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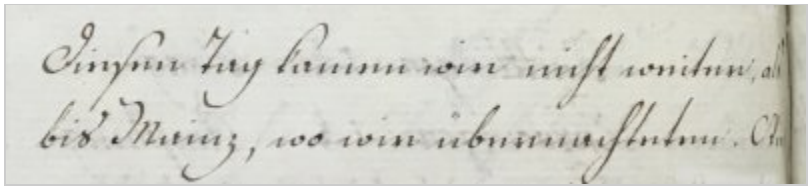
Mozart performs at a concert in Mainz (20 Oct 1790)

Martin Nedbal

Franz Joseph von Zierotin, “Tagebuch / meiner Reise zur Krönung / Kaiser Leopold II / im Jahre / 1790 / Geschrieben für mich / Franz Joseph Graf von Ziero= / tin / Von meinem Freunde und / Hofmeister / Alois Rogier,” Czech Republic, State Regional Archive Opava, Olomouc Branch, Zierotin Family Archive Bludov (1295), 1427-1947, inventory number 467, shelfmark VI-2306, item 84

[84v] [...]

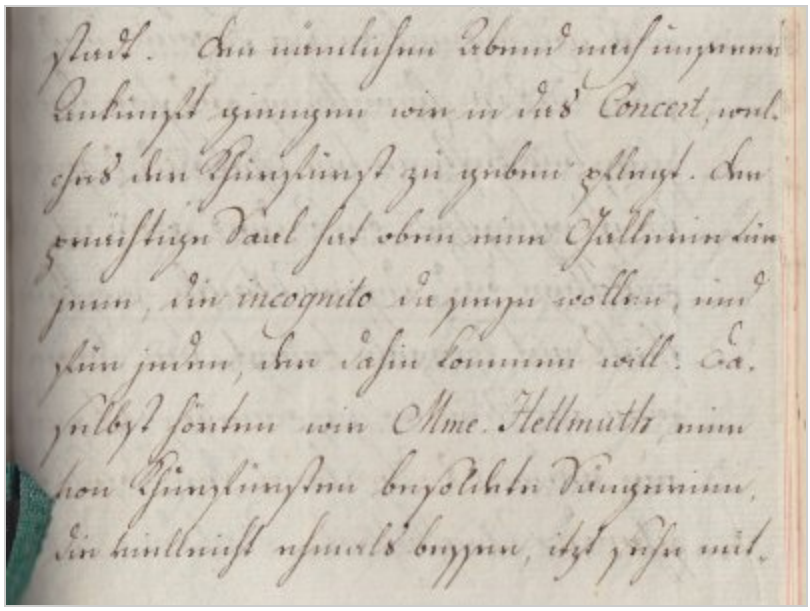
[20 Oct]
Diesen Tag kamen wir nicht weiter als
bis Mainz, wo wir übernachteten. *[...]*



[85r]

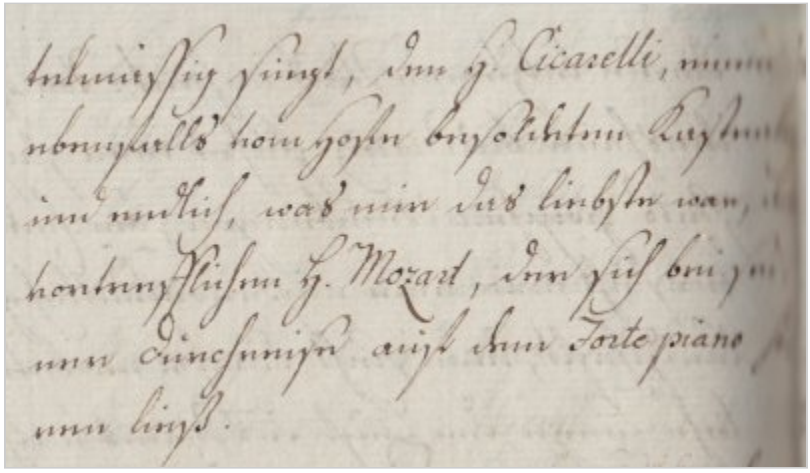
[...] Den nämlichen Abend nach unserer
Ankunft giengen wir in das *Concert*, wel=
ches der Khurfürst zu geben pflegt. Der
prächtige Saal hat oben eine Gallerie für
jene, die *incognito* da seyn wollen, und
für jeden, der dahin kommen will. Da=
selbst hörten wir *Mme. Hellmuth*, eine
von Khurfürsten besoldete Sängerinn,
die vielleicht ehmals besser, itzt sehr mit=

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[85v]

telmässig singt, den H. *Cicarelli*, einen
ebenfalls vom Hofe besoldeten Kastraten,
und endlich, was mir das liebste war, den
vortrefflichen H. *Mozart*, der sich bei sei=
ner Durchreise auf dem *Forte piano* hö=
ren ließ. *[...]*



[translation:]

[20 Oct]
Today we did not travel further than
Mainz, where we spent the night. [...]

[...] On the same evening after our

arrival, we went to the concert that the Elector likes to give. The magnificent hall has an upper gallery for those who wish to be there *incognito*, and for anyone who wants to attend. There we heard *Mme. Hellmuth*, a singer paid by the Elector, who may have sung better at one time, but at present is very mediocre; Herr *Ceccarelli*, a castrato also paid by the court; and finally, my favorite, the excellent Herr *Mozart*, who was passing through and performed on the fortepiano. *[...]*

Commentary

This reference to Mozart’s participation in a concert at the electoral court in Mainz on 20 Oct 1790 comes from the travel diary of Count Franz Joseph von Zierotin (František Josef ze Žerotína, 1772–1845). In 1790, at the age of 18, Zierotin travelled to Frankfurt to attend the coronation of Leopold II as Holy Roman Emperor. The coronation was preceded by a largely ceremonial vote cast by the traditional electors. Zierotin was an “Edelknabe” (page-boy) in the Bohemian delegation (“Wahlbothschaft”), which represented the electoral vote associated since the Middle Ages with the Kings of Bohemia (see the roster of the Bohemian delegation here). Zierotin kept an extensive diary during his trip; the diary, which survives in a manuscript fair copy by Zierotin’s Hofmeister Alois Rogier, was overlooked by scholars until Marika Růžičková described it in her 2014 undergraduate thesis at Palacký University in Olomouc (Růžičková 2014). The diary contains two previously unknown references to Mozart: the one transcribed here, and another in Zierotin’s entry for 22 Oct 1790, when he witnessed Mozart directing a rehearsal of *Figaro* in Mannheim (see our entry for that date). Zierotin’s diary also contains several descriptions of theatrical and operatic performances in Vienna, where he stopped for a few days on his way to Frankfurt. Because eyewitness accounts of Viennese theater during this period are rare, we have included his descriptions at the end of this commentary.

Zierotin was descended from an ancient Moravian noble family, and he was a first cousin of Countess Maria Anna Hortensia von Hatzfeld (née Zierotin), the acclaimed amateur soprano who sang the role of Elettra in Prince Auersperg’s production of Mozart’s *Idomeneo* in Vienna in Mar 1786 (see our entry on that production). Zierotin spent his early career in imperial service and administration, but later devoted himself to his estates in Blauda (Bludov), Prauss (Prusy, in Prussian Silesia), and Wallachisch Meseritsch (Valašské Meziříčí; on Zierotin, see Wolny 1829, i: 158–60, and Lapáček 2012, 54).



Count Franz Joseph von Zierotin
Lithograph, 1839, Rudolph Gaupmann, after Alexander Clarot
(de.wikipedia.org)

Young Zierotin arrived in Frankfurt on 11 Jul 1790, nearly three months before the coronation; Mozart arrived on 28 Sep. We have no evidence that they met, but the possibility cannot be ruled out. Zierotin does not mention Mozart’s concert in Frankfurt on 15 Oct; in fact, that date is conspicuously absent from his diary. However, it seems that Zierotin’s cousin Countess Hatzfeld helped organize the concert. In a letter to Constanze on 8 Oct, Mozart acknowledges the Countess’s crucial role:

> — wenn die Academie ein bischen gut ausfällt, so habe ich es meinem Namen — der gräfin Hatzfeld, und dem Schweitzerischen Hause, welche sich sehr für mich intereßiren, zu danken. — [*Briefe* iv:117–18]
>
> — If my academy has any success at all, it will be because of my name, and because of Countess Hatzfeld and the Schweitzer house, who take an interest in me.—

(On the likely identification of “gräfin Hatzfeld” in Mozart’s letter as Countess Maria Anna Hortensia, see the *Notes* to our entry on her performance of “Tutte nel cor vi sento” in Bonn.)

In his diary entry for 17 Oct, Zierotin’s makes some general comments on theatrical performances in Frankfurt during the coronation festivities:

[81v]

[...]
[17 Oct]

Bevor ich Frankfort verlasse, möchte
ich noch etwas von demselben berühren.
Die Unterhaltungen, wenige ausgenom=
men, muß sich hier jeder *particulier*
auf eigene Kosten verschaffen. Das
Theater ist ziemlich groß, und schön, auch
die Trupp, die da spielt ganz gut; denn
es ist die Mainzische, aber sie spielt
hier nur, wo man sie am leichtesten
entbehren kann, im Sommer. Wäh=
rend der Krönung, waren hier noch

[82r]

2. andere Gesellschaften, näml. eine
französische von Strasburg, und eine
Triersche von H. Koberwein, der mit
H. Böhm assozirt war; letzterer besorg=
te die Schauspiele, ersterer die Ballets,
die keine von den beiden anderen hatte.

Diese 2. Gesellschaften spielten in höl=
zernen, eigens dazu errichteten Schau=
spielhäusern von mittelmässiger Größe.
Die französische Trupp hatte viel An=
stand in ihrem Spiele, den sich unsere
deutschen Schauspieler, wann sie Kava=
liere, Fürsten, oder wohl gar Könige
vorstellen, nicht zu geben wissen; doch
blickte überall der affektirte Gallier
hervor. Trauerspiele waren nicht
ihre *force* Stücke, sondern kleine Lust=

[82v]

spiele, und komische Opern; doch muß
man sehr an ihre Musik gewöhnt seÿn,
wenn sie gefallen soll, indem sie ganz
in französischen Geschmacke ist, nichts
als Trillereÿen. Diese Schauspieler schrei=
en außerordentlich, machen sich aber
eben dadurch so verständlich, daß man
gewiß keine Silbe verliert. Sie dekla=

> miren sehr richtig, und legen den Ak=
> zent allzeit auf das wahre Wort. *[...]*

[translation:]

> *[...][17 Oct.]*
> Before leaving Frankfurt, I want to
> say a bit more about the city. Here, with
> few exceptions, each private individual must
> give entertainments at his own expense. The
> theater is quite large and pretty, and the
> troupe that performs there is very good; it is
> the one from Mainz, but it performs here
> only when it can be most easily spared,
> in summer. During the coronation, there
> were also two other companies here, namely
> a French one from Strasbourg, and one
> from Trier run by Herr Koberwein, who had
> joined with Herr Böhm; the latter provided
> spoken theater, the former ballets, each
> which the other did not have.
> These two companies performed in specially
> erected wooden theaters of medium size.
> The French troupe had much decorum in
> its performance, which our German actors,
> when they portray cavaliers, counts, and even
> kings, do not know how to imitate; yet
> it always comes out in the affected Gauls.
> Tragedies were not their forte, but instead littlec
> omedies and comic operas; yet one must very
> much get used to their music in order
> to enjoy it, because it is completely in the
> French taste, nothing but trills. These actors
> shout extraordinarily, but they thereby make
> themselves so well understood, that one
> certainly does not miss even a single syllable.
> They declaim quite correctly, and they always
> put the accent on the right word. *[...]*

(On the three theatrical companies that Zierotin describes, see especially Glatthorn 2017, 93–95).

The Mainz company performed Mozart’s *Le nozze di Figaro* (in a German adaptation as *Die Hochzeit des Figaro*) in Frankfurt on 25 Sep and 10 Oct; Zierotin does not mention these performances. (Christiane Keilholz, who went on to sing the role of Susanna in the Mannheim premiere of *Figaro* on 24 Oct 1790, made a guest appearance with the Mainz company in that role on 25 Sep; see our entry for that date.) Mozart wrote to Constanze that the company also planned a performance of *Don Giovanni* for Tuesday, 5 Oct, but this performance did not take

place, and Dittersdorf's *Die Liebe im Narrenhaus* was given instead (Glatthorn 2017, 94). Some scholars claim that Mozart saw a performance of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* in Frankfurt on 12 Oct, but there is no evidence of such a performance (Glatthorn 2017, 94).

Mozart's concert in Frankfurt on 15 Oct was given in the city's theater. According to the poster announcing the concert (*Dokumente*, 329; facsimile in Glatthorn 2017, 107), at least one member of the Mainz company participated: Margarete Luise Schick (1773–1809; on Schick, see our entry for 1 May 1791). Another participant was the castrato Francesco Ceccarelli (1752–1814), whom Mozart knew from Salzburg, and who at that time was a member of the musical establishment at the electoral court in Mainz. Mozart's concert began at eleven in the morning, and that same evening, the Mainz company performed Wranitzky's *Oberon* in the same theater. The participation of Schick and the shared venue has led some scholars to suggest that Mozart's orchestra at the concert consisted of musicians from Mainz, possibly members of the Mainz Hofkapelle (Glatthorn 2017, 106).

Mozart's concert seems not to have been very successful, and he left Frankfurt soon afterwards. According to a letter to Constanze on 15 Oct, he intended to leave on 18 Oct, but he was apparently already in Mainz already by 17 Oct, when he sent a letter from that city (the letter is lost, but Mozart mentions it in one written to Constanze from Mannheim on 23 Oct; *Briefe*, iv: 119). It may be that Countess Hatzfeld also helped organize the concert in Mainz; she had many family connections there: most importantly, her brother-in-law Franz Ludwig von Hatzfeld was intendant of court music in Mainz, and her sister-in-law Sophie von Coudenhoven (née Hatzfeld) was a member of the inner circle of the Elector, Archbishop Friedrich Karl Joseph von Erthal (1719–1802), who was a cousin. (On the Hatzfeld family and Mainz, see our entries for Prince Auersperg's production of *Idomeneo* and Hugo von Hatzfeld's letter of 23 Mar 1786.)

Zierotin remained in Frankfurt until 20 Oct, when he began his journey homeward, making his first stop in Mainz. Up to now, our principal source on the concert in Mainz has been a brief report in the *Privilegierte Mainzer Zeitung*. The report is dated 21 Oct, but refers to the previous day:

> Mainz, vom 21. Oktob. Unter mehreren fremden hohen Herrschaften befinden sich auch Se. fürstl. Gnaden des Hrn. Reichs-Vizekanzlers Fürsten von Colloredo nebst Frau Gemahlin und Kinder hier. Gestern war bei Hof große Tafel, wozu sämmtliche hohe Fremde eingeladen wurden, und Abends Akademie, in welcher sich der berühmte Tonkünstler und Kapellmeister Sr. k. H. des Erzherzogs Franz, Hr. Mozart, auf dem Klavier mit höchst- und hohem Beifall hören ließ. [*Dokumente*, 331]
>
> Mainz, from October 21. Among several other foreign nobility here are His Princely Grace Herr Reichs-Vizekanzler Prince von Colloredo, along with his wife and children. Yesterday, there was a grand reception at court, to which all the exalted foreigners were invited, and in the evening an academy, at which the famous composer and Kapellmeister of His royal Highness Archduke Franz, Hr. Mozart, performed at the keyboard, to the acclaim of the Elector and his distinguished guests.

The "Fürst von Colloredo" was Franz de Paula Gundaker von Colloredo-Mansfeld (1731–1807), a Habsburg diplomat based in Vienna. He had assumed the title of Fürst on the death of his father in 1788. His next younger brother was Hieronymus von Colloredo, the Archbishop of Salzburg and Mozart's former employer. (For the relationships of this branch of the Colloredo family, see this genealogy from 1783.) The report in the *Privilegierte Mainzer Zeitung* implies that other visiting nobility also attended the concert; presumably, like Zierotin, these visitors were on their way home from the Frankfurt coronation. It was widely said at the time (as in the Mainz report) that Mozart was the Kapellmeister of Archduke Franz (who was soon to succeed his father Leopold II as emperor in 1792); but it seems fairly certain that he was not.

Mozart mentions the concert in Mainz in his letter to Constanze on 23 Oct 1790:

> — ich habe den Tag vor meiner Abreise beym Churfürsten gespielt, aber magere 15 Carolin erhalten — [*Briefe*, iv:119]
>
> — On the day before my departure [from Mainz] I played at the Elector's, but received a meagre 15 Carolin —

A Carolin (Karolin) was a gold coin worth 11 gulden, so Mozart's payment for the performance was 165 fl, the amount recorded in the accounts for the court musical establishment in Mainz (*Dokumente*, 331). This amounted to more than one third of the 450 fl that Mozart had received at the beginning of the year for composing *Così fan tutte* for the court theater in Vienna; the payment in Mainz also seems generous for a single appearance by a guest performer at a concert. So Mozart's disappointment with the amount should be understood in the wider context of the high expenses of his trip to Frankfurt and his unhappiness with what he had earned from his concert there. (See our entry on Mozart's receipt for his honorarium in Mainz.)

The exact program of the concert in Mainz remains unknown, but Zierotin's diary shows that Francesco Ceccarelli again participated, as he had in Mozart's Frankfurt concert on 15 Oct. This raises the possibility that some of the music from that concert might have been performed again in Mainz. One change from the Frankfurt concert was the replacement of Schick by soprano Franziska Josepha Hellmuth (1757–c.1798), who was a member of both the Mainz Hofkapelle and the Mainz theater company (Wagner 1984, 104).

The concert took place in the so-called "Akademiesaal" in the northern wing of the Electoral Palace in Mainz. Zierotin remarks that he attended as an unofficial guest (the implication of "incognito") and thus observed the concert from a publicly accessible gallery. He gave a more detailed description of the hall during his first visit to Mainz on 14 Jul 1790:

[30r]

> *[...]*
> 14. *[Jul]* In der khurfürstl. Residenz, die präch=
> tig eingerichtet, ist vorzüglich der grosse
> Saal, der zu Konzerten, und im Fasching

> zu Bälen gebraucht wird, merkwürdig.
> Es ist sehr hoch mit schönen marmorir=
> ten Säulen gestützt, so wie der gan=
> ze Saal selbst marmorirt ist, und hat
> oben eine mit starken eisernen Git=
> tern versehene Gallerie, die dem Vol=
> ke zum Auditorio dient; *[...]*

[translation:]

> *[...]*
> 14 *[Jul]* In the Electoral Residence, which
> is splendidly furnished, the great hall is
> particularly remarkable; it is used for
> concerts, and, in carnival time, for balls.
> It is very high, supported by beautiful
> marbled columns, just as the whole hall
> itself is marbled, and it has an upper gallery
> with a strong iron balustrade, which serves
> as a place for the people to listen *[...]*

Zierotin's remarks suggest that the concert in Mainz was open to the general public, and he provides a rare description of the beautiful concert space, constructed in 1786–1787. The hall was destroyed by Allied bombing in the Second World War, but a photograph survives; it shows the marbling and the gallery with its iron balustrade, just as Zierotin describes.



Akademiesaal, Electoral Palace in Mainz (pre-war photograph)
(Landesamt für Denkmalpflege Rheinland-Pfalz)

Zierotin’s diary contains other references to theater, including musical theater. Of particular interest are his descriptions of his visits to theaters in Vienna. He arrived in Vienna on 16 Jun 1790 and attended a performance in the Theater in der Leopoldstadt that same day:

[4r]

[16 Jun]
[...] Das Theater
in der Leopoldstadt, beim Kasperl genan[n]t,

[4v]

spielt auch andere ganz gute Stücke, und
dieß gar nicht übel. Ich sah den Geister=
seher, ein Stück ohne Liebesintrigen, ohne
Hochzeit, ohne Frauenzimmer kann man fast
auch sagen. Diese Schaubühne zeichnet
sich vorzüglich durch die Menge und Sau=
berkeit ihrer Dekorationen aus, und fin=
det deshalb bei den Herrn Wiennern,
die so sehr am Scheinn kleben, einen zahl=
reichen Zuspruch. *[...]*

[translation:]

> *[16 Jun]*
> *[...]* The Theater
> in the Leopoldstadt, called Beim Kasperl,
> also performs other plays that are quite good,
> and not at all badly. I saw *Der Geisterseher*,
> a piece without love intrigues, without
> a marriage, one can almost even say without
> women. This theater stands out especially
> because of the quantity and fineness of its
> decorations, and it is thus attended in large
> numbers by the Viennese, who are so
> attached to make-believe.*[...]*

The piece that Zierotin saw in the Theater in der Leopoldstadt was Joachim Perinet's *Der Geisterseher*, a comic play in five acts ("komisches Schauspiel in 5 Akten", based on a story by Friedrich Schiller) which had premiered on 28 May 1790 (Gugitz 1905, 165, and Angermüller 2009, 72; on Perinet, see our entry on his *29 Annhemlichkeiten in Wien*). The following day, Zierotin visited the Burgtheater:

[4v]

> *[...]*
> 17. *[Jun]* Besah ich das Nazionaltheatre. Es
> ist sehr groß und prächtig, hat aber et=
> was gothisches in seinem inneren Anse=
> hen. In der Kleidung, und Dekoration
> wird sehr auf das Kostüm, auf die im
> Stücke herrschende Zeit und Umstände
> gesehen.

[translation:]

> *[...]*
> 17 *[Jun]* I viewed the Nationaltheater. It is
> very large and magnificent, but has
> something Gothic in its interior appearance.
> In clothing and sets, much care is taken
> with historical convention, the time and
> circumstances depicted in the piece.

Zierotin does not explicitly say that he attended a performance in the Burgtheater that day, but if he did, it would have been *Die Glücksritter*, an adaptation of George Farquhar's *The Beaux Stratagem*.

[6r]

> *[...]*
> Abends im Nazionaltheatre, um die Mei-
> sterinn *Sacko* zu sehen. Diese berühm=
> te Schauspielerinn ist sehr groß und stark,
> eher häßlich als schön, und schon bei Jahren;
> aber ihre Stimme ist sehr melodisch, und
> ihr Spiel so dahinreißend, daß man dabei
> auf das vergißt, woran die *Natur* an
> ihr zur Stiefmutter ward, und daß selbst
> der gefühlloseste gezwungen wird, an
> dem Stücke Antheil zu nehmen.

[translation:]

> *[...]*
> In the evening, at the Nationaltheater to
> see the masterly *Sacco*. This famous
> actress is very large and strong, more ugly
> than beautiful, and already advanced in years;
> but her voice is very melodious and her
> acting is so gripping, that one forgets *Nature*
> has treated her as a stepmother would,
> and that even the most insensitive are forced
> to become absorbed in the piece.

The play that Zierotin saw on 19 Jun was *Imogen*, Friedrich Ludwig Wilhelm Meyer’s German adaptation of Shakespeare’s *Cymbeline* (Hadamowsky i:64). On 24 Jun Zierotin attended an Italian opera in the Burgtheater:

[9r]

> *Jun*: 24. War ich in der wälschen Oper.
> Da ich kein Kenner von Musik bin, und
> folglich selbst nicht urteilen kann, so
> muß ich mich auf das Urtheil anderer
> verlassen, für dessen Unpartheilichkeit
> ich kein Bürger bin. Dermalen wer=
> den in Wienn *Mlle: Ferraresi* als die
> beste Sängerinn, und *Mr: Benuci* als
> der beste Buffo gerühmt. Nach mei=
> nem stumpfen Gefühl sangen sie
> sehr schön.

[translation:]

> 24 *Jun*. I went to the Italian opera.
> Because I am no connoisseur of music,
> and therefore cannot judge for myself,
> I have to rely on the judgment of
> others, whose impartiality I cannot
> vouch for. According to them, *Mlle.*
> *Ferrarese* is considered the best singer,
> and *Mr. Benucci* the best Buffo in
> Vienna. In my dull opinion, they sang
> very nicely.

The piece performed that evening was Salieri’s *La cifra* (Hadamowsky i:22), in which Adriana Ferrarese sang Eurilla and Francesco Benucci probably appeared in the role of Rusticone (Rice 1998, 442). Two days later, Zierotin attended a performance in the Theater auf der Wieden:

[10r]

> *[...]*
> 26. *[Jun]* War ich auf der Wieden im Thea=
> ter. Die Schauspieler mögen wohl so
> ziemlich gut seyn, spielen aber so schlech=
> te Stücke, als nur seyn können. Sie spie=
> len Stücke, die oft 8, 9. auch 13. bis 14.

[10v]

> Theile haben, und die eben so viele Aben=
> de wahren, als das Stück Theile hat. Ich
> sah eines, das nur einen Theil hatte, nämlich
> König *Attila*, oder die Hexe von Augsburg.
> So was dummes habe ich selbst in dem Som=
> mer, oder Kasperl Theater noch nicht gese=
> hen; und doch wird diese Truppe mit ei=
> nem ziemlich zahlreichen Zuspruche be=
> ehrt: ein Beweis, daß nicht alles was
> groß, schön und edel ist, in Wienn ge=
> schätzt wird, und daß es in Wienn d[em]
> einzigen auch Leute giebt, die von recht
> verdorbenen Geschmacke sind. *[...]*

[translation:]

> *[...]*
> 26 *[Jun]* I went to the Theater auf der
> Wieden. The actors may well be quite

> good, but the pieces they play are as bad
> as can be. They perform pieces that often
> consist of 8, 9, even 13 to 14 parts, and
> that last for as many evenings as there
> are parts of a piece. I saw one, which was
> in only one part, namely *König Attila, oder die*
> *Hexe von Augsburg*. I have not seen anything
> so stupid even in summer or Kasperl theaters;
> and yet this troupe is honored with a quite large
> attendance: a proof that not everything
> that is great, beautiful, and noble is prized
> in Vienna, and that even in Vienna itself
> there are people, who have quite debased
> taste. *[...]*

The historical play ("historisches Schauspiel") *König Attila* that Zierotin saw on 26 Jun was by Emanuel Schikaneder; its performance the previous day, 25 Jun, was apparently the premiere (Deutsch 1937, 32).

Zierotin's observations on Viennese theater in the summer of 1790 are of particular interest, because, apart from the diaries of Count Zinzendorf (see Link 1998), we have few personal reactions to the city's cultural life during that period. Zinzendorf was at the performance of *Imogen* on 19 Jun, but otherwise did not attend any of the performances that Zierotin describes, so Zierotin is currently our only known witness to these. His subjective impressions of the "gothic" interior of the Burgtheater and the debased tastes of the Viennese (as reflected in the performance at the Theater auf der Wieden) offer a rare view of Viennese theater at that time from the point of view of an "outsider."

Notes (⇧)

We do not know why Zierotin kept this detailed diary of his trip to the coronation in Frankfurt. It may be that he thought of publishing it; such coronation diaries were something of a minor publishing genre at the time. On the other hand, Zierotin clearly did not consider himself an author; the only publication by him that we have been able to find is a speech on fire insurance from 1834.

Zierotin's reference to the old Burgtheater as "gotisch" may seem odd to those who have seen paintings and prints of the theater's interior. But Zierotin may have made his first visit to the theater during the day, when candles would not have been lit, as they were during a performance. Since the theater had few if any windows to admit outside light, the theater may indeed have seemed dark and gloomy on first acquaintance.

We would like to thank Steven Whiting and Michael Lorenz for helpful discussions of particular points of translation; and Catherine Sprague for bringing to our attention the beautiful pre-war photograph of the concert hall in the Electoral palace in Mainz.

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