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The premiere of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* in Strasbourg (24-25 Jan 1783)

Dexter Edge

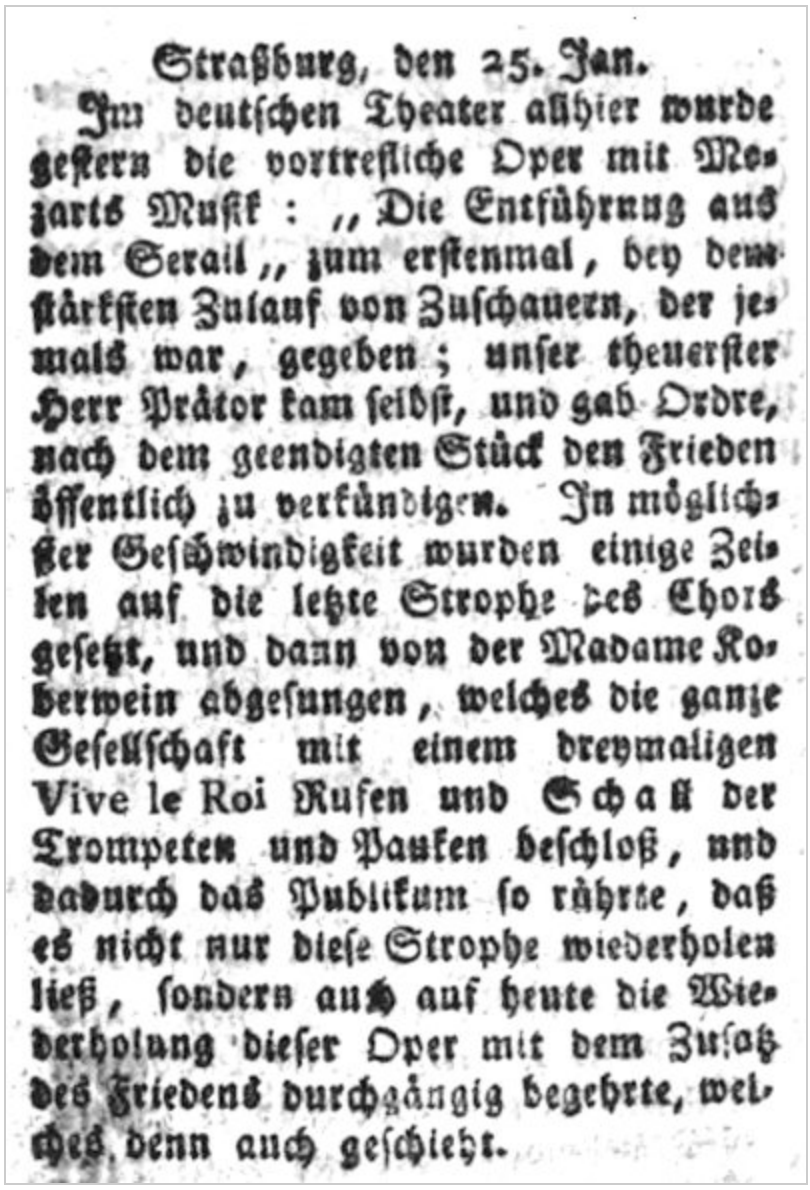
***Augspurgische Ordinari Postzeitung*, no. 29, 3 Feb 1783, unpaginated**

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Straßburg, den 25. Jan.

Im deutschen Theater allhier wurde gestern die vortrefliche Oper mit Mo= zarts Musik: "Die Entführung aus dem Serail" zum erstenmal, bey dem stärksten Zulauf von Zuschauern, der je= mals war, gegeben; unser theuerster Herr Prätor kam selbst, und gab Ordre, nach dem geendigten Stück den Frieden öffentlich zu verkündigen. In möglich= ster Geschwindigkeit wurde einige Zei= len auf die letzte Strophe des Chors gesetzt, und dann von der Madame Ko= berwein abgesungen, welches die ganze Gesellschaft mit einem dreymaligen *Vive le Roi* Rufen und Schall der Trompeten und Pauken beschloß, und dadurch das Publikum so rührte, daß es nicht nur diese Strophe wiederholen ließ, sondern auch auf heute die Wie= derholung dieser Oper mit dem Zusatz des Friedens durchgängig begehrte, wel= ches denn auch geschieht.

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Straßburg, den 25. Jan.

Im deutschen Theater allhier wurde gestern die vortrefliche Oper mit Mozarts Musik: „Die Entführung aus dem Serail" zum erstenmal, bey dem stärksten Zulauf von Zuschauern, der jemals war, gegeben; unser theuerster Herr Prätor kam selbst, und gab Ordre, nach dem geendigten Stück den Frieden öffentlich zu verkündigen. In möglichster Geschwindigkeit wurden einige Zeilen auf die letzte Strophe des Chors gesetzt, und dann von der Madame Koberwein abgesungen, welches die ganze Gesellschaft mit einem dreymaligen Vive le Roi Rufen und Schall der Trompeten und Pauken beschloß, und dadurch das Publikum so rührte, daß es nicht nur diese Strophe wiederholen ließ, sondern auch auf heute die Wiederholung dieser Oper mit dem Zusatz des Friedens durchgängig begehrte, welches denn auch geschieht.

[translation:]

Straßburg, 25 Jan.

Yesterday in the German theater here, the excellent opera with Mozart's music, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, was given for the first time, with the greatest throng of spectators ever. Our dearest Herr Praetor himself came, and ordered that the peace should be publicly announced at the end of the performance. With the greatest possible rapidity some lines were set to the last verse of the chorus, and then sung by Madame Koberwein, ending with a three-fold cheer of

"Vive le Roi" by the entire company and
the sound of trumpets and drums; and
the public was so moved that it not only
had this verse encored, but also universally
requested the repetition of the opera
the following day with the peace addendum,
and this then also took place.

Commentary

This report in the *Augspurgische Ordinari Postzeitung* documents the date, previously unknown to Mozart scholars, of the first performance of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* in Strasbourg, 24 Jan 1783. This is currently the earliest securely dated performance of the opera outside of Vienna. (On a purported but undocumented performance of the opera in Prague in the autumn of 1782 by the company of Karl Wahr, see the *Notes* below.) The performance in Strasbourg was based on a score of *Entführung* that actor Jakob Neukäufler had acquired in Vienna with Mozart's help and took with him when he joined the company of Simon Friedrich Koberwein, director of the German theater in Strasbourg. The "peace" announced at the end of the performance in Strasbourg was the signing on 20 Jan 1783 of the preliminary accords between Britain and France, and between Britain and Spain, marking the official end of fighting in the American Revolution.

Strasbourg was for many centuries a free imperial city of the Holy Roman Empire, but it was annexed in 1681 (without an immediate *casus belli*) by French King Louis XIV, who hoped to fortify his border in Alsace; the annexation was officially recognized in the Treaty of Ryswick in 1697. Yet Strasbourg retained special status within France: Protestants were not expelled (although Strasbourg Cathedral was reclaimed for the Catholics) and the German university in Strasbourg endured until the French Revolution; prominent students there included Goethe and Herder.

In the 1780s Strasbourg had both a French and a German theater. The company of Simon Friedrich Koberwein (1733–ca. 1808) was resident in the German theater in Strasbourg beginning in 1781; from 1782 until early 1784, Koberwein led a joint theatrical enterprise in Strasbourg with the director of the French theater, and then continued to run the German theater independently until 1789 (Winckelmann 1898, 223ff). In the summers Koberwein's company was free to travel, and took the opportunity to perform in many German and Swiss cities during the 1780s. Koberwein's enterprise in Strasbourg was so successful that he at one point planned to institute a summer season of German theater in Paris (for which he claims to have had encouragement from the Austrian-born queen, Marie Antoinette), although in the end nothing came of this (Koberwein 1803, 10–12).

Koberwein was born in Vienna in 1733 and made his theatrical debut in Linz in 1753. In 1756 he joined the company of Felix Kurz, whose daughter Edmunda (†1770) was Koberwein's first wife.

By the late 1760s, he was leading a theater company in collaboration with Joseph Hellmann (d'Elvert 1852, 84), a personal connection that ultimately played a role in bringing Neukäufler and the score of *Entführung* to Koberwein a decade and a half later. In the late 1760s and early 1770s, the Hellmann-Koberwein company is known to have performed in Brünn (Brno), Olmütz (Olomouc), and Kremsier (Kroměříž; on the company's performances in these cities, see d'Elvert 1852, 84, 140–41, 160). Between 1772 and 1777, the company is documented as having performed in various suburban theaters in Vienna (Blümml & Gugitz 1925, 43–52, 135, 333, 335), and also in Graz and Laibach (Ljubljana).

In his autobiography, Koberwein writes of having performed for empress Maria Theresia at Schönbrunn and Laxenburg:

> 1771 [?1772] hatte ich das Glück, die große Kayserin Maria Theresia in ihrem Sommer=Aufenthalt zu Schönbrun und Laxenburg mit meinen Schauspielen zu unterhalten. In dem Hoflager zu Schönbrun heiratete ich meine noch jetzt lebende Frau, Franziska Sartori, zu Prag gebohren, und Mitglied meiner Gesellschaft. — Die vielen huldreichen Gnadenbezeugungen der großen Monarchin hielten mich für alle bisher empfundene Kränkungen schadlos. Drei Sommer genoß ich dieses Glück . . . Nebst mehreren erhaltenen Gnadenbezeugungen, wurde ich kayserlich bezahlt und im dritten Sommer, wo die Schauspiele aufhörten, erhielten wir alle die höchste Gnade, Ihro Majestät, der huldreichen Kaiserin, die Hand zu küssen und die Gesellschaft wurde reichlich von ihr beschenkt. [Koberwein 1803, 5–6; also quoted in Blümml & Gugitz 1925, 51–52, who correct the year to 1772]
>
> In 1772 I had the good fortune to entertain the great empress Maria Theresia with plays at her summer residences Schönbrunn and Laxenburg. At her court in Schönbrunn I married my wife Franziska Sartori, who is still living, born in Prague, and a member of my company. The many gracious indications of favor from the great monarch reimbursed me for all slights endured up to that point. For three summers [i.e. 1772–1774] I enjoyed this good fortune . . . In addition to the several indications of favor that I received, I was imperially paid, and in the third summer, when the plays ended, we all received the highest favor, to kiss the hand of Her Majesty, the gracious Empress, and the company was richly rewarded by her.

Koberwein's second wife was the actress Franziska Sartori, whom he married on 18 Jul 1773 in Penzing, a suburb of Vienna, where the Hellmann-Koberwein company was performing; Joseph Hellmann was a witness to the marriage (Penzing, Trauungsbuch 2/2, 15v; see also Blümml & Gugitz 1925, 52). Koberwein seems to have been exaggerating slightly in saying they were married "at Schönbrunn," although Penzing borders on Schönbrunn. Franziska is the "Madame Koberwein" mentioned in the report on *Entführung* in Strasbourg, a production in which she apparently played the role of Konstanze.

Koberwein's children with Franziska all acted in his company, and three went on to careers of their own in the theater. His daughter Franziska, later Frau Karly, was a singer and actress in Bremen, and Katharina, later Frau Horscheld, was a dancer in Vienna. Koberwein's son Joseph

(1774–1857) was a beloved actor in the court theater in Vienna from 1796 until his retirement in 1846, and Joseph's wife Sophie (1783–1842), daughter of the theatrical impresario Franz Bulla, likewise had a long and distinguished career in the court theater from 1803 to 1841. (Wurzbach writes that the last word she spoke on the stage was "Amen," the final word in the role of Gertraude in *Welche ist die Braut* by Johanna von Weißenthurn.) Joseph and Sophie's son Georg Koberwein (1820–1876) became a distinguished painter.

The man who brought the score of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* to Koberwein was Jakob Neukäufler (1753–1835). Neukäufler left a short manuscript autobiography that was published in 1930 by Konrad Schiffmann (translated in Price 1997). Born in Neustift bei Freising in Bavaria in 1753, Neukäufler originally intended to become a Jesuit, but had to abandon this plan when Pope Clement XIV suppressed the order in 1773. In order to earn money to help his starving parents, who had been hard hit by famines in the early 1770s, Neukäufler became an actor, initially in the company of Herr Nieser in Munich. After Nieser's company was dissolved, Neukäufler joined the company of Joseph Moser, to which Emanuel Schikaneder also belonged. Schikaneder soon took over Moser's troupe, and Neukäufler remained with Schikaneder until late 1780 or early 1781, when he joined the company of Franz Heinrich Bulla; Neukäufler was still with Schikaneder during that company's engagement in Salzburg in 1780–1781, where Neukäufler met Mozart, who (the actor said) "hat sich mir immer sehr geneigt gezeigt" ("always showed himself to be very sympathetic to me," Schiffmann 1930, 74; for more on Neukäufler and Schikaneder, see Price 2008). A poster for a performance by Bulla's company of Goethe's *Clavigo* in Linz on 15 May 1781 lists Neukäufler in the role of Buenko. (The performance was paired with the improbably named ballet *Die Cyklopenliebe*.)



Heute Dienstags den 15 May 1781.
Wird auf dem Linzer Theater unter H. Heinrichs Bulla Direktion gegeben:

Clavigo,
oder
Die Familie der Beaumarchais.
Ein
Trauerspiel
in fünf Aufzügen
von Göthe, dem Verfasser des Göz von Berlichingen.

Personen.

Clavigo, Archivarius des Königs, Hr. Strobl.
Carlos, dessen Freund, Hr. Pirchfeld.
Don Beaumarchais, Hr. Bulla.
Marie, dessen Schwester, Mlle. Fiedler.
Guilbert, Hr. Dorfbeck.
Sein Frau, gebohrne von Beaumarchais, Mad. Hornung.
Buenco, Hr. Winklhofer.
St. George, Reisegefährte des von Beaumarchais, Hr. Lerang.
Des Carlos Bedienter, Hr. Röckl.
Des Clavigo Bedienter, Hr. Gabl.
Der Schauplatz ist zu Madrid.

Ich will mir alle die Mühe geben, nach Möglichkeit das heutige Geld zu bezahlen, das das sorgfältigste Festhalten des ersten Grund-Erwerbungs-Kapitals erfordert. Besonders soll sich der letzte Akt durch die enorme Feuerlichkeit des Feuerwerkes auszeichnen, die Ihrer Majestät, den Schöpfen der Freiheit, und der Anordnung verwandten dreyfachen Portionen, die in dieser Hinsicht, gegeben, auszeichnen. Zwar ist jeder Akt, jede Szene dieses Gemäldes ein reicher Strauß von Bewunderungs- und Staunens für den Zuschauer und Hörer. Ein Strauß des Anstoßes für manche Schamlosigkeitsgesellschaft, auf den gedrückten Hohen Hüte; Nicht zu sagen. Doch besser nur viele Schwierigkeiten zu überwinden, — weil mir viele Schwierigkeiten fühlen.

Den Beschluß macht:
Die Cyklopenliebe.
Ein Ballet
von Herrn Ballettmeister Hornung.

Der Anfang ist um 6 Uhr.

Theaterzettel zur Aufführung von Goethes „Clavigo".
(Im Besitze des Verfassers.)

Poster for a performance of Goethe's *Clavigo* by the theatrical troupe of Franz Heinrich Bulla
Linz, Tue, 15 May 1781
(Plate from Schiffmann 1905, between pp. 120 and 121)

Neukäufler soon left Bulla to go to Vienna, where he was eager to see the performances of Friedrich Ludwig Schröder, who had made a tremendous splash in the Burgtheater the previous spring as a guest performer in eleven different leading roles between 13 Apr and 11 May 1780, beginning with *King Lear*—a performance in which the initially hostile audience had been completely won over, giving Schröder a tumultuous ovation by the end (on Schröder in Vienna in 1780, see Meyer 1819, 342ff). The impression he made was so strong that Emperor Joseph II called him to become a permanent member of the Burgtheater ensemble the following year. Schröder arrived in Vienna to take up that position on 1 Apr 1781, remaining until 1785.

Neukäufler carried with him a letter of introduction to Schröder, who arranged for the young actor to have free admittance to the Burgtheater. Neukäufler thus had the opportunity to see Schröder in a number of the most prominent male roles in German theater of the time, including Odoardo in *Emilia Galotti*, Gustav Wasa, King Lear, and Hamlet. In his memoir, Neukäufler writes that Schröder's acting had such a profound physical impact on him that it regularly moved him to tears.

Neukäufler states that while in Vienna he acted for a brief period with the company of a Herr Hellmann—the same Joseph Hellmann who had been Koberwein's partner in the late 1760s and early 1770s. (Neukäufler first met Hellmann in a tavern across from the Kärntnertortheater in Vienna; he gives a memorable description of Hellmann's flamboyant attire.) Neukäufler writes of being with Hellmann's company for a six-week engagement in Krems, roughly 75 km northwest

of Vienna on the Danube, where the company performed while waiting to begin a summer engagement in Marinelli's theater in the Leopoldstadt in Vienna, which was available while Marinelli's own company played the summer season in Baden. According to Neukäufler, the Hellmann company's first performance in Krems took place on an Easter Monday, but he does not specify the year (Schiffmann 1930, 69). It cannot have been Easter 1781 (15 Apr), when Neukäufler was still with Bulla, or Easter 1783 (20 Apr), by which time Neukäufler was with Koberwein in Strasbourg. So he must be referring to Easter 1782. Easter fell on 31 Mar that year, so if Neukäufler's memory is correct, Hellmann's season in Krems began on 1 Apr. If he is correct in remembering that the season in Krems lasted six weeks, he would not have returned to Vienna before the middle of May 1782.

Neukäufler obtained his engagement with Koberwein in Strasbourg through the friendly recommendation of "Frau Sartori" in Hellmann's company, who was the mother of Koberwein's second wife Franziska (Schiffmann 1930, 72); Franziska's father Ignaz and several other Sartoris were also with Hellmann at the time. Before leaving Vienna, Neukäufler paid a visit to Schröder to show him his letter of offer from Koberwein:

> Ich ging zu Herrn Schröder und ließ ihm den Brief lesen. Er gratulierte mir und gab mir als Andenken vier Manuskripte von ihm. Damit ich "etwas Neues" mitbrächte, fügte er hinzu. Ferner ließ für mich Herr Compositeur Mozart die "Entführung aus dem Serail" kopieren; ich brauchte nur die Abschreibgebühr zu bezahlen. Herrn Wolfgang Mozart hatte ich schon in Salzburg kennen gelernt, als er noch bei seinem Vater war. Er hat sich mir immer sehr geneigt gezeigt. [Schiffmann 1930, 73–74]
>
> I went to Herr Schröder and had him read the letter. He congratulated me and as a remembrance gave me four of his manuscripts; so that I would bring "something new" along with me, he added. In addition, Herr Composer Mozart had *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* copied for me; I had only to pay the copying fee. I had already gotten to know Herr Wolfgang Mozart in Salzburg, when he was still at his father's. He always showed himself to be very sympathetic to me. [Translation amended from Price 1997, 31]

Mozart's *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* was premiered in the Burgtheater in Vienna on 16 Jul 1782, and performed at least eleven more times before the end of the year; it seems certain that Neukäufler would have seen it, although he does not explicitly say so. Neukäufler's name does not appear in Mozart's surviving letters, and Mozart does not mention having this copy of the score made. However, we know that he sent the autograph score of the opera to his father in Salzburg shortly after the premiere (Mozart inquires about the autograph's arrival in a letter to Leopold on 27 Jul 1782; *Briefe* iii:215), and it remained in Salzburg for some considerable time after that. Thus Mozart would have had to arrange to have the score of *Entführung* prepared for Neukäufler by someone who had a copy of it; this most likely would have been Wenzel Sukowaty, chief copyist of the court theater in Vienna (*Entführung* is not known to have been available from any other Viennese music copyist until considerably later). In a letter to his father on 12 Oct 1782, Mozart wrote that it would take the "Theatral Copist" (that is, Sukowaty) 8 to 10 days at most to prepare a copy of the opera's score (*Briefe*, iii:237). Assuming this estimate is roughly correct,

then it is unlikely that Mozart could have had a copy of *Entführung* made during the first two months of the run, when the opera was performed frequently and the theater's score was often in use. Mozart himself refers to this problem in a letter to Leopold on 25 Sep (*Briefe*, iii: 231–32), noting that the opera had been already been given 10 times by that point, and implying that the theater's copy of the score was needed for every performance. Mozart also noted that Emperor Joseph had been borrowing the theater's score quite often.

During the premiere run of *Entführung*, the two-week interval between the performances on 6 and 20 Aug 1782 was the first break longer than a week; subsequent performances took place on 27 Aug, 6 and 20 Sep, and 8 Oct, after breaks of 7, 10, 14, and 18 days, respectively. The performance on 8 Oct was a particularly significant one for Mozart: he directed the performance from the keyboard (probably using the theater's copy of the score) in the presence of the Grand Duke and Duchess of Russia and other distinguished guests (see our entry for 8 Oct 1782). While it is possible that Mozart had the score copied for Neukäufler at some point between 20 Aug and 8 Oct, it is perhaps more likely that he had it copied in the lengthy hiatus after 8 Oct; the next documented performance of *Entführung* was on 10 Dec 1782. (On Sukowaty and the Viennese court theater's score copy of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, see Edge 2001, Chpt. 9, here especially 1370–84.)

We do not know exactly when Neukäufler departed Vienna to join Koberwein. Given that the opera had its premiere in Strasbourg on 24 Jan 1783, Neukäufler must have connected with Koberwein soon enough for the opera to be prepared and rehearsed—thus almost certainly no later than the beginning of January, and very likely earlier. Neukäufler mentions stopping over in Augsburg on his way to Strasbourg; while in Augsburg, he attended a performance by the "Doppler" company (actually the company of Karl August Dobler) of the play *Der Westindier*, a translation of Richard Cumberland's *The West Indian* (Schiffmann 1930, 76–77). Dobler's engagement in Augsburg began on 23 Sep 1782 and lasted until 4 Mar 1783 (Witz 1876, 48–49); the date of the performance of *Der Westindier* appears to be unknown, but it seems to have been before Christmas (see the *Notes* below). So Neukäufler's stopover in Augsburg likely occurred between 23 Sep and Christmas 1782.

Neukäufler goes on to tell the story of his first meeting with Koberwein, his family, and his company. After their first mid-day meal together, he writes:

> Am Abend jenes Tages war kein deutsches, sondern französisches Theater. Ich sollte mitgehen, mußte mich aber für diesmal entschuldigen. Morgen, sagte ich zu Koberwein, würde ich ihm vier neue Stücke von Herrn Schröder und drei neue Opern, eine von Herrn Mozart, die anderen von Herrn Umlauf, bringen. "Das ist brav", erwiderte Koberwein, "da machen Sie mich ja auf einmal reich!" [Schiffmann 1930, 79]
>
> On the evening of that day there was no German theater, but rather French. I was supposed to go along, but had to make my apologies this time. Tomorrow, I said to Koberwein, I would bring him four new pieces by Herr Schröder and three new operas, one by Herr

> Mozart, the others by Herr Umlauf. "That is good," replied Koberwein, "in this you are making me suddenly rich!" [Translation amended from Price 1997, 33]

Ignaz Umlauf (1746–1796), whom Neukäufler had not mentioned in his memoir up to this point, was the first music director of Emperor Joseph II's "National Singspiel," which had opened with Umlauf's *Die Bergknappen* in 1778. Without more detailed knowledge of Koberwein's repertory in Strasbourg and elsewhere around 1783, we cannot be certain which singspiels by Umlauf Neukäufler brought with him. Two plausible candidates are Umlauf's two most recent ones: *Das Irrlicht*, which had premiered on 17 Jan 1782, and *Welche ist die beste Nation*, which premiered in Vienna on 13 Dec 1782 (and closed two days later, on 15 Dec). Schröder himself wrote, translated, and adapted so many plays that it is probably impossible to be certain which four of his works Neukäufler brought to Koberwein, at least in the absence of any detailed knowledge of Koberwein's repertory at this time. In his 1819 biography of Schröder, Friedrich Ludwig Wilhelm Meyer, a close friend and reliable witness, includes as an appendix a chronological list "von Schrödern mehr oder weniger bearbeiteten, umgeänderten, übersetzten und selbst verfaßten Schauspiele" (plays more or less adapted, modified, translated, or written by Schröder). The list contains 10 items for 1782 alone (Meyer 1819, vol 2, part 2, 172; for more on Schröder's works in Koberwein's repertory, see Price 2008, 354, note 26).

Neukäufler's presence in Koberwein's company in 1783 is confirmed by the company's roster in the Gotha *Theater-Kalender* for 1784 (238): "Hr. Neukäufler: zärtliche und komische Väter, Bauern und Karakterollen" ("Herr Neukäufler, endearing and comic fathers, farmers, and character roles").



The description of Koberwein in the *Theater-Kalender* reads "Erste zärtliche und komische Väter" ("leading tender and comic fathers"), so his roles and Neukäufler's may have overlapped to some extent. Koberwein's wife, "Mad. Koberwein" (that is, Franziska) is listed in the *Theater-Kalender* as playing "erste Liebhaberinnen im Schauspiel und Singspiel" (romantic female leads in plays and singspiels), and it is likely that she took the role of Konstanze in *Entführung*. The (admittedly rather catty) *Gallerie von Teutschen Schauspielern und Schauspielerinnen* of 1783 writes of her:

> Mad. Koberwein.
> Sie benuzt das Recht einer Direktrise, weil sie mehrentheils alle Rollen spielt, die ihr gut dünken. Liebhaberinnen macht sie wenigstens leidlich, auch einige Mädchen, worin sie Leb= haftigkeit und Laune zeigen kann, nur schadet ihr der Dialekt sehr. In der Operette ist ihre Stimme angenem. [*Gallerie* 1783, 132]

> Madame Koberwein.
> She makes use of the right of a directrix,
> as she mostly plays all the roles that seem
> good to her. Romantic parts she plays
> at least passably, also some girls, where
> she can show her liveliness and fancy, only
> her dialect hurts her very much. In operettas
> her voice is pleasant.

The dig at Madame Koberwein's "dialect" (her accent) is not surprising; such criticisms were common in eighteenth-century German theater criticism. She was born in Prague, and had spent her formative years traveling with a theater company throughout the southern German dialect region (Bavaria and Austria), so it would not have been surprising if her accent had sounded uncouth to the German-speaking community in Strasbourg.

The "Prätor" referred to in the report in the *Augspurgische Ordinari Postzeitung* was the highest official representative of the French government in Strasbourg, the "prétur royal." From 1781 until 1789, this position was held by Conrad Alexandre Gérard de Rayvenal (1729–1790; fr.wikipedia, en.wikipedia).



Conrad Alexandre Gérard de Rayneval
New York Public Library Digital Collections

Gérard was a native of Alsace. He had been secretary to the French Embassy in Vienna from 1761 to 1766, and it was he who officially welcomed the Austrian archduchess Marie Antoinette to

France when she crossed the border to take up her crown in 1770 as the wife of Louis XVI. In 1778, as the representative of the French government, Gérard signed the Treaty of Alliance and the Treaty of Amity and Commerce with the United States, recognizing it as a sovereign nation, and he became the first French ambassador to the fledgling nation in 1778–79 (a period during which he is said to have subsidised the writings of Thomas Paine, among others). He was ennobled in 1778, but is said not to have used his title. After his return to France, Louis XVI rewarded him with the post of "prétur royal" in Strasbourg.

The "peace" ("Friede") that Gérard announced at the end of the first performance of *Entführung* in Strasbourg on 24 Jan 1783 was the signing on 20 Jan of the preliminary treaties between Britain and France, and Britain and Spain, the culmination of arduous negotiations ending the American Revolution. Britain's preliminary treaty with the United States had already been signed on 30 Nov 1782; the signings on 20 Jan marked the official end of fighting, something that Gérard, given his previous role in the history of the young country, would have been especially inclined to celebrate. (For a good if dense introduction to the complex of treaties ending the American Revolution, see the Wikipedia article "Peace of Paris (1783).")

This newly uncovered report on the first performance of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* in Strasbourg on 24 Jan 1783 sheds light on a minor mystery in Mozart's correspondence. In a letter to his father on 15 Feb 1783, Mozart writes:

> Ich hätte in Strasburg in einem Winkel sitzen mögen—doch Nein—ich glaube nicht daß ich eine ruhige Nacht gehabt hätte.— [*Briefe*, iii:256, lines 15–16]
>
> I would have liked to sit in a corner in Strasbourg—but no—I believe that I would not have had a peaceful night.

It seems certain from this that Mozart had heard of the tremendous success of *Entführung* in Strasbourg just three weeks before, and he writes as if he expects Leopold to have heard about it as well—which he may well have, had he read the 3 Feb issue of the *Augspurgische Ordinari Postzeitung*, his home-town paper. Leopold's letters from this time are lost, but it is entirely possible that it was he who brought the story of the Strasbourg performance to his son's attention. Mozart writes that he wishes that he had "in einem Winkel sitzen mögen," or as English speakers might now say, that he had been a fly on the wall.

Mozart refers again to the Strasbourg performance of *Entführung* several months later in a letter to Leopold on 6 Dec 1783, in which he writes of a demand from Jean-Georges Scherz for repayment with interest of a debt that Mozart incurred in the second half of Oct 1778 as he stopped in Strasbourg on his way home to Salzburg from Paris:

> warum hat H: scherz die ganze lange zeit nicht mehr von sich hören lassen?—Mein Name ist doch nicht so verborgen! — Meine opera welche in Strasburg aufgeführt worden, hat ihm doch wenigstens müssen vermuthen lassen daß ich [in] Wienn war? [*Briefe* iii:293, lines 34ff]

> Why has Herr Scherz not been heard from for all of this long time?—My name isn't exactly hidden!—My opera that was performed in Strasbourg should have at least made him suspect that I was in Vienna?

Mozart had drawn 8 (or 12) Louis d'or on account through Scherz in Strasbourg in 1778, and he had apparently been under the impression that Leopold had arranged repayment at that time (see the commentary in *Briefe* v:159; these letters and the reference to a performance of *Entführung* in Strasbourg are also discussed in Massin 1997, 408).

The report in the *Augspurgische Ordinari Postzeitung* states that new lines were hastily invented to add to the final chorus of *Entführung* to celebrate the newly signed peace accord. This final chorus is "Bassa Selim lebe lange"; although the report refers to the "last verse," the chorus actually consists of just a single quatrain of trochaic tetrameter, repeated several times, with portions of lines also often repeated:

> Bassa Selim lebe lange
> Ehre sei sein Eigenthum,
> Seine holde Scheitel prange
> Voll von Jubel, voll von Ruh.

It would not have taken extraordinary skill to invent on the spot a new quatrain on this model that celebrated the peace (the word "Friede" is itself a trochee, as is "Prätor"; a first line for the new verse might well have been "Unser Prätor lebe lange"). According to the news report, the reception of the opera had been so tremendous, and the jubilation over the peace so great, that the public had successfully demanded a second performance of *Entführung* the following day (25 Jan, the dateline of the report), and that this indeed took place, including the new verse in the closing chorus celebrating the peace.

Notes (⇧)

The performances by Koberwein's company in Strasbourg are poorly documented; prior to the discovery of this report in the *Augspurgische Ordinari Postzeitung*, the company's earliest known performance of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* in Strasbourg had been one on 17 Dec 1788, a performance for which a poster survives (personal communication from Henry Price). The poster states that the performance would be the debuts of "Herr Morschhauser" (actually Murschhauser) and his wife. That Herr and Frau Murschhauser made their debuts with the Koberwein company in *Entführung* is confirmed in the *Theater-Kalender* for 1790 (120), which, however, places the debuts in Nov 1788. The *Theater-Kalender* for 1790 describes D*ie Entführung aus dem Serail* as one of the "neuaufgeführte Stücke" (newly performed works) in the company's repertory in the season 1788–89. The report in the *Augspurgische Ordinari Postzeitung* and the references in Mozart's letters leave little doubt that the company had already performed the opera in Strasbourg in Jan 1783, but it is possible that it may not have performed *Entführung* in Strasbourg often or at all in the interim, thus making the revival in 1788 a new production.

It has often been stated in the Mozart literature that *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* was premiered in Prague by the theatrical company of Karl Wahr in the autumn of 1782, and that this was the first performance of the opera outside Vienna (see, for example, Dokumente, 183; also Bauman 1987, 102–4 and Table 5, listing first performances of the opera in various cities during Mozart's lifetime; Bauman's table does not list Strasbourg). However, there is no known primary evidence to support this claim. The notion that the Prague premiere took place in 1782 seems to derive from Oscar Teuber (1885, 206), who cites no source and gives no specific date for the performance (apart from the year); Teuber merely quotes Niemetschek (1808, 34–35), who claims to have attended the first performance of the opera in Prague, but likewise gives no date. The earliest known Prague libretto for the opera is one published by Diesbach in 1783.

Two eighteenth-century sources list *Entführung* among the operas performed in Prague after Easter 1783 in the (newly completed) theater of Count Nostitz. A report from Prague printed under the dateline "August 1783" in Carl Friedrich Cramer's *Magazin der Musik* (Erster Jahrgang, Zweyte Hälfte, 997–1001) names *Entführung* among seven operas performed in the Nostitz theater since Easter of that year (it does not specify that any of the operas were new):

> *[999]*
> Die Opern, so hier auf den Gräflichen Natio=
> nal=Theater seit Ostern aufgeführet worden, sind fol=
> gende: Robert und Kaliste, des Guglielmi Sposa
> fedele. Bendas Romeo und Julie. Gaßmanns
> Liebe unter den Handwerksleuten. Mozart des
> jüngern die Entführung aus dem Serail, so aus=
>
> *[1000]*
> serordentlichen Beyfall erhalten. Der Rauchfangs=
> kehrer, von Salieri. Das Gräfliche Fräulein,
> von Schmidt, einen Mitglied der Gesellschaft. Rauz=
> zini Pyramus und Thisbe.

[translation]

> The operas that were performed here since
> Easter in the Count's National-Theater are as
> follows: *Robert und Kaliste*, from Guglielmi's
> *La sposa fedele*. Bendas's *Romeo und Julie*.
> Gassmann's *Liebe unter den Handwerksleuten*.
> Mozart the younger, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*
> which received extraordinary acclaim. *Der*
> *Rauchfangskehrer* by Salieri. *Das Gräfliche Fräulein*
> by Schmidt, a member of the company. Rauzzini
> *Pyramus und Thisbe*.

This reference to *Entführung* is included in *Dokumente* (195), although Deutsch reiterates in his commentary (without citing a source) that the opera had already been performed in Prague in the autumn of the previous year. However, the *Theater-Kalender* for 1784 lists *Entführung* as one of the "new" works given in Prague after Easter 1783 (this reference is not in *Dokumente*):

> *[251]*
>
> Prag.
> Unternehmer. Se. Excellenz Hr. Graf Franz An=
> ton von Nostitz *[...]*

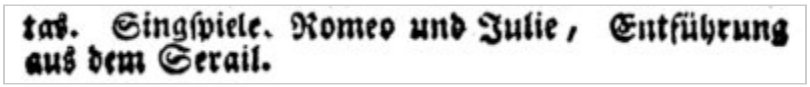

Prag.

Unternehmer. Se. Excellenz Hr. Graf Franz An-
ton von Nostitz, Obrist Burggraf des König-

> *[253]*
> *[...]*
> Seit Ostern sind folgende neue Stücke einstudirt
> worden: *[...]*


Seit Ostern ſind folgende neue Stücke einſtudirt
worden: Der Eilfertige, die beyden Billets, Gaſ-

> *[...]*
> Singspiele. Romeo und Julie, Entführung
> aus dem Serail.


taſ. Singſpiele. Romeo und Julie, Entführung
aus dem Serail.

This listing of *Entführung* as a "new work" in 1783 would seem to be strong evidence against a premiere in Prague in late 1782. It seems likely, then, that the opera had its Prague premiere some time between Easter (20 Apr) and Aug 1783, although the exact date remains unknown. (On the unsubstantiated date of 1782 for the Prague premiere, and the primary evidence suggesting a premiere in 1783, see Lederer 2011, 24–26; Lederer was the first to note the importance of the reference in the *Theater-Kalender* for 1784.)

The first of Neukäufler's two references to Mozart, regarding his meeting with Mozart in Vienna, is in *Addenda* (96), but the second reference, from his conversation with Koberwein, is not. For more on Neukäufler's biography, see Price 1997 and 2008. Schiffmann (1930), in his title and introduction, gives the year of Neukäufler's birth as 1754, but the text of Neukäufler's autobiography gives his date of baptism as 18 Jul 1753 (on this point see Price 2008, 351, note 15). It is not known precisely when Neukäufler left Schikaneder's company to join that of Franz Bulla. Schikaneder's engagement in Salzburg extended from 17 Sep 1780 to 27 Feb 1781 (Shrove Tuesday; see the *Theater-Journal für Deutschland*, xix:37–45). Neukäufler states in his autobiography that he left Schikaneder in 1780 (Schiffmann 1930, 58); however, he says that his reason for leaving was to avoid another long and arduous journey with Schikaneder's company

across the mountains to Graz, its next engagement following Salzburg. This would seem to imply that Neukäufler remained with Schikaneder to the end of the engagement in Salzburg at the beginning of Lent 1781, when the company would have departed for Graz (for more on Neukäufler's motivations for leaving Schikaneder and the timing of his departure, see Price 2008, 353–54).

In his memoir, Neukäufler lists the plays in which he saw Schröder perform in Vienna:

> Das erste Stück, das ich sah, war der "Fähnrich" [Der Fähndrich] von Schröder, das zweite der "Dankbare Sohn". Im ersten gab Schröder den Baron Harrwitz, im zweiten den Vater Rode meisterhaft. Dann bewunderte ich ihn in der "Eugenie" als Baron Hartley, in "Henriette oder sie ist schon verheiratet" als Obrist, in "Emilia Galotti" als Odoardo. [Schiffmann 1930, 59]
>
> The first play that I saw was *Der Fähndrich* by Schröder, the second *Der dankbare Sohn*. In the first Schröder played Baron Harrwitz, in the second, masterfully, the father Rode. Then I marveled at him in *Eugeni*e as Baron Hartley, in *Henriette, oder Sie ist schon verheiratet* as Obrist, in *Emilia Galotti* as Odoardo.

Neukäufler's remembered sequence of the roles he saw Schröder perform cannot be entirely accurate. Although he does not give specific dates in his memoir, we know that Neukäufler was with Bulla's company in Linz in May 1781, and he probably would have remained with the company through the summer season. It seems safe to assume, then, that he would have left Bulla to go to Vienna no earlier than the autumn of 1781. If Neukäufler's description of his time with Hellmann's company is accurate, then he would have been in Krems, 75 km from Vienna, from the end of March 1782 to at least mid May. Given the distance, traveling conditions in the eighteenth century, and the fact that he was an important utility player in Hellmann's company, it seems unlikely that Neukäufler would have had time or opportunity to make quick trips to Vienna to attend performances in the Burgtheater in the middle of his engagement in Krems.

Neukäufler writes that he first saw Schröder in the role of Baron Harrwitz, in Schröder's own *Der Fähndrich*. This play was premiered in Vienna on 23 Sep 1782, and this was therefore the earliest performance of the play that Neukäufler could have attended. He implies that he later saw Schröder as Odoardo in Lessing's *Emilia Galotti*; but during this period, *Emilia Galotti* was performed in Vienna only on 1 Jan and 9 May 1782, then not again until 4 Sep 1783, long after Neukäufler had left Vienna to join Koberwein. So during his visit to Vienna in 1781 and 1782, Neukäufler can only have seen Schröder as Odoardo in Lessing's play several months before seeing him as Baron Harrwitz in *Der Fähndrich*. During the period of Neukäufler's visit to Vienna, *Gustav Wasa* was given only on 22 Jul 1782 (the premiere), 24 Jul, and 21 Aug; it was not performed again in Vienna until 14 Oct 1784. Thus Neukäufler can only have seen Schröder as Gustav several weeks before he saw him in *Der Fähndrich*. Neukäufler's remembered chronology includes several such discrepancies.

The Augsburg engagement of the company of Karl August Dobler is briefly summarized in Witz (1876, 48–49), who gives the dates of the engagement as 23 Sep 1782 to 4 Mar 1783. A report in the *Theater-Journal für Deutschland* (xxi, 86–95) regarding Dobler's engagement in Augsburg lists the company's repertory, but only for the period from Christmas 1782 to 4 Mar 1783 (specific dates are not given for the

performances); *Der Westindier*, the play that Neukäufler claims to have seen in Augsburg, is not on this list, which would imply that it was given before Christmas 1782, which implies in turn that Neukäufler made his stopover in Augsburg before Christmas. We have not yet been able to see *Theater-Journal der von der hier unter der Doblerischen Direction stehenden Gesellschaft deutscher Schauspieler aufgeführten Schauspiele, nebst andern theatralischen Anmerkungen. Herausgegeben von einem Mitglied der Gesellschaft* (Augsburg, 1783; WorldCat records are here and here); if this book gives dates for performances of *Der Westindier* by Dobler's company, it may be possible to determine more precisely when Neukäufler was in Augsburg, and thus to date more precisely when he left Vienna.

Haass (1982, 23) states that Koberwein's company had a guest engagement in Karlsruhe from Sep 1782 to Jan 1783. Haass does not give a source for this claim; if true, it apparently conflicts with Neukäufler's story that he traveled directly from Vienna to Strasbourg and first met Koberwein and his company there. (Neukäufler does mention traveling through Karlsruhe on his way to Strasbourg; see Schiffmann 1930, 78).

We are tremendously grateful to Henry Price for his generosity in sharing with us the results of his many years of research on Jakob Neukäufler, for his helpful comments on drafts of this commentary, and for providing us with scans of the relevant pages from Schiffmann 1930 and a complete copy of Koberwein's rare autobiography. We are also grateful to David Buch for his comments on this commentary and his replies to particular queries.

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