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Mozart as a Viennese Moralist: *Die Zauberflöte* and Its Maxims*

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Ingmar Bergman's cinematic version of Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* abounds with unusual effects that constantly remind the audience that what they are watching is not reality but a spectacle. The most prominent of these occur during those moments when the characters stop interacting with each other, turn towards the spectators, and utter some wise (or supposedly wise) generalization. Bergman underlines the utterance of such maxims by adding placards that bear the inscription of the moralizing announcement (Fig. 1). This explicit sermonizing, however, does not invite the audience to take the moral statements seriously and to commit them to memory. Instead, the sudden appearance of the placards makes the spectators aware of the fact that they are being preached to, which draws their attention away from the content of the didactic message and thereby introduces an element of alienating irony.

Bergman's interpretation of *Die Zauberflöte*'s moralizing resonates with the views of those scholars who have doubted the sincerity of Mozart's approach to moral maxims and looked for traces of irony in his music. In his discussion of *Die Zauberflöte*'s Act I quintet (No. 5), Wolfgang Willaschek, for example, claims that Mozart treated the maxim featured in the quintet simultaneously with an affirmative moralistic vigor and with an ironic undertone. Not surprisingly, Willaschek mentions Bergman's setting of the moment with approval, seeing it as a faithful reflection of Mozart's dramaturgical vision.[1] Other critics have rejected outright the possibility of seeing the maxims as serious or as emphatically supported by Mozart's music. The Schikaneder biographer Kurt Honolka asserts that "wise teachings in verse never appealed to Mozart the music dramatist."[2] More recently, Claudia Maurer Zenck claimed: "Mozart travestied Schikaneder's serious,

* The present article is condensed from materials in my dissertation, "Morals across the Footlights: German Opera, National Identity, and the Aesthetics of Morality" (Eastman School of Music, in progress), especially Chapter II.

1. Wolfgang Willaschek, *Mozart-Theater: vom Idomeneo bis zur Zauberflöte* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1996), 322. All translations in this article are mine.
2. Kurt Honolka, *Papageno: Emanuel Schikaneder, Man of the Theater in Mozart's Time*, trans. Jane Mary Wilde (Portland: Amadeus Press, 1984), 126.

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Figure 1: Ingmar Bergman's staging of the Quintet No. 5 Maxim;
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elevated, simple maxims ... with scorching irony [mit aufblitzender Ironie]."[3] Later she added: "Mozart obviously did not think much of this type of didactic sentence."[4]

The search for irony runs counter to a prevailing tendency in explaining the didactic elements in *Die Zauberflöte*. Various eighteenth- and nineteenth-century interpreters and scholars saw the opera's moral symbolism as having a serious foundation, and used it as a proof of its purported Masonic message.[5] Twentieth-century discussions of the opera and its meaning likewise tended to concentrate on discovering esoteric ideas, including those of Freemasonry and Rosicrucianism.[6] In their eagerness to explain how the maxims supported hidden messages and programs, however, these scholars neglected to consider the opera's more explicit contexts.[7]

3. Claudia Maurer Zenck, "Einige ungewohnte Bemerkungen über die *Zauberflöte* oder: Pamina waltzt, Tamino sitzt im Wirtshaus," *Die Musikforschung* 57 (2004), 55.
4. Maurer Zenck, 55.
5. See Emil Karl Blümml, "Ausdeutungen der *Zauberflöte*," *Mozart-Jahrbuch* 1 (1923), 128ff.
6. As David Buch summarizes it: "New interpretations have proliferated in the twentieth century, including Rosicrucian mysticism, alchemy, numerology, Gnosticism, or even a fully worked-out numerical code of hidden messages based on Cabalistic gematria. Explaining hidden meanings of *Die Zauberflöte* became a dominant theme in Mozart studies." David Buch, "*Die Zauberflöte*, Masonic Opera, and Other Fairy Tales," *Acta Musicologica* (2004): 201. Buch presents his own fascinating interpretation of the opera, which I will discuss later in this article.
7. In his recent interpretation of the work, for example, Jan Assmann discusses Mozart's and Schikaneder's maxims at some length, yet he looks for the roots of the work's didactic elements solely in the Masonic writings on ancient mysteries and initiation rites. As a result, the only information that he can provide about the cultural background and meaning of the maxims comes from an

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This essay uncovers a previously overlooked background for the didacticisms in *Die Zauberflöte*: the discussions of moral maxims by eighteenth-century German, and more specifically Viennese, aestheticians. The German theories of theatrical maxims, moreover, serve to support a new reading of the moralistic elements in *Die Zauberflöte*, one that complements both the ironic and the Masonic interpretations. The connection between, on the one hand, the approach to morality in *Die Zauberflöte* and, on the other, German theater aesthetics also allows us to compare and contrast Mozart's approach to moralizing with that of other contributors to the Viennese singspiel repertoire from around 1790.

Moral Maxims in Eighteenth-Century German Theater Aesthetics

Moral maxims appear frequently in eighteenth-century German drama and contemporary German theorists of theater often discuss them in their treatises.[8] The main function of maxims is to draw a generalized observation from the proceedings on stage in order to promote virtue or condemn vice. To achieve the desired level of abstractness, maxims often use a general pronoun, such as *wir/uns, man*, or *wer* ("whoever," "any man," or "the person that").

Most eighteenth-century German writers see maxims as elements that significantly enhance the cultural and social value of theatrical works. Johann Christoph Gottsched, one of the most important German theater aestheticians in the early eighteenth century, stressed the significance of moral maxims at various points of his famous treatise *Versuch einer kritischen Dichtkunst für die Deutschen* (1730). In his discussion of the origins of poetry, for example, he claims that the respect the public paid to the ancient poets increased immensely when they used various "Lehr- und Sitten-Sprüche" (sayings that are educational or that urge good manners) in their poems.[9] He also suggests that a tragedy should contain as many "lehrreiche Sprüche" (sayings full of good lessons) as possible.[10]

Similar to Gottsched, the early-eighteenth-century promoter of theater in North Germany Carl Gottfried Engelschall pays attention to moral maxims. In his 1722 treatise *Gedanken über die Frage: ob ein Christ ohne Schaden und Gefahr seiner Seele die Comoedien und Schauspiele besuchen könne?* (Thoughts on the Question Whether a

email discussion with Karl Pestalozzi, who suggests that they might be related to the explanatory commentaries attached to Baroque emblems. Without slighting Assmann and Pestalozzi's assumptions, in the following pages I link the maxims to other relevant aspects of eighteenth-century culture. Jan Assmann, *Die Zauberflöte: Oper und Mysterium* (Carl Hanser Verlag: Munich, 2005), 65.

8. German theater is not the only one that uses maxims extensively. Many other theater forms and genres feature moralistic statements—they appear in Classical French drama, *tragédie lyrique* (where they often come forth in numbers explicitly called *air de maxime*), and in Metastasian *opera seria*. As the following discussion demonstrates, however, German theater and its aesthetics seem to have provided a particularly pertinent incentive for Mozart's fascination with maxims.
9. Johann Christoph Gottsched, *Schriften zur Literatur* (Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam Jun., 1972), 32.
10. Gottsched, 33.

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Christian Can Attend Comedies and Plays without Endangering and Damaging his Soul), Engelschall claimed that "in the comedies, one hears and learns a good deal of excellent morals, incisive moral sayings, and quotations from the wise men of the past, which greatly influence the human mind."[11] Like Gottsched, Engelschall here stressed the significance of moral maxims for the worthiness of a play. But Engelschall's statement also shows that drama theorists expected audiences to change their behavior according to the principles provided by maxims.

The most extensive discussion of moral maxims in eighteenth-century German literature appears in Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's *Hamburgische Dramaturgie*. The work consists of 52 theater reviews of performances by the Hamburg National Theater that Lessing wrote between 1767 and 1769. In the first four reviews, Lessing concentrates on the tragedy *Olindo und Sophronia* by Johann Friedrich von Cronegk with which the National Theater opened on 22 April 1767. Lessing notes that "Cronegk's numerous wonderful moral maxims are expressed with such beautiful brevity, that many of them deserve to become bits of folk wisdom that are used in everyday life."[12] He also describes the spectators' reaction to Cronegk's maxims:

> I was struck to see a general movement in the parterre and to hear murmurs with which approval is expressed even when [the audience's] close attention [to the play] does not permit it to break out in full.[13]

Lessing's remark suggests that Hamburg audiences did not consider moral maxims as empty phrases; rather, they were expected to identify subconsciously with the wisdom that the moral statements tried to impart.

Lessing later praises the Hamburg spectators for their attention to maxims: "I thought: 'Wonderful! People love morals in this city. The theatergoers in the parterre take delight in maxims; Euripides could gain acclaim on a stage like this, and a Socrates would want to visit it.'"[14] Lessing suggests that the audience's positive response to maxims points to the high moral standards of the city, making a flattering connection between the

11. Cited in Hilde Haider-Pregler, *Des sittlichen Bürgers Abendschule: Bildungsanspruch und Bildungsauftrag des Berufstheaters im 18. Jahrhundert* (Vienna/Munich: Jugend & Volk, 1980), 92. "...man höre ja und lerne in den Comoedien allerhand feine Moralia, und scharfsinnige Sententias, und Aussprüche der Weisen, welche einen grossen Ingress in die Gemüther der Menschen [haben]."
12. Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, *Hamburgische Dramaturgie* (Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam Jun., 1981), 21. "Er [Cronegk] hat... so manche [Moralen] in einer so schönen Kürze ausgedrückt, daß viele von seinen Versen als Sentenzen behalten und von dem Volke unter die im gemeinen Leben gangbare Weisheit aufgenommen zu werden verdienen."
13. Lessing, 21. "Ich ward betroffen, in dem Parterre eine allgemeine Bewegung, und dasjenige Gemurmel zu bemerken, durch welches sich der Beifall ausdrückt, wenn ihn die Aufmerksamkeit nicht gänzlich ausbrechen läßt."
14. Lessing, 21. "Teils dachte ich: Vortrefflich! man liebt hier die Moral; dieses Parterre findet Geschmack an Maximen; auf dieser Bühne könnte ein Euripides Ruhm erwerben, und ein Sokrates würde sie gern besuchen."

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Hamburg citizens and the ancient Greeks. Similarly, by imbuing their opera with maxims, Mozart and Schikaneder provided their Viennese audience with opportunities to react in a positive manner, affirm their superior moral sensibility, and perhaps even to identify with the ancient Greeks.

Lessing also acknowledges that some of the spectators might ignore or fail to understand maxims and their significance in a play. In chapters 2-4 of the *Dramaturgie*, he therefore lists various rules that ensure the effectiveness of maxims and their didactic messages on the audience. Lessing describes the rules of presenting maxims within his discussion of the skills of Konrad Ekhof, one of the most famous actors in the Hamburg National Theater troupe. In the production of *Olindo* und *Sophronia*, Ekhof played the character of Evander, Olindo's father, and he impressed Lessing with his unusual ability to act out moral maxims:

> Ekhof's special talent is that he can utter even the most boring and confusing wise sayings and general observations with decency and feeling, such that even the most trivial of them ... acquires nobility and interest in his mouth, and the most frigid [of them] warms up and comes alive.[15]

Evidently, Lessing found some of the maxims in *Olindo* und *Sophronia* unimaginative and platitudinous (as would some of the later commentators on the maxims in *Die Zauberflöte*). Yet he noted with pleasure that Ekhof approached even these statement with seriousness and dignity.

Lessing then formulates principles that actors should apply to their performance of moral maxims on stage. At first he asserts that moral sentences demand reflection and mental composure and should therefore be spoken in a relaxed manner and a certain coolness ("mit Gelassenheit und einer gewissen Kälte").[16] At the same time, he continues, actors should express the maxim with enthusiastic conviction ("Begeisterung"). The proportion of enthusiasm and tranquility should differ according to the situation in which the maxim is uttered. In placid situations, the manner of presentation should have more enthusiasm than calmness, whereas in more turbulent situations the actors should strive to calm the passions and impose upon them the rule of reason. In other words, Lessing suggests that the gestures used by actors to present maxims should be opposed to the gestures with which they accompany the utterances that surround these maxims, a principle that will have important ramifications in Mozart's settings of moralizing passages.

15. Lessing, 20-21. "Ein ihm ganz eigenes Talent ist dieses, daß er Sittensprüche und allgemeine Betrachtungen, diese langweiligen Ausbeugungen eines verlegenen Dichters, mit einem Anstande, mit einer Innigkeit zu sagen weiß, daß das Trivialste von dieser Art in seinem Munde Neuheit und Würde, das Frostigste Feuer und Leben erhält."
16. Lessing, 25.

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Lessing proceeds to describe various types of gestures that actors should use to successfully impersonate a character who delivers a maxim:

> When, in a frantic situation, the soul seems suddenly to gather itself, to throw a reflective glance at the situation at hand; then it is natural that it will take command of all the bodily movements. Not only does the voice become calm, the limbs also achieve a state of tranquility, in order to express the inner composure, without which the eye of reason cannot look around and contemplate. At once, the striding feet stand still, the arms sink down, the whole body moves into the horizontal position; a pause—and then the reflection. The man stands there, in a solemn stillness, as if he did not want to disturb himself from hearing what he is saying. The reflection is over,—another pause—and then he starts once more either moving around at once or he puts his limbs into motion gradually, depending on whether the reflection is aimed at taming his passions or at invigorating them.[17]

Thus, according to Lessing, a successful enactment of a moral maxim requires a coordination of the actor's mental and physical procedures to create the impression of a complete change of the impersonated character's emotional mood—a rupture, stressed by the pauses that surround it. Lessing's image of the character listening to himself announces moral wisdoms, moreover, introduces the notion of a character's personality splitting into two, which subsequently creates the impression that a new voice emerges during such moments of moral insight.

Lessing's theory suggests that in a play it was often the actor and his skill in using specific parenthesizing techniques that moved the audience to perceive a moral maxim not as a boring digression from the plot, but rather as a rare moment in which a transcendental moral truth can be heard. Playwrights themselves possessed few devices for implying the estrangement of moral maxims from the rest of the dramatic material and for suggesting to the actor how to present moral maxims effectively. Sometimes they could set the maxims off by hyphens, as Lessing often does in his dramas. At other times, they could write the whole play in a rhythmic pattern and then interrupt this pattern for a maxim, as Goethe did for one—though only one—of the many maxims in the 1787 version of his drama *Iphigenie auf Tauris*.[18]

17. Lessing, 27. "Wenn in einer heftigen Situation die Seele sich auf einmal zu sammeln scheinet, um einen überlegenden Blick auf sich oder auf das, was sie umgibt, zu werfen; so ist es natürlich, daß sie allen Bewegungen des Körpers... gebieten wird. Nicht die Stimme allein wird gelassener; die Glieder alle geraten in einen Stand der Ruhe, um die innere Ruhe auszudrücken, ohne die das Auge der Vernunft nicht wohl um sich schauen kann. Mit eins tritt der fortschreitende Fuß fest auf, die Arme sinken, der ganze Körper zieht sich in den wagrechten Stand; eine Pause—und dann die Reflexion. Der Mann steht da, in einer feierlichen Stille, als ob er sich nicht stören wollte, sich selbst zu hören. Die Reflexion ist aus, —wieder eine Pause—und so wie die Reflexion abgezielet, seine Leidenschaft entweder zu mäßigen, oder zu befreuen, bricht er entweder auf einmal wieder los oder setzet allmählich das Spiel seiner Glieder wieder in Gang."
18. The characters of *Iphigenie auf Tauris* talk in iambic pentameter, and they constantly express themselves in maxims. At the beginning of the fourth act, for example, Iphigenie contemplates her difficult position: she wants to save her brother Orest from being sacrificed by the Scythians to the

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Opera composers had a wider range of tools at their disposal. They could imbue their works with a variety of musical gestures that would stress the special dramatic significance of moral maxims and thus guide even the most inexperienced performers to present various wise messages to the audience in a meaningful way. Few composers used such gestures as extensively as Mozart did in *Die Zauberflöte*. As the following paragraphs show, Mozart's settings of maxims in many ways represent musical incarnations of Lessing's principles.

Quintet No. 5: Didacticism or Political Critique?

The first moment of moralizing in *Die Zauberflöte* occurs during the Act I quintet (No. 5). At its beginning, Papageno presents an emphatic, wordless protest about the padlock that the three ladies have put on his mouth ("Hm hm hm..."). The padlock serves as a punishment for Papageno's lie to Tamino that he himself had killed the snake that pursued the Prince at the beginning of the opera. The three Ladies come forth, take off the padlock and make Papageno promise he will never lie again. All five characters then join in presenting a communal statement:

Bekämen doch die Lügner alle	If the lips of all liars
ein solches Schloß vor ihren Mund:	could be padlocked like this:
statt Haß, Verleumdung, schwarzer Galle	instead of hate, slander and black bile,
bestünde Lieb' und Bruderbund.	love and brotherhood would reign.

goddess Diana, she also wants to help him escape from Tauris back to Greece, but she does not want to beguile Thoas, the king of Scythians, to whom she owes her life. In the middle of her long contemplative monologue Iphigenie says:

> ... Weh!/ O weh der Lüge! Sie befreiet nicht, / Wie jedes andre wahrgesprochne Wort, / Die Brust; sie macht uns nicht getrost, sie ängstet / Den, der sie heimlich schmiedet, und sie kehrt, / Ein losgedruckter / Pfeil, von einem Gotte / Gewendet und versagend, sich zurück / Und trifft den Schützen. (Johann Wolfgang Goethe, *Iphigenie auf Tauris*, Stuttgart: Reclam, 1970, 42).

This quote not only exemplifies the extended maxims used by the characters in Goethe's play, but it also evokes the very first maxim from *Die Zauberflöte*. Another maxim appears at the very beginning of this monologue and is rather idiosyncratic since it represents the only segment in the whole piece that is not written in iambic pentameter but employs unfixed and variable rhythmic feet instead:

> Denken die Himmlischen / Einem der Erdgebornen / Viele Verwirrungen zu, / Und bereiten sie ihm / Von der / Freude zu Schmerzen / Und von Schmerzen zur Freude / Tief-erschütternden Übergang: / Dann erziehen sie ihm / In der Nähe der Stadt, / Oder am fernen Gestade, / Daß in Stunden der Not / Auch die Hilfe bereit sei, / Einen ruhigen Freund. (Ibid., 40)

Iphigenie here reacts to what happened in the previous three acts: in the time of greatest adversity and despair while she was being forced to marry Thoas and to sacrifice her two countrymen, she found out that one of these strangers was in fact her brother—who moreover had a rescue plan. The metric treatment of Iphigenie's lines sets her generalized moral reflection apart from the rest of the text. Iphigenie seems to have abandoned the ancient world at this moment, she has stepped out of her role and turned directly to the audience to explain the moral point in the previous three acts: even in times of greatest despair there is hope.

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The statement does not refer directly to a person on stage but talks about liars in general and about abstract concepts such as love and brotherhood without relating them explicitly to the onstage reality. The fact that Schikaneder's libretto has all five onstage individuals utter the same generalized speech at the same time suggests that the singers no longer stand for their characters alone. Instead, they step out of their roles and comment on the onstage happenings from a non-diegetic perspective.

Both ironic and Masonic interpretations of the Quintet's maxim have dealt with Mozart's musical setting of the moment, but instead of explaining its explicitly didactic functions, they focused on finding hidden contexts. Thus in his discussion of the maxim, Nicholas Till fails to acknowledge the narrative shift in Schikaneder's text, which leads him to doubt the maxim's sincerity:

> How can we reconcile the fact that this admirable sentiment [the homily about the need to always tell the truth] issues from the mouths of three characters who later in the opera are revealed to be themselves incomparably deceitful and untrustworthy? Must we resort to the old story of the change of plan half way through the opera? Not if we recognize that the sentiment is inadequate, if not downright wrong.[19]

The involvement of the soon-to-be-debunked-as-evil Ladies in the didactic statement suggests, in Till's opinion, that the maxim does not function primarily as a prescription for the necessity of telling the truth. Rather than a quest for truthfulness, the praise of imposed padlocks by morally dubious characters symbolizes Josephine censorship and police surveillance.

Jan Assmann does offer an interpretation according to which the moment moves into a meta-dramatic sphere, and thus represents an attempt at educating the audience. He does not explain, however, how Mozart achieves the educational goal with his music. Instead, he focuses on finding a Masonic context for Schikaneder's textual images: the condemnation of hate and slander might have reflected the factional disputes within the Viennese Masonic lodges as well as political persecution of Masons in the early 1790s.[20] Thus, like Till, Assmann passes over the explicitly moralistic features connected with the maxim in favor of seeking hidden political contexts.

A more detailed examination of the setting of the quintet's maxim reveals parallels between Mozart's musical procedures and the didactic gestures postulated by Lessing. At the onset of the maxim, Mozart creates a moment of musical rupture that effectively emphasizes the narrative shift in Schikaneder's libretto (mm. 53-54—Ex. 1). The maxim represents the first instance within the quintet when all five characters sing in homophony. The homophonic delivery contrasts with the interjectory, conversational

19. Nicholas Till, *Mozart and the Enlightenment: truth, virtue, and beauty in Mozart's operas* (New York: Norton, 1995), 306.
20. Assmann, 65-66.

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Example 1: Quintet No. 5 Maxim, Opening

style of the previous section. Mozart also introduces staccato into the string parts. The new string texture contributes to a change of musical topos: the declamatory and celebratory tone accompanying Papageno's moral conversion switches into a more ethereal and

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mysterious mode (emphasized by the sudden entrance of solo oboe) during the first part of the didactic presentation. Mozart's shift of musical means resonates with Lessing's demand that a radical and sudden transformation of the actors' gestures accompanies the onset of maxims.

Mozart uses a variety of musical means to frame the moral message for his audience. A sudden change in dynamics accompanies the onset of moralizing: the last exchange between the Ladies and Papageno, marked *crescendo*, comes to an abrupt end on a quarter-note general rest, followed, in the measure immediately before the moral maxim, by a *piano* sign. The performers then sing the maxim *sotto voce*. The unexpected lower dynamic level grabs the audience's attention and makes them more alert to the text that is being presented at this point. Mozart parcels out the first sentence in groupings of several words at a time, and he separates the fragments by extended rests. The verbal separation slows down the process of delivery and thus allows the audience to seize upon the meaning of the whole statement more easily.

The sudden onset of impersonal, piecemeal homophonic delivery—almost as if the characters are dictating a message that they expect the audience to write down—and of a sublimely mystifying musical style forces the diegetic reality to recede into the background. The unexpected change in the mode of musical delivery reinforces the impression that the characters on stage no longer speak about their personal experience, and introduces the notion that a new voice emerges at this moment, a voice similar to the one that Lessing imagined in his theoretical discussion. The performers in fact cease to function as characters in the opera's plot at this point and metamorphose into a univocal extra-diegetic, omniscient narrator (an eighteenth-century German counterpart to a Greek chorus, perhaps). The musical and textual dissolution of individual personalities at this moment implies that the Ladies should no longer be considered as characters in the drama. Although their voices and bodies are still present on the stage, the Ladies have temporarily disappeared, and thus the moral message presented at this moment can remain detached from their dubious moral character.[21]

Mozart enhances the effectiveness of the moralistic narrator's speech with skillfully executed rhetorical figures. Schikaneder's maxim consists of two couplets. The first presents an image of a generalized moral action. The following two lines describe the bettering effects of such action on human society. As discussed above, Mozart responds to the first part with string staccato, *sotto voce* in the voices, *piano* dynamics, and a melodic phrase played by an oboe solo (mm. 53-61—Ex. 1). Such ethereal music fittingly endows the textual message with seriousness and profundity, and also makes the audience more alert.

21. The moment also creates an impression of the performers splitting from their roles and speaking directly to the audience—twentieth-century, post-Stanislavsky theater theorists would say they are "breaking the fourth wall."

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The musical style that Mozart chooses to accompany the first sentence of Schikaneder's maxim, moreover, parallels Lessing's demand for tranquility and coolness.

Each of the next two lines ("statt Haß..." and "bestünde...") acquires its own musical idea. The accented opening leap of a fourth, sforzandi in the orchestra, and repeated half-step alternations in the setting of the first one express the odiousness of hate, slander and bile mentioned in the text (mm. 61-64 and 69-72—Ex. 2). The harmony strongly contributes to Schikaneder's list of morally perilous attributes: a French augmented-sixth chord in G minor follows the F-major cadence that closed off the previous section. The phrase finishes with a cadence in G minor (ii in F major)—a tonal center that throughout the opera is associated with negative actions and traits of character (e.g. the attempted suicides of both Papageno and Pamina in Act II—Erik Smith calls it *Die Zauberflöte*'s "key of suffering"[22]).

The next line returns firmly to F major and features piano dynamics and two-note slurs that successfully reflect the wished-for love and brotherhood (mm. 66-69 and 74-77—Ex. 2). Thus the music in this section creates a set of contrasting musical gestures that express the duality between hate and slander on the one hand and brotherly love on the other. The vigorousness of Mozart's musical imagery corresponds to Lessing's demand for signs of enthusiastic conviction from the actors during maxim passages. Mozart's musical gestures thus once more parallel the physical and emotional gestures Lessing prescribed for actors.

Pamina's Waltz?

Mozart's settings promote a similarly effective moralistic attitude in the other four maxim moments that Bergman marked with placards. Among these, critics have recently read irony into the generalized statements presented by Pamina and the three Boys during the opening section of the Act II finale. I thus concentrate on this as opposed to the other moments.

The section under consideration deals with Pamina's attempted suicide, a more serious moral problem than Papageno's lies. Fearing that Tamino no longer loves her, Pamina rushes onto the stage and wants to stab herself. Fortunately, the Boys prevent Pamina from completing her deadly plan and persuade her that Tamino is still in love with her. All of them then rush off to see Tamino. A generalized statement closes the scene and announces what Pamina should have known all along:

Zwei Herzen, die vor Liebe brennen,	Two hearts that burn with love
kann Menschenohnmacht niemals trennen.	cannot be separated by human blindness.
Verloren ist der Feinde Müh',	All efforts of their enemies go forlorn,
die Götter selbst schützen sie.	the gods themselves protect them.

22. Erik Smith "The Music" in Peter Branscombe, *W. A. Mozart: Die Zauberflöte* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 130.

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Example 2: Didactic Madrigalisms in the second couplet of the Quintet No. 5 Maxim

The first couplet and its image of "Menschenohnmacht" indirectly refer to Pamina's lack of control over her own passions and her inability to overcome her suicidal urges. The maxim therefore functions didactically in that it exhorts the audience to trust the power of love even in times of great doubt and adversity.

In Mozart's musical setting of the maxim (mm. 146-183—Ex. 3), the omniscient narrator comes forth once again and makes use of Pamina's and the Boys' voices

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Example 3: The Power-of-Love Maxim, Act I Finale

and bodies as the impersonal style of the text's delivery indicates. More than one narrator in fact seems to appear during the second couplet, in which the individual vocal lines acquire greater independence. At the beginning of the maxim section, moreover, Mozart creates another transcendental rupture that resonates with Lessing's principles (mm. 146-147). Pamina and the Boys sing about their decision to go and see Tamino, but the mellifluous vocal lines that express their determination come to a sudden halt on a B-flat dominant-seventh chord. Afterwards, three detached woodwind chords, *piano*, interrupt the crescendo of the previous section.[23] A quarter-note rest follows and initiates homophonic delivery of the maxim's first couplet.

23. Christoph Peter ruminates on the transcendental qualities of these three wind chords when he says: "Durch [die drei Bläserakkorde] scheint ein überirdischer Glanz über den erwartungsvollen Szene aufzustrahlen. [...] Es hat den Anschein, als hielten die vier Sänger den Atem an und blickten staunend der Himmelserscheinung nach." Christoph Peter, *Die Sprache der Musik in Mozarts Zauberflöte*

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(Example 3 continued)

In her discussion of Mozart's music in this passage, Maurer Zenck points to several features that in her opinion suggest that Mozart distanced himself from the statement with comical irony. She claims that the setting of the opening couplet ("Zwei Herzen ... trennen") imitates an artless, peasant waltz, and that the use of a waltz clashes with the presence of a high-born character (Pamina is a princess, after all).[24] But this reading does not take into consideration the possibility that Pamina's body does not really represent the onstage character at this point, but rather a transcendental moralistic narrator. The countryside dance, moreover, fits the moralistic message very well, because it reflects the connections that Mozart and his contemporaries constantly made between utopian moralistic visions and pastoral styles (such as, for example, in the pastoral moment in the

(Stuttgart: Verlag Freies Geistesleben, 2nd extended edition, 1997), 335. Notice that Peter refers to the onstage people as singers, not as characters, and thus he stresses the extra-diegetic nature of the shift initiated by the wind chords.

24. Maurer Zenck, 50-51.

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(Example 3 the end)

Act II finale of *Le nozze di Figaro* but also in several didactic moments in *Die Entführung*, not to mention the moralistic Act I duet for Pamina and Papageno in *Die Zauberflöte*).[25]

Each of the first two lines is followed by a short phrase played by the woodwinds (clarinets, horns, and bassoons—mm. 151-153 and 157-159—Ex. 3). Maurer Zenck sees these two interludes as banal and redundant, and thus as enhancing the ironic character of this moment. The interludes, nevertheless, can also be seen as effectively complementing the moralistic statement. The wind interruptions of the vocal phrases accentuate the idea of division in the text ("trennen").[26] The instrumentation, moreover, contributes to the pastoral impression suggested by Pamina's and the Boys' waltz. The instrumental

25. For more discussion of the connection between the pastoral style and moralistic utopia in *Le nozze di Figaro* see Wye Jamison Allanbrook, *Rhythmic Gesture in Mozart: Le nozze di Figaro and Don Giovanni* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 157-60, as well as Michael Beckerman, "Mozart's Pastoral," *Mozart-Jahrbuch* 1991, 93-102.
26. One of the outside reviewers of my article for this journal kindly brought this function of the woodwind interludes to my attention.

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phrase also subtly transforms the topos. Whereas Pamina's and the Boys' musical lines stressed the first beat of each measure, the interludes make all the beats more or less equal by deemphasizing the first downbeat (with a *staccato* sign and slurring of beats two and three). Such a procedure suggests a different, more noble and serious dance style: Pamina's dance evokes a minuet at this point.[27] Mozart here combined high and low styles (minuet-like interludes with pastoral instrumentation and the preceding waltz-like passages), which brings out the universal transcendental validity of the moral message.

In her ironic reading, Maurer Zenck claims that Mozart's settings of the moral maxims are extremely short and the audience therefore easily fails even to notice them.[28] The fact that each of the first two lines of the maxim acquires its own instrumental interlude, however, also allows for an interpretation according to which Mozart wanted to emphasize the meaning of each phrase. The fact that Mozart extends the second half of the maxim through textual repetition and endows it with effective word-painting (Ex. 3) further strengthens the non-ironic interpretation. The imitative texture associated with the line "Verloren ist der Feinde Müh'" has the main melody wandering between voices and thus illustrates the textual image of getting lost. In the second part of the section, Mozart effectively responds to the image of rescue by godly providence when he makes Pamina's vocal line take the leading role with the prolonged high B flat on the word "Götter."

Moralizing in the Act I Finale

Generalized moralistic announcements often resound after didactically significant subplots have occurred on stage. The incident with Papageno and the padlock that leads to the moral maxim in the Act I quintet represents one such subplot, and so does Pamina's suicide scene. Another one occurs during the Act I finale, when Pamina and Papageno are caught during their attempt to flee Sarastro's lands. Papageno fears the consequences of the exposed elopement and asks Pamina to think of an excuse. Pamina resolves instead to tell "the truth, even if it be [considered] a crime" ("Die Wahrheit, wär' sie auch Verbrechen"). She thus demonstrates exemplary behavior, paralleling Papageno's promise to stop lying.

Mozart's music stresses the didactic significance of Pamina's decision (mm. 368-372—Ex. 4). Her watchword, "die Wahrheit," is highlighted by both repetition and melodic

27. In her discussion of waltzes, Wye Allanbrook says that "dance melodies with lighthearted affects provide less rhythmic differentiation on the level of the measure than do the more noble, serious gestures: rhythmic action in the minuet and sarabande moves from beat to beat, while in the passepied the focus of the action is on the first beat of every measure." Allanbrook, 63.

28. Maurer Zenck, 54. "Es fällt auf, dass Mozart diese und ähnlich unernste Abschnitte sehr kurz gehalten hat... Ihre Kürze im Verhältnis zur 'normalen' Umgebung zeigt ein diskretes Verhalten des Komponisten; und das bringt es mit sich, dass die stilistisch 'niederen' Stellen . . . leicht überhört werden."

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leaps (a minor seventh the first time, an octave the second). Her statement is also set off from the preceding music by a quarter-note rest. The detachment of Pamina's sentence and the prominent melodic contour create once more an impression of a transcendental voice speaking through her mouth. The emphasis Mozart put on the statement suggests a wider message to the audience to emulate Pamina's behavior. His music therefore transforms the diegetic act of a morally correct decision into a didactic maxim.

Example 4: The Truth Statement, Act I Finale

In the first edition of the libretto, a maxim announced by both onstage characters follows Pamina's exclamation. The maxim no longer appears in the final score:[29]

Die Wahrheit ist nicht immer gut,	To tell the truth is not always good,
weil sie den Großen wehe thut;	because it harms the greats;
doch wär sie allezeit verhaßt,	but if it were always hated,
so wär mein Leben mir zur Last.	then I would not want to live any more.

Several factors might have prompted Mozart to leave the statement out of the opera. Assmann suggests that Mozart left it out because he feared it would disturb the dramatic flow of the finale. But such explanation does not fit with the fact that Mozart included so many other moralistic reflections. Assmann also speculates about the hidden, predominantly Masonic meanings of the statement. He claims that the maxim would not pass the censors since its image of "truths" that damage "the greats" hints at the fact that the truths preserved in the Masonic mystery rituals were often inconsistent with the official ideologies of the absolutist government. He suggests, moreover, that the second couplet expresses the hope that the absolutist system will be overthrown one day. This reasoning, however, does not account for the fact that the supposedly politically subversive

29. For a list of the textual differences between the libretto and the autograph score see Peter Branscombe, "*Die Zauberflöte*: Some Textual and Interpretative Problems," *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association* 92 (1966), 45-63.

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maxim appears in the printed edition of the libretto. Moreover, we have no information on whether the censors would have approved Schikaneder's libretto before or only after it went into print.

A reconsideration of the maxim from a purely didactic perspective suggests another explanation for its eventual rejection. Mozart might fairly have decided to exclude the maxim from his setting because of its inferior moralistic qualities. First, only the first two lines represent a moral maxim, whereas the second two use personal pronouns and thus deflate the transcendental reach of the first two lines. Second, by suggesting that sometimes it is necessary to lie, the statement presents a dubious moral principle and also contradicts the one announced in the previous quintet. Third, the convoluted, contradictory logic of the statement makes the moral principle difficult to understand. Mozart's musical emphasis on Pamina's statement as it appears in the finished opera pushes the didactic message forward much more effectively than the contradictory, unclear maxim would have.

Mozart's decision to leave out this particular maxim, moreover, is resonant with Lessing's ideas. In his discussion of Cronegk's play, Lessing does not find all of the playwright's maxims worthy: "Unfortunately he [Cronegk] often tries to persuade us that colored bits of glass are gems and that witty antitheses are common sense."[30] Indeed, at one point Lessing chastises the playwright for using a maxim that promotes an immoral principle. A maxim becomes worthy, in Lessing's mind, only when it reaches out to express the absolute (moral) truth: "the poetic truth, which is contained within the maxim, must also approach the absolute truth."[31] A concept similar to Lessing's rejection of ineffective and immoral maxims seems to have guided Mozart's process of setting Schikaneder's libretto to music.

Die Zauberflöte and the Morally Deleterious Suburban Singspiels

My approach to Mozart's maxims as explicitly didactic statements that parallel moralistic theories of German aestheticians brings a new dimension into *Die Zauberflöte*, one that enriches the understanding of the opera by departing from the continual search for implicit meanings such as irony or mysticism. Furthermore, the examination of Mozart's didacticisms in *Die Zauberflöte* clarifies the work's position among other singspiels written in the same period. Several recent studies examine *Die Zauberflöte* in the context of the repertoire written for the Viennese suburban theaters. These studies, however, often obscure the precise nature of explicitly moralistic aspects in the opera.

30. Lessing, 21. "Leider sucht er [Cronegk] uns nur auch öfters gefärbtes Glas für Edelsteine, und witzigen Antithesen für gesunden Verstand einzuschwatzen."
31. Lessing, 22. "...diese poetische [in der Maxime entschlossene] Wahrheit muß der absoluten nähern."

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Jörg Krämer, in his monumental work on eighteenth-century German singspiel, sees German operas as a place of entertainment and rejects the possibility of these works being didactical. He applies this view to *Die Zauberflöte* as well, when he claims that both the manner of composition and the content of the piece conflict with the principles preached by the Enlightenment theater reformers.[32] My previous discussion of *Die Zauberflöte*'s maxims complicates Krämer's concepts and shows that the opera should instead be seen as responding, at least in part, to the Enlightenment view of theater as a moral institution.[33]

Like Krämer, David J. Buch seeks to depart from the conventional views of *Die Zauberflöte* as a work filled with arcane messages of a metaphysical and moralistic nature. Instead, he positions the work within the tradition of Viennese theatrical works based on fairy tales.[34] Buch nevertheless occasionally goes too far in his attempts to point out similarities between *Die Zauberflöte* and other Viennese magic operas of the time. Such overstatements become especially obvious in his discussion of the moralistic elements of these works. In his description of the fairy tales and fairy-tale-style theatrical works surrounding Mozart's opera, Buch claims:

> Humor is a common element, as are admonishing tales of drunkenness, lying, and exaggeration (Papageno's vices). Cowardice and talkativeness are punished by the loss of speech (Papageno's punishment). There are moralizing *Reden* in all of Schikaneder's fairy-tale singspiels, delivered in the cant of the current day.[35]

To put Buch's claims to the test, I explore in the following paragraphs moralistic elements in two Viennese fairy-tale singspiels that have often been compared to or linked with *Die Zauberflöte*. As will be seen, these two works approach moral concerns in ways that are radically different from those in Mozart's opera.

Kaspar der Fagottist, or: The Phallic Bassoon

According to one of the many apocryphal stories surrounding the origins of *Die Zauberflöte*, Mozart and Schikaneder changed the plot during the process of the opera's

32. Jörg Krämer, *Deutschsprachiges Musiktheater im späten 18. Jahrhundert: Typologie, Dramaturgie, Anthropologie einer populären Gattung* (Tübingen, Niemeyer, 1998), 538.
33. I do not necessarily want to reject Krämer's claims. As any other cultural artifact, *Die Zauberflöte* is a multivalent work that can provoke several valid, though contradictory interpretations. Even some of the moralistic scenes in *Die Zaubeflöte* can be seen as entertaining rather than didactical, or as being entertaining and didactical at the same time. Yet Krämer's categorical rejection of the possibility of seeing *Die Zauberflöte* as a didactic work is too strong. Perhaps Krämer simply overstated his argument in order to counteract the large number of moralistic and esoteric interpretations that the work has accrued throughout the centuries.
34. Buch criticizes especially Masonic interpretations of the work. See his "Fairy-Tale Literature and *Die Zauberflöte*," *Acta Musicologica* 64 (1992), 30-49, and "*Die Zauberflöte*, Masonic Opera, and Other Fairy Tales," *Acta Musicologica* 76 (2004), 193-219.
35. Buch, (2004), 208.

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creation. The originally positive Queen of the Night turned into an evil character, which resulted in dramaturgical inconsistencies. Through such a plot change, so the argument goes, Mozart and Schikaneder avoided too great a similarity between their work and the extremely popular singspiel *Der Fagottist*, oder: *die Zauberzither* by Wenzel Müller (with a libretto by Joachim Perinet).[36] *Der Fagottist* premiered on 8 June 1791 in the Theater in der Leopoldstadt, one of the suburban rivals to Schikaneder's Theater auf der Wieden. Most accounts that seek to dismiss claims about a change of dramatic plan for *Die Zauberflöte* cite Mozart's letter to his wife from 12 June 1791, in which he says: "I went then, in order to relax, to the Kasperl theater to see the new opera the Fagottist, which everybody talks about now—but there is not much in it."[37] An exploration of *Der Fagottist*'s treatment of moral issues suggests that one of the elements Mozart found wanting in the Leopoldstadt opera was a serious approach to didacticism.

Both works make use of various magical instruments—*Die Zauberflöte* features Tamino's flute and Papageno's magic bells, whereas *Der Fagottist* presents a magic zither and a magic bassoon (played by prince Armidoro, the main high-born male character of the opera, and his comic servant Kaspar respectively). Yet the magical instruments in *Der Fagottist* affect their diegetic listeners in ways that are radically different from those in *Die Zauberflöte*. For one thing, Mozart's magic instruments consistently appear in connection with positive moral qualities. The flute tames the wild animals (and this power allegorically promotes the ability to achieve mental composure); it also gives Tamino and Pamina encouragement in their last trial (and thus it becomes a symbol of steadfastness and decisiveness). Moreover, according to the description given by the Ladies in the Act I quintet, the flute positively transforms human passion by making those who are sad rejoice, by allowing an old bachelor to fall in love, and by increasing human happiness and contentment. Papageno's magic bells tame Monostatos and his slaves and thus, contribute to harmonious relationships between people.

Der Fagottist's counterpart to the magic flute appears at the beginning of Act I, when the fairy Perifirime asks Armidoro to recover her magic tinder-box from the evil magician Bosphoro and gives him a magic zither to make his task easier. Perifirime's initial description of the zither and its power shows the instrument in a not entirely savory light: "Nimm diese Zither, sie hat die Kraft die Herzen zu lenken, und Leidenschaften aller Art zu erregen und zu stillen [Take this zither, it has the power to control human hearts, and

36. One of the first sources of the story is Friedrich Treitschke's short story entitled "Die Zauberflöte-Der Dorfbarbier-Fidelio: Beitrag zur musikalischen Kunstgeschichte," which appeared in the second number of *Orpheus. Musikalisches Taschenbuch für das Jahr 1841*. For more extensive discussion of the legends surrounding the creation of *Die Zauberflöte* see Branscombe, 1991, 67-86.
37. Mozart, *Briefe und Aufzeichnungen: Gesamtausgabe*, Vol. 4, ed. Wilhelm A. Bauer and Otto Erich Deutsch (Kassel, 1963), 137. " ...ich gieng dann um mich aufzuheitern zum Kasperl in die neue Oper der *Fagottist*, die so viel Lärm macht—aber gar nichts daran ist."

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to incite or appease various passions].”[38] Whereas in *Die Zauberflöte*, the Ladies show the flute as beneficial to the moral well-being of its listeners, Perifirime's description does not leave an unequivocally favorable impression. Her choice of the verb “lenken” [to conduct, control] and her unspecified statement about “Leidenschaften aller Art” [passions of all kinds] allow the possibility that the zither could be misused, that instead of promoting joy, love, and happiness it could seduce its listeners from the right path and force them to follow forbidden passions and do evil deeds.[39]

Later in the act, Armidoro describes the abilities of the zither to Bosphoro and he once more hints at the possibility of misusing the powers of the instrument. He claims that when he plays *piano*, he arouses compassion, but when he plays *allegro*, he makes the hearts of all female beauties melt. And Kaspar adds: “We have experienced this often before.”[40] Armidoro and Kaspar here suggest that the zither can be and possibly also has been used to seduce women—maybe in some unspecified adventure that might have happened between Armidoro's and Kaspar's departure from Perifirime's palace and their arrival to Bosphoro's castle. Armidoro then offers Bosphoro his services: he claims he can use his zither to force princess Sidi, Bosphoro's captive and Perifirime's daughter, to love the wizard. In the end, Armidoro does not use the zither in such a way and no instance of the zither forcing women to submit to male desires occurs. But the fact that the libretto allows the possibility of using the zither for authoritarian and sexual purposes undermines the moral integrity of the instrument and the music it produces.

The magic bassoon becomes associated with even more ambiguous powers. Already the choice of instrument reveals sexual intent, since the way in which it is held (which makes it seem as if it grows out of the performer's lap) makes the bassoon an easily recognizable phallic symbol. Kaspar receives the instrument from the pixie Pizichi, Perifirime's servant. The bassoon's sound captivates Zumio, the servant of Bosphoro. Kaspar promises to teach Zumio how to play the bassoon in order to enchant girls: “Pay attention to how I will enthrall girls with my bassoon.”[41] Later in Act II, a comical duet depicts Zumio's bassoon lesson with Kaspar. After Zumio produces his first squeak, he asks: “Tell me does a tone like that affect girls' hearts?”[42] Zumio thus identifies the only goal he hopes to achieve by playing the instrument—seducing members of the opposite sex.

The sexual connotations of the bassoon accrue throughout the opera. Kaspar's bassoon aria in Act II demonstrates the magic properties of the instrument to influence

38. Joachim Perinet, *Kaspar, der Fagottist, oder Die Zauberzither*, in *Mozarts Zauberflöte und ihre Dichter*, ed. Werner Wunderlich, Doris Ueberschlag and Ulrich Müller (Anif: Mueller-Speiser, 2007), 383.
39. The fact that in the German language the word “lenken” appears often in the form of “ablenken” [to distract, divert, draw away] further increases the possibility of the zither's not-so-positive uses.
40. Perinet, 388. “Das haben wir schon oft erfahren.”
41. Perinet, 392. “Gieb du Acht, wie ich mit meinem Fagotte die Mädchen bezaubern werde.”
42. Perinet, 413. “Sage rührt ein solcher Ton/ wohl der Mädchen Herzen schon?”

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human minds, but in a somewhat surprising manner. Kaspar's singing and bassoon accompaniment prompt the female captives of Bosphoro to dance, but it has a very different effect on Zumio and Bosphoro, as the stage directions suggest:

> The Magician and Zumio hold one another's hands and start kissing. Kaspar pauses his performance for a little bit, he laughs, and when he sees that [Bospohoro and Zumio] seem to regain self-control, he starts playing again. [After another stanza of the aria, the stage directions continue]: He stops playing. Everybody staggers to the side. The Magician and Zumio become aware of their delusion, and breathe heavily.[43]

The bassoon therefore functions not only as an instrument of heterosexual seduction, but it also arouses homosexual desires (however comically rendered) in Bosphoro and his servant. The fact that Bosphoro and Zumio are the only characters who react to the sexual powers of the magic instruments further increases the possibility of a connection between music and illicit sexuality suggested throughout the opera.

Eventually the bassoon becomes associated with the sexual act itself. After gaining Bosphoro's trust with his zither music, Armidoro persuades the magician to change into his best clothes so that he can make a greater impression on Sidi. Bosphoro and Zumio depart, leaving Armidoro and Kaspar alone with Sidi and her servant Palmire. Sidi and Armidoro immediately fall in love with one another and so do Kaspar and Palmire. Palmire leaves the stage to watch out for the return of Bosphoro and Zumio. Kaspar follows her in order to "amuse her with his music." When Palmire and Kaspar return, Kaspar is unable to produce a single tone from his bassoon and complains that he must have broken his "Blasinstrument." The fact that the images of Kaspar's musical amusement and of his unexpectedly broken instrument should be considered sexual metaphors becomes obvious in a later scene. Here Zumio surprises Kaspar and Palmire kissing, and Kaspar attempts to avoid Zumio's anger by claiming that he has simply been demonstrating the correct embouchure to Palmire. Since "embouchure" represents Kaspar's code words for kissing, it is not difficult to imagine that his phrases about musical amusement and broken instrument stand for the sexual act and some sort of post-coital enfeeblement.

The crassly sexual associations of the magical instruments in *Der Fagottist* stand in sharp contrast to the humanistic functions of the flute and bells in *Die Zauberflöte*. In Act II of *Die Zauberflöte*, Papageno does use the bells twice to attract Papagena. But his sexual desire expressed through the bells focuses on a single woman. In *Der Fagottist*, the characters announce the sexual powers of their magic instruments in terms of acquiring multiple sexual partners, not just one. Moreover, Papageno longs for Papagena not

43. Perinet, 401. "Der Zauberer und Zumio fassen einander bey den Händen, und küssen sich wechselseitig. Kaspar pausirt eine Weile lacht, und als er sieht, daß sie wieder zu sich selbst kommen scheinen, fängt er wieder an. Er hört auf zu blasen. Alle taumeln auf die Seite hin. Zumio und der Zauberer erkennen ihren Irrthum, und können beyde kaum mehr schnauben."

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simply because of his sexual drives, but also because of his wish to find a family and have children. His sexual desires thus exist within strict moral boundaries. No mention of marriage and procreation, by contrast, occurs during the discussions of the sexual power of music in *Der Fagottist*. Unlike the victims of Zumio's and Bosphoro's sexual interests (and possibly also Armidoro's and Kaspar's—in the offstage adventures that Kaspar hints at during his description of the zither's powers discussed above), Papagena is in love with Papageno. Thus although the bells do become associated with Papageno's sexuality, they stand neither for sexual coercion, nor for sexual promiscuity, nor for the sexual act itself.[44]

The "Moralizing" Finale of *Der Fagottist*

Despite all of its "immoral" sexual allusions, *Der Fagottist* does attempt to transmit a didactic statement to the audience. One moral maxim occurs at the very end of the opera, during the brief finale called "Schluß-Chor." The number consists of four sections, and the main moralistic message occurs in the first of these, presented by the chorus:

Auf die allergrößten Leiden	After enormous suffering	a
folgen immer sanfte Freuden,	Gentle joys usually follow,	a
so wird Tugend stets belohnt.	thus virtue is constantly rewarded.	2B
Tugend läßt uns hier auf Erden	Virtue on this earth will	c
nimmermehr zu Schanden werden,	never more allow us to come to harm,	c
Laster werden nicht verschont.	vices are always punished.[45]	2D

Compared to the moral maxims in *Die Zauberflöte*, Perinet's text sounds like a platitude.[46] It consists of a concatenation of quasi-moralistic statements that are too generalized to provide a clear didactic message focused on one particular vice/virtue as is the case in *Die Zauberflöte*.

Müller's musical setting does not provide any moralistic emphasis for the vague text. He creates four simple melodic ideas, each as the setting for one line of the text in the scheme shown in the table above (the signs 2B and 2D indicate that the line is repeated with the same music—see Ex. 5). Müller basically repeats each melodic idea. This procedure arranges the individual lines of the moralistic statement into a well-shaped form, but it fails to enhance or emphasize the meaning of the text. The discrepancy

44. The bells do make Monostatos and the slaves dance in Act I finale, but Pamina and Papageno do not seem to have any explicit sexual interest in the dancing slaves.
45. Perinet, 438.
46. Final choruses in singspiels are often platitudinous and thus differ from maxims within a number discussed in the previous paragraphs. Mozart, however, avoided this commonplace attitude toward didacticism in the finales of his two German singspiels. The way he treats the final moral maxim in the Act III finale of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* most closely resembles his approach to maxims in *Die Zauberflöte* and departs from conventional procedures. I discuss the moral aspects of *Die Entführung*'s Act III finale in Chapter I of my dissertation-in-progress ("Morals across the Footlights").

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Example 5: *Der Fagottist*'s "Moralizing" Act III Finale, Opening

between Müller's musical setting and the textual images becomes especially obvious in the opening couplet. The first line is about suffering, the second about joys, yet both acquire the same musical idea—a compositional procedure in sharp contrast to Mozart's close attention to the individual phrases of moral maxims in *Die Zauberflöte*.

At the very end of the finale, the whole chorus sings again, and this time moralizing gives way to celebration:

Lacht und scherzet, tanzt und singet,	Laugh and joke, dance and sing,
wenn ihr Dankesopfer bringet,	when you bring sacrifice,
nennt das erste Pizichi,	always give thanks to Pizichi,
VIVAT VIVAT Pizichi!	VIVAT VIVAT Pizichi.

Müller repeats the first three lines of the chorus and grafts them onto the four musical phrases from the opening section (once more we get the phrases aa2Bcc2D). Thus the same music accompanies the didactic statement at the finale's opening and the

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celebratory utterance at its close. Such repetition accommodates a well-rounded form, yet it further undermines the possibility of understanding the initial moralizing as some sort of transcendental moralistic vision. Müller's and Perinet's finale provides an entertaining and tuneful closure to the opera, but unlike various numbers in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*, it neither illustrates a clear moral principle, nor stresses its importance to the audience.

Maxims in a Fruit: *Der Stein der Weisen*

Like Müller's opera for the Leopoldstadt Theater, the operas written for Schikaneder's Wiednertheater do not present the same kind of moralistic views as *Die Zauberflöte*. In his discussions of *Der Stein der Weisen, oder: Die Zauberinsel* (a magic opera composed to a libretto by Schikaneder by a group of composers including Mozart himself), David Buch stresses the work's similarities to *Die Zauberflöte*. But he is less attentive to the significant differences in approach to moralizing in the two operas.

In several instances, Buch makes an association between the padlock that the Ladies put on Papageno's mouth and the padlock that Lubano places on the door to his cabin to lock his unfaithful wife Lubanara in and prevent her from having extramarital relations.[47] Buch also shows that Mozart sets the moment in which the Ladies take off the padlock from Papageno's mouth to a melody that resembles the one used by Franz Xaver Gerl, the composer of the Lubano/Lubanara duet in *Der Stein der Weisen*, at the moment when Lubano locks Lubanara in (Ex. 6). Buch, however, does not acknowledge that Mozart changes the dramaturgical function of Gerl's musical number. Whereas in Gerl's piece the musical motive accompanies Lubano's act of closing the padlock, in Mozart's work it resounds during the act of taking it off.

The fact that similar music accompanies dramaturgically antithetical actions brings out the dissimilar didactic intent behind the two scenes. In *Die Zauberflöte*, the Ladies clearly explain the padlock's moral symbolism ("Dies Schloß soll deine/meine Warnung sein"), and Mozart and Schikaneder further comment on its allegorical function in the moral maxim that immediately follows. The Ladies' commentary and the maxim transform the comic padlock episode into a moral tale.

The Lubano/Lubanara duet in *Der Stein der Weisen* does not feature a single moralistic reflection in which the characters would warn against adultery and explain to the audience that Lubano's padlock represents a symbol of female chastity and fidelity. As in *Die Zauberflöte*, the librettist and the composer do afford Lubano and Lubanara a moment in which they sing the same text in homophony, but this moment does not contain a moral maxim. Rather, it consists of nonsense syllables ("Mum, mum! Dideldum!")

47. Buch talks about this similarity both in his "*Die Zauberflöte*, Masonic Opera, and Other Fairy Tales," 214, and in "*Der Stein der Weisen*, Mozart, and Collaborative Singspiels at Emanuel Schikaneder's Theater auf der Weiden," *Mozart-Jahrbuch* (2000), 99.

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Example 6.: Padlock Moments in *Der Stein der Weisen* and in *Die Zauberflöte*

Der Stein der Weisen
71
Lubano
Weib- chen, ja, so bleibt's be - schlos-sen Weib- chen, ja, so bleibt's be - schlos- sen. etc.
Piano
etc.

Die Zauberflöte
48
Papageno
Dies Schloß soll mei - ne War - nung sein, soll mei - ne War - nung sein. etc.
Piano
etc.

that entertain the audience but do not impart any easily graspable moral message.[48] Thus, instead of merely imitating Gerl's score, Mozart's quotation in fact comments—in ways that perhaps some audience members at the time might have noticed—on the moralistic shortcomings of Der Stein der Weisen.

Another moment that Buch sees as anticipating *Die Zauberflöte* comes in the Act II finale—he claims that the rescue duet between Nadir and Astromonte's Genie represents "the kernel of the expansive rescue scene of Pamina in the second act finale of *Die Zauberflöte*."[49] The two scenes nevertheless differ significantly when viewed from a didactic standpoint. Whereas Pamina's rescue scene has a strong moralistic undertone (as I demonstrated earlier), the duet between Nadir and Genie does not—or at least not in a way that is immediately obvious. Just before the duet starts, Nadir gets carried away by his anger towards Astromonte, and he kills his beloved Nadine by mistake. In the following scene, Nadir is in despair about the death of Nadine and wants to commit suicide. The Genie prevents Nadir from fulfilling his intention and leads him off stage. At no point during this course of actions does any of the characters or the chorus reflect on what is

48. The musical setting of the "mum-mum-didledum" segment may have inspired Mozart's musical approach to the onset of direct moralizing in the Quintet. Like Mozart, Gerl employs frequent rests between individual words of Lubana's and Lubanaro's statements at this point, and he also marks the violins *pizzicato*, which further thins out the texture.

49. David Buch, "Die Hauskomponisten am Theater auf der Wieden zur Zeit Mozarts (1789-1791)," *Acta Mozartiana* 48 (2001), 116.

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happening in moral terms. No warning against submitting to uncontrollable passion (as Nadir has submitted to his mindless rage), no warning against suicide, and no eulogy to the power of love accompanies the scene.

As in the padlock incident, Mozart seems to be paraphrasing a motive from the *Stein* duet (this time probably composed by him) in the moral maxim following Pamina's rescue episode ("Zwei Herzen, die von Liebe brennen"). The melody sung by Nadir in the duet and accompanying the phrase "Ich komm und folge deinem Rat" [I will go and follow your advice] and later also "Ich fliehe diesen Ort" [I flee from this place] uses the same rhythm and similar pitches as the melody that Pamina sings during the concluding maxim section to the words "Verloren ist der Feinde Müh" (Ex. 7—both melodies are set in E-flat major, both start with a leap from dominant to tonic, go up to the third degree and then descend). The musical similarity once more clashes with the narrative differences between the two scenes. Nadir's scene simply portrays action, whereas Pamina's scene makes the action didactically useful. As in the previous instance of musical quotation, Mozart seems to be commenting on the earlier opera and points out his improvements on the earlier work's insufficient commitment to didacticism.

Only at one point during the opera do moral maxims appear, but this occurrence has a more comical than moralistic tinge. In Act I, Scene 6, Lubano complains about his hunger and thirst. The Genie approaches in a ship, gives him a piece of fruit, Lubano opens it and, to his great disappointment, finds a book inside it. The book contains three moral maxims. Lubano reads them aloud and comments on them:

> What is that? It is a book to read—there, I can eat till I am full. Ouch!—what does it say inside? (He reads:) Abnegation and patience lead to the road of happiness and joys. The title [i.e. the maxim] may be nice and true, but what use is it to me right now?—I could easily die of hunger and thirst from too much patience and abnegation. (He reads further:) He who counts on godly assistance will receive it. Oh well, in that case I want to follow this principle, as long as I live. He who encourages you to commit murder is an agent of the devil. Murder is not my thing; I follow the principle: Live and let live.[50]

Lubano rejects the first maxim with outright sarcasm, and his reaction to the third maxim suggests that it does not teach anything new or important, but that it represents a mere platitude. He unconditionally approves of the second maxim only—

50. Emanuel Schikaneder, *Der Stein der Weisen* in *Schikaneders heroisch-komische Oper* Der Stein der Weisen—*Modell für Mozarts* Zauberflöte*: Kritische Ausgabe des Textbuches*, ed. David J. Buch and Manuela Jahrmärker (Göttingen: Hainholz Verlag, 2002), 53-54. "Was ist den jezt das? Das ist ein Buch zum lessen—da kann ich mich satt essen. O weh!—Was steht denn drinn (*ließt*) "Uiberwindung und Gedult, führt zum Weeg des Glücks, und der Freuden." Der Titel mag ganz schön und wahr sein, aber was nüzt mich das alles. Auf die lezt kann ich aus lauter Gedult und Uiberwindung, verhungern, und verdursten. (ließt weiter) "Wer auf der Götter Hülfe baut, dem wird geholfen." Je nu, so will ich auch diesem Grundsatz folgen, so lang ich lebe. "Derjenige, so dich zu einem Mord verleitet ist des Teufels Spießgeselle." Morden ist meine Sache nicht, bey mir heißts leben, und leben lassen."

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Example 7: Act II Finale duet between Nadir and Genie, *Der Stein der Weisen*

and his approval seems to result mainly from the fact that this particular maxim does not require him to limit his needs and desires as the first one does. Because of Lubano's irreverent reactions, the moment lacks the transcendental aura that marks the maxims

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in *Die Zauberflöte*.[51] Conspicuously, no music enhances the intensity of the didactic messages: all are pronounced entirely in unaccompanied spoken monologue.

After Lubano has finished reading the maxims, four dwarfs hop onto the stage and indicate with gestures that he will receive food and drink. What does such a sequence of events signify? Did the reading of the maxims represent some sort of moral trial of Lubano's character through which he earned nourishment? If so, then the scene seems to point out that reading moral principles from a book and commenting on them constitutes sufficient proof of a person's high moral character. The superficiality of such a trial, however, contrasts with the seriousness of the trials that Pamina and Tamino undergo in *Die Zauberflöte*.

Although they appear in connection with Lubano, the maxims would more easily apply to Nadir's situation. In the course of the opera, Nadir breaks all three of the principles preached by the maxims: the villain Eutifronte persuades him (not Lubano) to murder Astromonte in order to regain Nadine; he does not have enough patience and self-control and thus yields to anger and kills Nadine; and he loses hope in divine assistance and nearly commits suicide. It is Lubano and not Nadir who receives the fruit, however, which clouds the messages of the maxims and diminishes their didactic effectiveness. The moralistic significance of these maxims, in fact, disappears behind the spectacular, magical, and comic aspects of the scene: the Genie's arrival on a ship, the image of a fruit containing a book, and Lubano's irreverent commentaries on the maxims. The Zauberflöte maxims, by contrast, immediately follow scenes that illustrate specific moral principles. Such dramaturgical placement allows the maxims to explain the moral significance of these scenes more effectively to the audience.

The fruit scene symbolizes the approach to moralizing in *Der Stein der Weisen* and in *Der Fagottist* (and in many other works written for the suburban stages in Vienna in the period around *Die Zauberflöte*)—the moralistic core drowns in the juicy pulp of onstage action, spectacle, low comedy, and magical occurrences. The striking differences in the treatment of moralizing in *Die Zauberflöte* suggest that a completely different vision governed the creation of this opera, a vision that took the German aestheticians' call for theater as a moral institution seriously.

51. In a brief discussion of Lubano's maxims in her article about the libretto for *Der Stein der Weisen*, Manuela Jahrmärker suggests that the fact that Lubano announces the maxims more or less without any understanding helps to make them appear abstract and more universally valid. She does not, however, compare these maxims to moments of direct moralizing in *Die Zauberflöte* and does not make clear that the maxims in Mozart's opera function even more effectively in delivering abstract and universally valid messages. See Manuela Jahrmärker, "Die Logik des Optischen: Zum dramaturgischen Konzept im Stein der Weisen," in *Schikaneders heroisch-komische Oper*, 103-104.

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Mozart, Theater Aesthetics, and Germanness

While it might never become possible to ascertain to what extent Mozart's moralistic attitudes resulted from his direct interaction with Lessing's *Dramaturgie*, it is a fact that the composer had contact with various members of the Viennese theatrical circles who had closely studied Lessing's aesthetic theories.[52] The institution of Austrian theater censorship might have accounted for one of such contact. In 1770 the Empress Maria Theresia appointed Franz Karl Hägelin as the new German theater censor in Vienna. Hägelin stayed in the position for the next 35 years, which means that he read, commented upon, and approved of a vast majority of German-language theatrical pieces that were to be produced in Vienna, possibly including the libretti of such German operas as *Die Entführung* and *Die Zauberflöte*. According to Carl Glossy, Hägelin would analyze each piece "mit umständlicher Breite" (with detailed breadth) in order to justify his decisions. These written-out justifications gradually grew into a large collection of notes that he referred to as his "Hausprotokoll."[53] Except for a few remnants dealing with pieces from the beginning of the nineteenth century, nothing of Hägelin's "Hausprotokoll" has survived to the present day. Nevertheless, in 1795 Hägelin wrote out a number of remarks about the censor's tasks for his colleagues in Hungary. In his discussion of moral issues in theatrical pieces Hägelin cites a passage from one of Lessing's chapters on maxims in the *Dramaturgie*.[54]

Another point of connection between *Die Zauberflöte* and Lessing's theories might have originated from Mozart's personal interactions with Joseph von Sonnenfels. Soon after Lessing started publishing his reviews, Sonnenfels initiated a similar project, which he called *Briefe über die Wienerische Schaubühne*. As Hilde Haider-Pregler points out, Sonnenfels most probably took inspiration from Lessing's *Dramaturgie* and wanted to compete with it.[55] His *Briefe* contain extensive discussions of moral elements in pieces performed in the Viennese theaters in the 1760s. Sonnenfels does not postulate specific

52. There are a few indications that Mozart personally knew Lessing's writings. Paolo Gallarati points out, for example: "there is no doubt that Mozart knew [all of Lessing's major plays], and it is likely that he also read Lessing's *Hamburgische Dramaturgie*, for, in the famous letter of 26 September 1781, he describes his aesthetic of expressive naturalness with the same words as Lessing and in a manner very similar to that of the German playwright." Paolo Gallarati, "Mozart and the eighteenth-century comedy" in *Opera buffa in Mozart's Vienna*, ed., Mary Hunter and James Webster (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 101.
53. Carl Glossy, *Zur Geschichte der Wiener Theaterzensur I.* (Vienna: Friedrich Jasper, 1896), 38.
54. "...so wie die gemeinen äsopischen Fabeln ihre Moral haben, so hat auch die Fabel eines Drama ihre Moral. Lessing sagt: 'Die Moral ist ein allgemeiner Satz aus den besonderen Umständen der handelnden Personen gezogen; durch seine Allgemeinheit wird er gewissermaßen der Sache fremd, er wird eine Ausschweifung, deren Beziehung auf das gegenwärtige von dem weniger aufmerksamen oder weniger scharffsinnigen Zuhörer nicht bemerckt oder nicht begriffen wird.'" Cited in Glossy, 66.
55. Haider-Pregler, 396.

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theories about maxims, yet he does pay attention to them and praises playwrights for using them.[56]

The only direct evidence of Sonnenfels's contacts with Mozart originates from the time when Mozart was about to begin his work on *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, the other German opera by the composer that features maxims set in similar manner as those in *Die Zauberflöte*. In his letter to Leopold Mozart from May 26, 1781, Mozart writes: "Count Rosenberg hosted me twice in the most courteous manner, and has, together with Countess Thun, [Gottfried] van Swieten, and [Joseph] von Sonnenfels, listened to an opera of mine."[57] In the letter to his father from December 22, 1781, in which Mozart defends his plans to marry Constanze Weber and attempts to prove that he enjoys a good reputation in Vienna, he writes furthermore: "if you really believe that I am not liked at the court or by the nobility, then you can write... to Herr von Sonnenfels, anybody you want."[58] The first letter, especially, suggests that Sonnenfels had close personal knowledge of Mozart's operas. During their close encounters throughout 1781, Mozart and Sonnenfels would have had the opportunity to discuss the moral issues in German theater and about ideas concerning proper use of maxims in an opera.[59]

Yet another imitator of Lessing's *Dramaturgie* had a close relationship with Mozart. In 1784 Mozart joined the Masonic lodge "Zur Wohltätigkeit." Its master, Otto von Gemmingen-Hornberg, knew Mozart from the composer's second stay in Mannheim in 1778. Numerous mentions of Gemmingen in Mozart's letters show that the two men often discussed theater and that Mozart even planned to set Gemmingen's drama *Semiramis* to music. In 1778 the elector Karl Theodor established the Mannheim National Theater and Gemmingen became its chief critic. In emulation of Lessing, Gemmingen called his col-

56. See especially Letter XXVI where he discusses Regnard's *Le Jouer* and Edward Moore's *The Gamester*. Joseph von Sonnenfels, *Briefe über die Wienerische Schaubühne* (Graz: Akademischer Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 1988), 154-160.
57. Mozart, *Briefe und Aufzeichnungen: Gesamtausgabe*, Vol. 3, 120-21. "...Graf Rosenberg hat mich, da ich ihm zweimal Visite machte auf die höflichste Art empfangen und hat bei der Gräfin Thun mit van Swieten und H:v: Sonnenfels meine opera gehört."
58. Ibid., 187-88. "...wenn Sie glauben, daß ich bei Hof, bei der ganzen und halben Noblesse verhaßt sei, so schreiben Sie nur an... H:v: Sonnenfels... an wen Sie wollen..."
59. Mozart also owned the first four volumes of Sonnenfels's *Gesammelte Schriften*, which were published in 1783 (his *Briefe* appeared in volumes V and VI, however). The first four volumes contain, among other works, collected issues of Sonnenfels's moral weekly *Der Mann ohne Vorurtheil*, which were originally published in the same period as the *Briefe*, and contained many similar ideas on theater. In his discussion of Sonnenfels's relationship with Mozart, Georg Knepler points out that the composer's views often differed from those of Sonnenfels (especially in matters such as Viennese popular theater and improvisation). Yet, Knepler also claims that both men were in agreement in their views of theater as a moral institution. Georg Knepler, *Wolfgang Amadé Mozart*, trans. J. Bradford Robinson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 84.

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lection of twelve reviews *Mannheimer Dramaturgie*.[60] Although he does not discuss moral maxims as extensively as Lessing, Gemmingen, like Sonnenfels, pays close attention to moralistic features of the plays performed in Mannheim during the 1778/79 season.[61]

As many scholars and critics have pointed out, Gemmingen, Sonnenfels, and Mozart were actively involved in the activities of the Viennese Masons during the 1780s. Mozart's and Schikaneder's use of maxims in *Die Zauberflöte*, therefore, might have reflected the Masonic views of the didactic functions of theater. Yet these views originated in and remained intertwined with the broader context of German theater aesthetics.

An investigation of the German aesthetic underpinnings of *Die Zauberflöte* reveals yet another level of meaning for Mozart's maxims: a nationalist one. Throughout the eighteenth century, German theater aestheticians repeatedly connected the concept of German theater as a moral institution with the notion that the German nation should be (or already was) morally superior to other peoples, and that German theater should help the Germans achieve such superiority (or reinforce the moral highground they had already achieved). Although these notions do not find an explicit treatment in Lessing's discussion of maxims, several of his other works contain numerous anti-French statements, in which he presents the French and their art—including their achievements in the theater—as superficial and lacking the Germans' moral profundity. According to Heidi M. Schlipphacke, critical opinions about French morality appear as early as Lessing's *Briefe die neueste Literatur betreffend*, published in 1759. The Francophobic rhetoric intensifies in Lessing's *Dramaturgie*, in which, moreover, the critique of French culture becomes suffused with moralistic elements: Lessing presents the French as blindly following tyrannical rules, as unnatural, lacking heart, conceited, and vain. Schlipphacke shows furthermore that in Lessing's plays, such as *Minna von Barnhelm or Miss Sarah Sampson*, "France and

60. Gemmingen's *Dramaturgie* has been newly published and edited in Karl S. Guthke, "Gemmingens *Mannheimer Dramaturgie*," *Das Jahrbuch des Freien Deutschen Hochstifts* (1969), 1-66.
61. Guthke claims that "Gemmingen [hat] seinen Lessing genau studiert, wenn er auch die *Hamburgische Dramaturgie* nicht jedesmal aufgeschlagen auf dem Tisch liegen hat, während er seine Stücke abfaßt." (Guthke, 9) One passage from *Mannheimer Dramaturgie* particularly strengthens the possibility that Gemmingen studied Lessing's passages on moral maxims attentively. In Part VII, Gemmingen discusses the principles of applause. In one sentence he talks about how stillness can often function as a sign of the audience's approval, especially in the moments in which close attention to the subject does not permit the spectators to express themselves in any other way: "Ob zwar auch im Schweigen eine Art des größten Beifalls liegt, wenn nemlich die Seele zu beklemmt, die Aufmerksamkeit auf den Gegenstand zu sehr geheftet ist, daß man sonst nichts zu beginnen vermag. [Silence, however, often functions as the best kind of applause: such as when the soul of the spectator is too consumed, when the attention is directed so closely to the occurrences onstage that one does not manage to think about clapping.]" (Guthke, 45) This sentence closely resembles Lessing's description, quoted above, of how Hamburg audiences eagerly listened to moral maxims. For the German text see footnote 14.

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French figures are associated with 'lawlessness' and 'decadence'" and that they function as "negative mirrors for German virtue."[62]

The notion that superior morality in theater reflects German national identity figured prominently in the Viennese aesthetic discourse as well. In the 1750s and 1760s, under the rule of Maria Theresia, the imperial theater in Vienna was dominated by French *opéras-comiques*. The French works, however, did not reach the Viennese stage in their original version, but were adapted first. The adaptations often involved improving the original works' moral tone, such as by getting rid of any sexually ambiguous expressions or scenes, or by adding explicit didactic statements to the original libretti. In his study of French theater in Vienna during Maria Theresia's reign, Bruce Alan Brown notes a degree of nationalist intention in the Viennese moralizing approach to French operas:

> There was certainly a measure of pride in Vienna's emulation of and competition with the spectacles of Paris. It revealed itself in such things as the smugness with which the Viennese pointed out that the French pieces performed in their city were purged of Gallic *équivoques*.[63]

Later in his study, Brown refers to the Viennese feelings of moral and national superiority as "a new idea of nationalism (soon dominant in Vienna) that called into question a more cosmopolitan, French-inspired view of culture."[64]

Viennese aestheticians further promoted such nationalist views, most notably Sonnenfels in the *Briefe*. In his discussions of various Italian *opere buffe* and of the French *opéras comiques* performed in Vienna in the 1760s, Sonnenfels repeatedly points to the moralistic shortcomings of these pieces and claims that these shortcomings are connected to the national character of the Italians and the French.[65] As I noted above, he also theorizes about the ideal German theater, and, like Lessing, recommends the emphatic presentations of moral maxims.

Gemmingen does not treat the theatrical traditions of other nations with the same amount of criticism as Lessing and Sonnenfels do.[66] Nevertheless, he does stress the importance of theatrical morality as both a reflection of German national identity and a

62. Schlipphacke, Heidi M. "'*Vous appellés cela betrügen?*': Slippery French Morals and German Bourgeois Virtues in Selected Writings by G. E. Lessing" in *Rhine Crossings: France and Germany in Love and War*, ed. Aminia M. Brueggemann and Peter Schulman (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005): 50-1.
63. Bruce Alan Brown, *Gluck and the French Theatre in Vienna* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 7.
64. Brown, 8.
65. Such views appear especially in Letters I-IV that present Gluck's *Alceste* as a specifically German response to the (morally) problematic nature of Italian serious opera, and also in Letters X-XII that contain his criticism of the (immoral) libretti by Carlo Goldoni.
66. In Stück V and VII, for example, Gemmingen discusses several plays by Goldoni. He complains about the fact that these plays do not posses the desired level of moral uprightness, yet he does not connect Goldoni's problematic morality to the moral character of the whole Italian nation.

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tool to construct such identity. In "Stück VIII" of the *Dramaturgie*, for example, Gemmingen discusses a German translation of a French play and criticizes the translator for introducing jokes in bad taste and sexual innuendos into the original piece. He justifies his criticism by claiming that morally inferior theater puts the whole German nation to shame.

Ideas similar to those of Lessing, Sonnenfels, and Gemmingen must have been in the minds of playwrights, librettists, and composers, who were commissioned to write pieces for the German National Theater established by Joseph II in Vienna in 1776 and viewed by many as a direct descendent of the failed Hamburg enterprise. Many of the operas written for the musical branch of the institution (the National Singspiel founded in 1778) were adaptations of French and Italian works. As in the times of Maria Theresia, these adaptations involved significant moralistic changes, including incorporation of moral maxims.[67]

The moralistic fervor in *Die Zauberflöte* might have descended directly from the National Singspiel's aesthetics. Among the various composers and librettists associated with *Der Fagottist* and *Der Stein der Weisen*, Mozart was the only one who received a commission from the National Singspiel.[68] The product of this commission, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, exudes didactic intensity similar to that in *Die Zauberflöte*.[69] The fact that in the handwritten list of all his compositions, Mozart referred to *Die Zauberflöte* as a "teutsche Oper," further strengthens the supposition that the opera was connected to the aesthetics of the Viennese National Theater experiment. Most of the German works written for the Viennese theaters around 1790 were identified according to their genre characteristics—*Der Fagottist*, for example, was referred to as a *Singspiel*, *Der Stein der Weisen* as a *Heroisch-komische Oper*. Mozart's preference for a national rather than a genre characterization of his last opera suggests that during the creation of *Die Zauberflöte*, he was thinking about the nationalist/moralistic principles associated with *Die Entführung* and the National Singspiel. Thus despite their aura of transcendence, Mozart's maxims in *Die Zauberflöte* might be preaching specifically German morals.[70]

67. Chapter I of my "Morals across the Footlights" presents a case study of how a French *opéra comique* (*Les Souliers mors-dorés, ou La cordonnière allemande*, libretto by Marquis de Ferrières, music by Alessandro Fridzeri) was transformed into a German singspiel for the National Theater in Vienna (*Die pücefarbnen Schuhe, oder Die Schöne Schusterin*, libretto by Gottlieb Stephanie the Younger, music by Ignaz Umlauf) and how a significant part of this transformation consisted in infusing the original work with moralistic elements.
68. I am basing this claim on Buch's statement that "with the exception of Mozart, Schikaneder did not commission imperial composers for the new singspiels composed every month." Buch, "Mozart and the Theater auf der Wieden: New Attributions and Perspectives," *Cambridge Opera Journal* 9 (1997), 196. The Theater in der Leopoldstadt also had its own composers, such as Wenzel Müller, who never wrote anything for the imperial theaters.
69. Especially prominent is Mozart's setting of the maxim "Nichts ist so häßlich als die Rache..." in *Die Entführung*'s finale, which exhibits the same didactically intensifying musical features and which I discuss in Chapter I of my "Morals across the Footlights."
70. The Germanness of Mozart's approach to morality in his singspiels becomes even more obvious when compared to the treatment of didactic issues in his Italian operas of the 1780s. Although they too

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Very little evidence survives about the process of *Die Zauberflöte*'s creation. The fact that this opera approaches didacticism in a more rigorous manner than *Der Stein der Weisen* although both singspiels were conceived and produced by Schikaneder in the same period suggests, however, that it was Mozart who instigated the serious approach to moral maxims in the later work. Schikaneder's well-known comment in the preface to his opera *Der Spiegel von Arkadien* further insinuates that Mozart might have influenced his decision to include extensive moralistic passages *Die Zauberflöte*. In reaction to Christian August Vulpius's changes in the opera's libretto for the performance at the Weimar court theater (changes that included transformations of moral maxims into regular utterances of onstage characters), Schikaneder asked rhetorically: "How could he [Vulpius] have thought of mutilating an opera which I thought through diligently ['fleissig durchdachte'] with the late Mozart[?]"[71]

Could it be that during the process of "diligent thinking" Mozart reminded Schikaneder of the concept of German national theater as a school of morals, the same concept that had already influenced his *Die Entführung*?[72] May he even have asked the librettist to add some moral maxims into the text of the new opera, so that he could have the chance to set them with a musical equivalent of the dramatic effectiveness that contemporary German thinkers such as Lessing felt these messages deserved? May he have wanted to increase the opera's Germanness through his intense musical attention to maxims? Although the answers to these questions will probably always remain hypothetical, the very act of asking them allows unexplored possibilities of hearing and interpreting Mozart's and Schikaneder's opera to emerge and stakes out new paths that connect the work to its original cultural contexts and meanings.

contain a large number of didactic elements, these works do not promote moral issues in so explicit and intense a manner. I compare Mozart's moralizing in his Italian as opposed to his German operas in Chapter III of my "Morals across the Footlights."

71. Schikaneder's" Preface" cited and translated in Branscombe, 1991, 89.

72. Schikaneder's pre-Wiednertheater plays and libretti followed the German aesthetics of moral theater more closely than his later works. See Egon Komorzynski, *Emanuel Schikaneder: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des deutschen Theaters* (Vienna: Doblinger, 1951), esp. pp. 38-72, and Anke Sonnek, *Emanuel Schikaneder: Theaterprinzipal, Schauspieler und Stückenschreiber* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1999), esp. pp. 223-232. Norbert Miller briefly discusses moral maxims in the post-*Zauberflöte* libretti by Schikaneder and claims that Schikaneder's tendency to moralize through maxims influenced Beethoven's *Fidelio*. Miller, however, does not pay attention to the fact that most of Schikaneder's magical operas from the 1790s tend to transform *Die Zauberflöte*'s moralistic vigor into travesty. Beethoven's fascination with serious moral maxims should therefore be seen as responding specifically to *Die Zauberflöte*, and not so much to the later Schikaneder operas. See Norbert Miller, "Die Erben von Zauberflöte und Glockenspiel: Peter von Winters 'Labyrinth' und das Märchentheater von Emanuel Schikaneder," in *Europäische Romantik in der Musik*, written by Carl Dahlhaus and Norbert Miller (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1999), 497-538. I discuss Beethoven's operatic moralizing in Chapters III and IV of my "Morals across the Footlights."

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