* of Mozart's works lists 626 compositions: 22 operas and dramatic works, 56 pieces of church music, 36 songs, 53 symphonies and instrumental works, 60 concertos, and numerous sonatas, choral and orchestral works, and many other compositions.



This statue stands in Mozartplatz, Salzburg, in honor of the city's most famous native.

Courtesy/John W. Welch

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Mormons, Opera, and Mozart

Gideon O. Burton

One of the world's great operatic works, *The Magic Flute* is the subject of this issue of *BYU Studies*, which presents a variety of perspectives from scholars and performers who have enjoyed and explored Mozart's masterpiece both critically and personally. It may seem unusual for *BYU Studies* to devote so much attention to a single operatic work, but opera is itself an inclusive art form, inviting the very sort of interdisciplinary study to which this periodical is committed.

While this opera has pleased diverse audiences from well before the beginnings of Mormonism, Latter-day Saint points of view open up the work in interesting ways. For example, Latter-day Saint doctrines help to highlight certain themes salient in *The Magic Flute* (such as the marital union of man and woman), and Mormon history shares some common cultural moments with thematic elements in the opera (such as parts of Freemasonry). Because of their history, doctrine, and sensibilities, Latter-day Saints respond to this opera uniquely, and the encounter brings something new to an established masterpiece. At the same time, this reflection reveals something back to Latter-day Saints about who they are and how their culture responds to great art: we read *The Magic Flute*, and *The Magic Flute* reads us.

There is a longstanding Mormon tradition of studying, appreciating, and encouraging the musical and dramatic arts. From the nineteenth century that tradition has specifically included opera. Even amid the persecutions and relocations of early Mormon history, Latter-day Saints devoted themselves to building theaters and opera houses, and to filling them with local and visiting performers. In Nauvoo the Seventies Hall served as a

venue for musical theater productions, and soon after the Mormons' arrival in the Great Basin many buildings specially constructed for theater and opera were erected, from the famous Salt Lake Theater to Provo's first opera house, Cluff Hall (built in 1857), to Logan's Thatcher Opera House, to Ogden's Grand Opera House (1890), to the far-flung opera house in Manassa, Colorado (1911). Even small towns such as Beaver, Utah, could brag of having an opera house (fig. 1).

These theaters were often the venue for socials, community meetings, dancing, and non-operatic theater, but opera proper was also taken seriously in Mormon culture. At the turn of the twentieth century, the first Mormon opera company was founded by siblings Emma Lucy Gates and Cecil Gates, grandchildren of Brigham Young. The Emma Lucy Gates Opera Company featured its namesake in leading roles, and Cecil conducted the orchestra.¹ This company staged operas for several seasons in the Salt Lake Theater, such as the performance in 1915 of *Camille*, which was praised from the pulpit during general conference by President Seymour B. Young of the First Council of Seventy and held up by Elder Richard R. Lyman at a later general conference as a model of an earlier generation that had played well their part "in this great work."²

Indeed, the performance and patronage of opera has been a point of distinction in Mormon culture down to the present day. Elder Thomas E. McKay took time during the General Conference in 1943 to point out that an unnamed Church member in Paris, "a young lady, is singing leading opera roles in France and Switzerland."³ Her name was not so important as the fact that Latter-day Saints were playing significant roles in the world of European opera. In 1947, Metropolitan Opera singers were announced as a significant component of the centennial pioneer celebration. Commissioned for the same occasion was the opera-pageant *The Promised Valley* by Crawford Gates, "depicting through song and pageantry the history of the pioneers as told or experienced in the imagination of the author and musician through the people who made the trek."⁴ Though more of a folk musical than a serious operatic work, this production nevertheless demonstrated to generations of those who saw this perennial favorite that the Mormon past was given dignity when expressed through formal narrative singing. In a more serious vein, Leroy Robertson's *Book of Mormon Oratorio* (1953) represented a high point in Mormon musical development. Its recorded performance was published broadly, and productions of it continue to this day.

Collectively, these are modest efforts, of course. Mormons have not established an extensive tradition of composing or staging original operas. But many talented opera singers of the faith have achieved national and



Courtesy Kaye Terry Hanson

Fig. 1. The Opera House in Beaver, Utah.

international renown. Emma Lucy Gates “was the first Mormon artist to hit the ‘big time,’ performing throughout Europe and America and appearing with the Berlin State Opera.”⁵ Tenor Glade Peterson “thrilled European opera audiences, where he [was] the Zurich Opera’s leading tenor for nearly ten years.” He sang in most major European opera houses, including the Munich Opera House, the San Francisco Opera, the Salzburg Festival, and “Santa Fe’s prestigious season,” and he was the first Mormon to star at La Scala, in Milan. Peterson was “the Church’s male counterpart to Emma Lucy Gates.”⁶ Baritone Roy Samuelsen, who makes his home at Indiana University’s opera center, sang the part of Sarastro in a production of *The Magic Flute*. Lawrence P. Vincent (who provides in this issue a memoir of singing in *The Magic Flute*) spent much of his career as a tenor before audiences in Vienna (fig. 2). Ariel Bybee, mezzo soprano, has sung at the most significant venues and in the best roles. Her nearly two-decade career at the Metropolitan Opera has kept her among the best-known and best-loved American opera singers of the late twentieth century. Bybee, who has most recently been teaching at the Lee Strasberg Institute and the American Musical and Dramatic Academy, joins such musicians as Clayne W. Robinson, director of opera at Brigham Young University for twenty years, in the



Fig. 2. The Vienna Opera House, as seen c. 1890. In his essay on pages 36–40 in this issue, tenor Lawrence P. Vincent describes performing the role of Tamino in *The Magic Flute* at this venue.

effort to train future professional singers. They follow a long tradition of Mormons teaching the appreciation of music in general and of opera in particular. Another well-known Mormon singer who sustains this sort of cultural commitment to opera is Michael Ballam, who in working to promote the Utah Opera Company and musical education for children has appealed to Mormon leaders' statements anticipating great artistic achievement among Latter-day Saints.

Opera represents a high point of Western cultural achievement, and so it has been natural for the Latter-day Saints, so intent upon refinement, education, and artistic development, to appreciate this multifaceted art form. In recent years operatic selections have been featured in Mormon Tabernacle Choir recordings: "The Lord Victorious" from *Cavalleria Rusticana*, "Hail, Bright Abode" from *Tannhäuser*, "Triumphal Scene" from *Aida*, and the popular "Anvil Chorus" from Verdi's *Il Trovatore*. But well before such recordings, the careers of famous opera singers were often noted in the pages of the *Contributor*, the *Improvement Era*, and Latter-day Saint newspapers. These performers were held up as models of refinement

for the Young Men's and Young Women's Mutual Improvement Associations, and there is evidence that the attention given to opera did indeed whet the Mormon musical appetite. The loftiest achievements of the world's musicians have taken their place in the Latter-day Saint imagination, being gradually grafted into Latter-day Saint cultural ambitions during the nineteenth century. An 1882 article in the *Contributor* is telling in this regard. "The Musician's Dream" dramatizes a daydreaming musician:

Thoughts of our present musical state—what it *is* and what it *might be*—filled his mind, and he murmured to himself, why have *we* no Handels, or Mozarts. . . . The musical art must be planted and nourished before noble champions like the great ones of Germany, past and present, can spring up. We must first become a musical people in very deed, not only lovers of it, but practical workers.⁷

The anonymous author goes on to fantasize a future in which accomplished renderings of Mozart and other masters will be celebrated but then eventually yield to the strains of original compositions by Latter-day Saints, equally soul stirring. Connecting this distant ambition to the present, the dreamer foresees this evolution of musical accomplishment taking place by means of the choirs of the YMMIA and the ongoing studied appreciation of past masters.

Mozart, in particular, has served Latter-day Saints as a benchmark of musical achievement. As Mormons have organized their educational and cultural institutions, Mozart has been held up as a paragon for their future success. Michael Hicks, historian of Mormon music, explains:

As part of his dream to have the Saints bring their treasures to Zion from throughout the world—and especially from Europe—[Brigham] Young directed James Smithies to oversee a new "Deseret Philharmonic Society" in 1855. This association would "promote the love and study of harmony throughout the Territory," especially the harmony of sacred choral music. The society's secretary, Jonathan Grimshaw, sent out a call to converts coming to Deseret that "we are much in want of the Oratorios of Handel, Haydn, Mendelssohn, etc.; the Masses of Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven, etc., and new works of merit."⁸

Latter-day Saints did indeed come to enjoy these musical forms and to appreciate Mozart and his fellow composers. In a paeon to German culture at the beginning of his April 1950 general conference address, Elder Levi Edgar Young declared that "German music particularly has been of enduring joy to us, for in this very Tabernacle where we are assembled, the creations of Bach, Mozart, Wagner, Haydn, and the oratorios and operas of Handel have been heard with deep appreciation of the masters."⁹ Indeed, Mozart's works have not only been performed during cultural presentations in central Church venues, but anthems and solos by Mozart have been performed

during general conferences, including “Alleluia” from the motet “Exsultate, Jubilate”; “Gloria”; and “Jesu, Word of God.”

Among musical masters admired by Latter-day Saints, Mozart has a long and varied presence, figuring into Mormon thinking and the Latter-day Saint experience on many levels. “Though in the Outward Church Below,” long a part of Mormon hymnody, kept Mozart’s lilting tune an ongoing part of Latter-day Saint worship.¹⁰ Other works by Mozart have been included in German and French Mormon hymn books.¹¹ In Church periodicals, Mozart’s life and childhood have been discussed and dramatized in order to model to the youth of Zion the possibilities of great achievement by those who are young and even to exemplify the God-given faculty of memory.¹²

Most commonly, Mormons have made direct connections between the inspirational nature of classical music (in its effects or in its origins) and the inspired nature of their own faith. In a 1991 *Church News* editorial, Michael Ballam reported compiling a list of the works “considered by the world as great classics, such as Beethoven’s ‘9th Symphony,’ Brahms’s ‘Requiem,’ Bach’s ‘St. Matthew Passion,’ and Mozart’s ‘Magic Flute.’” Ballam noted that these important pieces of inspiring music were “either written or discovered within 50 years of the target date of 1830,” the date of the organization of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.¹³ Regardless of the specific choices in his listing, it is culturally noteworthy that Ballam associated these celebrated musical achievements of the world’s artists with that historical time period during which Mormons believe the heavens opened wide for the latter days. To a church that believes firmly and centrally in divine revelation, it is not hyperbole to speak of inspired music.

In a similar vein, Latter-day Saint author Karl C. Sandberg sees in Mozart’s mode of composition a parallel to the inspired translating methods used by Joseph Smith: “Mozart often found appearing in his mind whole musical ideas, which he then worked into their orchestrated form. When he wrote them down, he appeared to be taking dictation from the muse.”¹⁴

Mormon belief that music plays an inspirational role akin to revelation was eloquently expressed by B. H. Roberts, who said that “a Mozart, a Beethoven, or a Handel, . . . may . . . call out from the silence those melodies and the richer harmonies that lift the soul out of its present narrow prison house and give it fellowship for a season with the Gods.”¹⁵ The alignment of divine inspiration with great music is as old as Orpheus, of course, but in Mozart, Latter-day Saints have found resonances particular to their own vision of evolving human potential and their own story about how God’s gifts—whether scriptural or musical—have come and still come to his children.

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Courtesy Kaye Terry Hanson

The author's grandchildren listen while she tells them the story of *The Magic Flute*. The author recounted the opera's story to her grandchildren for the first time during a family vacation to the beach. As the music and the author's narration ended, the children clamored for her to tell the story again.

A Magic Summer with *The Magic Flute*

Kaye Terry Hanson

My granddaughter, Sadie, is nearly four. She and I drive to California in my car to spend a week in a rented house at the beach with extended family. Her parents and two brothers follow in another car. With Sadie buckled in her car seat behind me, I look for ways to entertain her as I drive. “Want to hear a story about a princess?” I ask. Of course she does. I slip my newly purchased CD of *The Magic Flute* into the car stereo system and begin. “A prince wanders into an unknown land where a scary monster snake lives. When the prince sees the snake, he is so scared that he faints. Three mysterious women kill the snake and tell their queen about the handsome prince.” I look in the rear-view mirror and see that Sadie is hooked. “Then what happens?” she asks.

“A funny man named Papageno, dressed all in feathers, finds the prince just as he wakes up. The prince sees the dead snake and asks who killed it, and Papageno lies and says that he did. The three mysterious women hear Papageno lie about the snake and punish him by putting a lock on his mouth.” I look at Sadie in the mirror. “Listen, Sadie, here’s how Papageno sings with a lock on his mouth.” I punch the CD forward, and Papageno hums, “Hm, hm, hm, hm. . . .” Sadie laughs out loud and begs me to play that part over and over again. I do, and I wonder at the understanding of a little girl. I would never have known a story about an opera when I was a child.



In our small southern Utah town, opera was laughed at. Never mind that our pioneer ancestors had built a fine structure named The Opera

House. Never mind that every Christmas the Beaver Second Ward presented a full-voiced, full-blown, and probably perfectly respectable production of Handel's *Messiah*. Never mind that most of us took piano lessons and learned our quota of piano pieces written by Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms. Opera was silly. Everybody knew that. It was weird, long, and most of all, too hard to understand. So we didn't understand it. We made fun of it, and none of us knew anybody who didn't.

How is it that such a beginning could lead to my learning to enjoy opera today—often listening to it as the music of choice on a long car trip—or to my teaching and sharing opera stories with my grandchildren?



In Las Vegas, Sadie climbs into her parents' car, and her brother Zachary buckles in behind me. Encouraged by Sadie's interest in *The Magic Flute* story, I also tell it to Zachie, who is six. Zachie has a natural affinity for music—he always has—and he responds delightedly to the vocal gymnastics of the dark queen.



Two periods in my life were important in my learning about opera. Following my freshman year at Brigham Young University, I returned to my old job as a summer lifeguard at the Beaver Municipal Pool. The new manager had just finished his first year as the music teacher at the high school. He loved music, of course, and had an elaborate (for those days) stereophonic record player with gigantic speakers and a wonderful collection of classical long-playing records—including opera scores—that he willingly shared. As we listened, he would say, "Notice how the violins sound like they're weeping" or "Hear the triumph in the trumpets here?" or "This passage means that the lovers are parting."

I was receiving an intense course in music appreciation. And, miracle of miracles, I began to love the music because I understood. By the time I graduated from the university, I had begun to understand some other things about the performing arts. I had discovered the theater department, developed an ear and a heart for Shakespeare, and learned that several of my friends at school had arrived there loving classical music, classical theater, and—to my surprise—opera! Why, I wondered, didn't they grow up thinking opera was laughable?



On our last leg of the journey, McKay, who is barely twenty-two months old, is buckled in behind me. Conversation about *The Magic Flute*

is limited, especially on his side, but I play the music anyway and talk to him about good and bad and light and dark and happy and sad. I have no idea what he understands, but he “dances” happily to the music and responds to my smiles and questions of “Do you like it?” with toothy grins of his own.



The second important period in my “learning about opera” life began the summer following my graduation from BYU. I was called on a mission to southern Germany, surely one of the most beautiful places on earth for the eye and the ear. In the midst of the quaint, unsophisticated cobblestone streets and feather beds airing from upper-story windows, I was amazed to discover that each German town with more than about fifty thousand inhabitants supported a professional symphony, a professional theater, a professional ballet company, and, often, a professional opera company. Such government support and community attendance was unheard of where I came from. In time, behind the doors we knocked on, we met and talked with members of those professional companies in several cities. We shared our love for the gospel of Jesus Christ with them, and they shared their love for fine music and theater with us.

And the classical music in Germany was not limited to professional performers. I was surprised to find a Mozart hymn in our Sunday *Gesangsbuch* entitled “Noch warten, Herr, in deinem Reich.” I was even more surprised to find the same hymn in our English hymnal with the title “Though in the Outward Church Below.” It was years before I discovered that the music is from *The Magic Flute*.

In those days, our mission president encouraged us on “Diversion Days” to lose ourselves in things German, so several times we chose operas, plays, or ballets to enrich our mastery of the German language and our understanding of German culture. Our whole district, at the insistence of a young music-major elder, once attended Weber’s *Der Freischütz* and learned that there was a difference between German opera and Italian opera. *How did that young elder come by his knowledge of opera so early?* I wondered. Eventually it dawned on me that children learn what they’re exposed to.



We arrive at the beach and settle in for our week of sun, sand, and sea. Two other grandchildren, Olle, who is four, and Leif, who is two, arrive. Encouraged by Zachie’s and Sadie’s reactions when I had them captive in

my car, I catch Olle and Leif up on the story and continue. “Sarastro, the king, tells the prince and Papageno that they will have to withstand three trials to prove they are worthy of the princess. Their first trial is one of silence. Papageno struggles with it; it’s too hard to be quiet.” The cousins look at one another. They know how hard it is to be quiet.

Still, these children are veterans of *Star Wars*, *Harry Potter*, and *Spy Kids*. They know about heroes, and they are not surprised when I tell them that Tamino keeps silent. All five children huddle by me on the beach house couch. The music plays from the CD player as we finish the story together. “As the prince plays on his magic flute, he and Pamina walk bravely through the fire and the water together. They have passed all the tests. The end.” The children sit still for a moment then clamor, “Tell it again, tell it again!” So I do.

Then I realize that the children’s parents, my own grown children and their spouses, are lingering in the background to hear the storytelling, too. I hear the fathers whistling arias from Mozart’s music, and I hear the mothers humming along.



I remember three ways my children became acquainted with fine music. First, since I had learned that children don’t make fun of things they are familiar with, I played classical music for my babies to hear. Second, when we went through a time of great personal sadness and heartache together, I read in the scriptures that David played music to soothe the troubled Saul. I experienced that same soothing. Third, when it came time for music lessons for my daughter, she expressed an interest in violin. I signed her up for the Suzuki method, complete with tapes that played as she went to sleep. Those tapes blessed all our lives. In short, both of my children responded to, embraced, and enjoyed classical music. They still do.



We play *The Magic Flute* all week at the beach. Periodically, I repeat something similar to what my music-teacher friend used to say to me: “Here is where the Three Ladies slay the monster snake” or “Listen to how the prince falls in love with the picture of the princess” or “Hear how angry the Queen of the Night is when she finds out that her plan to destroy Sarastro, the King of Light, won’t work.”



Our week at the beach is long ended. I have since heard that parents in Vienna take their children to *The Magic Flute* to introduce them to opera the way we take our children to *The Nutcracker* to introduce them to ballet, and I look for a nearby production to share with my grandchildren. At the library, I find an out-of-print children's book of the opera. When we're together, the children often ask for the story again. Sometimes when we read bedtime stories together, they choose this one, and sometimes when we talk about right and wrong or dark and light, I remind them of the magic kingdom where a prince proved his worth by passing hard tests. As they grow, I will explain other elements of the opera in more depth, but for now, it is enough to remember the magic summer when we all shared *The Magic Flute*.

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Lawrence P. Vincent as Tamino and Ildiko Raimondi as Pamina, in a Vienna Volksoper performance of *The Magic Flute*, 1995. Here Tamino and Pamina sing a duet just before Tamino begins his trials.

A Performer's Reflections on *Die Zauberflöte*

Lawrence P. Vincent

Singing the heroic tenor roles in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, *Entführung aus dem Serail*, *Così fan Tutte*, and *Die Zauberflöte* has been a richly rewarding and an extremely challenging experience for me. Few composers require such a masterful vocal technique, and even fewer understand the delicate marriage of vocal line to orchestral accompaniment. Using only those instruments that are absolutely necessary, Mozart weaves a frustratingly transparent orchestral fabric. With every phrase and nuance, he exposes the strengths and weaknesses of the human voice.

Even among Mozart's operatic masterworks, *Die Zauberflöte* is a unique composition. In combining a fairy-tale adventure with the seriousness of the ceremonial vows taken by the hero and heroine, Tamino and Pamina, Mozart demands a wide spectrum of emotional responses from performers. In addition to these vocal and emotional demands, *Die Zauberflöte* is one of the few operas in which singers must have some command of the German language because spoken dialogue is included.

My first encounter with *Die Zauberflöte* occurred in the beginning years of my undergraduate study. While learning the famous tenor aria "Dies Bildnis ist bezaubernd schön" ("This Image Is Enchantingly Beautiful"), I had a glimpse of, but little understanding for, the genius of Mozart. But with each passing year, my respect for the encompassing mastery of this composer is magnified.

One of the facets of this mastery is his uncanny ability to compose "musical" stage directions. In recitatives (sung monologue or dialogue), ensembles, and arias, these musical cues can help an astute performer bet-

ter understand when certain movements should take place and what these movements should be. Some subtle, others very obvious, all are built directly into the rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic underpinnings of each musical episode. One very obvious musical stage direction is found in the opening measures of act 1, scene 1, when the sixteenth-note motive in the strings suggests Tamino's attempt to escape the evil serpent. One also hears Tamino shooting an arrow as the serpent approaches in measure 13. Such ingenious compositional tools enable an alert and sensitive performer to determine exactly how, musically and dramatically, every phrase of the opera should be interpreted.

Although I have performed the role of Tamino many times, the most exciting and memorable performance was, by far, in Die Wiener Staatsoper (the Vienna State Opera). The thrill of performing with world-class singers accompanied by the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra in one of the world's most renowned opera houses is unforgettable. As I sat in my dressing room listening intently to the overture, knowing that Tamino had the first aria of the entire opera, my heart raced wildly. Viennese audiences are hard to please and are great connoisseurs of Mozart. *How appropriate*, I thought, *that Tamino's first words are "Help me!"*

Every seasoned performer has stories of stage mishaps and close calls. Because *Die Zauberflöte* is a fairy tale, the sets, costumes, and props can be as fantastic or outrageous as the stage designer's imagination. One such prop in my Vienna performance was a huge, dragonlike snake, mechanized and programmed to charge poor Tamino during the "Zu Hilfe!" ("Help Me!") aria. The large mouth opened, revealing a tube from which smoke and a monstrous roar would emanate. At this point in the opera, Tamino, overcome with fear, would pass out as he fell prey to this monster. Then, three mysterious ladies would come to his aid and kill the snake. As they thrust in their spears, the snake was supposed to break into three parts. With such a complicated mechanism, it was no wonder that things went, more often than not, slightly awry.

Each night, "Tamino vs. the snake" became the favorite sporting event of stagehands, prompter, and hidden members of the ensemble. Sometimes the snake would make a horrific entrance and then, for no apparent reason, remain motionless in the middle of the stage like a big, friendly dog. Tamino, trying to sustain the illusion of excitement and fear, would have to run twice as hard and fast to convince the audience that indeed, this was a life-threatening piece of wood on wheels. Other times, the bottom jaw would drop and swing back and forth like a rusty gate in the wind.

My personal favorite was the “spontaneous combustion” variation. Before Tamino could even pass out, the snake would explode into three pieces, making the subsequent rescue superfluous. As Tamino, I had a difficult time maintaining any semblance of unconsciousness while laughing convulsively.

In the United States, one rarely (if ever) hears snatches from operas being sung or whistled on the streets. Foreign to our ears, operas such as *Die Zauberflöte* are commonly known and widely appreciated in Europe. Many times as a performer I would watch with amazement as stagehands mouthed the words to each aria. At a very early age, children are taught the music and story of *Die Zauberflöte*. It is not uncommon to hear adults and children alike humming these melodies on the street as if they were “pop” tunes.

With reference to this early familiarity with Mozart, a very sweet and amusing story comes to mind. In the ten years we spent in Vienna, one of the only times I was able to actually sit with my wife in the audience was during a performance of *Die Zauberflöte*. In act 3, the comic figure Papageno makes a mock attempt at suicide. Just as the singer slipped the noose around his neck and melodramatically began counting, “One, two, two-and-a-half, two-and-three-quarters . . .,” a totally smitten five-year-old’s voice rang out from the second balcony, “NO!” The singer broke character, and the whole house exploded with laughter and applause. Mozart has this effect on young and old, singer and instrumentalist, conductor and stagehand.

These anecdotes are amusing to recount and even more interesting to have experienced. However, it is the moments of true spiritual fusion between character and Latter-day Saint performer that make singing the role of Tamino unlike singing any other role. His quest for truth in the face of very convincing counterfeits is ours. His struggle with choosing between momentary satisfaction and long-term reward is also a resonant theme in our lives. And finally, in subduing all things earthly (even the elements), Tamino is permitted to assume his rightful place with Sarastro and Pamina. To be a literal instrument in the creation and metamorphosis of such a noble character through music such as Mozart’s is extremely humbling. The circle of creation is complete as this instrument is acted upon and undergoes a like metamorphosis. By the end of each performance as Tamino, my spiritual resolve is strengthened. As an actor, I have been acted upon.

The incomparable beauty and scope of Mozart’s lasting musical creations are testimony to his transcendent genius. Whether walking the streets

in the city where he lived, composed, and died or performing his works in historic halls and opera houses, one can see, feel, and hear Mozart's enduring presence. To do him justice in performance becomes the elusive challenge of every aspiring and mature singer.

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Toward an Anthropology of Apotheosis in Mozart's *Magic Flute*

A Demonstration of the Artistic Universality and
Vitality of Certain “Peculiar” Latter-day Saint Doctrines

Alan F. Keele

It seems there are certain notions held by Latter-day Saints, deviating almost diametrically from those promulgated by orthodox Christianity, that have the power to evoke from certain conservative Christian quarters the most vituperative fulminations. One thinks immediately of the idea expounded by Joseph Smith at King Follett's funeral¹ that humans have the potential to become gods through a process of perfection experienced by the gods themselves. The orthodox response to this notion in the form of the *Godmakers*² films and other manifestations of righteous indignation has been extraordinary. The paradox, however, is this: Scratch the orthodox surface of Christianity, explore at any depth occidental thought, especially the aesthetic search for ontological meaning in the arts, and you will find this and other related “Mormon” ideas in surprising abundance and unsurpassed persuasive power.

This paradox was brought into focus for me some years ago through a conference paper given by the late Ernst Benz, Professor of Church History at the University of Marburg. In his essay, “Der Mensch als *imago dei*” (Man as the Image of God), Benz traces the notion of the identity of humans and gods from the earliest times to the present day, observing that the concept of apotheosis—man becoming god—was once a widely held idea in the ancient world until it was forced underground by the doctrines of Augustine, that former, gnostic follower of the Persian dualistic prophet Mani, both of whom seemed nearly obsessed with the evil nature of all mortals, beginning with our conception in sin.

After Augustine, however, our now-heterodox and heretical idea that humans and gods are ontologically identical did not perish from the minds

of humans but continued to manifest itself from time to time: for example, in the German medieval mystics such as Meister Eckehart, Tauler, and Suso, whose *unio mystica* with God proved to them man's and God's essential ontological identity; in Jacob Böhme; in the Baroque poets such as Angelius Silesius; in the *Four Books on True Christianity* by Johann Arndt; and in the German Romantic nature-philosophy of Hegel and Schelling.

Professor Benz writes:

The mystical comprehension of the idea of *Imago Dei*, of the self-portrayal of God in man through the procreation and birth of the Son in man, leads directly, in the last analysis, to the concept of the apotheosis of man. This concept disappeared from church doctrine in the fifth and sixth centuries . . . but it always remained alive in the tradition of Christian mysticism by virtue of the continuity of the mystical experience. Yet European believers who dared to speak about apotheosis in the Christian sense of the renewal of God's image in man are not to be discussed here but rather the representatives of an American Church, which—based on the experiences and doctrines of its visionary founder—has made the idea of deification the very foundation of its anthropology, its concept of the community, even its social structure: the Mormon Church.³

Benz continues:

It is unknown what spiritual tradition provided Joseph Smith (who as the son of a simple settler in Sharon, Vermont, grew up under the difficult conditions of colonization) with his new understanding of God. As a boy he heard the revival-sermons of various preachers from various sects who came among the settlers. But what is characteristic about his religious development is precisely that he obeyed the angelic warning to join none of the existing sects, but to prepare himself for the imminent revelation of the eternal gospel whose herald he himself was to be. Today, historians of Christian theology might presume that he picked up by accident some half-understood bits of Schelling's idea of theogony, the idea of a God who evolves himself in his creation, who grows with it and in it becomes more and more aware of himself—but among the settlers of the Wild West there was no such possibility.

And so the complete reinterpretation which the founder of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints makes of the orthodox Christian view of God is all the more surprising.⁴

My encounter with Ernst Benz's thinking was paradigmatic for me: since then I have kept my eyes open—somewhat more haphazardly than systematically—for heterodox ideas in the arts that correspond to those commonly regarded as unique to Mormonism. One of the most interesting and most important of these is found in *The Magic Flute*, Mozart's last opera, composed in the year of his untimely death, 1791.

Supposed Problems with the Libretto Examined

Since its premiere over two centuries ago, *The Magic Flute* has been defamed⁵ as resoundingly for Emanuel Schikaneder's⁶ wretched libretto as belauded for Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's glorious score. And though it was for many years and remains today one of the most-oft performed works in the world's opera repertory, for all its *musical* appeal it seemed one of the least likely monuments of German culture ever to be taken seriously as a *literary* and *philosophical* text, judging by the dismissive comments of the libretto's many detractors.

This problem has been further perpetuated by the practice of omitting in most live performances as well as in recordings of the opera large portions of the spoken dialogue of this supposedly inferior text, presumably also because such omissions save time and space on recording media such as discs and tape.⁷

The bias against the libretto was in nowise diminished by the Peter Shaffer play and Milos Forman film *Amadeus*, where Emanuel Schikaneder is seen as half charlatan, half clown, a Viennese P. T. Barnum whose ribald productions in his Theater auf der Wieden (Theater in Wieden, a Vienna suburb) descended to the level of sausages being pulled from the rear-end of a papier-mâché horse.

It should be obvious, however, that Shaffer and Forman's gimmick was to show the world from the standpoint of Mozart's supposed rival Salieri in his insane asylum: certainly his distorted view of Schikaneder is intended to be no more objective or historical than his psychotic view of Mozart as an unworthy, puerile twit, portrayed by a cackling Tom Hulce wearing a halloween fright wig.

The *Amadeus* play and film further obscure reality by omitting entirely the fact that Mozart and Schikaneder were Freemasons, serious and respectable brothers of the lodge, and that they intended *The Magic Flute* to be an artistic reflection of their deepest-held religious and humanistic beliefs, not mere buffoonery.

Ironically, however, its very Masonic connections may have also contributed to the disrepute into which the libretto immediately fell. The opera appeared at a time when Masonry in Austria was experiencing a sharp decline as the result of allegations it and even more exotic secret societies—such as the Rosicrucians, the Asiatische Brüder (Asiatic Brethren), and the Fratres de Cruce (Brethren of the Cross)—were serving, at least potentially, as hotbeds of anti-monarchical, Jacobin insurrection—especially in the more far-flung areas of the Hapsburg realm where the Emperor felt less secure about his power.⁸

In mid-December 1785, almost exactly one year after Mozart joined the lodge Zur Wohltätigkeit (Charity), an Imperial decree (the Freimaurerpatent [Freemasonic Edict] of Emperor Joseph II) strictly controlling such societies appeared. The edict was like a bolt out of the blue, since many of the mainstream Masons in Vienna viewed themselves as strong supporters of Joseph II's enlightened, if sometimes overwrought, reforms.

Within a year, the number of Masons in Vienna declined from as many as eight hundred down to as few as one hundred. And though the numbers rebounded slightly with the ensuing reorganizations of the lodge structure, after the death of Joseph II in 1790 and that of his brother and successor Leopold II two years later, under Joseph's reactionary nephew Emperor Franz II, Freemasonry in Austria essentially ceased to exist. Thus the libretto of *The Magic Flute* and its esoteric Freemasonic elements were left vulnerable to misunderstanding and derision.⁹ Mozart, of course, who remained a Mason until the end of his life, died on December 5, 1791, just two months after the premiere of the opera, and was thus prevented from having said or written something that could have corrected any misunderstandings.

Not quite everyone immediately savaged the opera's libretto, however: *The Magic Flute* as literature appealed strongly to no less a writer than Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, who saw the Weimar performance in early 1794. A year later he commenced writing a sequel to *The Magic Flute*, two acts of which were completed before the project was abandoned around 1798.¹⁰ Though it goes beyond the scope of this study, I believe that part two of Goethe's great masterpiece, *Faust*, became his virtual sequel to *The Magic Flute*, inheriting much of its essential thematic and mythical material. It is not an accident that Goethe, too, was a Freemason who would have resonated to the Masonic references rather than have been confused or repulsed by them.

One important argument in favor of the libretto is that Mozart himself quite possibly had a great deal to do with the construction of the libretto: it does seem to show throughout a Mozartian level of architectonic and aesthetic sophistication,¹¹ indicating that Mozart and Schikaneder might very well have worked together on the libretto as a team. In any case, as we will see, the libretto is in fact a sophisticated verbal complex, highly structured and powerfully mythopoetic.¹²

Emboldened by the possibility that Mozart himself played an important role in the creation of the libretto as well as the music, and by Goethe's respect for it as a literary text, I also argue that *The Magic Flute* is an important juncture of streams of German culture, both confluence and fountain-head of the supernal subject we are following. Into it flowed mythic examinations of the meaning of life from as far away and as long ago as

ancient Egypt. Out of it flow ideas as timely as the absolute equality and nobility of all genders, races, and classes; the bonding in a holy temple of a man and a woman into an eternal monad; love as the eternal prime mover; the perfectibility of society and the possibility of apotheosis; as well as other themes that exercised a powerful influence not only on Goethe but indeed on two full centuries of German culture. (Latter-day Saint readers will, of course, immediately recognize these as major ideas informing the revelations to Joseph Smith as well.)

A Sophisticated Libretto Demands a Careful Reading

Let us turn now to the opera itself and to some specific questions about the libretto: One conventional view is that the plot and the characters of *The Magic Flute* suffered from a shift in the middle of the drama, a shift that allegedly occurred after Mozart had already composed the lion's share of the music. The Queen of the Night, who had started out as a good character, and Sarastro, who started out as a bad one, suddenly change roles.¹³

An explanation commonly advanced for this shift is that in June 1791, five months before the premiere of *Die Zauberflöte* on September 30, a competing Viennese house, Das Theater in der Leopoldstadt, began producing an opera entitled *Kaspar der Fagottist oder die Zauberzither* (Caspar the Bassoonist or the Magic Zither). According to this version of the story, Mozart and his libretto-writing team decided half way through the opera to turn their plot upside down, in order not to appear to have borrowed from their competitors.¹⁴ It is not clear how such a change would have prevented the appearance of appropriation, and, if this explanation were viable, one wonders why the libretto team did not drop the remarkably similar title as well!

In my view, the plot, rather than being simply broken in the middle, was intended as a sophisticated symbolic vehicle, carefully crafted from start to finish as a lesson in epistemology, or what is commonly known in German as *Sein und Schein* (Reality and Appearance), an exercise in learning to see through appearances and in learning to examine premises and assumptions. In short, the first part of the opera is an intentional deception, which certain protagonists are invited to penetrate and debunk. And just as some protagonists of the opera learn to question allegations, innuendo, circumstantial evidence, rumor, and other manifestations of apparent truth, members of the audience are invited by the opera to participate in the same epistemological exercise, whereby they learn to discover the true *Sein* beneath the deceptive *Schein*. (Such an investigation into truth and falsehood presented in the form of a cosmic drama with audience participation can be compared with the Latter-day Saint temple rite.)

A Review of the Plot and Characters Commences

As the curtain rises, we see a prince named Tamino being pursued by a serpent, a fitting mythical creature, since we shall later have reason to view Tamino as an Adam figure.¹⁵ His quiver of arrows for his bow empty, and unable to elude the snake, he calls upon the merciful gods to save him, then he falls unconscious:

Help! Help! Otherwise I am lost,
chosen as the victim of the cunning serpent.
Merciful gods! It's already closing in!
O save me! O protect me!

Three ladies-in-waiting of the Sternflammende Königin (Starflaming Queen), otherwise known as Königin der Nacht (Queen of the Night), dispatch the monster with their silver javelins. Smitten by the gentle and handsome appearance of the unconscious prince, a heated argument ensues over which of the ladies should remain with him and which should go report his presence to the Queen (fig. 1). Finally, not trusting any one of their number to be alone with him, all three reluctantly depart (1.1).

When the prince awakens, he sees a curious character named Papageno approaching, a simple soul who makes his living catching birds for the Queen and her Three Ladies, and whose feathered costume makes him look as much like a bird as a man. (Even Papageno's name bears a certain resemblance to the German word for parrot: *Papagei*.) In his aria he explains how adept he is at catching birds but expresses his desire to have a net for girls, whom he would catch for himself by the dozens, locking them up in cages until he decided which one was his favorite. He would barter for some sugar for her and then make her his wife (1.2).

Frightened of Tamino, and to keep him at a distance, Papageno claims to have the power of a giant. Therefore Tamino thinks it must have been Papageno who slew the serpent. Suddenly catching a glimpse of the dead snake, in a comedy of mock heroics, a terrified Papageno takes credit for killing it, whereupon the Three Ladies reappear and hang a lock upon his mouth as a punishment for lying (1.3).

Then the ladies reveal to Tamino that Pamina, the daughter of their queen, is the prisoner of an evil sorcerer named Sarastro, who has kidnapped Pamina from her mother's arms. When Tamino sees Pamina's picture, which he describes as a divine image, the prince feels his heart burning with what can only be love, and he sings of his longing for an eternal union with her (fig. 2): "Oh, if I could only find her! . . . Full of rapture I would press her to my warm bosom, and then she would be mine eternally" (1.4–5).

Now the Queen herself appears and commissions Tamino to rescue her daughter, promising him that Pamina will, in fact, be his eternally if he



Courtesy Duane Morris Photography

Fig. 1. The Three Ladies admire an unconscious Tamino, Portland [Oregon] Opera performance of *The Magic Flute*, 1996–1997. The Three Ladies' admiration of Tamino's beauty soon turns into heated argument over who will remain with the handsome youth while the others go to fetch their mistress, the Queen of the Night.

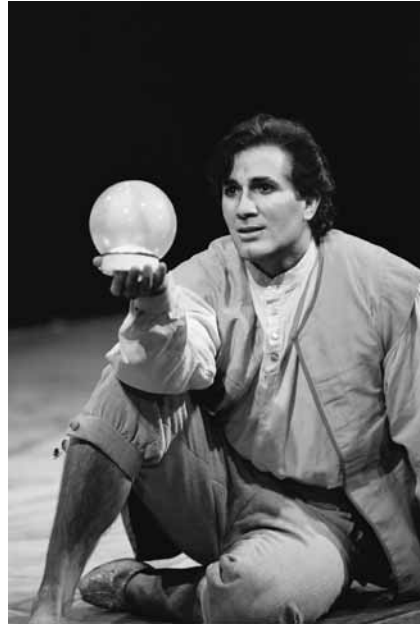
succeeds. The hapless Papageno will have to go along as his companion. The pair are to be guided to Sarastro's fortress by three rather angelic young boys (also described as being beautiful, sweet, and wise), who will hover around them on their journey—they are often portrayed as traveling in a kind of hot-air balloon—and the pair will be further protected by two magical musical instruments, a flute and a set of bells (1.6 and 8).¹⁶

So far, the Three Ladies and their queen have presented themselves to Tamino, to Papageno, and to the audience as paragons of virtue, whereas Sarastro, a despicable sorcerer and kidnapper, is the paragon of evil. Circumstantial evidence seems to support their claims: in addition to killing the evil snake and saving Tamino, the ladies perform other apparently moral acts such as placing the lock on Papageno's mouth when he attempts to take credit for killing the serpent. They editorialize that the world would be a better place if all people had a lock placed on their mouths whenever they told a lie (1.7).

It might be well to recall, however, that in many literary works—one thinks of Shakespeare—it is often the worst villains or disreputable characters who spout the most moralistic bromides, those one-liners one hears quoted in sermons: “Who steals my purse steals trash,” “To thine ownself be true.”¹⁷ In the midst of all this moralizing it is also easy to overlook the fact that while Tamino was unconscious, the Three Ladies dropped their ladylike decorum and in a scene laden with erotic desire nearly come to blows over which one of them is to remain alone with him!

These subtle clues notwithstanding, at this point in the opera the Queen and her ladies still appear to be the source of good: the ladies provide Tamino with the magic flute to help him on his way, and they provide the set of magic bells for Papageno, whom they must sweetly coerce into going along, because he has heard (from them) that Sarastro is “Like a beastly tiger! Surely Sarastro would have me mercilessly plucked and roasted and served to the dogs” (1.8).

Finally, it is the ladies who introduce Papageno and Tamino to the three young spirit guides, who will show the intrepid rescuers the way to Sarastro’s fortress (as it is called). Nothing suggests these cherubs are actually associated with, much less are under the control of the Queen and her ladies (in his film version of the opera the famous Swedish director Ingmar Bergman expressly disassociates the ladies from the lads by the device of a black veil that descends over them when the boys appear), but at this early point in the opera, few have begun to question such matters . . . *except* Tamino.



Courtesy Doug Hamer

Fig. 2. Tamino gazes at an enchanting image of Pamina, in a Lyric Opera of Kansas City performance of *The Magic Flute*. The opera’s libretto suggests that the Queen of the Night gives Tamino a picture of her daughter, Pamina. The performance pictured, however, uses a crystal ball instead.

Tamino Begins to Question Some Basic Premises

Early on, immediately after the visit of the Queen, something inside Tamino wonders if the entire experience was real, not something done with smoke and mirrors to fool him. He asks the gods to guide him through his epistemological test; he asks them not to allow him to be deceived: "Is this actually reality, that I saw? Or are my senses deceiving me? Oh, ye good gods! Don't let me down or I'll fail to pass your test. Protect my arm, steel my courage, and Tamino's heart will beat eternal thanks to you!" (1.7). This is an important prayer to bear in mind as the story continues.

Separated on their way, Papageno arrives at the sorcerer's fortress before Tamino and almost immediately encounters a frightening, evil being, Monostatos, a black-skinned Moor, who is at that very moment in the act of placing Pamina in chains and fetters because she had attempted to escape. Monostatos cruelly commands a band of slaves, in whose eyes he is a devil and who long for liberation from his diabolical tyranny, all of which only naturally serves to substantiate our view that Sarastro, his master, is also evil.

However, from these slaves we learn that Pamina temporarily stopped her tormentor in his tracks by calling out the name of Sarastro, which "shook the Moor; he stood quietly and still," allowing Pamina temporarily to escape in a boat. So perhaps Sarastro is more than the evil master of an evil minion after all, as we will see in more detail shortly (1.9–10).

The Moor is as frightened at Papageno's birdlike appearance as Papageno is of the Moor's black skin: When they meet they both cry out, in unison, "This is—the dev—il cer—tainly!" (1.12). They both flee, but Papageno returns immediately, having quickly applied sweet reason to the problem: there are black birds in this world, why should there not be black people?

He introduces himself to Pamina, tells her the prince is in love with her and is on his way to rescue her, but that they had not yet seen the Three Boys, as promised, so the prince had sent him on ahead as a scout. Though she briefly fears Papageno may be an evil spirit from Sarastro's retinue, the fact that he has the picture of her that her mother and the ladies had shown the prince, together with the fact that he seems to have a kind heart, convince her to trust him.

Having gained her sympathy and having assured her that she will soon find her true love, he laments that he, Papageno, has no Papagena. Pamina tells him, "Have patience, friend! The heavens will provide for you as well; they will send you a girlfriend before you even know it" (1.14).

Their ensuing duet continues on the theme of divine love, which is a gift of heaven and which infuses all of nature. Because in German the

grammatical gender of the noun *Liebe* (love) is feminine, the duet also suggests the personification of love, portraying love as a kind of omnipotent goddess. The song ends with a remarkable chiasm, the point of which is that through love, this ubiquitous and omnipotent force, a man and a woman can be ennobled, can in fact become the most noble entity in the universe, capable of reaching upwards toward and attaining godhood, an idea to which Latter-day Saints must necessarily resonate:

- Pamina. Men who are capable of feeling love,
also have good hearts.
- Papageno. Women's first duty, then,
is to empathize with these sweet impulses.
- Both. We want to enjoy love,
we live solely through love.
- Pamina. Love sweetens every misery,
all creatures make oblations to her.
- Papageno. She spices the days of our lives,
she is operative in the whole circle of nature.
- Both. Her exalted purpose clearly indicates
there is nothing more noble than a wife and a husband.
A man and a woman and woman and man reach upward
towards and attain godhood. (1.14)

Tamino Experiences Cognitive Dissonance and Is Cross-Examined

Meanwhile, Tamino himself has encountered the three angelic spirits and is finally led by them, each youth carrying a palm branch—a symbol of peace—to what Tamino expected to be Sarastro's fortress. However, his expectation that it is the seat of an evil sorcerer is not borne out by its architecture: the columns and the portals all seem to him to testify that reason and diligence and the arts reside here and that evil cannot be enthroned in such a place.

With such columns and portals it does not seem to be a fortress at all, but a beautiful temple set in a sacred *locus amoenus*, a grove of trees like those in Elysium¹⁸ or the Garden of Eden, the dwelling place of the gods: "Where am I now?" Tamino sings, "What's happening to me? Is this the seat of the gods here? The portals, the columns, all show that intelligence and diligence and the arts reside here. Where activity is enthroned and idleness yields, vice cannot easily gain control" (1.15).

The central temple bears the inscription *Temple of Wisdom*. It is linked by colonnades on either side to two other temples bearing the inscriptions

Temple of Reason and *Temple of Nature*. Totally fixed upon his mission to free the fair young damsel in distress, however, Tamino apparently represses for the moment his cognitive dissonance about the discrepancy between what he has been told about Sarastro and the aesthetic evidence before him. Summoning up all his courage, Tamino boldly walks up to one of the three portals and opens the door. "Get back!" a hidden chorus commands. The same happens at the second portal. This does not seem an hospitable place! Very likely it is the fortress of an evil sorcerer after all. Finally, however, at the third, central, portal, he encounters a priest (1.15).

A discussion ensues between the priest and Tamino about who is bad and who is good and how one can know what is truth and what is falsehood. The priest asks Tamino, "Where are you bound for, bold stranger? What do you seek here in this holy place?" Oddly enough, Tamino does not reply, "I seek Pamina," but makes a rather more cryptic statement: "That which is the property of love and virtue." "These words have noble meaning!" replies the priest, whose next statement reveals that he is very wise, perhaps even clairvoyant: "But how will you find these things? Love and virtue do not lead you, because death and revenge inflame you" (1.15).

"Only revenge for the villain," says Tamino. "I don't think you'll find him here," the priest replies. "Sarastro rules in this locale?" asks Tamino. "Yes, yes, Sarastro rules here!" "But surely not here in the Temple of Wisdom?" "He rules here in the Temple of Wisdom!"

Tamino cries out, "So then everything is hypocrisy!" and turns to leave. These words most likely mean Tamino believes the architectural evidence that this is the seat of the gods is bogus, but his statement can also be read against the grain to mean that he is perhaps on the verge of discovering that everything the Queen and her minions have been telling him is in fact hypocrisy. In any case, when the priest asks him, "Do you want to leave already?" Tamino replies, "Yes, I want to leave, happy and free, never to see your temple." The priest then expressly reinforces the notion that Tamino has been purposely deceived: "Explain yourself to me more clearly, a deceit has led you astray." Tamino replies that if Sarastro rules here that is enough for him. The priest asks if he hates Sarastro. "I hate him eternally! Yes!"

"Well, then, give me your reasons," says the priest. "He is a monster, a tyrant," replies Tamino. "Is what you say proven?" "Proven by means of an unhappy woman," says Tamino. "So, a woman deceived you?" says the priest, before uttering the first of many misogynistic statements in *The Magic Flute* (about which more presently): "A woman does little, chatters a lot. You, young man, believe such a game of the tongue? Oh, if only Sarastro would lay before you his intentions, the reasons for his actions."

Tamino does not think he needs to know any more than he already knows: "His intentions are all too clear; Didn't the thief mercilessly tear Pamina from her mother's arms?" The priest does not deny that Sarastro has taken Pamina from her mother ("Yes, young man, what you say is true,") but says he is prevented by an oath and by his duty from explaining at this point Sarastro's reasons.

Tamino, who fears Pamina has already been killed as a sacrifice on the altar, asks, in despair, "So when will the veil be lifted?" a sign he is beginning to understand that he does not understand. "As soon as the hand of friendship leads you into the holy place for the purpose of creating eternal bands," replies the priest before withdrawing.

Alone now, Tamino utters a significant apostrophe to eternal night, which begs to be associated with the Queen of the Night, asking when night will end and he can find enlightenment: "Oh, eternal night, when will you disappear? When will my eye find—and be found by—the light?" "Soon, young man," replies a choir of invisible voices, "or never!"

Tamino asks them if Pamina still lives: "You invisible ones, tell me, is Pamina still alive?" "Pamina lives still," they reply, the word order of the German sentence extending the suspense until the last possible moment.

Tamino expresses his thanks for this to the omnipotent gods by playing his flute. Evoking the myth of Orpheus, whose playing charmed all creatures, animals of all sorts now emerge to listen, and Tamino observes, "How powerful your magical sound is, because, sweet flute, even wild beasts find joy in your playing" (1.15).¹⁹

Then, from a distance, he hears Papageno's pan flutes echoing his melody. Papageno and Pamina have also heard his playing and are rapidly moving toward his sound, when suddenly Monostatos catches up to them. Papageno remembers his magic bells, whose sounds enchant this wild beast as well: with all his slaves Monostatos goes away singing and dancing. In another duet, Papageno and Pamina editorialize about the need for harmony and friendship, obviously that which the bells symbolize, without which there is no happiness on earth: "If every good man could find such little bells, his enemies would then disappear without difficulty and he would live without them in the best harmony. Only the harmony of friendship alleviates troubles; without this sympathy there is no happiness on earth!" (1.17)

At this moment, a chorus is heard approaching, hailing the triumphal entry of Sarastro! Along with the princess, the trembling bird-man awaits his certain doom. "My child, what shall we say?" he asks Pamina. "The truth! The truth, even if the truth were a crime," she answers courageously (1.17).

Sarastro's True Character Emerges

Pamina kneels before Sarastro to beg his forgiveness for attempting to flee. She explains that the evil Moor had demanded love, and it was his attempted rape which had made her want to flee, not any desire to flee from Sarastro. We recall that just as Monostatos was about to lay his hands on her, she called out the name of Sarastro, which so terrified the Moor that he allowed her to escape. The existence of slaves in the temple may be similarly explained: just as Monostatos had attempted to force his will on Pamina, perhaps he has unjustly enslaved others in Sarastro's name by misusing his authority within Sarastro's realm.²⁰

Certainly this is consistent with what happens next: Monostatos arrives on the scene, having captured Tamino. When Tamino and Pamina recognize each other and fall into each other's arms, Monostatos rudely separates them, kneels before Sarastro, tells him that Tamino was planning to kidnap Pamina, and asks that the culprit be punished. "You know me!" he says, "My watchfulness—" Sarastro finishes his sentence in sarcastic tones, the irony of which Monostatos misses, "Deserves to have laurel leaves strewn in its honor. Listen! Give this honorable man immediately—" Monostatos sycophantically interrupts to thank him for the pending gift: "Your grace alone makes me rich," but Sarastro had not finished his sentence: "Only seventy-seven blows of the bastinado on the soles of his feet." Sarastro is a kind judge: the word *only* implies that Monostatos deserved more. (In fact, Monostatos is not punished: Sarastro ultimately pardons him, we learn, because it is a high religious holiday.²¹) All the people applaud Sarastro's divine wisdom: "Long live Sarastro, the divine, wise man!" (1.18, 1.19).

He instructs the priests to lead Tamino and Papageno into the Temple of Trials so that they might become purified. The first act ends with a jubilant chorus foretelling the celestialization of earth and the apotheosis of mortals:

When virtue and justice
strew the path of the great ones with glory,
then earth will be a heavenly realm
and mortals will be equal to the gods. (1.19)

Sarastro Explains the Plan of Apotheosis

When the second act opens, "the theatre is a palm grove; all trees are silver-like, the leaves of gold. Eighteen seats made of leaves; on each seat stands a pyramid, and a large black horn rimmed in gold. In the middle the

largest pyramid, also the largest trees. Sarastro and other priests come in solemn procession, each with a palm branch in his hand” (2.1).

As we will see, these triadic-shaped pyramids are important symbols in *The Magic Flute*: not only the scenery (three temples!), all the characters and the action of the opera are driven by a deep structure based on the principle of the triad. *Musically* the triad is also omnipresent in the key signature E-flat, with its three flats, and the score’s numerous three-fold repetitions and triadic chords. (In conventional numerology, three is the number of heaven—of the Trinity, for example. Four is the number of the earth—of earth, air, fire, and water, or of east, west, north, and south, for example. The sum and product of three and four create the perfect numbers seven and twelve. With their four triangular sides then, pyramids are visual symbols of perfection, of the harmony between earth and heaven.) Presently we shall also discuss the Egyptian god-couple Isis and Osiris, who stand at the pinnacle of a pyramid-like array of characters and behaviors; that is, they form the smaller pyramid or pyramidion like that on the Great Seal of the United States, which serves both as apex and as a pattern or model for the whole.²²

For the moment, however, it would be useful to attend to Sarastro’s discussion of life and death, particularly the process of apotheosis, as he speaks with the other priests assembled in the temple about Tamino’s future and his role in the future of the brotherhood:

Sarastro. (*After a pause.*) Ye servants of the great gods Osiris and Isis, consecrated in the Temple of Wisdom!—With a pure soul I declare unto you that our gathering today is one of the most important of our times.—Tamino, a prince, twenty years of age, is keeping a vigil at the northern portal of our temple, and sighing, he longs with a virtuous heart for an object which we all must achieve with hard work and diligence.—In short, this young man desires to tear the veil of darkness from his eyes and gaze into the holy shrine of the greatest light.—To watch over this virtuous man, to offer him our hand in friendship, let these be among our most important duties today.

First Priest. (*Arises.*) He possesses virtue?

Sarastro. Virtue!

Second Priest. Also discretion?

Sarastro. Discretion!

Third Priest. Is he charitable?

Sarastro. Charitable!—if you consider him worthy, then follow my example. (*They blow into their horns three times.*) Touched by the unity of your hearts, Sarastro thanks you in the name of humanity.—Let prejudice pour out its reproach upon

those of us who have been consecrated!—Wisdom and reason break it asunder like cobwebs.—They shall never shake our pillars. Nevertheless, let evil prejudice disappear; it shall disappear as soon as Tamino himself possesses the greatness of our difficult craft.—Pamina, that gentle, virtuous maiden, has been reserved by the gods for this fair youth; this is the foundation stone, the reason I took her away from her proud mother.—That woman thinks she is great; she hopes to fool the people with illusion and superstition and destroy the solid edifice of our temple. But that she shall not do; Tamino, the fair youth himself, shall help us to fortify it and, as one who is consecrated, will be a reward to virtue but to vice will be a punishment. (*The three-fold chord in the horns is repeated by all.*)

Spokesman. (*Arises.*) O great Sarastro, we recognize and admire your speech, so full of wisdom; but will Tamino be able to withstand the difficult trials which await him?—Pardon me for being so bold as to reveal my doubts about it to you! I am afraid for the youth. What if his spirit, sunken in pain, leaves him and he is defeated by the difficult struggle?—He is a prince!—

Sarastro. More than that—he is a human being!

Spokesman. But what if he were to die in his early youth?

Sarastro. Then he is given unto Osiris and Isis and will feel the joy of the gods sooner than we do. (*The three-fold chord is repeated.*) Let Tamino be led with his travelling companion into the vestibule of the temple. (*To the speaker, who kneels before him.*) And thou, Friend, whom the gods have determined through us to be the defender of truth—carry out thy holy office, and teach both, by thy wisdom, what the obligations of humanity are, teach them to recognize the power of the gods. (*The speaker exits with one priest; all the priests gather together with their palm branches.*)

Sarastro and the chorus now intone a great prayer to Isis and Osiris:

Sarastro. O Isis and Osiris, bequeath
The spirit of wisdom unto the new couple!²³
Ye who steer the steps of the wanderer,
Strengthen them with patience in danger.

Chorus. Strengthen them with patience in danger.

Sarastro. Let them see the fruits of their trials.
And yet, should they go down to their graves,
Then reward their bold course of virtue,
Take them up into your dwelling place.

Chorus. Take them up into your dwelling place. (2.1)

The God-Couple Isis and Osiris Are Divine Models for Humans

One of the most important attributes of Isis and Osiris, and no doubt the reason why Mozart and Schikaneder chose them for this opera, is that they are a married god-couple who exemplify the highest kind of love and self-sacrifice and who have themselves overcome evil and death.²⁴

It will be recalled from the myth that Osiris's evil brother Seth,²⁵ the god of the red desert, death, drought, and destruction, kills Osiris out of jealousy because Osiris is the god of green vegetation, new life, and fertility. Seth hides the body, but when it is found, he cuts it up and buries pieces of the body all around the realm, to make it even harder for Osiris's adherents to worship him or for him ever to come back to life. Seth's evil plan fails, of course. Not only do Osiris's body parts bring fertility and new life to wider regions of the realm, wherever they are buried, he himself takes up his body again, so the net effect is much more new life, rather than less.

It is Isis who first finds Osiris's body. Later, after the body is dismembered, she goes around anew to find his body parts before praying to have the gods reassemble them. Thus Osiris is often portrayed as wrapped in mummy cloths (signifying that he was once dead) but with green skin (signifying that he is newly alive), and Isis often stands by him as they greet the worthy dead who pass all the tests and are themselves ready to be resurrected, drawn through the veil into the presence of the living gods (fig. 3).²⁶

In the syncretic pantheon, Osiris²⁷ resembles in important ways Orpheus, who was also cut into pieces by evil forces, but whose pieces brought harmony wherever they were placed; Dionysos, bringer of fertility, new life, and the grape; and, especially, Jesus Christ, the resurrected god whose adherents from all over the realm remember him by partaking of symbolic pieces of his broken body in the sacrament of the holy eucharist, where they also drink of the juice of the grape in memory of his blood. Like Osiris, Jesus' life-giving essence springs up wherever these pieces of his body are planted. Also like Osiris, Jesus' death brings about much greater new life, rather than less. The gathering of Christ's body presages the gathering of the body of the saints, his children, who have taken his essence upon them by eating and drinking in remembrance of him.

Papageno and Tamino Enter the Temple of Trials

Returning again to Papageno and Tamino, who have been led into the Temple of Trials, we observe the spokesman and the second priest ask them what they desire in the temple. Tamino answers, "Friendship and love," before affirming that he is willing to give his life to acquire these qualities



Fig. 3. The Weighing of the Souls, a scene from the Book of the Dead of Hunefer, from Thebes, Egypt, ca. 1275 bc. In Egyptian mythology, the souls of deceased individuals were weighed against a feather. Those whose sins were lighter than the feather were able to proceed to a paradise. Pictured on the right are Osiris (seated) and Isis (standing), waiting to meet the souls entering paradise.

and to win Pamina: “Are you ready to give your life in your struggle to attain them?” “Yes!”

Papageno is asked, “Do you also wish to struggle to attain a love of wisdom?” but he answers, “Struggling is not my thing. Actually I’m not interested in wisdom at all. I am a man of nature, who is content with sleep, food, and drink; and if it were possible for me sometime to snare myself a pretty mate—”

The priests inform him he will never have such a mate if he does not submit to their trials, subject himself to all their laws, and not be afraid, even of death. “I’ll stay single,” replies Papageno. The priests persist, “But what if you could win the hand of a virtuous, beautiful girl?” “I’ll stay single.”

Seeing that Papageno is totally self-centered, the priests appeal to his narcissism: “But what if Sarastro had reserved a girl for you who had exactly the same clothing and coloration as you do?” “Is she young?” Papageno inquires. “Young and beautiful.” “And her name is?” asks Papageno. “Papagena.” “What?—Pa—?” “Papagena,” the priests affirm.

“Papagena? I’d like to see her just out of curiosity.” “You can see her,” reply the priests, but Papageno is very suspicious: “But when I’ve seen her, then I have to die?” he asks. The priest makes an indefinite gesture and Papageno interprets it in the most negative way: “I’ll stay single.”

“You can see her,” continue the priests, “but until the prescribed time is over, you cannot speak one word to her. Will your mind possess

enough steadfastness to keep your tongue in check?” “Oh, yes!” Papageno replies, confidently.

“The gods also impose upon you a salutary silence,” the priests tell Tamino; “without this you would both be lost. You will be able to see Pamina, but at no point be able to speak to her; this is the beginning of the time of trials for both of you” (2.3).

The Opera Exhibits General Misogyny, or Does It Warn about Specific Women?

As Tamino and Papageno begin the test of their steadfastness and their ability to hold their tongues, the spokesman and the second priest give them more instructions in a duet that seems to contain a most misogynistic sentiment:

Protect yourselves against the wiles of women:
This is the first obligation of the covenant!
Many a wise man allowed himself to be deceived,
he erred and did not notice it.
In the end he saw that he was abandoned,
his loyalty rewarded with mockery!
In vain he wrung his hands;
death and despair were his reward. (2.3)

On one level this is a warning that the Queen and her ladies are lurking around the temple perimeter waiting to ensnare Tamino and Papageno. In the next scene the ladies do pop up out of the ground and attempt to get the initiates to break their vow of silence. If all such apparently misogynistic statements in the opera had reference only to the Queen of the Night or to her nefarious ladies-in-waiting, it would be a simpler matter to explain them.²⁸

It is true that many of the misogynistic statements *start out* as references to the Queen of the Night or the Three Ladies, but, as above, such statements quickly appear to become generalized to all womankind. After Pamina’s earlier attempt to flee from Monostatos, for example, she explained to Sarastro her conflicting loyalties to him and to her mother: “My child’s sense of duty calls to me, because my mother—” “Is in my power,” Sarastro rather brutally interrupts. “The name of mother sounds sweet to me,” Pamina persists, “she is that—” “And a proud woman,” Sarastro interrupts once more. “A man must lead the hearts of you women, because without him every woman tends to overstep the bounds of the circle of her effectiveness” (1.18).

Back in the temple, the Three Ladies attempt to induce Tamino to believe rumors: "Tamino, listen, you are lost! Remember the Queen! There's a lot of whispering going on, whispering in a lot of ears, about the falseness of these priests."

Without breaking his vow of silence, Tamino's answer (spoken only to himself) reveals that he has come a long way in his epistemology since his first encounter with the old priest: "A wise man applies tests and does not regard what the common mob says."

The ladies continue with the rumors: "It is said that whoever swears an oath to join their covenant band goes to hell, lock, stock, and barrel." Papageno is frightened by this and asks Tamino if it is true. Apparently Tamino is permitted to answer him in song, which he does as follows: "Nonsense, gossip echoed by women, but thought up by hypocrites." Papageno sings, "But the Queen also says it." "She is a woman, has the mind of a woman," replies Tamino. Soon the priests discover the ladies have made their way into the temple, and they shout, "The holy threshold is desecrated! Send these women down to hell!" (2.15).

Let us examine one final example of misogyny before attempting the feat of demonstrating that the opera is *not* misogynistic: When the Queen comes to Pamina with a dagger and orders her to assassinate Sarastro, the Queen recounts her husband's conversation with her during his last hour. We learn, among other things, that her husband had been the High Priest of the brotherhood before Sarastro and that the Queen coveted the tokens of his power. She complains that he said to her, "'Woman, my last hour has arrived—all the treasures I possessed personally are yours and your daughter's.' 'The all-consuming sun disk'—I hastily interrupted him. 'Is destined to belong to the consecrated ones,' he answered, 'Sarastro will administer it in as manly a way as I have to this point. And now, not a further word; don't try to understand things which are unfathomable to the female mind. Your obligation is to turn yourself and your daughter over to the leadership of wise men'" (2.8).

The Audience Is Ultimately Disabused of Sexism

How can one justify or even explain such apparently blatant misogyny? Having progressed to this point in the opera, and having begun to understand that this is a rather sophisticated text rather than a simplistic and fatally flawed one, it is perhaps time to test a working hypothesis in a kind of thought experiment: if Mozart and his collaborators did indeed go to the trouble to create in *The Magic Flute* a school for epistemology, a

school for learning to see through commonly accepted, biased, or prejudicial “truth” in pursuit of enlightened real truth²⁹ (hence the inclusion of a “fractured plot,” the lecture by the priest to Tamino, and the like), is it plausible they would have intended their opera to confirm such stereotypes as misogyny? Or is it even possible they intended their opera to undermine such stereotypes? At the risk of appearing to impose contemporary issues onto a two-hundred-year-old document, we will first address this question of misogyny before turning to the related question of racial stereotypes.

To begin, let us recall the duet early in the opera between Papageno and Pamina, containing the lines “We wish to enjoy love; we live by love alone. . . . Love’s noble purpose shows clearly that there is nothing more noble than a wife and a husband.” The song ends in the significant chiasm “Mann und Weib und Weib und Mann / Reichen an die Gottheit an” (Husband and wife and wife and husband, reach up to [and attain] godhood) (1.14). This is the very opposite of misogyny!

This theme that a man and a woman together reach up to or achieve godhood is picked up again later when Tamino has passed all the prior trials and is now poised for the final, grand test involving earth, air, fire, and water. Two guards in black armor, with flaming helmets, sing aloud to him in an impressive duet (their parts are exactly one octave apart, which lends a remarkable timbre to the song) the words carved on a pyramid at the portal of the great mountain into which he must go:

He who passes along this path full of difficulties
becomes pure by means of fire, water, air, and earth;
if he can overcome the terrors of death,
he soars from earth toward heaven.
Then, illuminated, he will be in a position
to dedicate himself entirely to the mysteries of Isis.

Tamino is ready to charge into yet another trial as a lone man, for, he says, “No death frightens me, prevents me from acting like a man.” But this duet emphasizes it is the mysteries of the female, the goddess *Isis*, into which Tamino is to be initiated. Consequently, he learns that Pamina is to go with him into that part of the temple where they will be bonded as priest and priestess, god and goddess, which relationship cannot be severed even by death: “Now no fate can separate us any more, even if death were to intervene!” Tamino and the two cherubim-like guardians of the path to eternal life (albeit with flaming helmets rather than flaming swords) now join to sing the significant words, “To go joyfully into the temple hand in hand. A woman who does not fear night and death is worthy and can be initiated.”

And now, very significantly, Pamina does not simply *follow* Tamino into the temple, she *leads* him, as she is led by the goddess Love and as they

are both protected by the magic flute, which has something of the essence of the tree of life about it, since she tells Tamino that her father cut it from the deepest roots of a thousand-year-old oak tree “in a magical hour . . . amidst lightning and thunder and raging storm.” Pamina says, “I myself will lead you; Love will lead me!”

When they complete their test of courage, Pamina and Tamino sing, “Ye gods, what a moment! Isis’s joy is vouchsafed unto us!” and the chorus, which, very significantly, includes women’s voices as well as men’s, exults, “Triumph! Triumph! Thou noble couple! Thou³⁰ hast vanquished danger! The initiation of Isis is now thine! Come, both of you, enter into the temple!” (2.28).

Finally, as the music becomes a joyful celebratory wedding dance, this choir of priests and priestesses(!)³¹ sings:

Hail to you, consecrated ones!
You penetrated through night.
Thanks be unto you, Osiris,
and thanks to you, Isis!
Strength was victorious
and crowns beauty and wisdom, as a reward,
with an eternal crown! (2.30)

Isis and Osiris have determined that Tamino and Pamina should be together forever and become gods like they are. Thus *The Magic Flute* invites us to think of Isis and Osiris as the ultimate model for our lives, not Sarastro, righteous man that he is, nor Pamina’s father, whose wife did not deserve to stand with him in the temple, and certainly not Monostatos, whose very name implies egotism: The prefix *mono-* means *alone* in Greek and Latin and *-statos* implies *standing*. Monostatos is the arch example of someone who stands alone, who egotistically watches out for himself and no one else. He first tries to get “love” by rape then, later, by allying himself politically to the Queen who promises to “give” him her daughter when they have destroyed the temple. (In retrospect, the Queen is very quick, from the beginning, to “give” her daughter to others and to threaten her, in a famous aria that we will discuss at more length presently, to “loose eternally all bonds of nature,” whereas the very purpose of the temple is to forge such bonds.)

So if conventional wisdom about the unworthiness of women to be inducted into the sacred order is reflected in some of the statements of the priests, the deeper structure of the opera suggests that Mozart perceived this misogynistic and celibate order—though righteous as far as it goes—should and would be replaced by a new married and equal gender-neutral leadership, personified in Tamino and Pamina, deified in Isis and Osiris.

Certainly that does not detract from the dignity and holiness of Sarastro, who apparently represents the last celibate high priest, destined to be replaced by the new, married high priest and priestess.

Under the inspiration of his muse, Mozart is apparently following the logic of real humanism to its conclusion: setting about to lift Masonry (and society at large) by its own rhetorical bootstraps, as it were; showing that Masonry had yet to live up to the ideals of its own philosophy; taking it out of its misogynistic phase into a new era; and using as a lever the logical extension of the enlightened worldview, espoused by Masons and others of their time, that systematically strove to avoid all prejudice and irrational traditions and whose chosen model was the loving god-pair Isis and Osiris. So just as Tamino and Pamina transcended the gross deceptions of the Queen, they also transcend the more subtle last, residual biases reflected in conventional chauvinistic truisms sometimes thoughtlessly uttered or adhered to by otherwise enlightened souls.

All the apparent confusion of this libretto, all its contradictory claims and behaviors flee as the darkness before the glorious structural clarity of this paradigm: The god-couple Isis-Osiris is to be the model for the new Adam-and-Eve couple Pamina-Tamino, who, if they prove their worthiness, will become like the gods.

Other Couples Are Placed in the Paradigm of Apotheosis

At the bottom extreme of the paradigm, wickedly mirroring the divine couple of Isis and Osiris is the diabolical “couple” Monostatos and the Queen of the Night who, as we shall see, pair up near the end of the opera in an evil *mariage de convenance*, albeit only temporarily, and for all the wrong reasons.

In between is yet another couple, Papageno-Papagena, who will be blessed by the merciful gods with a portion of the gods’ glory and happiness, but by the couple’s own choices will not be worthy of the full joy of the consecrated initiates in the Temple of Wisdom. Papageno apparently can love only someone who looks just like himself (and whose name is a feminine variant of his). So whereas the names Pamina and Tamino are beautifully harmonious, almost anagrams of each other, whilst being clearly different, as are the names Isis and Osiris, the name-pair Papageno-Papagena suggests the love of a narcissist for his own reflection in the mirror.

Papageno has some virtue, but he expressly will not attain to the glory of Isis-Osiris as will Pamina-Tamino. For him, the heavenly joys involve drinking wine, having enough to eat, and having a little wife who looks like

the birdman himself. Papageno repeatedly states that life holds no higher joy for him than that of a good glass of wine:

Speaker. O man! You would have deserved to wander forever in the dark crevices of the earth;—however, the kindly gods have released you from this punishment.—But in return you will never experience the heavenly joy of the consecrated ones.

Papageno. Well, so what, there are a lot of other people like me.—The greatest joy for me right now would be a good glass of wine.

Speaker. Otherwise you have no wish in this world?

Papageno. Not up till now.

Speaker. Your wish will be fulfilled.—(*Exit. Immediately a large beaker filled with red wine comes out of the earth.*)

Papageno. Hurray! There's my wine now!—(*Drinks.*) Glorious!—Heavenly!—Divine!—Hah! I am now so happy that I would fly to the sun if I had wings.—Hah!—I feel so strange in my heart!—I want—I wish—I wonder what? (2.23)

In the end it is not true, of course, that Papageno wishes only for the heavenly joys of a glass of wine: at this moment he remembers his desire for a wife, or at least a little girlfriend, but he is not yet worthy even of that and will require more trials, including a suicide attempt, before the gods grant him a wife.

Rape and Murder: The Evil Characters Reveal Their True Nature

But this excursus on misogyny and goddesses has gotten us somewhat ahead of our story: As Tamino and Papageno undergo their trials of silence within the temple, Monostatos discovers Pamina asleep in the moonlight in a garden and makes another attempt to rape her. After revealing that he had been excused from the seventy-seven blows of the bastinado on the soles of his feet because today is a holy day, he sings (in rapidly conspiratorial, hushed tones) an aria, the first part of which echoes the ideas in Pamina's and Papageno's earlier duet about the universality of love, but in which he then goes on to blame his misfortunes in love on his skin color.

Continuing in the language of perdition (having earlier claimed that he would be consumed by the fire burning within him: "The fire, which glows within me, will yet consume me") he sings of the torments of living forever without a wife, a sentiment which also backhandedly reinforces the opera's emphasis on the heavenly nature of eternal marriage:

Every being feels the joys of love,
bills and coos, flirts and cuddles and kisses;
and I am supposed to avoid love
because a black man is ugly!

Have not I been given a heart?
 Am I not made of flesh and blood?
 To live forever without a mate
 would truly be the flames of hell!
 And so, while I am yet alive, I wish
 to bill and coo, kiss, be tender!
 Dear, good old moon, forgive,
 a white girl charmed me.
 White is beautiful! I must kiss her;
 Moon, hide your face while I do!
 If it bothers you too much,
 then close your eyes! (2.7)

Monostatos's plans are foiled by the arrival of the Queen, but he hides close by to overhear the conversation between mother and daughter. Upon learning that her plot to have Tamino rescue Pamina has failed and that Tamino is in the process of becoming an initiate himself, the Queen demands that Pamina stab Sarastro and take from him the sevenfold sun disk, which he wears on his breast. We have already learned how Pamina's father, on his deathbed, bequeathed the disk to Sarastro and to the initiated brethren.

Pamina responds to this story by asking her mother why she could not love Tamino, even after he is initiated: "Dear mother, could not I love this young man just as tenderly after he is an initiate, as I now love him? My father himself was bound to these wise men. He spoke of them all the time with rapture, praised their goodness—their understanding—their virtue. Sarastro is no less virtuous."

The Queen flies into a rage at such treason: "Do my ears deceive me? You, my daughter, have the audacity to defend the disgraceful cause of these barbarians? To love a man like that, who, allied with my mortal enemy, would plot my overthrow at any moment? Do you see this cold steel? It was honed to stab Sarastro. You will kill him and turn over the sun disk to me."

And then, in one of the most famous and familiar arias in the operatic repertory, this hate-filled demon, evoking the gods of revenge and hell's very flames, swears she will renounce her daughter forever, destroying eternally all the natural ties of parenthood, if Pamina does not kill Sarastro. Beautiful in its unique way, the music is fittingly frenzied and furious, her voice raging and raving, rising to a shrill scream:

The revenge of hell seethes in my heart,
 death and despair flame all around me!
 If Sarastro does not feel his death pains from your hand,
 then you will not be my daughter forevermore.

Let all the bonds of nature be repudiated eternally, be
abandoned eternally, demolished forever,
if Sarastro does not take on the pallor of death at your hand!

Hear, O ye gods of revenge! Hear the oath of a mother! (2.8)

Black Heart, Not a Black Skin: Racism Is Deconstructed

Fittingly, the Queen immediately sinks away into the subterranean regions. When she is gone, Monostatos comes forward, takes the dagger from Pamina and asks why she is trembling, because of his black skin or because of the murder plot. Revealing then that he knows all, he threatens Pamina if she does not agree to love him. Her life, and the life of her mother, are in his hand, he says.

First he threatens to tell Sarastro about her mother's plan, saying that Sarastro would surely drown the Queen (in something sounding very much like a baptismal font) in the temple: "A single word from me to Sarastro and your mother will be drowned in these underground vaults, in the water they say is used to purify the initiates."

When Pamina refuses, Monostatos "plays the race card." Full of anger, he says, "Why? Because I bear the color of a black spectre? Oh, it's not, eh? Aha! Then die!" (2.10). (His "Oh, it's not, eh?" implies she has shaken her head as if to say, "Of course it is not your skin color.") Though she tells him on bended knee she has given her heart to Tamino and begs him for mercy, Monostatos raises the dagger: "Love or death!" "Never!" Pamina says resolutely.

Monostatos draws back his arm to stab her and says, "Then go to hell!" but at that moment Sarastro appears and shoves him backwards. Having been caught in the act of attempting to murder Pamina, Monostatos blurts out a quick lie: "Sir, my behavior does not deserve punishment, I am innocent! They had conspired to murder you, therefore I wanted to avenge you."

Sarastro responds, "I know more than enough, I know that your soul is just as black as your face. Also I would punish you for this black enterprise, if an evil woman, who does happen to have a very good daughter, had not provided the dagger for it. Thank the evil actions of this woman that you are allowed to depart unpunished. Go!" (2.11).

These references to the color of Monostatos's skin require a sensitive analysis. As in the case of the misogynistic references in *The Magic Flute*, the opera appears at first to reinforce racial stereotypes; however, all the while it subtly begins to undercut them. It will be recalled, for example, that when Papageno first encounters Monostatos, xenophobic stereotypes of the black as bogeyman contribute to the birdman's original bias about

Sarastro as evil sorcerer. Immediately after his initial shock at encountering a black man, however, even Papageno, certainly no genius, understood that it is perfectly normal for there to be various colors of humans, just as there are various colors of birds.

In effect, Mozart and Schikaneder appealed to what they were sure was a similar bias in many members of the audience in order to entrap them in their original epistemological deception about who is good and who is bad. Once so entrapped, however, members of the audience would then be subtly invited with Papageno, as the priest had invited Tamino, to reexamine the premises of their beliefs and prejudices.

In the course of the opera, for example, it becomes clear for all to see that Sarastro has in nowise discriminated against Monostatos on account of his race; on the contrary, he has probably given him more authority and more freedom of action than he deserves. In the end, Sarastro expressly tells him that it is his black heart and his black deeds—absolutely not, however, his black skin—that make him evil.

Failing to gain the daughter, Monostatos now turns to the mother, who had called herself The Starflaming Queen, a title reflecting her nocturnal nature (the term *flaming* is also appropriate, considering her predilection for the flames of hell), but her dark essence is captured even better by her other title, The Queen of the Night, a being whose blackness is also not a function of her skin color, but of her essential inner nature. Thus Monostatos and the Queen profoundly resemble each other and will be seen ultimately paired up in an unholy symbolic alliance against the Good. But just as the Queen's evil nature is not a function of her gender, as we have seen, neither is Monostatos's evil nature a function of his race.

Mozart Challenges Eighteenth-Century Racism

That Mozart and Schikaneder were capable in 1791 of attempting to undermine racial prejudice in Western Europeans may seem as difficult to accept as the premise that they were capable of undermining misogyny. Yet a brief excursus into the life of an acquaintance of Mozart, a certain Angelo Soliman, may shed some light on the matter. Soliman, whose real name was Mmadi Make, was born sometime around 1726 in Africa. At seven, he was stolen by an enemy tribe and sold to Europeans who took him to Italy, where he was raised and educated by a Marquess. Eventually he was noticed and admired by an Austrian general, Johann Georg Christian Fürst Lobkowitz, who then accepted him as a gift from the Marquess.

A profoundly intelligent and well-educated man—he is said to have spoken perfect German, Italian, and French as well as some English, Czech, and Latin—Angelo Soliman was well known to all the most significant

scientists and artists in Vienna. For twenty years or so he accompanied the general on his campaigns until, at the death of Lobkowitz, he was inherited by Joseph Wenzel Fürst Liechtenstein, whom Soliman accompanied to Frankfurt during Liechtenstein's work there as a kind of lobbyist for the election of Joseph II as Holy Roman Emperor.

Soliman always dressed like an aristocrat and is said to have made quite an impression in his white, gold-trimmed frock coat that contrasted starkly with his dark skin.³² While in Frankfurt he earned the enormous sum of twenty thousand Gulden at gambling, which enabled him, upon his return to Vienna, to secretly marry the widow of a Dutch general (in St. Stephen's Cathedral!), buy a house in the suburbs, and lead a half-way normal life, though Liechtenstein was angry when a chance remark by the Emperor revealed this marriage to him, for he considered Soliman his personal chattel.

Mozart, who enjoyed the company of unconventional people of all sorts, knew Soliman as a member of the Freemasonic lodge Zur wahren Eintracht (True Harmony), which Soliman joined in 1783. According to the minutes of the lodge, Mozart and Soliman attended a number of meetings together in the temple. Mozart had met him earlier, about the time Mozart began his opera *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (The Abduction from the Seraglio), which premiered in 1782. There is reason to believe that Mozart's interest in the idea of freeing captives in a foreign land, the subject of that opera, may have been catalyzed by the case of Soliman.

In *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* when Selim Bassa, the Turkish Sultan, allows his European captives to go free, even though he loves Konstanze and even though the father of their leader, Belmonte, was his bitter enemy, it is the Muslim who sets the Christian precedent for Sarastro's gentle judgments nearly ten years later:

Belmonte. Cool your vengeance on me, avenge the injustice my father did to you! I expect the worst and do not blame you.

Selim. It must be a characteristic of your clan, then, to commit injustices because you assume that is just the natural thing to do? You are mistaken. I detested your father far too much for me ever to be able to walk in his footsteps. Take your freedom, take Konstanze, sail to your fatherland, tell your father that you were in my power, that I let you go free in order to be able to tell him that it is a far greater joy to avenge by good deeds an injustice suffered, than to expiate one vice by committing others.

Belmonte. Sir! . . . You astonish me . . .

Selim. (*Regards him contemptuously.*) I believe it. So with that, depart, and if you are at the very least more humane than

your father, then my actions will be rewarded. (*Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, 3.9)

That European Christians required such lessons in the Golden Rule and in racial justice emerges from the end of our account of Angelo Soliman: Soliman lived until after the repressive Emperor Franz II had succeeded both his uncle, the enlightened Joseph II, and his father, Leopold II. In an unbelievably ghoulish act, at Soliman's death Kaiser Franz II ordered that his body be confiscated and, despite protests by the family and by the Archbishop of Vienna, given to a taxidermist and sculptor named Franz Thaler to be skinned, mounted, and added to the Imperial Collection of exotic stuffed animals, displayed in a tableau along with several aquatic birds and a water hog. Mercifully, when Vienna was bombarded in 1848, the collection was destroyed in a fire.³³

Even knowing as little as we do about his relationship to Angelo Soliman, it is difficult to believe that Mozart, a friend and lodge brother of such a man, would have knowingly cast aspersions on, or have allowed Schikaneder or anyone else to cast aspersions on, another human being because of his skin color.³⁴ Far more likely, it seems to me, is that Mozart and Schikaneder intended *The Magic Flute* expressly to call into question the rationality of racism and sexism.

Pamina and Papageno Are Tested Further

Returning to the plot of the opera once again: after the departure of Monostatos, who reveals he is determined to seek out the mother since he cannot have the daughter, Pamina begs Sarastro not to punish her mother, who continues to lurk in the subterranean halls of the temple, plotting revenge. He explains in a beautiful aria, set to calm music exactly opposite that of the strident Queen, how within these holy walls revenge is not known and how love, not force, leads people to do their duty. The further text of his aria explains why he tolerated Monostatos in his realm and why he does not intend to take any revenge on him or on the Queen of the Night:

In these holy halls
revenge is not known.
And if a person has fallen,
love leads him back to his duty.
Then he walks hand in hand with a friend
joyously and happily into the better land.

Within these holy walls,
where one human being loves another,

no traitor can lurk,
because enemies are forgiven.
Whoever does not take pleasure from these doctrines,
does not deserve to be a human being. (2.12)

Meanwhile, back in the vaults of the temple, Papageno and Tamino continue their trials of silence. Papageno laments that he cannot even get a glass of water here, much less anything stronger. At this an ugly old hag emerges with some water for him. Out of sheer boredom he strikes up a conversation with her: "Tell me, how old are you?" "Eighteen years and two minutes," she replies. Papageno must think she has meant to say *eighty* years (as in English, in spoken German *achtzehn* and *achtzig* are quite alike), and it amuses him that such an old woman has inadvertently said *eighteen* when she obviously meant *eighty*.

"Ha, ha, ha! Oh, what a young angel you are! Do you have a boyfriend, too?" Papageno asks, mockingly. "Course!" she replies. "Is he also as young as you?" Papageno continues. "Not quite, he is older by ten years." Papageno finds this extremely funny: the thought of a ninety-year-old boyfriend sends him into hysterics: "That must be quite a love affair! What is your lover's name?" "Papageno."

"Papageno!" At this revelation Papageno is thunderstruck. Could someone else in the world have his name? "Well, then, where is he, this Papageno?" he inquires. "There he sits, my angel," the old hag replies, pointing at Papageno. "I am supposedly your lover?" he asks. "Yes, my angel!" she replies. He asks her name, but she is prevented from telling him by a strong clap of thunder, at which the old lady limps rapidly away.

The Three Boys arrive in their flying apparatus. They reveal that they have been sent by Sarastro to restore to Tamino and Papageno the magic flute and the magic bells, which were temporarily taken from them, and they leave behind a table beautifully set with food and wine. When we meet again for the third time, they say, joy will be the reward for your courage! Papageno tucks in to the food and wine as Tamino plays on his flute, which Pamina hears and follows to find the two men.

Pamina Considers Suicide

Normally, Papageno would have been unable to keep silent about anything, and he would have surely revealed to Pamina that Tamino is not allowed to speak to her, but as luck and the skill of the librettists would have it, his mouth is crammed so full of food at this moment that even he cannot speak. Consequently, poor Pamina, who receives no response from Papageno or Tamino, becomes convinced that Tamino no longer loves her.

Her unbelievably sad aria ends with a resolve to seek peace in death:

Alas, I feel it, the joy of love
is eternally lost!
You happy hours will never
return to my heart again!
See, Tamino, these tears
flow, my betrothed, just for you.
If you do not feel the longings of love,
then peace will be found in death! (2.18)

When she departs, Tamino and Papageno are summoned forth to join the priests. Papageno, engrossed in his meal, says that not even the six lions that draw Sarastro's chariot could pull him away from it, at which the lions do appear, only to be charmed by Tamino's flute-playing. Frightened, Papageno allows Tamino to drag him away. Eighteen priests arranged in a pyramid with six on a side, each carrying a lighted pyramid in his hand like a lantern, sing in three-part harmony the following prophetic chorale:

O Isis and Osiris, what joy!
The brightness of the sun chases away the gloomy night.
Soon the noble youth will feel new life:
Soon he will be totally devoted to our ministry.
His spirit is bold, his heart is pure,
Soon he will be worthy of us. (2.20)

Sarastro orders that Tamino be led in with a sack over his head. He instructs Tamino that he has two final, dangerous trials to accomplish and asks that the gods continue to accompany him as they have so far. Then Pamina is brought in, also with a sack on her head. The sack is removed and she is told that Tamino is there to say farewell to her for a final time. And though one can read this to mean—correctly—that Tamino will never have to take his leave from her again after this, she has concluded earlier that Tamino does not love her, and this biased view makes her interpret the statement to mean that she will never see him again.

Pamina is in the process of learning what Tamino learned earlier, and what this epistemological opera is all about, at its most profound level, namely that one must always question the validity and the source of one's assumptions. In the subsequent trio between her, Tamino, and Sarastro, her prior convictions also apparently make it impossible for her to attend to or be convinced by Sarastro's and Tamino's repeated reassurances:

Pamina. Shall I not see you again, precious one?
Sarastro. You will see each other again, joyfully!
Pamina. Deadly dangers await you!

Tamino. Surely the gods will protect me!
Pamina. Deadly dangers await you!
Sarastro. Surely the gods will protect him!
Pamina. You will not escape death,
this my intuition whispers to me.
Sarastro. May the will of the gods be done,
their slightest intimation will be like a law unto him!
Tamino. May the will of the gods be done,
their slightest intimation will be like a law unto me!
Pamina. O, if you loved, as I love you,
then you would not be so calm.
Sarastro. Believe me, he feels the same emotions,
and will be your loyal mate forever!
Tamino. Believe me, I feel the same emotions,
and will be your loyal mate forever!
Sarastro. The hour strikes, now you must part!
Tamino and Pamina. How bitter are the sorrows of parting!
Sarastro. Tamino has to leave again.
Tamino. Pamina, I really have to leave.
Pamina. Does Tamino really have to leave?
Sarastro. He has to leave now!
Tamino. I have to leave now.
Pamina. You have to leave then!
Tamino. Pamina, farewell!
Pamina. Tamino, farewell!
Sarastro. Now hurry away.
Your word is calling you.
The hour strikes, we will see one another again!
Tamino and Pamina. Alas, golden calm, return again!
Farewell! Farewell!
Sarastro. We will see one another again! (2.21)

When Tamino is led out blindfolded, Papageno has been left alone in a chamber. Attempting to escape, he is turned back at both doors to the room, the one he entered and the one through which Tamino has been led. "Get back!" a voice calls out, as the voices had done earlier when Tamino attempted to enter the temple. Unlike Tamino, however, Papageno does not find a third door. Instead, the spokesman enters and tells him, as we have seen, that the kindly gods have released him from punishment, but in return he will never experience the heavenly joy of the initiates. It is at this point that Papageno says that for him a good glass of wine is the highest,

most divine joy. Upon drinking his wine, however, Papageno feels strange stirrings in his heart. Perhaps there is one more thing he desires after all. He plays his magic bells and sings:

A girlfriend or mate
is what Papageno wishes for himself!
O, such a gentle little dove
would be sheer bliss and eternal salvation³⁵ for me!
Then eating and drinking would really appeal to me,
then I could measure up to princes,
enjoy life as a wise man
and be as though I were in Elysium.

A girlfriend or mate
is what Papageno wishes for himself!
O, such a gentle little dove
would be sheer bliss and eternal salvation for me!
Alas, can't I please just one of all
those charming girls?
May one of them help me out of my difficulties,
or I'll surely grieve myself to death.

A girlfriend or mate
is what Papageno wishes for himself!
O, such a gentle little dove
would be sheer bliss and eternal salvation for me!
If no girl gives me love,
then the flame must consume me!
But if a female mouth kisses me,
then immediately I'll be healthy again! (2.23)

This, of course, is the cue for the old woman to enter for the second time: "Here I am now, my angel!" "Just my luck!" replies Papageno. She promises to love him tenderly if he will promise to be true to her eternally. When he hesitates to offer her his hand as a token of their covenant, saying that such a thing requires careful thought, she bursts out, "Papageno, I counsel you, do not hesitate. Give me your hand, or you will be incarcerated here forever. Water and bread will be your daily fare. You will have to live without a friend, without a girlfriend, and renounce the world eternally."

Papageno thinks about it: "Drink water? Renounce the world? No, in that case I would rather take an old woman than no woman at all. Now then, here you have my hand with my promise that I will always be true to you, (*to himself*) as long as I do not see a prettier woman." When he gives her his hand and formally swears this oath to her, she metamorphoses into a young woman, dressed just like he is: "Pa—Pa—Papagena!" he stammers (2.24).

When he attempts to embrace her, however, the spokesman takes her rapidly by the hand: "Away with you, young woman, he is not yet worthy of you." He tells Papageno to get back, which Papageno refuses to do: "Before I'll get back, may the earth swallow me up," which the earth now obligingly does (2.25).

The three angelic boys make their third appearance, as promised, with a song whose last two lines about the celestialization of earth and the apotheosis of mortals exactly repeat those sung by the chorus at the end of act 1:

Soon the sun will shine resplendently
in its golden orbit, to herald the morning.
Soon superstition will disappear,
soon the wise man will be victorious.
O gentle peace,³⁶ descend to us,
return into the hearts of humans again;
Then earth will be a heavenly realm
and mortals will be equal to the gods. (2.26)

But immediately one of the boys notices that Pamina is tormented by doubts and thinks she may even be insane. They resolve to comfort the poor girl, for "truly, her fate deeply affects us!" (2.24) (I argue in another essay about a later Viennese opera³⁷ which involves the intervention by unborn children that it may be possible for this statement to be literally true: these angelic beings may well represent the unborn spirits of Pamina's—and Papageno's—children. If so, her fate—and his—would indeed affect them most deeply!) To be on the safe side, they decide to further observe her suspicious behavior.

When they do, they see that she has decided to commit suicide by stabbing herself with the dagger brought to her earlier by her mother, whose curse, Pamina says, continues to plague her. They attempt to warn her verbally, but she persists, so they physically restrain her and tell her that if her young man could see this he would certainly die of grief, for he loves her alone. Although they are not at liberty to reveal to her why he could not speak to her, they do offer to take her to him so that she can see for herself that he has dedicated his heart to her and is even willing to face death on her account. As they prepare to leave, they join with her in a quartet:

Two hearts that burn in love,
human powerlessness can never part.
The labors of enemies are in vain;
The gods themselves protect them. (2.27)

Pamina arrives, as we have seen previously, just as Tamino is about to embark on his last trial, though unbeknownst to him he was destined to share

it with her. It will be recalled how she tells Tamino about the holy provenance of the magic flute, bids him play upon it, and leads him into the Temple of Trials even as she is led by Love.

Papageno Also Flirts with Suicide before Finding Love at Last

However, while Tamino and Pamina have been reunited to endure the last of their trials together, those by fire and water, another, more unfortunate character is also planning to commit suicide. Papageno has been unable to find his Papagena anywhere and, having forgotten the power of his magic bells, believes there is no way out but to hang himself from a tree. True to the comic bathos inherent in his character, he calls out to all the pretty girls in the world, saying he will reconsider his suicide if one of them will take pity on him. If they refuse, his suicide will be their fault, he reasons. After counting to three, with no response from any girls (including those in the audience, to whom this born ham always appeals³⁸), he proceeds with his plan, only to be interrupted at the last second by the three spirits, who condemn suicide and remind him he has forgotten his magic bells.

While he plays the bells, invoking their magic to bring his mate to him, the boys return to their flying machine and escort Papagena forth, then tell Papageno to turn around and look at her. A duet between the two avian characters ensues, the beginning of which evokes the mating ritual of certain birds³⁹ as these two astonished creatures begin by repeating the syllable *Pa*— seven times. Eventually they evoke heaven’s blessing upon their union, including the gift of many children, though their essentially narcissistic nature dictates their desire for children who will be many small copies of themselves, right down to their names and their respective gender:

Papageno. Pa—Pa—Pa—Pa—Pa—Pa—Papagena!

Papagena. Pa—Pa—Pa—Pa—Pa—Pa—Papageno!

Papageno. Are you now given to me totally?

Papagena. Now I am given to you totally!

Papageno. Well then, in that case be my little mate!

Papagena. Well then, in that case be my heart’s little dove!

Both. What a joy it will be,
 When the gods are mindful of us,
 and reward our love with children,
 such dear little tiny children!

Papageno. First a little Papageno!

Papagena. Then a little Papagena!

Papageno. Then another little Papageno!

Papagena. Then another little Papagena!
Both. Papagena! Papageno! Papagena!
It is the most sublime of all feelings,
when parents are blessed with
many, many, many, many
Pa—Pa—Pa—Pa—genos,
Pa—Pa—Pa—Pa—genas. (2.29)

Though Papageno displays many human frailties throughout *The Magic Flute* (which combine with the especially sympathetic music lavished on him by Mozart to make him one of the most beloved characters in the opera!), in the end love induces him to take the first step away from narcissism and hedonism to pray with Papagena that heaven bless them with many dear little tiny children. Even if the children look like so many little Papagenos and Papagenas, Papageno is nonetheless declaring himself ready to move outside himself to love and care for other beings. Miraculously, the gods have used his narcissism to help him overcome his narcissism.

The Couples Find Gender Equality in Divine Marriage

In at least one other way, we see that Papageno has moved away from egocentrism. His relationship with Papagena, as expressed in their duet, seems to be totally based on gender equality: there is no hint in the duet that Papageno will lord it over Papagena, who seems every bit his equal in every sense of the word. Perhaps this is in belated recognition of the fact that just as Tamino was led through his trials by Pamina, herself led by the goddess of Love and accompanied by the magic power of music, Papageno has also been led in very creative ways throughout all his trials by Papagena, herself led by the goddess of Love, and rescued at the last moment through the magic power of music.

So in the last analysis, in neither couple is the man superior to the woman, a fact brought into focus by the examination of a verse intended for the Three Boys that Mozart apparently chose not to set to music and include in the opera. According to a textbook of the opera from Berlin dating from 1795, the Three Boys would have been required to sing to Papagena, as they escorted her out of the flying machine to meet Papageno:

Come here, you sweet, dear little woman!
You are to devote your little heart to your husband!
He will love you, sweet little woman,
be your father, friend, and brother!
Be this man's property!⁴⁰

In addition to its other less-glaring weaknesses such as inane repetition, had it been included, this unattributed verse would have blatantly subordinated the woman to the man, making him her father and declaring her to be his chattel! In this verse, had it been set to music and included in the opera, one would have had a definitive refutation of our theory that this opera works to undermine chauvinism: the notion that one member of the human family—based on race or gender—could ever be considered inferior, even chattel, to another!

Evil Is Vanquished in a Glorious New Dawn

In any event, there is still one scene left in the opera, to which we will now attend: In the first part of the scene, Monostatos, the Queen, and her ladies-in-waiting climb up out of their infernal pit bearing black torches in their hands (even their “illumination” is black, it would seem), intending to ambush and massacre all the priests in the temple. Monostatos reminds the Queen of her promise to give him her daughter, a promise typical of the Queen and Monostatos, for it entirely ignores the issue of Pamina’s free will. They are somewhat apprehensive about the sound of thunder and waterfalls emanating from the temple, but, undaunted, their song changes into a mantra of idolatrous obeisance to their evil Queen-goddess:

Monostatos. Just be quiet, quiet, quiet, quiet!

Soon we will penetrate into the temple.

Queen and the Three Ladies. Just be quiet, quiet, quiet, quiet!

Soon we will penetrate into the temple.

Monostatos. But, O Queen, keep your word! Fulfill—

Your child must be my wife.

Queen. I will keep my word; it is my will:

My child shall be your wife.

The Three Ladies. Her child must be his wife.

(Muffled thunder, the sound of water are heard.)

Monostatos. Be quiet, I hear a horrible roaring

like thunder and a waterfall.

Queen and the Three Ladies. Yes, this roaring is dreadful

like the reverberation of distant thunder!

Monostatos. Now they are in the halls of the temple.

All. That is where we will attack them—

and eradicate these sanctimonious frauds from the earth
with fire and with mighty sword.

The Three Ladies and Monostatos. Unto you, great Queen of the
Night, may the victims of our revenge be offered as a sacrifice.

There is no need for a battle. At once an enormous sound is heard, a crashing chord, thunder, lightning, and windstorm all together. Instantly the stage is transformed into a great sun, whose rays banish all evil (plate 8 and back cover). Sarastro stands in an elevated position; Tamino and Pamina are wearing priestly attire, with all the priests arrayed on both sides of them. The Three Boys hold flowers in their hands.

Monostatos, Queen, and the Three Ladies. Our power is shattered,
annihilated,
we are all thrust down into eternal night. (*They sink away out of sight.*)

Sarastro. The rays of the sun banish the night,
destroying the ill-gotten power of hypocrites.

Chorus of Priests. Hail to you, consecrated ones!
You penetrated through night.
Thanks be unto you, Osiris,
and thanks to you, Isis!
Strength was victorious
and crowns beauty and wisdom, as a reward,
with an eternal crown! (2.30)

One Great Whole: We See the Role of Art in Theology

As the music changes from a chorale of thanks to a joyful kind of celebratory wedding dance, the curtain falls on this, Mozart's most remarkable paean of praise to husbands, wives, and children,⁴¹ to free will, faith, and forgiveness, to courage, to life, to universal equality, to eternal marriage, and to the apotheosizing potential of divine love.

In our reading of *The Magic Flute*, we have seen how apotheosis, that one great theological, philosophical, anthropological idea, amplified and multiplied by the medium of great art into a thousand beautiful facets—like one bright ray of light through a prism—can create heretofore unknown resonances in the human soul and can point to heretofore unknown implications for human behavior. In my experience with great works of art, such ideas are invariably depicted in the most profoundly moving aesthetic manner, as though held by their artist creators to be among the most precious insights vouchsafed them by the muses.

This fact suggests, to my mind at least, a mutually beneficial relationship that should exist between Latter-day Saints and the fine arts, in fact between Latter-day Saints and learning generally. As we contemplate our own struggles to realize the potential of our own remarkable theology, it is important to remember how much the arts, including *The Magic Flute*, have to offer, even to those who have a fulness of truth. These disciplines

have the power to substantiate and make us more profoundly appreciate both the myriad implications and the universal appeal of the tenets of our own sometimes neglected or even derided theology.

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Much of this article appears with excerpts from the original German libretto under the title "*Die Zauberflöte*: Mozart's Magical Celebration of Apotheosis, the Man/Woman Monad, and the Temple as Blueprint for Celestial Life" in my book *In Search of the Supernal: Pre-Existence, Eternal Marriage, and Apotheosis in German Literary, Operatic, and Cinematic Texts* (Münster: agenda Verlag, 2003), 79–136.

1. See Joseph Smith Jr., *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1950), 6:302–17.

2. *The Godmakers* is the title of an anti-Mormon book by Ed Decker and Dave Hunt (Eugene, Ore.: Harvest House Publishers, 1984) and two films based thereon.

3. Ernst W. Benz, "Der Mensch als *imago dei*," printed as "*Imago dei*: Man in the Image of God," in *Reflections on Mormonism: Judeo-Christian Parallels*, ed. Truman W. Madsen (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1978), 208.

Those interested in exploring Benz's paper further should know that only about two-thirds of my translation of Benz's lecture appeared in this monograph. For the missing third, one must consult the original German text in Ernst Benz, *Urbild und Abbild: Der Mensch und die mythische Welt* (Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1974), 475–508, or ask me for a copy of the full English translation (Alan_Keele@byu.edu). For more on Latter-day Saint doctrine on man in the image of God, see Donald Q. Cannon and Larry E. Dahl, *The Prophet Joseph Smith's King Follett Discourse: A Six Column Comparison of Original Notes and Amalgamations with Introduction and Commentary* (Provo, Utah: BYU Printing Service, 1983); Stan Larson, "The King Follett Discourse: A Newly Amalgamated Text," *BYU Studies* 18, no. 2 (1978): 193–208; and Van Hale, "The Doctrinal Impact of the King Follett Discourse," *BYU Studies* 18, no. 2 (1978): 209–23.

4. Benz, "Man in the Image of God," 209.

5. The following, from a contemporary review, is typical:

This ridiculous, absurd and insipid concoction, before which the powers of reason grind to a halt and critical thinking is forced to blush, would be forgotten and despised had it not been set to music by the great Mozart; however, by virtue of the grand talents of this genius, which he exhibited in their full strength, the entire work was a success; people ignored the rubbish . . . laughed off the caricatures, and reveled in the magic of the music. (Herr Knüppel, "Vertraute Briefe zur Charakteristik von Wien," cited in *Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Sämtliche Opernlibretti*, ed. Rudolph

Angermüller [Stuttgart: Reclam, 1990], 920). All translations from German are mine.

6. Actually *Johann Joseph* Schikaneder. Compare Volkmar Braunbehrens, *Mozart in Wien* (Munich: Piper, 1986), 505.

7. See Aaron Dalton's article in this issue of *BYU Studies*, "Diese Aufnahme ist bezaubernd schön: Deutsche Grammophon's 1964 *Magic Flute*," 251–69.

8. Compare Braunbehrens, *Mozart in Wien*, 260–62.

9. Compare Braunbehrens, *Mozart in Wien*, 284–85. See also Paul Kerry, "Initiates of Isis Now, Come, Enter into the Temple!": Masonic and Enlightenment Thought in *The Magic Flute*," in this issue of *BYU Studies*, 104–30.

10. See Robert B. McFarland's article in this issue of *BYU Studies*, "Mann und Weib and Baby Makes Two: Gender and Family in Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's Sequel to *The Magic Flute*," 206–17.

11. Compare Stefan Kunze, *Mozarts Opern* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1996), 628–29:

There remains a word to be said about the authorship of the *Magic-Flute* text. Since Otto Jahn's fundamental Mozart biography, Karl Ludwig Giesecke is regularly mentioned as an author, or at least a coauthor, doubtless with the unspoken but honorable motive of upgrading or upvaluing, in a round-about way, the *Magic-Flute* text. . . . But the theory is based only on one (questionable) witness: namely the testimony of Giesecke himself during a conversation in a tavern in Vienna in 1818. That is all—and it's not enough. But even asking the question this way is wrong and irrelevant. As wrong as it is to limit the question of authorship just to the text, it's just as wrong to view a piece like *The Magic Flute* as the literary property of *one* author. It's not a question of which author, whether one or several, rather it's a question of whether the piece was *authored*, in the strict sense. That which comprises the author: individuality of thought, of poetic structure, all of that is secondary in the Schikaneder libretto. Perhaps Giesecke and others did make their contributions to the way the scenes are conceived. But if there was a coauthor of *The Magic Flute*, then it was one about whose contribution we know absolutely nothing: namely Mozart.

12. As Philipp B. Malzl shows in his contribution to this issue of *BYU Studies*, "Marc Chagall's *Magic Flute* Poster: An Allegory of Eden," 218–28, Chagall was fascinated as well by the mythical implications of the opera, implications that are a function of the text even more than of the musical score.

13. Compare Wilhelm Zentner's introduction to the libretto in Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *Die Zauberflöte* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1962), 5–6.

14. Zentner, introduction to libretto, 5–6.

15. Some versions purporting to be earlier had a lion chasing Tamino, rather than a serpent, but this alternative is not only less interesting mythically, it is also potentially confusing because later Sarastro emerges in a chariot drawn by lions. Whether Mozart and Schikaneder originally wrote the part for a lion, eventually it became more or less standardized as a serpent (though my favorite performance, that by John Eliot Gardiner, uses a lion, presumably because the Pilobolus Dancers, who function both as the scenery and the set, can more easily imitate a lion than a snake!).

For further discussion of Tamino as an Adam figure and mythical creatures in *The Magic Flute*, see Malzl, “Marc Chagall’s *Magic Flute* Poster,” 218–28.

16. See Harrison Powley, “*Die Zauberflöte*: What’s in a Title?” in this issue of *BYU Studies*, 189–204.

17. William Shakespeare, *Othello*, 3.3; William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, 1.3.

18. Elysium is the Greek idea of paradise where the blessed go to eternal rest and joy. See John B. Fowles, “From Arcadia to Elysium in *The Magic Flute* and Weimar Classicism: The Plan of Salvation and Eighteenth-Century Views of Moral Progression,” in this issue of *BYU Studies*, 84–103.

19. For more on Orpheus, see Powley, “*Die Zauberflöte*,” 192.

20. Michael Evenden’s contribution to this issue of *BYU Studies*, “Sarastro’s Repentance: One Dramaturg’s Advice on *The Magic Flute*,” 162–69, raises the fascinating possibility (and confirms a long-standing suspicion of mine) that Sarastro should be seen as an imperfect, albeit penitent leader, perhaps having slaves after all (like other good men of the Enlightenment such as Thomas Jefferson!), perhaps even having improperly coveted Pamina at one point, but instrumental in guiding matters so that in the end a perfect godlike couple, Pamina and Tamino, lead the brother- and sisterhood into a brighter future.

21. Compare act 2, scene 7, where Monostatos says to himself, “So I have this day to thank for the fact that I can still tread on the earth with unbroken skin.” See also act 2, scene 11, Sarastro to Monostatos: “Be grateful that the evil actions of this woman allow you to leave unpunished.”

22. One need go no further than a U.S. dollar bill to see the pyramidion on the Great Seal of the United States. It contains the all-seeing eye of god, slightly separated from a pyramidal edifice composed of thirteen tiers of stone representing the thirteen original colonies, formed in god’s image, or in the image of the pyramidion, and striving to rise above the gap still separating the eternal from the mortal. Jefferson, Washington, Mozart, and Schikaneder shared not only the same Enlightenment and Freemasonic views but the same pyramidal, Egyptian iconography to describe them. See Kerry Muhlestein, “European Views of Egyptian Magic and Mystery: A Cultural Context for *The Magic Flute*,” in this issue of *BYU Studies*, 137–48.

23. Clearly, the new couple mentioned is not Tamino and Papageno, the two men being led into the Temple of Trials, but Tamino and Pamina, whom the gods have reserved for each other.

24. That Osiris and Isis are also brother and sister detracts not at all from their holiness, for in the realm of heaven all beings are brothers and sisters and incest exists not at all. Much the same kind of divine marriage union obtains between Siegmund and his twin sister Sieglinde in Wagner’s *Ring of the Nibelungen*. And though there are many other god-couples in the pantheon such as Zeus and Hera, Wotan and Fricka, Haephestos and Aphrodite, one is hard pressed to think of any of them besides Isis and Osiris who remain true to each other and do not fight all the time!

25. Known to the Greeks and others as Typhon, this evil deity is portrayed as a kind of King Kong in Gustav Klimt’s famous *Beethoven Frieze* of 1902, located in the Secession House in Vienna (home to an alternative modern school of art that “seceded” from the nearby art academy).

26. Compare Sir James George Frazer, *The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion* (New York: Macmillan, 1922), 442–47. See *Ramses II: The Pharaoh and His Time, Exhibition Catalogue* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1985), plate p. 44.

27. See in this issue of *BYU Studies* John Gee's "Notes on the Egyptian Motifs in Mozart's *The Magic Flute*," 149–60.

28. See Victoria Webb, "The Queen of the Night: A Daughter's Plea," in this issue of *BYU Studies*, 180–88.

29. See Kerry, "Masonic and Enlightenment Thought in *The Magic Flute*," 104–30.

30. In the German, there is an interesting use of the *singular* forms of address *du*, *dein* (thou, thine): are Tamino and Pamina now literally to be considered one flesh, a device made possible in German grammar because the word *couple* is singular. The text returns to the plural in the next sentence with the imperative plural forms *come*, *enter*, *both of you*.

31. At one other equally significant point in the opera, namely at the very end of the first act, the prophetic chorus about the celestialization of the earth and the apotheosis of humankind also includes women (1.19), a musical clue that in the heavenly realm, and in the perfected earthly realm modelled on it, no discrimination on the basis of gender exists.

32. Compare Soliman's picture in Braunbehrens, *Mozart in Wien*, plate 10.

33. For all the information about Soliman, I am indebted to Braunbehrens, *Mozart in Wien*, 96–99.

34. See David P. Crandall's article in this issue of *BYU Studies*: "Monostatos, the Moor," 170–79.

35. Here the German is *Seligkeit*, an enormously important word. Not translatable with one English equivalent, the word carries several meanings ranging from the theological notion of everlasting life and salvation to the emotional state thought to be enjoyed by beings who attain to eternal life: supreme bliss, sheer joy, and divine happiness. In the context of Papageno's aria it is clear that *Seligkeit* bears both meanings, for he sings not only of his earthly happiness, but of his expected status as prince and wise man in Elysium if he is successful; the image also considers the flame (presumably not only of his love, but of hell) that will consume him if he fails to find a wife.

36. This language is similar to that in the last two lines of Pamina's and Tamino's farewell song: "Alas, golden calm, peace, or stillness, return again!" (2.21). It is also remarkably similar to the sentiment expressed in Goethe's most famous poem, "Über allen Gipfeln / Ist Ruh": (Above all mountain peaks there is calm), where calm, peace, or stillness, a heavenly attribute, also descends to mortals.

37. This is *Die Frau ohne Schatten* by Hugo von Hofmannsthal with music by Richard Strauss. My essay is in my book *In Search of the Supernal: Pre-Existence, Eternal Marriage, and Apotheosis in German Literary, Operatic, and Cinematic Texts* (Münster: agenda Verlag, 2003).

38. For one young audience member's response to this scene, see Lawrence P. Vincent, "A Performer's Reflections on Die Zauberflöte," in this issue of *BYU Studies*, 39.

39. The German word for parrot is *Papagei*, of which Papageno/-a would seem to be an echo. The suffixes *-geno* and *-gena* suggest engendering. Some might connect the repetition of the syllable Pa- seven times (as well as the sevenfold sun disk) with the number for the creation, represented by the seven periods.

40. Zentner, introduction to libretto, 67n6.

41. See Kaye Terry Hanson's article in this issue of *BYU Studies*, "A Magic Summer with *The Magic Flute*," 30–35.



© Bildarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz

Johann Christoph Friedrich von Schiller, oil painting by Gerhard von Kügelgen, 1808–1809. Original: Freies Deutsches Hochstift, Frankfurt am Main. Schiller's philosophy of moral education, an integral part of Weimar Classicism and developed most fully in *On the Aesthetic Education of Man in a Series of Letters* (1795), is a productive eighteenth-century lens through which to view the ideas of moral progression found in *The Magic Flute*. Photograph by Lutz Braun.

From Arcadia to Elysium in *The Magic Flute* and Weimar Classicism

The Plan of Salvation and Eighteenth-Century Views of Moral Progression

John B. Fowles

The painful sighs are now past.
Elysium's joyful banquets
Drown the slightest moan—
Elysium's life is
Eternal rapture, eternal flight;
Through laughing meadows a brook pipes its tune.
.....

Here faithful couples embrace each other,
Kiss on the velvet green sward
As the soothing west wind caresses them;
Here love is crowned,
Safe from death's merciless blow
It celebrates an eternal wedding feast.

—Friedrich Schiller¹

Presumably, many people gloss over the aphorism that life is a journey—indeed, for Latter-day Saints, an “eternal journey”²—as cliché. But this aphorism encapsulates profound theological, philosophical, moral, and even teleological implications that should indeed interest most people. The journey metaphor connotes progress and ascension, indicating beginning, purpose, and end to mortal existence. True, moving linearly from point A to point B—metaphorically ascending a ladder or climbing a steep mountain³—fittingly illustrates the progress inherent in this eternal journey. But a cyclical understanding of this progression—spiraling upward from one state of being to another—also captures and perhaps even enriches the sense of mankind's journey.

What, then, is the nature of this cyclical journey? Where does it begin and end? What is its purpose? In many cases, religion seeks to answer these questions for sincere disciples who desire meaning in and a satisfactory end to life's journey. For example, in the Latter-day Saint plan of salvation, each individual begins life's cyclical journey in a state of innocence in the presence of God, progresses through mortal existence as a sojourner on Earth, and relies on the grace of Jesus Christ while individually striving to become "perfect"⁴ in order to return into the presence of God. Those who return to God's presence will do so as exalted, sentient beings; they will have become like God in many ways, such as knowing good from evil and choosing the good for its own sake.

Similarly, eighteenth-century aesthetic theory investigated the nature of existence, albeit from the perspective of aesthetic and moral development. In this context, eighteenth-century thinkers in Austria and Germany also explored human life as a journey. They emphasized moral progression in ways that unwittingly anticipate Latter-day Saint views of human existence and progression. For example, when Mozart and Schikaneder worked together on *The Magic Flute* in 1791, they imbued their *magnum opus* with symbolic meaning that essentially allegorized the nature of life's journey. Their dramatization of moral progression not only constitutes the substance of this opera as the initiates endure arduous trials in their search for truth, but the concept of moral progression also occupies center stage in the nearly contemporaneous German literary movement of Weimar Classicism (1795–1805) through Friedrich Schiller's aesthetic philosophy.

In contrast to the rather traditional linear depiction of progress in life's journey found in *The Magic Flute*, Schiller examines progression from point A to point B more as a cyclical moral change of state within the individual than as a physical change of location. That is, Weimar Classicism traces humanity's aesthetic and moral progression metaphorically from a paradisiacal but naive Arcadia⁵ through an educative cycle in search of maturity, truth, and improvement with the goal of one day returning to paradise. For those who have achieved an elevated level of moral awareness, this paradise will no longer be that naive Arcadia but rather a conscious Elysium.⁶ This Schillerian perspective not only enriches interpretations of the initiates' progression in the *The Magic Flute*'s ritual journey but can also contribute to our understanding of the individual's ascension in the "eternal journey of man"⁷ in the Latter-day Saint plan of salvation.

Mormons, Masonry, and *The Magic Flute*

Many Latter-day Saints might be surprised to learn that they are more familiar with Mozart's *Magic Flute* than they might have thought. The melody to the opera's beautiful and profound Aria 7, Papageno and Pamina's "Bei Männern welche Liebe fühlen," was put to words in "Though in the Outward Church Below," a hymn included in Latter-day Saint hymnals from the beginning of the Church until 1985.⁸ Also, Papageno's silly Aria 20, "Ein Mädchen oder Weibchen," has been used for the Latter-day Saint children's Primary song "I Pledge Myself to Love the Right."⁹

But more importantly, Latter-day Saints will likely resonate with the opera's essence: "the struggle between Good and Evil, and a young man's and young woman's progress toward self-knowledge, enlightenment and marriage."¹⁰ Furthermore, Latter-day Saints may be interested to learn that the ethical principles expressed in the opera, "the quest for wisdom, truth, and true human happiness"¹¹—Enlightenment principles with which many Latter-day Saints will feel intimately comfortable—are also shared by German and Austrian Freemasonry of the late eighteenth century.¹² Mozart was an active Freemason since 1784 in the Vienna Lodge Zur Wohltätigkeit (Beneficence), and Schikaneder had been involved in the Regensburg Lodge Zu den drei Schlüsseln (The Three Keys) in Bavaria during 1788 before moving to Vienna in 1789.

In addition, because all of Mozart's works contain a "productive power" that seems to renew itself in every generation—as observed in 1828 by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe,¹³ one of the architects of Weimar Classicism—modern interpretations of *The Magic Flute* can "productively" inform Latter-day Saint notions of eternal progression in the plan of salvation. Read in this way, Masonic principles of moral education through individual initiative, the triumph of good over evil—of light over darkness—as encoded in *The Magic Flute*, may simultaneously illuminate the Prophet Joseph Smith's own attraction to Freemasonry in Nauvoo.

Goethe, Mozart, Schikaneder, and many other Enlightenment figures were Freemasons. Perhaps Joseph Smith understood that Latter-day Saint doctrines and Freemasonry were not exclusive of each other. To the contrary, "both emphasize morality, sacrifice, consecration, and service, and both condemn selfishness, sin, and greed."¹⁴ Furthermore, both the Latter-day Saint temple ceremony and the rites of Freemasonry focus on the allegorical portrayal of progression. The temple ceremony contains "a model setting forth the pattern of human life on earth and the divine plan of which it is part," and the rites of Freemasonry portray "life's states—youth, manhood, and old age—each with its associated burdens and challenges,

followed by death and hoped-for immortality.”¹⁵ In fact, the similarities in these allegorical teachings prompted Joseph Smith to suggest “that the endowment and Freemasonry in part emanated from the same ancient spring.”¹⁶ Progression with perfection as the ultimate goal constitutes a common element in Latter-day Saint temple theology and enlightened principles of Freemasonry.

Discussing some of the ancient sources that may relate to Latter-day Saint temples, Hugh Nibley examines some apocryphal New Testament-period writings that, like the aesthetic theory of Weimar Classicism, can actually support the view of the plan of salvation as cyclical, rather than simply as lineal ascent as in *The Magic Flute*. But the plan of salvation cannot be a two-dimensional circle, because although cyclical, it would not be progressive. As Nibley points out, the writer of the apocryphal Gospel of Philip understood the inadequacy of a two-dimensional view of progress by equating “the false progress of this world” with an “ass turning a wheel, going around and around, turning the wheel and getting nowhere at all.”¹⁷ Viewed from above, the cycle or journey of the plan of salvation might indeed appear two dimensional, both beginning and ending in the presence of God; but one could also view it as the three-dimensional cross section of a spiral staircase in which the cycle of eternal existence appears to spiral upwards, beginning on a certain plane—in the presence of God during the premortal life—and spiraling through the life cycle to end on a higher plane, ideally again in the presence of God, but this time in an exalted state of being. “Until Christ opened the way, it was impossible to go from one level to another. He is the great opener of the way because he gave us the plan by which we can progress. He is the way” (Gospel of Philip 768:17–22).¹⁸

Similarly, in the Latter-day Saint plan of salvation, the Atonement of Jesus Christ enables such progression. To put this in the allegorical terms of Weimar Classicism, then, Adam is in the Garden of Eden, or the naive innocence of Arcadia, and Jesus Christ, “the last Adam” (1 Cor. 15:45), is in the glory of the celestial kingdom, or a conscious Elysium: “the first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven” (1 Cor. 15:47). Indeed, to universalize this notion, “for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive” (1 Cor. 15:22). Through an emphasis on *becoming*, or on progressing from one moral state of being to another, Weimar Classicism’s allegorical progression both contributes to a Latter-day Saint understanding of the plan of salvation and enhances interpretations of Mozart and Schikaneder’s *Magic Flute*.

The Magic Flute in Austria and the nearly contemporaneous literary/aesthetic movement of Weimar Classicism in Germany both share

a common ancestor: Christoff Martin Wieland (1733–1813).¹⁹ Wieland, a Freemason, brought with him to Weimar in 1772 an education reflecting general trends of the broader European Enlightenment. Wieland's philosophy appears to have been influenced by the thought of the Earl of Shaftesbury, an English Freemason, and the German jurist Pufendorf, among others. Educated by John Locke, Shaftesbury used common-sense toleration and a "rational deism" as a compromise between atheism and orthodoxy.²⁰ By combining Pufendorf's emphasis on natural law and natural religion with Shaftesbury's religious moderation, Wieland taught reason and free discussion as guides to truth.²¹ Essentially, Shaftesbury's approach greatly influenced Wieland's concept of *Bildung*, "of man making himself."²² Both Mozart and Schikaneder were familiar with Wieland's literary achievements—particularly his *Oberon* (1780). "Mozart owned a copy of the Wieland poem, and Schikaneder was so conscious of his indebtedness to Wieland (though not specifically for *Oberon*) that he remembered him in his will of 17 December 1803."²³ In any event, Wieland's humanistic ideas surface in the Masonic educative progression of *The Magic Flute* and later—in a modified form—are central to the "beautiful soul" of Weimar Classicism.

Wieland's philosophy of *Bildung*, or moral education, which informed both *The Magic Flute* and perhaps more heavily Weimar Classicism, reflected the principles of eighteenth-century German Freemasonry. According to the eighteenth-century Freemason Johann Gottlieb Fichte, disciple of Kant and professor of philosophy at the University of Jena in the principality of Weimar, the purpose of genuine, humanitarian German Freemasonry was the moral "education of the *whole* man."²⁴

Eighteenth-century "German Freemasonry" focused on the humanitarian project of moral education and avoided political involvement. In contrast, "romance" Freemasonry—at home in France, Italy, and Spain—was politically liberal and mystical, a quality perceived as corrupt by German adherents of the movement.²⁵ Specifically, "Fichte assumes that alongside the open training of men for their special work in society," Freemasonry "[has] supplied the deficiencies of the one-sided training in society and sought to train men as such and not as followers of some particular calling."²⁶ This education of the whole man meant equipping him for success in his quest for truth, the achievement of which constituted Freemasonry's ultimate goal. Moreover, in his lectures on Freemasonry,²⁷ Fichte appreciated the role of allegorical drama in this educative process, finding that the instruction necessary for achieving this ultimate goal of truth "may be carried on by myths and allegories and symbols."²⁸

In Vienna, the scientist and Freemason Ignaz von Born—contemporary and Masonic brother of Mozart—similarly identified man’s quest for truth and wisdom as defining Austrian Freemasonry in his seminal article “On the Mysteries of the Egyptians” (“Ueber die Mysterien der Aegyptier”) of 1784. Of the purpose of Masonry, von Born writes, “Is not truth, wisdom and the advancement of the bliss of the entire human race the actual end goal of our Brotherhood?”²⁹ Furthermore, asks von Born,

Does a more exalted or nobler purpose exist than to expand our knowledge through reciprocal instruction, to show all who have entered into our circle the straight way to perfection on the path of virtue, and as brothers to bring them back if they stray, to encourage each other daily to perform virtuous deeds, to do all that is good, and to prevent all that is evil?³⁰

Von Born’s essay not only summarizes many principles of eighteenth-century Austrian Freemasonry, including the quest for truth and virtue, but its doctrines also perhaps affected the writing of *The Magic Flute* directly through Mozart and Schikaneder’s association with Ignaz von Born.³¹ As the head of the lodge Zur wahren Eintracht (True Concord), Ignaz von Born may have given them the idea to glorify ideals of pure humanity in the opera—to display the victory of light over darkness in the Masonic sense of enlightenment.³²

The Masonic nature of *The Magic Flute* is beyond dispute.³³ A defining characteristic of Masonic allegorical fiction during the eighteenth century revolves around the fraternity’s educative focus: “Freemasonic allegory often has Minerva leading the Mason along an educational path.”³⁴ In addition to Wieland’s works, *The Magic Flute* owes a debt to other earlier works with Masonic ties involving ritual education, including Abbé Jean Terrasson’s *Sethos* (1730), which—similar to Fichte’s view of Freemasonry—“aims to depict the ‘entire life’ of the hero.”³⁵ In fact, “any post-1730 work of fiction that describes a ritual education owes at least an indirect debt to Terrasson’s novel.”³⁶

With its emphasis on ritual education, then, it is not surprising that *The Magic Flute* is “the most famous work of art based in part on *Sethos*, . . . reproduc[ing] the trials by fire, water, and air administered by a priestly secret society.”³⁷ These trials in the opera facilitate Tamino’s initiation out of his initial naive, superstitious position into a state of moral awareness and reason. Much as Wieland presented a humanistic philosophy of man making himself, Fichte envisioned oral, allegorical Masonic instruction, and von Born insisted upon the obtainment of truth and virtue through fraternal assistance in the lodge, Tamino and Papageno begin their own allegorical journey as they embark on their quest for truth in the opera.

Moral Education in *The Magic Flute*

Ironically, Tamino and Papageno's journey for truth begins with a lie. Observing Tamino's reaction to the portrait of her daughter, the Queen of Night decides to use him as her instrument in regaining her deceased husband's "sevenfold circle of the sun," without which she has diminished power (2.8).³⁸ But it is not until the middle of the second act that the Queen reveals in a conversation with Pamina, her daughter, that her husband was formerly an initiate together with Sarastro in the brotherhood and that Sarastro now wears the sevenfold circle of the sun around his neck. The Queen initially veils this true nature of things in assigning a quest to Tamino to rescue her daughter from Sarastro, who the Queen's servants claim is a "powerful, evil Demon" (1.5). Furthermore, Tamino leaves his audience with the Queen with the false impression that she mourns for her daughter when she really only cares about regaining her power (1.6). Thus, Tamino embarks on his journey because of the Queen's lie.

By contrast, Papageno the bird catcher, Tamino's companion in this allegorical—educative—journey, begins his quest with his own lie, declaring that he has killed the serpent that Tamino had confronted before fainting, and is immediately punished as the Three Ladies padlock his lips for lying (1.2–3). Foreshadowing the larger moral teaching of the opera's quest for truth, the Three Ladies, Tamino, and Papageno decry the vice of lying in song: "If all liars received such a lock on their mouths, instead of hate, slander, and black gall, there would be love and brotherhood" (*Bekämen doch die Lügner alle / Ein solches Schloß vor ihren Mund: / Statt Haß, Verleumdung, schwarzer Galle / Bestünde Lieb und Bruderbund*) (1.8). But since, as Locke posits, truth has the tendency to find its own way into the hearts of men,³⁹ the untrue premises of Tamino's search cannot long stand.

Through his own educational experience Tamino learns the true nature of Sarastro's brotherhood of initiates and discerns the Queen's lie. The truth begins to dawn on Tamino when he stands in front of three temples prominently positioned in Sarastro's realm. In No. 8 Finale, "This course leads you to your goal" (*Zum Ziele führt dich diese Bahn*), the Three Boys admonish him to be "steadfast, tolerant, and discreet" (*standhaft, duldsam, und verschwiegen*), in order to achieve his objective. Noting the Boys' words and his surroundings, Tamino asks himself, "Is this place the seat of the gods?" (*Ist dies der Sitz der Götter hier?*), and concludes, "But both gates and pillars show that wisdom and work and the arts tarry here. Where activity reigns and slothfulness yields, vice cannot easily come to power. I venture courageously to enter the gates" (*Doch zeigen die Pforten, es zeigen die Säulen, / Daß Klugheit und Arbeit und Künste hier weilen. /*

Wo Tätigkeit thronet und Müßiggang weicht, / Erhält seine Herrschaft das Laster nicht leicht. / Ich wage mich mutig zur Pforte hinein) (1.15).

Although a voice prevents Tamino from entering either the Temple of Reason or the Temple of Nature, while standing at the door of the Temple of Wisdom, he begins to perceive through such reasoning that Sarastro rules there. In the meantime, Papageno, while separated from Tamino, has found Pamina. Seeing the simple good in Papageno, his “feeling heart” (gefühlvolles Herz), Pamina begins Aria 7, “For men who can feel love” (Bei Männern, welche Liebe fühlen), an ode to universal, binding love. Of unifying love Pamina sings, “Its lofty goal most clearly shows that nothing is more noble than woman and man. Man and woman and woman and man together approach divinity” (Ihr hoher Zweck zeigt deutlich an: / Nichts Edlers sei, als Weib und Mann. / Mann und Weib und Weib und Mann / Reichen an die Gottheit an) (1.14, Aria 7). These lines foreshadow the end of the perfecting educative journey on which Tamino will soon embark in order to become an initiate in Sarastro’s brotherhood: he must be united with Pamina to become complete.

By the time Tamino meets Sarastro, the audience has already experienced Sarastro’s wisdom and moderation in ruling his realm (compare 1.18).⁴⁰ After meeting Sarastro, Tamino begins to take some initiative, agreeing to become an initiate, and he is led with Papageno into the “Prüfungstempel” (Temple of Trials) while the choir lauds the power of virtue and righteousness to make a heaven on earth and mortals like gods (1.19). Of Tamino’s submission to the initiation ritual, Sarastro states, “This young man desires to tear his dark veil from his face and peer into the sanctuary of the greatest light” (dieser Jüngling will seinen nächtlichen Schleier von sich reißen, und ins Heiligtum des größten Lichtes blicken); in response to the Speaker’s concern that Tamino’s status as a prince might hinder him in his moral education—“He is a prince!” (Er ist Prinz!)—Sarastro replies simply, “More than that—he is a man!” (Noch mehr—er ist Mensch!) (2.1).

Tamino’s personal quest for truth constitutes the opera’s particular focus. Furthermore, in his comment to the Speaker, Sarastro reveals his brotherhood’s broader mission: “And you, friend! Whom through us the gods have appointed to be a defender of the truth—fulfill your holy office and teach them both through your wisdom mankind’s duty, teach them to recognize the power of the gods” (Und du, Freund! den die Götter durch uns zum Verteidiger der Wahrheit bestimmten—vollziehe dein heiliges Amt, und lehre durch deine Weisheit beide, was Pflicht der Menschheit sei, lehre sie die Macht der Götter erkennen) (2.1). This admonition reflects the purpose of Freemasonry—its ultimate search for truth.⁴¹ Thus the opera takes on both a particular and universal allegorical focus.

At this point, Tamino's initiation trials begin. Although the entire opera is an allegorical process, this section contains perhaps the more didactic, Masonic content. Tamino and Papageno face three trials: silence (2.3–6, 13–19) and fire and water (2.28). Meanwhile, Pamina encounters her mother, the Queen of Night, and informs her that Tamino will become an initiate. In response, the Queen of Night unveils her true nature as the embodiment of darkness and evil in Aria 14, singing, "Hell's vengeance burns within my heart; death and despair are aflame all around me!" (Der Hölle Rache kocht in meinem Herzen, / Tod und Verzweiflung flammet um mich her!) (2.8); but Pamina passes a trial of her own in rejecting her mother's command to kill Sarastro (2.9). Pamina is then led to Tamino by his playing of the flute during his trial of silence, but to her dismay he does not speak to her, thus passing his own test (2.18–21).

Papageno, on the other hand, fails his test of silence miserably, forfeiting his chance of becoming an initiate, although he will still gain the wife, Papagena, whom he seeks (2.23, 29), and thus united with his love will also finish the journey on a higher plane, or state of being, than he began. As Tamino prepares to embark on his next two trials, of fire and water, Pamina is allowed to join him in passing these tests, and they enter the temple together: "What joy to see each other again. We enter the temple gladly hand in hand. A woman that does not dread night and death is worthy and will be initiated" (Welch Glück, wenn wir uns wiedersehn. / Froh Hand in Hand im Tempel gehn. / Ein Weib, das Nacht und Tod nicht scheut, / Ist würdig, und wird eingeweiht) (2.28).

After their moral education in these rituals and with each other as companions, they have internalized the flute's power in their hearts.⁴² This fulfils the Three Boys' prophecy in Finale 21,

Soon the sun will parade on its golden path
To announce the morning—
Soon superstition will disappear
And the wise man will conquer!
Oh lovely peace, descend here
And return into the hearts of men.
Then the earth will be a kingdom of heaven
And mortals will resemble gods. (2.26)
[Bald prangt, den Morgen zu verkünden,
Die Sonn auf goldner Bahn—
Bald soll der Aberglaube schwinden,
Bald siegt der weise Mann!—
O holde Ruhe, steig hernieder,
Kehr in der Menschen Herzen wieder.
Dann ist die Erd ein Himmelreich
Und Sterbliche den Göttern gleich.]

Tamino began his quest in a naive, superstitious state; now he and Pamina have been steadfast in their trials and have gained further light and knowledge. Their change of state can represent progression from a naive Arcadia to conscious Elysium; they are now “complete”—*together* they “approach divinity” (Aria 7, 1.14).

Cyclical Aesthetic and Moral Progression in Weimar Classicism

The Magic Flute very capably depicts moral education as the initiates progress from ignorance to illumination through their various trials. Shortly after *The Magic Flute*’s debut, the German poet and aesthetic theorist Friedrich Schiller added perspective to this type of educative process by noting its inherently cyclical nature. This insightful approach adds value to interpretations of the progress inherent in moral education, whether looking backwards to *The Magic Flute* and Freemasonry’s penchant for allegorical moral education or looking ahead to the peculiar emphasis that Latter-day Saints put on allegorical drama in moral education.

Schiller’s philosophical and aesthetic theory expressly revolved around the relationship between Arcadia and Elysium in both the universal progression of mankind and in the individual’s quest for perfection. His ideas lend depth to Tamino’s and Pamina’s own allegorical quest in *The Magic Flute*. He discusses Adam and Eve’s fall in the Garden of Eden as the greatest event in the history of mankind, opening the way not only for mankind to progress, but also by implication for individuals in a cyclical journey toward perfection. This perspective of moral progression is particularly informative for Latter-day Saints.

Conjecturing that before the Fall Adam and Eve were perfect in the sense that they were perfectly—or completely—acted upon by nature, like animals, Schiller proclaims that

this Fall of mankind from instinct, which indeed brought moral evil into the creation but only to make the moral good possible, is without objection the happiest and the greatest event in the history of humanity. Man’s freedom stems from this moment; here is where the first cornerstone was laid for his morality.⁴³

The Fall enabled mankind’s progression because through it, Adam and Eve first became capable of exercising their reason while striving for the moral good:

Philosophers are correct in naming it a giant step for humanity because through it man became an agent unto himself, having hitherto been a slave of his natural appetites; man went from being an automaton to a moral being, and with this step he first mounted the ladder which is to lead him to self-mastery after the course of many millennia.⁴⁴

Although referring in this passage to humanity's progress as ascension on a ladder, Schiller also began to view it as a progressive cycle spiraling from a starting point in the perfect, although naive and innocent, Arcadia to a *higher plane of perfection* in a morally aware Elysium. The upward cycle of progression helps us understand the concept of "a higher plane of perfection," which at first glance seems like a contradiction in terms. But Schiller adamantly propounds this conception: Arcadia and Elysium are lower and higher states of perfection with regards to humanity's moral maturity. Essentially, Schiller is suggesting a notion of perfection within progressive spheres. Thus the upwardly spiraling cycle illuminates each successive sphere of progression as a sort of landing on an ascending spiral staircase. Moral cognizance is key:

Man was to learn to find again through *reason* the state of innocence which he had lost, and **to return again**—this time as a free, rational intellect—to that state which he left as a *plant* and as a mere creature of instinct. From a paradise of ignorance and servitude he was **to work his way up**—even if it took many long millennia—to a paradise of knowledge and freedom; that is, to a paradise where he would obey the moral law within his own breast just as unflinchingly as he had obeyed instinct in the beginning.⁴⁵

Metaphorically speaking, then, "man went . . . from being a happy instrument to an unhappy artist."⁴⁶ Much as Tamino in *The Magic Flute* received a moral education before unification with Pamina, the resulting "artist" must be morally and aesthetically educated to become complete.

With a view toward attaining this completion, the conscious program of Weimar Classicism as a literary movement was an effort "to reconcile particular and general, sense and reason, experience and necessary truth, man's particularities and his generic character."⁴⁷ More specifically, Schiller seeks "to restore man's unity and wholeness, which has been torn apart by the duality of reason and sensuality,"⁴⁸ through aesthetic education analogous to Tamino's initiation in *The Magic Flute*. In the terms of Weimar Classicism, the desired result is a *schöne Seele* (beautiful soul), or a new moral state of being in which the moral law has been internalized so fully that the individual naturally conforms to it in all of its actions.⁴⁹ This moral state constitutes Schiller's "higher paradise"—Elysium—in his lecture about Adam and Eve: attainment of it means that the individual has consciously and completely—perfectly—internalized and chosen to abide by moral laws and has thus *become* a being whose actions are naturally moral. Essentially, achieving this state of being will fulfill the Three Boys' prophecy in *The Magic Flute* that "the earth will be a kingdom of heaven and mortals will resemble gods" (2.26), and the individual, like Tamino, will enter an Elysean existence, having established peace in his or her heart.

The importance of *becoming* distinguishes the ideal towards which humanity and the individual are striving—Elysium—from the natural harmony in Arcadia. This component of moral choice—possible because of man’s Fall and resultant entrance into human society, or culture—renders Elysium a more desirable, even divine, state of being. Presence in Elysium will be deserved, whereas the “perfection” of those in Arcadia “is not something they have deserved, since it is not the result of a decision on their part. . . . What distinguishes us from them is exactly what they lack [for divinity]. We are free and what they are is necessary; we [change], they remain one.”⁵⁰ People should be motivated through aesthetic, moral education to approach Elysium rather than passively to look back to Arcadia.⁵¹ In this sense, Arcadia and Elysium could even occupy the same physical location: the individual approaching Elysium comes full circle but in doing so has progressed by spiraling up to a higher moral state of being. Tamino and Pamina—united after their initiation trials—experience just such a quickening as they “approach divinity,” even though they physically may remain in the same temple. Thus, if “the human being who now can no longer return to *Arcadia*”⁵² can be led “to *Elyseum*,” then there may indeed be completion to such an allegorical cycle. And *The Magic Flute* depicts such completion poignantly through Tamino and Pamina’s ultimate marriage to each other, which is also a necessary factor in the Latter-day Saint plan of salvation to attain perfection in the educative cycle.

Conclusion

The theme of allegorical moral education runs through Freemasonry, through eighteenth-century German and Austrian aesthetic thought, and also, in a notably similar way, through Latter-day Saint doctrines of progression in the plan of salvation, although no direct, definitive links between any of these expressions have been shown or suggested in this study. Weimar Classicism’s contribution to the notion of allegorical progression is its perspective of cyclical progression from one state of being to another. *The Magic Flute* provides an allegory of moral progression from a naive, superstitious state of being—Schiller’s metaphorical Arcadia—to a higher existence of moral awareness and intelligence—Schiller’s ideal Elysium—through tests and trials that prove the initiate’s righteousness and virtue. Perfection, or completion, is finally attained through marriage with another who has also overcome.

These concepts can be particularly meaningful for Latter-day Saints with their understanding of the plan of salvation and their use of allegorical drama in the temple to teach it. In all of these perspectives of progression,

the individual is not alone in life's journey, but rather is led by a mentor. In *The Magic Flute*, the speaker guides the initiates through their trials; in Schiller's aesthetic philosophy, the poet or artist leads the way. For Latter-day Saints, however, the ultimate and essential mentor in this process is the Lord Jesus Christ. In Latter-day Saint theology, Christ's Atonement is necessary for entrance into Elysium, to incorporate that term from Schiller's analytical framework. That is, "perfection" or "completion" as an end goal of this cyclical existence is impossible for Latter-day Saints without the Atonement. But, as with Papageno in *The Magic Flute*, individual unwillingness to internalize the moral laws and obey the commandments—to attain a condition of harmony with God's law out of individual volition—similarly precludes entrance into a Schillerian Elysium despite the indispensability of Christ's mediation.

The element of individual initiative, rather than the necessity of Christ's mediation, is the central feature of both the Freemasonic perspective of *The Magic Flute* and the aesthetic approach of Weimar Classicism. Both require individual action and deplore passivity or slothfulness. Tamino first begins realizing Sarastro's true nature when he notices that Sarastro's realm is a place of intelligence, work, and art: "Where activity reigns and slothfulness yields, vice cannot easily come to power" (1.15). This attitude reigns in Weimar Classicism as well, for example in Goethe's *Faust I*, where Faust sets the conditions of wagering his very soul with Mephistopheles by saying, "Should I ever lay satisfied on a bed of sloth / then let me be done for then and there!" (Werd' ich beruhigt je mich auf ein Faulbett legen, / so sei es gleich um mich getan!) (*Faust*, 1692).

Precisely because Faust does not become passive in this way—or content in a personal Arcadia—he gains salvation. This teaching is also allegorical: "Faust's continued ascension is symbolic of man's striving to attain [godly attributes] eventually in their perfect form and incorporate them as his own."⁵³ Like Adam and Eve or Tamino and Pamina, Faust can also represent all mankind in his journey,⁵⁴ teaching the importance of continued striving for Elysium.

Not surprisingly, the Freemason Wieland's works influenced the creation of *The Magic Flute*, and Mozart and Schikaneder's opera subsequently greatly influenced Goethe. In fact, Goethe began, but never finished, a sequel to *The Magic Flute*⁵⁵ that shifted the philosophical focus of the drama to the polarity between activity and passivity—expansion and concentration—in which action or movement is seen as life itself, and inaction or passivity is death.⁵⁶ This development, if it had been fully realized by Goethe, would have thrown the factor of individual initiative in this process of moral education into bold relief.

Finally, Elder Russell M. Nelson points out the central place in Latter-day Saint thought of individual initiative, in addition to reliance on Christ's grace, in this progressive cycle. Comparing the individual's initiative in internalizing "fundamentals"—divine, moral, and social laws—to a spinning top that creates forces providing lift outward and upward, Elder Nelson teaches, "How can one's personal progress approach that of the Lord's hopes for us [in 3 Ne. 27:27]? It is by exercising individual initiative upwards and outwards, while remaining within the limits of the fundamental bounds and conditions we have discussed."⁵⁷ Because Tamino followed through with his initiation, he was endowed with intelligence and completion. In an allegorical sense he chose to leave Arcadia and strive for Elysium. Similarly, for Latter-day Saints, "life is not intended to be lived in an idyllic Eden."⁵⁸ So it was with Adam and Eve, and so it is for all in life's eternal journey toward perfection.

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1. Friedrich Schiller, "Elysium," trans. Michèle Lester, *Schubert Schiller-Lieder*, vol. 1, in *Deutsche Schubert-Lied-Edition*, prod. and ed. Pauline Heister (Naxos: NHN International, 2001). For the original German text of the poem, see Friedrich Schiller, "Elysium," in *Schiller's Sämtliche Werke*, Säkularausgabe, 16 vols. (Stuttgart and Berlin: J.G. Cotta'sche Buchhandlung, 1905), 1:238–39.

2. For example, see Gordon B. Hinckley, "We Walk by Faith," *Ensign* 32 (May 2002): 73.

3. See, for example, Neal A. Maxwell, *Wherefore, Ye Must Press Forward* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1977), 87.

4. Compare Matthew 5:48 and 3 Nephi 12:48.

5. In a literal sense, Arcadia is a geographical region of Greece, "a mountainous area in central Peloponnesus approaching the sea only in the south-west, near Phigalia." N. G. L. Hammond and H. H. Scullard, eds., *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1970), 94. But Arcadia came to represent mankind's primeval childhood for eighteenth-century aesthetic theorists—a place of naive and innocent shepherds enjoying an existence of Homeric totality in which they lived in perfect harmony. Embedded in the neoclassical intellectual milieu of the day, these theorists idealized classical civilization and saw in the Greeks man at one with himself. In a certain sense, then, Arcadia was a type of Eden where man was in a state of innocent perfection that was a product of man's unity with himself and nature. Particularly Friedrich Schiller, one of the architects of Weimar Classicism (1795–1805, the aesthetic movement that created a German classical literature), employed the metaphor of Arcadia to represent humanity's initial state of naive

innocence, which was lost through man's entrance into society, but whose natural harmony is constantly sought again, in his essay "On Naive and Sentimental Poetry" (1795), discussed in more detail below. Friedrich von Schiller, *"Naïve and Sentimental Poetry" and "On the Sublime": Two Essays*, trans. Julius A. Elias (New York: Frederick Ungar, 1966), 81–190.

6. In Greek mythology, Elysium, or Elyseum, was "the place where those favoured by the gods . . . enjoy after death a full and pleasant life." Sir Paul Harvey, comp. and ed., *The Oxford Companion to Classical Literature* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1940), 157. It is a place where "there is no snow, no winter storms and no rain, but rather the Zephyr blows softly there from over the ocean for eternity to cool those who come there." D. Friedrich Lübker, ed., *Reallexikon des classischen Alterthums für Gymnasien* (Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, 1860), 296 (All translations from German or Spanish in this article are my own unless otherwise noted in the citation). Eighteenth-century aesthetic theorists, particularly Schiller, used the concept of Elysium metaphorically to represent the end goal for which humanity was collectively striving, where mankind might regain the lost Arcadian harmony through personal moral choices. But it is not a Rousseauian return to the natural harmony experienced in Arcadia. Rather, Elysium is a higher state of perfection than Arcadia, because perfection in Arcadia resulted simply from mankind's naive, natural—but therefore undeserved—totality, whereas the perfection attained in the metaphorical Elysium is deserved as the end product of choices in moral development. Reaching Elysium signifies a state of being in which the moral law has been so fully internalized that an individual simply will never act against it: totality is thus restored, but this time it is by choice, not ignorant nature.

7. Gordon B. Hinckley, First Presidency Christmas Fireside, 2002, as quoted in Sarah Jane Weaver, "We Join in Singing Praises to the Son of God," *Church News*, published by *Deseret News*, December 7, 2002, 3.

8. Anonymous, "Though in the Outward Church Below," *Hymns of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1972), 102.

9. *Children's Songbook of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1989), 161.

10. Peter Branscombe, "Die Zauberflöte: A Lofty Sequel and Some Lowly Parodies," *Publications of the English Goethe Society* 48 (1978): 21.

11. Bernhard Paumgartner, *Mozart* (Freiburg i. Br.: Atlantis, 1967), 448.

12. Scott Abbott identifies German Freemasonry as "the Enlightenment institution *par excellence*." Scott Abbott, *Fictions of Freemasonry: Freemasonry and the German Novel* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1991), 18.

13. Wallace Wood, trans., *Conversations with Eckermann, Being Appreciations and Criticisms on Many Subjects by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe* (New York: M. Walter Dunne, 1901), 248 (March 11, 1828):

For what is genius but that productive power by which deeds arise that can display themselves before God and nature, and are therefore permanent, and produce results. All Mozart's works are of this kind; there lies in them a productive power which operates upon generation after generation, and still is not wasted or consumed.

14. Kenneth W. Godfrey, "Freemasonry and the Temple," in Daniel H. Ludlow, ed., *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 4 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1992), 2:529.

15. Godfrey, "Freemasonry and the Temple," 2:528.
16. Godfrey, "Freemasonry and the Temple," 2:529. But "resemblances between the two rituals are limited to a small proportion of actions and words; indeed, some find that the Latter-day Saint endowment has more similarities with the Pyramid texts and the Coptic documents than with Freemasonry." Godfrey, "Freemasonry and the Temple," 2:529.
17. Hugh Nibley, "Apocryphal Writings and Teachings of the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *Temple and Cosmos: Beyond This Ignorant Present*, ed. Don E. Norton, vol. 12 in The Collected Works of Hugh Nibley (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1992), 294.
18. Quoted in Nibley, "Apocryphal Writings," 294 (Nibley's additions in square brackets omitted).
19. Wieland was part of the Weimar scene for over twenty years before Goethe and Schiller combined forces in 1794 to create Weimar Classicism, or German High Classicism; that is, when the Duchess Anna Amalia invited Wieland to Weimar in 1772 to tutor her son, Karl August, she began solidifying the foundation for the establishment of German classicism in that location. Nicholas Boyle, *Goethe, The Poet and the Age*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1991), 1:37.
20. W. H. Bruford, *Culture and Society in Classical Weimar, 1775–1806* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962), 29–30.
21. Bruford, *Culture and Society in Classical Weimar*, 31.
22. Bruford, *Culture and Society in Classical Weimar*, 37. For instance, Shaftesbury's book of 1711, *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times, etc.*, presents an aesthetic program focused on "the Greeks [as] the best guides he knew to the good life for a cultivated man" (36).
23. Peter Branscombe, *W. A. Mozart, Die Zauberflöte* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 28. In pertinent part, the will provided, "I bequeath to the famous poet Herr Wieland in Weimar, as author of *Tschinnistan* [the other Wieland work to influence *The Magic Flute*], 300 Gulden"—which sum, in the event of Wieland's predeceasing him, was to be paid to "Herr Schiller, our German Schaeckspair [*sic*], who wrote *Kabale und Liebe*, for which bequest however Herr Schiller is requested to write a theatrical work and send it to every theatre in Germany."
24. Schikaneder was well aware of the Weimar writers: "the leading names of the theatre of the time also occur [as authors of works performed in Schikaneder's Theater auf der Wieden in Vienna]: Lessing, Schiller and Goethe, Iffland, Schröder and Kotzebue." Branscombe, *W. A. Mozart, Die Zauberflöte*, 143.
25. Johann Gottlieb Fichte, *Philosophie der Maurerei*, ed. Wilhelm Filtner (Leipzig: Felix Meiner, 1923), 17, quoted in Abbott, *Fictions of Freemasonry*, 19.
26. For example, Professor Abbott points out that Thomas Mann's rather negative depiction of Freemasonry as political and mystical in *The Magic Mountain* (1924) elicited a response accusing him of being uninformed about the "'genuine,' humanitarian Masonry (nonpolitical and nonmystical) which had attracted the likes of Goethe, Herder, Fichte, and Mozart." Abbott, *Fictions of Freemasonry*, 147. Another response assumed "that Thomas Mann used only Romance sources. He did not know English or German Freemasonry." Abbott, *Fictions of Freemasonry*, 147.
27. Melvin Maynard Johnson, ed. and intro., *Masonic Addresses and Writings of Roscoe Pound* (Richmond, Virginia: Macoy Publishing and Masonic Supply, 1953), 128.

27. The lawyer and Freemason Roscoe Pound paraphrased and commented on Fichte's lectures, which were originally published in the Masonic journal *Eleusinien des 19. Jahrhunderts*, 1802–1803 (Abbott, *Fictions of Freemasonry*, 189 n. 6), in Pound's own Masonic addresses and writings, as collected by Melvin Maynard Johnson in *Masonic Addresses and Writings of Roscoe Pound*.

28. Johnson, *Masonic Addresses and Writings of Roscoe Pound*, 128.

29. I[gnaz] v[on] B[orn] M[eister] v[om] St[uhl], "Ueber die Mysterien der Aegyptier," *Journal für Freymaurer* 1, no. 1 (1784): 130 (German orthography as in original source). (Ist Wahrheit, Weisheit und die Beförderung der Glückseligkeit des ganzen Menschengeschlechts nicht auch der eigentliche Endzweck unsrer Verbindung?) The German original has been included in parentheses throughout for comparison.

30. von Born, "Ueber die Mysterien der Aegyptier," 130. (Und kann wohl auch ein erhabener edlerer Endzweck seyn, als unsre Kenntnisse durch wechselseitige Mittheilung zu erweitern, jedem, der sich an unsern Kreis schließt, auf dem Pfade der Tugend den geraden Weg zur Vollkommenheit zu zeigen, ihn, wenn er auf Abwege geräth, brüderlich zurückzubringen, uns täglich zur Ausübung tugendhafter Handlungen aufzumuntern, alles Gute auszuüben, alles Böse zu verhindern?)

31. Branscombe, *W. A. Mozart*, Die Zauberflöte, 20–25.

32. Paumgartner, *Mozart*, 448. Eighteenth-century Freemasons worked to achieve a state of enlightenment as their end goal in the educative process of their fraternity: "In French orations masters and brothers were routinely described and complimented as *éclairé*; in Dutch, as *verlichte*; in German, as *aufgeklärt*. In Britain one of the principle duties of a lodge was to 'initiate the unenlightened.' Genevan masons described themselves as 'true children of the light.'" Margaret C. Jacob, *Living the Enlightenment: Freemasonry and Politics in Eighteenth-Century Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 145.

33. Compare Paul E. Kerry, "Initiates of Isis Now, Come, Enter into the Temple!": Masonic and Enlightenment Thought in *The Magic Flute*," in this issue of *BYU Studies*, 104–30.

34. Abbott, *Fictions of Freemasonry*, 33: "Fénelon's *Aventures de Télémaque* (1699), describing the educational adventures of Télémaque under the guidance of Minerva (disguised as Mentor), is generally considered the first novel with Masonic ties."

35. Abbott, *Fictions of Freemasonry*, 34.

36. Abbott, *Fictions of Freemasonry*, 34.

37. Abbott, *Fictions of Freemasonry*, 35.

38. All references to the text of *The Magic Flute* are given parenthetically in the text.

39. John Locke, *A Letter concerning Toleration* [1689], ed. and intro. James H. Tully (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1983), 46: "For Truth certainly would do well enough, if she were once left to shift for her self. . . . She is not taught by Laws, nor has she any need of Force to procure her entrance into the minds of men. . . . If Truth makes not her way into the Understanding by her own Light she will be but the weaker for any borrowed force Violence can add to her."

40. Sarastro indicates to Pamina that he holds her for her own benefit, hinting that she is better off away from her mother's dark influence.

41. Albert G. Mackey, "Truth," in *An Encyclopedia of Freemasonry and Its Kindred Sciences Comprising the Whole Range of Arts, Sciences and Literature as Connected with the Institution*, new and rev. ed. by William J. Hughan and Edward L. Hawkins, 2 vols. (New York: Masonic History, 1925), 2:805.

42. Paumgartner, *Mozart*, 452: "But in the pit of fire Tamino is saved from danger through unwavering faith in truth and love: the pure sound of the flute has become a symbol of his soul" (In der Feuerhöhle aber wird Tamino durch unerschütterlichen Glauben an Wahrheit und Liebe aus der Gefahr gerettet: der reine Ton der Flöte ist zum Symbol seiner Seele geworden).

43. Friedrich Schiller, "Etwas über die erste Menschengesellschaft nach dem Leitfaden der mosaïschen Urkunde" (Something about the First Human Society according to the Guide of the Mosaic Document), in *Schiller's Sämtliche Werke*, 13:26. (Dieser Abfall des Menschen vom Instinkte, der das moralische Übel zwar in die Schöpfung brachte, aber nur um das moralische Gute darin möglich zu machen, ist ohne Widerspruch die glücklichste und größte Begebenheit in der Meschengeschichte; von diesem Augenblick her schreibt sich seine Freiheit, hier wurde zu seiner Moralität der erste entfernte Grundstein gelegt.)

44. Schiller, "Etwas über die erste Menschengesellschaft," 13:26–27. (Der Philosoph hat Recht, es einen Riesenschritt der Menschheit zu nennen, denn der Mensch wurde dadurch aus einem Sklaven des Naturtriebes ein freihandelndes Geschöpf, aus einem Automat ein sittliches Wesen, und mit diesem Schritt trat er zuerst auf die Leiter, die ihn nach Verlauf von vielen Jahrtausenden zur Selbstherrschaft führen wird.)

45. Schiller, "Etwas über die erste Menschengesellschaft," 13:25 (bold added, italics in original). (Er sollte den Stand der Unschuld, den er jetzt verlor, wieder aufsuchen lernen durch *seine Vernunft* und als ein freier vernünftiger Geist dahin zurück kommen, wovon er als *Pflanze* und als eine Kreatur des Instinktes ausgegangen war; aus einem Paradies der Unwissenheit und Knechtschaft sollte er sich, wär' es auch nach späten Jahrtausenden, zu einem Paradies der Erkenntnis und der Freiheit **hinaufarbeiten**, einem solchen nämlich, wo er dem moralischen Gesetze in seiner Brust ebenso unwandelbar gehorchen würde, als er anfangs dem Instinkte gedient hatte.)

46. Schiller, "Etwas über die erste Menschengesellschaft," 13:26. (der Mensch wurde . . . aus einem glücklichen Instrumente ein unglücklicher Künstler.)

47. T. J. Reed, *The Classical Centre: Goethe and Weimar, 1775–1832* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1980), 75.

48. Dieter Borchmeyer, *Weimarer Klassik: Portrait einer Epoche* (Weinheim: Beltz Athenäum, 1994), 239. (den Menschen, der durch den Dualismus von Vernunft und Sinnlichkeit zerrissen ist, als Einheit und Ganzheit wiederherzustellen.)

49. This sounds very Kantian for a reason: Schiller used Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* (1981) and other philosophical writings as a springboard for his own aesthetic philosophy of completion in the "beautiful soul" in his essay "On Grace and Dignity" (Über die Anmut und Würde, 1793). But Schiller surpasses a mere harmonization of the famous Kantian dualism within the moral subject between *Pflicht* (duty) and *Neigung* (inclination). Indeed, Schiller breaks free from the Kantian paradigm because his own aesthetic ideal actually constitutes a natural "inclination to duty." Emil Carl Wilm, *The Philosophy of Schiller in Its Historical Relations* (Bristol: Thoemmes Press, 1994, reprint of 1912 edition), 127.

50. Friedrich Schiller, "On Naive and Sentimental Poetry" (Über naive und Sentimentalische Dichtung), trans. Daniel O. Dahlstrom, in *Friedrich Schiller, Essays*, ed. Walter Hinderer and Daniel O. Dahlstrom, *The German Library: Vol. 17* (New York: Continuum, 1993), 232. "Change" has been substituted in square brackets for Dahlstrom's curious use of "alter" in this passage. "Aber ihre Vollkommenheit ist nicht ihr Verdienst, weil sie nicht das Werk ihrer Wahl ist. . . . was uns von ihnen unterscheidet, ist gerade das, was ihnen selbst zur Göttlichkeit fehlt. Wir sind frei, und sie sind notwendig; wir wechseln, sie bleiben eins." Schiller, "Über naive und Sentimentalische Dichtung," 2:541.
51. Gerhard Kaiser touches on this participatory role of aesthetics in his collection of Schiller lectures and studies from 1966 to 1977. See, for example, Gerhard Kaiser, *Von Arkadien nach Elysium. Schiller-Studien* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1978), 9, 206–17.
52. Schiller, "On Naive and Sentimental Poetry," 232.
53. Hans-Wilhelm Kelling, "Thoughts about Goethe's Religious Convictions," in *Literature and Belief* 20, no. 2, Goethe and Religion, ed. Paul E. Kerry (2000): 115.
54. Kelling, "Thoughts about Goethe's Religious Convictions," 115–16.
55. Robert McFarland, "Mann und Weib, and Baby Makes Two: Gender and Family in Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *Magic Flute* Sequel," in this issue of *BYU Studies*, 206–17.
56. Dieter Borchmeyer, *Goethe, Mozart, und Die Zauberflöte* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1994), 22–23.
57. Russell M. Nelson, "Fundamentals and Initiatives," in *Life in the Law: Answering God's Interrogatories*, ed. Galen L. Fletcher and Jane H. Wise (Provo, Utah: J. Reuben Clark Law Society and Brigham Young University Press, 2002), 53.
58. Neal A. Maxwell, *Not My Will, but Thine* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1988), 8.



Frontispiece of the first edition of *The Magic Flute* libretto. Engraving by Mozart's lodge brother Ignaz Alberti, 1791, Vienna. *The Magic Flute* was associated with Freemasonry from its inception. The frontispiece "shows a Hermes column and an ibis—the sacred bird of Hermes or Mercury: the symbols of Hermeticism. The print depicts a temple, and in the foreground, beside the tools of the operative masons' craft, can be seen the head and shoulders of a dead man: presumably the murdered temple builder Hiram/Adoniram, the Rosicrucian symbol for Christ. (Mozart himself is three times referred to as Adoniram in the masonic funeral oration presented at his lodge after his death.) From the arch of the temple itself hangs a chain with a five pointed star—the emblem of Rosicrucianism." Till, *Mozart and the Enlightenment*, 298.

“Initiates of Isis Now, Come, Enter into the Temple!”

Masonic and Enlightenment Thought in *The Magic Flute*

Paul E. Kerry

Habakkuk exclaimed that in the presence of Lord the “sun and moon stood still in their habitation.” The Empyrean (Canto XXXII) of Dante’s *Paradiso* concludes with the splendid phrase “l’amor che move il sole e l’altre stelle” (the Love which moves the sun and the other stars). And in 1945 when Harry S Truman realized the weight of the office he would inherit upon the death of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, he declared, “I felt like the moon, the stars, and all the planets had fallen on me.”¹ It seems that when prophets, poets, and presidents have the need to express the inexpressible, destabilizing the heavens, if in language only, signals their sense of wonder.

Yet, in the sixteenth century the earth and sun and moon and stars did move, at least to those who comprehended the radical implications of the Copernican model, namely, the shift from a geocentric to a heliocentric reality. This new principle—the universe organized around the sun—became the emblem of a movement that would produce an equivalent Copernican shift in human thought and society: the Enlightenment.²

Seventeenth-century thinkers were engaged with concepts such as theodicy and theophany and were concerned about European wars in which religion and politics had collided so viciously. Later philosophers found at least partial answers to these perplexing questions in natural religion and religious toleration. In England (including its North American colonies) and France, new political ideas informed the Glorious, American, and French Revolutions respectively. And the Constitution of the United States of America can be seen as the culminating response to the nexus of socio-political and religious issues raised during the Age of Reason.

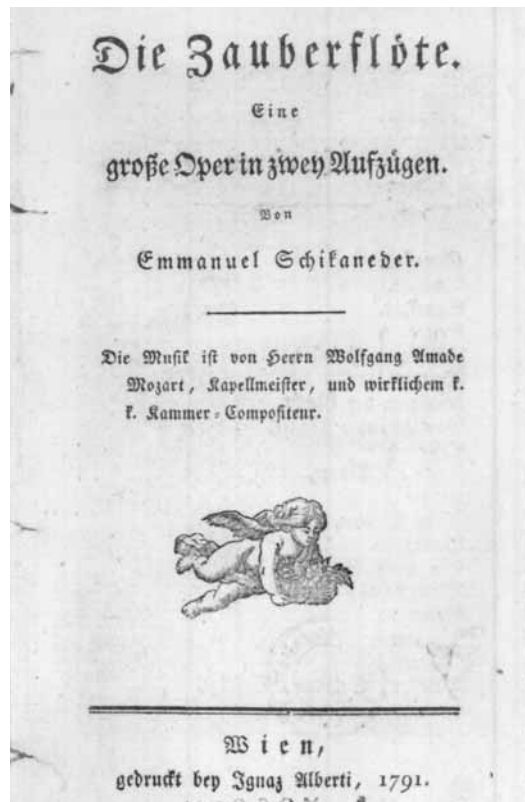
It was during this tumultuous time that Masonic lodges spread across Europe, including the Germanic lands. Freemasonry “is an allegory of morality in which men are taught the virtues of an upright life through the symbolism of stonemasonry.”³

The Magic Flute (1791), “a product of the late eighteenth-century German Enlightenment in that it exemplifies—like many other artworks of the time—an attempt to instruct the audience in ethical matters through the vehicle of entertainment or amusement,”⁴ is associated deeply with Freemasonry.⁵ Some major productions, such as the Metropolitan Opera

Mozart Bicentennial Celebration production (1991) under James Levine (set design by David Hockney), nurture this link. The eighteenth-century flourishing of Freemasonry in which lodges sought to reinterpret symbolically Judeo-Christian values in the light of reason is a hallmark of the Enlightenment.⁶ In this article I will identify certain Masonic ideals that inhabit *The Magic Flute* by comparing the conceptual themes and language of the libretto with those found in key Masonic texts.⁷ But many Masonic ideals are a subset of Enlightenment thought,⁸ thus it is necessary when analyzing Masonic elements in the opera to refer to the pervading Enlightenment themes as well.

Vienna and Catholic Enlightenment

The Vienna in which *The Magic Flute* was created experienced a “feverish intellectual activity” springing from Emperor Joseph II’s enlightened



Title page for the first published edition of *The Magic Flute* libretto.

reforms.⁹ Certainly it was more tolerant than Salzburg—where Mozart was born, was baptized a Catholic, and gave performances—which had only decades earlier expelled thousands of Protestants.¹⁰ In 1781, Mozart, who had had artistic restrictions placed on him, was basically thrown out of Salzburg.¹¹

Mozart never foreswore his Catholicism, but his initiation as an Apprentice Mason into a Viennese lodge, for which he also composed music, would have put him at odds with a 1738 (renewed: 1751) Catholic Bull, *In eminenti apostolatus*, forbidding such membership (it is not known if Mozart was aware of this Bull). Indeed, the Catholic ruler, Maria Theresa, mother of Joseph II, viewed Masonry (to which her husband belonged) with suspicion.¹² Mozart's actions need not be seen as contradictions if examined from the standpoint of the Catholic Enlightenment, which, as Eda Sagarra observes, inspired a diversity of Catholic thought.¹³ Furthermore, the Masonic lodge to which Mozart belonged was known to be a place where faithful Catholics attempted to combine their religion with the Masonic Craft (plate 1).¹⁴

The atmosphere of tolerance created by Joseph II did not last long, for in late 1785 he issued an edict on the Masons that was the prelude to the end of the lodges in Vienna.¹⁵ This change in the political climate has prompted the analysis that *The Magic Flute* was a rearguard action to promote (if not save) Freemasonry during the reign of Leopold II.¹⁶

Eighteenth-century thinkers continued to break down the remaining rubble of religious orthodoxy left over from the fanaticism and wars of the previous century. David Hume's idea of natural religion, François Voltaire's biblical criticism, and John Locke's and Thomas Jefferson's ideas on toleration continued the process of the demythologization of religion that had been ongoing since the scientific revolution. In the Germanic lands, Johann Gottfried Herder, Johann David Michaelis, Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, and others would initiate similar epistemological changes.

The Magic Flute can be understood in light of this transformation of religion. The opera opens with a biblical motif: Prince Tamino flees a deadly serpent. The libretto endows the snake with an anthropomorphic quality associated with Lucifer, namely, it is cunning (1.1).¹⁷ The Prince faints, and the Three Ladies slay the pursuing beast. It is possible to see in this a metaphoric Fall of man, and German intellectual preoccupation with explaining the biblical Fall is evidenced at precisely this time in the writings of three of the eighteenth century's most well-known luminaries: Immanuel Kant, Johann Herder, and Friedrich Schiller.¹⁸ *The Magic Flute*



In 1784, Ignaz von Born, the acclaimed Viennese Master Mason whom Mozart knew and respected, wrote an influential article in what would become one of Vienna's leading Masonic publications,

Journal
für
Freymaurer.

Als Manuscript gedruckt
für
Brüder und Meister des Ordens.

Herausgegeben
von den Brüdern der ☐ zur wahren Eintracht
im Orient von Wien.

13



Ersten Jahrgangs
Erstes Vierteljahr.

W J E N ,
Gedruckt bey Christian Friedrich Wappler.

5 7 8 4.

Journal für Freymaurer (Journal for Freemasons) entitled "Ueber die
Mysterien der Aegyptier" (On the Mysteries of the Egyptians). This
article is a key source for *The Magic Flute*.

redefines allegorically the transgression of Adam and Eve, as a positive Fall (*felix culpa*), for Tamino is reborn as an Adam figure who begins his quest to find Pamina (Eve) and then they proceed together on a ritual journey to discover new knowledge, truth, and light in a priestly temple community.

Wisdom and Leadership

Tamino's odyssey parallels other eighteenth-century narratives that feature a prince wandering in a foreign land and learning to become the ideal of a "wise ruler" (2.21) who understands his duties towards humanity (2.1). Indeed, in the eighteenth century the popular French novel *Sethos*, accepted by many Masons as factual, depicted a prince who becomes initiated into the secret knowledge of ancient Egypt.¹⁹ Ignaz von Born, the acclaimed Viennese Master Mason, whom Mozart knew and respected,²⁰ continues this line of thought in an influential article, "Ueber die Mystereien der Aegyptier" (On the Mysteries of the Egyptians, 1784), published in the *Journal für Freymaurer* (Journal for Freemasons), which would become a leading Masonic publication in Vienna. In this article, von Born asserts that the pattern of the initiation of a young prince had ancient antecedents—and he cites *Sethos*.²¹ Similarly, Schiller, as a professor lecturing on history at the University of Jena, taught the commonly held view that Moses had been initiated into Egyptian mysteries (*Die Sendung Moses*, 1790). Thus the Egyptian²² backdrop to Tamino's learning and development is in part a reflection of the cultural milieu of *The Magic Flute*.²³

Ignaz von Born affirms that the mission of Masonry is to combat "ignorance" (Unwissenheit) and "foolishness" (Thorheit).²⁴ In *The Magic Flute*, the Three Boys sing that the "wise man" will triumph over "superstition" (Aberglaube), and their aria contains a plea that peace be restored, perhaps brought about by Tamino, for this peace will make "the earth a heaven and mortals as the gods" (2.26). Identical language is used by the temple chorus at the conclusion of act 1, as it praises a future time when "virtue and justice" (Tugend und Gerechtigkeit) will spread and make "the earth a heaven and mortals as the gods" (1.19).²⁵ *The Magic Flute* puts forward the thesis that society can be morally regenerated by educating humanity, a common late German Enlightenment theme.²⁶

When Tamino comes upon the temple grounds,²⁷ he queries, "Is this the residence of the gods?" (1.15). He concludes, however, that the temple exemplifies more about the mortals who built it as he notices abundant evidence of intelligent design, diligence, activity, and craftsmanship that are its hallmarks. Eventually, he ascertains that an order of priests, under the leadership of Sarastro, dwell therein, and he decides to join "the initiates"

(den Eingeweihten) (2.8) through undergoing ceremonies and symbolic trials, a common feature of Masonic ritual to try the “persistence” (Beharrlichkeit) of a “seeker” (den Suchenden).²⁸ Masonic initiates were required to make and keep certain promises, for example, of verbal restraint, a pattern that is followed in the opera.

Verbal Integrity and Restraint

In an expressly didactic moment, Papageno is punished for prevarication: he lies to Tamino by stating that it was he who had killed the serpent. After a lock is placed on Papageno’s mouth, Prince Tamino, the Three Ladies, and Papageno (whose mouth is eventually freed) sing a moral homily that extols how brotherhood and love would abound if lies, hate, and betrayal could be overcome (1.8). That these vices stem from the mouth is not insignificant, for the Enlightenment ideal is that self-control, particularly of verbal expression, is a key to harmonious relationships. The theme of verbal restraint arises again as Tamino is led by the Three Boys to Sarastro’s abode and instructed to be “steadfast” (standhaft), “patient” (duld-sam), and “discreet” (verschwiegen) (1.15). And later, before Tamino is accepted into the temple order, Sarastro asks his fellow priests if the young prince possesses discretion



Courtesy Library of Congress

George Washington as Mason. The eighteenth-century preoccupation with verbal discretion and the *esprit de conduite* is found in Freemason George Washington’s notes entitled “Rules of Civility and Decent Behaviour in Company and Conversation” (ca. 1747, published posthumously). In addition, Masons were charged with “avoiding all Wrangling and Quarelling, all Slander and Backbiting.”

(Verschwiegenheit) (2.1)—a typical trait of Masonic initiates represented by “the Seal of Solomon, the seal of discretion” (Salomons Siegel, das Siegel der Verschwiegenheit).²⁹ Moreover, a major portion of the trials that Tamino and Papageno must undergo are connected with remaining silent, as the priests instruct: *Stillschweigen* (2.13).

The eighteenth-century preoccupation with verbal discretion and the *esprit de conduite* is found, for example, in Antoine de Courtin’s *Nouveau traité de la civilité* (New Treatise on Civility) (1690), in articles in Addison and Steele’s journal *Spectator* (until 1714), in Freemason George Washington’s notes on the “Rules of Civility and Decent Behaviour in Company and Conversation” (ca. 1747, published posthumously), and in the immensely popular book by Enlightenment and Freemason Adolph Freiherr von Knigge *Über den Umgang mit Menschen* (On Social Relations) (1796). Ignaz von Born recounts that only through silence could the Egyptian gods be honored.³⁰ In addition, Masons were charged with “avoiding all Wrangling and Quarelling, all Slander and Backbiting.”³¹ Yet there is more than manners presented in *The Magic Flute*, for the opera presages the humanistic sentiments that ought to inform such outward manifestations in a way that anticipates Jane Austen’s novels.³² One of these sentiments was to recast the relationship between male and female, a move that the opera throws into vivid relief.

Union of Male and Female

Tamino remains in traditional masculine modes of discourse as he declares that he will face his final and greatest trial “as a man” (2.28). The opera appears to adhere to the gendered outlook of the age as Tamino is chastised for being tricked by a woman (1.15), Pamina is told by Sarastro that a man must guide a woman so that she does not step out of her sphere (1.18), and the male initiates are exhorted to beware of the trickery of women (2.3). Furthermore, the power of the Queen of the Night is associated with intoxication (1.7), fantasy (1.1), superstition (2.1), illusion (2.1), prattle (2.5), feminine cunning (2.5), hypocrisy (2.5), and night (2.30).³³ The Enlightenment agenda could be described as the binary opposite of these, namely: sobriety, reality, reason, rationality, science, logical discourse, sincerity, truth, and light. Thus masculinity would signify illumination and reason, and femininity, superstition and irrationality.

Therefore it is unusual that Pamina joins Tamino prior to his undergoing the final purifying trials by fire and water and that in this crucial moment is granted permission to become a temple initiate.³⁴ Astonishingly,

she not only claims her place at his side, but also declares that she will lead him and love will lead her (2.28). This startling assertion highlights the possibility of male-female partnership in an opera that tends to rely on stereotypes. It also breaks with custom, for joint male and female initiations deviated from typical Masonic convention.³⁵ *The Magic Flute* here surpasses the possibilities foreseen for women in Rousseau's acclaimed novel of pedagogy, *Émile* (1762), in which Sophie is denied the education afforded the eponymous protagonist. Moreover, the necessary union of male and female, which had been posited philosophically by Rousseau and Kant (to achieve existential wholeness)³⁶ is illustrated in the joint initiation. Jacques Chailley interprets the joint initiation in *The Magic Flute* as "a proclamation of the redemption of Woman and her rise to equality with Man in the Mystery of the Couple."³⁷

This joint initiation is embodied in the opera's references to the Egyptian gods Isis and Osiris, another male-female unity to whom the priests pay homage.³⁸ Tamino and Pamina can be seen to represent the necessary interdependence of male and female as they are initiated into the temple order and, as a single unit, obtain the mysteries of the gods:

Triumph, triumph you noble couple!
 You have overcome the trials!
 Initiates of Isis now,
 Come, enter into the temple!
 [Triumph, Triumph du edles Paar!
 Besieget hast du die Gefahr!
 Der Isis Weihe ist nun dein!
 Kommt, tretet in den Tempel ein!] (2.28)

The opera announces the arrival of a new power to which both Tamino and Pamina submit willingly: Love (die Liebe). This is an expansion of Tamino's earlier view of love as a passion like fire (1.4), expressed prior to his initiation when he first saw Pamina's portrait and then later when he proclaimed that he would rescue her (1.5). Now, in love, they walk the path together, including when thorns are strewn along the way and even when they are in the shadow of death (2.28).

The Magic Flute hints at a new direction for gender relations that attempts to frame the debate not so much in the language of supremacy, but of willing interdependence through love. This relationship is underscored by the performance on stage. After being separated and fearing the worst, they are relieved and enthused to see each other, and the stage directions indicate that they embrace each other (2.28), reminding viewers of their first meeting in the temple gardens (1.19) and foreshadowing their

next embrace after the trial by fire (2.28). They are attracted to each other, love each other, and draw strength from one another, especially as they face their fiercest challenges together.

The most explicit and lyrical statement in relation to the interdependence of female and male occurs itself as an instance of human potential vis-à-vis divinity in the duet of Papageno and Pamina:

There is nothing nobler than husband and wife.
 Husband and wife and wife and husband
 Approach godhood.
 [Nichts Edlers sei, als Mann und Weib.
 Mann und Weib und Weib und Mann,
 Reichen an die Gottheit an] (1.14).

Daniel Hartz points out that the opera “is not a story but rather a parable about love and its role in the human quest for self-betterment.” He further suggests, convincingly, that the “interchange of nouns” (husband and wife and wife and husband) bears “linguistic testimony to the reciprocal relationship of the ideal pair.”³⁹ The essence of this relationship is evoked by the duet of Papageno and Papagena, in which divine approbation is signified in the cooperation of man, woman, and gods—unified through love—and embodied in the power of procreation:

What joy will be ours, When the gods consider us,
 Bless our love with children, Delightful, lovely children!
 [Welche Freude wird das sein, Wenn die Götter uns bedenken,
 Unsrer Liebe Kinder schenken, So liebe kleine Kinderlein!] (2.29)

Brigid Brophy quips that “Mozart remains Catholic enough to remember that marriage is a sacrament.”⁴⁰ Of course, these verses are put into the mouth of Papageno, who insists that he is a “natural man”; who relishes sleep, food, and drink; who is not too particular about obtaining wisdom (2.3); and who would trade the joy of the initiates for a glass of wine (2.23). In fact, the stage directions indicate that Papageno and Papagena engage in “silly games” (2.29); nevertheless, although they do not enter into the temple order, marriage and family life are held up as noble and good. Tamino and Pamina, in sacerdotal clothing, choose temple initiation and strive to attain “strength . . . beauty and wisdom” (*Stärke . . . Schönheit und Weisheit*) (2.30). According to Ignaz von Born, Freemasons strove to achieve this same trio of virtues,⁴¹ which metaphorically constitute three pillars that support a Masonic lodge.⁴² To reach these pillars of the temple, a Masonic initiate needed above all knowledge and light, and these find their analogies in the opera as well.

Knowledge and Light

Two key moments of moral orientation occur in act 1. When Tamino awakens after being hunted by the great serpent, he exclaims, “Where am I! Is it fantasy that I yet live?” (1.1). For the duration of the first act, Tamino is motivated by falsehoods stemming from the Queen of the Night, and he is led to believe that Sarastro is a villain (1.5), inhumane (1.15), and a tyrant (1.15). The Queen also calls the temple priests “barbarians” (2.8) and “sanc-timonious hypocrites” (2.30).

Only when these views are contradicted firmly and he is confronted by his own prejudice does Tamino reconsider his course at the doors of the temple. Ignaz von Born proposes that wisdom, virtue, goodness, and knowledge are all a part of “spreading enlightenment” (Aufklärung zu verbreiten).⁴³ Similarly, Sarastro defines the temple community’s goals as overcoming “prejudice” (Vorurteil) through “wisdom” (Weisheit) and “reason” (Vernunft) (2.1).

The second moment of orientation occurs when Tamino again wonders, “Where am I?” (1.15). He has left the barren mountain regions of the initial stage setting and enters into an increasingly organized temple community in which the dichotomy between light and darkness increases. He is forlorn as he supplicates the gods: “O eternal night, when will you wane?— When will my eye find the light?” (O ewge Nacht! wann wirst du schwinden? — / Wann wird das Licht mein Auge finden?) (1.15). This question can be read as both literal and metaphorical, for according to one contemporary account, eighteenth-century Masonic initiates were asked what they desired most, and the response was, “To be brought to light.”⁴⁴ Furthermore, Ignaz von Born teaches that once the initiate (der Eingeweihte) has seen the light (das Licht erblickt hat) more is revealed to him.⁴⁵ And in *The Magic Flute*, Sarastro proclaims that the great goal of the temple priests is to assist Tamino as he seeks to tear the veil of darkness from himself and look into the sanctuary of the greatest light (2.1).⁴⁶

The sun, as the ultimate source of light, becomes the crowning symbol of truth in the opera, and darkness its antithesis. The chorus suggests that “the gloomy night is driven away by the brilliance of the sun” (2.20), the Three Boys anticipate that the rising sun will force superstition to flee, and Sarastro’s power is represented by the “Sevenfold Circle of the Sun” (2.8), an Ephod-like device. The opera reaches a climax in an earth-centered apotheosis using the sun, a quintessential Enlightenment symbol, as the stage directions set forth: “The entire theater transforms itself immediately into a sun” (2.30). The attempted special effect appears to be one of a sunburst, in which Enlightenment radiates from the stage onto the audience.⁴⁷

Sarastro's final words clarify the meaning of the image: "The rays of the sun drive out the night, Destroys the usurped power of the hypocrites!" (2.30).

This finale underscores the Enlightenment belief in societal progress such that a celestial kingdom may be achieved here on earth.⁴⁸ This would require a harmonizing of societal tensions that remained elusive in the late-eighteenth century (and of course continues to remain elusive today). Yet the opera espouses explicit attitudes on the brotherhood of man that point the way to a family of humanity.

Family of Humanity and Virtue

The interdependent family of humanity is alluded to throughout the opera. One way this is shown is through the symbolic use of hands. When Tamino first arrives at the temple grounds, he seeks understanding and the priest tells him that his confusion will be clarified "as soon as friendship's hand guides you into the sanctuary to an eternal bond" (*Sobald dich führt der Freundschaft Hand, Ins Heiligtum zum ewgen Band*) (1.15). At different points in the opera hands are used to help guide Tamino, Papageno, and Pamina (1.19; 2.2; 2.21), not least because the characters, like Apprentice Masons, are "hood-winked"⁴⁹ or blindfolded, and Sarastro sings that a friend's hand strengthens one who has made an error (2.13). Handshakes are used to signify promises (2.3), and a handshake is the last sign that Sarastro gives to Tamino before the final tests (2.21). Sarastro also instructs the temple priests that it is their duty to offer Tamino the hand of fellowship (2.1).⁵⁰

As Pamina relates the history of the magic flute (and for the first time speaks of her father) to Tamino, "she takes him by the hand" (2.28) to give him strength and to gain strength, for their culminating trials may well overcome them. And Tamino and Pamina will enter the temple joyously, hand in hand (*Froh Hand in Hand im Tempel gehn*) (2.28). In each of these instances hands are used to assist, to guide, to show empathy, and to lend vitality to another in need.

The equality of the human family is highlighted when Tamino first encounters Papageno and asks him, "Who are you?" (1.2). That Tamino expects an identifying rank or profession is implied when he informs Papageno that he is a prince whose father rules over many lands. Instead of stating his profession, Papageno replies: "Stupid question! [I am] a person like you" (1.2). This response is meant to show Papageno's social naiveté, yet the overtones of a shared humanity despite class differences cannot be overlooked. This perspective is given greater emphasis in act 2 when the Speaker (*Sprecher*) moots his concern that Tamino, a "prince" (*Prinz*),

would not be able or willing to endure the trials of initiation; Sarastro responds that he is “even more” than a prince, that “he is a human being” (Noch mehr—er ist Mensch!) (2.1).

A common humanity is again recognized when Papageno and Monostatos first encounter each other. Mutually frightened—Monostatos by Papageno’s strange bird-like clothing, and Papageno by Monostatos’s dark skin color—they blurt out simultaneously, “That is surely the devil” (1.12). After fleeing, Papageno reflects, “Am I not a fool to have allowed myself to be frightened?—There are black birds in the world, why not then black people?” (1.14). Demonizing the unfamiliar is here castigated as foolish, and an acceptance or at least a tolerance of others regardless of color is implied.

Of course, Enlightenment thinkers struggled with racial prejudice,⁵¹ and it cannot be ignored that Monostatos’s darkness of skin is marked by the opera’s semiotics, as is all darkness, as an outward sign of the inward state of his soul (2.11), although the audience hears his plea that he is of “flesh and blood” and subject to the same passions as others (2.7). Self-pity blinds him to his own selfishness, for he attempts to force himself on Pamina against her will, and when she rejects his ultimatum—“love or death!”—he imputes that it is his skin color which repels her (2.10).

The more complex question concerns Sarastro’s apparent status as a slaveholder or at least one who sanctions slavery within his realm. Enlightenment thinkers were not slow to decry slavery, but it is a bitter irony that in what they viewed as one of the greatest socio-political successes of the age, the United States of America, actions were not always swift to follow ideals. Attila Csampai argues that Sarastro fits the image of the modern, enlightened leader akin to U.S. presidents (Annette Kolb proffers that he embodies Plato’s ideal ruler⁵²), who could proclaim “human rights” but keep slaves.⁵³ *The Magic Flute* retains this ambivalence but may show a way forward. Eckelmeyer argues that Monostatos and Sarastro exchange places in the opera in that the former becomes more brutal and the latter more magnanimous. Sarastro chooses to banish Monostatos for his odious behavior rather than apply capital punishment, which may reflect Joseph II’s Enlightenment penal code changes in the Empire.⁵⁴

If Tamino is to occupy a leadership role in the temple order as is implied by Sarastro (2.1), then it appears that he will begin an era of non-slave holding, which harmonizes with the overall thrust of the humane pronouncements of the opera that suggest a person’s worth is not incumbent upon rank or status, but rather upon an individual’s innate humanity. Hence, Tamino, a refined prince, and Papageno, a rustic bird catcher, are given the same opportunity of initiation into the temple

The playbill for the premiere of *The Magic Flute* in Vienna, September 30, 1791.

community,⁵⁵ the opera's central metaphor of a fraternal society. Masons called each other "brother"⁵⁶ and saw it as their highest obligation to cultivate "BROTHERLY-LOVE, the Foundation and Cape-stone, the *Cement* and *Glory* of this ancient *Fraternity*."⁵⁷

This ideal is inherent in the ritual question, akin to Masonic questions asked of an Apprentice, posed to Tamino by the priests: "What drives you to enter our walls?" (Was treibt euch an, in unsre Mauern zu dringen?). Tamino answers soberly: "Friendship and love" (Freundschaft und Liebe) (2.3). Similarly, in "Ueber die Mysterien der Aegyptier," von Born relates a story of twelve priests who ruled together in harmony, and he cites this convivial relationship as a "monument to friendship" (Denkmal der Freundschaft).⁵⁸ Analogous reconciliatory and harmonizing gestures in *The Magic Flute* are many and not least among them is the aria sung by Sarastro to Pamina, who has been disowned by her mother for refusing to assassinate him, when he explains that within the "holy walls" of the temple (In diesen heiligen Mauern), forgiveness is inculcated (2.13).⁵⁹

What emerges in *The Magic Flute* is a new social order, a "Brotherhood" (Bruderbund) (1.8) based on virtue. One of the central questions asked by the priest before Tamino may proceed with initiation illuminates the importance of this quality: "He possesses virtue?" (Er besitzt Tugend?). To which Sarastro gives a resounding affirmation—"Virtue!" (2.1). At the close of act 1, the choir sings in praise of virtue (1.19), and Sarastro's prayer to Isis and Osiris in act 2 intimates that choosing the path of virtue might cost one's life (2.1).

For Freemasons, this new order made men of all ranks brethren and virtue their common goal: "Yet does the craft admit that strictly to pursue the paths of virtue, whereby a clear conscience may be preserved, is the only method to make any man noble."⁶⁰ And von Born argues that the goal of "our Brethren" is to show those who wish to join "our circle" the way to perfection on "the path of virtue."⁶¹ Tamino contends that he is ready to walk "the path of virtue" (Den Weg der Tugend fortzuwandeln!) (2.28). Directly thereafter Pamina shows by her own virtue and courage that she, too, is worthy to be initiated (Ein Weib, das Nacht und Tod nicht scheut, / Ist würdig, und wird eingeweiht) (2.28). Here Mozart and Schikaneder transcend the metaphor of universal brotherhood and transform it into a typical late-German Enlightenment one of the universal family of humanity.

On November 18, 1791, Mozart would conduct his final musical performance, *Kleine Freimaurerkantate* (KV 623), a cantata celebrating the opening of a new temple for his Masonic lodge.⁶² Virtuous societies had been envisioned by Klopstock in *Die deutsche Gelehrtenrepublik* (The German

Republic of Letters) (1774); transformed by Kant, whose treatise *Zum ewigen Frieden* (On Perpetual Peace) (1795) foresaw a federation of nations; and anticipated by Goethe, who created an intellectual blueprint for a parliament of the world's religions (1784/1816).⁶³ Perhaps the grandest expression of global harmony is declared in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony choral setting of Schiller's "Ode to Joy" (An die Freude, 1786): "All humanity will be brothers" (Alle Menschen werden Brüder).⁶⁴ Similarly, *The Magic Flute*'s Masonic ideals of the late-German Enlightenment throw into relief the possibility of a family of humanity.

Conclusion

The Magic Flute integrates Masonry and Enlightenment ideals into Mozart's musical language; and yet, these seem to give way to a unique aesthetic-ethical vision. If *The Magic Flute* epitomizes the crowning possibility of male and female potential as Tamino and Pamina are initiated into the temple order and obtain the "Mysteries of Isis" (Mysterien der Isis) (2.28), that then begs the question: What are these mysteries? The opera does not give a clear answer. The etymology of the word *mystery* implies those things that are sealed to the uninitiated, and although the opera guides the audience through the initiation, it ends just after the initiation is complete.

Nevertheless, there are hints as to what these mysteries may be. Tamino is given instructions by two men in black armor with flames on their helmets, who stand sentinel-like near the entry way to the place of his final "trials" (Beschwerden). The words they read to him from a pyramid suggest that after purification through the elements of fire, water, air, and earth and overcoming the fear of death, an initiate is prepared to soar heavenward and, illuminated, dedicate himself to the Mysteries of Isis (Erleuchtet wird er dann im Stande sein, / Sich den Mysterien der Isis ganz zu weihn). When Pamina joins Tamino at this point and is granted permission to undergo the temple order's initiation with him, they all sing that fate or destiny cannot separate them, and, significantly, they all add that death cannot do so either (Nun trennet uns [euch] kein Schicksal mehr, / Wenn auch der Tod beschieden wär!) (2.28). It appears, therefore, that on one level the temple ceremonies prepare the initiate to prevail over the fear of death or even death itself.⁶⁵

The Egyptian iconography of the opera and its temple cult's devotion to Isis and Osiris lend some credence to this elucidation. But from a rationalist Enlightenment standpoint, one could assert that the opera's temple order dispels superstitions about death. And from a Masonic coign of

vantage, conquering death could symbolize a new way of life and fellowship; considering the opera from the perspective of esoteric Masonry (which, for example, took elements of Rosicrucian thought or alchemy seriously; or was taken in by outright frauds, such as Cagliostro's so-called "Egyptian Rite") might infuse the opera with more mystical overtones about conquering death.⁶⁶

Another purpose of the "Tempel"⁶⁷ (2.28) is alluded to throughout the opera. Tamino, upon first gazing at Pamina's portrait, wishes that he could be with her forever. He imagines that embracing her with the passion and rapture he feels in his heart would bind them *eternally* (Ich würde sie voll Entzücken / An diesen heißen Busen drücken, / Und *ewig* wäre sie dann mein) (1.4, emphasis added). Indeed, the Queen of the Night lays implicit claim to the authority to make Pamina his *eternally*, if Tamino does as she says (Und werd ich dich als Sieger sehen, / So sei sie dann auf *ewig* dein) (1.6, emphasis added).⁶⁸ It can be inferred, too, through what Pamina momentarily misconstrues as an *eternal* loss (*Ewig* hin) of Tamino's love, that she had believed that their love would be eternal (2.18, emphasis added).

Each of these—Tamino's fiery passion; the Queen of the Night's usurped and presumptuous authority; and Pamina's piercing grief—insists on some kind of an eternal union. After Pamina and Tamino penetrate the night (Ihr dranget durch Nacht)⁶⁹ and are purified through initiation, they are prepared to enter into the Mysteries of Isis in what appears, in the stage directions, to be the celestial chamber of the temple.⁷⁰ They will be rewarded "with an *eternal* crown" (Mit *ewiger* Kron) (2.30, emphasis added)—a royal symbol of rule that combines political and ecclesiastical authority. This scene is thematically and linguistically linked to the words of the temple priest (the Speaker) to Tamino when the prince seeks Pamina and is told that he will be led by the hand of friendship into the sanctuary (or holy place) to an *eternal* bond (Sobald dich führt der Freundschaft Hand / Ins Heiligtum zum *ewgen* Band) (1.15, emphasis added).

If taken literally, all of this could intimate that another purpose of the temple order is to forge a new family ideal in facilitating an "eternal bond" between husband and wife;⁷¹ however, that is about as easy to assess as it would be to know how literally Mozart meant it when he signed his letters to his beloved wife, Constanze, "Eternally yours" (*Ewig* Dein), as he often did.⁷² Certainly F. J. Lamport shows that a number of German dramas emerged during the late eighteenth century (about the time of *The Magic Flute*) with "plots turning on family relationships."⁷³ One could argue that learning to relate to each other as family is a strong subtext in *The Magic Flute* and deem the references to eternal love and temple initiation as metaphors of this or choose a less fashionable and speculative view and

see in these “open secret” statements a Romantic hypothesis, perhaps even the recrudescence of a religious hope: that relationships of love deserve to be eternal.

Dorothy Koenigsberger holds that the “emotional experience Mozart and Schikaneder intended their audience to have parallels the experiences that they believed ancient petitioners had when they were accepted at the temple. . . . In other words, as Sarastro and the priests do to the characters, so the opera is intended to do to the audience.”⁷⁴ In this sense, an audience is instructed in what is just and humane, a moral precondition for entering the temple community. Thus, the opera’s aesthetic strategy is one of perceptual reenactment: the members of the audience witness the initiation of Tamino and Pamina into the Mysteries of Isis, itself rooted in an artistic interpretation of Masonic ceremony, and are themselves initiated into the enlightened ideals of *The Magic Flute*’s temple community.

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1. Habakkuk 3:11; Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy: Paradiso*, trans. Charles S. Singleton (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), 380–81; David McCullough, *Truman* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1992), 353.

2. Peter Hulme and Ludmilla Jordanova, “Introduction,” in *The Enlightenment and Its Shadows*, ed. Peter Hulme and Ludmilla Jordanova (London: Routledge, 1990), 3.

3. Cecil Hill, “Masonic Music,” in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie, 20 vols. (London: Macmillan, 1980), 11:753.

It seems to have derived from the late medieval practice of admitting speculative “masons” to the lodges of working masons, a practice that became widespread in the late 17th century and gained great popularity in the 18th and 19th. Adherents of freemasonry are said to “work” at the construction of a “temple of humanity,” an intellectual analogue to Solomon’s temple supported by the three pillars of Nature, Reason and Wisdom. (753)

4. Judith Eckelmeyer, *The Cultural Context of Mozart’s Magic Flute: Social, Aesthetic, Philosophical*, 2 vols., Studies in the History and Interpretation of Music, 34 A, B (Lewiston, N.Y.: Edwin Mellen, 1991), 1:35.

5. Paul Nettl provides a brief history of the earliest reception in this vein in *Mozart and Masonry* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1957), 82–87.

6. Winfried Dotzauer, “Freimaurer,” in *Lexikon der Aufklärung: Deutschland und Europa*, ed. Werner Schneiders (Munich: Beck, 1995), 137–39. I thank Professor Neil L. York for sharing his views with me on tracing Masonic influences. See his “Freemasons and the American Revolution,” *The Historian* 55 (1993): 315–30.

7. This method reflects that of Reinhart Koselleck’s *Begriffsgeschichte* and Quentin Skinner’s idea of a “cultural lexicon,” although it does not adhere strictly to their approaches. Compare Reinhart Koselleck, *Vergangene Zukunft* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2003); and Quentin Skinner, *Regarding Method*, vol. 1 of *Visions of Politics*, 3 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

8. Thomas Christensen, “Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus,” in *Encyclopedia of the Enlightenment*, ed. Charles Kors, 4 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 3:101–3.

There are Romantic elements in the opera, especially if one follows the thesis that it was in part inspired by Christoph Martin Wieland’s publication of an anthology of fairy tales (Märchen) (*Das Schnisstan*, 1786–1789), in which August Jakob Liebeskind’s “Lulu, oder Die Zauberflöte” appeared. Wieland joined a Masonic lodge late in life. In the same year, Paul Wranitzky’s opera *Oberon* had been performed in Vienna with a libretto adapted by Karl Ludwig Giesecke. A few months before the first performance of *The Magic Flute*, another “magical opera” entitled *Kaspar der Fagottist oder die Zauberzither* (Wenzel Müller) was performed in Vienna. These are often cited as possible influences on *The Magic Flute*.

9. R. J. W. Evans, “Josephinism, ‘Austrianness,’ and the Revolution of 1848,” in *Austrian Studies II: The Austrian Enlightenment and Its Aftermath*, ed. Ritchie Robertson and Edward Timms (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1991), 146.

10. Compare Mack Walker, *The Salzburg Transaction: Expulsion and Redemption in Eighteenth-Century Germany* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992).

11. Jeremy Black, “Salzburg,” in *The Blackwell Companion to the Enlightenment*, ed. John Yolton (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), 472.

12. Ulrich Im Hof, *Das Europa der Aufklärung* (München: Beck, 1995), 129. I thank Owen Dudley Edwards for sharing his thoughts on Mozart’s Catholic milieu.

13. Eda Sagarra, “Marie von Ebner Eschenbach and the Tradition of the Catholic Enlightenment,” in Robertson and Timms, *Austrian Studies II*, 127.

14. Nicholas Till, *Mozart and the Enlightenment* (London: Faber and Faber, 1992), 127–28. In 1784, Mozart was initiated into the Viennese lodge Zur Wohltätigkeit (it was shortly thereafter amalgamated with other lodges and reconstituted as Zur neugekrönten Hoffnung in 1786). Schikaneder belonged to a lodge in Regensburg, Zu den drei Schlüsseln. H. C. Robbins Landon has identified Mozart in a period painting of a Viennese Masonic lodge meeting. It is known that lodge brothers had roles in some of his operas, including *Die Zauberflöte*. H. C. Robbins Landon, *Mozart and the Masons: New Light on the Lodge “Crowned Hope”* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1982), 31–35.

15. *Die Protokolle der Wiener Freimaurerloge “Zur wahren Eintracht” (1781–1785)*, ed. Hans-Josef Irmen, Schriftenreihe der Internationalen Forschungsstelle “Demokratische Bewegungen in Mitteleuropa 1770–1850” 15 (Frankfurt: Lang, 1994), 19.

16. H. C. Robbins Landon, 1791: *Mozart's Last Year* (New York: Schirmer, 1988), 132–36.

17. All references to *The Magic Flute* refer to the following edition of the opera: Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *Die Zauberflöte. KV 620. Eine große Oper in zwei Aufzügen. Libretto von Emanuel Schikaneder*, ed. Hans-Albrecht Koch (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1991). All translations from the German are mine.

18. Immanuel Kant, *Mutmasslicher Anfang der Menschengeschichte* (Conjectural Beginnings of Human History) (1786); Johann Herder, *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit* (Ideas on the Philosophy of the History of Humanity) (1784–91); Friedrich Schiller, *Etwas über die erste Menschengesellschaft* (On the First Society of Humans) (1790).

19. *The Magic Flute* draws on the novel *Sethos, histoire ou vie tirée des monuments, anecdotes de l'ancienne Égypte* (1731) by Jean Terrasson. Jacques Chailley, *The Magic Flute, Masonic Opera: An Interpretation of the Libretto and the Music*, trans. Herbert Weinstock (London: Victor Gollancz, 1972), 34–35.

20. Mozart composed *Die Maurer Freude* (KV 471) (Masonic Joy) in 1785 as a tribute to von Born, who was Grandmaster of the United Lodges.

21. Ignaz von Born belonged to Vienna's well-known lodge, Zur wahren Eintracht, and authored the influential article "Ueber die Mysterien der Aegyptier" (On the Mysteries of the Egyptians) in *Journal für Freymaurer* 1, no. 1 (1784): 77.

22. The Egyptian elements point to a European Orientalism. Compare Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Random House, 1994), 118. Also, Siegfried Morenz, *Die Zauberflöte. Eine Studie zum Lebenszusammenhang Ägypten—Antike—Abendland*, Münstersche Forschungen 5 (Münster: Böhlau, 1952). Mozart did write incidental music for Tobias Philipp Freiherr von Gebler's *Thamos, König in Ägypten* (Thamos, King in Egypt) (1773/1779). This is sometimes noted as an early sign of Mozart's interest in Egypt and Masonry. Baron von Gebler was a prominent Mason.

23. Learning and development are explicitly recommended when Tamino is enjoined to be a man (1.15; 2.6; 2.21). Masons also developed through different grades, specifically, *Lehrling* (Apprentice), *Geselle* (Journeyman), and *Meister* (Master). Dotzauer, "Freimaurer," 138.

24. von Born, "Ueber die Mysterien der Aegyptier," 130.

25. "Dann ist die Erd ein Himmelreich / Und Sterbliche den Göttern gleich" (1.19).

26. Compare Immanuel Kant's famous essay "Was ist Aufklärung?" (What Is Enlightenment?) (1784); and see also Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, *Die Erziehung des Menschengeschlechtes* (The Education of the Human Race) (1777/1780); Friedrich Schiller, *Über die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen* (On the Aesthetic Education of Man) (1796); Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* (Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship) (1795; 1796); and Goethe, *Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre* (Wilhelm Meister's Journeyman Years) (1821; 1829).

27. More precisely he discovers the temple complex (1.14) with the *Tempel der Weisheit* (Temple of Wisdom) between the *Tempel der Vernunft* (Temple of Reason) and *Tempel der Natur* (Temple of Nature). Wisdom thus reflects the harmonizing of reason and nature. "Tempel" alludes to the Masonic tradition that includes Solomon's temple, compare James Anderson, *The Constitutions of the*

Free-Masons containing the History, Charges, Regulationss &c. of That Most Ancient and Right Worshipful Fraternity, for Use of the Lodges (London, 1723; rpt., Philadelphia, 1734), 14. Pamina is also ritually reborn, after her head covering is removed, when she asks, "Where am I?" (Wo bin ich?) (2.21).

28. von Born, "Ueber die Mysterien der Aegyptier," 95.

29. von Born, "Ueber die Mysterien der Aegyptier," 101.

30. von Born, "Ueber die Mysterien der Aegyptier," 59.

31. Anderson, *Constitutions of the Free Masons*, 56.

32. Brigid Brophy, *Mozart the Dramatist: A New View of Mozart, His Opera and His Age* (London: Faber and Faber, 1964), 204.

33. Certainly the Queen of the Night wants Sarastro assassinated (2.8), and she, her servants, and Monostatos (to whom she promises Pamina) plan to annihilate the temple society (2.30).

34. Chailley argues that Pamina has in fact undergone the same ritual preparation. Chailley, *Magic Flute, Masonic Opera*, 127–57.

35. Margaret C. Jacob shows that females were "adopted" into lodges as early as 1750 (La Loge de Juste, The Hague), *Living the Enlightenment: Freemasonry and Politics in Eighteenth-Century Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 120–42. She also notes that members of this lodge visited Vienna (135). I am grateful to Professor Jacob for drawing my attention to this important detail.

36. Till, *Mozart and the Enlightenment*, 287.

37. Chailley, *Magic Flute, Masonic Opera*, 74.

38. Compare Sarastro's nomination speech at the start of act 2 and also the petition of the chorus (2.1).

39. Daniel Heartz, *Mozart's Operas*, ed. and with contributing essays by Thomas Baumann (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 292.

40. Brophy, *Mozart the Dramatist*, 203.

41. von Born, "Ueber die Mysterien der Aegyptier," 116.

42. *Jachin and Boaz; or, an Authentic Key to the Door of Free-Masonry, both Ancient and Modern* (London, 1762; reprint, New York, 1796), 19. The number three, a so-called Masonic number alluding to the three pillars, is found in various formulations (musical, numbers of characters, and so on) throughout the opera. Some scholars have identified the key of E-flat as the Masonic tonality of the opera. Hill, "Masonic Music," 755.

43. von Born, "Ueber die Mysterien der Aegyptier," 130–31.

44. *Jachin and Boaz; or, an Authentic Key to the Door of Free-Masonry*, 13. It was the duty of the "Master and the rest of the Brethren" to lead the initiate to the light. H. C. Robbins Landon strives to prove that Mozart and Schikaneder probably drew from the Masonry of the St. John ceremony as well as the Scottish ritual in 1791: *Mozart's Last Year*, 127–31. Another recent study suggests that two kinds of Masonry are shown (one authoritarian, the other idealistic) in Jules Speller, *Mozarts Zauberflöte. Eine kritische Auseinandersetzung um ihre Deutung* (Oldenburg: Igel, 1998), 225.

45. von Born, "Ueber die Mysterien der Aegyptier," 89.

46. "Kurz, dieser Jüngling will seinen nächtlichen Schleier von sich reißen, und ins Heiligtum des größten Lichtes blicken" (2.1). Eighteenth-century prints reveal that at certain points in Masonic initiations an actual veil or sackcloth

draped the head and torso of, for example, a prostrate initiate, who was eventually raised by the outstretched arm and handgrip of a lodge brother.

47. Enlightenment architecture and design often gave prominence to the motif of a radiating sun. For example, the interior of the late-seventeenth-century library (1692–96) of The Queen's College, University of Oxford, features an emblem of a radiating sun placed at the center of the ceiling as if to symbolize enlightenment and knowledge emanating from the collection of books (plate 2).

48. Nicholas Till points out that a decade later in van Swieten and Haydn's *Die Schöpfung* (The Creation) (1801) darkness is banished forever but that this metaphorical gesture was essentially the last gasp of the total victory of progress. Till, *Mozart and the Enlightenment*, 302. At various points in von Born's essay he reviews the meaning of the sun for the Egyptians. See, for example, von Born, "Ueber die Mysterien der Aegyptier," 119.

49. *Jachin and Boaz; or, an Authentic Key to the Door of Free-Masonry*, 6, 11.

50. Handshakes and grips play a crucial role in Masonic mysteries; compare *Jachin and Boaz; or, an Authentic Key to the Door of Free-Masonry*, 14. Handclasps are explicitly referred to both in the on-stage dialogue as well as in the stage directions when Tamino and Papageno begin their trials (2.3). Contemporary eighteenth-century prints of Masonic ceremonies show ritual handclasps being given and received.

51. Compare Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze, ed., *Race and Enlightenment* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991); and Hannah F. Augstein, ed., *Race: The Origin of an Idea, 1760–1850*, vol. 14 of Key Issues (Bristol: Thoemmes, 1996).

52. Annette Kolb, *Mozart* (Erlenbach-Zürich: Eugen Rentsch, 1947), 288.

53. Attila Csampai, "Das Geheimnis der 'Zauberflöte' oder die Folgen der Aufklärung," in *Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Die Zauberflöte: Texte, Materialien, Kommentare*, ed. Attila Csampai and Dietmar Holland (Reinbeck bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1988), 32–35. Among those Enlighteners who spoke out against the institution of slavery are Locke, Pope, Raynol, Diderot, Schlözer, Lichtenberg, and Franklin.

54. Eckelmeyer, *Cultural Context of Mozart's Magic Flute*, 1:28–30.

55. Tamino and Papageno are offered an equality of opportunity (not an equality of outcomes), but the opera does not go so far as to address the modern question of how disparate societal starting points of prince and bird catcher might have influenced such outcomes. von Born attests that although under normal circumstances farmers or tradesmen would not be initiated into the Masonic Craft, exceptions could be made. von Born, "Ueber die Mysterien der Aegyptier," 89.

56. Compare von Born, "Ueber die Mysterien der Aegyptier," 95.

57. Anderson, *Constitutions of the Free Masons*, 56.

58. von Born, "Ueber die Mysterien der Aegyptier," 126.

59. *Mauern* can be read here as an allusion to the German word for Freemasonry: *Freimaurer*. It was a Masonic duty to help one who goes astray (wenn er auf Abwege geraeth) in a brotherly (bruederlich) manner. von Born, "Ueber die Mysterien der Aegyptier," 130.

60. Laurence Dermott, *Ahiman Rezon: Or a Help to All That Are, or Would Be Free and Accepted Masons*, 3d ed. (1756; reprint, London, 1778), 18.

61. “Auf dem Pfade der Tugend den geraden Weg zur Vollkommenheit zu zeigen.” von Born, “Ueber die Mysterien der Aegyptier,” 126, 130.

62. Volkmar Braunbehrens, *Mozart in Wien* (Munich: Piper, 1986), 426.

We have not explored the Masonic pieces that Mozart composed for specific lodge occasions, such as “O heiliges Band” (KV 148) (O Holy Bond) or the so-called *Gesellenreise* (KV 468) (Journeyman’s Route), written on the occasion of his father’s, Leopold Mozart’s, acceptance into and ritual progress in Wolfgang’s Viennese lodge (Zur Wohltätigkeit).

63. Compare Paul E. Kerry, *Enlightenment Thought in the Writings of Goethe: A Contribution to the History of Ideas* (Rochester, N.Y.: Camden House, 2001), 90–99, 183–87.

64. Friedrich Schiller, *Sämtliche Werke* (Munich: Hanser, 1987), Band I, 133 (compare 872). Beethoven’s Symphony no. 9 premiered in Vienna on May 7, 1824.

65. It is normally assumed that the first trial Tamino and Papageno undergo is to keep their vow (Gelübde) of silence as the Three Ladies attempt to speak with them. It is interesting to note, however, that the Three Ladies also attempt to frighten Tamino and Papageno with the notion of death (Tamino! dir ist Tod geschworen! Du, Papageno! bist verloren!) (2.5).

66. See, for example, Eckelmeyer, *Cultural Context of The Magic Flute* and M. F. M van den Berk’s *The Magic Flute. Die Zauberflöte: An Alchemical Allegory* (Leiden: Brill, 2004). It is tantalizing that evidence can be found to support each of these interpretations.

67. It is noteworthy that at exactly when Tamino and Pamina complete successfully their initiation and stand at the illuminated entrance to the temple, which has suddenly revealed itself, the stage directions continue: “A solemn stillness. This sight must represent the most perfect splendour” (Eine feierliche Stille. Dieser Anblick muß den vollkommensten Glanz darstellen) (2.28). Mozart and Schikaneder wanted this moment, when the threshold of the temple comes into view, to be the most awe-inspiring in the opera and convey this sense of deep reverence through a calming silence, a virtue that has been espoused throughout *The Magic Flute*.

68. The Queen of the Night threatens Pamina that she will destroy forever (auf ewig—this phrase is used three times) all “bonds of nature” (alle Bande der Natur) that unite them as a family (2.8).

69. The reader could here recall Sarastro’s phrase about removing the “veil of darkness” (2.1).

70. The final stage directions of the opera suggest that the closing scene, which takes place in the temple itself, should feature a prominent sun and Sarastro’s final recitative refers to the power of the sunlight. David Hockney, the set designer in the aforementioned Metropolitan Opera production, uses a large painted radiating sun as the entire backdrop of the stage.

71. The opera’s dramatic architectonics also provides a striking juxtaposition that subtly links the divine relationship of man and woman to the temple. After Pamina and Papageno sing the well-known aria that defines the high purpose of love as the nobility of a husband and wife approaching godhood (Ihr hoher Zweck zeigt deutlich an: / Nichts Edlers sei, als Weib und Mann. / Mann und Weib und Weib und Mann / Reichen an die Gottheit an) (1.14) the next scene shows Tamino being guided to and discovering the temple complex (1.15).

72. Mozart's letters to Constanze at the time he was composing *The Magic Flute* are full of affection, at times playfully expressed through the words of the opera's libretto, and they are often signed "Ewig Dein" (Eternally yours) or use *ewig* in other endearing formulations such as "Dein Dich ewig liebender Mann" (Your eternally loving husband). See Mozart, *Briefe und Aufzeichnungen*, collected and commented on by Wilhelm A. Bauer and Otto Erich Deutsch, 7 vols. (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1962–1975), 4:136–52.

73. F. J. Lampert, *German Classical Drama: Theatre, Humanity and Nation, 1750–1870* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 67 and 76.

74. Dorothy Koenigsberger, "A New Metaphor for Mozart's *Magic Flute*," *European Studies Review* 5 (1975): 266.



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Plate 1. Mozart as a Guest at the Viennese Masonic Lodge (Mozart zu Gast bei der Wiener Freimaurerloge), by an anonymous Viennese painter, 1790. Photograph by Alfredo Dagli Orti. Original at Museen der Stadt Wien (Vienna). The figure at the far right of this meeting of the Freemasons in Vienna has been identified as Mozart. In 1784, Mozart was initiated into the Masonic Craft in the Viennese lodge Zur Wohltätigkeit (Beneficence). Eventually Mozart became a Master Mason, as his attendance at the lodge Zur wahren Eintracht (True Concord) indicates. He composed music for special Masonic occasions, mostly set in lodges, until the end of his life. *The Magic Flute* integrates Masonry into Mozart's musical language, and yet the Masonic ideals that are thrown into relief in the opera seem themselves to give way to a unique aesthetic-ethical vision.



Plate 2. Library of The Queen's College (1341), University of Oxford. Courtesy of the Provost and Fellows of The Queen's College. Enlightenment architecture and design often gave prominence to the motif of a radiating sun. For example, the interior of the library (built 1692–1696) of The Queen's College features an emblem of a radiating sun placed at the center of the ceiling signifying the light and knowledge emanating from the collection of books.



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Plate 3. Stage set design for *The Magic Flute*, by Karl Friedrich Schinkel, 1815. The Hall of Stars of the Queen of the Night (Die Sternenhalle der Königen der Nacht), act 1. Photograph by: Reinhard Saczewski. Original at Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett. The Queen of the Night's first appearance, on a throne of stars in act 1, is among the most anticipated in the opera. Schinkel's stage set design has become iconic, as it captures the terrible majesty of the music as the Queen descends onto the stage.



Plate 4. View of the City of Salzburg with the Fortress (Stadtansicht von Salzburg mit der Festung), copper engraving, latter half of the eighteenth century. Photograph by Alfredo Dagli Orti. Salzburg was a Catholic Prince Archbishopric within the Holy Roman Empire of the Germanic Nation, which meant that it was an independent ecclesiastical principality. Mozart's father, Leopold, was a court composer to Archbishop Sigismund von Schrattenbach and the Mozart family flourished musically under him. Wolfgang, who had had artistic restrictions placed upon him by Count Hieronymous Colloredo, the next Prince Archbishop, felt increasingly confined in Salzburg and eventually left his native city for the Imperial capital, Vienna.



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Plate 5. *Vienna, As Seen from the Belvedere (Wien, vom Belvedere aus gesehen)*, by Canaletto, oil, ca. 1760. Original at Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna. This famous view of eighteenth-century Vienna with the soaring Gothic tower of St. Stephen's Cathedral in the center of the painting, the Baroque dome of St. Charles's Church to the left, and the garden of Belvedere Palace in the foreground portrays the capital city as a center of ecclesiastical as well as imperial authority. Mozart moved to Vienna in 1781 and married Constanze Weber a year later. The final decade of his life, although increasingly plagued by financial worry and not without deep personal sorrow (including the death of his father and four infant children), saw the production of towering works such as the Linz Symphony, the Prague Symphony, the Jupiter Symphony, *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Don Giovanni*, and *The Magic Flute*, as well as brilliant piano concertos and a host of other pieces.



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Plate 6. Stage set design for *The Magic Flute*, by Karl Friedrich Schinkel, 1815. Entrance with Rock Archway (Eingang mit Felsentor), for act 1, scene 1. Original at Kunstbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin. The setting for the first scene of *The Magic Flute* features a rocky area with a temple in the background—the residence of the Queen of the Night and her attendants—and in front of which Tamino collapses from exhaustion as he flees the serpent.



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Plate 7. Stage set design for *The Magic Flute*, by Karl Friedrich Schinkel. Entrance to the Temple of the Sun (Eingang zum Sonnentempel), for act 2. Photograph by Reinhard Saczewski. Original: Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett, Sammlung der Zeichnungen. Tamino and Pamina undergo ritual trials of fire and water during their temple initiation in preparation to obtain the Mysteries of Isis.



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Plate 8. Stage set design for *The Magic Flute*, by Karl Friedrich Schinkel. Interior of the Temple of the Sun (Inneres des Sonnentempels), for act 2. Photograph by Reinhard Saczewski. Original at Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett, Sammlung der Zeichnungen. Sarastro and the Order he leads are devoted to the Temple of the Sun. Eventually, Pamina and Tamino are initiated into the temple order, and the opera concludes with a sunburst that radiates from the stage onto the audience.

European Views of Egyptian Magic and Mystery

A Cultural Context for *The Magic Flute*

Kerry Muhlestein

Composer Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and librettist Emanuel Schikaneder lived and created during the height of eighteenth-century interest in and fascination with Egypt. *The Magic Flute*'s Egyptian setting would therefore evoke in their contemporaneous audience notions of a distant land with an exotic and magical culture. The numerous Egyptian elements of the work are representative of its era and are situated near the end of a continuum of European thought about ancient Egypt before the solid foundation of modern day Egyptology had been laid. To Europeans, Egypt was a murky and mysterious landscape, one that easily lent itself to imaginative speculations about the purpose of its awesome architecture, the nature of its arcane ritual ceremonies, and the knowledge contained in its intriguing, then-undeciphered language. Such European perception of ancient Egypt informed the cultural productions of the late eighteenth century, including *The Magic Flute*.

Ancient Egypt: Lost and Found

Over three thousand years ago, powerful officials serving under Rameses II made trips to visit their ancient past, standing in reverence before the Great Pyramids of Giza, which were already over a thousand years old. For three and a half millennia, the regular flood of the Nile had sustained one of the longest-lived and most glorious civilizations the world has known. When the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah were in their infancy, the rulers of Egypt were trying to recapture the splendor of their predecessors.

Beginning in the sixth century bc, Greek scholar-travelers came to see for themselves the age-old wonder that was Egypt, leaving records of their

journeys—writings that were often more filled with legend and imaginative rumination than with accuracy. Often the Greeks sought to tie their own traditions in with those of Egypt, hoping to add the weight of Egypt's gravity and prestige to their own culture. Herodotus, probably the most famous of these Greek travelers, said that "more monuments which beggar description are to be found there [in Egypt] than anywhere else in the world."¹

Yet even Egypt's persistent culture could not outlast time and its inevitable changes. Christianity brought about the demise of much of the Egyptian culture. Determined to purge themselves of all vestiges of their heathen background, Egyptian Christians programmatically shut down pagan temples and rites. Another victim of this inner cleansing was the Egyptian system of writing. Hieroglyphs, with their depictions of various gods, were unacceptable. In 394 *ad*, the priests at Isis's temple in Philae, in southernmost Egypt, carved the last hieroglyph onto stone before Christian patriarchs ended the active use of hieroglyphs forever.² The advent of Islam also hastened the disappearance of ancient Egypt's culture. The dominant religions of Christianity and Islam turned the travelers' focus from Egypt to Jerusalem and Mecca. A few travelers went as far as Giza and the Great Pyramids, but the vistas farther south were long forgotten. Like so many of the ancient sphinxes sunk beneath the sand, the glory of Egypt was buried by the winds of change.

During the Renaissance, a new wind blew back the sands of obscurity, revealing Egypt's desert treasures. Europeans searching for their classical roots encountered the records of the Greeks who had written about ancient Egypt. The Greek studies received a new impetus as Constantinople fell in 1453 and voluminous, long-neglected classical works were retrieved from its libraries.³ European scholars armed with Herodotus, Strabo, Diodorus, and their own Bible found their imaginations stirred by the accounts of ancient Egypt. Curiously, few, if any, of the classical scholars, for all their vaunted thirst for knowledge, had taken the time to learn anything about the Egyptian language or writing system, with the possible exception of Pythagoras.⁴ Moreover, while Greek scholars had tried to grasp the intellectual riches they found, much of the record they left is less than reliable. Besides reporting hearsay and legends, the Greeks often misportrayed architecture they had actually seen for themselves, evidenced by the varied and exaggerated accounts of the labyrinth adjoining the pyramid of Amenemhet III. Still, these accounts caught the fancy and fueled the imagination of early modern thinkers questing for new knowledge of old ideas.

To accompany the classical Greek accounts of Egypt, there was soon a stream of new sources about the country. As early as 1646, John Greaves

(1602–52), an Oxford scholar, published his survey of Giza in his monograph *Pyramidographia, or a Discourse of the Pyramids in Aegypt*. Henceforth, findings in Egypt poured into Europe. During the late eighteenth century, accurate drawings of valleys, monuments, and statues, along with realistic copies of inscriptions, were included in these publications. Notable among these were the Danish mariner Frederick Norden's (1708–42) lavishly illustrated volume of his travels, published posthumously numerous times from 1751 to the end of the century, and Archdeacon of Dublin Richard Pococke's (1704–65) popular book *Description of the East*, which was reprinted many times after its initial publication in 1743.

Accompanying this steady flow of information was a parallel stream of intellectual musing about pharaonic culture. Some of Europe's greatest minds puzzled over the enigma of ancient Egypt. Yet, despite the increasing availability of accurate information and the application of enlightened principles of study, much of what was written on Egypt continued to be a mix of speculation and scholarship. An example of this strange mingling is the work of Athanasius Kircher (1602–80), who was considered one of the greatest scholars of his time. As he worked in Rome, where a number of genuine Egyptian artifacts and architecture had been placed by the Romans, he became increasingly interested in Egypt. Kircher put the study of Coptic—the last phase of the Egyptian language, written primarily in Greek letters—on a solid footing.⁵ He also correctly identified Coptic as a remnant of the language of ancient Egypt. This Jesuit priest was convinced that the ancient Egyptians knew of secret powers and motions and understood lost concepts. He came to believe, incorrectly, that he could decipher hieroglyphs and that they concealed the philosophical lore of ancient Egypt. He reconciled these beliefs with his Jesuit views by finding a godly character in Egyptian lore: he interpreted Hermes Trismegistus, a Grecified and transmogrified version of the Egyptian god Thoth, as a prophet who had invented hieroglyphs.⁶

The Magic and Mystery of Egypt

Kircher's work serves as a good example of the way Enlightenment egyptological scholarship intermingled with the unscholarly impression that ancient Egypt was a land of magic and mystery. The biblical account of Egypt illustrated a country whose ruler received prophetic dreams and whose royal magicians were able to match many of God's miracles with their own mysterious arts. Alexander the Great had been crowned by the famous Oracle of Siwa in Egypt, causing him to want to be buried there above all other places he had been. The Emperor Hadrian had reportedly

traveled to Egypt, where he had met and been impressed by its magicians. Legend had it that Pythagoras summoned an eagle to himself by employing an art that he learned from Egyptian magicians. William Shakespeare (1564–1616) captured his contemporaries' fascination with Cleopatra VII's strange, spell-like power over Mark Antony in *The Tragedy of Antony and Cleopatra* (1607). Even Saint Anthony had allegedly been tempted by Egyptian magic. In the eighteenth century, this image of Egypt was kept alive by plays and tales such as Christoph Martin Wieland's (1733–1813) folktale caricature, in *Dschinnistan*, of an Egyptian sorcerer who wore a pyramid-shaped hat.⁷

The architecture of Egypt also contributed to the aura of mystery. The Romans had been so taken by archaic Egyptian monuments that they had brought obelisks, statues, and other goods to Rome, sometimes placing them in an artificially created Nile landscape or next to locally built pyramid tombs. These antiquities were still visible during the Renaissance and ensuing periods, and the imagination they sparked was enhanced by the multitude of drawings and descriptions that became available in the eighteenth century through engravers such as Giovanni Battista Piranesi (1720–78) of Italy and Johann Heinrich Lips (1758–1817) of Switzerland (fig. 1). Even today, paintings such as those of Scotsman David Roberts (1796–1864), which were first published in the early nineteenth century, convey the impression of ancient Egyptian grandeur and mystery. The lack of knowledge about the purpose of such buildings as the pyramids only fueled the fires of the European imagination. Architecture such as the Great Pyramids and the Sphinx easily lent themselves to admiration and fanciful speculation. Although the descriptions and drawings paled in comparison to reality, they still managed to convey something of the reaction of eyewitnesses. Such wonder is well portrayed by Napoleon's soldiers, who, when they arrived at the temple of Luxor in 1799, were so awed by its size and magnificence that they broke into applause, after which they "spontaneously formed ranks and presented arms."⁸

Eighteenth-century European reaction to all of this aura can be seen in the notions propagated by the intellectual elite. The sense of Egypt's might and mystery was added to by scholarly ideas of China's culture deriving from Egypt, which had purportedly once conquered China. In the 1790s, it was speculated that the cathedral of Notre Dame had been built on the ruins of a temple of Isis. French revolutionaries were so enthralled with Egypt that they built a statue of Isis on the ruins of the Bastille and, for a while, used the ancient Egyptian calendar instead of the Roman.⁹

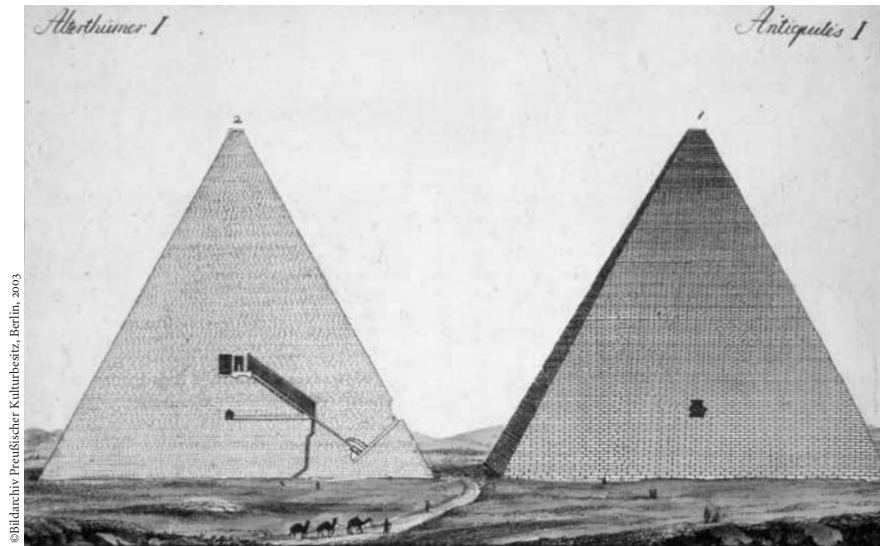


Fig. 1. *The Pyramids of Giza, One of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World*, by Johann Heinrich Lips (1758–1817). Copperplate engraving, 1790, created for an unknown picture book by F. J. Bertuch. Original in Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin—Preußischer Kulturbesitz. European artists created artwork such as this engraving to capture the intrigue of Egypt. The green grass and hills in this engraving illustrate the inaccurate depictions of Egypt that often poured into eighteenth-century Europe.

The Wisdom and Lore of Ancient Egypt

Another impression of Egypt as a land of magic and mystery was that within its ritual culture were long-lost secrets of wisdom. Again, the sources most readily available in Mozart's eighteenth-century cultural milieu confirmed this idea: The Bible indicates that Moses was learned in the wisdom of Egypt (Acts 7:22) and demonstrates that Solomon was the wisest man on earth by saying that he was even more wise than the ancients of Egypt (1 Kgs. 4:31). Greek intellectuals, such as Solon, Pythagoras, and Plato, had supposedly studied with Egyptian priests. Herodotus continually wrote of mysteries and wisdom that the Egyptians possessed but that were not prudent to pass on. And for centuries Alexandria was famous for having the best library in all the world.¹⁰

Hieroglyphs. Although some intellectuals decried Egyptian hieroglyphs as a primitive and superstitious form of writing, much of the respect and ambience of Egyptian lore was focused on the ancient writing system. Until hieroglyphs were deciphered in the mid-nineteenth century,

the symbols remained a locus of speculation and apprehension.¹¹ The hieroglyphic form of writing lent itself to symbolism. Furthermore, the use of glyphs for graphemes was fluid enough that the Egyptians themselves were immensely fond of playing with them. We know of tables written in such a way that they convey an intended message read either in horizontal rows or vertical columns.¹² Moreover, many inscriptions employed what has often been called “cryptographic writing.” Since the purpose was likely not to conceal meaning but was probably instead a manner of playing with words and symbols, the term “sportive writing” is now more commonly employed. Additionally, because the signs were actual pictures, they were often used as elements of Egyptian art to further convey meaning and symbolism. The sheer number and pictographic nature of the signs bespoke mystery to any who did not know the language.

Europeans had inherited a long tradition of viewing hieroglyphs as a method of conveying great and hidden knowledge. By 1422 they knew of the writings of Horapollo, a fifth-century Alexandrian scholar, who had written his Greek work *Hieroglyphica* shortly after the meridian of time. Horapollo believed that behind each Egyptian sign was a number of symbols and meanings, a few of which he elucidated.¹³ European intellectuals such as Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832) were so intrigued by Egyptian lore that they had ordinary objects such as cups and plates painted with Egyptian scenes and hieroglyphs. This intense preoccupation with Egyptian writing led to attempts to collect Egyptian inscriptions in Europe. For example, Goethe gathered a great deal of genuine and reproduced artifacts for the museum in Weimar and his own private collection.¹⁴

Mummies and Artifacts. The perceived wisdom of ancient Egypt led to other fascinations. Inscriptions were not the only alluring Egyptian items that gave an impetus to amassing Egyptian antiquities. For centuries Arab physicians, once regarded as the best, had used bitumen in treating a variety of ailments. When bitumen became less available, they instead prescribed the use of mummified flesh. This practice was adopted by many crusaders, who carried it home and made it vogue.¹⁵ Hence, from the thirteenth century onward, Europeans used mummies medicinally in wound care and for internal ailments. The demand for mummies led to large-scale grave robbing and mummy exportation from northern Egypt. Beginning in the seventeenth century, the arrival of whole mummies in Europe created a new attraction. Soon a great many museums were scrambling to add a mummy to their collection to be on a par with their competitors. The need for both display and medicinal mummies gave rise to even greater digging and exportation projects in Egypt, none of which placed much emphasis on the scholarly value of the sites they destroyed.

Such extensive importation led to a frenzy of collecting other Egyptian artifacts for European museums. Various European countries had consuls in Egypt to protect their interests there; these consuls did all they could to ensure that their country procured a sizeable display of the wonders of ancient Egypt.¹⁶ The exportation of obelisks, statues, sarcophagi, inscriptions, mummies, and other artifacts proceeded in a wanton manner and at a reckless pace. During this era, the great collections of museums in England, France, Italy, Germany, and Austria-Hungary were acquired.¹⁷ Competition between countries could be intense: the French consul even built a small house atop the first pylon of the Karnak temple so that he could watch over his terrain with a telescope.¹⁸

This period was a time of exploitation in excavation. Impeding stonework was often removed via dynamite, and excavators such as Antonio Lebolo garnered wealth by excavating for clients by day and for themselves by night, hiding their nocturnal finds in closets as they sought buyers. Some seekers even destroyed any artifacts similar to those they had acquired in order to escalate and protect the value of their goods. The steady stream of stone grandeur into the museums, libraries, and private households of Europe did much to heighten that continent's interest in the ancient Egyptians and the secrets they must have possessed to be able to do so much so long ago.

Egyptian Lore within Christian Countries

As has already been noted, respect for Egyptian wisdom necessarily tangled its roots with those of Christianity. In the seventeenth century, three learned Englishmen published studies on Egyptian culture. Sir John Marsham (1602–85), who published on the problem of chronologies in the Old Testament, was among the first to consider Egyptian antiquities. John Spencer (1630–93) of Cambridge suggested a comparative study of Old Testament cultures and considered similarities between Hebrew and Egyptian rituals. He attributed the origin of the Urim and Thummim to Egypt in his *Dissertatio de Urim et Thummim* (1669). Generally, Egypt was credited with a superior understanding of the cosmos and with the possession of secret wisdom beyond that available in European cultures. Religious belief, the quest for knowledge, and mysticism were all mixed together.

A type of cognitive dissonance was created by looking to such a pagan country for lore surpassing that of Christian nations. This dissonance was alleviated by the creation of the concept of true Egyptian religion being closer to Christianity. Thus Ralph Cudworth (1617–88), professor of Hebrew at Cambridge, posited that the essence of Egyptian religion was

monotheistic and suggested that Moses was an initiate into the secrets of Egyptian religion, which prepared him to be able to receive the various revelations of Sinai. The idea of the Egyptian elite practicing an appropriate monotheism while the general population practiced a heathen polytheism lasted into the nineteenth century and even played a part in twentieth-century scholarship.¹⁹

The concept of an orthodox Egyptian initiation caught hold in certain religious circles, finding fertile ground in the Germanic lands around Mozart's time. Historian Friedrich Schiller (1759–1805), among others, speculated on Moses's exposure to Egyptian mysteries in *Die Sendung Moses* (The Mission of Moses, 1790).²⁰

Notable among groups that sought to fathom ancient mysteries is the Fama Fraternitatis, R. C. (*Rosae crucis*) or Rosicrucian Brotherhood, which originated in the Germanic lands. This group's popularity in the eighteenth century was based largely on an increasingly accepted view that Moses was an initiate into Egyptian lore, forming the basis of Old Testament religion. Although, according to the Rosicrucians, some impure elements had crept into Egyptian religious thought, Saint Mark purportedly cleansed this Egyptian lore of all heathen practices. Alchemy was also thought to be a part of the saving lore of the Egyptians, and its resurrection was attempted. Hence a Rosicrucian passed through various states of initiation, culling the secrets that he believed were still available in Egyptian temples.

Perhaps the most significant ramification of the Rosicrucian movement was its effect on another group, the Freemasons. Freemasonry would become much more widespread and influential than Rosicrucianism, yet it was heavily influenced by the Rosicrucian emphasis on Egypt. Because of Rosicrucian beliefs, Masons began believing that Moses had been initiated into appropriate arcana by a secret priestly society in Egypt. This idea was strengthened by Jean Terrason's novel *Séthos*, published in 1731, describing a young protagonist who was initiated into the Isis mysteries within the chambers of the Great Pyramid (and taken by some to be based on the life of an actual ancient Egyptian prince who experienced the mysteries of ritual initiation). The protagonist's encounter with the four elements changed his nature sufficiently to allow him to fully partake of the Great Isis Mysteries.²¹ Influential intellectuals of the Enlightenment, such as the librarian of Frederick the Great, joined Freemasonry and adopted an interest in ancient Egyptian initiation rites. In 1770 a group of Freemasons published a tract that became the model for an Egyptian initiation supposedly begun by the first king of Egypt.²²

The arch-swindler, the Italian Count Alessandro Cagliostro (1743–95), exploited naive notions about Egyptian influence and attempted to blend

those notions with Freemasonry. This enigmatic aristocrat claimed to know priests of underground temples still existing in Egypt who could trace their origins back to the time before Moses. This supposed clandestine class of priests had allowed Cagliostro to become privy to their most esoteric initiations, which he in turn spread to any Freemason interested. These so-called Egyptian rites spread through some branches of Masonry in France, Poland, Switzerland, and Germany.

In 1791, the same year that *The Magic Flute* was first performed, Cagliostro was condemned by the Inquisition. Pope Pius VI (1717–99) spared his life and had him imprisoned for life instead. His manuscript was publicly burned, and he festered in a Papal prison while his ideas continued to spread. Masonry embedded within itself the idea of passing through seven stages of Egyptian initiation, in which deep mysteries were unfolded.²³ Many intellectuals did not approve of such secret societies, yet this did not seem to lessen their allure or influence. In fact, Goethe, a Freemason himself, completed a play in 1791 entitled *Der Gross-Cophta* (The Great Cophta) aimed at excoriating and exposing Cagliostro-like frauds.

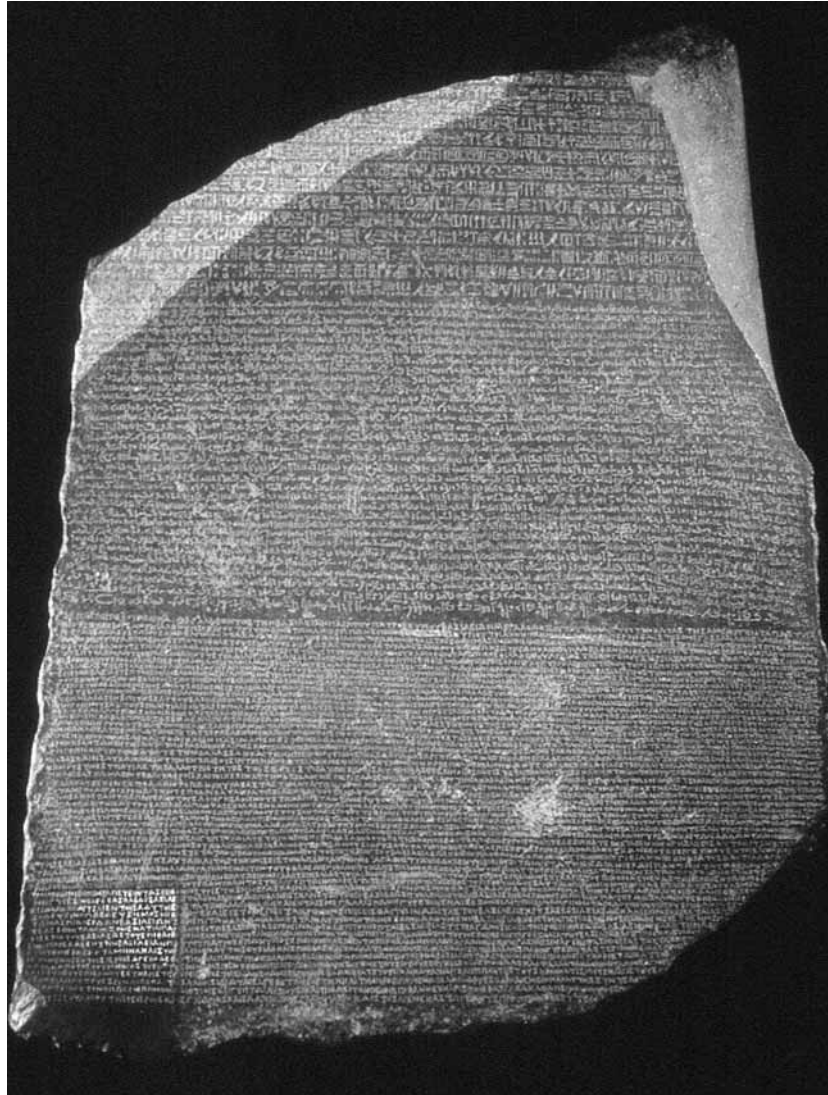
Conclusion

Ignaz von Born, a Master Mason and highly respected Viennese scientist, published an influential essay in 1784 entitled “Üeber die Mysterien der Aegyptier” (On the Egyptian Mysteries). Scholars agree that Mozart and Schikaneder were inspired by von Born.²⁴ *The Magic Flute* also contains elements derived directly from Terrason’s *Séthos*. Thus *The Magic Flute* is an intertextual work that drew on the European fascination with Egypt and contributed to it.

In sum, the Europe of Mozart’s day had the widespread impression that great secrets were locked within the culture of ancient Egypt, tantalizingly beyond the reach of modern civilization. Although some scholars thought that they had grasped these secrets, most felt that these mysteries had not yet, but soon would be, unfolded. While there were skeptics, the latter group held that if only the initiations could be truly recovered and understood or the deep symbols locked within hieroglyphs set free, then the wisdom of Egypt would lead mankind to a higher state.

The aura of wisdom and mystery that veiled Egypt has still not completely fallen. Just years after Mozart’s death, the first steps toward a more scholarly understanding of ancient Egypt were taken. In 1798, when Napoleon launched his invasion of Egypt, he brought with him a scientific corps, comprising 150 specialists in geography, geology, and language, who

began to systematically study Egyptian history and culture. One of the treasures they plundered was the Rosetta Stone (now on display in London's British Museum), the key that would slowly unlock the mystery of hieroglyphs (fig. 2). As the true nature of this writing system was understood,



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Fig. 2. Rosetta Stone. Discovered in 1798, the Rosetta Stone helped Egyptologists decipher hieroglyphs that would uncover truths about ancient Egypt. The text, a decree by a council of priests in 196 BC, is written in hieroglyphs on the top, demotic in the middle, and Greek on the bottom.

false notions as to its secrets largely slipped away, to be replaced by the vast amount of information that accurate translations yielded. Today the sands that concealed Egypt have been largely cleared away.

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1. Herodotus, *Histories*, 2.35. Later writers perpetuated similar ideas that would have been available in eighteenth-century Europe. For example, Clement of Alexandria wrote, in *Stromateis Book VI*, that the Greeks were indebted to the Egyptians for their philosophy. See John Tait, “The Wisdom of Egypt: Classical Views,” in *The Wisdom of Egypt: Changing Visions through the Ages*, ed. Peter Ucko and Timothy Champion (London: UCL Press, 2003), 34–37.

2. See Cyril Aldred, *The Egyptians*, 3d ed., rev. and updated by Aidan Dodson (London: Thames and Hudson, 1998), 14.

3. Aldred, *The Egyptians*, 15.

4. See Paul Johnson, *The Civilization of Ancient Egypt* (New York: Harper-Collins, 1998), 232. Romans who wrote about Egypt seem to have learned even less than Greek authors, with the possible exception of Apeleius as he wrote *Metamorphoses* (The Golden Ass). For example, Pomponius Mela described Egypt in *Chorographia*, but his account is filled with at least as much fantasy as fact. For more on the treatment of Egypt in Roman writings, see Herwig Maehler, “Roman Poets on Egypt,” in *Ancient Perspectives on Egypt*, ed. Roger Matthews and Cornelia Roemer (London: UCL Press, 2003), 203–15, especially 214.

5. Athanasius Kircher, *Lingua Aegyptiaca Restituta* (Rome: Herman Elliot, 1646).

6. See Erik Hornung, *The Secret Lore of Egypt: Its Impact on the West*, trans. David Lorton (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001), 101–3. Here Kircher was following the work of earlier writers such as the antique work *Asclepius*, which notes that Trismegistus prophesied of Christ. See Charles Burnett, “Images of Ancient Egypt in the Latin Middle Ages,” in *Wisdom of Egypt*, 82. Another ancient work, by an anonymous author, states that Hermes Trismegistus composed a work on the Trinity. See Burnett, “Images of Ancient Egypt,” 91.

7. Hornung, *Secret Lore of Egypt*, 55–62.

8. Nicolas-Philibert Desvernois, *Mémoires du Général Baron Desvernois* (Paris, 1898), 67. See also Brian M. Fagan, *Rape of the Nile* (New York: Charles Scribner and Sons, 1975), 72–76.

9. See Lynn Hunt, *Politics, Culture and Class in the French Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 60–63, 98; and Hornung, *Secret Lore of Egypt*, 131–34. It should be noted that while much of European reaction to exotic Egypt was positive, the land’s aura could also be projected as dark. The Egyptians’ apparent fascination with the afterlife often made the country a symbol of death, and its strange elements could be portrayed as nightmarish.

10. See Plato, *Timaeus and Critias*; and Isocrates, *Busiris*. See also B. Mathieu, “Le Voyage de Platon en Égypte,” *Annales du Service des Antiquités de l’Égypte* 71 (1987), 153–67.

11. For examples, see David B. Haycock, "Ancient Egypt in 17th and 18th Century England," in *Wisdom of Egypt*, 145–47.
12. *The Stela of Paser*, EA 194. See Richard Parkinson, *Cracking Codes: The Rosetta Stone and Decipherment* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 84–85.
13. Brian A. Curran, "The Renaissance Afterlife of Ancient Egypt (1400–1650)," in *Wisdom of Egypt*, 106–7.
14. Hornung, *Secret Lore of Egypt*, 129; S. Hummel, "Goethes ägyptische Sammlung," *Goethe Jahrbuch* 97 (1980), 212–20. For more on the competition for Egyptian artifacts, see David Jeffreys, "Two Hundred Years of Ancient Egypt: Modern History and Ancient Archaeology," in *Views of Ancient Egypt Since Napoleon Bonaparte: Imperialism, Colonialism and Modern Appropriations*, ed. David Jeffreys (London: UCL Press, 2003), 3; and Fekri A. Hassan, "Imperialist Appropriations of Egyptian Obelisks," in *Views of Ancient Egypt*, 61.
15. Okasha El Daly, "Mummies as Medicine," *Discussions in Egyptology* 48 (2000): 60–63. See also Curran, "Renaissance Afterlife," 126.
16. See Jeffreys, "Two Hundred Years of Ancient Egypt," 4; and Morris L. Bierbrier, "Art and Antiquities for Governments' Sake," in *Views of Ancient Egypt*, 74–75. This era became known as the war of the consuls. See Alberto Siliotti, ed., *Belzoni's Travels* (London: The British Museum Press, 2001), 26.
17. Siliotti, *Belzoni's Travels*, 21, 26–27; and Johnson, *Civilization of Ancient Egypt*, 239.
18. Brewer and Teeter, *Egypt and the Egyptians*, 8.
19. For an example of nineteenth-century thinking, see Sigmund Freud, *Moses and Monotheism*, trans. Katherine Jones (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1939). For one example of twentieth-century scholarship being influenced by this idea, see Siegfried Morenz, *Gott und Mensch im alten Ägypten* (Heidelberg: Lambert Schneider, 1965).
20. See Jan Assmann, *Moses the Egyptian: The Memory of Egypt in Western Monotheism* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997); and Masilio Ficino, *Heptaplus* (1489). As another example, see Samuel Shuckford, *The Sacred and the Profane History of the World Connected, from the Creation of the World to the Dissolution of the Assyrian Empire* (London: R. Knaplock and J. Tomson, 1728), 312–13, who wrote that "the Egyptians were at first Worshippers of the true God."
21. See Abbé Jean Terrasson, *Séthos*; and Hornung, *Secret Lore of Egypt*, 118.
22. See *Crata Repoa, or Initiations into the Ancient Secret Society of the Egyptian Priests* (1770), cited in Hornung, *Secret Lore of Egypt*, 120.
23. Hornung, *Secret Lore of Egypt*, 122–23. See also Henry Evans, *Cagliostro and the Egyptian Rite of Freemasonry* (Edmonds, Wash.: Holmes Publishing, 1994); John Hamill and Pierre Mollier, "Rebuilding the Sanctuaries of Memphis: Egypt in Masonic Iconography and Architecture," in *Imhotep Today: Egyptianizing Architecture*, ed. Jean-Marcel Humbert and Clifford Price (London: UCL Press, 2003), 207–20; and Michael Rice and Sally MacDonald, "Introduction—Tea with a Mummy: The Consumers View of Egypt's Immemorial Appeal," in *Consuming Ancient Egypt*, ed. Sally MacDonald and Michael Rice (London: UCL Press, 2003), 13–14.
24. Jacques Chailley, *The Magic Flute, Masonic Opera: An Interpretation of the Libretto and the Music*, trans. Herbert Weinstock (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1971), 35.

Notes on the Egyptian Motifs in Mozart's *Magic Flute*

John Gee

Operas are noted for their music rather than their librettos. They are attributed to their composers rather than their librettists. Thus the perennial popularity of Mozart's *Magic Flute* is attributed to Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's music rather than Emanuel Schikaneder's libretto.¹ Schikaneder's plot revolves around the conversion and initiation of Tamino, Pamina, and Papageno into the mysteries of Isis and Osiris, seen largely from Tamino's point of view. (This can provide some confusion for those who encounter the opera for the first time as Tamino learns in the second act that what he thought was good and evil in the first act is really the other way around.²)

Schikaneder and Mozart were both members of the Viennese Masonic lodge Zur wahren Eintracht, which based its ritual on the same novel, *Sethos*, upon which Schikaneder based the plot of *The Magic Flute*.³ The novel *Sethos* was written by Jean Terrasson in 1731.⁴ Terrasson was a classically trained scholar who knew his sources on Egypt and based the initiations in *Sethos* on the descriptions of Egyptian initiations in the writings of Apuleius, Plutarch, Iamblichus, and Eusebius.⁵ Other than the scenery,⁶ few Egyptian motifs actually appear in *The Magic Flute*, and at least one Egyptologist, Siegfried Morenz, has argued that the Egyptian motifs are Greek rather than Egyptian.⁷ Such a position makes some sense in that Mozart died (1791) before the Rosetta Stone was discovered (1799) and while its decipherer, Jean-François Champollion (1790–1832), was just a toddler. We should, therefore, expect little if any correspondence between ancient Egypt and *The Magic Flute*, and that is what we find. Nevertheless, contrary to Morenz's assertions, a few ancient Egyptian motifs survive in

garbled form. A half century of research and discovery has brought new evidence to light, but the most important change has been a reorientation in thinking brought about in part by one of Morenz's own students.⁸ Though the Egyptian motifs have been obscured, they are present and are worth examining not only (1) in light of what Schikaneder knew second-hand from classical sources, but also (2) in light of what is now known about these same motifs from Egypt based on the Egyptian sources.

Names

The names of most of the characters in *The Magic Flute* reflect an Italian background, so it comes as something of a surprise to find that the names of two of the protagonists in *The Magic Flute* are Egyptian in origin. Tamino, the heroic male protagonist, has an Egyptian name that means “*She* of Min,”⁹ while the heroine, Pamina, has an Egyptian name that means “*He* of Min.”¹⁰ Min was an Egyptian god most closely tied to the Egyptian sites of Panopolis (Akhmim), and Coptos,¹¹ although he was also worshiped at Thebes. Efforts to characterize Min as a particular type of deity (for example, a fertility god) fail to do justice to his multiple roles and characteristics.¹² We might expect that if Schikaneder had known anything about ancient Egypt directly, then the gender of his protagonists would have been correct.

Initiation

The most prominent Egyptian motif in *The Magic Flute* is the initiation. The initiation into the mysteries of Isis and Osiris is well known from classical sources such as Herodotus,¹³ Plutarch,¹⁴ Apuleius,¹⁵ and others, the sources available to Schikaneder and Terrasson. Egyptian texts unavailable to them allow us to shed some other light on Egyptian initiation as portrayed in the classical sources. In particular, we have at least portions of three different initiation rituals from Egyptian papyri that are explicitly identified as such.¹⁶ We must consider each of these sources to understand the thirdhand use of Egyptian material found in *The Magic Flute*.

In *The Magic Flute*, Tamino is initiated by first being prohibited from speaking (2.4–2.6, 2.13–2.19). Papageno fails this portion of the initiation. Tamino then confronts fire, water, air, and earth with Pamina, which they overcome with the aid of the magic flute (hence the name of the opera). They then appear “in priestly clothing” (in priesterlicher Kleidung) as the entire theater changes into a representation of the sun (2.30). Aside from the magic flute, these elements are taken from the classical authors' descriptions of Egyptian initiations.

The classical authors describe the Egyptian initiation in similar terms. Herodotus describes the mysteries of Isis and Osiris as a passion play that is staged on a lake at night.¹⁷ Apuleius describes the mysteries as taking place in a temple at night after purification and several days of preparation.¹⁸ Both Herodotus and Apuleius preserve a discrete silence on the subject,¹⁹ since they themselves were initiated and initiates were not supposed to discuss the initiation in explicit terms.²⁰ They are, however, willing to tell some aspects of the experience, which was found in “some books written in an illegible alphabet”²¹: “I passed the confines of death, treading the threshold of Proserpina, and returned having passed through all the elements. In the middle of the night I saw the sun flashing with bright light, and I met the gods beneath and above, and worshiped before them.”²² At the end of the initiation, the initiate emerged in a fine linen (byssus) garment elaborately embroidered with scenes, wearing a stole and a crown of leaves and carrying a torch or lamp representing the sun.²³

The descriptions of Egyptian initiation by these classical authors compare with some provided by the Egyptians themselves. A Ptolemaic period Egyptian text describes an initiation read off a secret roll described as the Book of Thoth:

He placed the scroll in my hand. I read one text from it. I encircled the heaven, the earth, and the netherworld, the mountains, and the seas. I discovered everything that the birds of heaven, the fish of the sea, and the cattle said. I read another text. I saw the sun appearing in heaven with his council of gods. I saw the moon shining with the stars of heaven and their constellations. I saw the fish of the sea although there was 21 cubits of water over them.²⁴

At first glance, Apuleius’s description and the Egyptian descriptions do seem dissimilar, but both are written on scrolls, deal with a tour of the cosmos, including the netherworld, and have a vision of the sun along with attendant deities.

Beyond similar descriptions found in Egyptian texts, there is also an Egyptian term meaning “to initiate.” The Egyptian verb “to initiate” *bs(i)* “always implies . . . an idea of ascension from a lower world to a higher world.”²⁵ The verb is used both for the initiation into the temple²⁶ and for the initiation of a priest into a higher office.²⁷ The constituent elements of the Egyptian initiation are normally seen to include aspects of transition and rebirth (fig. 1).²⁸ As a rebirth the initiation involves the creation or re-creation of the individual followed by his coronation.²⁹ As a transition, the initiation involves the acquisition of knowledge, following the path that leads to justification through the gates where the individual is tried.³⁰ The initiation also involves the seeing of secret things.³¹

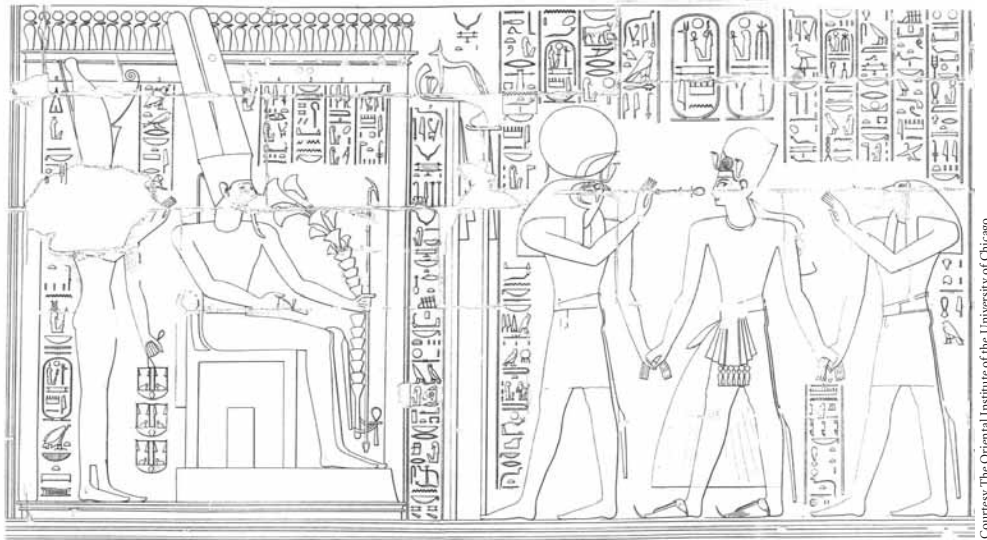


Fig 1. Mural from the temple at Medinet Habu, Egypt, ca. 1200 bc. In this ancient Egyptian depiction of initiation, Ramses III is shown being initiated into the presence of the god Amun-rasenter and Mut by Harchentechtha and Thoth. Harchentechtha says to Ramses, “Let me initiate you into the great temple [of] your [father] Amun, lord of the gods, so that he may give you every land as a gift and the populace in your fist forever.” Thoth says, “Behold, I am with you guiding your way to the horizon of the lord of the gods so that your father, Amun the primeval one, who begot you, might receive you, and grant you life like Re in the heavens, and your kingship on earth like Horus.” From Epigraphic Survey, *Medinet Habu*, 8 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1930–1970), 5:pl. 313. Drawn by Douglas A. Champion.

Silentium

In the description of Egyptian initiation, some aspects invite closer examination. In the first stage of the initiation, the initiates, Tamino and Papageno, are enjoined not to speak to women (2.4–2.6), and then later not to speak at all (2.13–2.19). In classical terms, this is called a *silentium*, although the most common use of the *silentium* is to prevent people from talking about the initiation rites they have received to the uninitiated.

The Egyptian version of the *silentium* is well known from classical sources, but it also appears in the Egyptian accounts of initiation. One initiation text specifies that during the initiation the initiate is to remain silent in order that “you may remember unflinching those things said by the great god.”³² The injunction to silence also appears both in chapter 125 of the Book of the Dead: “I did not raise my voice,”³³ and twice in the demotic Book of the Dead: “I did not raise my voice.”³⁴

Raising the voice can occur in several different contexts. It occurs in the context of injustice when the eloquent peasant Khunanup “wept very much for the pain of what was done against him. Then this Nemtynakht said: Don’t raise your voice or you will join the lord of silence (that is, die)!”³⁵ The Middle Kingdom monarch Djefayhapy extolled himself as “one who subdues the vainglory of the proud and one who silenced the loud voiced so that he would not speak;”³⁶ and yet a few lines later called himself “loud voiced when he praises god.”³⁷ These Middle Kingdom passages demonstrate that context is important when interpreting what a loud voice means in ancient Egypt.

Thutmosis III’s vizier, Weser, elucidates the context of this particular ritual requirement in a lengthy passage providing a specific context:

I acted as priest entering the temple of Amun, and I applied ointment to the god’s flesh, and I adorned Amun and Min. I carried Amun in his feast, and lifted Min onto his platform. I did not stand erect in the house of the lord of bowing. I did not raise my arm in the house of him who raises his arm [Min]. I did not raise my voice in the house of the lord of silence. I did not lie in the house of the lord of truth. I did not go astray from the purity of my god. I did not take a portion of his divine offerings.³⁸

This autobiographical account clearly points to the context of many of the items in the negative confession as being part of the priestly duties and, at least as far as a loud voice is concerned, restricts its use inside particular cultic settings. Raising his voice is one of the crimes for which Seth is condemned in the execration ritual of Abydos.³⁹ Yet at other times, a loud voice was part of the ritual, as a Ptolemaic ritual roll describes part of a funerary ritual as “a recitation by his priest with his voice raised behind this god.”⁴⁰

One can also discern a pattern of increasing restrictions over time. If in the Middle Kingdom Djefayhapy praised god with a loud voice, Weser in the New Kingdom spoke in muted tones in Osirian temples, while by Roman times, the interdiction had become pervasive, as Papyrus Insinger demonstrates: “A temple in which there is no quiet, its gods are those who reject it.”⁴¹ In a similar vein, during Ptolemaic times, the temple at Esna prohibited the use of harps, tambourines, and trumpets during the festival of grasping the crook on 20 Epiphi.⁴² Practical benefits of speaking *soto voce* emphasized the avoidance of disease (and consequent impurity): “A loud voice always makes misery in the body like sickness.”⁴³ Silence during some worship continued in the Isis cult to Roman times.⁴⁴ The prescription of silence continued to be a constant emphasis into Christian Egypt, where it reached its greatest extreme in the monastic movement, the ideal being never to speak at all.⁴⁵

Schikaneder's version of the initiation in *The Magic Flute* changes the *silentium* of the Egyptian mysteries into something other than it is in the Egyptian mysteries.

The Four Elements

The Egyptian initiations do not have a passage through the four Aristotelian elements (earth, water, fire, and air) as is present in *The Magic Flute* and in even the classical writers' accounts of Egyptian initiations. Instead, the Egyptian initiations present an account of the creation, occasionally mentioning one or another of the four elements.⁴⁶ The story of the creation centers on the creator god laughing or speaking and creating various parts of the earth or divine entities in seven discrete acts: First light, second water, third intellect, fourth procreation, fifth justice, sixth time, and seventh the soul.⁴⁷ These creation stories parallel a recently published creation account from the Tebtunis temple archive.⁴⁸ In this account, the creator first finds a place, then begets a son,⁴⁹ then creates other gods.⁵⁰ The wind separates the sky from earth, the water above from the waters below.⁵¹ Then the sun is created.⁵² After that there is a rebellion in heaven,⁵³ which is subsequently suppressed.⁵⁴ The gods grow old and die. Then the moon enters the sky, and the son of god is born and hidden.⁵⁵ The breath of life is given, and then death is created, to which all living creatures are made subject.⁵⁶ Stones and minerals are given to the serpents,⁵⁷ and then the stars are created.⁵⁸ Coming from various fragments whose order is uncertain, the narrative is disjointed. Nevertheless, the creation narrative is clearly present; it comes from a temple archive; and it provides an antecedent to the description by classical authors, who would associate the creation with the four elements since "the creation of the cosmos received the whole of every one of the four elements."⁵⁹

The late period creation narratives have parallels with earlier creation accounts. In the Shabako Stone, which was written no earlier than the Nineteenth Dynasty,⁶⁰ the creator, Ptah, also speaks in order to create the world and all things therein. Ptah "gave birth to the gods; he made the towns; he founded the territories; he placed the gods in their shrines; he established their offerings; he founded their shrines; he fashioned their bodies in order to pacify their hearts, so that the gods might enter into their bodies."⁶¹ Mention of the rebellion in heaven is also based on a previous work, which tells how men "were plotting against Re,"⁶² who was the king of heaven and earth and who dwelt on earth at that time.⁶³ The rebels were punished and special measures had to be taken to avoid the complete destruction of mankind.⁶⁴ The suppression of the revolt was celebrated

every year in the Feast of Hathor,⁶⁵ which was celebrated at different times in different locations throughout Egypt,⁶⁶ and thus remembered annually by the Egyptian populous. The giving over of the treasures of the earth to the serpents, which are seen as the manifestations of various gods, many of whom are evil, is also mentioned.⁶⁷

Thus we can trace a form of Egyptian creation narrative, which was incorporated into Egyptian initiation. The creation narrative was then transmitted through the Isis cult, and classical authors who had experienced Egyptian initiation referred to it, without divulging what occurred by referring to passing through the four Aristotelian elements. This reference, having obscured what occurred in the Egyptian initiation, was then misunderstood and reinterpreted by Terrasson and Schikaneder as representing a trial by the four elements.

Crowns

At the end of the opera, Tamino and Pamina appear “in priestly clothing” (in priesterlicher Kleidung) as the entire theater changes into a representation of the sun (2.30). This enactment follows Apuleius’s description of the initiate at the end of the Egyptian initiation in Egyptian priestly robes wearing a crown of leaves and carrying a torch or lamp representing the sun.⁶⁸ Carrying a torch or lamp is actually typical of Egyptian temple ritual⁶⁹ and is explicitly compared by the Egyptians to the sun.⁷⁰

The wreath or crown worn by the initiate appears as the wreath of justification in Egyptian sources where “the wreath of divinity is placed on the head of a man after you have given [him] a lamp of fire.”⁷¹ Although this text is attested only in Ptolemaic Egypt, the wreaths themselves have been found on earlier mummies (ca. 1880 bc) antedating not just classical sources but even earlier Linear B sources.⁷²

Conclusions

Some of the motifs of the initiation in *The Magic Flute* have their origins in ancient Egyptian initiations. The elements, however, have been modified: first by the classical authors, second by Jean Terrasson, and third by Emanuel Schikaneder. The changes include altering the gender of the names of the protagonists, changing the requirement of silence to not addressing women, and transforming the creation to a trial by the four Aristotelian elements. In much the way that blocks from Pharaonic Egyptian monuments are sometimes reworked into later architecture, one can still recognize the traces of authentic Egyptian artifacts reworked into the structure of *The Magic Flute*.

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1. Proof of the popularity of Mozart’s music may be seen in the borrowing by others for use with different lyrics. Latter-day Saints, for example, have used the aria “Ein Mädchen oder Weibchen” for the children’s song “I Pledge Myself to Love the Right” and “Bei Männern, welche Liebe fühlen” was used for the old hymn “Though in the Outward Church Below,” although sadly this latter has been removed from the hymnal. *Hymns, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1948), no. 102; *Children’s Songbook* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1989), 161.

2. There are, of course, hints in the first act that things are not the way that they seem, as when Tamino says, “Nun ist’s klar: es ist eben diese nächtliche Königin, von der mein Vater mir so oft erzählte. Aber zu fassen, wie ich mich hierher verirrt, ist ausser meiner Macht” (Now it’s clear: it is this very nocturnal queen, about whom my father has so often told me. But to comprehend how I have hitherto erred is beyond my power) (1.2). All translations appearing in this article are mine.

3. Erik Iversen, *The Myth of Egypt and Its Hieroglyphs in European Tradition* (Copenhagen: Gec Gad, 1961), 122.

4. Iversen, *Myth of Egypt and Its Hieroglyphs*, 121.

5. Iversen, *Myth of Egypt and Its Hieroglyphs*, 121–22.

6. Note that beginning in act 1, scene 9, “Das Theater [wird] in ein prächtiges ägyptisches Zimmer verwandelt” (The theater is changed into a magnificent Egyptian room).

7. Siegfried Morenz, “Die “Zauberflöte” im Lichte der Altertumswissenschaft,” *Forschungen und Fortschritte: Nachrichtenblatt der deutschen Wissenschaft und Technik* 21/23 (1947): 232–34 (non vidi); Siegfried Morenz, *Die Zauberflöte: Eine Studie zum Lebenszusammenhang Ägypten—Antike—Abendland* (Münster: Böhlau, 1952), 71–90. Based on the sources that Morenz was examining, I would have to come to the same conclusions that he did. My approach differs substantially in looking at Egyptian sources explicitly identified by the ancient Egyptians as “initiations,” whereas the ones that Morenz examined are those that seem to tell the story of Osiris in some sense or other.

8. For the story, see Jan Assmann, “Death and Initiation in the Funerary Religion of Ancient Egypt,” in *Religion and Philosophy and Ancient Egypt*, ed. William Kelly Simpson (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale Egyptological Seminar, 1989), 135–59.

9. *Demotisches Namenbuch*, ed. Erich Lüddeckens and others, 17 vols. (Wiesbaden: Ludwig Reichert Verlag, 1980–2000), 16:1186.

10. *Demotisches Namenbuch*, 5:368.

11. Overview in Eugene Romanosky, “Min,” in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*, ed. Donald B. Redford, 3 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 2:413–15. For a more nuanced evaluation, see Claude Traunecker, *Coptos: Hommes et dieux sur le parvis de Geb*, *Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* 43 (Leuven: Peeters and Departement Orientalistiek, 1992), 333–35.

12. Traunecker, *Coptos*, 333–34.

13. Herodotus, *Historiae*, 2.171.1.

14. Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride*.
15. Apuleius, *Metamorphoses*, 11.
16. The texts are PGM IV 475–829 and PGM XIII 1–343 (duplicate in lines 343–646), in Karl Preisendanz, *Papyri Graecae Magicae: Die griechischen Zauberpapyri*, 2 vols. (Leipzig: Teubner, 1928–31), 1:88–101, 2:87–117; and an Oxyrhynchus papyrus in Reinhold Merkelbach, “Ein ägyptischer Priestereid,” *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 2 (1968): 7–30.
17. Herodotus, *Historiae*, 2.171.1.
18. Apuleius, *Metamorphoses*, 11.23.
19. Herodotus, *Historiae*, 2.171.1; Apuleius, *Metamorphoses*, 11.23.
20. Iamblichus, *De Mysteriis*, 6.7.
21. Apuleius, *Metamorphoses*, 11.22.
22. Apuleius, *Metamorphoses*, 11.23.
23. Apuleius, *Metamorphoses*, 11.24.
24. P. Setna 3/40–4/3 (cf. 3/35–37), in Wilhelm Spiegelberg, *Die demotischen Denkmäler*, 3 vols. (Leipzig: W. Druglin, 1904; Strassburg: Dumont Schauberg, 1908; Strassburg: G. Fischbach 1906; Berlin: Reichsdruckerei, 1932), 2:pls. 44–45.
25. Jean-Marie Krutchen, *Les annales des prêtres de Karnak (XXI–XXIII^ees dynasties) et autres textes contemporains relatifs à l’initiation des prêtres d’Amon*, Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 32 (Leuven: Departement Oriëntalistiek, 1989), 202.
26. Penelope Wilson, *A Ptolemaic Lexikon: A Lexicographical Study of the Texts in the Temple of Edfu*, Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 78 (Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters en Department Oosterse Studies, 1997), 330–31.
27. Krutchen, *Annales des prêtres de Karnak*, 167–92.
28. Assmann, “Death and Initiation,” 137.
29. Assmann, “Death and Initiation,” 137–42.
30. Assmann, “Death and Initiation,” 143–52.
31. Jan Assmann, *Altägyptische Totenliturgien. Band 1: Totenliturgien in den Sargtexten des Mittleren Reiches* (Heidelberg: C. Winter, 2002), 322–24.
32. PGM IV 558–60, 728–30, in Preisendanz, *Papyri Graecae Magicae*, 1:92, 96.
33. Charles Maystre, *Les déclarations d’innocence (Livre des Morts, chapitre 125)* (Cairo: Institut français d’archéologie orientale, 1937), 96.
34. P. Bib. Nat. E. 140 2/22, 26, in Franz Lexa, *Das demotische Totenbuch der Pariser Nationalbibliothek (Papyrus des Pamonthes)* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1910), 19, 21.
35. Eloquent Peasant B1 24–27, in R. B. Parkinson, *The Tale of the Eloquent Peasant* (Oxford: Griffith Institute, 1991), 8; Adriaan de Buck, *Egyptian Reading-book* (Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 1963), 91; Raymond O. Faulkner, “Tale of the Eloquent Peasant,” in *The Literature of Ancient Egypt*, 2d ed., ed. William Kelly Simpson (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), 33; Miriam Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, 3 vols. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973–81), 1:171.
36. Djefai-Hapi 229, in Pierre Montet, “Les tombeaux de Siout et de Deir Rifeh,” *Kémi* 6 (1936): 149; Kurt Sethe, *Historisch-Biographische Urkunden des Mittleren Reiches*, Urkunden des ägyptischen Altertums VII (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1935), 54, hereafter cited as *Urk.* VII; Josef Janssen, *De traditionelle egyptische Autobiographie vór het nieuwe Rijk*, 2 vols. (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1946), 1:108, 2:150.
37. Djefay-Hapi 238, in *Urk.* VII, 56; compare the examples gathered in Janssen, *De traditionelle egyptische Autobiographie vór het nieuwe rijk*, 1:53.

38. Kurt Sethe and Wolfgang Helck, *Urkunden der 18. Dynastie*, Urkunden des ägyptischen Altertums IV (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1905–9), 1031, hereafter cited as *Urk.* IV; Miriam Lichtheim, *Maat in Egyptian Autobiographies and Related Studies* (Freiburg Schweiz: Universitätsverlag and Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1992), 113–14.

39. P. Louvre 3129 C 26–27, in *Urk.* IV, 19.

40. MMA 35.9.21 1/7–8, in Jean-Claude Goyon, *Le Papyrus d'Imouthès Fils de Psintaês* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1999), planche 1–1A.

41. P. Insinger 23/10, in Franz Lexa, *Papyrus Insinger* (Paris: Paul Geuthner, 1926), 1:73; Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, 3:203.

42. Serge Sauneron, “Remarques de philologie et d'étymologie (§§ 36–45),” *Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale* 66 (1968): 2–4. For the festival, see Sherif el-Sabban, *Temple Festival Calendars of Ancient Egypt* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000), 167–68:

Feast of grasping the crook; making the appearance of Khnum-Re, chief of the countryside in Aba, his face being turned towards the interior in order to delight the heart of his father Atum. Making halt in the pavilion of resting; then after the evening service, appearance of the god in the upper place, after he overthrew his opponent who fought against him in that place. Pouring the wine which is abundant on the offering tables in the presence of this god, his good face being turned towards the North (to Sau-khenen), in order to satisfy his heart, and pouring the libation water and fumigation of incense in the honour of the gods and those deceased; accomplishing the ceremony of “perfecting the countryside.”

43. P. Insinger 22/11, in Lexa, *Papyrus Insinger*, 1:70; P. A. A. Boeser, “Transkription und Übersetzung des Papyrus Insinger,” *Oudheidkundige Mededelingen uit het Rijksmuseum van Oudheden te Leiden* n.s. 3/1 (1922): xxix; Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, 3:203.

44. Apuleius, *Metamorphoses*, 11.22.

45. Apothegmata Patrum 6, 11, 40, 97, 152, 165, 201, 207, 224, 247, 305, 366, 373, 558, 562, 601, 611, 619, 621, 632, 658, 721, 808, 996–97, 1071, in Bonifaz Miller, *Weisung der Väter: Apothegmata Patrum, auch Gerontikon oder Alphabeticum genannt* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Lambertus, 1965), 16–17, 25, 44, 62, 67, 83–84, 89–90, 96, 111, 130, 132, 198, 200, 216, 218–19, 221–22, 227, 240, 268, 326, 360.

46. PGM IV.487–537, in Preisendanz, *Papyri Graecae Magicae*, 1:88–90; PGM XIII.138–209, in Preisendanz, *Papyri Graecae Magicae*, 2:93–97.

47. PGM XIII.163–205, in Preisendanz, *Papyri Graecae Magicae*, 2:95–97.

48. For the comparison see Mark Smith, *The Carlsberg Papyri 5: On the Primaeval Ocean* (Copenhagen: The Carsten Niebuhr Institute of Near Eastern Studies, 2002), 210–11.

49. On the Primaeval Ocean, fragment 1, in Smith, *On the Primaeval Ocean*, 17–18, 193.

50. On the Primaeval Ocean, fragments 2–3, in Smith, *On the Primaeval Ocean*, 31–32, 42–43, 193–94.

51. On the Primaeval Ocean, fragments 4–5, in Smith, *On the Primaeval Ocean*, 54–55, 64–66, 194.

52. On the Primaeval Ocean, fragment 4, in Smith, *On the Primaeval Ocean*, 54–55, 194.

53. On the Primaeval Ocean, fragments 5, 8, in Smith, *On the Primaeval Ocean*, 194–95.
54. On the Primaeval Ocean, fragments 6–8, in Smith, *On the Primaeval Ocean*, 195.
55. On the Primaeval Ocean, fragments 9–11, in Smith, *On the Primaeval Ocean*, 84–92, 195.
56. On the Primaeval Ocean, fragment 13, in Smith, *On the Primaeval Ocean*, 105–7, 195–96.
57. On the Primaeval Ocean, fragment 14, in Smith, *On the Primaeval Ocean*, 129–132, 196.
58. On the Primaeval Ocean, fragments 30, 38, in Smith, *On the Primaeval Ocean*, 168–69, 178–79, 197.
59. Plato, *Timaeus*, 31A–34B, 47E–50C, 82A; the quote is from 32C.
60. The key works for the dating of the Shabako Stone are Friedrich Junge, “Zur Fehlдатierung des sog. Denkmals memphitischer Theologie oder Der Beitrag der ägyptischen Theologie zur Geistesgeschichte der Spätzeit,” *Mitteilungen der deutschen Archeologischen Instituts Abteilung Kairo* 29 (1973): 195–204; Hermann Alexander Schlögl, *Der Gott Tatenen: Nach Texten und Bildern des Neuen Reiches*, *Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis* 292 (Freiburg Schweiz: Universitätsverlag: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1980), 110–17. Hugh Nibley has often claimed that the Shabako Stone is a copy of the earliest Egyptian inscription, but his dating is based on earlier studies now known to be in error.
61. Shabako Stone 59–60, in James Henry Breasted, “The Philosophy of a Memphite Priest,” *ZÄS* 39 (1901): Tafel I–II; Kurt Sethe, *Dramatische Texte zu alt-ägyptischen Mysterienspielen* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1928), 68; Hermann Junker, “Die Götterlehre von Memphis (Schabaka-Inschrift),” *Abhandlungen der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften philosophisch-historische Klasse Jahrgang 1939* nr. 23 (Berlin: Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1940), 65; James P. Allen, *Genesis in Egypt: The Philosophy of Ancient Egyptian Creation Accounts* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale Egyptological Seminar, 1988), 44.
62. Book of the Cow, in Charles Maystre, “Le livre de la vache du ciel dans les tombeaux de la Vallée des Rois,” *Bulletin de l’institut français d’archéologie orientale* 40 (1941): 58; Alexandre Piankoff, trans. *The Shrines of Tut-Ankh-Amon* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955), 27.
63. Book of the Cow, in Maystre, “Livre de la vache du ciel,” 58; Piankoff, *Shrines of Tut-Ankh-Amon*, 27; see also P. Carlsberg 180 fragment X 5/2, in Jürgen Osing, *Hieratische Papyri aus Tebtunis I* (Copenhagen: Carsten Niebuhr Institute of Near Eastern Studies University of Copenhagen, 1998), 172, 174 note b with references.
64. Book of the Cow, in Maystre, “Livre de la vache du ciel,” 59–73; Piankoff, *Shrines of Tut-Ankh-Amon*, 27–28.
65. Book of the Cow, in Maystre, “Livre de la vache du ciel,” 74; Piankoff, *Shrines of Tut-Ankh-Amon*, 29.
66. Thus at Kom-Ombo the festival occurs on the twenty-eighth day of the third month of inundation called Hathor (November 24): “Festival of Hathor, resident in Ombos. Causing the appearance of Horus and Hathor. Performing all the rites.” (el-Sabban, *Temple Festival Calendars of Ancient Egypt*, 155.) At Edfu, it occurred from the first day of the first month of harvest called Pachons through the first day of the second month of harvest called Payni (April 26–May 26):

Going out to Khadi. Taking out [Harsomtous and his ennead?] in procession on his beautiful feast of Proceeding to Khadi, as it is [called]. One approaches his barque on the river. Leading the gods-on-their-standards before him, while the scribe of the sacred book, in the god's presence, recites the prayer "Overthrowing the Foe". They cross (the river) to Khadi, spending 5 days there, while he (the god) strikes the foe. The floor of the hall is strewn with shelled barley. The procession of this god (is made) to the royal way-station of Khadi; then the retainers scatter the barley [on] the floor of the hall, and throw (some of it) at the feet of this god. They play the sistrum and tambourine, and sing: "You have crushed the aggressors, you have crushed the aggressors, O Harsomtous! You have slaughtered your enemies, fallen beneath your feet—you have crushed them like barley. May you cause all lands to prostrate (themselves) at your name—you are Re, ruler of the foreign lands." The same is done for 5 days. (el-Sabban, *Temple Festival Calendars of Ancient Egypt*, 176, parenthetical and bracketed comments in original.)

At Esna, it occurred on the last day of the first month of seed time called Tybi (January 25): "Feast of Hathor, mistress of Agny" (el-Sabban, *Temple Festival Calendars of Ancient Egypt*, 163), and again on the fourteenth day of the second month of harvest called Payni (June 8) (el-Sabban, *Temple Festival Calendars of Ancient Egypt*, 167). At Thebes it occurred on the first day of the fourth month of inundation called Choiak (November 27): "Day of the festival of Hathor; offering for Amon-Re with his Ennead and the portable image of *Wosermaatre Meriamon* [Ramses III], in this day of festival." (el-Sabban, *Temple Festival Calendars of Ancient Egypt*, 103.)

67. Book of the Cow, in Maystre, "Livre de la vache du ciel," 87–103; Piankoff, *Shrines of Tut-Ankh-Amon*, 31–33; compare P. Brooklyn 47.218.48 1/14–2/16, in Serge Sauneron, *Un traité égyptien d'ophiologie* (Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 1989), 7–35.

68. Apuleius, *Metamorphoses*, 11.24.

69. See P. Berlin 3055 1/2–5, in *Hieratische Papyrus aus den Königlichen Museen zu Berlin*, 5 vols. (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1901), 1:Taf. 1; Rosalie David, *A Guide to Religious Ritual at Abydos* (Warminster, England: Aris and Phillips, 1981), 64, 66. For some details on lamps, see John Gee, "The Structure of Lamp Divination," *Acts of the Seventh International Conference of Demotic Studies*, CNI Publications 27 (Copenhagen: Carsten Niebuhr Institute, 2002), 207–18.

70. From the ritual of lighting the lamp from the daily temple liturgy: "May it [the lamp] shine like the sun on the horizon." P. Berlin 3055 1/2–5, in *Hieratische Papyrus aus den Königlichen Museen zu Berlin*, 5 vols. (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1901), 1:Taf. 1.

71. Book of the Dead 19, in Hermann Grapow, *Religiöse Urkunden: Ausgewählte Texte des Totenbuches*, *Urkunden des ägyptischen Altertums V* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1915–1917), 136–44; see also Philippe Derchain, "La couronne de la justification. Essai d'analyse d'un rite ptolémaïque," *Chronique d'Égypte* 30 (1955): 225–87.

72. Examples in Salima Ikram and Aidan Dodson, *The Mummy in Ancient Egypt* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1998), 149.



Courtesy Hagen Haltern

Sarastro, by Hagen Haltern. A struggling, repentant Sarastro is more consistent with the opera's moral logic: that change and progress are necessary and possible.

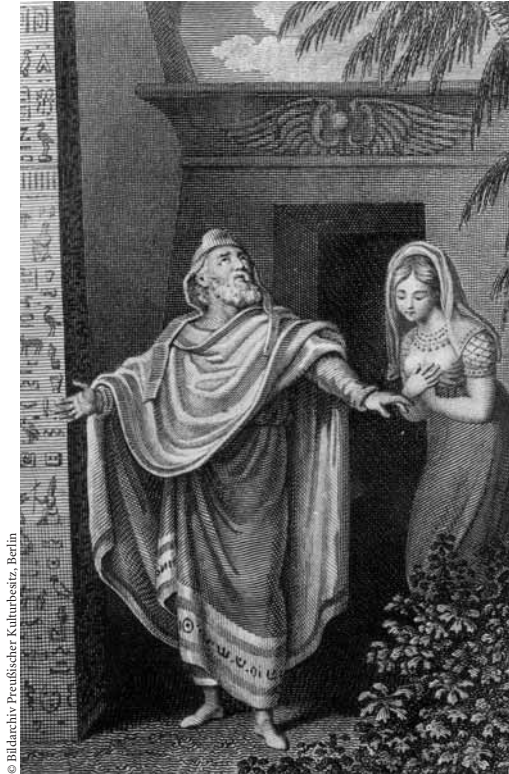
Sarastro's Repentance

One Dramaturg's Advice on *The Magic Flute*

Michael Evenden

Traditionally, the scholar of dramatic literature and the director of plays (or the stage director of an opera) are opposed figures. Despite common passions, they have different goals, methods, and materials. In the end, a scholar's polished critical argument and a director's persuasive theatrical performance are held to be two decidedly different things. But a dramaturg (a kind of in-house scholarly advisor to a theater or opera company) attempts to be a scholar of dramatic literature and theatrical history and, at the same time, a canny and practical advisor to the artistic team of an actual stage production. A dramaturg attempts to crisscross the theory-practice boundary, mediating between the extended reasoning engendered in the study and the evanescent impressions engendered by a performance. So, being a dramaturg and having written a scholarly book on *The Magic Flute*,¹ I propose to answer my own book-length scholarship with its antinomy, a short statement of practical advice for a (hypothetical) production of Mozart's last, great opera.

The advice I have to offer is centrally concerned with the incommensurability between contemporary criticism and the director's interpretive task, particularly in classical opera. Let me be more specific: *The Magic Flute* has a distinctive quality that challenges both scholarship and artistic interpretation in different ways. The crucial quality is inconsistency. The libretto (and, to a certain extent, the music as well) is a polyglot assemblage of many motifs in the popular culture of its time and its original audience—the off-the-track theatergoing public of post-Josephinian Vienna. As such, it is a work full not only of richness and variety, but of contradictions, both obvious and subtle. The more you study it, the more these



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Illustration for *The Magic Flute*: act 2, Sarastro and Pamina. Engraving by Meyer. This is a typical portrayal of Sarastro as the pontifical ruler and Pamina as the submissive princess. As such, it ignores the “backstory” of the opera, Sarastro’s abduction of Pamina and his subsequent holding her by force under circumstances that, whether he intends it, leave her endangered by one of his servants, Monostatos.

contradictions become apparent. Thus, *The Magic Flute* is a rather extreme case of a standard problem in reviving the classical operatic repertory for a contemporary audience. On the one hand, the music ultimately strives for emotional power through its coherence and order. On the other hand, the libretto seems to go every which way and, to our modern minds, raises questions the music does not seem able to answer.²

So what are we to do when we cannot quite make the work function in our minds as audience members? Deconstructive criticism of the late twentieth century centers, rather perversely, on foregrounding a given text’s irreconcilable difficulties, and thus it can content itself with documenting and interpreting the disjunctions in *The Magic Flute*. A minor, often high-profile tradition of deconstructive

staging makes a classical opera or play seem impossibly contradictory and unsupportable by the way it is designed, directed, and performed. However, the more customary artistic path (and, I believe, the pressure of the operatic form itself) is to try to make a self-contradictory work seem to cohere, enlisting the resources of performance to reconcile inconsistencies. The opera, then, is rendered in a way that makes sufficient sense and frees the audience’s enjoyment from confusion and nagging ahistorical doubts.

The operatic dramaturg, then, must find the textual difficulty and propose a performative solution to it. My purpose here is to identify a critical problem in the musico-dramatic text of *The Magic Flute* and to pose an artistic solution—an interpretive idea that might be staged in a way that would bring the work a plausible internal logic, at least in performance.

The Problem in *The Magic Flute*

I must also be clear about which problem I wish to remedy. For myself, as well as for most people, the main action of the opera (the moral purification and amorous fulfillment for Tamino and Pamina) and the principal subplot (Papageno's pursuit of the elusive Papagena, although dependent on magic and comic surprise) are hardly problematic and work well enough in a good performance. Nor is the most troubling problem what some lovers of *The Magic Flute* will have anticipated from my argument: I am not actually concerned with the most obvious plot contradiction in the opera (and one of the most obvious in all familiar opera), the surprising switching of audience sympathy from the Queen of the Night to the priest Sarastro at the end of act 1. This is, for me, a kind of red herring in *Magic Flute* scholarship because much of that scholarship (and there is a lot of it) has spent itself solving the wrong problem. The fact is that, given a stage interpretation that bites the bullet and tries to make sense of it all, the turnaround of audience sympathies "works" theatrically, lending some unexpected tension and surprise to a formulaic story and taking the audience through something of the moral and ethical realignment of the protagonists. Whether a clever innovation or a happy fallout of artistic carelessness, this turnaround seems to me a rather good piece of artistic strategy.

For me the nagging, irreconcilable problem in *The Magic Flute* lies in the context of the principal action—what we call the background situation or "backstory." Thus, the problem of the opera disturbs the premise of the plot and is a moral, not a logical, question. In my opinion, for the moral design of the opera to work, we have to accept Sarastro's prior-to-the-opening-curtain violence against Pamina—his abduction of a woman and his subsequent holding her by force under circumstances that, whether he intends it, leave her endangered by one of his servants (Monostatos). This is the initiating action of *The Magic Flute's* drama, and the irreconcilability of this authoritarian, misogynistic violence with the moral discipline and dignity Sarastro is supposed to embody is, for me, a potentially fatal flaw in the moral logic of the opera.

I know that the usual take on this problem is to blithely ignore it. If such denial were voiced, the argument would be that Sarastro's intentions

were only the best and that since the end result is positive one really should not mind the crudity of his offstage methods. But that ignores the moral structure of the opera, in which Sarastro and his teachings are meant to embody virtue itself. It also ignores the opera's plot, in which the reprehensibility of Sarastro's act and the outrage it causes (in Tamino and others) is the real mainspring of the action.

The Backstory Reexamined

Here we must reexamine the backstory of the opera and try, experimentally, to take it seriously as modern operagoers, listeners, or readers. In passages of dialogue that are too often cut in production (and are often not even printed in score or libretto), we learn a crucial fact about the fundamental enmity between Sarastro and the Queen of the Night: the Queen is the widow of a powerful sovereign who, on his deathbed, surprised her by bequeathing his talisman of office to Sarastro, the head of a priestly order, instead of to her. The ensuing rivalry over the sevenfold sun disk, which signifies a power that is both magical and political, is the foundation of the struggle between Sarastro and the Queen. (One has to read closely to see the clues—word choices, stage directions—that indicate that this power is not only supernatural, but one of earthly government, but they are there [see 2.1 and 2.8]). And, importantly, that background struggle is fought, as Sarastro tells us, in the hearts and loyalties of the citizens, torn between the old dynasty represented by the Queen and the new priestly government of the Order of the Sun. Sarastro's greatest concern is that "that woman seeks to defame our Order and arouse the populace against us" (2.1). Unexpectedly, then, this is the initial problem for the forces of good in the opera; the priests are struggling with the Queen's attempts to ruin their reputation and to undermine the legitimacy of their earthly authority.

But what is unacknowledged here, at least in any overt way, is Sarastro's own complicity in the problem of the priests' reputation. The Old Priest (sometimes called the Speaker) hints at it, as if with deeply suppressed frustration, when he knows he cannot defend Sarastro against Tamino's understandable outrage. Did Sarastro not tear Pamina unwillingly from her mother's arms? the Prince demands. The Old Priest can only warily reply, "Yes, youth, what you say is true" (1.15). And whether or not he wants to, he can say no more—a loyalty oath binds his tongue.

The Speaker's scene is a brilliant piece of musical and dramatic dialogue, deepened by the Speaker's inferable subtext of anger and regret at a situation he cannot defend. Here is another enemy enraged by Pamina's capture! Sarastro asked for this! Sarastro is an embarrassment to the Order

and its cause—at this point a thing no priest in the opera can say. Or else, as some skeptical modern critics have argued, the whole priestly order is in its essence coercive, violent, and misogynistic.³

A Dramaturg's Solution

Having identified the fundamental problem in the opera—Sarasstro's unacknowledged moral inconsistency—I now offer my dramaturgical advice, for any opera director out there who wants to take it up: have Sarasstro admit it. Acknowledge the contradiction and interpret the action of the opera as partly Sarasstro's effort to come to terms with a rash act, a crime, an abuse of power that must now be repented of.

The Sarasstro in my mental staging is young, as the original singer who played the role was. He is attractive. In kidnapping Pamina, he has acted unwisely with all kinds of intentions, including one central, troubling one: he had fallen in love with Pamina and concocted a half-mad plan to win her by taking her by force. In his first sung speech to Pamina, Sarasstro addresses her as "Love" and, with dark feeling in his descending vocal line, tells her that he knows she loves another and promises not to compel her love (1.18). It is a good acting moment if Sarasstro is facing the sad results of his unconscionable rashness but does not yet see a way out. Sarasstro is, then, a cousin of Pasha Selim from Mozart's *Abduction from the Seraglio*—a despot struggling with his own passions, painfully learning the self-renunciation necessary for true enlightenment. (It is entirely possible that Mozart and Emmanuel Schikaneder, Mozart's producer/singer/librettist, consciously based *The Magic Flute* on *Abduction*—the latter had been a hit for Schikaneder's company years earlier, when the two men first met.)

In production I would have the opera played out as the moral initiation of Tamino, of Pamina, and—at the same time, in another way—of Sarasstro, who is learning to be an unselfish and self-renouncing ruler, the enlightened despot of the sort that Vienna had recently lost in Joseph II. He loses the woman, and—as I believe Schikaneder intended us to understand in performance—he gives up his throne to the worthy prince. But he gets his soul back.

My proposed solution is rather simple: I would modify the dialogue to show Sarasstro's struggle and his repentance. I would have Sarasstro say to his priests at the beginning of the second act something like this (and I am modifying the existing monologue only slightly):

I come before you with a soul newly purified to tell you that this night our Order can be delivered from the darkness that threatens it. Tamino, a king's son, wishes to tear the veil from his eyes and behold the light of

truth in our temple. He will rescue our Order from the shame that vicious tongues have placed upon it . . . for tonight it has been revealed to me that Pamina, the virtuous, beautiful maiden, has been destined by the gods for Tamino. To her, I withdraw my claim and humbly beg my brother-priests' forgiveness for my rash and dangerous action, which has put our cause at risk. Tamino is destined to rule in our Order, rewarding virtue and punishing vice. To that end, he will be subjected to our severest trials. And Pamina will pursue his honorable path with him, for a woman that fears neither danger nor death is also worthy of enlightenment. If you can join with me in rescuing our Order from error within as well as calumny without—then follow my example.⁴

I think this simple modification gives us a Sarastro who is, for once, dramatically interesting. Through the ineffable logic of repentance, the change permits the opera the only moral consistency that I believe it can now have.

I argue for this struggling, repentant Sarastro (instead of Sarastro the walking sermon) because *The Magic Flute* is—structurally, logically, and emotionally—about the painful learning process of leaving old misunderstandings, violent imaginings, and exaggerated claims of the self behind and entering into the sweet harmony and equipoise that is this opera's vision of a heavenly state. To deny Sarastro the opportunity to experience this process, by not allowing him to enact his hard-won growth and repentance, is to force him, and perhaps all authority figures, onto a pedestal on which he truly does not fit. Lest we be accused of silently supporting the secret abuses of power that we know now always haunted the Enlightenment and, as Doctrine and Covenants 121:34–40 tells us, almost always threatens to corrupt religious authority as well, we—as operatic artists and audiences—would do well to acknowledge Sarastro's initial transgression for what it is and enjoy enacting the process by which transgression is overcome.

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1. In *Silence and Selfhood: The Desire of Order in Mozart's Magic Flute* (New York: Peter Lang, 1999), I attempt to bring together a number of contemporary critical approaches with Mozart's *Magic Flute*.

2. Within any continuity of musical language, the music becomes outdated more slowly than the out-of-the-way forms of drama that tend to be made into operas—melodrama, commedia comedy, and patriotic-historical spectacle.

3. The majority of critics who engage *The Magic Flute* love it enough to try to resolve its intrusive elements of male supremacy and misogyny, usually by willfully evading lines of text like "A man must guide your heart; without him, every

woman tries to exceed her rightful sphere" and "Beware of women's wiles—this is the first duty of our brotherhood" and focusing instead on the moral and musical transcendence Pamina earns in act 2, implying that her perfection must trump the earlier pronouncements. Any implicit connection between the Order's contempt for women and Sarastro's violence toward Pamina is seldom discussed. Still, I have sat in audiences and heard them hiss Sarastro's misogynistic words and have read of productions in which Sarastro is played as a tyrannical ayatollah rather than an enlightened ruler or in which Tamino and Pamina transcend the values of the Order and signal the fact by symbolically breaking the flute at the end; it seems that these internal moral contradictions have become more difficult to ignore.

Catherine Clément, *Opera, or the Undoing of Women*, trans. Betsy Wing (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988) anticipates much of this: "Men's education suppresses its own violences, and I have never yet seen my heart's version of the *Flute*. In it the good priests with the majestic voices would do what they really do; they would shove Pamina forcibly into the cubbyhole where Zarastro [*sic*] locks her up, they would beat up the Queen of the Night, they would kick Papageno, the truth at last" (75–76). See also David Schroeder, *Mozart in Revolt: Strategies of Resistance, Mischief and Deception* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1999), 26–29, for an argument that Mozart and Schikaneder deliberately intended the authoritarian violence of Sarastro's order—featuring slaves and torture as well as misogyny—to ironize the sanctimony of their pronouncements.

4. This free adaptation of the original speech, intended only as a sketch, abbreviates the original and reorders some of its passages (see 2.1). It also borrows from other passages in the libretto.

Note that, in order to clarify the action, I have chosen to move Sarastro's order to admit Pamina to the process of purifying trials to this early point in the act (whereas in the original he orders her into the temple of trials in a later scene), and it is the two priests in the finale who sing that "A woman who fears neither night nor death is worthy and shall be consecrated." I have also chosen to state openly what is more indirectly implied by the action, that Sarastro intends to pass his leadership on to Tamino.

Free as this version is, then, it refers to the original throughout, and the only ideas I have consciously invented are (1) that it is only on this night that Sarastro has learned that Pamina is destined for Tamino; thus, he has "newly" purified his heart by giving her up; (2) Sarastro's open acknowledgment of personal wrongdoing, according to my thesis in this article: "To her, I withdraw my claim, and humbly beg my brother-priests' forgiveness for my rash and dangerous action, which has put our cause at risk;" and (3) Sarastro's final reference to error in the misogynistic Order itself: hence the added phrase "in rescuing our Order from error within as well as calumny without."



Scene from *The Magic Flute* by Ingmar Bergman. Monostatos has allied himself to the Queen of the Night and her ladies: she has promised to give him Pamina if he reveals a secret way into the temple. The Queen plans to annihilate Sarastro and the other priests through “fire and sword” and her followers swear an oath to her. The Queen and her forces of darkness are, however, completely defeated by the temple order, which is compared in the finale to the rays of the sun.

Monostatos, the Moor

David P. Crandall

Monostatos, captain of Sarastro's guard and clandestine admirer of Pamina, is a character of frustrated villainy.¹ Duplicitous, cowardly, and often dull-witted, he is bound to a menial social position and blinded by a self-imposed ignorance that prevents him from realizing his ambitions. As an opportunist, Monostatos is entirely unsuccessful—his schemes and machinations never quite pan out. Yet of all the nationalities and peoples he could represent, why is Monostatos cast as a Moor? Why not a Greek or a Jew or a Dane? Is it simply his Moorish background that makes of him a rather odious and pathetic creature, or is there something else in his demeanor or actions or decisions that more correctly locates the source of his contemptuous and strangely tragic character? The answer to these questions is not overly complicated. Monostatos is certainly liable to all the difficulties a Moor would encounter in the household of non-Moors, but it is he who ultimately proves his own undoing by not following Wisdom's path, even when it stretches before his very eyes. Though Monostatos is not the cleverest of men, lack of native intelligence is not his stumbling block; it is his willful indifference to the Right, to the Good, his refusal to see what is to be seen. An entirely self-generated apathy toward the integrity of the person accounts for his foolish and unfortunate course.

As a Moor of complete European invention, Monostatos must be understood within the context of the late-eighteenth-century European imagination. A thousand years before this, however, *Moor* became the term used by the Christian population of Spain to refer to the Muslim invaders who crossed the Strait of Gibraltar from the northernmost tip of Morocco in A.D. 711. By 750, these people of Berber and Arab stock, and

recent converts to Islam from the North African Roman province of Mauritania (hence, *Moor*), laid claim to much of the Iberian peninsula. Though Moorish Spain was never centrally governed or politically stable, Arab immigrants—people highly skilled in hydraulic technology, agriculture, and medicine and learned in all the arts and sciences that flourished in the Arab world, as well as gifted artisans from North Africa—gathered and thrived in the major centers of Moorish Spain in the succeeding centuries. For nearly seven hundred years, they participated in a blossoming civilization and a sophisticated, cosmopolitan life to be found nowhere else in medieval Europe.

The European recapture of Toledo in 1085 marked the beginning of the decline of Moorish rule in Spain, though it was not until the close of the final and gruesomely unsuccessful Crusade in 1204 that the attention of Christian Europe turned more fully toward removing the infidels at their own doorstep. With the fall of Granada in 1492, Islamic dominance in Spain was finally subdued, and the magnificent life that bloomed for centuries under the Moors disappeared.

Monostatos is heir to the great Moorish civilization, though by the late eighteenth century the popular imagination had all but erased the memory of the beauty and grandeur of Moorish life. Many of the Moors had fled Europe, returning to North Africa and other Arab lands, though it was not uncommon to find Moors employed as servants or slaves in the households of prominent European families, especially in Portugal, Spain, and Italy. But within the late-eighteenth-century European imagination, Moors were mostly a fallen and degenerate people, a servile people, a dark people. Were they considered exotic? Perhaps, but certainly not to the extent they were in the mid- to late-nineteenth-century, when Arabic material culture (such as carpets, pillows, carvings, weapons, and platters) became the vogue in European home decor and the choice in costumes for fancy dress parties.

The world in which Mozart and Schikaneder lived viewed Moors as distinctly inferior,² not only because of their religion but more so because of ignoble character traits attributed to Moorish culture—traits that were, of course, part and parcel of the ongoing creation of social boundaries and group identities employed by Europeans in defining themselves against that savage “other.”³ (It must be noted that such a practice is hardly unique to Europeans, but a truly pan-human phenomenon.) And, not surprisingly, these Moorish attributes are well reflected in the literature of the time, especially in what is sometimes termed “that cheaper sort of fiction.” Though not particularly high in literary quality, many of these widely read works offer a compelling portrayal of Moors cast within the web of the popular European imagination of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Moors in Popular Contemporaneous Novels

Charlotte Dacre's *Zofloya; or, The Moor* (1806), a dark and lurid tale of the nether side of human nature, features a Moorish servant, Zofloya, who works in a wealthy Venetian household. He is described as remarkably handsome, tall, and strong of body, and there is an intense sensuality about him that threatens to overwhelm the mistress he serves. The Moor is an exceptional servant: not only does he do his tasks well, but he even anticipates the specific kinds of assistance of which his mistress stands in need. As the storyline of infidelity and homicide progresses, Zofloya's mistress, Victoria, comes under his charm, then his power, and, finally, his complete control. He enables her to fulfill her murderous intentions by suggesting possibilities, creating opportunities in which foul deeds could be done, and eventually demanding the execution of her designs. Though Victoria's deep sensual desires for Zofloya are never fulfilled, as her life becomes a ruin, and in the moment before her own suicide (abetted by the Moor), she finally realizes the Moor's true identity:

Victoria raised her eyes—horrible was the sight which met them!—no traces of the beautiful Zofloya remained,—but in his place, stripped, as in her dream, of his gaudy habiliments, stood a figure, fierce, gigantic, and hideous to behold!—Terror and despair seized the soul of Victoria; she shrieked, and would have fallen from the dizzying height, had not his hand . . . seized her with a grasp of iron by the neck!

“Dost thou mark, vain fool!” he cried in a terrific voice, which drowned the thundering echo of the waters—“Behold me as I am—no longer that which I appeared to be, but the sworn enemy of all created nature, by men called—SATAN!—’Tis I that lay in wait for frail humanity. . . . I seduce them to my toils. . . . Yes, *I* it was, that under semblance of Moorish slave . . . —appeared to thee in thy dreams. . . . I found thee, oh! of most exquisite willingness, and yielding readily to all my temptations!”⁴

The hands of the Moor tighten their grasp around her throat and hurl her headlong to her death in the boiling sea. As she falls toward the water, Zofloya, as Moor and Satan, sends his “demoniac laugh” echoing in her ears.⁵

The central Moorish character in Anna Eliza Bray's *The Talba; or, Moor of Portugal* (1831) is a person entirely different in habits and native dispositions from Zofloya. The Talba is a man of servitude, working in a wealthy Portuguese household, but he is also a man of great personal integrity and respected by his master and mistress. In due course, through a series of events, the Talba uncovers a plot to kill his mistress, the future queen. His discovery, however, comes too late to foil the deed, but upon seeing his mistress in her room, still as the night and covered in blood, the Moor

decides he must confront the murderer—the king himself. Bray describes the Talba's strength as follows: "But what tongue shall speak the emotions of the king, when the Talba, the noble-minded Talba, rushed into his presence, and with a generosity of feeling that made the *dark brow* of the Moor shine like an angel of light."⁶ The king is unable to resist the power of the Talba's rebuke, but when Don Pedro, son of the king, raises his hand in grief and anger to slay his father, the Talba disarms him and reproaches the prince:

Wretched man! would you murder your father? Does this become a warrior! a prince! Leave guilt to Allah: he will fully requite it; but dip not thy steel in a father's blood. . . . Sinful in thy own nature, dare not to avenge thyself on him, who, though he has sinned heavily against thee, is still thy father, the author of thy days, thy judge, thy king.⁷

Of all the characters through the entire novel, save perhaps the Talba's mistress, none possesses the nobility and integrity of character of the low-born Moorish infidel.

Robert Montgomery Bird's *Abdalla the Moor* (1839) is the story of a Moor forced to journey from Spain to the New World in the company of soldiers joining Cortes's conquest of Aztec Mexico. Although the disparaging remarks about Moors found throughout the early pages of the text hold true for most of the Moorish servants and slaves (they are scheming and untrustworthy), Abdalla is different. He is of a noble and powerful family and is a Moorish Christian. Many of the Spanish conquistadors are depicted as simple philistines, lusting after wealth and the shedding of "infidel" blood. As a victim of Spanish brutality—his wife was killed by the knight he now serves—Abdalla seeks to aid the Mexicans in their efforts to thwart Cortes, that thereby they might not have to suffer as Abdalla has suffered. Despite his deep-seated hatred of Spanish conquest, Abdalla risks his life to save his master.

In the end, Abdalla forgives his master of the murder but utters his final statement on Christian Spain.

"The standard of Christ," said the Moor, with emphasis, "waves not over the heads of the Spaniards, but the banner of a fiend, bloody, unjust, and accursed. . . . God, whom they traduce and belie in all their actions, has given them over to the punishment of the hypocrites and blasphemers, to sufferings miserable and unparalleled."⁸

As he lies dying, Abdalla brings a crucifix to his lips, denouncing Muhammad and professing his Christianity. "I am of the faith of Christ, and Mahomet I defy. My people shall be followers of the Cross, but they shall sweep away the false Spaniard, as the wind brushes away the leaves."⁹

In his death is the tacit acknowledgment that Abdalla was a far better Christian than the Spaniards he served.

The Stereotypical Moor

In each of these novels, the leading Moorish character is anomalous: not one of them falls squarely within the realm of popular expectations for a Moor. Zofloya is too wicked, the Talba too saintly, and Abdalla, in the end, too charitable, too forgiving, too high-minded, too Christian. These characters aside, however, the Moors in these novels are depicted as being “naturally” indolent, and because of inherent moral weaknesses, Moors are undependable, often incapable of performing skilled tasks, and never to be trusted, since what lurks in the hearts of Moors is treachery, a desire to bare the sword, as did their ancestors in the past, and topple their Christian superiors. They are seen as a people of dark, silent, brooding eyes, swarthy complexions, and facial expressions that mask their true intentions. Yet despite a native tendency toward indolence and shiftlessness, Moors are not unintelligent, for they continually hatch schemes and plots to best their masters, to undo their masters’ designs (an obvious contradiction, as the “indolent” are constantly at work to bring down their masters). Thus their swarthy skin and dark hair and eyes are but extensions of their dark and brooding souls. A Moor must never be trusted because even if he serves well, it is always under compulsion, always under duress. A Moor serves well because of a social, political, and economic condition beyond his ability to change. In popular portrayals, never is there genuine love, compassion, or charity, but always contempt, unwilling acceptance, and steeping disloyalty.

Reflected in the popular European imagination of the time is a race of people who were thought to differ not only in their dark, foreboding appearance, but because they live supposedly without the moral virtues of Christianity—charity, honesty, humility, loyalty, trustworthiness, and purity of thought. And since nothing more could be expected of such people, why assert that it is otherwise? It is in this dreary context that Monostatos lives—and well he seems to fill the bill.

Monostatos’s Faults

Even bearing in mind the playful nature of the opera, Monostatos is nothing if not a “typical Moor.” His actions are consistent most of all in their duplicity. He lies repeatedly, especially to his master, Sarastro, about the well-being of Pamina in his ongoing attempts to subvert Sarastro’s plans for her, and to anyone else who poses a threat to his designs. Indeed,

his precise intentions toward Pamina are never straightforward and honest, but full of subterfuge, for he appears to possess no genuine love or concern for her welfare but a pedestrian sensual desire for her because of her virtuous beauty. As for loyalty and trust, Monostatos, captain of Sarastro's guard, exercises the guards for his own purposes, not his master's. And with what effortlessness does his allegiance shift from Sarastro to the wicked Queen of Night when she lures him with the promise of Pamina (2.30). With an unquestioning stupidity he assists the Queen in creating a plot to capture Pamina and wrest her from Sarastro, never wondering whether the Queen is trustworthy. In nearly all of his actions, Monostatos displays cowardice—be it his flight from Papageno (1.12), his confrontations with Sarastro (1.19; 2.11), or in the scene of his final demise (2.30). In every wit, Monostatos is a Moor!

Can the deficient character of Monostatos be squarely attributed to being a Moor? Certainly when he is spoken of as “the Moor” it is done so in a context of disdain—a simple fact not wasted on Monostatos. That his public standing is clearly understood by him finds its most poignant expression in a quiet moment when he discovers Pamina alone in the oriental garden, sleeping peacefully in the shade. Intending to steal a kiss from her, he utters his sincere conviction that love is just as fervent beneath a swarthy skin as it is in the heart of a white man (2.7). Social prejudice and his Moorish background do not fully account for his actions; neither can Monostatos accurately be viewed as a Marxian revolutionary, fighting against the hegemonic forces of oppression and evil to raise his people to a new level of equality, to usher in a new era of social and economic justice. There is nothing heroic or praiseworthy about Monostatos. And since he is clearly depicted as a moral agent, as a person who makes his own decisions and could just as easily have elected to follow a different path, he is not a social-cultural dupe.

In his major failings, though, Monostatos is not alone: he is hardly the only liar or the only coward or the only duplicitous person with dark intentions. Papageno, the piping buffoon, is also a liar and a coward, but eventually he learns his lesson. Without question, the Queen of Night is the most deceptive, lying, vicious, and selfish character of all—truly a creature of demonic proportion.¹⁰ But like Monostatos, she never learns her lesson. Both she and Monostatos are villainous characters, but the *natures* of their respective villainies are entirely different.

While the Queen of Night is a black and malignant villainess, Monostatos proves to be rather more of a buffoon than a strictly malicious villain. The principal difference between the two is as simple as the difference between knowledge and ignorance, cunning and stupidity. The Queen of

Night is knowledgeable, she understands fully the ways of the world, she knows of the enlightenment available in Sarastro's temple and of his higher ways, but she deliberately rejects the knowledge of Wisdom and Light and betakes herself to scheming against Sarastro, using Pamina as a pawn. She cares nothing for her daughter; instead, the maiden is little more than a tool to be set against Sarastro, whose illumination would fully expose the Queen's dark and miserable life to her daughter. Thus, the Queen's intellectual base of operation is knowledge, and the source of her villainy lies in possessing a good apprehension of Wisdom and Light but willfully rebelling against it—as acquiescence would ruin her worldly power and standing.

Monostatos languishes under a different species of villainy, for he is truly ignorant of a higher way. His motivations and deeds are not diabolical but merely selfish, wanting those things not socially (or morally) allotted him. Though he is keenly aware of the temple and the illustrious persons who inhabit it—those men who have demonstrated the desire and strength of character requisite for enlightenment and who have had it bestowed upon them—he takes no personal interest in it. Of this illumination itself and what, in particular, it represents, he is blissfully ignorant—the matter simply holds no appeal for him. But it is precisely this indifference to illumination of a higher order that constitutes Monostatos's stumbling block. His efforts are so concentrated on what could be called, based on Aristotle's *Ethics*, goods of second intent (the tangible “good” things of the world) that he is blinded to the greater value of goods of first intent (those moral truths and ideas that are key to the life of the soul). In his pursuit of Pamina, he foolishly blames his swarthy complexion for his failures. Through the character of Tamino, the truth of the matter is more clearly established. Tamino may be a handsome



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Costume for Monostatos, 1819. Original is at the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin—Preussischer Kulturbesitz Kunstbibliothek.

lad, but Sarastro will never allow him to marry Pamina based on the superficiality of physical appearance; instead, Tamino must demonstrate his worthiness by following the path to illumination with true sincerity and there receive the Wisdom and Understanding that alone will qualify him to take Pamina to wife. Tamino finally sees that this must be so and walks that path. In stark contrast, Monostatos has not the least comprehension of the ways of love and virtue and wisdom, rather, he blames his troubles on his swarthy skin and social position—anything but his own moral character and the agency of his innermost self (2.13).

Indeed, Monostatos is the very embodiment of the commonest of common men, the unthinking and ignoble working stiff who pursues goods of second intent (which Aristotle tells us are not in themselves unworthy—they are necessary, and without them the goods of first intent would be difficult to obtain), all the while believing them to be goods of first intent. Monostatos has made himself incapable of seeing what is of lasting and consequential value. Thus, in the absence of true wisdom and knowledge, he is undeserving of Pamina.

Monostatos, the Moor, is a bungling deceiver, an ineffective liar and double-dealer, a simpleton willing to switch allegiances in pursuit of his desires; yet for all these faults there is something sadly tragic about his character, about his inability to see the writing on the wall, about the wastage of his life. Monostatos chooses to pursue goods of second intent when the goods of first intent—the knowledge, the grand understandings of the purpose and order of life offered to worthy persons by Sarastro—lay before his very eyes, entirely within his grasp (for there is no indication that Monostatos would be denied access to them had his desires been worthy). To a soul blind to the goods of first intent, such knowledge is of little worth, especially when Monostatos compares it to the seduction of a beautiful maiden and potential wealth and power. Herein lies the real source of his villainy: it is not European conceptions of his race or his culture that constitute the fountain of his villainy (these may form a barrier of sorts, though not absolutely as illustrated by the Talba and Abdalla); rather, his own eyes are so strongly fixed on goods of second intent that Monostatos is quite unable to even *recognize* the value of the life of the soul.

In this regard, the character of Monostatos stands as a warning against the consequences of giving oneself wholly to the pursuit of goods of second intent, to the things of the world, to having and getting, and the pillars of modern life: faddism, consumerism, and consumption. Yet perhaps more important than this message, the life of Monostatos is a demonstration that allowing one's moral life to decline because of social prejudice leads to the death of mind and soul—a kind of double warning that no human

circumstance or condition can justify moral and ethical malfeasance, and that once the low path is taken, one inevitably loses one's remaining stock of moral sensibility.

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1. For an ethical interpretation of Sarastro, see Michael Evenden's "Sarastro's Repentance: One Dramaturg's Advice on *The Magic Flute*," in this issue of *BYU Studies*, 162–69.

2. Certainly Viennese audiences would not fail to see in Moors a parallel to the Turks whom they had fought at the Siege of Vienna (1529) and eventually vanquished at the Battle of Vienna (1683).

3. Members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, too, have been "orientalized" and cast as the "savage other" in a long line of popular fiction that dates back to the Victorian era. See Terryl L. Givens, *The Viper on the Hearth: Mormons, Myths, and the Construction of Heresy* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 130–37. Compare *BYU Studies* 40, no. 4 (2001) which features the theme "LDS Scholars Engage Islamic Thought."

4. Charlotte Dacre, *Zofloya; or, The Moor* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997[1806]), 266–67.

5. Dacre, *Zofloya*, 267.

6. Anna Eliza Bray, *Talba, or Moor of Portugal* (New York: J. and J. Harper, 1831), 186.

7. Bray, *Talba*, 189.

8. Robert Montgomery Bird, *Abdalla the Moor and the Spanish Knight: A Romance of Mexico* (London: J. Cunningham, 1839), 112.

9. Bird, *Abdalla the Moor*, 153.

10. For a reading against the grain of traditional interpretations of the Queen of the Night, see Victoria Webb's "The Queen of the Night: A Mother Betrayed," in this issue of *BYU Studies*, 180–88.



Courtesy Rowan University Opera Theater

Although often portrayed as the foil of Sarastro and the embodiment of evil, the Queen of the Night can also be read as a more benevolent character: a mother who feels betrayed by her daughter. Seen here in a production by Rowan University Opera Theater, the Queen appears majestic but not evil.

The Queen of the Night

A Mother Betrayed

Victoria A. Webb

It may be difficult for some to understand how any mother could sincerely sing both arias assigned to the Queen of the Night in *The Magic Flute*. Indeed, most critics assume she is insincere, at best. In her first aria, the Queen expresses desperate suffering caused by the abduction of her daughter, Pamina. In the second, Pamina has safely returned to her mother's embrace, only to be confronted with her "wrath of hell." I recently gained some insight into this inconsistency when I came face to face with a mother's wrath. On a long train ride, I sat next to an older woman who was a politically active teacher and the mother of two daughters; she spoke to me as if I were one of them. She was very interested in my academic achievements and asked about my professional intentions. I told her that I enjoyed teaching and would continue to do so, but that my highest aspiration was to use my education as a wife and mother. I could not have foreseen her reaction. She screamed at me, "How dare you! I burned my bra for you!"

The Queen of the Night is traditionally portrayed as the villainess of the opera and an enemy of the powerful Sarastro. Tamino's progression is clear: he grows and matures in an opera that could be conceived of, in a general way, as a *Bildungsroman*, a story of development in which the male hero develops morally as he learns discipline, duty, and his responsibility to society. When seen in this light, Sarastro is a kind of father figure to Tamino as Tamino prepares to take Sarastro's place and lead the temple order into a new age. But the relationship of actual family members—of Pamina to her mother, the Queen of the Night—is often glossed over. Their relationship should be of particular interest to Latter-day Saint readers, who have a deep respect for filial piety.

The Queen is usually associated with defiance of Enlightenment principles; she, her ladies in black, and the night setting are interpreted as the foil to Sarastro, the temple priests, and the sun. Indeed, a Latter-day Saint audience might even tend to superimpose its own religious beliefs on the order of priests and their temple, which would make the Queen's insubordination an act of pride and ultimately wicked. Nevertheless, a purely textual reading of the libretto can shed a different light on the queen. The words are often not understood by audiences that do not speak German and that are more interested in the Queen's tremendous arias, usually accompanied by theatrical spectacle. A purely textual reading is, of course, reductive for an opera but necessary because the text tends to be neglected. A close textual reading undercuts a dichotomous "black and white" interpretation of the opera and allows a sympathetic view of the Queen to emerge: she can be seen as a benign but fallible woman stripped of her power because of her gender and as a mother who feels betrayed by her only daughter.

Betrayed by Both Husband and Daughter

In the Queen of the Night's discussion with Pamina in act 2, scene 8, just before her second aria, I cannot help but hear the wrath of the woman I met on the train, outraged at patriarchal oppression: "What do I hear! How could you, my daughter, defend the scandalous principles of these barbarians?" (2.8). The comparison becomes all the more acute as I am reminded of the reasons inspiring the Queen of the Night's wrath. In her husband's last mortal act, she was rendered ineffectual as he gave the source of their power, the sevenfold disk of the sun, to Sarastro and the initiates, only advising her, "Do not seek to understand matters that are beyond the grasp of the female mind" (2.8). Of course, in the twenty-first century, sensibilities immediately pick up on the sexism here, but it must at least be acknowledged that, in Mozart's eighteenth-century context, these words would have been less inflammatory and in keeping with prevailing views. Nevertheless, for the Queen, who has been stripped of her power and excluded from knowledge on the basis of gender, her husband's explanation becomes the foundation for the hostility expressed in the famous second aria, "The Wrath of Hell Boils in My Heart."

Although the Queen's passionate response may be motivated partly by what she perceives as the mistreatment of women, it strikes me that the real anger arises from her daughter's rejection of her passion. The Queen feels betrayed by Pamina, whose focus is not on destroying the power of Sarastro and the initiates but on her potential ties to them as Tamino's betrothed. The Queen justifiably wonders about her daughter's allegiance

to her, and it is this suspicion that connects her two arias. The Queen now fears something far worse than her daughter's physical abduction, described in her first aria. The Queen expresses horror that Pamina does not see a conflict of interest in her relationship with Tamino; she fears that her daughter is being "mentally abducted," swayed from her beliefs. It is primarily this fear that drives her rage in the second aria.

Loving Mother and Benevolent Queen

Pamina's sympathy with her mother's enemies is particularly frightening for the Queen because, until this confrontational scene in the opera, she has had little reason to suspect that her daughter would ever disagree with her; she and Pamina have been of one mind. Both Pamina's and the Queen's first words in the opera are of how troubled they are because of their separation, and they both work toward their reunion. As the Queen instigates her daughter's rescue through Tamino and Papageno, Pamina attempts to escape (1.9). Even the slaves who guard the Princess know where her heart lies: "Ah, how [she . . .] flees to her loving mother's palace" (1.10). The focus of both mother and daughter is the same—seeing each other again.

Pamina and her mother are also concerned for each other. Like many parents, the Queen feels that her own well-being is interconnected with her daughter's; she tells Tamino that after her daughter's abduction "all [her] happiness was lost" (1.6). Pamina believes that her mother is concerned for her welfare: "I am not afraid of death; I grieve only for my mother, for she will surely die of sorrow." (1.11). Likewise, the Queen, concerned with her daughter's "future happiness"¹ (1.5), fulfills Pamina's secret wish for love by sending her Tamino. It is no wonder that Pamina associates her mother with joy and goodness, rejoicing even to see the Queen's representative: "My mother, Oh joy! You know my dear sweet mother?" (1.14). Indeed, for Pamina, "the sound of her mother's name is sweet" (1.19).

Nor is it only Pamina who speaks highly of the Queen. In fact, in the entire opera, not one character criticizes the Queen except Sarastro. Admittedly, many characters, including Tamino, make general misogynistic comments² that may be directed toward the Queen, but only Sarastro openly slanders her. To counter his comments, the Three Ladies question Sarastro and the priests as "priests of false character" (2.5). Considering this lack of criticism, there is not overwhelming textual evidence that the Queen's character is evil; rather, it is a case of their word against his.³ And Pamina—arguably the one who should know her mother best—does not question her mother's motives.

Motherhood is central to the Queen's identity; she not only mothers Pamina, but she also extends maternal concern to others in her realm. Her world is filled with the wonder, fear, and enchantment associated with childhood, and she rules there through her Three Ladies, who act as governesses for her. They save a young, frightened Tamino from a terrifying snake and bring him to the Queen, who refers to Tamino as her son. The Three Ladies provide daily sustenance for Papageno, and, under the Queen's motherly direction, he is mildly reprimanded for dishonesty. Furthermore, the Three Ladies tell Tamino that the Queen's "maternal heart has decided to make [him] completely happy" (1.5). Both Tamino and Papageno are conspicuously referred to as youngsters [Jünglinge]. The Queen's realm is a world in which a mother's gifts of a magic flute and silver bells can chase away any danger and bring happiness to all of humanity (1.8).

The Queen's Fears and Pamina's Choices

When her mother is in charge of her realm, Pamina's relationship with her mother remains stable and secure; however, their relationship changes when they confront each other and Pamina learns of her mother's weaknesses. Ever aware that her daughter is increasingly influenced by her developing relationship with Tamino, the Queen fears the worst when she hears that Tamino has joined the initiates: "The initiates? My unfortunate daughter, now you are snatched away from me forever" (2.8). The princess, who still believes that her mother is able to remedy anything, naively suggests that they run away and hide together. "Let us flee, dearest Mother! Protected by you I will defy every danger" (2.8). Hoping to show her daughter why Tamino's association with the initiates is so offensive to her and why he is lost to them, this single mother now chooses to share her adult burden with her daughter. The Queen tells Pamina that she does not possess the source of power, the sevenfold disk of the sun, and that she was betrayed by her own husband, who gave the disk to Sarastro and the initiates.

In spite of her dramatic and hopeless tone, the Queen puts forward a plan to return things to the way they were before Tamino joined the initiates. Hoping to secure both Pamina's and Tamino's loyalty, she inverts Tamino's earlier charge to save Pamina from Sarastro: Pamina must now reclaim Tamino from the initiates. The Queen tells her daughter that she must do more than save Tamino physically; she must convince him to return to the Queen's realm: "[The prince will be] lost unless you persuade him to flee" (2.8).

Perhaps subconsciously, the Queen also uses the emotions that Pamina and Tamino have for each other to ensure that they return to her. Just as Pamina was to be the prince's reward for fulfilling the Queen's bidding, the Queen assures Pamina that Tamino will not be hers unless she succeeds. "The first glimmer of daylight will determine whether he belongs entirely to you or to the initiates" (2.8). Essentially, Pamina's mother compels her daughter by presenting her with two options, one of which is utterly discouraging for the princess: either Tamino will belong to Pamina or he will be given to the initiates and lost to her forever.

But Pamina's interpretation of these options illustrates the Queen's greatest fear, that Pamina may desire something different than she does. The Queen's intention notwithstanding, her word choice reveals that there might be other options for the princess. The Queen uses the German word *ganz* ("entirely") when describing how Tamino may be given to Pamina—"ganz dir," "entirely to you." The sentence is structured so that it is unclear whether the word "entirely" also modifies the initiates, meaning that Tamino could belong either entirely to Pamina or entirely to the initiates. Pamina, who does not have her mother's jaded outlook regarding the initiates, does not interpret the sentence this way and thus sees further possibilities for the second option: Tamino's association with the initiates need not preclude a relationship with her: "Dear Mother, could I not love the young man just as tenderly as I do now, even if he does become one of the initiates?" (2.8). Indeed, Pamina believes that she and Tamino can still be together because her own parents had such a relationship: "My father himself was bound to these wise men" (2.8).

Perhaps because of the Queen's struggles with her own initiate husband and with Sarastro, she will not entertain the possibility of such a partner for her daughter. The Queen, who has just shared her darkest secrets about her conflicts with those very men, feels abandoned by the person she expected most to understand. "You, my daughter? How could you love a man like that, who associates with my mortal enemy?" She is hurt that her daughter might even suggest such a union because it is utterly contrary to the hopes she holds for herself and for her daughter. She perceives the suggestion as substantiation that she is losing Pamina and is driven to the ultimatum described in her second aria: "You will kill him [Sarastro] and deliver up the mighty disk of the sun to me . . . If you do not cause Sarastro to suffer the pains of death, then you will be my daughter no more" (2.8). Murdering Sarastro thus becomes the determining test of her daughter's allegiance.

Although Pamina does not know where to turn in light of her mother's ultimatum, she is certain she cannot comply. Furthermore, she knows that

her disobedience will hurt the Queen deeply. Nevertheless, Pamina, a fledgling adult, makes her own decision: “Am I to commit murder?—Ye gods! That I cannot do” (2.9). Fulfilling the Queen’s oath in an ironic way, Pamina refuses to kill Sarastro and, as a result, is no longer the Queen’s daughter—she is the Queen’s equal as an adult. She is no longer innocent to adult responsibilities and decisions, and she alone must bear the consequences for her own actions. Thus, Pamina (like Tamino) develops morally through making choices, in a manner that would be consistent with Latter-day Saint views of moral agency and accountability.

It is difficult to know what the Queen thinks about her daughter’s choice because there is so little dialogue or aria time dedicated to the Queen’s troubles in the second half of the opera. In act 2, the Queen refers to Pamina as her child, but the reference is unpleasant because it is a part of a bargain that the Queen has struck with the self-serving Monostatos. Monostatos has offered the Queen entrance into the temple in exchange for Pamina, and the Queen agrees: “I’ll keep my word; it is my will: my child shall be your wife” (2.30). For those disposed to thinking of the Queen as evil, her bargain with Monostatos seems to confirm all suspicions.

But the view that the Queen is evil is difficult to rationalize without ignoring the effort and torment she went through when Pamina was first abducted. Had the Queen then wished Sarastro dead, she could have reasonably sent Tamino to kill him during his rescue mission, for from the power-stripped Queen’s perspective Pamina’s abduction was the initiates’ second unprovoked offense against her. Yet this mother did not ask for justice or even vengeance; she simply longed for her daughter’s return. It is not until the initiates begin to turn her daughter and Tamino against her that the Queen begins to speak of wrath, revenge, and power.

Power to Save Her Daughter

The only time the Queen ever addresses the issue of power is when she feels she cannot protect her child. In her first aria, she mourns that as her daughter cried for help, she was powerless: “Ah, help was all she cried . . . But my assistance was too weak” (1.6). Later she is forced to admit to Pamina that her power ceased with her husband’s death and that she cannot protect Pamina (2.8). Is it not then reasonable that at the end of the opera she wishes to seize power to serve justice on those who have turned her daughter against her?

The possibility that the Queen wants power only to protect Pamina could help to explain the Queen’s alliance with Monastatos. Monastatos is privy to much more information than the Queen is, and she needs his

knowledge to locate her daughter. The Queen does not know what the audience does, that Monastatos is a liar and a potential rapist.⁴ The audience is aware of Monastatos's shifting loyalties and manipulations of the truth to serve his own ends, but the Queen knows only what he has told her. It is he who seeks out the Queen when he fails to blackmail Pamina into marriage: "Since I am not to have the daughter, I'll seek out the mother" (2.11). What the Queen does know is that she and Monastatos share an objective: to "exterminate the hypocrites⁵ from the earth with glowing fire and mighty sword" (2.30). To the Queen, Sarastro is a great hypocrite and a real threat to Pamina.

We have all known parents who are concerned because their children are involved in things with which their parents do not agree. My grandmother, a devout Presbyterian, was one such parent. When my father became a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, she feared for her son and tried hard to convince him that his ways were wrong. Although she did not succeed in her attempts, we never viewed her efforts as evil or motivated by anything other than love.

Similarly, Pamina understands that her mother cares for her child. Perhaps appealing to the audience as much as to Sarastro, Pamina makes a plea for her somewhat controlling, flawed but caring mother as it dawns on her how very difficult it must be to let go of a daughter: "Lord, do not punish my mother! [Consider] her sorrow at my absence" (2.12). Pamina's constant consideration for her mother is evidence that the Queen should not be interpreted as a purely evil character. Our own perceptions might have constructed the cunning witch that we associate with the Queen of the Night.⁶ By focusing on the relationship between mother and daughter, as given in the text, it is possible to redeem not only Pamina, whose moral development is often overlooked, but also the Queen of the Night, who is too easily castigated for blind malevolence.

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1. Although the reference to future happiness is made directly to Tamino regarding his forthcoming association with Pamina, one can reasonably assume that the Queen also implies future happiness to her own daughter through the union as well.

2. The Priest discredits Tamino's reasons for hating Sarastro because "a woman has so told [him]" but gives no reason other than gender for not believing the implied woman—the Queen of the Night (1.15).

3. Of course, it must be stressed again that we are examining the opera in a slightly distorted way by discounting the performance elements and musical logic that can create tensions with this reading. Nevertheless, the text must be taken into account.

4. In act 2, scene 8, the Queen interrupts Monostatos's advances on her daughter, but the Queen barely notices him and certainly is unaware of what the audience knows from the previous scene. Upon her arrival, she simply dismisses the Moor.

5. Though the word *Frömmeler* is often translated as "pious ones," since the eighteenth century the verb *frömmeln* has come to mean *fromm tun*, to act or appear pious, which corresponds to the English word *hypocrite*. The German words *Frömmerei* and *Frömmeler* have negative connotations implying an inward insincerity masked by outward pious behavior. See *Fromm* in *Der Große Duden Band 7: Etymologie*. Bibliographisches Institute AG: Mannheim. 1963.

6. Similarly, our own wish to see Sarastro as a perfectly wise and benevolent ruler might make us less sensitive about slight ambiguities in his character. Compare Michael Evenden, "Sarastro's Repentance: One Dramaturg's Advice on *The Magic Flute*," in this issue, 162–69.

Die Zauberflöte

What's in a Title?

Harrison Powley

Scholars have argued over *Die Zauberflöte* for many years. Is it a fairy-tale opera, a metaphorical discussion of Masonic and Rosicrucian beliefs, or a contemporary political or philosophical commentary on the 1780s and the Enlightenment?¹ It can be all these and more, but for many in the audience during fall 1791 it was entertainment, pure and simple. The audience at the Theater auf der Weiden came from all levels of society. The nobility and educated attended as well as the working and servant classes.

In a work so rich with literary, visual, and musical symbols, it is easy to gloss over the most obvious ones: the magical musical instruments.² Musical instruments of Mozart's day were similar in some ways to instruments in common use today yet quite different in construction, sound, and performance techniques. As performers and conductors try to communicate music of past centuries, they have turned in recent years to performing music on the instruments for which the composers wrote the music, using either surviving instruments or modern reconstructions in an attempt to recreate the timbres or tone colors, tempi, ornamentation, tunings, and the like of the past.³

This essay focuses primarily on Mozart's use of two instruments: the *Zauberflöte* (magic flute) and the *Zauberglöckchen* (magic bells). We know what a flute is and what bells are, but why and how are they "magic"? In fact, why do Schikaneder and Mozart use these instruments at specific times in the work, and what meanings did they convey to Mozart's audience? We will also discuss several surviving instruments that could have influenced Mozart's music.

Papageno's Panpipe

The first unusual instrument we hear is a little panpipe (*Faunen-Flötchen*) played by Papageno (fig. 1) in his aria “Der Vogelfänger bin ich ja” (1.2).⁴ This is not a magic instrument but an aid Papageno uses to attract the birds he trades to the Three Ladies, emissaries of the Queen of the Night, in return for food, drink, and shelter.⁵ The bird catcher Papageno, in the service of the Queen of the Night, is a man of the people, a child of nature, someone with whom those of the lower social classes in the audience could easily and immediately identify.⁶ Schikaneder played this role and the panpipe to the delight of his audience.⁷

Mozart's music here is airy and earthy; the ascending five-note motive of the panpipe is Papageno's musical motive (example 1). The strophic song, written in G major, a key often associated with the “rustic, idyllic and lyrical,” aptly portrays Papageno's pastoral origins.⁸



Fig. 1. Copper engraving to Mozart's *Zauberflöte* by Johann Heinrich Ramberg (1763–1840). Papageno plays the panpipes in his aria “Der Vogelfänger bin ich ja” (1.2). *Orpheus Taschenbuch für 1826*, vol. 3 (Leipzig: Ernst Fleischer, 1826). Also reproduced in Stradner, *Klangwelt*, 315.



Example 1. Papageno's panpipe motive “Der Vogelfänger bin ich ja” (1.2, mm. 13–140).

The “Golden Flute”

The introduction of the *Zauberflöte* and the *Zauberglöckchen* comes after the Three Ladies show Tamino a portrait of Pamina (1.3) and tell him of the capture of Pamina by a powerful evil demon (1.5). The Queen of the Night then enters amid thunder as the mountain parts, revealing her seated on a star-studded throne. She promises Tamino that he can marry Pamina if he will rescue her from the villain (1.6). Before Tamino and Papageno leave on their rescue mission, the Three Ladies first give Tamino a gift from the Queen: a *goldene Flöte* (fig. 2) for his protection from the greatest misfortune.⁹ The flute has not undergone enchantment, but its “magic” is that it can foster enchantment.¹⁰ The Three Ladies further explain that with the flute Tamino “can act omnipotently, transform human passion, make the sad joyful” and “through love captivate even an old bachelor” (1.10).¹¹ Then all sing that the flute is “worth more than gold or crowns for through it the happiness and contentment of mankind will be increased.”¹²

In his thought-provoking article “Layers of Meaning in *The Magic Flute*,” Joscelyn Godwin reminds us that the “flute itself is a many-layered



Fig. 2. An eighteenth-century boxwood flute of the type used in the 1790s. Boxwood is “golden,” the color of light oak. This instrument may be similar to the *goldene Flöte* the Three Ladies give Tamino before he leaves to rescue Pamina. Flute by Pierre Naust, Paris, ca. 1690. The mark NAUST with a lion rampant is stamped on each of the flute’s three sections. Boxwood with large turned ivory mounts. One closed, silver key. Total length 666 mm (26.5”). Sounding length 583 mm (23.5”). Ex. coll. Friedrich von Huene, Brookline, Massachusetts. Purchase funds gift of John R. and Janice Waltner, Freeman, South Dakota, in honor of their daughters, Mary Law and Ann O’Donnell, 2002. Photo used by permission of the National Music Museum, no. 10113, Vermillion, South Dakota.

symbol. It is phallic, of course, and as such represents the virility which is lacking in Tamino at the outset, but which is a vital quality on the Quest.”¹³ He then quotes Jacques Chailley: “[The flute’s] symbolism is that of music itself: to carry out his journey of purification, man needs aid from rites that give him the power to transform souls, and music is the most essential sign of them.”¹⁴ This of course immediately recalls the Greek myth of Orpheus, the musician who could charm wild beasts and move trees and rocks from their places by the sound of his music. After the death of his beloved Eurydice, he charmed the ferryman Charon, the dog Cerberus, the three Judges of the Dead, and even Hades with his singing and lyre playing. Orpheus’s music moves Hades, and Hades allows Eurydice to return to the world of the living if Orpheus does not look back until she is again in the sunlight.¹⁵

Godwin quotes further “the Sufi poet Mevlana Jalalu’d-din Rumi, founder of the esoteric Islamic order of Whirling Dervishes, who dance to the music of reed-flutes (*nays*): ‘First [the flute] is cut away from its original stem. Then in its heart the holes have been made; and since the holes have been made in the heart, the heart has been broken, and it begins to cry.’”¹⁶ We find out much later in the opera who made the flute (2.28). Along with Tamino, we learn from Pamina that the flute does not really come from her mother, the Queen of the Night, but that her father, Sarastro’s predecessor as master of the sevenfold sun circle, made it. A pivotal point in the libretto, Tamino and Pamina are at last united and will undergo the last trials together. As they are about to enter the trial of fire, Pamina takes Tamino by the hand and says:

Love may strew the path with roses, because roses always come with thorns. You play the magic flute; may it protect us on our way. My father carved it in a magic hour from the deepest heart of a thousand-year-old oak, amid lightning, thunder, storm, and tumult. Now, come and play the flute, may it lead us on our rocky way.¹⁷

Chailley points out that the flute is “destined for use under the sign of Air (man’s breath), it has been produced magically during a stormy night under a downpour (Water), to the noise of thunder (Earth) and the flash of lightning (Fire). It unites the four Elements, whence its perfection.”¹⁸ Godwin suggests that “the flute is Tamino’s purified heart, in which divine happiness wells up [2.15], and which with Pamina’s support, gives him the power to pass the trials [2.28].”¹⁹

Our first indication of the flute’s Orphic power to transform feelings and animals comes toward the end of act 1, scene 15. Tamino, informed by a priest who comes out of the Temple that Pamina still lives, takes out his flute and sings in recitative style before he plays: “Oh, if with every tone I



Example 2. Tamino plays his flute upon learning that Pamina lives; animals come and listen to its sound (1.15, mm. 160–67).

were only able, almighty ones, in your honor to describe my thanks, which sprang from heart [he points to his heart].”²⁰ Now in the key of C major, a key of purity, simplicity, and childlike innocence,²¹ Tamino plays the *Zauberflöte* (example 2), charming all types of wild animals accompanied by the twittering of birds.²² Tamino continues his song: “How powerful is your magic sound, charming flute, for through your sound even wild animals feel joy. But only Pamina stays away.” He calls her name, seemingly in vain, then plays again, pleading for her to hear him, answer him. Papageno’s panpipe echoes the last five notes of Tamino’s flute, an ascending G major scale (example 3). Tamino exclaims, “That is Papageno’s sound!” After two more repetitions of the flute answered by the panpipes, Tamino, his hopes raised, sings, “Perhaps the sound will lead me to her!” as he rushes off stage.²³ In the next scene, Papageno and Pamina, escaping from the Temple, sing of their hope that Tamino will find them. Papageno again plays his panpipe, and Tamino answers offstage on his flute. At that moment, Monostatos discovers Pamina and Papageno.

It is at this point that Papageno realizes that his panpipe is not viable against Monostatos.



Example 3. Papageno’s panpipe answers Tamino’s flute (1.15, mm. 206–10).

The Zauberglöckchen

Let us return to Papageno when the Three Ladies first give him the *Zauberglöckchen* (1.8, mm. 171–72). In the score, Mozart wrote, “Gibt ihm ein stahlnes Gelächter” (literally, “give him a steel laughter”). In the printed libretto, the instruction is “Gibt ihm eine Maschine wie ein hölzernes Gelächter” (literally, “Give him a machine like a wooden laughter or amusement”). The phrase “hölzernes Gelächter,” which may be a corruption of “hültzig Glechter” (wooden sticks), was used until the late eighteenth century to refer to a folk xylophone, often a single trapezoidal row of wooden bars.²⁴ The Three Ladies, however, give Papageno a box inside of which is what they call (1.8, mm. 184–85) *silber Glöckchen* (little silver bells). Papageno and Tamino, now armed with their *Zauberinstrumenten*, begin their quest.

Papageno’s first opportunity to use his *Glöckchen* occurs shortly after Pamina and Papageno hear Tamino’s flute played offstage. They are now overjoyed at the prospect of being saved when Monostatos and his slaves suddenly confront them. Papageno then shows that he is not entirely the fool. “He who often risks much often wins much! Come you pretty glockenspiel, let your little chimes sound so that their ears ring!”²⁵ Monostatos and the slaves then begin to dance as they exit (1.17, example 4).

Godwin suggests that in this scene Papageno charms Monostatos through the power of music, “which symbolizes the fundamental goodness of simple folk.”²⁶ After they leave, Papageno and Pamina sing, “If every good man could find such bells! His enemies would then disappear without trouble, and without them he would live in the best harmony! Only harmony and friendship lightens our burden; without this sympathy there is no happiness on earth.”²⁷ Konrad Küster, however, states, “The glockenspiel has not yet implanted itself in Papageno’s consciousness—or rather he has not yet fully grasped that he has left his old identity behind and acquired a new one.”²⁸



Example 4. Papageno plays the *Zauberglöckchen* while Monostatos and his slaves dance as they exit the stage (1.17, mm. 294–301).



Example 5. Papageno, *Zauberglöckchen* introduction to the first verse of “Ein Mädchen oder Weibchen” (2.23, mm. 1–8).

In act 2, scene 23, Papageno sings his aria “Mädchen oder Weibchen.” Mozart writes a virtuosic part for the *Glöckchen* (example 5). Schikaneder played Papageno in some performances, using a mute stage prop instrument while someone else played an actual instrument in the wings. Whether it

was a small keyboard-like instrument in the box given him by the Three Ladies or a bell tree (fig. 3) that he hit with sticks or spun around (singers who have played the part have used all these and more), it is this aria that Mozart describes in his October 8–9 letter to his wife, Constanze:

But during Papageno’s aria with the glockenspiel I went behind the scenes, as I felt a sort of impulse to-day to play it myself. Well, just for fun, at the point where Schikaneder has a pause [perhaps m. 35], I played an arpeggio. He was startled, looked behind the wings and saw me. When he had his next pause, I played no arpeggio. This time he stopped and refused to go on. I guessed what he was thinking and again-played a chord. He then



Fig. 3. Detail from copper engraving to Mozart’s *Zauberflöte* by Johann Heinrich Ramberg (1763–1840). Papageno plays the *Zauberglöckchen* in his aria “Klinget Glöckchen klinget” (2.29). The instrument may have been a bell tree such as this one, which he hit with sticks or spun around. *Orpheus Taschenbuch für 1826*, vol. 3 (Leipzig: Ernst Fleischer, 1826). Also reproduced in Stradner, *Klangwelt*, 314. Courtesy of the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, Sammlung alter Musikinstrumente.



Example 6. Papageno, *Zauberflöckchen* introduction to “Klinget Glöckchen klinget” (2.29, mm. 576–83).

struck the glockenspiel and said ‘*Shut up.*’ Whereupon everyone laughed. I am inclined to think that this joke taught many of the audience for the first time that Papageno does not play the instrument himself. By the way, you have no idea how charming the music sounds when you hear it from a box close to the orchestra—it sounds much better than from the gallery. As soon as you return—you must try this for yourself.²⁹

The third time Papageno uses his bells is when he wants to find Papagena again (1.29). He first tries his panpipe unsuccessfully: she does not appear. He then tries to hang himself but stops at the last minute at the reappearance of the Three Boys, who remind him to use his *Glöckchen*. He then sings “Klinget Glöckchen klinget” followed by the humorous duet in which Papagena and he stutter joyously on the first syllable of their names (example 6).

Much speculation surrounds exactly what sort of instrument Papageno plays, both on stage by the singer and offstage by a musician. On stage he might have played a small bell tree that he takes out of the box given him by the Three Ladies, or perhaps he played a set of metal bars (fig. 4).³⁰ Today from backstage or in the orchestra the *Zauberflöckchen* music is usually performed on a

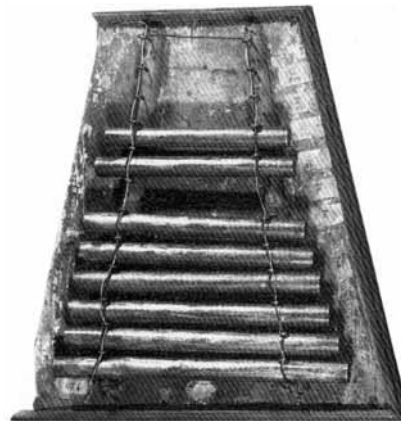


Fig. 4. Metal, trapezoidal glockenspiel in a wooden case, eighteenth century, incomplete diatonic scale g to d², possibly used as a stage instrument. No one knows exactly what sort of instrument Papageno’s portrayers played in the eighteenth century. On stage they might have played a small bell tree (fig. 3) or a set of metal bars like these. Courtesy of the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, Sammlung alter Musikinstrumente, Inv. Nr. 264. Also reproduced in Stradner, *Klangwelt*, 316.



Fig. 5. Glockenspiel keyboard, Kaiserliche Vorstellungsuhr. Courtesy of the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, Sammlung alter Musikinstrumente. Also reproduced in Stradner, “Automatenspiele,” 134.

celesta, an instrument played like a small upright piano in which small hammers strike metal bars. This instrument was not patented, however, until 1886.³¹

What type of instrument did Mozart intend in 1791? In the score, Mozart uses the term *istromento d'acciaio* (“instrument of steel”). Until recently, scholars knew no such instrument from the eighteenth century.³² In 1999, however, Gerhard Stradner published an important article in which he describes a musical clock built by 1745 and given to the Empress Maria Theresia in 1750 to celebrate her tenth year on the throne.³³ On examining the musical clock, Stradner unexpectedly found inside it another instrument, a separate keyboard glockenspiel of four chromatic octaves (C to c³, pitched a¹ = 410 Hz) (fig. 5). Since the instrument is in fragile condition and does not play, it could not be completely opened to see if it had metal plates or bars or rods. One can only speculate whether or not Mozart knew of this clock and its hidden instrument. That such instruments did exist is now beyond question. In at least one recent production of *Die Zauberflöte*, moreover, an instrument maker reconstructed a special *istromento d'acciaio*.³⁴

Jeremy Montagu proposes an interesting possibility for another metal instrument. We do not know whether Mozart's steel instrument used



Fig. 6. Glasschord made by Beyer of Paris, dated March 18, 1785, Sammlungen der Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde in Wien, IN 20. Courtesy of the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, Sammlung alter Musikinstrumente. Also reproduced in Stradner, *Klangwelt*, 317.

metal bars, rods, or small bells that might be struck with a small hammer attached to a keyboard mechanism. Montagu informs us that an instrument similar to Benjamin Franklin's hemispherical cup bells, but played with small mallets attached to a keyboard, exists in the Museum of Rosenborg Castle in Denmark, and, according to Mette Müller, "The instrument suited the purpose [Mozart's music] well."³⁵

Nevertheless, yet another possibility is that Mozart in his arrangements of Handel's music in the late 1780s became aware that Handel used a keyboard instrument, called by Handel a carillon, that struck metal bars or bells from a keyboard.³⁶ In 1788, Mozart arranged Handel's masque *Acis and Galatea*, basing it on the published score of 1743. Regrettably, that score did not include the carillon part written in 1739.³⁷

The *Zauberglöckchen* could also be an instrument with glass bars, such as the one pictured here (fig. 6).³⁸ Built by Beyer in Paris in 1785, this "Glasschord" has a range from g to g³ and may be similar in size to the instrument used in *Die Zauberflöte*. Small wooden hammers strike the glass bars when the keys are depressed. Other glass instruments from the eighteenth century are not likely candidates since Mozart's music for his

istromento d'acciaio is much too elaborate to be played on Franklin's glass harmonica or the *sticcado-pastrole*.³⁹ Franklin's instrument is played with the fingers, and the *sticcado-pastrole* is played with two small mallets. What is certain is that Mozart had a specific tone color in mind that he could best achieve with this enigmatic instrument.

Why was Papageno given the *Glöckchen*? One logical and practical possibility may be that Mozart liked the exotic tone of bells. Mozart's opera orchestrations, moreover, are more colorful than his concert works. In folk cultures such as Papageno's, bells (on animals or a carriage) also served to avert evil and misfortune. Chailley suggests that Papageno's "wooden laughter or amusement" instrument and the amusement music it plays was carefully written by Mozart, "placing it in opposition to the magic flute." He goes on to say that modern "perfected" instruments such as the celesta "take away some of the rusticity desired from an instrument meant to be played upon the stage [in the wings] and certainly not in the pit."⁴⁰

Chailley states that the *Zauberglöckchen*, which are "under the sign of the Earth," are also symbolic:

In Act I it will have an irresistible effect upon Monostatos, who represents the same sign; in Act II, it is during Papageno's trial by Earth that it will fulfill its purpose of summoning Papagena so that she too may undergo that trial [2.23]. Its use in the finale [2.29] is less easy to explain: perhaps, as so often in the libretto, the explanation lies in parallelism with the preceding scene: just as Tamino and Pamina underwent their trials by Fire and Water together, so Papageno and Papagena too will be united under the double sign of Air and Earth: the flute and the glockenspiel.⁴¹

The Magic of Music

Perhaps the most sublime moment of the opera occurs when Tamino and Pamina pass through the trials of fire and water (2.28) (example 7). It is here that music's Orphic power is most evident. All sing after Pamina has explained the origins of the flute to Tamino, "Because of the power of sound we [you] walk happily through death's dark night." Pamina then sings, "We walked through the fiery furnace, bravely fought with danger. May your sound be protection in floods of water just as it was in the fire."⁴² At the end of the scene, the triumphal chorus sings, "You have conquered the danger! The dedication of Isis is now yours! Come, enter the Temple."⁴³

Nicholas Till tells us that *Die Zauberflöte* is "a parable of the magic powers of art, and especially of music, to redeem humankind from its subjection to earthly nature, and ultimately to reunite humanity with the cosmos and restore harmony and bliss." He nicely summarizes Tamino's



Example 7. Tamino plays *Die Zauberflöte* as he and Pamina begin the trial of Fire (2.28, mm. 362–71).

importance and power “to rouse, and at the same time to tame, wild beasts” with *Die Zauberflöte*, “a symbol not of the subjugation of nature by art, but of mankind’s escape from its subjugation to a baser nature, and its reconciliation with a higher concept of nature through art.” The flute allows him to summon Pamina, and together they enter “the underworld and there [invoke their] art to conquer death itself. . . . Through the mysterious power of the flute Tamino and Pamina are able to penetrate the raging elements and emerge unscathed and purified.”⁴⁴

To summarize:

Tamino’s flute conquers by pacifying the beasts and elements; its power is strange and archaic. Papageno’s bells, on the other hand, conquer by their summons to dance. The slaves who hold Pamina captive are enchanted by Papageno’s bells to dance away to a tune of such pristine, heartlifting innocence that for a moment the burdens of care and anxiety miraculously fall away.⁴⁵

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The author gratefully acknowledges Dr. Albert R. Rice and Prof. Dr. Gerhard Stradner for their generosity in sharing their vast knowledge of eighteenth-century musical instruments. They have pointed me toward paths I would not have followed and reminded me, as the Three Genies remind Papageno in *Die Zauberflöte*, when to use the *Zauberhörnchen* (2.29).

1. See, for example, Brigid Brophy, *Mozart the Dramatist: A New View of Mozart, His Operas, and His Age*, rev. ed. (New York: Harcourt, Brace, & World,

1964); Jacques Chailley, *La flute enchantée: Opéra maçonnique* (Paris: Éditions d'aujourd'hui, 1968); Jacques Chailley, *The Magic Flute, Masonic Opera: An Interpretation of the Libretto and the Music*, trans. Herbert Weinstock (1971; reprint, New York: Da Capo Press, 1982); Judith A. Eckelmeyer, *The Cultural Context of Mozart's Magic Flute: Social, Aesthetic, Philosophical*, Studies in the History and Interpretation of Music, vol. 34A (Lewiston, N.Y.: Edwin Mellen, 1991); Hans-Josef Irmen, *Mozart's Masonry and the Magic Flute*, trans. Ruth Ohm and Chantal Spenke ([Zülrich]: Prisca, 1996); Konrad Küster, *Mozart: A Musical Biography*, trans. Mary Whittall (Oxford: Clarendon, 1996); and Nicholas Till, *Mozart and the Enlightenment: Truth, Virtue, and Beauty in Mozart's Operas* (New York: Norton, 1993).

2. To commemorate the bicentennial of Mozart's death, the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna held an exhibition April 28 to October 27, 1991, *Die Klangwelt Mozarts* (The Sound World of Mozart). See Gerhard Stradner, ed., *Die Klangwelt Mozarts* (Vienna: Kunsthistorisches Museum, Sammlung alter Musikinstrumente, 1991).

3. See, for example, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *Die Zauberflöte*, Monteverdi Choir, English Baroque Soloists, John Eliot Gardiner, Archiv CD 449-166-2, 1996; and the essay included with this CD by Nicholas McNair, "'Enter, Pursued by a Lion': Hermetic Influences in *The Magic Flute*," 8–13.

4. All musical references are to *Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: Neue Ausgabe sämtlicher Werke*, ser. 2, sec. 5, vol. 9: *Die Zauberflöte*, ed. Gernot Gruber and Alfred Orel (Cassel: Bärenreiter, 1970). See also W. A. Mozart, *Die Zauberflöte: Eine deutsche Oper in zwei Aufzügen*, Karl-Heinz Köhler, facs. ed., Documenta Musicologica, 2nd ser. Facsimile Manuscripts, vol. 7 (Cassel: Bärenreiter, 1979).

5. For further discussion and illustrations of this instrument, see James McKinnon and Robert Anderson, "Panpipes," in *The New Grove Dictionary of Musical Instruments*, ed. Stanley Sadie, 3 vols. (London: Macmillan, 1984), 3:13.

6. Rose Rosengard Subotnik, "Whose *Magic Flute*?: Intimations of Reality at the Gates of the Enlightenment," *18th-Century Music* 15 (1991–92): 140. See also Chailley, *Magic Flute*, 104, who identifies Papageno with "his sign, Air."

7. Stradner, *Klangwelt*, 316, pictures (fig. 195) a privately owned Papageno flute made in Austria (ca. 1800) that uses the actual pitches required in the opera: g^2 , a^2 , b^2 , c^3 , d^3 . Even today, singers of the role sometimes play panpipes on stage.

8. Christian Friedrich Daniel Schubart, *Ideen zu einer Ästhetik der Tonkunst* [ca. 1784], ed. Ludwig Schubart (1806; reprint, ed. P. A. Merbach, Leipzig: Wolkenwanderer Verlag, 1924), quoted in Rita Steblin, *A History of Key Characteristics in the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries*, 2d ed. (Rochester, N.Y.: University of Rochester Press, 2002), 270.

9. The flute is "golden," not of gold but most likely made of boxwood, which has the color of light oak.

10. Chailley, *Magic Flute*, 123; and Roger J. V. Cotte, *Musique et symbolisme: Résonances cosmiques des oeuvres et des instruments*, (St-Jean-de-Braye: Éditions Dangles, 1988), 61. Operas using magic instruments were quite common in Vienna during the 1780s. The most popular predecessor to *Die Zauberflöte* is Wenzel

Müller's *Kaspar der Fagottist*, quickly renamed *Der Fagottist, oder Die Zauberzither* [The Bassoonist, or the Magic Zither], first performed June 8, 1791, in the Theater in der Leopoldstadt. Librettist Joachim Perinet adapted J. A. Liebeskind's story *Lulu oder die Zauberflöte*, published in 1789. Mozart attended the fourth performance and writes in a letter dated June 12, 1791, to his wife, "To cheer myself up, I went to the Kasperle Theatre to see the new opera 'Der Fagottist,' which is making such a sensation, but which is shoddy stuff." Emily Anderson, *The Letters of Mozart and His Family*, 3 vols. (London: Macmillan, 1938), 3:1419–20. See also Peter Branscombe, "Kaspar der Fagottist," in *New Grove Dictionary of Opera*, 2:956.

11. Judith A. Eckelmeyer, trans., *Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: The Magic Flute: The 1791 Libretto by Emanuel Schikaneder* (New York: Edwin Mellen, 1979), 12. Eckelmeyer translates *Hagestolz* as "stone-hearted"; the more literal "old bachelor" also seems appropriate.

12. Eckelmeyer, *The 1791 Libretto*, 12.

13. Joscelyn Godwin, "Layers of Meaning in *The Magic Flute*," *Musical Quarterly* 65 (1979): 479. See also Cotte, *Musique et symbolisme*, 115, 202–3.

14. Godwin, "Layers of Meaning," 479; Chailley, *Magic Flute*, 124.

15. "Orpheus was first and foremost a musician with shamanic powers. His voice and his lyre had the magical ability to charm animals and to change the course of rivers." His music would restore harmony and prevent quarreling. Orphics believed that the cosmos began in a primal unity but that harmony was destroyed by the Titans. The rule of Zeus adds unity back into the cosmos. People were admitted into Orphic religion societies by way of an initiation ritual that would produce salvation for the living and the dead and would remove guilt and pardon wrongs. Sexual ecstasy, presumably achieving harmony between man and woman in sacred unity, was part of the Orphic mystery. Larry J. Alderink, "Orphism," *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 5:48–50. See also Ovid, *Met.*, 10.1–128, 11.1–99; Virgil, *Georgics*, 4.452–527; Robert Graves, *The Greek Myths*, rev. ed., 2 vols. (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1960), 1:111–12.

16. Godwin, "Layers of Meaning," 479; Shems Friedlander, *The Whirling Dervishes* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992), 25, quoted in Godwin, "Layers of Meaning," 479.

17. Eckelmeyer, *The 1791 Libretto*, 53.

18. Chailley, *Magic Flute*, 125.

19. Godwin, "Layers of Meaning," 480.

20. Eckelmeyer, *The 1791 Libretto*, 22.

21. Schubart, quoted in Steblin, *History of Key Characteristics*, 226.

22. Eckelmeyer, *The 1791 Libretto*, 22.

23. Eckelmeyer, *The 1791 Libretto*, 23.

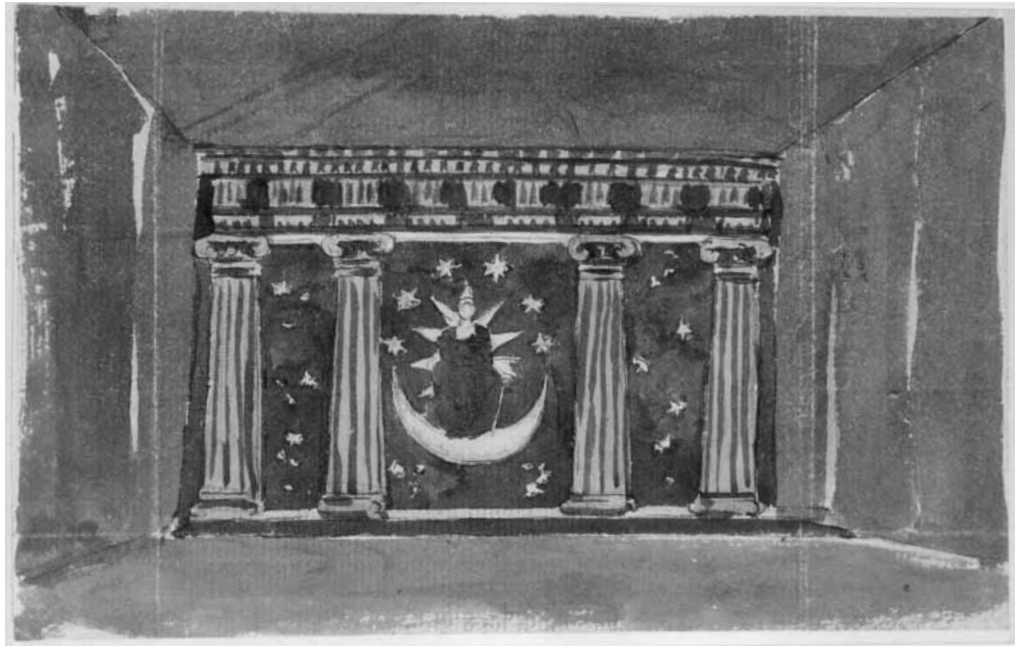
24. See Sibyl Marcuse, *A Survey of Musical Instruments* (New York: Harper and Row, 1975), 27–28; and James Blades, "Xylophone (2)," in *New Grove Dictionary of Musical Instruments*, 3:871.

25. Eckelmeyer, *The 1791 Libretto*, 23.

26. Godwin, "Layers of Meaning," 488.

27. Eckelmeyer, *The 1791 Libretto*, 24.
28. Küster, *Musical Biography*, 366.
29. Anderson, *Letters*, 3:1440–41.
30. Stradner, *Klangwelt*, 316.
31. Marcuse, *Survey of Musical Instruments*, 35–36; James Blades, “Celesta,” in *New Grove Dictionary of Music Instruments*, 1:320.
32. Writing in 1844, Hector Berlioz suggests that Mozart’s instrument was a series of small bells played from a keyboard. He also mentions that in *Les mystères d’Isis* (first performed at the Paris Opéra on August 20, 1801, a musical travesty based on music from *Die Zauberflöte* and other works by Mozart) a keyboard glockenspiel was used “with hammers striking steel bars instead of bells.” Hugh Macdonald, *Berlioz’s Orchestration Treatise: A Translation and Commentary* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 276–77. On later performances and parodies of *Die Zauberflöte*, see Branscombe, *Die Zauberflöte*, 142–77.
33. Gerhard Stradner, “Automatenspiele: Homo ludens—Der spielende Mensch,” in *Internationale Beiträge des Institutes für Spielforschung und Spielpädagogik, Universität Mozarteum, Salzburg*, ed. Günther G. Bauer, vol. 9 (Munich: Musikverlag Bernd Katzbichler, 1999), 126–29. The clock is now in the office of Austria’s president and therefore not on public display.
34. In Gardiner’s recording of *Die Zauberflöte*, a picture of a glockenspiel/carillon made by Robin Jennings is on the verso of the front cover of the “Note to the Recording.”
35. Jeremy Montagu, *Timpani and Percussion*, Yale Musical Instrument Series, vol. 2 (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2002), 94–95; Mette Müller, “Klokken et Musikinstrument,” *Arv og Eje* (1985), 142, cited in Montagu, *Timpani and Percussion*, 95.
36. Montagu, *Timpani and Percussion*, 92–95, discusses four works in which Handel uses his carillon: *Saul* (1739), *Il Trionfo del Tempo* (1739), *Acis and Galatea* (1739), and *L’allegro, il Penseroso, ed il Moderato* (1740). Montagu also quotes a letter from Handel’s librettist for *Saul*, Charles Jennens, to Lord Guernsey, dated September 19, 1738, that gives us some idea of the instrument: “Mr Handel’s head is more full of maggots than ever. I found yesterday in his room a very queer instrument which he calls carillon (Anglice, a bell) and says some call it a Tubalcain, I suppose because it is both in the make and tone like a set of hammers striking upon anvils. ’Tis played upon with keys like a harpsichord and with this Cyclopean instrument he designs to make poor Saul stark mad.” Montagu, *Timpani and Percussion*, 93, quoted in Winton Dean, *Handel’s Dramatic Oratorios and Masques* (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), 275.
37. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *Neue Ausgabe sämtlicher Werke*, ser. 10, vol. 1, *Acis und Galatea*, ed. Andreas Holschneider (Cassel: Bärenreiter, 1973); Georg Friedrich Händel, *Hallsche Händel-Ausgabe*, ser. 1, Oratorien und große Kantaten, vol. 9, no. 1, *Acis und Galatea*, HWV 49a (Cassel: Bärenreiter, 1991), facs. xxv, 159–73.
38. Stradner, *Klangwelt*, 317.

39. Alex Hyatt King, "Musical Glasses," in *New Grove Dictionary of Musical Instruments*, 2:725–27; Alex Hyatt King, "Sticcado-pastrole," in *New Grove Dictionary of Musical Instruments*, 3:454.
40. Chailley, *Magic Flute*, 125.
41. Chailley, *Magic Flute*, 126.
42. Eckelmeyer, *The 1791 Libretto*, 52.
43. Eckelmeyer, *The 1791 Libretto*, 53.
44. Till, *Mozart and the Enlightenment*, 317–18.
45. Till, *Mozart and the Enlightenment*, 319.



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Fig. 1. Stage design for *The Magic Flute: The Queen of the Night*, by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, 1794. Photograph by Sigrid Geske. As director of the court theater in Weimar from 1791 to 1817, Goethe had *The Magic Flute* performed eighty-nine times. This is a stage design by Goethe for the January 16, 1794, premiere in Weimar.

Mann und Weib, and Baby Makes Two

Gender and Family in Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's
Sequel to *The Magic Flute*

Robert B. McFarland

Latter-day Saints never grow tired of pointing out that Restoration scriptures and revelations could have not come forth in any other place than America. But the Restoration also came forth in a specific time, a period of important historical movements and cultural developments. It behooves us to deepen our understanding of the profound importance to the Restoration of the historical moment—not only through our study of political, religious, and biographical documents of the time but also through a careful consideration of the literature and art that interact with some of the most profound cultural and historical discourses of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

The Magic Flute: A Symbol of Middle-Class German Culture

A powerful discourse of this period involves the struggle for the definition of roles assigned to the man and the woman in the family. Many studies have shown the importance of seeing the family and gender roles in their historical context, a process that reveals the dynamic nature of the family; families are constantly in negotiation, in flux, and highly susceptible to historical and cultural influences.¹ One of the most interesting texts from this period in terms of the formation of gender and family is Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's operatic rendering of Emanuel Schikaneder's libretto *Die Zauberflöte*. This opera was an amazing cultural phenomenon in the last decade of the eighteenth century and the first decades of the nineteenth century.

Indeed, *The Magic Flute* was so influential that it spawned a series of sequels and related works that participate in the discourses of family and

gender formation at this time. For example, in his famous lyric story *Hermann und Dorothea*, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe makes references to *The Magic Flute* and shows that familiarity with the opera was a necessary part of German upper-middle-class education near the turn of the nineteenth century. In Goethe's story, Hermann, a naive lower-middle-class boy, escapes the turmoil of the nearby French Revolution and seeks refuge with a prosperous German family, who listen to songs from *The Magic Flute* in their home. Unfamiliar with the music, Hermann asks about it, and the family responds by laughing at his lower-class piety.² Goethe thus creates a connection between *The Magic Flute* and the emerging German middle-class combination of family, aesthetics, and education, marking the opera as an integral part of middle-class symbolic capital. *The Magic Flute* acts as a kind of *tableau vivant* of the values of the rising German middle class, who increasingly tried—just as the main characters of Goethe's *Hermann und Dorothea*—to restore their system of familial, gender, and moral ideals after the intrusion of conflicting ideals from the French Revolution. Several of Goethe's other works deal with the possibilities of the cultural capital of the middle class and its intermingling with the French Revolution.³

Goethe's Sequel to *The Magic Flute* and Changing Gender Roles

Goethe was fascinated with the Mozart/Schikaneder *Magic Flute*, and during his leadership over the Weimar Court Theater between 1791 and 1817, he had it performed eighty-nine times. Figure one shows Goethe's artistic rendering of his plan for the staging of *The Magic Flute*. In 1795 he began work on a sequel. He was repeatedly disappointed in the composers with whom he collaborated, and he left the project unfinished. August Wilhelm Iffland wanted to perform the work in Berlin in 1798, which led Goethe to begin the project anew. Schiller suggested that Goethe give up the project unless a suitable composer could be found. Schikaneder's own sequel premiered in that same year, an event that might have dissuaded Goethe from completing his project. By the time that the Schikaneder sequel was performed in Berlin in 1803, Goethe had given up the idea altogether. Later attempts by Iffland to interest Goethe in revisiting the sequel remained fruitless.⁴ The unfinished work exists only in fragments.

At the center of Goethe's sequel are Tamino and Pamina, now parents; the story revolves around their separation from and reunion with their son, a character referred to in the text as "Genius." Schikaneder's libretto for *The Magic Flute* is highly charged with questions and conflicts of gender that culminate in the wedding of Tamino and Pamina. Goethe's *Der Zauberflöte*

zweiter Teil (literally, “The Second Part of *The Magic Flute*,” hereafter referred to as Goethe’s *Magic Flute* sequel) continues the social and aesthetic project of *The Magic Flute* by reifying the polarization of gender roles through the use of the Genius figure.

Scholarship surrounding Goethe’s *Magic Flute* sequel has for the most part ignored the question of gender. While most studies of the work allude to its basic gender and family structures, none has connected the gender constellations of the work into scholarship that explains gender roles and the changing family structure in the late eighteenth century. In her groundbreaking and often-cited work on the changing ways the family has been historically defined, Karin Hausen explains the importance of understanding what the term “family” meant in the late Enlightenment period.⁵ Whereas the family of pre-eighteenth-century German-speaking countries consisted of a man, a woman, children, other extended family members, servants, and others, the new middle-class notion of family included only a man, a woman, and their children. Hausen attributes this shift to the increasing interest in the individual brought about by humanism, the Reformation, and the Enlightenment. The concept of marriage underwent a change from an economic, religious, and sexual union to an institution that centered around two people bound together by love.

One of the strongest forces at work in the late-Enlightenment-era family was the polarization of gender characteristics of men and women. In the late eighteenth century, there was a search for a legitimization of the house-and-family-bound role of the woman and the increasing absence of the father. Hausen claims that the German Classical movement provided ideological patterns for the emerging middle-class family and the corresponding polarization of gender roles. These roles were represented as manifestations of a divine order that allowed the “natural” gifts and limitations of the respective genders to have their proper place. Men were assigned characteristics such as strength, bravery, activity, intellect, reason, knowledge, and dignity, while women were assigned characteristics such as weakness, malleability, dependence, feeling, sensitivity, religiousness, and beauty. This strict separation of gender characteristics was central to many aesthetic studies of the late eighteenth century.⁶

The polarization of gender characteristics is not limited to sociological and aesthetic studies. Contemporary literature and art were also active participants in the gender discourse. Christina Zech thoroughly explores the gender questions and conflicts in Schikaneder’s libretto for *The Magic Flute*. She sees the work as a fight between the genders, a fight that the women lose bitterly. She points out that not only the Queen of the Night loses her position—Pamina and Papageno also lose their power to act and

decide for themselves and become willing subhuman complements to their husbands. Zech carefully shows how the text and music of *The Magic Flute* support a gradual polarization of Tamino and Pamina into Enlightenment ideals of manhood and womanhood in keeping with Kant's claim that feminine virtue or vice is completely different from that of men, for while "she is sensitive, he is sensible."⁷

In his *Magic Flute* sequel, Goethe builds upon the gender stratifications of *The Magic Flute*, creating in the characters of Tamino and Pamina the ideal of perfected manhood and womanhood, enhanced by the appearance of an androgynous character that symbolizes a perfect mixture of the two. It is this character—the son of Tamino and Pamina, called "Genius"—who stands at the center of this work. Goethe's story line picks up right where *The Magic Flute* left off. At the end of Schikaneder's libretto, the Queen of the Night and her female cohorts, accompanied by the traitor Monostatos, attack the temple of Sarastro in an attempt to kill him and his priestly order to gain their power. The plan fails, however, when the rising sun, representing Enlightenment values as embodied by Sarastro and his order, casts the Queen of the Night and her co-conspirators into the bowels of the earth.

Goethe opens his sequel in the dark subterranean grottos where the Queen has been banished. Monostatos reports to the Queen of the Night that he has partially succeeded in helping her with her plans of revenge. He and his cohorts return to the palace of Tamino and Pamina just as the pair, now king and queen, are about to deliver their first child. After the child is born, Monostatos opens a golden casket given to him by the Queen of the Night. Darkness engulfs the scene, and he puts the child into the casket before the parents can see him. The casket is then sealed by the magic of the Queen of the Night and cannot be opened. When Monostatos tries to escape with the casket, however, Sarastro's blessing causes it to grow heavier until it cannot be removed.

Right from the beginning, the baby trapped in the coffin serves as a focal point for the gender issues of the opera. The child is the object of the continuing struggle between the two most polarized gender-marked characters in *The Magic Flute* pantheon: Sarastro, male prophet and leader of a male-dominated priesthood that lives under a credo of masculine control, and the Queen of the Night, the amazonian sorceress leader of a female-dominated realm that is characterized by emotion and lack of restraint. The child is trapped in a golden coffin and trapped in the struggle of two genders competing for power.

The competition is so fierce, in fact, that in the first opera, the Queen of the Night swears that she intends to destroy the male oligarchy even at the cost of her own motherhood:

If—at thy hands—Sarastro doth not feel the pains of death
 So wilt thou be my daughter nevermore!
 Eternally forsaken! Eternally forbidden!
 Eternally destroyed be nature's bond between us both
 If, by thy hand, Sarastro doth not perish!
 Hear, gods of vengeance, hear a mother's oath!⁸ (2.8)

With this oath, Schikaneder's Queen of the Night paradoxically swears upon her own motherhood that she will renounce all of the natural ties to her daughter that make her a mother in the first place. Goethe's Queen of the Night continues this tradition, turning her lust for power and revenge against her daughter and renouncing her role as mother. Monostatos points out that even in the holy realm of the male priests the curse and power of the Queen will destroy all of the bonds among mother, father, and child:

Should ever the parents
 Each other behold
 Terror and madness
 Shall conquer their souls!
 Should ever the parents
 See their own child
 It then shall be taken
 By fate's fury wild.⁹

Directly after these lines, Goethe gives stage directions that indicate that the whole stage should turn into chaos. This direct attack on the family is thus marked as the disintegration into chaos, which is the vengeful plan of the Queen, who herself has already destroyed nature's bonds by deviating from the role of mother and submissive woman to gain power and gratification for herself. The stage directions go on to say that out of this chaos materialize the royal chambers of the family, a realm of strict order visually contrasted to the previous chaos that is its enemy. It is here that the conflict in Goethe's *Magic Flute* sequel is located—between the chaos of deviating from and the order of adhering to ideal family and gender constructions. At the center of this struggle is the child himself, hidden from view by the golden casket. This lost boy is an intriguing figure who seems to dominate the entire work, although he himself appears only for a moment at the end of Goethe's piece.

As the central figure of a struggle between forces that are marked by maleness and femaleness, this child character is the focal point of gender interactions. One such interaction can be observed as Goethe describes the daily care of the locked-up boy: the coffin appears on stage being carried by

a “chorus of women” who form a solemn procession. One of the women explains their task:

Thus wander on, ne’er standing still,
Follow the men, their wisdom and will,
Trust in them, in obedience strive,
As long as we move, the child stays alive.¹⁰

These women are performing a motherly task: they are shown carrying the child, keeping it alive, singing to him, and telling him about his future. The act of carrying the child, however, is commanded by “wise men,” whom the women promise to trust and blindly follow. As long as these women submit to the will of the men, the child will live. The men have prescribed constant movement to keep the child alive, a motif of active manhood that is familiar in many Goethe texts, from the poem “Schwager Chronos” to *Faust*. Even the child’s father, Tamino, is described as constantly moving as an expression of his grief, as compared to Pamina’s crying: “There he paces, there she cries.”¹¹ As a male child, Tamino and Pamina’s lost boy is already subject to male patterning, as men impress upon him their ideals through the women that obey them. The men are clearly in charge of the child’s welfare at this point. Tamino commands the women:

Strive forward, ever on and on!
Redeemed and saved we soon shall be
By Sarastro’s godly song.
Hush! And listen for tiny cries.
Hear and report each of his sighs
To his poor father, in his grief.¹²

The women, whether the chorus women or Pamina, “carry” the child in terms of gestation or nurturing, but the males still are seen as the powerful ones: only Sarastro can free the child, only Tamino can make the commands that will keep him alive. It is only after the males have done the saving that the mother’s nurturing will be needed: when the child is “freed” and “saved,” he will “lay like an angel, bedded on mother’s breast.”¹³ Even sealed off in a golden casket, the child is subject to the gender constructions of an idealized family—a caring, nurturing mother and an active, commanding father.

The royal couple are not the only parents in the work that follow the pattern of patriarchal dominance. Papageno and Papagena, the beloved zoomorphic figures from Schikaneder’s libretto, appear again in Goethe’s sequel, this time as would-be parents. Even though their lives are easy and full of bodily enjoyments, they suffer because they remain childless. After

much complaint, the pair comes into possession of three golden eggs. Like Tamino and Pamina's child, the children of Papageno and Papagena remain hidden from them, encased in gold. All of the children in Goethe's work are kept from their parents by womb-like containers made of gold, the symbol of exchange and commerce. It would seem that Goethe has created a way for males to gestate—a gestation of action, of command, of power, of wealth. Sarastro eventually “delivers” Papageno's children, helping them to hatch with his mystical chants about the powers of nature. Sarastro also takes the time to teach the feathered parents about child-rearing. As with Tamino, Papageno is urged to action as a father: he is to take his progeny to the royal court to help cheer Tamino and Pamina and to play the magic flute.

While the male gender roles in Goethe's sequel are marked by dominance and action, the women's roles are developed as ideal representations of love and nurturing. In an uncompleted scene that Goethe describes, Pamina receives some sort of sign and takes the little gold coffin, which is hereafter referred to only as a box, to the altar of the sun. As she sets the box down, the altar sinks into the ground and takes the child with it. The priests report that the child is deep beneath the earth, between fire and water, between death and life, pleading for help. The entire kingdom is engulfed in darkness, and the priests plead with Tamino and Pamina to go down and save their son. This act of saving is based upon the power of Pamina's love:

My most treasured wife, my dearest!
Rushing torrents, fires and fears
Shrink before a mother's love!¹⁴

It is here that Goethe's *Magic Flute* sequel goes beyond the polarization of gender roles in *The Magic Flute*. In the Goethe text, Pamina makes it through the fiery and watery hindrances by virtue of her motherly love for her son, not by her romantic love for Tamino. Goethe's *Magic Flute* sequel expands the ideology of gender roles by portraying an entire family that reflects not only the polarization but also the transmission of gender characteristics.

Once freed from the golden coffin, the child proves to be a combination of both of the parents. Upon emerging, the child utters phrases that reflect the internalized virtues of each of his parents:

Here am I, beloved ones,
And am I not fair?
.....

Though armies should threaten
 And dragons offend,
 The boy will still vanquish
 And rise in the end!¹⁵

The newly liberated child immediately points out his own beauty and his love for his parents, as well as his bravery and need for action, reflecting the respective virtues of Pamina and Tamino as set forth in *The Magic Flute*. The character of Genius is prefigured in the three young boys of the first opera. Like the Genius figure, these boys fly: on their *Flugwerk*,¹⁶ or flying apparatus, they literally float between the gendered spaces and figures of the opera. Although the boys are given their task by the women in the feminine realm of the Queen of the Night, they are also marked with definite masculine characteristics. The boys are an integral part of Tamino's induction into the male order of Sarastro; they provide him with guidance during his initiation. The three little boys, mixtures of masculinity and femininity, help Tamino to behave like a man and Pamina to behave in the proper role as a woman. These androgynous characters bring Tamino and Pamina together through their ability to float between the strictly segregated male and female space of the opera to dispense their masculine or feminine wisdom as needed.

Goethe's *Magic Flute* sequel replaces the figures of the three little boys with the single character of Tamino and Pamina's child. The Genius figure and the three boys are all repeatedly referred to as *Knaben*. The word *Knabe* is a gender classification that plays an important role in late-eighteenth-century gender discourse; it locates the character in a specific gender mode that stands outside the polarization of male and female ideals. The *Knabe* was the specific contemporary term for an immature male figure that was at the center of discussions of aesthetics. Catriona MacLeod points out that the forming of the icon of the *Knabe* was greatly influenced by the Greek ideal of beauty: the manliness of a beautiful boy who still possesses the forms of enduring feminine youth. This stage of maturation is neither masculine nor feminine but a "middle form."¹⁷ The idealized androgynes were modeled after adolescent boys—in the liminal and sexually indeterminate stages of puberty, described in imagery of water and waves, floating, hovering, and suspension. This polymorphous ideal of androgyny became reinscribed in the late eighteenth century as a desexualized aesthetic representation of a balanced heterosexual relationship.¹⁸ In works such as Wilhelm von Humboldt's *Über die männliche und weibliche Form* (Concerning Masculine and Feminine Form), the abstract ideal of androgyny was seen as the perfectly balanced union of art and freedom, form and

matter, the perfect masculine and the perfect feminine. This “third sex” was used to strengthen the polarization and idealization of manhood and womanhood.¹⁹

What is, then, the gender of Goethe’s Genius figure? He is androgynous, a perfect combination of his idealized mother and father. As such, Genius stands as a kind of gender-marker, an artificial catalyst for the idealized family. By existing as a “third gender,” the androgynous Genius can equally and perfectly take upon himself a balance of the ideal manhood of his father and the ideal womanhood of his mother. Pamina and Tamino, already very much polarized and idealized in terms of their gender at the end of *The Magic Flute*, are taken to a new level of idealization when placed in a family configuration with their androgynous *puer aeternus* offspring. The figure of Genius internalizes and solidifies the gender ideology of his two parents in a way that mere opera listeners such as Hermann’s middle-class neighbors could not begin to emulate.

The Genius character is, on one hand, a representation of aesthetic theories that Goethe was developing in his literary works. Besides this rather ethereal aesthetic purpose, Genius also serves as a locus for a very concrete manifestation of the late-Enlightenment gender discourse as he unifies a man and a woman into an ideal family that will serve as a model for families like the one Goethe portrays in *Hermann und Dorothea*. The character serves as a combination of the male and the female and thus as a locus of all of the polarized ideal virtues that are prescribed for each of the sexes. The figure of the flying boy—an allegorical representation of the power of artistic genius itself—is a product of a union of two idealized figures who serve as the ultimate expression of their respective gender roles. When neither sex deviates from the prescribed realms of womanly grace and male dignity, the result of such a union is shown to be something greater than the sum of its parts.

Considering the gender dynamics of *The Magic Flute* and Goethe’s *Magic Flute* sequel, what elements of these discourses could serve to enlighten the culture that surrounded the restoration of the Church in early nineteenth-century America? On one hand, works such as *The Magic Flute* furthered a middle-class tendency for polarization of genders into idealized traits and acceptance of male authority, and the effects of these gender ideologies still inform the ways that men and women participate in many aspects of Western culture. On the other hand, the opera and its sequel helped to prepare two continents for the radical notions of ideal societies led by prophets, of eternal marriage, and of sacred temple rites. Even before the Restoration, people across Europe and America were humming such tunes as “In These Holy Halls” and “Man and Woman—Combine

to Reach Divinity.” While *The Magic Flute* did not directly pave the way for the Book of Mormon and early Latter-day Saint revelations historically, it was a very popular and influential part of the philosophy and new ideas that surrounded the Restoration.

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1. See Karin Hausen, “Family and Role-Division: The Polarisation of Sexual Stereotypes in the Nineteenth Century: An Aspect of the Dissociation of Work and Family Life,” in *The German Family*, ed. Richard J. Evans and W. R. Lee (Totowa, N.J.: Barnes and Noble Books, 1981), 51–83. The Hausen citations in this paper are from the German version of Hausen’s article, cited below.
2. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Hermann und Dorothea* (Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam, 1987), 18.
3. Goethe, *Hermann und Dorothea*, 18.
4. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Der Zauberflöte zweiter Teil, Sämtliche Werke, Briefe, Tagebücher und Gespräche*. 6: *Dramen 1791–1832* (Frankfurt a.M.: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1993), 1043–48.
5. Karin Hausen, “Die Polarisierung der ‘Geschlechtscharaktere’: Eine Spiegelung der Dissoziation von Erwerbs- und Familienleben,” in *Sozialgeschichte der Familie in der Neuzeit Europas: neue Forschungen*, ed. Werner Conze (Stuttgart: Ernst Klett Verlag, 1976), 363–93.
6. Gail K. Hart discusses an example of this in her investigation of the centrality of the notion of gender polarization in Schiller’s seminal aesthetic work *Über Anmut und Würde* (On Grace and Dignity). She points out that the division of qualities along gender lines, especially the femininity of grace and the masculinity of dignity, is fundamental to Schiller’s project. Gail K. Hart, “Anmut’s Gender: The *Marionettentheater* and Kleist’s Revision of *Anmut und Würde*,” *Women in German Yearbook* 10 (1994): 85–87.
7. Christina Zech, “Ein Mann muß eure Herzen leiten: Zum Frauenbild in Mozart’s *Zauberflöte* auf musikalischer und literarischer Ebene,” *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft* vol. 4, no. 52 (1995): 304–15. Zech’s original words: “Sie ist empfindlich, er empfindsam.”
8. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *Die Zauberflöte*, Eine große Oper in zwei Aufzügen, Libretto von Emanuel Schikaneder, Herausgegeben von Hans-Albrecht Koch (Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam, 1991), 48.
9. Goethe, *Der Zauberflöte zweiter Teil*, 226–27.
10. Goethe, *Der Zauberflöte zweiter Teil*, 227: “So wandelt fort und stehet niemals stille, / Das ist der weisen Männer Wille, / Vertraut auf sie, gehorchet blind, so lang ihr wandelt lebt das Kind.”
11. Goethe, *Der Zauberflöte zweiter Teil*, 228: “Dort wandelt er, dort weinet sie.”
12. Goethe, *Der Zauberflöte zweiter Teil*, 229: “Bewegt euch immer fort und fort! / Bald rettet uns mit heil’ger Weihe / Sarastro’s lösend Götterwort. / Lauschet auf die kleinste Regung, / Meldet jegliche Bewegung / Dem besorgten Vater ja.”

13. Goethe, *Der Zauberflöte zweiter Teil*, 229: "Und befreiet und gerettet, / An der Mutter Brust gebettet, / Lieg' er bald ein Engel da."
14. Goethe, *Der Zauberflöte zweiter Teil*, 247–48: "O mein Gatte, mein Geliebter / meine Gattin, meine teure / Sich das Wasser, sich das Feuer / Macht der Mutterliebe Platz."
15. Goethe, *Der Zauberflöte zweiter Teil*, 248–49.
16. Mozart, *Die Zauberflöte*, 54.
17. Catriona MacLeod, "The 'Third Sex' in an Age of Difference: Androgyny and Homosexuality in Winckelmann, Friedrich Schlegel, and Kleist," in *Outing Goethe and His Age*, ed. Alice A. Kuzinar (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 199–200. MacLeod uses the term "Mittlere Gestalt."
18. MacLeod, "The 'Third Sex,'" 199–200.
19. MacLeod, "The 'Third Sex,'" 194–97.



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Fig. 1. *The Magic Flute, Main Poster*, by Marc Chagall, 1966, created for the Metropolitan Opera. The images in this poster represent not only characters from Mozart's opera but also characters from the Garden of Eden.

An Allegory of Eden

Marc Chagall's *Magic Flute* Poster

Philipp B. Malzl

“For me there is nothing on earth that approaches those two perfections, *The Magic Flute* and the Bible.”¹

—Marc Chagall

In 1964, the Metropolitan Opera Company in New York City commissioned Marc Chagall to design the stage sets and costumes for its first production of Mozart's acclaimed opera *The Magic Flute*, scheduled for 1967. In three years, Chagall created 13 large curtains, 26 smaller curtains, and 121 costumes and masks.

In addition, the Metropolitan Opera asked the artist to produce two monumental murals entitled *The Sources of Music* (1966) and *The Triumph of Music* (1966), which pay tribute to the world's great opera composers and which were permanently installed in the foyer of the new Lincoln Center opera house. Although these images were not intended as part of the 1967 production of *The Magic Flute* per se, one of them, *The Sources of Music*, does contain overt references to Mozart. One group of figures in *The Sources of Music* reappears almost unchanged in the poster Chagall made in 1966 to serve as an advertisement for the Met's production of *The Magic Flute*. This composition, entitled *The Magic Flute, Main Poster* (fig. 1), depicts a small group of animal characters that correspond to the main figures from the narrative of Mozart's opera. Compared to the art historical importance of the stage designs and the Lincoln center murals, the poster is probably the least significant.

Nonetheless, the *Magic Flute* poster deserves attention for a specific reason: it bears a strong resemblance to Chagall's numerous Garden of Eden scenes. The Garden of Eden is a theme the artist treats at various

stages of his artistic career, most frequently in the decade preceding this poster. The similarity of the poster with Chagall's edenic themes does not appear to be a phenomenon of chance. Instead, everything points to a deliberate attempt by Chagall to draw parallels between *The Magic Flute* and the Bible, since he felt that both works shared fundamental principles of goodness and truth. Indeed, each of the figures on the poster can be identified as a character from the opera while simultaneously corresponding to a character from the Garden of Eden. Thus, Chagall pays homage to two major sources of personal and artistic inspiration whose messages he thought to be harmonious.

Characters from the Opera in the Poster

Before demonstrating the dual symbolism of the creatures on the poster, I must first establish their identity in the opera. The *Magic Flute* poster is inhabited by five distinct figures. Two felines occupy the base of the composition. In the dense foliage of green trees and bushes above them lurks a large snake. To its right, a mysterious flute-playing winged figure hovers seemingly weightlessly in space. Immediately above this winged figure, a bird with an abstracted, triangular tail feather forms the apex of the composition. These characters are all enveloped in a lush and colorful vegetative environment, presumably a forest, indicated by two trees and shrubbery surrounding the characters.

At first glance, this scene appears to depict simply a group of animals enjoying the music coming from a flute. One is reminded of act 1, scene 3, of *The Magic Flute*, when Tamino plays his enchanted flute, whose magical sounds lure the forest animals out to dance; however, a comparison with Chagall's sketches and designs for the stage backdrops and curtains renders this interpretation problematic. Upon closer examination, it becomes evident that these creatures actually represent four key figures from Mozart's opera symbolically disguised as animals. The winged figure stands for the Queen of the Night, while the snake represents the serpentlike creature chasing Tamino in the first scene of the opera. The pair of lions is meant to symbolize Tamino and Pamina, and, finally, Sarastro is embodied in the white bird above.

The Woman/Bird. In terms of composition, the flute-playing figure is most prominent. Again, although the flute player could be Tamino, more evidence speaks in favor of the flute player as the Queen of the Night. This attribution of identity is supported by four specific clues. First, the flute she is playing was delivered to Tamino by her design. Second, and more importantly, this figure is a hybrid: part human, part bird. And although Tamino

is not directly associated with birds in any way, the Queen is an enthusiastic bird collector and employer of a professional bird catcher named Papageno. The bird may thus be interpreted as one of her symbols.

A comparison with other depictions from Chagall's opera designs reveals a pattern that supports the association of the Queen with birds. For instance, the artist's design on the curtain for act 2, scene 10, depicts a crowned female figure inside a large bird, embedded in the dark blanket of night, suggested by the moon and stars on a blue background (fig. 2). Similarly, the curtain for the finale shows a female head and torso combined with a bird. Significantly, this time the woman is holding a flute. In addition, the face and talons of the part-bird figures in the poster and in the finale curtain are virtually identical.

Color is the final indicator of the half-bird's symbolic identity in the poster. Chagall has always utilized color to express ideas and emotions. Speaking about the ideology of his art in general, Chagall argued, "The style has no importance. The thing is to express oneself. Painting should have a psychical content. . . . I attenuate the white, *I muddy the blue by countless thoughts*. The psyche should get into the paint" (italics added).²

In other words, Chagall did not use color without considering its connotations. Supported by the artist's statement, it can be argued that his choice of blue, which surrounds both the Queen and the snake in the poster, might symbolically emphasize her role as ruler of the night. On a secondary level, blue may even represent the lies proceeding from her flute in the form of mesmerizing music, deceiving those within her reach. Contrast, for instance, the dominant use of blue in figure 2 with the vivid red in the curtain for the finale (fig. 3): by the end of the opera, a powerful red, perhaps Chagall's visual signifier for "Good," has conquered and replaced the Queen's "Evil." Furthermore, the Queen's hypocrisy is highlighted by a shimmering, semicircular halo as well as by her meek and innocent-looking face. By comparison, in the curtain for act 2, scene 10, the Queen is also wearing a crown. These details identify the hybrid in the poster as the Queen of the Night.

The Snake. The snake in the poster can be identified as a representation of the serpentine creature mentioned in the opera libretto. Its depiction in the *Magic Flute* poster is solely based on its brief appearance at the beginning of the opera when it pursues Tamino, only to be subdued by the Three Ladies.

The Lions. The other key characters in the *Magic Flute* poster are two feline creatures that resemble a pair of lions. The one on the right probably represents Tamino, while the one on the left stands for Pamina. This theory is supported by gender-specific features of the animals. For instance, the lion on the right has a mane, which is exclusive to male lions,



Fig. 2. Detail of *The Magic Flute: Curtain for Act II, Scene 10*, by Marc Chagall. The crowned female figure inside the bird shows an association between the Queen of the Night and bird imagery.



Fig. 3. Detail of *The Magic Flute: The Curtain for Finale*, by Marc Chagall.

while the lion on the left has feminine facial features that are stressed by makeup-like accents, particularly on the lips. It is also noteworthy that Chagall depicted the lioness's feet like the Queen's, thus linking her physiologically to her mother.

It seems as though Chagall tries to illustrate an amorous relationship between the pair of lions. First, the lions seem playful, as if they were courting. Second, a yellow area unites the two creatures in a world of their own, which is only partially invaded by the Queen's color, blue. In the opera, Tamino was deceived by the Queen for some time. For this reason, Chagall may have tainted his body with blue.

But why would Chagall have chosen to disguise Pamina and Tamino as lions? This choice may be partially explained by referring to Freemason symbolism, a frequently employed interpretive source for scholars dealing with *The Magic Flute* opera. In Ancient Craft Masonry, the lion represents Christ, the "lion of the tribe of Judah."³

In addition, a consideration of the lion's secular iconography yields insight. In various cultures, lions are thought to be royal and noble creatures chosen to rule over all other animals. Similarly, Prince Tamino and Princess Pamina are rulers in their own right. But beyond their simple hereditary royalty, Chagall must have considered the individual noble character traits of Tamino and Pamina. For instance, in his analysis of the *Magic Flute* libretto, Robert Moberly expresses commonly held notions about Pamina's noble character. Besides the "exceptional Strength and Beauty of her womanly Nature,"⁴ he praises the princess for being "brave and unselfishly loyal, virtuous . . . truthful, [and] . . . incorruptible."⁵ Similarly, Tamino is described as having his heart in the right place. Although he is naive and timid, Moberly observes, the prince is "trying to be brave" and is "earnestly anxious to become a wise ruler."⁶ It is clear that theirs are truly noble attributes, thus validating Chagall's symbolic association of Tamino and Pamina with lions on two related levels: similarity to Christ and secular nobility.

Within the context of *The Magic Flute*, this symbolic association linking lions with Tamino and Pamina continues with Sarastro, the wise king. For instance, Papageno, mistakenly fearing Sarastro to be a bird-eating carnivore, calls him a *Tiger Tier* (tiger-animal; 1.8). Moreover, when Sarastro first appears, he does so in command of a majestic, lion-drawn chariot (1.8). A sketch for the opera performance illustrates how Chagall envisioned this scene (fig. 4). Although neither of the lions pulling the chariot is meant to embody Sarastro physically, it is likely that Chagall forged a symbolic link between Sarastro—the thematic source of goodness, truth, and light—and those who would eventually partake of these virtues within



Fig. 4. *Magic Flute: Sketch of Chariot Pulled by Lions*, by Marc Chagall. This is a sketch for the performance of act 1, scene 8. Saraastro first appears in the opera in a chariot pulled by two lions. Here Chagall may be linking the Christlike Saraastro with the Masonic epithet for Christ: “lion of the tribe of Judah.”

Saraastro’s temple. By depicting Tamino and Pamina as lions, Chagall alludes to their symbolic identity as Saraastro’s ideological offspring.

The White Bird. The final creature in the poster that represents a character from the opera is the white bird. It is true that birds, as well as hybrids between birds and humans, have long been a standard icon of Chagall’s paintings and etchings, so much so that at times their depiction appears random and insignificant. Nevertheless, it is hard to believe that Chagall would have placed this particular bird arbitrarily, especially considering the symbolism of the other characters in the poster. Although birds have earlier been interpreted as a symbol of the Queen of the Night, several hints suggest that this particular bird personifies Saraastro. First, he is really the fourth essential opera figure to be accounted for. If the bird does, in fact, represent Saraastro, Chagall is obviously playing on the dichotomy that divides his ideological sphere from that of the wicked Queen. While Saraastro is depicted in the color of wisdom, light, and life, the Queen is surrounded by colors that stand for ignorance, darkness, and death. The bird’s place at the apex of the composition could symbolize Saraastro in that he is the only figure in the opera never to be blinded by the Queen’s lies, thus rising above all others. Finally, because the bird is white, it might actually be a dove, which strongly suggests a connotation of peace in Judeo-Christian

iconography. Again, this proponent of peace provides an appropriate antithesis to the Queen, who is the author of contention in *The Magic Flute*.

Although everything thus far follows logically, the meaning of the red triangle to the left of the bird is a bit more problematic. Perhaps the triangle is designed to serve simply as an abstracted, colorful tail feather for the bird. At the same time, this shape may constitute another generalized reference to Freemasonry, since the equilateral triangle is one of the most meaningful and common symbols of the fraternity.⁷

The fact that the artist was well informed about the countless references to Masonry in the opera is well documented. Emily Genauer, the primary scholar on Chagall's designs for *The Magic Flute* production, relates how Chagall studied as much as possible about Mozart and the libretto, "as well as analyses of it."⁸ Chagall became disenchanted with the overwhelming variety of interpretations, each imposing further manifestations of Masonry onto every element and character of *The Magic Flute*. Genauer observes that, although the painter did not "minimize the importance of Freemasonry to both Schikaneder [Freemason librettist of *The Magic Flute*] and Mozart, . . . Chagall was not concerned either with the references to or even the rituals of Freemasonry, which are scattered throughout the libretto."⁹

Although he refrains from rejecting Freemason interpretations altogether, Chagall makes it clear that he feels uncomfortable with reductive interpretations of the opera: "There are many levels of meaning [in the opera]. Who shall say that one or the other is right or the only one?"¹⁰ While he respects scholarly interpretations, Chagall reserves his artistic right to extract personalized meaning from the opera, based on his unique observations and experiences. Thus, the red triangle might be read as a superficial reference to Masonry while simultaneously acting as an aesthetically pleasing, abstracted part of the bird's anatomy.

Characters from the Garden of Eden in the Poster

Having identified each of the figures in the poster, we are now prepared to consider another key aspect of this image: Chagall believed that *The Magic Flute* had layers of meaning. In fact, Chagall capitalized on this multiplicity of meaning and extracted from the opera an additional interpretation, a biblical allegory. He provided hints of his vision not only in the sketches and designs for the opera, but most overtly within the poster.

Biblical Influences in Chagall's Earlier Work. The *Magic Flute* poster bears easily recognized similarities to Garden of Eden scenes Chagall created both before and after the poster. The Old Testament had always struck

a chord with Chagall, who was Jewish. Recalling his upbringing with the Bible, Chagall used these tender words: “Since my childhood, [the Bible] has filled me with vision about the fate of the world and inspired me in my work. . . . For me it is like a second nature.”¹¹

When he began the *Magic Flute* project in 1964, Chagall was emerging from a sixteen-year period during which he continuously worked almost exclusively on multiple biblical subjects in a variety of mediums. Major works of this nature include Chagall’s Bible series, a set of 105 etchings; the art collection of the *Musée National Message Biblique Marc Chagall*; his famous *Jerusalem Windows* cycle; and stained-glass windows for two French cathedrals.

As can be imagined, this repetition of biblical subject matter influenced what Jean-Bloch Rosensaft calls the painter’s “corpus of imagery.” Rosensaft observes that this visual alphabet “is the source for virtually every important, monumental project from the 1950s on.”¹² Surely, Chagall’s work for *The Magic Flute* stage designs and costumes is one of these important projects.

Rosensaft further observes that Chagall’s biblical images even re-emerge in works whose topic is not overtly or intentionally religious. Among other examples, Rosensaft cites the mural *The Sources of Music*, a detail of which inspired Chagall with the composition for the present version of the poster image.¹³ Rosensaft concludes that “the Bible becomes so intrinsic to [Chagall’s] imagination that it emerges consciously and unconsciously in many of his works, adding additional layers of meaning open to multiple interpretations.”¹⁴ Albeit, the biblical echoes in the *Magic Flute* poster were not unconscious; they were Chagall’s intent.

Chagall’s Eden Paintings. The Garden of Eden theme in particular was of great significance to Marc Chagall, and he depicted it numerous times in multiple mediums. In fact, Pierre Provoyeur, curator of the *Musée National Message Biblique Marc Chagall*, describes how Chagall viewed it as his “mission” to portray the paradisiacal theme in paint, thus becoming “partners [with poets and musicians] in the quest for a lost Eden.”¹⁵ A few examples of Chagall’s edenic works suffice in supporting the idea of imagistic crossover in the poster. First, in *Adam and Eve and the Forbidden Fruit* (1958–59)¹⁶ a snake is emerging from a tree trunk, echoing the reptile in the poster. Second, in the drawing entitled *Eden* (1958–59), Adam and Eve appear to be tempted by a rather large bird, as in the poster.¹⁷

Third and most significantly, Provoyeur observes that “Chagall shows his fancy for the Garden of Eden subject through works like *Paradise*” (1958–61).¹⁸ This particular painting arguably bears the strongest resemblance to the poster. The left side of the painting is little more than a

slightly rearranged version of the *Magic Flute* poster. It features two lions, a bird, a winged figure, and a snake spiraling up a tree, all of which surround Adam and Eve in a lush and colorful garden-like environment.¹⁹ These examples provide sufficient evidence that Chagall intentionally reused his biblical symbols in the poster.

Chagall himself hinted at his belief in a direct relationship between the Bible and *The Magic Flute*: “I adore Mozart. . . . He’s a God, and *The Magic Flute* is divine”²⁰ and “I believe in the truth of the Bible, as I believe in the truth of Mozart.”²¹

Edenic Symbols in the Poster. Provided with this background, a closer study of the *Magic Flute* poster as a Garden of Eden parallel reveals many similarities. First, the scene is set within a forest, or garden-like environment. Second, the image features all of the essential elements that define the Garden of Eden event: there is one element that represents Evil, another that represents Good, and an amorous pair around which the scene revolves. In this interpretation, the snake is the infamous biblical symbol of Evil. Although the serpent plays only a marginal role in the opera, it characterizes the poster scene as an allegory of the account in Genesis. Had Chagall merely wanted to include a symbol of evil, surely the Queen of the Night would have sufficed. But he also included the snake, thus allowing the viewer to read the scene in two ways—one narrated by the libretto and another informed by the Bible. Moreover, in a Garden of Eden reading, the dove with the red triangle might serve as a symbol of Deity. In his overtly biblical illustrations, Chagall usually reserves the apex of the composition for the presence of God, whether disguised as a circle, a beam of light, God’s name in Hebrew letters, or any combination of these²² (fig. 3). The upside-down triangle might be interpreted as another symbol for God’s presence.

The Queen and the snake refer to Satan within the edenic context. They are placed as a physical barrier between God’s sphere and that of Adam and Eve, represented by the lions. The lions also make greater sense in this interpretation. In the Garden of Eden account, Adam was made ruler over all animals; the lion is the “king of beasts.” Finally, in establishing the biblical validity of the lions, it is imperative to consider Chagall’s previous use of this animal. Although lions never appear in any of the artist’s secular works, they frequently inhabit his biblical scenes. A few examples support this point: *The Prophet Elijah*, *Bezaleel*, *The Synagogue of Vilnius*, *White Crucifixion*, and *The Prophecy of Isaiah*. The presence of lions in only his biblical works illustrates that Chagall intended the lions in the poster to carry a sacred symbolic meaning.

Clearly, Chagall composed the main characters of the *Magic Flute* poster in the guise of animals who can be interpreted as the main figures

from the biblical Garden of Eden. Thus, not only did Chagall reveal his sentiments for Mozart and the Bible—two of his greatest inspirations—but he managed to reconcile them harmoniously, in humanistic fashion, in a pictorial allegory of good and evil.

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3. Albert G. Mackey, *An Encyclopaedia of Freemasonry and Its Kindred Sciences*, rev. ed., 2 vols. (Chicago: Masonic History, 1921), 2:802.
4. R. B. Moberly, *Three Mozart Operas* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1968), 226.
5. Moberly, *Three Mozart Operas*, 225.
6. Moberly, *Three Mozart Operas*, 219.
7. Mackey, *Freemasonry and Its Kindred Sciences*, 2:800.
8. Genauer, *Chagall at the 'Met,'* 53.
9. Genauer, *Chagall at the 'Met,'* 54. See also in this issue of *BYU Studies*, Paul Kerry, "Initiates of Isis Now, Come, Enter into the Temple!": Masonic and Enlightenment Thought in *The Magic Flute*," 104–29.
10. Genauer, *Chagall at the 'Met,'* 55.
11. Jean Bloch Rosensaft, *Chagall and the Bible* (New York: Universe Books, 1987), 18.
12. Rosensaft, *Chagall and the Bible*, 17.
13. Rosensaft, *Chagall and the Bible*, 17.
14. Rosensaft, *Chagall and the Bible*, 17.
15. Marc Chagall, *Marc Chagall, Biblical Interpretations*, trans. Charles Frankel (New York: Alpine Fine Arts Collection, 1983), 114.
16. *Adam and Eve and the Forbidden Fruit*, by Marc Chagall, 1958–59, can be easily viewed on the internet.
17. *Eden*, by Marc Chagall, 1958–59, may be found in various publications on Chagall. It is also available as a PDF document from *BYU Studies*.
18. *Paradise*, by Marc Chagall, 1958–61, is available on the internet at sites such as http://www.musees-nationaux-alpesmaritimes.fr/pages/page_id17989_u12.htm.
19. Other Garden of Eden scenes by Chagall that resemble the poster compositionally: *Adam and Eve Expelled from the Garden of Eden* (1958–61), and *Creation of the World: The Fifth and Sixth Days* (1971–72).
20. Guy Weelen, "Chagall in Full Flight," in G. di San Lazzaro, ed., *Chagall: Monumental Works* (New York: Tudor Publishing, 1973), 46.
21. Andrew Kagan, *Marc Chagall* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1989), 97.
22. Examples of such symbols can be seen in the artist's drawings *God Reveals Himself to Moses in the Burning Bush* (1952–57) and *Elijah Revives the Son of the Widow of Zarepath* (1952–57).

Adaptation, Enactment, and Ingmar Bergman's *Magic Flute*

Dean Duncan

For all of its manifold musical glories, *The Magic Flute* was and is a theatrical work, meant for production and performance, and that repeatedly. As such, I will be concentrating on the opera's theatrical and cinematic elements. This article treats Ingmar Bergman's felicitous 1975 film adaptation of the opera. Those inclined can find much to complain about in Bergman's cinematic version of Mozart's opera, but I would like to suggest that, with sympathy and openness, this complaining could give way to approval and great gratitude. In this *Magic Flute*, we have an interpretation worthy of its source, which is saying a great deal.

Despite its popularity, film remains suspect for some critics, especially when it goes poaching in the preserves of "legitimate" art. There are reasons for this guardedness. Since watching appears to be easier than reading, and since film preserves performances that in the theater remain only in memory, cinema has in many ways become the default medium, the final destination to which texts from all media tend. One unfortunate result, inextricably linked to the mega corporate nature of contemporary media production, is that, instead of a healthy conversation between multiple versions of a work, there is a search for the definitive take. Disney's excellent 1940 version of *Pinocchio*, for example, leaves the electrifying original unread and leaves the contradictory and fascinating Benigni adaptation (2002) unseen and even unconsidered; and the whole disheartening situation leaves us prescriptive, proscriptive, and grumpy about the stories and enactments that should make us happy.

Of course, any production, theatrical or cinematic, that tries to incorporate every nuance and possibility found in the source or uncovered by a

comprehensive reading would almost certainly be unbearably busy, unfocused, and endless. A production must select out of an abundance of possibilities a certain few actualities. The regretting of roads not taken, especially when the actual choice is proven to be a good one, is profitless.

All productions are adaptations, and adaptations are often discussed, as Seymour Chatman has suggested, by using a lover's vocabulary: one is faithful; another betrays.¹ These may be inflated terms, as this is no marriage; the stakes are not as high—and, in the realm of story, dalliance may actually be helpful and healthy. It may be more accurate to say that in adaptation there is a range of possibility, a spectrum from attempted congruence to indulged liberality. As for hierarchy or value, I would posit that any kind of adaptation, in the abstract, is neutral. The good and ill are in the work, the understanding, and the application.

In the same way, the page, the stage, and the screen are all completely valid media for sharing stories. They are also markedly and necessarily distinct from one another. When adaptations occur, there may be continuities from the source, but there must also be changes. These changes must take into account the properties specific to the medium being utilized. Bergman's adaptation partly succeeds through a playful self-consciousness about crossing the boundaries between media. He makes of this a game with which we as audience become complicit participants. Paradoxically, through a dogged artificiality, by continually unveiling the mechanisms of representation, Bergman earns our interest and honors his source. This dynamic carries throughout the film but is apparent from the first act, where I will concentrate my remarks.

Ingmar Bergman's *Magic Flute* starts with an image of a sunset reflected on water, with sylvan scenes following and birdsong placed underneath on the soundtrack. A facsimile of Mozart's signature and then of the Swedish title (*Trollflöjten*) in period calligraphy are juxtaposed on the screen. The westering light strikes the walls of a great hall, harmoniously ensconced in this natural setting. There is applause and then the overture's opening clarion call.

In these first swift strokes, Bergman has intimated a great deal. On a practical level, he is summoning the film audience out of natural tranquility and into operatic serenity. He has created a relaxed and reflective atmosphere for the enjoyment of his presentation. He is identifying Mozart as the author and the prevailing sensibility in his film. But in addition to disarming us with a host's courtesy and an adaptor's modesty, Bergman is also making a powerful conceptual assertion about the status and significance of the *Magic Flute* text, an assertion on which he will continue to expand. This performance, scrupulously based on the conventions informing

the 1791 premiere and its actual appearance, will call to mind a particular historical moment as well as an ahistorical ideal. The opening establishes the terms and their significance: here are nature and culture and, as the production will soon demonstrate, woman and man, all joined in balance and harmony.

As the overture proceeds, Bergman continues to reinforce this opening idyll, cutting between natural scenes and the classical statues arranged within them. The neo-Greek and Roman coincide with Mozart's music, all classical examples of balance, beauty, and harmony. From there we go inside the hall and encounter for the first time a visual and narrative motif that will serve as a structuring metaphor for the duration of the film.

This motif begins when we are introduced to a young spectator, a red-headed girl of about ten years of age. She is looking and listening with careful and happy attention. Bergman holds on her, and he will come back to her repeatedly throughout the film. When the opera proper begins, this child will become the site of suture, the standard technique through which the film spectator is brought into the film space and brought under the rules and assumptions that inform and structure it. This suturing is accomplished through what is known as the shot–reverse shot: we see a person looking, we cut to what she is looking at, then we finally see her response to the thing she has just seen. In this construction, we are introduced to the character with whom we will identify, we come to share her space and perspective as we see through her eyes, and finally by seeing her again we see what kind of response that is expected of us.²

The significance of this first suturing in *The Magic Flute* is that Bergman is telling us exactly who he is talking to as well as giving an indication of the spectating position and sensibility that he expects or perhaps invites us to assume. In its present telling, this is a story for children, for the guileless and hopeful sensibility of the idealized child. As with the opera's protagonists, a number of lessons await this youthful spectator, suggesting a shared passage from innocence and ignorance to knowledge.

Now the overture proceeds in tandem with a lengthy montage sequence. Montage, the joining of discrete film pieces, is not only a way of clearly constructing narrative sequences but also a way of constructing and enacting concepts.³ Montage can be used to show that meaning in film is not inherent but comes from the juxtaposition of separate images. As the spectator sees ideas forming before his eyes, he may also infer that the seeming social truths that are offered to or imposed upon him may also be constructed and, as such, are open to change or resistance. Though it has more or less become the exclusive property of advertisers and propagandists,

montage began with and maintained the possibility of active, engaged spectatorship. It was to make us aware and to help us think.

Bergman's opening montage presents a message for us to think about. The sequence is made up almost exclusively of faces in closeup, all listening and looking, juxtaposed and multiplying, presenting a variety of bone structures and expressions and ages and ethnic groups. This striking legion of representative types is bound together by what often brings disparate and even disharmonious images together in film—music. Most conventional film music is hidden, subordinated to narrative as well as to the other ideological and commercial functions that motion pictures perform.⁴ Here the standard hierarchy is actually reversed. There being no explicit story for the music to support or reinforce, the images here actually accompany the music.

The music carries a particular meaning or tells a particular story, one that the film has already proposed to us and to which it will return. Mozart's overture and even Mozart himself embody musical and cultural ideals that embrace and unite every spectator we have seen in this film. Since we have seen nearly every kind of person that we might imagine—since we almost certainly have seen someone who looks like us—then we too are invited to become part of this communion.

We have had three conceptual assertions then, even though there has been as yet no dialogue, no narrative enactment as such. The first idea is of a world in balance; the second relates to the child as being an ideal spectator and a model for our participation. Finally, there is the concept of the brotherhood of man, represented by but not limited to Mozart's universal appeal shown in the many faces. These notions are all lovely, but they seem unusually direct and even naïve for an ironic archsophisticate like Bergman.

Bergman is not being sarcastic, nor is he taking a conscious break from his own convictions about the ways of the world. As he has suggested in his autobiography *The Magic Lantern*, Bergman is drawn to the powerful tonality and harmony of *The Magic Flute*, to the way its music coincides with its view of the world, the possibilities it presents for human relations.⁵ There are many momentary, shimmering exceptions in Bergman's oeuvre, but his work overwhelmingly expresses the compromise, ambiguity, and disappointment he has found in his own life. Notwithstanding these conclusions, he is open to countering testimony. So powerful and pretty is the view presented by this opera that the international cinema's great narrative stylist subordinates his own style and the messages it usually renders to Mozart and librettist Emanuel Schikaneder's clearer and cleaner vision. It is as if Bergman were saying, "Yea, I believe; help thou mine unbelief."

Subordination yes, but self-abnegation, no. The three concepts just mentioned may seem disarmingly and impossibly simple now, but as is generally the case, say, with musical material presented in an overture or with the theme-stating first sections of the sonata form, developments and deepening will follow. In fact, deepening, and problematizing, too, begin in the opening sequence. The film's idealized romantic child exists within striking distance of actual childhood—a spirited and sometimes contradictory part of a process of development, and not a static abstraction. Each simple idea will be enriched as Bergman explores its contrary elements.

For instance, as suggested, the film does suture the spectator into both its narrative and conceptual space. But it does so with a difference: rather than following the conventional course of bringing us in to identify with a fictional character and potentially disappearing ourselves, Bergman has simply accomplished something that allows for all sorts of helpful complicating. He has sutured us to this girl as a spectator, and thus he has made us conscious of our outside and observing status. As he cuts repeatedly throughout the opera to this little girl, he establishes in our minds that we are to watch and think, absorb and process and react.

In other words, there are no fourth-wall illusions here: this is clearly a theatrical presentation, constructed and artificial. Against the kind of commercial theater and films that we overwhelmingly attend, Bergman gives us interaction, the process revealed and opened to interrogation, and with acknowledged exchange and communication between performers and audience. He says:

In my imagination I have always seen *The Magic Flute* living inside (an) old theater, in (its) keenly acoustical wooden box, with its slanted stage floor, its backdrops and wings. Here lies the noble, magical illusion of theater. Nothing *is*; everything *represents*. The moment the curtain is raised, an agreement between stage and audience manifests itself. And now, together, we'll create!⁶

A main modernist device for initiating this kind of conversation is to introduce elements that do not easily or immediately integrate into the whole. The disturbing detail, alienation effects, and intertextual references are some means by which questions are encouraged, alternatives considered, and awareness fostered.⁷

At this point, Bergman starts introducing such modernist techniques into his period presentation. First there is a fleeting intertextual reference. The overture's brief incursion into the minor coincides with a number of red fades (the hall from the outside, the painted curtain, the spectator). Bergman is quoting himself, borrowing a device he used in the film *Cries and Whispers* (1973). In this account of alienation, darkness, and the

shining moments that dispel them, he used red fades and a red-dominated design to suggest the color of the soul, of our interiors, of our bloodied, painful thoughts. This notion also informed the film that followed and that immediately preceded the production of *The Magic Flute*. In *Scenes from a Marriage* (1974), Bergman gives us his own version of the institution that is figuratively and hopefully portrayed in the opera. In the 1974 film, marriage fails as the hopeful real-life couple is unable to manage the trials of faith and perseverance that we will see successfully completed in *The Magic Flute*. (The actor playing the husband in *Scenes from a Marriage*, Erland Josephson, can be seen briefly in *The Magic Flute*'s opening assembly of attentive faces.)

Reference to Bergman's earlier work is a device that occurs, glancingly and intermittently, throughout the film. Bergman is peeking out from behind the curtain, briefly problematizing the optimistic spirit of the presentation to which he has subordinated himself. Now he will return to his place. A shot of the boy Mozart's portrait signals our coming out of the minor into a resounding major. The overture and the faces continue, and then the sequence ends, the child looks, and the curtain rises. As spectators within the hall, we begin to watch the presentation proper.

The opening image of act 1 resumes the patent artificiality toward which Bergman continuously takes us spectators. Behind the curtain, we see a lovely forest set, the scenery diminishing slightly into the distance, suggesting a vanishing perspective at the same time that it eschews the illusion of painterly verisimilitude. Lightning flashes by means of some superb but not remotely realistic lighting effects. The trees are painted on wooden flats called legs. These reach in from the wings and are manipulated by means of what is known as a chariot and pole system, which operates with ropes and cables that allow technicians to revolve the set pieces. This type of system prevailed in the theater of Mozart's period and would have been used in the opera's initial production. Intermittently throughout the film we will see this system in operation. Its changes will not be hidden but will take place visibly and audibly before us.⁸ The use of these effects is an indication of another one of the major strategies in *The Magic Flute*, one of its main sources of delight and another evidence of Bergman's surprising, seemingly uncharacteristic subordination and fidelity to his source. This is partly—enthusiastically—a conservation performance, a demonstration of how things used to be done.

The story proper starts with a crisis, which Bergman immediately undercuts. Prince Tamino enters upstage, stage right, fleeing in terror. The source of that terror follows immediately, in the form of one of the least frightening monsters in screen history, a charmingly mincing and goggle-eyed

dragon. Tamino and dragon exit stage left, re-enter from our right, mid-stage, then run across again. (Western European theater practice in the late eighteenth century favored this kind of lateral movement, with longitudinal crossing—up and down, before our eyes—being comparatively infrequent.) Tamino, directly addressing the audience, begs for relief. Even in the midst of his appeal, he is overcome by the dragon, which brings with him absolutely no suggestion of real jeopardy.

Suddenly three resolute women appear and dispatch the dragon with amusing ease. Sparks, then smoke pour out of the dragon's nostrils as its eyes roll most unalarmingly, and then it expires. In all of this, in the setting and the enactment, we have the opposite of verisimilitude.

If the sets and the acting are not realistic, then what is? The answer is there, strikingly, right from the beginning, and the prevailing artificiality actually gives us a clearer and more direct understanding of that answer. What is real is beauty, the beauty of the music, the skill and enthusiasm with which it is performed, and the freshness with which it is rendered for our instruction and delight.

Now the three ladies, actually attendants of the Queen of the Night, warmly perform a long and stunning trio. In it they rejoice in their victory over the monster, express admiration for the beautiful (and unconscious) prince, and then begin to fight about which among them will stay to guard him. Here are the opera's first articulated ideas, with values suggested beneath: love, wonder, and romance with a gentle hint of eroticism. These values are central to secular theater as well as a source of interesting contrast and, eventually, of reconciliation in this story.

A subtle deception is being enacted here. The workings of protagonism are such that we tend to favor and identify with those to whom we are introduced first and from whom we first hear. The complication here lies in the fact that these favored ladies, who have, after all, just saved the man who looks likely to become the hero of our story, turn out to be working for the antagonist of the piece. Many critics have suggested that the Queen of the Night's uncertain status—intervening savior figure at first, aggrieved and affronted mother later, intolerable threat to the patriarchal order finally—may be evidence of a hastily assembled, partly incoherent libretto. It is difficult at this late date to be certain about causes and intended meanings, but Bergman's treatment of the inconsistency is instructive.

Bergman approaches each scene and presents each shift and paradox with unapologetic directness; he refuses from the start to hide the preposterous or problematic. This is an opera lover's methodology. This text and that of other operas are often taken to task for their implausibilities and other narrative shortcomings. By emphasizing implausibility rather than trying

to mask, avoid, or justify it, Bergman suggests that it might be a central part of the operatic form, the seat of some of its key ideas and pleasures. After all, opera's central conceit, the impossible artificiality of people going around singing all the time, is the most undeniable example of theater's noble illusion and is the fundamental artificiality that Bergman seeks to celebrate in this production.

The ladies sing on, alternating humorously between contending and making pretty pronouncements about sisterhood and such. Mozart's comic operas are very good at demonstrating the fitfulness of human intercourse. Harmony is fleeting, with foible and fractiousness ever at the gates. But still a kind of grace operates here and eventually prevails. Something binds up the wounds of the conflict. Although this grace may seem Christian to us, for Bergman it is not Christian hope that heals, at least not straightforwardly.⁹ Nor does Christian hope appear very directly in the European farce of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Instead, wit and enlightened humanity are the cause for hope and gratitude in these farces. Still, in the ineffable, spiritual realm we have felicitous expression and, in Mozart, inexpressible musical beauty.

Visually, from the time of the dragon's demise, almost everything in this scene has been rendered in the style of the Great Performances series: close-ups, two shots, and small groupings. It is the grammar of convenience, pragmatic framing and quick coverage, completely adequate for preserving and celebrating a performance, though not remotely exploring or reflecting the cinema's expressive range and potential. As the scene ends, the last of the ladies' discussion and their departure is taken in a long shot, from the center of the stalls, as it were. Bergman returns us to a pointedly theatrical perspective, using the *film d'art* composition associated with film history's stodgiest, most stagy shooting strategy.

After the dragon scene there begins a more intimate artificiality and a demonstration of perpendicular cinema (a perpendicular, presentational style in which the camera establishes and maintains a 90 degree relationship to its subject). The introduction of Papageno's character does three things. His introduction partly emphasizes his charmingly scampish character, but it also introduces us to the off-stage space. Håken Hagegård, who plays Papageno, is asleep in the wings. He stirs, hears his cue approaching, and then scrambles to get ready. A costumed bat helps him on with his costume, while theater technicians (pretend to) play chess. We get a close-up of the candles that illumined the eighteenth-century stage. Bergman is exposing the artifice and uncovering the apparatus. It is a device both modern and immemorial, demonstrating the workings of theater, showing us not only the message but also how it is constructed and presented.¹⁰

Now comes the third element of Bergman's using Papageno's introduction: Although Papageno seems to have been standing off stage and preparing to go on, something unexpected happens when he actually does so. Bergman's cut actually takes Papageno, and the audience along with him, out of the wings of the theater and onto the stage of the film studio.¹¹ This is creative geography, an innovation and exercise of the Soviet avant garde-ists of the 1920s. V. I. Pudovkin's *Chess Fever* (1925) is shot exclusively with this device, in which you cut from one view to another that is in reality far away but is completely contiguous in the viewer's mind. As Papageno sings, we may become aware that we are in the (reconfigured) Drottningholm Palace no more, that the Great Performances style has given way to early perpendicularity, in which film production preserved the openly interactive, attractively artificial theatrical experience at the same time that it adapted it to cinematic circumstance and strength. Bergman uses his studio to help intensify that transition. The artificiality of the eighteenth-century style (that is, the dragon) will give way to distancing techniques that are more modernist. Bergman is setting up a dialogue between forms and periods. The film studio becomes a liminal space that houses and facilitates this dialogue. In this will be a major theme in the film. If artificial theater and realistic film are often considered to be irreconcilable binaries, Bergman will, by means of his strategy of uncovering the apparatus, by his mixture of styles, and by free alternation of playing spaces, bring them harmoniously together anyway. The audience in the theater has disappeared for a while. It is the individual in the film audience who is being addressed.¹²

The shift to the film studio once again signals Bergman's self-conscious artificiality, which Bergman continues to assert as an analog or continuity with the artificiality of opera, as is apparent in the ensuing dialogue between Papageno and Tamino. There, we are reminded that *The Magic Flute* is not an opera proper, but rather what is known as a *Singspiel*. Musical bits are intermingled with actual conversations, with the result that the high artificiality of operatic interaction is alternated with and grounded by plain vernacular conversation. This is something that may not play particularly well in a recording, especially for a non-German speaker. (Bergman's version, it should be pointed out, is actually in Swedish.) In a theater or on film, the technique registers wonderfully. It is yet another example of in-betweens, of a text that shares the musical and the theatrical, invites the cinematic, and profoundly evokes the life to which they all refer.

After the *Singspiel* dialogue between Papageno and Tamino, the ladies return, whispering to our male principals in compositions that evoke secrecy, darkness, psychological intensity, and jeopardy. In this setting,

Bergman's strategy is narratively appropriate, given that the Queen of the Night is coming, and she is fooling everyone.

Distant thunder and the sudden fall of night signal her arrival, and as if to signal the grand performative nature of this character and the film's treatment of her, we go back to the stage space, briefly resuming our role as the theatrical spectator. There is a chariot and pole scene change by which a group of billowing black clouds and a delightful background of painted constellations come into view. As before, these suggest linear perspective at the same time that they refuse its implied illusion.

This stage view is short-lived, as we alternate modes immediately; the very next shot returns us to a film perspective. Characters no longer address us but rather look past us, giving us the illusion that we have not only penetrated the theatrical space but that we have become invisible in doing so. This is Hollywood: no fourth walls, the illusion of a freer, all-angled access not only to the cinematic space but into the lives of the characters. Bergman, always ideologically suspect among activist critics for his almost exclusive interest in the internal and the psychological, here utilizes a technique he knows very well. This is, in fact, another moment of suture, except that it is exposed to us and therefore jeopardized. There's no shot-reverse shot; we've already been sutured, and the mixture of modes means that no individual mode can work undisturbed. It is certainly also true that our joining the actors on stage, our alternating between purely frontal and more angled, indirect views not only brings the viewer closer to the action but also helps her feel the vulnerability and elation of performance. It is the stage-and-audience pact to which Bergman has consistently referred, a pact for the performer as much as for the part performed.

The filming of the Queen's aria "O zittre nicht, mein lieber Sohn" is typical of Sven Nykvist, Bergman's superb cinematographer. We have sorrowful expression in continuous close-up—the camera exploring, caressing the contours of the face, its infinite expressiveness, its infinite sadness. Again this is Bergman briefly registering in this Mozartian world, where prettiness prevails but the ugliness must be acknowledged.

From this moment of psychological concentration, we come back to theatrical high spirits. "Hm! Hm! Hm! Hm!" is the beginning of the shimmering quintet that features the Queen's three attendants along with Tamino and Papageno. In the film, Bergman makes of this quintet a didactic presentation, one that usually raises a laugh in the audiences that see it. Papageno is lectured about his lying and vows never to do it again, saying that he fears being punished again.

Now the principals turn to the audience, and, standing in a carefully composed arrangement, they deliver a sermon. Another didactic element,

which pushes this presentation into comic range, is the use of a series of placards on which these moral sentiments are carefully lettered. The out-of-nowhere, mysteriously ascending and descending signs are amusing in part because the actors are so unfazed by their inexplicable appearance. They are also comically effective because the actors and filmmakers alike are so unapologetic. Of course, this is more theatrical artificiality, but the lack of apology and the guilelessness that provides the courage for it are unexpectedly affecting.

At this point, Tamino receives the magic flute, a gift to cheer the sorrow-laden, to lift up the hanging hands of administrator and recipient alike.¹³ The message here is clear and goes beyond pretty platitudes. It is a humanist's faith, perhaps, and a good one, too: Music, specifically—as well as the arts allied with narrative and the theater, generally—heals and saves.

In this film, the lessons (and more lessons will follow, some ironically) work because of the music and because of the expertise and enjoyment of the participants—just as lessons can work in one's home because of all the loving interaction and all the fun activities that leaven and inform that instruction. This is theater, too: sometimes lessons do not need to be hidden in a convincing and contradictory narrative; they do not need realism, verisimilitude, or rounded characters.

The Magic Flute is effectively didactic in that it contains edifying messages and it communicates them kindly. Bergman's affectionately ironic use of direct address and placards bearing platitudes is a reference to the simplicity (and, potentially, to the oversimplicity) of these messages. However, that potential for simplemindedness is not fulfilled because the opera also contains plenty of nuance and lifelike ambiguity as well as troubling contradiction and inconsistency. Bergman is attuned to these ambiguities, and he renders them clearly and beautifully. Bergman does not attempt to deny or eliminate the problems in the text. Rather, he reveals gaps and requires that we consider them.

Like the art to which Bergman subscribes (but cannot often feel to produce), the extraordinary power of Tamino's flute is found in the way it fills darkness with sweetness. After he has played it, the flute floats into the air, but not quite magically: the wires that lift it are clearly visible. At this point, the film viewer may have become so attuned to Bergman's theatrical artificiality and medium comparisons that she is delighted and not affronted by the conceit.

Now Bergman describes a strategic shift and explores a different kind of stylization. The quintet splits into two groups, dividing men and women. As these groups address us, we might be briefly reminded of film's roots in portraiture and painting.

Next our subjects turn from us and toward one another. Perpendicularity gives way to profiles and a beguiling echo. This is not only painterly but pertains to some degree across the spectrum of the arts. The Mozartian narrative (as found for instance in Beaumarchais, Da Ponte, de Musset) has sometimes been troubling to realists because of its impossible symmetry, its convenient complications, and its implausible reconciliations. As narrative we may find this unconvincing, but resistance may give way if we consider certain formal and figurative possibilities. The way Bergman composes and cuts between his profiled figures suggests an evoking, even an invocation of, the dance as well as standard sonata form. Characters come together, describe patterned actions, and enliven those actions with their own individuality. Statements are made and themes presented, then varied, inverted, problematized, and, finally, beautifully resolved.

Like Tamino, Papageno too receives a gift, if not *of* then *for* the spirit. Momentarily (keep in mind the various villains), it seems, there is something for everyone. The singers address us with another moral written on signs, then turn again from the camera to each other, again to the dance, and to the suggestion of that which lies at the end of all dance and the root of all comedy. Bergman also makes use of musical rhythm to evoke romantic roundelays, the great chase, the blessed continuation of the race (note the two sequential paintings on Papageno's music box).

With the artificial, impossible descent of a trio of angelic boys in a balloon, we finally hear from the other side, from the Queen's enemies. They balance and counter the Queen's women, though there is little question, even at this early point, of who will enlist our sympathy. With the exception of his little girl in the audience, Bergman's suturing in the film has been of a deconstructive sort, suggesting by its incompleteness the function of the device rather than leaving it to work conventionally. Here he changes his strategy, giving us a bona fide shot–reverse shot (a view from above of Tamino and Papageno, another of cinema's nontheatrical perspectives), again drawing us in to identify with the perspective of childhood. These boys are the counterpoint of the idealized and actual child in the audience.

As if to renew the agreement between stage and stalls and to complete the connection between children in the various narrative spaces, Bergman cuts back to the girl in the audience, with whom we now go to visit Pamina. As we do so, Bergman continues to explore his partly theatrical space with the camera's (and thus the spectator's) unique mobility and power of concentration. We go up and down and around corners, playing with composition, depth of field, and foreground and background relationships. The approach is simultaneously cinematic and intimately theatrical.

Christian Metz proposed in the mid 1960s that, contrary to conventional assumption, it is not the protagonists of a piece that we ultimately identify with but the camera itself.¹⁴ We assume its mobility, its universal access, its privileged perspective. Metz problematizes this illusion, since of course we are seeing only what we are supposed to see, and our presumed power may not lead us to interrogate our position. In his evocation of Metz's theory, however, Bergman does not leave us ideologically stranded. His interruptions and range of viewing positions make it difficult for us to simply submit to these illusions.

Before long we find Tamino in another ambiguous location, another liminal space. At first the set is clearly constructed to suggest the theatrical element in the film, but now we come to a transition. As the camera enters the previously theatrical space and explores it, as it shoots and varies shot size, we suddenly find ourselves in a similar set but now contained in a film



Scene from *The Magic Flute* by Ingmar Bergman. Sarastro and the other priests guide Tamino, monitor his spiritual progress, and pray that he will be given strength to overcome the trials. The priests eventually defeat the Queen of the Night, her ladies, and Monostatos, who make a final attempt to overthrow the temple order.



Scene from *The Magic Flute* by Ingmar Bergman. This scene shows Sarastro's triumphal entry at the end of act 1. It is the first time that the audience and Tamino meet him. The audience, like Tamino, have only heard terrible rumors about him and the temple order from the Queen and her ladies.

studio. Having established his narrative location in both performative settings, Bergman has Tamino ask one of the libretto's most searching questions: "Could this be a godly site?"

Tamino is in Sarastro's temple, a constructed, separate space designed for figurative, presentational rituals that relate directly and profoundly to life issues. From his two ritual spaces, reflecting the locations of Bergman's own searching and devotion, an actor asks the same question, "Could this be a godly site?" Here is another lovely, disarmingly sincere moment. For all of the disaffection and doubt in his own work and in modernism generally, Bergman is here affirming art's holiness, its potential and often realized ability to embody and grant wisdom, beauty, and happiness.

Tamino is about to be introduced into Sarastro's brotherhood, about to assume the burdens and privileges of Sarastro's order, about to win his love and his life—for it is in the temple precinct that he will meet Pamina. And on this brink we find him at lowest ebb. Has the Queen lied to him? He is discouraged by deceit and fraud, by all the gaps between appearance and reality, between aspiring and accomplishment. In the midst of this difficulty, Tamino comes to what for Bergman is the center of the opera, the key to its significance and to his own interest in it. Everywhere there are hints and intimations in the darkness: the intermingled hope and doubt that something beyond us exists and that something between us can abide.

In his life, Bergman came at least twice to despairing disbelief. For him both God (*The Silence*) and love (*Shame*) died (though some hope, however muted, seems always to have returned to him). It can be critically dubious to rely excessively on biographical detail, but when we consider the number of marriages and romantic interludes in Bergman's life, we can infer that one reason for the silence was that he was never able to join that brotherhood, to achieve the fidelity that might bring the answer to his questions,¹⁵ is there anybody out there, can any lasting thing be between us? In his autobiography, Bergman describes this central scene, the one that moves him most profoundly:

Tamino is left alone. . . . He cries: "Oh, dark night! When will you vanish? When shall I find light in the darkness?" The chorus answers *pianissimo* from within the temple: "Soon, soon or never more!" Tamino: "Soon? Soon? Or never more. Hidden creatures, give me your answer. Does Pamina still live?" The chorus answers in the distance: "Pamina, Pamina still lives."

These twelve bars involve two questions at life's outer limits—but also two answers. When Mozart wrote his opera, he was already ill, the specter of death touching him. In a moment of impatient despair, he cries: "Oh, dark night! When will you vanish? When shall I find light in the darkness?" The chorus responds ambiguously. "Soon, soon or never more."

The mortally sick Mozart cries out a question into the darkness. Out of this darkness, he answers his own question—*or does he receive an answer?*

Then the other question: “Does Pamina still live?” The music translates the text’s simple question into the greatest of all questions. “Does Love live? Is Love real?” The answer comes, quivering but hopeful in a strange division of Pamina’s name: “Pa-*mi*-na still lives!” It is no longer a matter of the name of an attractive young woman, but a code word for love: “Pa-*mi*-na still lives.” Love exists. Love is real in the world of human beings.¹⁶

Bergman’s testimony is moving, the more so for its author’s Dostoevskian doubt. This phenomenon of an unbeliever giving superior, efficacious witness happens frequently (compare Pier Paolo Pasolini’s 1964 film *The Gospel According to Matthew*). How can Tamino gather sufficient courage, how can Bergman do this contradictory thing? The answer is everywhere in the opera: Tamino starts to play his flute; it is the consolation of creation, especially collaborative creation.

Mozart’s simple melody brings Tamino out of the shadow and out of that ambiguous in-between space back onto the bright, artificial theatrical space. Out from the wings come the pacified animals, delightful fauves, as fake as that dragon. This is another charming moment for children and a moving one for adults, who may take Tamino’s dilemma more to heart than children do. In this and in the forthcoming conclusion, there is a wonderful payoff.

Tamino is still alone, still without his Pamina. Notwithstanding his own incompleteness and anxiety, the savage beasts are still charmed; the artist, out of his own terminal doubt and unconnection, provides certainty and communion to his audience. It is often thus with secular art, especially as received in a community of faith. There are sacrificial, atoning parallels here. By the sinner’s and doubter’s stripes we are not necessarily healed, as he has not the power of salvation. But the service rendered is nevertheless considerable and even holy; whereas before we were blind, now we can see.

Papageno’s bells answer Tamino’s flute from offstage; Bergman continues to explore, cross between, and bring together the different dramatic settings as well as the dramatic modes and conventions that typify them. By repetition as well as by variation, he continues to illustrate and celebrate the permeability of the division between performer and spectator, the theatrical and the cinematic, the enacted and the lived.

Now it is time for a narrative complication, not convincing or even necessary, but wholeheartedly presented out of love of story and opera convention. Pamina and Papageno run on what is obviously a treadmill as the pretty stage scenery goes obviously by behind them. Tamino still sits

offstage, amidst the stage machinery and all of the production helpers. The meeting of the lovers is almost accomplished. Then a swarthy man, the Moor Monostatos, appears. He works for Sarastro and guards Pamina from harm (although, as we shall see later, there is something more to it). He captures the fleeing pair and then looks threateningly at us, saying, "You will smart for this, believe me." Here is what in Britain is called the Panto(mime) tradition. In the Pantos, which now usually take place around Christmas and which are continued staples for the youngsters and their families, good guys are cheered and bad guys booed. There is no hint of theatrical verisimilitude. Interaction and participation are all.

Such gentle play between audience and actor, including Bergman's own winking at his film audience, permeates the intermission—another highly artificial spectacle on par with the overture—and softens the conflicts through the second act as trials and temptations lead toward climax. At his nadir, when Papageno feels terminally alone and even suicidal, he is struck by an idea. He looks at the camera—now the theater space has given way again to that theatrical/cinematic in-between—and invites a maiden from the (film) audience to join him. Here is a variation of what we have already seen, a theatrical device and a didactic confrontation straight out of a morality tale, when audiences felt directly addressed. Of course, the point of our being confronted from on stage is not exactly morality-tale material, but *The Magic Flute*, along with its current makers, has clearly demonstrated devoted interest not only in aspiring to virtue, but also in plain romantic love.

Back on stage, we witness another charming transformation. Papageno's bells summon the springtime, and the theatrical greenery drops into place right before our eyes. Artifice invites our appreciation of the world to give way, at least temporarily, to an appreciation of its representation or of its artistic transformation. It is difficult for us to resist that invitation.

Papageno and Papagena finally meet. This is one of the opera's climactic scenes, the resolution of one of its main character's objectives, the fulfillment and justification of one of its philosophical alternatives. This a lovely meeting in which wooing, wedding, and children are envisioned. The treatment echoes that earlier quintet. Actors facing the camera turn to face each other with more implications of the dance, though this time of a different and more primal nature.

After we return to Pamina and Tamino and to their third and most difficult trial, Bergman enacts his last and greatest explosion of the theatrical space. These are superb, completely stylized film stage settings. The



Scene from *The Magic Flute* by Ingmar Bergman. Papageno rejoices in the fulfillment of his dream, a wife and children.

flute (representing art, artifice, harmony) will protect Tamino and Pamina on their way, providing insight and comfort through all the buffetings. They pass and play through a landscape of flames that leap and lick in the foreground and on the frame's margins, past the cavortings of leotarded men and women, inflamed and damned by their passion. They pass through water, through more artificiality and stylization in the film-studio space, through a waving sea of languid human limbs. Tamino closes his eyes to the scene, plays the flute, and provides steadiness, while Pamina surveys and guides him through. Of course, they succeed.

Now there is final exploration of that stylized liminal space as the Queen of the Night and Monostatos approach the sanctuary for a last attack. Using lateral tracking and portraits in profile (again, typically Nykvist), malice and darkness are feelingly presented.

The final confrontation is brief to the point of being perfunctory. Is it Bergman choosing not to linger on conflict when concord is at the core of his presentation? Beyond the Queen's last hauntingly defiant smile at Sarastro as she disappears, perhaps Bergman is finally, at least in this film, letting go of the antagonism in which he believes for the harmony for which he yearns. In the end, we return to the eighteenth-century stage place, to a shot of the entire audience watching approvingly. Tamino and Pamina rise to their seat of power and preeminence while Sarastro makes a departure that is also quick, but poignant and not at all perfunctory. Sarastro gets his own flute, which is to say that the spectator, encouraged by a last bit of suturing, might well pass from viewing this successful consummation to the pursuit of his or her own saving union.

The Magic Flute is a vast and satisfying creation, especially when we allow that it is not complete as long as people are producing and listening to and writing about it. Bergman seems to acknowledge this by good-naturedly showing us the scaffolding and costumes, as though to acknowledge that any form, including his own, will and will not fit the subject. Production and adaptation in the narrative arts, as well as the critical readings that respond to them, are not often likely to be perfect or to perfectly please those looking on. This is as it should be.

We have discussed a lover's vocabulary as it has been applied to adaptation and how terms like *fidelity* and *betrayal* may overshoot the mark. There is another lover's concept, though, a marital analogy that can relate to adaptation and especially to a reader's experience with it or to any textual experience at all. As one considers, in the abstract, prospective marriage partners, one can think of any number of traits and qualities, merits and proportions that promise to please. When the person in question comes on the scene, however, it is prudent, yet still pleasing, to change



Scene from *The Magic Flute* by Ingmar Bergman. Prince Tamino and Princess Pamina face the greatest trials of temple initiation together and rely on each other, as well as on the magic flute.

one's mode of thinking. As with any comprehensive reading of the text when compared to someone's focused staging or filming, the actual person requires that all possibility becomes one particularity. No man or woman can be all things, in disposition or intellect, emotionally or physically. He or she will have strengths and limitations, which, contrary to dream-come-true myths, turn out to be inextricably linked.

Romance is threatened within *The Magic Flute*, as is the romantic ideal of Mozart's canonicity through Bergman's cinematic rendering. Divine unions, as the opera teaches, are as readily endangered as they are idealized. The greater danger to Mozart's work, however, may be its canonical status, preventing audiences from appreciating it by its exalted, untouchable

nature. Bergman's translation of *The Magic Flute* succeeds because it allows us to court Mozart's story again, or it us. Whenever canonical works are taken down from the shelf, as Mozart's was by Bergman, we converse and commit and make decisions. As in marriage, the sacred starts to intermingle uncomfortably with the everyday. It might be argued, though, that this is precisely the right place for religion.

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1. Leo Braudy and Marshall Cohen, *Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings*, 6th ed. (New York: Oxford, 2004), 445–59. See also Louis D. Giannetti, *Understanding Movies* (Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2002), which talks about adaptations that are faithful or loose or literal.
2. Braudy and Cohen, *Film Theory and Criticism*, 106–17.
3. For more on montage, see Richard Taylor, ed. and trans., *The Film Factory: Russian and Soviet Cinema in Documents* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1988), 41–46, 66–67, 72–75.
4. See Claudia Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies: Narrative Film Music* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1987).
5. Ingmar Bergman, *The Magic Lantern: An Autobiography*, trans. Joan Tate (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1988).
6. Ingmar Bergman, *Images: My Life in Film*, trans. Marianne Ruuth (London: Bloomsbury, 1994), 353.
7. See Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, “The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception,” *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972) on the detail; and on alienation see Bertolt Brecht, “The Modern Theatre Is Epic Theatre,” in *Brecht on Theatre*, trans. John Willet (London: Methuen, 1964), 33–42.
8. For a reenacted demonstration of the chariot and pole, see the early sections of Terry Gilliam's 1988 film *The Adventures of Baron Munchausen*.
9. Although Bergman does not portray Christian hope, hints (such as the actor's vision in *The Seventh Seal*, the terrible, magisterial *Winter Light*, the charity in *Cries and Whispers*, the Christmas sequence of *Fanny and Alexander*) suggest that the light of hope, or at least of edifying mythology, has not quite gone out.
10. The closest cinematic analogy, perhaps insufficiently acknowledged, is Laurence Olivier's 1944 film version of Shakespeare's *Henry V*.
11. See Kenneth Branagh's *Henry V* (1989).
12. See André Gregory and Louis Malle's exquisite *Vanya on 42nd Street* (1994).
13. *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie (New York: Grove's Dictionaries, 2000), s.v. Zauberooper, says that magical elements were common devices in the *Zauberoperas* (magic operas) that abounded during

this period. The magical flute, which today seems so sweet because of its stark contrast from most of the other communication we overhear, worked then because it was a superlative example of a familiar form.

14. Braudy and Cohen, *Film Theory and Criticism*, 106–17.

15. See Peter Cowie's chronology in Bergman, *Magic Lantern*, 291–301. For a most moving use of biographical detail, see Bergman on Bach in Bergman, *Magic Lantern*, 43.

16. See Bergman, *Magic Lantern*, 216–17.

Diese Aufnahme ist bezaubernd schön

Deutsche Grammophon's 1964 Recording of
The Magic Flute

Aaron Dalton

Singing speaks most eloquently for itself in real time and doesn't fall into words on paper very easily," writes a former voice teacher of mine. "It is either beautiful or it isn't. If it's beautiful, words aren't adequate. If it isn't, words about it have to be either false or cruel."¹ Why, then, would I offer the following dissection of what I believe to be the greatest recording of arguably the greatest opera? And how, with a glut of *Magic Flute* recordings on the market (I aborted my tally at over forty casts on dozens of labels), can I presume to identify one particular recording as the greatest among them? After all, if you believe my teacher's claim above, would not even the most rapturous hyperbole prove inadequate?

Trusting that what you have read in this publication has piqued in you some trace of musical, cultural, historical, intellectual, or spiritual interest regarding *The Magic Flute*, I want to channel your simmering impulses and ensure that your next step is a good one. Expectedly, opera enthusiasts champion nearly as many "quintessential" *Magic Flute* recordings as there are, well, *Magic Flute* recordings. But as one having familiarity with the opera as both a fan and a performer, I would do you a disservice by recommending anything other than the 1964 Deutsche Grammophon² set as your starting point.

My defense, meaning both my justification for writing this article as well as for the claims made in it, rests primarily on the otherworldly performances of tenor Fritz Wunderlich as Prince Tamino and baritone Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau as the bird catcher Papageno. With these characters dominating the opera's musical score, it would follow that the work's definitive recording would be the one lucky enough to feature in tandem

these two, the definitive recorded interpreters of these roles. And the degree to which each singer's sound complements that of the other—indeed, these two voices are perhaps as mutually well-suited as those of any tenor-baritone duo on record—makes for a delicious aural indulgence.

Yet the success of this particular *Magic Flute* does not depend solely on the merits of Wunderlich and Fischer-Dieskau, for other artists, including those filling the secondary roles, help to bear the standard in mostly outstanding fashion. Admittedly, not every note sung on this recording is of entirely uncompromised beauty (and my words in those rare cases may seem cruel, though I believe them to be true), but my sincere hope is that what follows below will somehow lead you to discover for yourself that, even above its many superb rivals, *diese Aufnahme ist bezaubernd schön*.³

The Supporting Cast and the Orchestra

The secondary roles in and the orchestra of *The Magic Flute* are essential to the development of the opera's plot, symbolism, and principal characters. This recording's supporting parts features both established stars and up-and-coming singers, giving performances that range from admirable to phenomenal. I will touch here on a few of the latter.

Hans Hotter (The Speaker). In a cameo appearance that, if live, might have elicited maniacal ovations from even the most staid of German audiences, bass-baritone Hans Hotter, the foremost Wotan⁴ of the mid-twentieth century, blesses this recording as the Speaker, a role that consumes less than five minutes of stage time yet facilitates the critical watershed in Prince Tamino's quest. With unmatched vocal color and impeccably restrained power, Hotter's Speaker imbues the young prince with light and wisdom in a scene that pairs—in terms of both the plot and the contemporary opera-world—the promising initiate with the sagacious veteran, the hope of the future with the triumphs of the past.

James King and Martti Talvela (Armed Men). As the Armed Men, James King and Martti Talvela add the undeniable strength and quality of voice that would soon make Wagnerian icons of both of them.⁵ Their duet, throughout which the tenor doubles the bass at the octave,⁶ is taken at an unusually slow pace, which emphasizes the weight of the piece's message but requires almost freakish vocal resilience to sustain the long melodic lines, especially in the tenor part (example 1).⁷

Antonia Fahberg, Raili Kostia, and Rosl Schwaiger (Three Boys, or Genii of the Temple). The premiere *Magic Flute* in 1791 cast in the role of First Boy, Anna Schikaneder, niece of the opera's librettist Emanuel Schikaneder, and flanked her with two boy trebles. However, a cursory

Example 1. The Armed Men's duet, throughout which the tenor doubles the bass at the octave.

1st Armored Man:
wird rein durch Feu - er, Was - ser, Luft und Er - den:

2nd Armored Man:
wird rein durch Feu - er, Was - ser, Luft und Er - den:

review of major recordings and recent stage productions shows no obvious de facto convention regarding the gender assigned to these small but important roles.⁸ The casting choice in the case of this Deutsche Grammophon recording results in an unqualified success, most notably in the pivotal and, as sung here, luminescent second-act suicide scene with Pamina, “Bald prangt, den Morgen zu verkünden” (Soon the morning begins to proclaim), discussed in greater detail below.

Chorus and Orchestra. Although *The Magic Flute* is not usually numbered among the choral monoliths of opera such as Verdi’s *Nabucco* or Mussorgsky’s *Boris Godunov*, the relatively few measures Mozart does devote to the chorus represent some of his finest work for large vocal ensemble. Berlin’s RIAS (Radio in the American Sector) Chamber Choir⁹ is bold and expansive during brief tutti chorus passages, most notably the ecstatic “Triumph!” upon Tamino and Pamina’s successful completion of their trials. Interestingly, and perhaps unintentionally, the occasional lack of absolute vocal homogeneity within the ranks of the male chorus¹⁰ actually enhances the listener’s perception of intimate humanity, suggesting that this is not an enclave of droning eunuchs but, rather, a quorum of individuals: mortal men who have achieved brotherhood only after passing through trials uniquely suited to each initiate.

The Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, under Karl Böhm’s baton, executes Mozart’s difficult score with lyricism and depth. On this Deutsche Grammophon recording, the Berlin Philharmonic is not pushed to the paces at which the Vienna Philharmonic often clipped for Böhm on the 1955 Decca *Magic Flute*,¹¹ but the up-tempi here are sufficiently lively and the slower tempi appropriately deliberate—but never too ponderous—to convey the full breadth of meaning and emotion inherent to the partitur.¹²

Particularly noteworthy are the full-bodied overture and the urgent preface to Tamino's exchange with the Speaker at the temple. The Speaker scene is a notorious challenge for conductors because of the balance between impulse and restraint, didacticism and subtlety that it demands of the singers and orchestra, making all the more difficult the task of synchronizing the efforts on the stage with those in the pit. Böhm rallies the musicians to the cause, creating the indisputable touchstone for future attempts at the scene. The opportunity to hear the result is, in my opinion, alone worth the cost of the recording.

Three Principal Performers

As I have suggested, Wunderlich's and Fischer-Dieskau's singing sets an impossibly high standard—not only for Taminos and Papagenos on other recordings, but also for the three other principal characters on this one. The performances of Roberta Peters, Franz Crass, and Evelyn Lear are not without flaw (the most glaring example being Lear's try at Pamina's second-act aria), and they do not sing consistently to the level of their leading tenor and baritone. But collectively they do shine, for the most part, brightly enough so as not to dim the achievements of Wunderlich and Fischer-Dieskau.

Roberta Peters (The Queen of the Night). Like the anguish of Leoncavallo's Canio, the braggadocio of Verdi's Duke, and the endearing egocentricity of Rossini's Figaro,¹³ the wrath of Mozart's *Sternflammende* (Starflaming) Queen spawns some of the form's most recognizable sound bites. She is the one who grants the opera-going initiate safe fodder for après-show chat over drinks and dessert. She is the one who somehow produces noises typically associated with alley cats and the rack. She is the one who above all else, we hope, hits the money notes.

Unless you have the ears of a bat or a piano tuner, Roberta Peters's Queen leaves little to be desired in the vocal pyrotechnics department. It is the less virtuosic portions of her arias, primarily in the first and less famous of the two, that are not as satisfactory as they might be. In her first aria, for example, while her ample middle register gives unusual richness to the lengthy andante introduction, her support of the tone is not energized consistently during some of the legato mezzo forte phrases. This results in a sound that is at times slightly throaty and dampened and a pitch that teases the lower end of perfection more liberally than one would expect from a recording of this scope, especially on sustained notes and slower descending intervals.

Soon after some of these less gratifying phrases, the tempo quickens, additional ledger lines appear above the staff, and Peters takes us to the promised land. As a parting gesture, perhaps in penitence for a few imprecise pitches on the melismas¹⁴ that precede it, she offers the prince and the audience a graceful high F (f^3) that actually has life and vibrato—and even a slight tenuto,¹⁵ for good measure, in defiance of the scored staccato¹⁶—rather than the inert squeak mustered by so many who attempt it (example 2).

Do not be disheartened by what sounds to my ears like an editing clip immediately following the high F (f^3). Found typically within a few measures—for reasons that do not need elaboration—of particularly difficult vocal or instrumental passages, these “splice scars” are not uncommon in postwar, pre-digital age studio recordings and are often much more conspicuous than this example. If you come across them in this recording (which otherwise boasts a clarity far superior to that which one might expect from a forty-year-old analog recording) or others of the era, give them the benefit of the doubt, bearing in mind the widespread digital doctoring that often overpolishes modern studio recordings and can make millionaire matinee idols out of second-tier talents.

Clearly, Peters is more in her acrobatic element with the second aria, “Der Hölle Rache” (The vengeance of hell), which camps out somewhere in the upper stratosphere and lacks taxing, sustained lyrical phrases such as those found in the first aria. Aside from slipping again to the lower realm of the targeted pitch on the series of high Cs (c^3) leading to her famous high F (f^3) arpeggios,¹⁷ Peters delivers all the agility and nearly ultrasonic

Example 2. The Queen of the Night's first aria with high F (f^3).

The musical score is for the Queen of the Night's first aria. It features a vocal line in treble clef and piano accompaniment in grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The vocal line begins with a series of eighth notes, followed by a high F (f^3) marked with a tenuto line. The lyrics "e - - - - - wig dein," are written below the vocal line. The piano accompaniment consists of a steady eighth-note pattern in the bass and a more complex pattern in the treble.

Example 3. The Queen of the Night's second aria, "Der Hölle Rache" [The vengeance of hell], with high F (f³) arpeggios.

The musical score for the Queen of the Night's second aria, "Der Hölle Rache," is presented in two systems. The first system shows the vocal line with the word "mehr," and the piano accompaniment. The piano part includes arpeggiated figures for the Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), and Strings (Str.). The second system continues the vocal line and the piano accompaniment, with the Flute and Oboe parts also visible.

fury that, for over two hundred years, audiences have come to expect from the vengeful Queen (example 3).

As Peters rages through her second aria, she does in fact approach the bounds of technical control. But the Queen's curse hardly makes for compelling drama when sung like a vocalise¹⁸ or, worse yet, "Let the Bright Seraphim."¹⁹ The effect that Peters's ragged aggression produces in the listener is at once discomfiting and electrifying. Though of inconsistent vocal beauty, this Queen's singing does not disappoint and is most often engaging, replete with the types of brilliant high notes for which most coloratura sopranos would kill—and probably have.

Franz Crass (Sarastro). Franz Crass ennobles his Sarastro (the Queen's arch-nemesis and her musical antithesis) with one of the most mellifluous recorded offerings the role has received. He exhibits remarkable breath control and caresses the challenging phrases with sensitivity and lyricism, attributes that lean his character appropriately more toward the side of the sympathetic patriarch than that of the tyrannical demagogue who too often bullies his way around *Magic Flute* stages.

While virtually every note Crass sings in the middle and upper portions of his vocal range resonates with wisdom and authority, the then-thirty-six-year-old bass-baritone's lower range does not always rumble with the cavernous potency sufficient to evoke the gods' grandeur and

counterbalance the Queen's shrieks. In his scenes and arias, some notes below low A-flat—of which Mozart scored plenty—seem somewhat restricted, such as the low F in his entrance dialogue when he tells Pamina, “Zur Liebe will ich dich nicht zwingen, doch” (I will not compel you to love, however). Here, Crass struggles with what is admittedly one of the most difficult leaps in the operatic bass repertoire (example 4).

Sarastro's final statement, “Die Strahlen der Sonne vertreiben die Nacht, / Zernichten der Heuchler erschlichene Macht” (The sun's rays drive away the night, destroying the hypocrites' usurped power), which has none of the extremely low notes found elsewhere in the opera, exemplifies the beautiful and powerful singing Crass invests in the role, singing that helps his Sarastro to endure among the best on record.

Evelyn Lear (Pamina). Evelyn Lear's contribution to this recording is that of a perplexingly inconsistent Pamina. The vast majority of her singing is warm and appealing, often breathtakingly so. She sings her first-act duet with Fischer-Dieskau, “Bei Männern, welche Liebe fühlen” (In men who feel love), in a delicate lilt, with her voice always focused but never forced. Even in the uppermost ranges, she leaves no room for improvement on the many high Gs (g²) and A-flats (a-flat³), blending with the baritone in an impressive sotto voce.²⁰ Even the precarious pair of ornaments at the duet's end—each one peaking in a high B-flat (b-flat³) and being sung over light orchestral scoring that leaves the voice nearly as exposed as it would be in a bona fide a cappella cadenza—sounds effortless, with discreet rubato²¹ and a lush legato.

Lear excels in the second-act ensembles, such as her trio with Sarastro and Tamino, the riveting suicide scene with the Three Boys, and, above all, the spellbinding trial of water and fire scene with Tamino and the Armed Men. Often lost in the shuffle of the opera's marquee excerpts, the suicide scene is an exquisite piece of composition that marks the turning point in Pamina's resolve. One of this set's many transcendent moments is the repetition of the scene's final phrase: “Verloren ist der Feinde Müh, die Götter

Example 4. Sarastro's entrance dialogue with difficult leap to low F.

The musical score for Sarastro's entrance dialogue is presented in a standard musical notation format. It consists of a vocal line for Sarastro and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is written in a bass clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are: "zur Lie - be will ich dich nicht zwin - gen, doch, doch geb ich dir die Frei - heit nicht,". The piano accompaniment features a bass line with a low F and a treble line with a low F. The score is labeled "Sarastro:" and "FLOR.".

Example 5. Repetition of final phrase of Pamina's suicide scene.

The musical score is written in B-flat major (two flats) and 4/4 time. It features four vocal parts and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are in German and English.

Vocal Parts:

- Pamina:** die Göt-ter selb-sten schütz-en sie, die Göt-ter, Göt-
- 1st Boy:** (Instrumental)
- 2nd Boy:** Fein-de Müh, die Göt-ter selb-sten schütz-en sie, die
- 3rd Boy:** ren ist der Fein- - - de Müh, die

Piano Accompaniment:

- The piano part consists of two staves (treble and bass clef).
- It features a melodic line in the right hand and a harmonic line in the left hand.
- Dynamic markings include *mf* (mezzo-forte) and *f* (forte).
- There are several slurs and ties throughout the piece.

Lyrics:

die Göt-ter selb-sten schütz-en sie, die Göt-ter, Göt-
 Fein-de Müh, die Göt-ter selb-sten schütz-en sie, die
 ren ist der Fein- - - de Müh, die
 ter selb - sten schütz - en sie,
 Göt - ter selb - sten schütz - en sie,
 Göt - ter selb - sten schütz - en sie, vl.

selbstesten schützen sie” (The enemy’s effort is wasted, the very gods protect them), during which Lear arches a stunning high B-flat (b-flat³) over the shimmering ensemble (example 5).

This set retains the second-act trio, “Soll ich dich, Teurer, nicht mehr sehn?” (Shall I see you, my beloved, no more?), which is sometimes cut from recordings and, more often, stage productions because of the extra convolution it imposes on the plot. In this case, the trio proves to be a surprising highlight of the recording, featuring some of Lear’s best singing, showing further nobility and power from Crass’s Sarastro, and presenting Wunderlich’s Tamino, matured through trials, sounding even more divine (if that is indeed possible) than previously.

Unfortunately, Lear's legacy in this recording is tarnished, as is, in some listeners' opinions, the set as a whole,²² by her astoundingly feeble effort on Pamina's usually poignant second-act aria, "Ach, ich fühl's" (Alas, I feel it). Her misguided attempts to communicate bleak resignation turn the piece into a dirge, with the spoiled fruits of her laboriousness serving only to baffle and frustrate the listener, by now so accustomed to her superb lyricism.

I do not question whether Lear feels, even deeply, what she is singing. But her vocal output in the aria simply fails to match her emotional commitment to it. The first three words from her lips, "Ach, ich fühl's," are heart wrenching, as intended. There is precious little redeeming value in what follows. The lion's share of the aria's uppermost notes (none of which, as far as I can tell, should be more challenging for a lyric soprano than notes and phrases she sings successfully elsewhere) sound tight and uncomfortable, betraying a vocal toil unlike any other that she—or any other singer, for that matter—reveals in the opera. She reaches the end of certain phrases short of breath, leaving only anemic support for their final words, and her liberal use of portamento²³ creates a sense of general sloppiness.

The puzzling disparity between Lear's singing in this aria and in the rest of the recording is such that one struggles to believe it all to have proceeded from the same set of vocal cords—but, ach, it did. Even the disarming pathos of the high G (g²) on her final "Ruh" (peace) does not salvage this piece as the recording's only utter disappointment (example 6).

In the lone case of this aria, I cannot help but concede a recommendation to the recordings of other singers who better convey its full tragic beauty,

Example 6. Pamina's final "Ruh" (peace) on high G (g²) near the end of the aria.

Pamina:

so wird Ruh im To - de sein,

namely Kiri Te Kanawa, Gundula Janowitz,²⁴ and Renée Fleming, notwithstanding the latter's apparent preference for an unusually brisk tempo.

Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau as Papageno

It is not difficult for even an average baritone to be vocally adequate as Papageno, a role Mozart tailored for performance in the opera's premiere by Schikaneder himself who, we might infer by comparing this role's musical conservatism to Mozart's more ambitious composition for the leading baritones of his other operas, may not have possessed extraordinary vocal gifts. However, it is difficult for even an excellent baritone to excel in this potentially rich role, given its abundance of pitfalls ranging from melodrama and shallowness of character to vocal complacency and inattention. Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau's Papageno represents the ideal marriage of comedic flair and vocal expressiveness required for the role's successful execution.

By including extensive spoken dialogue (though it is still edited heavily), this recording breaks with the norm of earlier *Magic Flute* efforts and other *Singspiel*²⁵ recordings, the majority of which tended to allocate precious vinyl to anything other than music only when absolutely necessary. Much of the plot's action is driven by Papageno's dialogue, which Fischer-Dieskau delivers with a lower-German drawl of which few of his adoring *Lieder*²⁶ fans would ever have imagined him capable. He takes ample artistic license with the earthy humor of Schikaneder's clever word plays but never crosses the line to outright hamming, unlike lesser Papagenos who delight the groundlings but offer little to the aficionados.

Mozart's scoring for the lonely bird catcher's texts abounds with strophes and strophic variations, including the introductory aria "Der Vogelfänger bin ich ja" (Yes, I am the bird catcher), the first-act duet with Pamina "Bei Männern, welche Liebe fühlen" (In men who feel love), and the second-act aria "Ein Mädchen oder Weibchen" (A girl or little woman). Largely absent the triumphant high



Baritone Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (1925–). Photograph taken by Fritz Eschen, o.J.

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notes or blistering patter that tend to snap comic baritones to attention in other roles, Papageno's "big sings" can serve as traps to lull even good singers into carelessness. It is precisely by overcoming this predicament that Fischer-Dieskau—his musicianship honed in Schubert's and Schumann's *Lieder* settings of verses by the great German romantic poets—vivifies the Schikaneder strophes that have died on the cords of less diligent artists and thereby sets himself apart from the many other excellent Papagenos on record. For a brief but indicative sample of Fischer-Dieskau's peerless artistry at work in this role, listen to the phrase "Nun plaudert Papageno wieder!" (Now Papageno prattles again!) near the beginning of the first act's "Hm! hm! hm!" quintet, noting the kid-in-a-candy-shop exuberance with which he spins a silky strand of middle Cs (c¹) over the underlying staccati in the strings (example 7).

Fischer-Dieskau demonstrates in this recording an expressive musicality beyond that of his 1954 Papageno for Deutsche Grammophon under Ferenc Fricsay.²⁷ While this progress owes presumably to the vocal and dramatic development that results from additional years on the stage, some of it may be attributable to his emotional development off of it. Given the December 1963 passing of his wife Irmgard after the birth of their third son,²⁸ one can only imagine the personal context in which the devastated Fischer-Dieskau recorded this otherwise comic role in which a lonely soul pines for a mate. Even the celebratory "Pa-Pa-Pa?" duet with Papagena

Example 7. Papageno in the first act's "Hm! hm! hm!" quintet: "Now Papageno prattles again!"

The musical score for Example 7 is presented in three staves. The top staff is for the 1st Lady, who has a single note on a whole rest. The middle staff is for Pamina, who has a single note on a whole rest. The bottom staff is for the strings (Str.), which play a staccati accompaniment. The vocal line for Papageno is written in a single staff, starting with the lyrics "Nun plaud-ert Pa - pa - ge - no wie - der!". The melody is characterized by a series of eighth notes, with a trill (tr) on the final note. The string accompaniment consists of a series of staccati eighth notes in the right hand and a series of staccati eighth notes in the left hand.

carries a heavy irony in light of the baritone's overwhelming concern for the welfare of his now-motherless children, including one still in infancy at the time of the recording sessions:²⁹

Welche Freude wird das sein,
 Wenn die Götter uns bedenken,
 Unsrer Liebe Kinder schenken,
 So liebe, kleine Kinderlein! . . .
 Es ist das höchste der Gefühle,
 Wenn viele, viele, viele, viele
 Pa-Pa-Pa-Pa-pagenos
 Pa-Pa-Pa-Pa-pagenas
 Der Eltern Segen werden sein. (2.32)
 [What joy it will be
 If the gods remember us
 And reward our love
 With darling little children.
 It is the noblest of feelings,
 If many, many, many, many
 Papagenos and Papagenas
 Become their parents' blessing.]

Fischer-Dieskau found comfort during this difficult time in the friendship he enjoyed with "the bright and cheerful"³⁰ tenor, Fritz Wunderlich.

Fritz Wunderlich as Prince Tamino

Wunderlich's entire discography is but a brief snapshot of a blossoming career, spanning roughly ten years, with this recording serving as a glowing tribute to his consummate artistry. The tenor died, suddenly and tragically, at age thirty-six, two years after this recording was made, thereby galvanizing his celebrity and perhaps sparing himself the indignities to which aging tenors sometimes subject themselves. Upon Wunderlich's passing, Fischer-Dieskau eulogized his friend and frequent collaborator thus:

A voice has ceased to sing. Its owner was a short-lived master of his art, on the way to the pinnacle of his fame. . . . How incomparable



Used by permission of Fritz Wunderlich Society, Kusel, Germany

Tenor Fritz Wunderlich (1930–66).

was this tenor voice, how, with all its sweetness, it still possessed a majestic power. He was the one hope and fulfillment of a vocal genre which, for some time, had been waiting for someone like him. His silence is therefore all the more painful, all the more tangible. . . . There were hardly any technical difficulties for him, his talent had been given the opportunity to mature and had been able to develop over many musical fields. So this was not only a richly-endowed voice, but also one imbued with the sheer love of singing.³¹

This admiration, which comes from one considered by many to be the master of German vocal music in the twentieth century, seems entirely justified by even the briefest of needle drops on any of Tamino's bars in this recording.

Wunderlich creates a robust and dazzling Prince Tamino with his full and focused lyric tenor voice, infusing the coming-of-age character with a singular balance of passion and compassion, boyish innocence and masculine virility. His dramatic conviction and purity of tone are evident at the opera's outset, the moment he cries out under the serpent's hot pursuit:

Zu Hilfe! Zu Hilfe! sonst bin ich verloren,
Der listigen Schlange zum Opfer erkoren.—
Barmherzige Götter!

[Help! Help! Or I am lost,
Chosen as an offering to the cunning serpent!
Merciful gods!]

These lines merely hint at the talent that becomes even more superbly pronounced as the opera continues.

Surveying operatic recordings several decades in either direction, one would be hard-pressed to find a tenor making more listenable sounds than does Wunderlich in Tamino's first-act aria, "Dies Bildnis ist bezaubernd schön" (This image is enchantingly beautiful). But this aria's sublimity is not the result of Wunderlich's vocal timbre alone. Here, as throughout the recording, he reveals an intense personal commitment to the prince's plight, thereby facilitating ease of communion between listener and character. The aching *Sehnsucht* (longing) he conveys in "O, wenn ich sie nur finden könnte! / O, wenn sie doch schon vor mir stände!" (Oh, if I could just find her! Oh, if she but stood before me!) resonates immediately and deeply with any who have experienced the same (example 8).

Then Tamino hesitates, "Ich würde, würde, warm und rein/ Was würde ich?" (I would, I would, ardent and pure, what would I do?). Unlike many tenor-conductor pairs who grow restless during Mozart's deliberate silence and scramble to the next phrase, Wunderlich and Böhm exploit each beat of the ensuing full-measure rest, allowing Tamino to envision what it would mean to have his heart's desire (example 9). This important rest

Example 8. Pair of phrases beginning “O, wenn,” from Tamino’s first-act aria, “Dies Bildnis ist bezaubernd schön” (This image is enchantingly beautiful).

Tamino:



lein! O, wenn ich sie nur fin - den

könn - tel O, wenn sie doch schon - vor mir stän - de!

Example 9. Tamino’s full rest in his first-act aria.

Tamino:



Ich wür - de, wür - de, warm und rein, was wür - de ich?

Ich wür - de sie voll Ent - zü - cken an die - sen

extends to the listeners an invitation to participate in this moment of translucence, either by sharing in the prince's vision or by creating our own.

The legato of the aria's final phrase, "Und ewig wäre sie dann mein" (And forever would she be mine), is "a minor miracle" in its own right,³² and the tenor's phrasing throughout the remainder of the opera, even as his emotions intensify and his character matures, remains immaculate. Wunderlich's breadth of expression is heard in Tamino's testosterone-fueled determination leading to the scene with the Speaker, firmness that turns quickly to simple sweetness in the scene with the flute and animals. His dramatic range is shown again in the manly boldness of "Schließt mir des Schrekens Pforte auf!" (Unlock for me the gates of terror!) as he anticipates the trials, which contrasts almost immediately with exhilaration and tenderness when, upon hearing Pamina, he asks, "Was hör ich? Paminens Stimme?" (What do I hear? Pamina's voice?). This same tenderness continues through the subsequent reunion scene, to which I will refer shortly.

In my opinion, perhaps the only tenor in recent memory to match Wunderlich's combination of vocal potency, sensitivity, and beauty is the beloved Swede Jussi Björling, another glorious voice silenced prematurely by death. But while the latter did perform Tamino on stage, the apparent absence of a complete Björling *Flute*³³ set makes a head-to-head comparison of the tenors' recorded achievements in this role impossible, leaving me no choice but to insist that Fritz Wunderlich's Tamino on this Deutsche Grammophon set is rivaled by one other Tamino on record: his own, recorded live, just a few weeks after these sessions, on the Golden Melodram label with the Munich Philharmonic under Fritz Rieger.³⁴ In the Melodram set, Wunderlich demonstrates at times even more tastefully effusive passion than on the Deutsche Grammophon recording. But, Hermann Prey's excellent Papageno and Anneliese Rothenberger's fine Pamina notwithstanding, the Munich cast and orchestra fall short of what the Berlin musicians achieve.

Final Notes

It seems that I have exhausted my supply of superlatives—and, yes, you may find as you listen to the recording that even the loftiest of them are indeed inadequate to describe what you hear. But I beg, in parting, your indulgence for brief mention of one of the most beautiful moments in all of opera: the reunion of Pamina and Tamino, preceding the trials of water and fire in the second act.

This scene represents, for me, the pinnacle of marital unity. The phrases exchanged in the nine measures beginning with Pamina's "Tamino

mein!” (My Tamino!) embody a mutual devotion that has yet to be surpassed in any opera with which I am familiar, and has surely but a handful of peers in all of art. In their interpretation, Wunderlich and Lear consecrate this moment with a gratitude, desire, and wonderment stripped of all theatrical pretense. And could we hope for a more radiant high A (a^2) than Evelyn Lear offers us here (example 10)?

We can truly share the couple’s joy, both *because* they are expressing it and because of the *way* in which they express it. This joy may seem at first to be one of pure agape love,³⁵ especially when contrasted, for example, with the overt erotic impulse of both music and lyrics in the famous second-act reunion of Wagner’s *Tristan and Isolde*. And yet Tamino and Pamina’s reunion contains, albeit discreetly restrained, every bit of the visceral charge flaunted by Wagner’s lovers. In fact, the ultimate message of this scene—and, I believe, a meaning central to *The Magic Flute* itself—is that a

Example 10. Greetings exchanged by Pamina and Tamino at the beginning of their reunion scene.

The musical score for Example 10 is presented in three systems. The first system shows Pamina's vocal entry with the lyrics "Ta -" and a piano accompaniment featuring strings (Str.). The second system shows Tamino's vocal entry with the lyrics "mi - no mein! o welch ein Glück! Pa - mi - na mein!" and a piano accompaniment featuring harp (Hm.). The third system shows Pamina's vocal entry with the lyrics "o welch ein Glück!" and a piano accompaniment featuring harp (Hm.).

divinely appointed and trial-tested union of equals not only can, but *must*, feature both agape and eros, as well as storge and philia.

Listeners will be pleased to know that Wunderlich and Fischer-Dieskau collaborated on many recordings during roughly this same period.³⁶ But do yourself the favor of getting to know this magical *Flute* as a first step in approaching the many excellent recordings of these artists or this work. You might choose to experience this set in a lounge chair with a view of the garden, hoping to be washed over by a wave of inspired sounds. Or you might sit dutifully at your bureau, poised to pore over the score and libretto, invoking a blitz of premeditated inspiration. In either case, I do hope you will come to regard this recording as you would a dear friend: not perfect, but admired and beloved. And you may then understand why I felt compelled to share my feelings about the singing you will hear, especially that which is *bezaubernd schön*.

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I have used this musical notation system in this article: middle C and up are noted as c^1 , d^1 , . . . c^2 , d^2 , and so on. Notes in the octave below middle C are noted simply as c, d, and so on. Notes in the second octave below middle C are noted in capital letters: C, D, and so on.

1. Clayne W. Robison, *Beautiful Singing: Mind Warp Moments* (Provo, Utah: By the author, 2001), xi.

2. Karl Böhm (conductor), *Die Zauberflöte*, written by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, recorded in Berlin, 1964, digitally remastered compact disc, "Legendary Recordings," released January 1997, Deutsche Grammophon, DG449749-2.

3. German for "This recording is enchantingly beautiful," adapted from Prince Tamino's first-act aria "Dies Bildnis ist bezaubernd schön," or "This image is enchantingly beautiful." All translations in this article are either my own or are from the liner notes to the highlight compact disc (released May 1990, DG/Polygram Records, 429825) of the 1964 Deutsche Grammophon *Die Zauberflöte* recording.

4. One of the most vocally demanding of all roles in the bass-baritone repertoire, Wotan is the chief god in the first three operas of Richard Wagner's four-opera cycle *Der Ring des Nibelungen*.

5. King had just begun making his name as the various heroic tenors of Wagner and Richard Strauss, roles with which he would be identified internationally for the next quarter century. In addition to his subsequent triumphs in leading

Wagnerian roles, Talvela would soon become one of the most sought-after Saras-tros of his era, recording the role five years later with the Vienna Philharmonic under Sir Georg Solti on a Decca set (Decca catalogue number 458213-2) that would also feature Fischer-Dieskau as the Speaker. For more information on King and Talvela, see James Anderson, *The Complete Dictionary of Opera and Operetta* (New York: Wings Books, 1993), 306, 559.

6. The duet's melody is based on the Lutheran chorale, "Ach Gott vom Him-mel sieh darein." See Donald Jay Grout and Hermine Weigel Williams, *A Short History of Opera*, 3d ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 642; and "Projekt Gutenberg-DL," <http://www.gutenberg2000.de/luther/lieder/achgott.htm>.

7. Piano-vocal musical score excerpts prepared by Wholenote Music, Inc., Pleasant Grove, Utah, 2002.

8. While it seems probable that producers acknowledge the ideal of casting prepubescent boys for reasons both dramatic and musical, in the absence of young talent of Vienna Boys' Choir caliber, productions using boys as the Boys often risk sacrificing quality to novelty, and many side with caution and sopranos.

9. For more information on the RIAS, see "History and Purpose of RIAS Berlin and the RIAS Berlin Commission," <http://www.riasberlinkommission.de/us-rias-hist-history.html>.

10. For example, listen closely to the tenors and second basses in "O Isis und Osiris, welche Wonne!" (O Isis and Osiris, such delight!).

11. Karl Böhm (conductor), *Die Zauberflöte*, written by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, recorded in Vienna, Austria, 1955, compact disc, released January 1998, Decca, 448734.

12. The musical score (German).

13. These characters' respective calling-card arias ("Vesti la giubba" from *I Pagliacci*, "La donna è mobile" from *Rigoletto*, and "Largo al factotum" from *The Barber of Seville*) should be recognized easily by even the most casual listeners of opera the world over.

14. A series of different notes sung on one syllable.

15. A note held through its fully notated time value, giving the effect of a slight pause without slowing the overall tempo.

16. "Detached" (Italian), a note that is sung or played only briefly, then released suddenly.

17. From the Italian for "harp," meaning to sing or play the notes of a chord individually, in succession.

18. A vocal exercise without text, typically sung on open vowels.

19. Famous coloratura soprano aria from G. F. Händel's oratorio *Samson*.

20. "Under the voice" (Italian), it means to sing quietly, with restraint.

21. Applying flexible tempo to a phrase, by abbreviating some of its notes and applying their "stolen" (Italian) time value to other prolonged notes.

22. This vocal debacle in part prompted one contributor to an online listen-ers' forum to title his assault of this recording, "Why I will never forgive Roberta Peters and Evelyn Lear." Michael Nyby, Ithaca, N.Y., January 26, 2002, review of 1964 Deutsche Grammophon *Magic Flute* recording, http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/B000001GXI/qid=1065410290/sr=1-4/ref=sr_1_4/102-1157639-2936902?v=glance&s=classical.

23. "Carrying" (Italian) a tone over intervals between notes, more deliberately than through the use of legato ("tying" the tone between the notes), in that the notes between the departure note and arrival note are actually resonated.

24. Janovitz's "Ach, ich fühl's" on EMI's widely acclaimed 1964 *Flute* under Otto Klemperer (EMI catalogue number 67388-2) may in fact be the finest rendition of this aria on a full recording of the opera. Lucia Popp's Queen on the same set is equally outstanding.

25. Since the mid-eighteenth century, the term *Singspiel* has referred to a type of Germanic light opera that uses unaccompanied spoken dialogue between discrete musical numbers (as in *The Magic Flute*), similar in this regard to most modern Broadway musicals. See Grout, *Short History of Opera*, 3d ed., 131.

26. Of all his accomplishments, Fischer-Dieskau is most closely associated with the *Lied* (German for "song"), a term used in English primarily in reference to German art songs of the nineteenth century.

27. Deutsche Grammophon catalogue number 435741. Soprano Lisa Otto plays Papagena to Fischer-Dieskau's Papageno in both the 1954 and the 1964 DG recordings.

28. Kenneth S. Whitton, *Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, Mastersinger: A Documented Study* (London: Oswald Wolff, 1981), 53.

29. Hans A. Neunzig, *Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau: A Biography*, trans. Kenneth S. Whitton (Portland, Ore.: Amadeus, 1998), 111–12.

30. Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, *Reverberations: The Memoirs of Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau*, trans. Ruth Hein (New York: Fromm International Publishing, 1987), 165.

31. Whitton, *Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, Mastersinger*, 72.

32. Whitton, *Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, Mastersinger*, 71.

33. Björling's Swedish version of Tamino's Portrait Aria, recorded live in recital, is available on the Bluebell label. Jussi Björling and Harry Ebert, *Gröna Lund Recordings*, vol. 1, recorded June 1959, Stockholm, Sweden, released August 1993, Bluebell, 42.

34. See Fritz Rieger (conductor), *Die Zauberflöte*, written by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, live broadcast recording from Nationaltheater Munich, July 1964, released June 2001, Golden Melodram, GM50027-3.

35. The four types of love identified by the Greeks are agape (selfless, sacrificial or saving love), eros (emotional, sensual or physical love), storge (affectionate familial love), and philia (friendship or companionship love).

36. Their shared discography includes, among other works, Mahler's *The Song of the Earth* (*Das Lied von der Erde*) on Classica d'Oro, Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin* (*Yevgeny Onyegin*) on Gala, a widely acclaimed *Flying Dutchman* (*Der Fliegende Holländer*) by Wagner on Berlin Classics, as well as Berg's *Wozzeck*, Haydn's *The Creation* (*Die Schöpfung*), and Verdi's *La Traviata* on Deutsche Grammophon.

Set Design for the Final Scene in *The Magic Flute*

Michael Lyon

Stage Directions. *The stage is transformed into a sunburst; Sarastro appears on high; Tamino and Pamina are in priestly robes, surrounded on both sides by the Egyptian priests; the Three Boys offer flowers.* (2.30)

This set design was made in the same eclectic spirit that Mozart and Schikaneder used in the creation of their opera and reflects some of the various influences that were current in their time. In designing the Temple of the Priests of the Sun, I have portrayed the Egyptian motif explicit in the text as a typical New Kingdom temple pylon doorway with massive wooden doors and gold inset panels as mentioned in contemporary texts. The winged sun disk of Horus the Behedite over the door is an appropriate symbol for such a temple. The two red granite *tekhenu* or obelisks are in the same proportions as the one erected by Senwesret I in c. 1950 bc at Annu, the sacred city of the sun god, called On by the Hebrews and Heliopolis by the Greeks. The gold caps at the tops of the obelisks were intended to catch the rays of the sun while the shaft itself was described by Pliny as a symbolic representation of the sun's rays.¹

Unlike the pseudo-hieroglyphic inscriptions appearing in so many *Magic Flute* set designs over the centuries, these inscriptions actually say something worth reading. Starting with the top of the right-hand obelisk and repeated on the left (but reversed so as to face into the sacred axis leading into the temple), we see the gold Horus falcon on the *serekh* palace façade enclosing a royal name, with the pillars of heaven motif familiar to us from the Book of Abraham's Facsimile 1, figure 11, at the bottom. The royal name in this case is a punning spelling of Sarastro, using the glyph *Sah*, the name for Osiris as the constellation Orion, while the second syllable, *Ra*, is the Sun God. The remainder is my clumsy approximation of his

name. The name Sarastro is easily recognized as the Persian prophet Zoroaster (itself the Greek misspelling of the Old Persian *Zarathushtra*). What is not as well known is that Mozart played the role of Zoroaster in costume during a 1786 carnival ball, where he handed out “Fractions of Zoroaster’s Fragments,” a short collection of jests and social criticism.²

The serekh enclosure is followed by the usual Egyptian formula, so the first part of the inscription reads, “Sarastro is given life like the sun for all eternity.” The difficulty of writing foreign names in hieroglyphs is particularly evident in artifacts from the Persian and Ptolemaic domination of Egypt, about 300 bc, the period from which the rest of the obelisk inscription is taken. Hugh Nibley translates this text from the temple tomb of the priest Petosiris, who apparently, like Mozart and Schikaneder, had an eclectic interest in new influences from abroad.³ His temple demonstrates the effort of his artists to combine elements of Egyptian traditional designs with the new Greco-Persian art. The text seems appropriate to this opera, and so I have inscribed it on the two obelisks:

Come, I will instruct you in the Way of God. I will guide you in the Way of Life, the true (right) way of him who obeys God. Happy is he who guides his heart in that way! He whose heart is firm in the Way of God, whose existence on earth is assured. He whose soul is filled with the fear of God, great is happiness upon the earth!

Nibley says this text “is entirely in the spirit of the First Psalm of David,” raising all sorts of questions about the sources of the wisdom literature of Egypt and Israel. It is well to remember that no culture is independent of those around it, and a belief in the “purity” of any work of art or literature is misguided, to say the least.

As I envision this final scene of *The Magic Flute*, Tamino and Pamina enter from their completion of the ordeal of fire and water; the temple doors stand closed. After they are clothed in their white priestly robes, they begin to mount the seven steps to Sarastro, who stands waiting for them at the top. The first step is in the shape of the intersection of a circle and square of equal area, an ancient Greek geometric problem with religious implications. As they ascend to the triumphant music of the chorus, the heavy doors slowly open, revealing the great light shining through a sun symbol on the wall of the *sanctum*. The light dims slightly to allow us to see the large image of the Two who are One: an image representing Isis and Osiris of the text, but visually it shows the Chinese dieties Fu xi and Nu wa.⁴ He holds an uplifted try-square, a symbol of the square four-cornered earth, while she is holding the compass that draws out the great circle of heaven, for it is in the marriage of the round heaven and the square earth that all creation comes forth. These tools were certainly familiar to Mozart

and Schikaneder as Freemasons. Though the compass and square do not have the same significance to the Freemasons that the Chinese attribute to them, they are the preeminent symbols of Freemasonry even today and can represent the goal of making spiritual aspirations (the compass) triumph over physical passions (the square), as well as other moral principles. The use of a Chinese image may seem extreme even in such an eclectic setting, but by a gratifying coincidence the entwined serpent tails of Fu xi and Nu wa are paralleled by a small bronze statue of Isis-Thermouthis and Osiris-Agathodaimon with serpent tails from the period of great religious and artistic synthesis in Egypt during the first century after Christ.⁵ Their tails are tied together in the Hercules knot, a symbol of their eternal marriage. The hybrid style, Hellenistic heads on Egyptian cobra bodies, is a result of the desire to combine the most important elements of the great religious traditions then in constant contact with each other. This eclectic syncretism is similar to the development of Freemasonry in England centuries later.

When Tamino and Pamina reach the top of the stairs they turn and face the audience; Sarastro symbolically relinquishes his power by stepping down from the top step. The new rulers of the Temple take a golden try-square and silver compass from pillows held by kneeling servants and hold them up, echoing the image behind them as the triumphal music concludes.

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1. Pliny, *Natural History* 36.14.

2. Hans-Josef Irmen, *Mozart's Masonry and the Magic Flute*, trans. Ruth Ohm and Chantal Spenke ([Zülrich]: Prisca; University of Essen, 1996), 142–44.

3. The translation appears in Hugh Nibley, *Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1975), 68. The hieroglyphics I inscribed on the obelisks appear in an excavation report by E. Lefebvre, *Le Tombeau de Petosiris* (Cairo: Imprimerie de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 1924), 38, line 62.

4. My image is based on banners found in seventh-century tombs in western China. Aurel Stein, *Innermost Asia*, 4 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1928), 2:plate 109 and description on 707.

5. Bronze statue of Isis-Thermouthis and Sarapis-Agathodaimon, Staatliche Museen, Berlin.