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Mozart is awarded the third receipts from *Die Zauberflöte* (5 Oct 1791)

Dexter Edge

Bayreuther Zeitung, no. 121, Tue, 11 Oct 1791

[947]

Wien, vom 5. October.

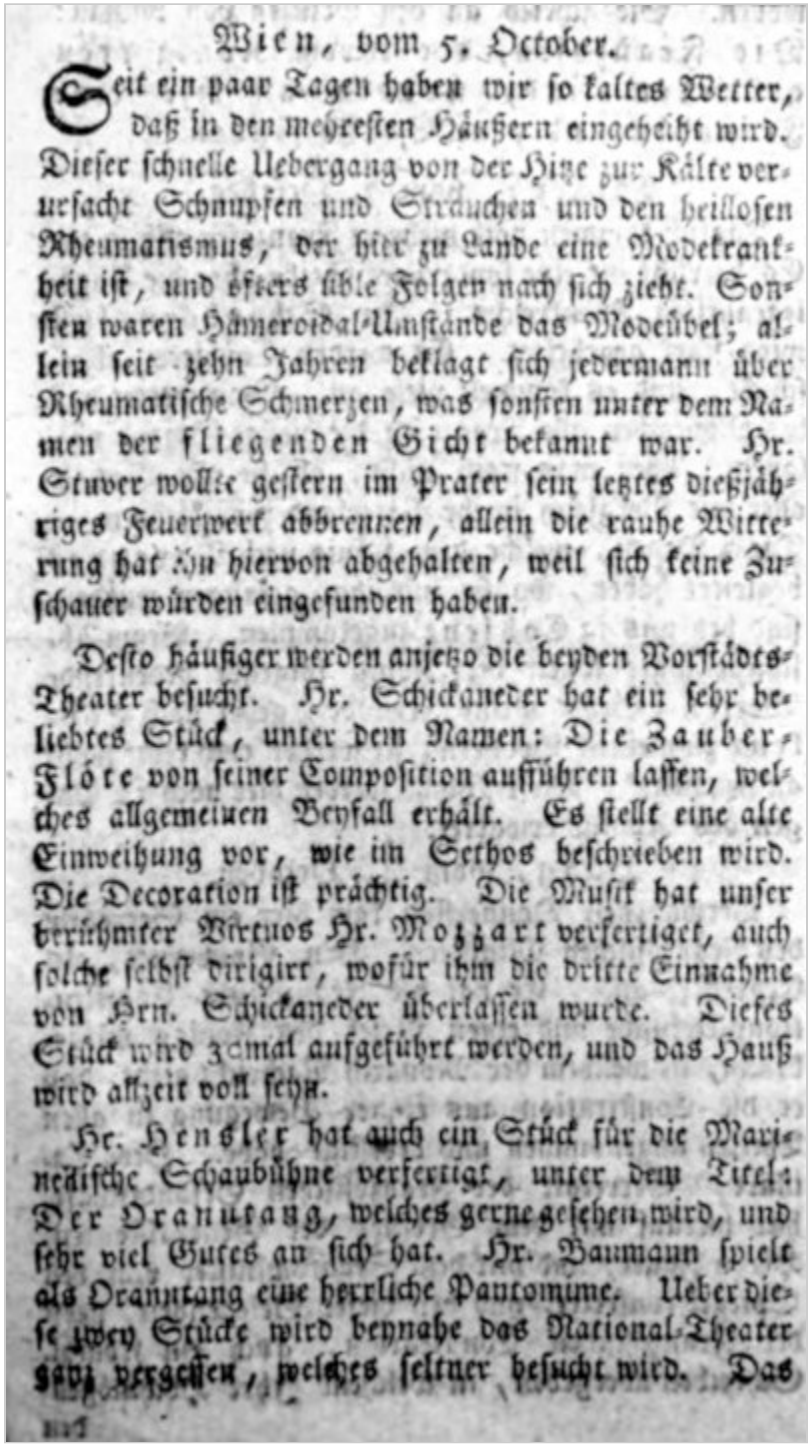
Seit ein paar Tagen haben wir so kaltes Wetter, daß in den mehresten Häußern eingeheiht [*sic*] wird. Dieser schnelle Uebergang von der Hitze zur Kälte ver= ursacht Schnupfen und Strauchen und den heillosen Rheumatismus, der hier zu Lande eine Modekrank= heit ist, und öfters üble Folgen nach sich zieht. Son= sten waren Hämeroidal=Umstände das Modeübel; al= lein seit zehn Jahren beklagt sich jedermann über Rheumatische Schmerzen, was sonsten unter dem Na= men der fliegenden Gicht bekannt war. Hr. Stuver wollte gestern im Prater sein letztes dießjäh= riges Feuerwerk abbrennen, allein die rauhe Witte= rung hat ihn hiervon abgehalten, weil sich keine Zu= schauer würden eingefunden haben.

Desto häufiger werden anjetzo die beyden Vorstädts= Theater besucht. Hr. Schickaneder hat ein sehr be= liebtes Stück, unter dem Namen: **Die Zauber= Flöte** von seiner Composition aufführen lassen, wel= ches allgemeinen Beyfall erhält. Es stellt eine alte Einweihung vor, wie im Sethos beschrieben wird. Die Decoration ist prächtig. Die Musik hat unser berühmter Virtuos Hr. **Mozzart** verfertiget, auch solche selbst dirigirt, wofür ihm die dritte Einnahme von Hrn. Schikaneder überlassen wurde. Dieses Stück wird 3 mal aufgeführt werden, und das Hauß wird allzeit voll seyn.

Hr. **Hensler** hat auch ein Stück für die Mari= nellische Schaubühne verfertigt, unter dem Titel: **Der Oranutang**, welches gerne gesehen wird, und sehr viel Gutes an sich hat. Hr. Baumann spielt

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als Oranutang eine herrliche Pantomime. Ueber die=
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ganz vergessen, welches seltner besucht wird. *[...]*



Wien, vom 5. October.

Seit ein paar Tagen haben wir so kaltes Wetter, daß in den mehresten Häußern eingeheizt wird. Dieser schnelle Uebergang von der Hize zur Kälte verursacht Schnupfen und Sträuchen und den heillosen Rheumatismus, der hier zu Lande eine Modekrankheit ist, und öfters üble Folgen nach sich zieht. Sonsten waren Hämeroidal-Umstände das Modeübel; allein seit zehn Jahren beklagt sich jedermann über Rheumatische Schmerzen, was sonsten unter dem Namen der fliegenden Gicht bekannt war. Hr. Stuver wollte gestern im Prater sein lezтes dießjähriges Feuerwerk abbrennen, allein die rauhe Witterung hat ihn hiervon abgehalten, weil sich keine Zuschauer würden eingefunden haben.

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Hr. Hensler hat auch ein Stück für die Marinellische Schaubühne verfertigt, unter dem Titel: Der Oranutang, welches gerne gesehen wird, und sehr viel Gutes an sich hat. Hr. Baumann spielt als Oranutang eine herrliche Pantomime. Ueber diese zwey Stücke wird beynahe das National-Theater ganz vergessen, welches seltner besucht wird. Das

[translation:]

Vienna, 5 October

For the past few days we have had such cold

weather that ovens have been lit in most houses. This quick transition from heat to cold has brought on head colds and sniffles and terrible rheumatism, which is a fashionable illness in these parts, and occasionally leads to serious consequences. Formerly, hemorrhoidal troubles were the fashionable illness; but for ten years everyone has complained of rheumatic pain, which was formerly known under the name flying gout. Herr Stuwer wanted to shoot off his final fireworks of this year in the Prater yesterday [4 Oct], but the harsh weather prevented him, because no spectators would have turned up.

Thus at present the two suburban theaters are all the more frequently attended. Herr Schikaneder has had performed a very popular piece of his composition under the name *Die Zauberflöte*, which has received universal acclaim. It depicts an ancient initiation, as described in *Sethos*. Our famous virtuoso Herr Mozart produced the music and directed it himself, for which he was granted the third receipts by Herr Schikaneder. This piece has been performed three times, and the house was full every time.

Herr Hensler has produced a piece for the Marinelli stage, under the title Der Oranutang [*sic]* which been well received and has very much good in it. Herr Baumann as the orangutan gives a marvelous pantomime. Beyond these two pieces, the Nationaltheater, which is attended less often, is almost entirely forgotten. *[...]*

Commentary

This chatty report on Viennese life, weather, and entertainment at the beginning of Oct 1791 states that Mozart was awarded the proceeds from the third performance of *Die Zauberflöte* ("die dritte Einnahme"), a claim for which there is currently no other known source. It is, in fact, the only known evidence from the time that directly addresses Mozart's compensation for the opera, and it is an important early witness to the opera's reception. The report is dated 5 Oct (a Wednesday), five days after the opera's premiere on Fri, 30 Sep, and it was evidently sent to the *Bayreuther Zeitung* from Vienna by a private correspondent. Because it provides a wealth of illuminating detail within three short paragraphs, the report is worth unpacking at some length.

This commentary will discuss:

• The number of performances of *Die Zauberflöte* that had taken place by 5 Oct and how many of those performances Mozart might have directed from the keyboard.

• The claim that Mozart was awarded the receipts from the third performance, and how much those receipts might have amounted to.

• The resemblance noted by the correspondent between the initiations depicted in *Die Zauberflöte* and *Sethos,* a book by Jean Terrasson.

• The Viennese context at the time of the opera's premiere, as described in the report: the weather; Stuwer's firework displays; Hensler's play *Der Orang Outang* at the "Marinelli" theater (the Theater in der Leopoldstadt), which had its premiere on the same night as *Die Zauberflöte*, Fri, 30 Sep 1791; and the public's alleged lack of enthusiasm for the offerings of the court theater at the time.

(For a survey of the sources bearing on the earliest performances of *Die Zauberflöte*, see the commentary to our entry for 1 Oct 1791.)

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The number of performances of *Die Zauberflöte* under Mozart's direction (⇧)

Die Zauberflöte was unquestionably a huge hit: the opera was performed very frequently over the next months and years, soon racking up numbers of performances that were unprecedented in Viennese theatrical life up to that point. Yet the documentary evidence for the opera's early performance history is surprisingly thin. Some of what has been handed down in the Mozart literature as fact about the earliest performances of *Die Zauberflöte* can be traced back to an

article published in 1841, fifty years after the premiere, by Georg Friedrich Treitschke (1776–1842).

Treitschke's article—"Die Zauberflöte. Der Dorfbarbier. Fidelio. Beitrag zur musikalischen Kunstgeschichte"—is framed as a fictional conversation among three elderly friends, Ernst, Adam, and Friedrich, who are reminiscing about the golden age of Viennese music, 1780 to 1820. Ernst tells of the early performance history of *Die Zauberflöte*, and gives precise numbers: the opera was performed sixteen times in a row immediately following the premiere ("dann unausegesetzt sechzehn Wiederholungen"), and twenty-four times in Oct 1791, taking in a total of 8443 fl 20 kr from the twenty-five performances up to that point (Treitschke 1841, 246–47). According to Ernst, the theater's poster for 20 Nov 1792 claimed that it would be the 100th performance, but it was actually the 83rd, and the poster for 22 Oct 1795 claimed that it would be the 200th, but it was really only the 135th. Otto Erich Deutsch, in his 1937 study of the Theater auf der Wieden, reproduces all of Ernst's numbers, but fails to cite his source—and the numbers have consequently established themselves as fact in the Mozart literature (Deutsch 1937a, 60–61, 65; 2nd corrected edition, Deutsch 1937b, 33–34, 37).

Although embedded in a fictional narrative, the numbers cannot be dismissed out of hand: Treitschke had a long association with the Theater an der Wien (the successor to the Theater auf der Wieden), and it is possible that he had access to early documents that are now lost. But the numbers must be treated with skepticism, and there is conflicting evidence. Count Zinzendorf recorded in his diary that the performance of *Die Zauberflöte* he attended on 6 Nov 1791 was the twenty-fourth, a number he might well have seen on the poster; this contradicts Treitschke's implication that there had been twenty-five performances by the end of Oct. (On this point, see also our entry for 1 Oct 1791.) If we read Treitschke to mean that *Die Zauberflöte* was performed on 17 consecutive days at the beginning of its run, then the report in the *Bayreuther Zeitung* contradicts him: it states that there had been three performances by 5 Oct, the date of the report, implying that it had not been performed on two of those five days. (On the other hand, it is possible that Treitschke meant to imply that the opera was performed seventeen times in a row, but not necessarily on consecutive days, before the company performed any other work.)

We know from surviving posters that the opera was performed on 30 Sep and 1 Oct, so if the report in the *Bayreuther Zeitung* is correct, the third performance must have taken place on 2, 3, or 4 Oct, although the correspondent does not say which. The posters from the first two performances both state that Mozart himself would direct the orchestra:

> Herr Mozard wird aus Hochachtung für ein gnädiges und verehrungswürdiges Publikum, und aus Freundschaft gegen den Verfasser des Stücks, das Orchester heute selbst diregiren. [*Dokumente*, 357]
>
> Herr Mozart, out of high regard for a gracious and esteemed public, and out of friendship for the author of the piece, will today direct the orchestra himself.

(The poster for the second performance reads identically, but corrects "Mozard" to "Mozart" and "diregiren" to "dirigiren.") In an eighteenth-century context, the implication is that Mozart led the orchestra from the keyboard, not that he "conducted" in the modern sense.

It was not unusual for composers to direct the orchestra in the earliest performances of their new operas. In the longer of his two autobiographies, Joseph Weigl (1766–1846) notes that Mozart directed the first three performances of *Le nozze di Figaro* in the Burgtheater in Vienna in 1786, and the first three of *Don Giovanni* in that same theater in 1788 (Angermüller 1973, 54). The surviving posters for *Die Zauberflöte* show that Mozart directed at least the first two performances of the opera in the Theater auf der Wieden in 1791. Did he direct more than two?

The early Mozart literature transmits conflicting traditions. Treitschke (1841, 247, footnote) claims that Mozart led the first three performances from the keyboard, with Süßmayr turning pages and Johann Baptist Henneberg, music director at the Theater auf der Wieden, playing glockenspiel. No known documentary evidence from the time of the premiere confirms this version. (Ignaz von Seyfried, writing the year before Treitschke, also mentions Süßmayr turning pages; see Seyfried 1840, 184; also Buch 2005, 129, note 18.)

An alternative tradition can be traced to an article published in 1842 by Aloys Fuchs (1799–1853): he has Mozart leading the first two performances of *Die Zauberflöte*, with Henneberg directing the third and Mozart watching from a box. This claim has often been adopted as fact by subsequent writers (some of whom incorporate the detail about Süßmayr turning pages, as per Treitschke and Seyfried). It is indeed reasonable to assume that Henneberg, as music director of the theater, would eventually have taken over from Mozart, regardless of how many performances Mozart led at the beginning of the run. But Fuchs's story likewise lacks documentary confirmation from the time. On the current state of evidence, then, we cannot say whether Mozart or Henneberg directed the third performance.

The correspondent to the *Bayreuther Zeitung* offers no new information on this point, stating merely:

> Die Musik hat unser berühmter Virtuos Hr. Mozzart verfertiget, auch solche selbst dirigirt, wofür ihm die dritte Einnahme von Hrn. Schikaneder überlassen wurde.
>
> Our famous virtuoso Herr Mozart produced the music and directed it himself, for which he was granted the third receipts by Herr Schikaneder.

The correspondent states that Mozart directed, without specifying how many times, and that he was granted the receipts from the third performance, presumably for having composed and directed the music. But the syntax is ambiguous: because the word "wofür" (for which) comes directly after "dirigirt," the sentence can be read as implying that Mozart was rewarded specifically for directing, but it can also be read as implying that he was rewarded for composing and directing.

Mozart's compensation for *Die Zauberflöte* (⇧)

Before the discovery of this report in the *Bayreuther Zeitung*, we had no documents from the time regarding Mozart's compensation (or lack of it) for composing *Die Zauberflöte*. As often happens in the Mozart literature, the absence of evidence was filled with competing narratives. Again, there are two contradictory traditions.

One, stemming from Rochlitz (1798, col. 83–84), implies that Mozart received no direct compensation from Schikaneder for *Die Zauberflöte*, but retained the exclusive right to sell copies of the score. (In fictional dialogue, Rochlitz has Mozart himself suggesting this arrangement; Rochlitz also implies that Schikaneder—whom he refers to only as "ein gewisser Schauspieldirektor," rather than by name—reneged on the promise). Two letters written shortly after Mozart's death suggest that he may indeed have retained the right to sell copies of the score, at least during the period directly following the premiere. On 10 Dec, just just five days after Mozart died, Jakob Haibel (a member of Schikaneder's company who later married Mozart's sister-in-law Sophie) wrote to Wolfgang Heribert von Dalberg, intendant of the theater in Mannheim, stating that he could not yet procure *Die Zauberflöte* for Dalberg "inasmuch as Herr Mozart has died and during his lifetime he valued the score at 100 ducats" ("indem H. Mozart gestorben, und er bey seinen Lebzeiten noch die Partitur davon auf 100 Dukaten angeschlagen"; for the full text of this passage and further discussion of Haibel's letter, see our entry for 1 Oct 1791). Eighteen days later, on 28 Dec 1791, Constanze Mozart wrote to Luigi Simonetti in Bonn offering the scores of *Die Zauberflöte* and *La clemenza di Tito* for 100 imperial ducats (450 fl) each, the same price mentioned by Haibel (*Briefe*, iv:177–78; for a more detailed discussion of this letter, see Edge 2001, 649–53). Both letters are consistent with Rochlitz's story, but they by no means prove that Mozart received nothing directly from Schikaneder for composing the opera.

The other tradition can be traced back at least to Seyfried (1840, 180), who claims that Mozart was paid 100 ducats for composing *Die Zauberflöte*. This was the standard fee in Vienna at the time for operas commissioned by the court theaters (see Edge 1991), but Schikaneder is not known to have paid fees for any other operas composed for the Theater auf der Wieden, many of which were collaboratively composed in any case. If the correspondent to the *Bayreuther Zeitung* is correct that Schikaneder awarded Mozart the receipts from the third performance, this may have been in addition to a set fee for which we as yet have no other evidence, or it may itself have been the fee. At present we simply cannot say.

It is entirely plausible that Mozart might have been awarded the third receipts. It was a common practice in the eighteenth century to grant an author, composer, or performer the receipts from a performance. The court theater in Vienna made at least twelve such awards between 1778 and the end of the theatrical season in 1792 (see Edge 1991, Table 2 and the accompanying discussion). Mozart himself was awarded box-office receipts at least one other time during his career: on 4 Nov 1787 he wrote from Prague to his friend Gottfried von Jacquin in Vienna that the performance

of *Don Giovanni* the previous day (the fourth performance) had been "to my benefit" ("zu meinem Benefice"; *Briefe*, iv:58), implying that he had been granted the receipts. The poster from the third performance of *Die Zauberflöte* is not known to survive, but surviving posters from other productions at the Theater auf der Wieden and a catalog prepared by Ignaz von Seyfried show that performances there were sometimes for the benefit of playwrights, singers, or actors. On at least one occasion, a composer was the beneficiary: the fourth performance of *Das Labyrinth* (a sequel to *Die Zauberflöte*), on 15 Jun 1798, is recorded by Seyfried as having been "zum Vorteil" (to the benefit of) Peter Winter, the opera's composer. (We are grateful to David Buch for information on benefit performances at the Theater auf der Wieden).

How much would the "dritte Einnahme" for *Die Zauberflöte* have amounted to? No primary documentation is known recording the receipts from any performance in the Theater auf der Wieden. Treitschke, writing fifty years after the fact, but possibly drawing on primary sources that are now lost or unknown, claimed that the opera took in 8443 fl 20 kr from its first twenty-five performances (figures that Deutsch reproduced without attribution in 1937). The very specificity of Treitschke's numbers tends to make them believable, but we cannot rule out the possibility that he may have relied on hearsay or simply made them up.

If for the sake of argument we accept his numbers, they would imply average receipts of 337 fl 44 kr per performance over the first twenty-five performances. How would this figure have compared with the receipts at other Viennese theaters? In an earlier publication, one of us has analyzed in detail a complete run of box-office receipts from the Burgtheater for the theatrical seasons 1789–90 and 1790–91 (Edge 1996). The average receipts from all 604 performances in that theater for which tickets were sold over those two seasons (counting both operas and plays) were 237 fl 20 kr, 100 gulden less than the hypothetical estimate for the first twenty-five performances of *Die Zauberflöte*. However, the box-office receipts recorded by the Burgtheater did not, so far as we know, include proceeds from the sale of tickets for boxes; the boxes in the court theater were generally subscribed, not sold by the performance. The Theater auf der Wieden also had boxes, but we do not know whether the theater sold subscriptions for them; it may be that tickets for some or all boxes were sold for individual performances. If so, we would expect the average receipts to be correspondingly higher than if the boxes had been subscribed.

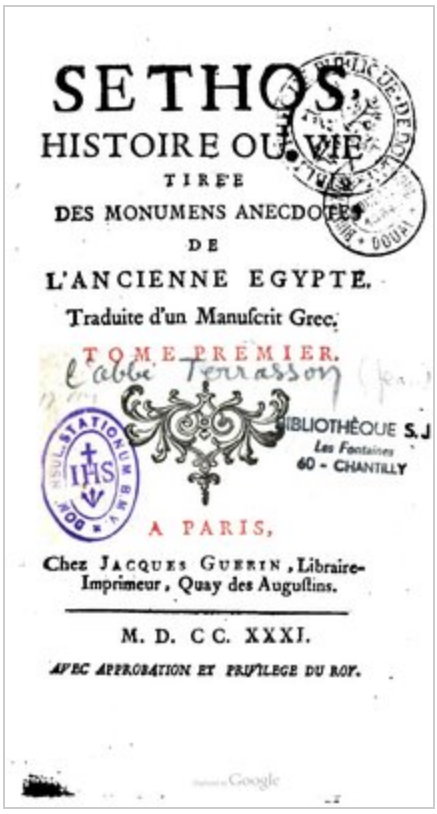
A second point of comparison is provided by the receipts from thirty-one performances in the Kärntnertortheater by the Schikaneder-Kumpf company, from 5 Nov 1784 to 6 Feb 1785 (see the entry on this site for 5 Nov 1784). The receipts from that company's residency (again mixing operas and plays) averaged 348 fl per performance, quite close to the hypothetical average for the first twenty-five performances of *Die Zauberflöte* at the Theater auf der Wieden. The figures for the Kärntnertortheater probably include tickets for boxes as well as for individual seats. But comparisons between various Viennese theaters must be made with caution: both the Burgtheater and the Kärntnertortheater almost certainly had larger maximum capacities than did the Theater auf der Wieden, and ticket prices in the Theater auf der Wieden were generally lower than those in the court theaters. So the figures discussed here should be taken as, at best, indicative.

It seems reasonable to assume that the box-office receipts for *Die Zauberflöte* would have fallen off somewhat over the first six weeks of the run, so receipts from the third performance would likely have been higher than the average for the first twenty-five. In the final analysis (for we do not know if Treitschke's figures are true, nor do we even know for certain that Mozart was awarded the receipts from the third performance), the state of the evidence allows us only to make an educated guess at the receipts from the third performance of *Die Zauberflöte*. Based on the relatively weak evidence, a reasonable guess would be on the order of 400 fl.

The correspondent to the *Bayreuther Zeitung* notes that the theater was full for each of the earliest performances of *Die Zauberflöte*, a point that Mozart also makes in his last letters to Constanze. We do not know the exact capacity of the Theater auf der Wieden at this time, but it seems to have been significantly smaller than the Burgtheater, which could hold a maximum of around 1200 people.

Sethos **(⇧)**

It has long been recognized that one of the sources for the plot and text of *Die Zauberflöte* was *Sethos, histoire ou vie, tirée des monumens anecdotes de l'ancienne Egypte. Traduite d'un Manuscrit Grec*, first published anonymously in 1731 in three volumes, but soon acknowledged to be the work of Jean Terrasson (1670–1750); indeed, the publication of *Sethos* may have prompted Terrasson's election to the Académie française the following year (Macpherson 2004, 238).


SETHOS,
HISTOIRE OU VIE
TIRÉE
DES MONUMENS ANECDOTES
DE
L'ANCIENNE EGYPTE.
Traduite d'un Manuscrit Grec.
TOME PREMIER.
l'abbé Terrasson
BIBLIOTHÈQUE S.J
Les Fontaines
60 - CHANTILLY
A PARIS,
Chez JACQUES GUERIN, Libraire-Imprimeur, Quay des Augustins.
M. D. C C. XXXI.
AVEC APPROBATION ET PRIVILEGE DU ROY.

Jean Terrasson, *Sethos* (1731), vol. 1, title page
(Google Books)

Sethos purports to be a translation from a "Greek manuscript"; Egyptian hieroglyphs had not yet been deciphered at the time, so knowledge of ancient Egypt was still largely derived from ancient Greek and Latin writers, whose knowledge of Egyptian history was tenuous at best. Terrasson's *Sethos* is, in any case, entirely fictional, although it is said to draw heavily on the *Bibliotheca historica* by Diodorus Siculus (Diodorus of Sicily), which Terrasson himself translated and published in seven volumes a few years later. The name "Sethos" is a Greek form of the Egyptian "Seti," the name of two pharaohs and several other historical figures in ancient Egypt, meaning "of [the god] Seth."

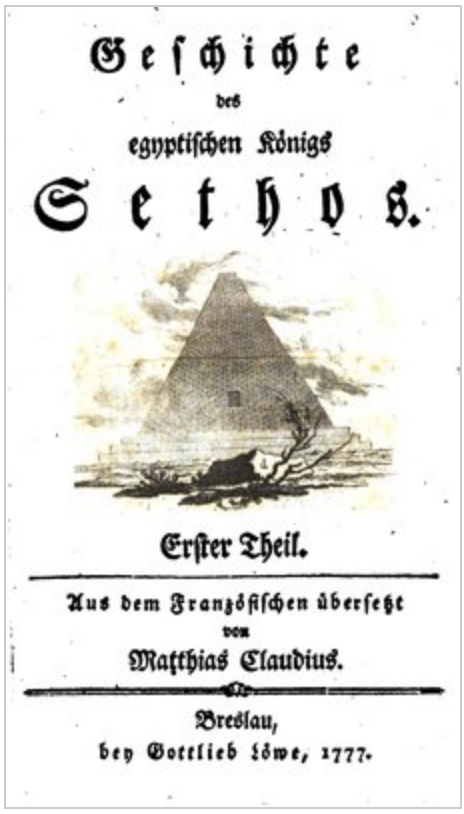
Sethos was widely read and admired throughout the eighteenth century. A second French edition appeared already in 1732. The first German translation, by Christoph Gottlieb Wend (? – 1745), was published in three volumes that same year, as was an English translation by Thomas Lediard. *Sethos* was also translated into Italian (1734) and Russian (1777–78), and new French editions continued to appear until well into the nineteenth century. *Sethos* was admired by Frederick the Great: in Terrasson's book, a library in Thebes is described as having the phrase "La Nourriture de l'Ame" (the nourishment of the soul) inscribed over its entrance; Frederick had a Latin version of this phrase, "Nutrimentum Spiritus," placed over the entrance to the Royal Library in Berlin (Macpherson 2004, 238).



(Wikimedia Commons)

Sethos was particularly popular in Masonic circles, and the book is said to have played an important role in inspiring the incorporation of Egyptian symbols and themes into Masonic rituals (Macpherson 2004, 245ff). Terrasson's *Sethos* was also a direct inspiration for the play *Thamos, König in Ägypten* by Tobias Philipp Freiherr von Gebler, for which Mozart composed incidental music. A high priest named Sethos is a character in *Thamos*, and as Macpherson has pointed out, the name "Thamos" may have inspired the name "Tamino" (Macpherson 2004, 241).

A new German translation of *Sethos* by poet Matthias Claudius (1740–1815) appeared in two volumes in 1777 and 1778 under the title *Geschichte des egyptischen Königs Sethos*, and this is generally thought to be the version that Schikaneder and his Viennese contemporaries would have known. Claudius's translation was advertised in the *Wiener Zeitung* as early as 22 Oct 1777.


Geſchichte
des
egyptiſchen Königs
Sethos.
Erſter Theil.
Aus dem Franzöſiſchen überſetzt
von
Matthias Claudius.
Breslau,
bey Gottlieb Löwe, 1777.

Matthias Claudius, translation of Terrasson's *Sethos* (1777–78)
vol. 1, title page
(Google Books)

Claudius is known to music historians today for his poems set by Schubert (including *Death and the Maiden*) and by many other prominent composers, among them Webern, Hindemith, Reger, and even Humperdinck (see the listings for Claudius at The LiederNet Archive). Claudius is said to have been a Freemason (as was Gebler), which may have inspired his interest in *Sethos* (Macpherson 2004, 246, note 24).

Edward Dent provides a detailed description of the parallels between *Sethos* and *Die Zauberflöte* (Dent 1947, 224–28), and traces the history of the recognition of these parallels. According to Dent, the "connection of *Sethos* with *Die Zauberflöte* seems to have been first pointed out by Thomas Love Peacock in a review of Thomas Moore's tale, *The Epicurean* (1827)" (Dent 1947, 225, note 1; Peacock's review is in vol. 8 of *The Westminster Review*; his remark on the relationship between *Sethos* and *Die Zauberflöte* is on page 363). Dent credits Carl Gollmick as the first German scholar to recognize the connection in 1842, and Viktor Junk as the first to describe the parallels between the two works in detail in his 1899 study *Goethes Fortsetzung der Mozartschen Zauberflöte* (Junk's discussion of *Sethos* and *Die Zauberflöte* begins on page 14).

The report on *Die Zauberflöte* published in the *Bayreuther Zeitung* shows that parallels with *Sethos* were already recognized by the correspondent at the time of the opera's premiere:

> Hr. Schickaneder hat ein sehr beliebtes Stück, unter dem Namen: Die Zauber=Flöte von seiner Composition aufführen lassen, welches allgemeinen Beyfall erhält. Es stellt eine alte Einweihung vor, wie im Sethos beschrieben wird.
>
> Herr Schikaneder has had performed a very popular piece of his composition under the name *Die Zauberflöte*, which has received universal acclaim. It depicts an ancient initiation, as described in *Sethos*.

That the relationship was recognized from the first is not surprising: *Sethos* is a book that an educated and literary person in Mozart's Vienna quite likely would have known, and a literary Freemason almost certainly would have known.

Dent gives a concise summary of the plot:

> Sethos is an Egyptian prince, born in the century before the Trojan War. The first part of the book deals with his education and his initiation into the mysteries; the second part describes his travels in Africa as a universal lawgiver for savage tribes; finally, he returns to Egypt and retires into a college of initiates for the rest of his life. [Dent 1947, 225]

As Dent explains, *Die Zauberflöte* draws on Terrasson's first volume (principally the first four "books" of that volume), describing the prince's education and initiation. That the initiation in the opera was reminiscent of the one in *Sethos* was already noted by the correspondent to the *Bayreuther Zeitung*. Sethos' tutor and guide is Amedes ("Amedès" in Terrasson, without accent in Claudius); the similarity to "Amadeus" and "Amadè" cannot have escaped the opera's creators.

There are numerous parallels between the opera and the book: the details of the initiation, the locations, even specific wording. (For a detailed description of the parallels, see Branscombe 1991, 10–18, and his following section on *Thamos*, 18–20; see also Buch 2004, 195–97, and Dent 1947, 224–28.) A frequently cited example is the inscription over the archway through which Sethos must pass to follow the narrow path leading to the inner reaches of the pyramid in which his initiation will take place. In Terrasson, the inscription reads:

> QUICONQUE FERA CETTE ROUTE
> SEUL, ET SANS REGARDER DERRIE-
> RE LUI, SERA PURIFIE' PAR LE FEU,
> PAR L'EAU, ET PAR L'AIR; ET S'IL
> PEUT VAINCRE LA FRAYEUR DE LA
> MORT, IL SORTIRA DU SEIN DE LA
> TERRE, IL REVERRA LA LUMIERE,
> ET IL AURA DROIT DE PRE'PARER
> SON AME A LA REVELATION DES
> MYSTERES DE LA GRANDE DE'ESSE
> ISIS. [Terrasson 1731, book 3, 214]

Claudius translates this as:

> Wer diesen Weg allein geht, und
> ohne hinter sich zu sehen, der wird gereinigt
> werden durch das Feuer, durch das Wasser
> und durch die Luft; und wenn er das Schre=
> cken des Todes überwinden kann, wird er aus
> dem Schooß der Erde wieder herausgehen,
> und das Licht wieder sehen, und er wird das
> Recht haben, seine Seele zu der Offenbarung
> der Geheimnisse der großen Göttin Isis ge=
> faßt zu machen!
> [Terrasson 1777–78, trans. Claudius, book 3, 155]

This text is very similar to the words sung by the Two Armed Men in Act II, scene 28 of *Die Zauberflöte*, albeit modified into verse:

> Der, welcher wandert diese Strasse voll Beschwerden,
> Wird rein durch Feuer, Wasser, Luft und Erden;
> Wenn er des Todes Schrecken überwinden kann,
> Schwingt er sich aus der Erde Himmel an.
> Erleuchtet wird er dann im Stande seyn,
> Sich den Mysterien der Isis ganz zu weih'n.

That this passage in the opera was modeled on the corresponding passage in *Sethos* seems undeniable.

It may be, however, that the last word has yet to be said on the relationships among *Sethos*, its translations, and the opera. Most writers on *Sethos* and *Die Zauberflöte* mention Wend's earlier German translation, but none seems to have compared his text with that of Claudius. Wend's rendering of the inscription on the archway is:

> Wer diesen Weg allein / und ohne hinter sich
> zu sehen/ thun wird / soll durch Feuer / Wasser und
> Lufte gereinigt werden / und wo er das Schröcken
> des Todes überwinden kan/ soll er aus dem Schoosse
> der Erde herausgehen / das Licht wieder sehen und
> das Recht haben/ seine Seele zu Offenbarung derer
> Geheimnisse der grossen Göttin Isis zuzubereiten.
> [Terrasson 1732, trans. Wend, book 3, 149]

This is remarkably similar to the version in Claudius, and it seems likely that Claudius knew Wend's translation and may have drawn on it for his own, at least for this passage. But to pursue this question here would take us too far afield.

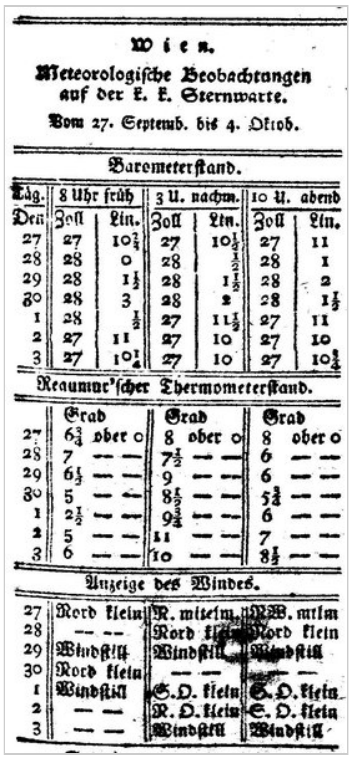
Viennese weather at the time of the premiere of *Die Zauberflöte* (⇧)

The report of the anonymous correspondent to the *Bayreuther Zeitung* begins with a paragraph describing an unseasonable cold snap in the days preceding the report:

> Seit ein paar Tagen haben wir so kaltes Wetter, daß in den mehresten Häußern eingeheiht [*sic*] wird. Dieser schnelle Uebergang von der Hitze zur Kälte verursacht Schnupfen und Strauchen und den heillosen Rheumatismus, der hier zu Lande eine Modekrankheit ist, und öfters üble Folgen nach sich zieht. Sonsten waren Hämeroidal=Umstände das Modeübel; allein seit zehn Jahren beklagt sich jedermann über Rheumatische Schmerzen, was sonsten unter dem Namen der fliegenden Gicht bekannt war. Hr. Stuver wollte gestern im Prater sein letztes dießjähriges Feuerwerk abbrennen, allein die rauhe Witterung hat ihn hiervon abgehalten, weil sich keine Zuschauer würden eingefunden haben.
>
> For the past few days we have had such cold weather that ovens have been lit in most houses. This quick transition from heat to cold has brought on head colds and sniffles and terrible rheumatism, which is a fashionable illness in these parts, and occasionally leads to serious consequences. Formerly hemorrhoidal troubles were the fashionable illness; but for ten years everyone has complained of rheumatic pain, which was formerly known under the name flying gout. Herr Stuwer wanted to shoot off his final fireworks of this year in the Prater yesterday [4 Oct], but the harsh weather prevented him, because no spectators would have turned up.

The implication is that people had to fire up their heating ovens earlier in the season than usual. (The word "eingeheiht" in the report is a typographical error for "eingeheitzt.")

Viennese temperatures from this time can be tracked in the *Wiener Zeitung*. In the "Anhang" of its Wednesday issue each week (the paper was published twice weekly), the *Wiener Zeitung* published tables giving the barometric pressure, the temperature, and the wind direction and character for the preceding Tuesday through Monday, recorded three times daily, at 8 am, 3 pm, and 10 pm. The image below shows the tables from the issue for Wed, 5 Oct 1791 giving the readings from the week of Tue, 27 Sep to Mon, 3 Oct 1791, the week of the premiere of *Die Zauberflöte*.



W i e n.

Meteorologische Beobachtungen auf der k. k. Sternwarte.

Vom 27. Septemb. bis 4. Oktob.

Barometerstand.

Tag.	8 Uhr früh		3 U. nachm.		10 U. abend	
Den	Zoll	Lin.	Zoll	Lin.	Zoll	Lin.
27	27	10¾	27	10½	27	11
28	28	0	28	½	28	1
29	28	1½	28	1½	28	2
30	28	3	28	2	28	1½
1	28	½	27	11½	27	11
2	27	11	27	10	27	10
3	27	10¼	27	10	27	10¾

Reaumur'scher Thermometerstand.

	Grad		Grad		Grad	
27	6¾	über 0	8	über 0	8	über 0
28	7	— —	7½	— —	6	— —
29	6½	— —	9	— —	6	— —
30	5	— —	8½	— —	5¾	— —
1	2½	— —	9¾	— —	6	— —
2	5	— —	11	— —	7	— —
3	6	— —	10	— —	8½	— —

Anzeige des Windes.

27	Nord klein	N. mitelm.	NW. mtlm
28	— —	Nord klein	Nord klein
29	Windstill	Windstill	Windstill
30	Nord klein	— —	— —
1	Windstill	S. O. klein	S. O. klein
2	— —	N. O. klein	S. O. klein
3	— —	Windstill	Windstill

Weather statistics for Vienna, 27 Sep to 4 Oct 179
Wiener Zeitung, 5 Oct 1791, Anhang, 2569

The uppermost table, "Barometerstand" records barometric pressure in Viennese inches (Zoll), which are subdivided into twelve "Linien." One Zoll is approximately 1.04 modern inches or 26.34 mm. Thus the barometric pressure recorded at 10μpm in Vienna on the evening of the premiere of *Die Zauberflöte* was 28 Zoll 1½ Linien, equivalent to 29.17 inches or 740.81 mm. The table at the bottom records the direction of the wind (for example, "Nord" = "north" on the morning of 30 Sep), along with an informal characterization of wind strength: "klein" ("light"), "mitelm." ("mittelmäßig" or "moderate"), "stark" ("strong", not present in this example), or "Windstill" (no wind).

The temperatures in the middle table were recorded using the Réaumur scale, named after René Antoine Ferchault de Réaumur (1683–1757); this scale was widely used in Europe in the eighteenth and well into the nineteenth century, before gradually being superseded by the Celsius scale. Like Celsius, the Réaumur scale takes the freezing point of water as 0 degrees (0 ºRé). The boiling point of water (100 ºC, 212 ºF) is set at 80 ºRé. (Réaumur's original thermometer was based on measuring the expansion of diluted alcohol, and was calibrated somewhat differently than the scale named after him.) The formulas for converting ºRé to ºC and ºF are quite simple: ºC = ºRé x 5/4 (or ºC = ºRé x 1.25) and ºF = ºRé x 9/4 + 32 (or ºF = ºRé x 2.25 + 32).

The following table shows the Viennese temperatures for the two weeks leading up to 5 Oct, the date of the anonymous correspondent's report to the *Bayreuther Zeitung* (temperatures are converted to Celsius):

Date	8am	3pm	10pm
20 Sep	11.25	15	12.5
21	10	15	11.25
22	11.25	15	9
23	11.25	15.3	11.25
24	10.6	15	11.25
25	10.6	15	10.6
26	8.75	11.25	10
27	8.4	10	10
28	8.75	9.4	7.5
29	8.1	11.25	7.5
30	6.25	10.6	7.2
1 Oct	3.1	12.2	7.5
2	6.25	13.75	8.75
3	7.5	12.5	10.6
4	8.1	12.5	7.5
5	6.25	13.75	8.75

To give a sense of these temperatures to readers more familiar with the Fahrenheit scale, the readings for 30 Sep 1791, the date of the premiere of *Die Zauberflöte*, are:

8 am 43.25 ºF
3 pm 51.1 ºF
10 pm 44.9 ºF

The temperatures reported in the *Wiener Zeitung* seem relatively cool but not especially cold; these were, after all, the first two weeks of autumn. There was a mild dip in temperature from 25 to 26 Sep (when, as we shall see, a new weather system seems to have moved in), and a sudden dip toward freezing on the morning following the premiere of *Die Zauberflöte*, when the temperature dropped to 3 ºC (37.6 ºF), before recovering to 12.2 ºC (53.9 ºF) by the afternoon.

Given the cold morning of 1 Oct, it is understandable that heating ovens might have been fired up: the preceding days had not been warm, and Viennese houses had probably lost any residual summer heat, so the cold of the morning of 1 Oct may have seemed more marked than usual. But were these temperatures unseasonably cold compared to recent years? The table below shows the temperatures for 20 Sep to 5 Oct in 1789 and 1790; to simplify the comparison, only the high and low for each day are given (all temperatures are converted to Celsius).

Date	Low	High	Low	High
	1789		**1790**	

Date	Low	High	Low	High
20 Sep	10	12.5	16.25	22.5
21	11.25	18.75	15	25
22	15	18.75	11.25	15
23	13.75	18.1	11.9	16.25
24	12.5	16.25	11.25	16.25
25	11.25	13.75	13.1	19.6
26	11.25	15.6	6.9	11.9
27	12.5	17.5	7.5	12.5
28	15	20.6	5	11.25
29	15.6	20	6.25	16.25
30	13.4	19.7	10.6	12.8
1 Oct	13.75	19.4	10	14.7
2	13.75	17.5	10.6	14.4
3	15	18.1	10.6	14.4
4	12.5	17.5	9.4	15.6
5	10.6	15	9.4	16.25

It is easy to see that temperatures during the first two weeks of autumn were relatively mild in 1789, with highs around 20 ºC in the last days of Sep, and the temperature never falling below 10 ºC for the morning reading. The corresponding period in 1790 was more variable, with quite warm temperatures on 20 and 21 Sep (as high as 25 ºC or 77 ºF), but with a drop to 5 ºC on the morning of 28 Sep, almost as low as the 3 ºC on the morning of 1 Oct 1791. One has the impression, then, that the allegedly unseasonable cold snap of 1791 was not really out of the ordinary, and that the anonymous correspondent may have been poking fun at the overly sensitive Viennese.

But what of the correspondent's reference to "rauhe Witterung" ("harsh weather")? There is little hint of anything unusual in the statistics published by the *Wiener Zeitung*, with nothing stronger than moderate winds recorded during the two-week period leading up to the correspondent's report in 1791. However, the statistics do not tell the whole story (they do not tell us, for example, whether it rained). The *Wiener Zeitung* did not publish any descriptive reports of the weather during these weeks, and Count Zinzendorf, who regularly recorded Viennese weather in his diary, was out of town at the time (see the commentary to the entry for 1 Oct). So we must turn to reports filed by Viennese correspondents with "foreign" newspapers to learn more about Viennese weather around the time of the premiere of *Die Zauberflöte*.

A report to the *Bayreuther Zeitung* from a correspondent in Vienna describes a sudden and violent storm on the afternoon of Sun, 25 Sep 1791, just five days before the premiere of Mozart's opera (*Bayreuther Zeitung*, Anhang to no. 118, Mon, 3 Oct 1791, 921–22).

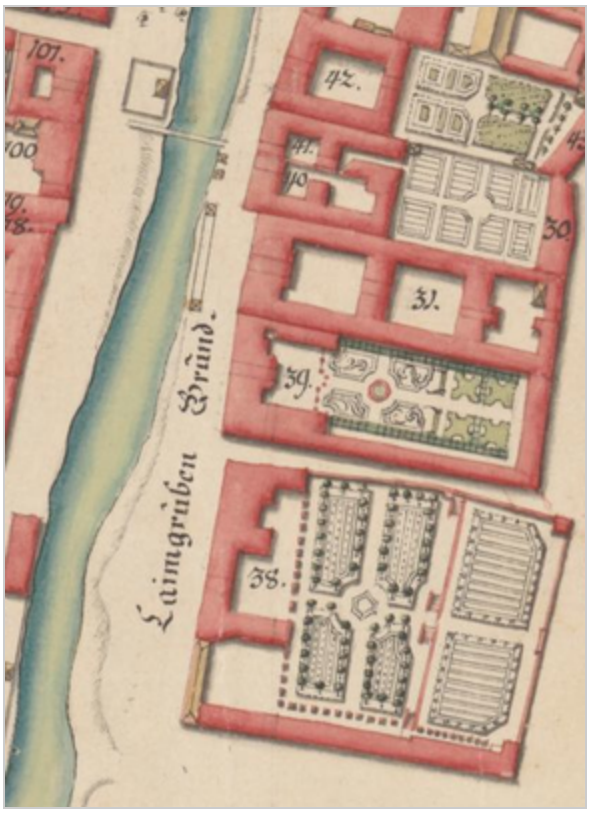
> Aus einem andern Schreiben aus
> Wien, vom 27. Sept.
>
> *[...]*
>
> Am Sonntage [25 Sep] hatten wir Nachmittags um 4 Uhr
> ein gegen alle Erwartung starkes, und eine ganze
> Stunde anhaltendes Donnerwetter, sammt einem
> heftigen Regen, der mit Schloßen [hail] begleitet war.
> Der Donner schlug in einer unserer Vorstädte ein,
> zündete ein Hauß, welches aber bald glücklich gelöscht
> wurde. Der Hagel hat hie und da den Weinstock be=
> schädigt; der Regen war aber für das ausgetrocknete
> Erdreich [soil] günstig. Viele Mühlen konnten wegen Man=
> gel an Wasser schon lange nicht mahlen, und die mei=
> sten Brunnen in den hochliegenden Vorstädten waren
>
> *[922]*
>
> vertrocknet, daß man das benöthigte Wasser zum Ko=
> chen von der Ferne mit Unkosten zuführen mußte.
>
> From another letter
> from Vienna, 27 Sep.
>
> *[...]*
>
> On Sunday [25 Sep] in the afternoon around 4 pm
> we had, contrary to all expectation, a thunderstorm
> that lasted an entire hour, together with heavy rain,
> that was accompanied by hail. The lightning
> struck in one of our suburbs and ignited a house,
> which fortunately was quickly extinguished. The
> hail damaged grape vines here and there, but the
> rain was beneficial for the dried-out soil. Many
> mills had for quite some time not been able to grind,
> and most wells in the higher-lying suburbs were
> dried out, so that the required water for cooking
> had to be brought in from afar at great expense.

A brief notice in the *Preßburger Zeitung* on 1 Oct also mentions the lightning strike:

> Wien den 29. Sep. *[...]*
> Den 25. dieses war Nachmittags
> allhier ein heftiges Donnerwetter, wel=
> ches neben den [*sic*] Foukonetischen Bierhaus
> an der Wien durch den Rauchfang auf
> einen Küchenheerd einschlug, und sol=
> chen fast ganz zerschmetterte, sonst aber
> keinen Schaden verursachet hat.
> [Preßburger Zeitung, no. 79, Sat, 1 Oct 1791, 808–9]

> Vienna, 29 Sep. *[...]*
> On the 25th of this [month] there was
> a severe thunderstorm here in the afternoon,
> which, next to the Fokonedi beerhall an der
> Wien, struck a cooking stove through the
> chimney and shattered it nearly completely,
> but otherwise caused no damage.

The beerhall was in the "Fokonedihaus," so called because it had once belonged to Richard Fauconet, a well-to-do French hat maker to the court (Czeike, ii:343). The Fokonedihaus was immediately adjacent to the site where, a few years later, the Theater an der Wien would be built, and thus quite close to the Theater auf der Wieden in the Freihaus, on the other side of the Wien river (we are grateful to Michael Lorenz for identifying the "Fokanedihaus").



Joseph Anton Nagel, Grundriß der Kayserlich-Königlichen Residenz-Stadt Wien,Ihrer Vorstädte und deren anstoßenden Orte (1781, detail).

> The "Fokanedihaus" is no. 31, with three inner courtyards. A few years later, the house adjacent to it, no. 39, became the site of the Theater an der Wien. The small footbridge over the Wien River was known as the "Fokanedisteg" (also the "Theatersteg").

The correspondent to the *Bayreuther Zeitung* may have been thinking of this storm in referring to "rauhe Witterung," and it surely would still have been in the minds of the audience at the premiere of *Die Zauberflöte* on the Friday following the storm. Thunder was not at all unusual in eighteenth-century opera, but thunder is unusually frequent in the second act of *Die Zauberflöte*, with numerous stage directions specifying thunderclaps, and two specifying lightning. Papageno is terrified in Act II, scene 2 by three increasingly powerful thunderclaps. At the end of the quintet "Wie? wie? wie?," thunder and lightning are accompanied by "ein schrecklicher Accord mit allen Instrumenten" ("a terrifying chord with all instruments"), a fortissimo diminished seventh in which Mozart literally uses all the instruments.

In Act II scene 7, the Queen of the Night arrives accompanied by thunder; in scene 13 the "altes Weib" (Papagena) is interrupted by thunder when she is about to speak her name; the Speaker's command of "Zurück!" in scene 22 is accompanied by thunderclaps; there is muffled thunder in scenes 28 and 30; and there is yet another clap of thunder and lightning accompanied by a diminished seventh in the full orchestra at the climax of the finale of the opera, as the Queen and

her minions are banished to eternal night. (Branscombe [1991, 14] notes that *Die Zauberflöte* may have borrowed the trope of thunder from *Sethos*, where the thunder eventually reveals itself to be sounds from underground chambers and massive gates or drawbridges.) Schikaneder and company cannot have planned the weather, but they must have been delighted that the memory of the recent violent thunderstorm would have added a special frisson to the thunderous passages in the opera for the opening-night audience.

Just a little over two weeks after the opera's premiere, a Viennese correspondent to the *Bayreuther Zeitung* was noting the warm temperatures and sunshine (Anhang to no. 125, Fri, 21 Oct 1791, 977):

> Wien, vom 15. October.
>
> *[...]*
>
> Der sogenannte alte Weibersommer hat sich bey uns eingestellt. Wir haben warme Luft und schönen Sonnenschein.
>
> Vienna, from 15 October.
>
> *[...]*
>
> The so-called "old women's summer" [Indian summer] has set in here. We have warm air and beautiful sunshine.

The temperature table from the *Wiener Zeitung* on 19 Oct 1791 does in fact show considerable warming on 11–15 Oct, with a high of 16⅔ ºRé (20.8 ºC, or nearly 70 ºF) on 11 Oct, following a high of just 11½ ºRé (14.3 ºC, or 57.9 ºF) the previous day. On 28 Oct, however, temperatures fell to around freezing (the high that day was 1 ºRé or 1.25 ºC) and remained there for several days. Heavy snow fell in Vienna from 28 Oct to 1 Nov, quite unusual for that time of year (Strömmer 2003, 234). Whether the unusually variable autumn weather may have affected Mozart's health and perhaps hastened his decline is a question that remains to be investigated.

Stuwer's fireworks (⇧)

In describing the effects of the cold and inclement weather, the anonymous correspondent to the *Bayreuther Zeitung* mentions that "Herr Stuwer wanted to shoot off his final fireworks of this year in the Prater yesterday [4 Oct], but the harsh weather prevented him, because no spectators would have turned up" ("Hr. Stuver wollte gestern im Prater sein letztes dießjähriges Feuerwerk abbrennen, allein die rauhe Witterung hat ihn hiervon abgehalten, weil sich keine Zuschauer würden eingefunden haben").

The elaborate themed fireworks displays staged by Johann Georg Stuwer (1732–1802) and his descendants were a fixture of Viennese summers for nearly 100 years (on the Stuwer family, see esp. Wurzbach). Stuwer's first fireworks display, entitled "Des Confucius Luftgebräu," took place on 27 May 1774. It was a hit, and he went on to produce four more displays that summer, including one entitled "Werther's Leiden, Frei nach Göthe," or "Werther's Sorrows, Freely Adapted from Goethe," undeterred by an explosion in his workshop in July in which two of his assistants, Martin Aichl and Michael Burghard, were severely burned and died of their injuries (both deaths were recorded in the *Wienerisches Diarium* on 23 Jul 1774); Stuwer's workshop exploded again in Oct 1785. Stuwer continued to stage several displays every summer until handing over the franchise to his son Caspar in 1799. After Caspar's death, the displays continued under his son Anton (who accidentally shot and killed himself with his own shotgun in 1848), and then under Anton's son Anton (the great-grandson of Johann Georg) until the time of the Weltaustellung (World's Fair) in Vienna in 1873, when the Stuwers' display ground in the Prater was appropriated for the fair. Friedrich Nicolai, in describing his visit to Vienna in 1781, includes an amusing chapter recounting how he managed to miss Stuwer's display "Der feuerspeuende Berg Vesuv in seinem vollen Ausbruche" ("The Fire-belching Mount Vesuvius in Its Full Eruption"; Nicolai 1784, 622–30); elsewhere he notes that Stuwer's displays drew crowds of 10,000 to 12,000 (Nicolai 1784, 475). Stuwer, who in his advertisements styled himself "priv. Kunst= und Lustfeuerwerker," also occasionally staged hot-air balloon flights, still a novelty at the time.

Stuwer's displays were chronically at the mercy of the weather, and his advertisements and posters made clear that dates were subject to change at the last minute; tickets were explicitly marked as remaining valid if a display had to be rescheduled. According to Wurzbach, Stuwer fireworks were rescheduled so often on account of bad weather that the Viennese came to have a saying: "wenn Stuwer sein Feuerwerk angekündigt hat, dann regnet es sicher" ("if Stuwer has announced his fireworks, then rain is certain").

The end of Stuwer's season in 1791 was no exception; his final display was originally scheduled for Thu, 29 Sep (*WZ*, 21 Sep 1791, 2458–59), the evening before the premiere of *Die Zauberföte*; Stuwer gave an alternative date of Tue, 4 Oct, in case the weather was not accommodating. In the wake of the thunderstorm on 25 Sep, Stuwer announced on 28 Sep that the display had in fact been postponed to 4 Oct "wegen unbeständigem Wetter" ("owing to unsettled weather"), with 6 Oct as the alternative date if weather was bad on the 4th (*WZ*, 28 Sep 1791, 2515). In a brief exasperated note published on 5 Oct (*WZ* 1791, 2573), Stuwer wrote:

> Da ich immer wegen ungünstiger Witterung mein schon öfters angekündigtes diesjähriges Schlußfeuerwerk nicht abbrennen konnte, so soll es den 6. oder 7. dieses, oder den ersten leidentlichen Tag geschehen, wozu ich ein stäts verehrungswürdiges Publikum gehorsamst einzuladen nur die Ehre nehme.

> Since I have not been able, on account of unfavorable weather, to set off my final fireworks display for this year, which I have already repeatedly announced, it will now take place on the 6th or 7th of this [month], or on the first tolerable day, to which I most obediently now have the honor of inviting a continually honorable public.

The display finally took place on Thu, 6 Oct, as the *Wiener Zeitung* reported in its issue of 8 Oct (*WZ* 1791, 2589):

> Vorgestern gab Hr. Stuwer Feuerwerk im Prater, welchem der jüngeren Erzherzoge KK. HH. und zahlreiches Publikum beywohnten, und allgemeiner Beyfall geschenket wurde.
>
> The day before yesterday [6 Oct] Herr Stuwer gave fireworks in the Prater which were attended by their royal imperial highnesses the younger archdukes and a numerous public, and received universal acclaim.

The temperature at 10 pm on 6 Oct was 8 ºRé (10 ºC, 50 ºF). Stuwer probably wished in retrospect that he had waited for "der alte Weibersommer" a few days later: on 11 Oct, when the afternoon high reached nearly 21 ºC, the temperature at 10 pm was a milder 12⅔ ºRé (roughly 16 ºC or 60 ºF).

The theme of Stuwer's final fireworks display of 1791 was the storming of the Turkish citadel "Ismael" (Izmail, now in Ukraine) on the Danube by Russian forces under Alexander Suvorov on 22 Dec 1790 (on the Austrian-Russian war with the Ottoman Turks, see the commentary to our entry for 28 Oct 1789). The storming of Izmail was in fact a horrific massacre, with over 40,000 Turks (men, women, and children) killed—essentially for nothing, as it turned out: Izmail was returned to the Turks at the end of the war. Stuwer's public probably knew nothing of this, however, and was likely full of patriotic feeling: many spectators would have just recently returned to Vienna from the splendid coronation of Leopold II in Prague as King of Bohemia.

Hensler's *Der Orang Outang* (⇧)

Following the paragraph on *Die Zauberflöte*, the anonymous correspondent to the *Bayreuther Zeitung* mentions another recent theatrical premiere in Vienna:

> Hr. Hensler hat auch ein Stück für die Mari=
> nellische Schaubühne verfertigt, unter dem Titel:
> Der Oranutang, welches gerne gesehen wird, und
> sehr viel Gutes an sich hat. Hr. Baumann spielt
> als Oranutang eine herrliche Pantomime.
>
> Herr Hensler has produced a piece for the
> Marinelli stage, under the title *Der Oranutang* [*sic*]
> which been well received and has very much
> good in it. Herr Baumann as the orangutan
> gives a marvelous pantomime.

The correspondent is referring to the so-called Marinelli Theater in the Viennese suburb of Leopoldstadt, established by Karl Marinelli (1744–1803) in 1781, also known as the Theater in der Leopoldstadt. Karl Friedrich Hensler (1759–1825) was one of the theater's principal authors from 1785 onward (for an extensive works list, see the article on Hensler in Wurzbach). Among his most popular works were *Das Sonnenfest der Braminen* (1790) with music by Wenzel Müller, and *Das Donauweibchen* (1798) with music by Ferdinand Kauer. Hensler was also the author of the *Maurerrede auf Mozarts Tod* (1792; *Dokumente,* 392–95).


MAURERREDE
AUF
MOZARTS TOD.
VORGELESEN
BEY EINER
MEISTERAUFNAHME
IN DER
SEHR EHRW. ST. JOH.
ZUR
GEKRÖNTEN HOFFNUNG
IM ORIENT VON WIEN
VOM
B^r. H. . . . . r.
WIEN,
GEDRUCKT BEYM HR. IGNAZ ALBERTI.
1793.

[Karl Friedrich Hensler], *Maurerrede auf Mozarts Tod* (1792)
(ÖNB, 14032-A)

Hensler took over the direction of the Theater in der Leopoldstadt after Marinelli's death, a position he retained until 1813. In 1817 he took over the direction of the Theater an der Wien, in 1818 the direction of the theaters in Preßburg (Bratislava), and in 1822 the direction of the Theater in der Josefstadt in Vienna.

Hensler's three-act play *Der Orang Outang, oder das Tigerfest* was premiered in the Theater in der Leopoldstadt on Fri, 30 Sep 1791, the same evening as *Die Zauberflöte*, and thus in direct competition with it (the date of the premiere of *Der Orang Outang* comes from the theater's music director, Wenzel Müller; see Angermüller 2009, 116).



Der
Orang Outang,
oder
das Tigerfest.
Ein Lustspiel in drey Aufzügen,
von
Karl Friedrich Hensler.
Aufgeführt im Jahr 1791.

Lex & Natura, Cœlum, Deus —
Omnia Jura damnant ingratum.

Wien, 1792.
mit Goldhannschen Schriften.

Karl Friedrich Hensler, *Der Orang Outang* (1792), title page
(Google Books)

Implausibly, given the orangutan and the "tiger festival," the play is set among the Incas ("Ynka" in Hensler's spelling) and it contains frequent references to "Indianer" (that is, "Indians" of the New World; for another early reference to *Der Orang Outang*, under the title *Die Indianer*, see our entry for 1 Oct 1791). The "Herr Baumann" who pantomimed the part of the orangutan was very likely Friedrich Baumann (1763–1841), who premiered Mozart's *Ein deutsches Kriegslied*, "Ich möchte wohl der Kaiser sein," K. 539, at the Theater in der Leopoldstadt on 7 Mar 1788. Baumann had a long career in that theater and subsequently in the court theaters; he was especially known for his skill in improvised comedy and his unusually mobile face (Castelli 1861, 223–24).

The Viennese theatrical scene (⇧)

Following the description of the cold and inclement weather, the correspondent to the *Bayreuther Zeitung* writes:

> Desto häufiger werden anjetzo die beyden Vorstädts=Theater besucht.
>
> Thus at present the two suburban theaters [the Theater auf der Wieden and the Theater in der Leopoldstadt] are all the more frequently attended.

The writer seems to imply that bad weather was driving people to indoor entertainment. After commenting on *Die Zauberflöte* and *Der Orang Outang*, the writer goes on to say:

> Ueber diese zwey Stücke wird beynahe das National=Theater ganz vergessen, welches seltner besucht wird.
>
> Beyond these two pieces, the Nationaltheater, which is attended less often, is almost entirely forgotten.

It would not have been surprising if the "Nationaltheater"—that is, the court theater in the old Burgtheater (the Kärntnertortheater remained closed at this time)—had seen a decline in audiences in Aug and Sep 1791. In early Aug, much of the imperial family (although not Emperor Leopold II) and "one hundred Viennese nobility" ("cento Nobili Viennesi", *Gazzetta universale*, 3 Sep 1791, 566) were in Eszterháza for the installation of the installation of Prince Anton Esterházy as Lord-Lieutenant (*Erbobergespan*) of the Sopron district. A centerpiece of the festivities was the performance on 3 Aug of Joseph Weigl's new cantata *Venere e Adone*, featuring four leading singers from the court opera in Vienna: Cecilia Giuliani, Dorothea Bussani (Mozart's original Cherubino and Despina), Vincenzo Calvesi (Mozart's original Ferrando), and Valentin Adamberger (Mozart's original Belmonte; on the festivities at Eszterháza and Weigl's *Venere e Adone*, see Rice 2013, 10–13; also Rice 2017).

During late Aug and much of Sep, the Viennese court and the entire upper nobility were in Prague for the extended festivities surrounding the coronations of Leopold II as King of Bohemia on 6 Sep, and his wife Maria Luisa as Queen of Bohemia on 12 Sep. A contingent of court musicians under Antonio Salieri was also in Prague to provide music, as was Mozart himself from late Aug to mid Sep, finishing and overseeing the preparations for the premiere of *La clemenza di Tito* on the evening of Leopold's coronation. The Empress did not return to Vienna until 4 Oct (her return is noted in the final paragraph of the anonymous correspondent's report to the *Bayreuther Zeitung*, not included in the transcription here), and Leopold finally left Prague with his son and eventual successor Archduke Franz, on 2 Oct, making various stops on their rather leisurely journey home, arriving in Vienna only on 12 Oct. Count Zinzendorf, who typically attended the theater in Vienna several times a week, was likewise in Prague for the coronation, not returning to Vienna until the end of Oct (see Klingenstein et al. 2009, 308). So the core of Viennese high society, the upper nobility who subscribed to boxes in the Burgtheater, were mostly out of town during the period described by the anonymous correspondent, and it is not surprising that the court theater was less well attended. If anything, it is surprising that the Burgtheater remained open at all during the coronation. The court theater seems typically to have had a bit of a slump in attendance during the summer, and the coronation in 1791 would have made the slump even worse.

The correspondent implies that the offerings in the court theater are not attracting audiences, but the plays performed in the theater in Sep 1791 were mostly works that had been and remained in the theater's repertory for many years, such as Johann Friedrich Jünger's *Die Entführung* (on 6 Sep), Iffland's *Die Jäger* (on 19 Sep), *Die Lästerschule* (Friedrich Ludwig Schröder's translation

of Sheridan's *The School for Scandal*, on 21 Sep), and *Irrthum auf allen Ecken* (Schröder's translation of Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer,* on 23 Sep). Only one new play was premiered in Sep: Jünger's *Die Geschwister von Lande*, on the 27th. It seems not to have been a success: it was performed only three more times in 1791 (on 29 Sep, 9 Oct, and 13 Nov), then once more in Sep 1792 before falling from the repertory. The correspondent to the *Bayreuther Zeitung* may have been responding in part to the public's lack of enthusiasm for this play. (For more on the context of the Burgtheater in the second half of 1791, see our entry for 23 Aug 1791 and the related entry on Jünger's letter to Johann Franz Hieronymus Brockmann).

It may have seemed to Viennese audiences that the operatic repertory of the current season in the Burgtheater was a bit stale. Between the premiere of Guglielmi's *La bella pescatrice* on 26 Apr 1791 and 4 Oct, the day before the anonymous correspondent's report, only six other operas besides *La bella pescatrice* were performed, all repeated several times:

- Salieri's *Il talismano*, performed three times in May with dismal receipts, permanently dropped from the repertory after its performance on 22 May, with receipts of 26 fl 45 kr.

- Paisiello's *La molinara*, given 12 times during the period.

- Joseph Weigl's *Il pazzo per forza*, revived on 7 Jun and given 11 times, in spite of weak receipts.

- Cimarosa's *Le trame deluse*, revived on 13 Jul, and performed 3 more times by 4 Oct, with weak receipts.

- Guglielmi's *La pastorella nobile*, performed 5 times, with decent receipts.

- Paisiello's *I zingari in fiera*, first performed on 18 Sep, the first operatic premiere that season after *La bella pescatrice* on 26 Apr, a gap of 145 days—a long time for a novelty-hungry Viennese public to wait for a new opera.

(For a detailed analysis of the operatic repertory in the Burgtheater during this period, see the separate appendix to this commentary, Edge 2015a, "Analyzing Historical Box-Office Receipts Using R and dplyr: Operas in the Burgtheater, 26 Apr to 4 Oct 1791".)

The average box-office receipts from the sixty opera performances in the Burgtheater from 26 Apr to 4 Oct 1791 were 203 fl 48 kr, actually slightly better than the recent historical average for operas over the preceding two seasons (1789–90 and 1790–91), 196 fl 10 kr (see Edge 1996, 110). But the cumulative average receipts show a continuing downward trend across the season up to that point, suggesting that the anonymous correspondent to the *Bayreuther Zeitung* had some justification for implying that audience numbers in the Burgtheater were low (see Edge 2015a). The average receipts from operas over the two months leading up to the correspondent's report, from 1 Aug to 4 Oct, were 169 fl 51 kr, a considerable decline from earlier in the season.

The average opera receipts in Aug and Sep 1791 were pulled down by two weak offerings. Weigl's *Il pazzo per forza* was performed three times in Aug and then once again on 4 Oct; the average receipts from these four performances were a paltry 77 fl 52 kr, with a low of 35 fl 2 kr from the performance on 13 Aug, a figure that implies the house was nearly empty. Cimarosa's *Le trame deluse* was first performed in the Burgtheater on 7 May 1787, and was performed sixteen times in 1787 and 1788, suggesting that it was at least a modest success (although we do not have records for its box-office receipts). It was revived on 13 Jul 1791, taking in a respectable 361 fl 22 kr, but it did poorly in its subsequent three performances, with receipts of 94 fl 35 kr on 15 Aug, 111 fl 21 kr on 24 Aug, and 117 fl 20 kr on 1 Sep, after which it was permanently dropped from the repertory. To look at this another way: when the receipts from the twenty-nine opera performances during the period 1 Aug to 4 Oct are ranked from highest to lowest, *Il pazzo per forza* and *Le trame deluse* occupy seven of the bottom ten positions.

The other three operas, however, took in solid if not spectacular receipts over these two months: *La pastorella nobile* averaged 160 fl 31 kr in five performances, *La bella pescatrice* 168 fl 23 kr in seven performances, and *La molinara* 193 fl 48 kr in five performances. One new opera was premiered during this period, Paisiello's *I zingari in fiera*, on 18 Sep. The box-office receipts from the premiere were 536 fl 16 kr, implying a nearly full house. The opera was performed again on 20, 24, and 30 Sep, and on 2 Oct; the average receipts over the five performances that had been given by the time of the anonymous correspondent's report to the *Bayreuther Zeitung* were 268 fl 7 kr. The opera did not remain in the repertory for long: its final performance of twelve was on 21 Jan 1792. But judging by its initial box-office receipts, it was far from a flop. It is surprising, in any case, that the theater even attempted an operatic premiere in mid Sep 1791: the court had not yet returned to Vienna, the high aristocracy were just beginning to trickle back, and Salieri did not return to Vienna with his contingent of court musicians until 15 Sep, just three days before the premiere.

Thus the correspondent to the *Bayreuther Zeitung* may have been exaggerating a bit in claiming that the Viennese theater-going public had "almost entirely forgotten" the court theater, but there was definitely an overall decline in the box-office receipts for operas over the course of the season up to that point. And the public was undoubtedly attracted by two new offerings of a quite different sort: *Die Zauberflöte*, which premiered at a time when German opera was entirely absent from the court theater, and Hensler's *Der Orang Outang*, a new comedy when the court theater had little new to offer in that genre.

Conclusion (⇧)

The anonymous correspondent's report to the *Bayreuther Zeitung* sheds new light on the Viennese context of the premiere of *Die Zauberflöte*, and makes the hitherto undocumented claim that Mozart was awarded the receipts from the third performance. The report is, in fact, the only known document from Mozart's lifetime bearing directly on the question of his compensation for the opera. It also shows that at least one culturally literate person in Vienna

immediately recognized the parallels between Schikaneder's libretto and Terrasson's *Sethos*, a recognition that previously has been thought to date back no earlier than 1827. It is one of just five known published reports on *Die Zauberflöte* from the period immediately following the premiere (on the others, see our entry for 1 Oct 1791), and it is the only one that comments on the size of the audience, noting that the theater had been full for each of the first three performances.

The identity of the correspondent to the *Bayreuther Zeitung* remains unknown, but it was evidently someone with with an interest in Viennese theatrical life. A preliminary survey of the *Bayreuther Zeitung i*n the years preceding this report has uncovered many other gossipy but knowledgeable reports on Viennese cultural life, sometimes containing details unknown from other sources. It may be that some of these reports stem from the same correspondent who submitted the one on *Die Zauberflöte*.

Notes (⇧)

This report in the *Bayreuther Zeitung* is mentioned by Piontek (2009, 138), drawing on Habermann (1991). Piontek mentions the reference to "unser berühmter Virtuos Hr. Mozzart" (Piontek silently "corrects" the transcription to "Herr Mozart"), but he does not describe the content, and may not have recognized the report's importance.

Mozart: New Documents currently includes three other reports from Viennese correspondents to the *Bayreuther Zeitung* regarding Mozart: a report dated 16 May 1786 on the premiere of *Le nozze di Figaro*; a report of a hitherto unknown benefit concert given by Mozart in the Kärntnertortheater on 28 Feb 1787; and the earliest dated report (6 Dec 1791) of Mozart's death, one that does not duplicate or draw on any other known notice of his death. We currently do not know whether the correspondent who filed the report on *Die Zauberflöte* was behind any of these other three, but the possibility cannot be ruled out.

The poster for the premiere of *Die Zauberflöte* has been widely reproduced; it is transcribed in *Dokumente*, 356–57. The poster for the second performances is in Vienna, Wienbibliothek, Druckschriften, C-77250, 1791 (I am grateful to David Buch for information about this poster). Images of the posters for the (alleged) 100th and 200th performances are available on the website of the Wienbibliothek (here and here, respectively); the library's catalog indicates that the originals are missing. The date on the poster for the 100th performance is not 20 Nov 1792, as Treitschke writes, but actually 23 Nov. Deutsch (1937a, 61; 1937b, 34), gives the correct date, while incorporating (without citation) Treitschke's claim that it was actually the 83rd performance. Treitschke's other date is correct: the poster for the 200th performance is dated 22 Oct 1795. Otto Jahn, in his classic Mozart biography, gives the correct dates for the 100th and 200th performances, mentioning in a note Treitschke's claim that the latter was actually only the 135th (Jahn 1859, 594 and note 5).

The current lack of secure knowledge about the early performance history of *Die Zauberflöte* strongly underlines the desirability of a comprehensive catalog of surviving posters from the Theater auf der Wieden and other Viennese theaters. Such a catalog would be an essential resource for any study of the Viennese theatrical repertory and its reception.

Franz Gräffer's late anecdote "Mozart und Schikaneder" (Gräffer 1845) has Mozart asking for and Schikaneder agreeing to a fee of 100 ducats for the composition of *Die Zauberflöte*.

In the first edition of the "Zeittafel" (chronology) in Deutsch's study of the Theater auf der Wieden (Deutsch 1937a, 60), an editing error placed Treitschke's figure of 8443 fl 20 kr with the listing for the premiere of *Die Zauberflöte* on 30 Sep 1791; it reads "Gesamteinnahme bis dahin 8443 fl. 20 kr.", implying (absurdly) that the opera had taken in that much money at its premiere. The mistake is corrected in the second edition (Deutsch 1937b, 33), where the entry for 1 Oct 1791 includes the corrected comment: "Sie [the opera] wird im Oktober 24mal gegeben. Gestamteinnahme bis dahin 8443 fl. 20 kr." ("It [the opera] was given 24 times in October. Total receipts to that point 8443 fl. 20 kr.") These numbers follow Treitschke exactly, although Deutsch fails to cite a source.

There are slight errors in the numbers given in Edge 1996 (110, Table 5.2) for total performances in the Burgtheater (including operas and plays) across the seasons 1789–90 and 1790–91 and their average receipts: the numbers given there are 605 performances with paid admission, with average receipts of 237 fl 39 kr. The figures given in the commentary here are the correct ones: 604 performances with paid admission, with average receipts of 237 fl 20 kr. The average given in Edge 1996 for operas over those two seasons, 196 fl. 10 kr., is correct.

The name and title "Sethos" is sometimes given in the literature with an acute accent ("Séthos"; see, for example, Somos 2014). However, the accent does not appear in Terrasson's original.

The Réaumur temperature scale has occasionally been mentioned in the Mozart literature; see, for example, Slonimsky's "The Weather at Mozart's Funeral" (1960). Slonimsky gives the Réaumur temperatures (as well as the barometric readings in Viennese Zoll and Linien) for the day of Mozart's burial based (he says) on figures drawn from the records of the Vienna Observatory. These figures are identical to those published in the *Wiener Zeitung* on 14 Dec 1791 (Anhang, 3193), except for the temperature reading at 8 am, given as 2.6 ºRé by Slonimsky, and as 2½ ºRé in the *Wiener Zeitung*. Slonimsky gives correct Fahrenheit equivalents for the Réaumur readings (rounded to the nearest tenth of a degree), but does not explain how these were derived. Eibl gives the barometric and temperature readings from the *Wiener Zeitung* for 5 and 6 Dec 1791 (*Addenda*, 74), and, like Slonimsky, he gives a correct conversion factor for Viennese Zoll and Linien (one Linie = 2.195 mm), but he gives no conversions for the temperatures. Krzeszowiak (2009, 187) includes facsimiles of the weather statistics printed in the *Wiener Zeitung* in the issues of 7 and 14 Dec 1791, and offers an approximate conversion for 3 ºRé to "ca. 4 ºC" (more accurately it is 3.75 ºC), but he does not explain how the conversion was made.

An accurate and useful table of metric equivalents for old Austrian weights and measures can be found on German Wikipedia here. A simple Python script for converting Réaumur temperatures to Celsius and Fahrenheit is given here, and one for converting Viennese Zoll and Linien to millimeters and modern

inches is given here. The analysis of the opera receipts in the Burgtheater in 1791 was made using R and the dplyr package; for an explanation of the analysis, see Edge 2015a.

In addition to the sources cited above, another useful resource on Stuwer is the web page at the Österreichisches Biographisches Lexikon Online Edition, which includes images of an 1825 watercolor of the Stuwer "Feuerwerksplatz" in the Prater, an aquatint from around the same time of a Stuwer fireworks display, an image from a poster of Stuwer's hot-air balloon, and an image of a "return ticket" to Stuwer's third fireworks display in 1798. The ÖBL page also includes additional bibliography on Stuwer.

Hensler's birthdate is given in Wurzbach and other nineteenth-century references as 2 Feb 1761, but more recent reference works, such as the Neue Deutsche Biographie online and the Österreichisches Biographisches Lexikon, give the date as 1 Feb 1759, as does Rommel (1952, 442). Rommel notes that Hensler's *Der Orang Outang* was given only eight times in the Theater in der Leopoldstadt in 1791, then apparently fell from the repertory; an adaptation by Adolf Bäuerle was performed five times in 1816 (Rommel 1952, 492, note 40).

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