

Summary of „Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: *Die Zauberflöte*
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W.A.Mozart: The Magic Flute **The autograph, its history and the consequences (1995)**

One might wonder what new knowledge the autograph of one of the most performed operas of the repertoire 200 years after its premiere can provide. Many books have been written about the piece and numerous performances have been staged and even Goethe was so impressed that he wrote a second part for the opera.

In order to answer this question it's important to identify the destiny of the original score and other copies of the latter.

In Mozart's time it was common to spread new scores through handmade copies which were adapted according to the occasion of its performances.

The first print was published in 1814 and has been of course not corrected by Mozart before its publication.

Hence it's evident that the entire performance history of the opera is based on an inaccurate edition which refers possibly not even to the autograph itself but to one of its numerous copies.

Constanze Mozart sold the autograph to the publisher Johann Anton André who wasn't able to realize his plans to publish an edition based on the autograph.

In 1842 all autographs owned by André were divided among the publisher's five sons. His eldest son received the *Magic Flute* and sold it to the banker Eduard Sputh.

The latter had planned to endow the autograph to the Prussian King in exchange for an order. Eduard Sputh was not able to realize this plan because he was insolvent and the autograph became part of the bankrupt's assets.

Eventually someone bought the autograph for 2500 Taler and gave it as a gift to the Prussian court. This unknown person received in exchange the „Red Eagle Order“

The autograph became then part of the royal library but no new edition was made.

During WW2 the score was again in danger and was stored in Poland. After the war it disappeared in an (for scientists) unknown place (in Krakow) and was returned only in 1977 to the government of the GDR.

Ever since it has been among the collection of the German National Library in Berlin.

Not even the New Mozart Edition was able to use the autograph for its edition because in the 1960s the score was still unavailable. Only a microfilm from the times of WW2 could be used to prepare the edition.

Therefore the edition of one of Mozart's most important pieces (made by Meinhard v. Zallinger 1956) had to be published without involving the most crucial source - the autograph.

Alfred Orel who was also involved in the publication fell sick and his assistant Gernot Gruber took over his work obviously without having been informed about important facts of Orel's work.

Consequences after screening the rediscovered autograph

Structure of the voices, notation, color of ink

From looking at the color of ink Mozart's working process becomes clear.

With fresh, neat ink he wrote the main voices in vertical direction. This process was so quick (because everything was already clear and ready in his head) that he didn't look at the middle voices and other lines.

Therefore today we are faced by differences in articulation and phrasing in different voices and we have to decide which original idea we prefer or whether we leave the differences as they are.

However, no contemporary edition leaves the decisions to the performer because they have been taken already by the publisher. Only studying the autograph gives us the opportunity to find new approaches.

Once Mozart had finished the main voices (they had to go as quickly as possible to the copyist) he added the other voices and parts with thinned ink (this was cheaper and Mozart was notoriously broke in this time). Unfortunately because of the use of thinned ink some sections have faded away over the years and could be made readable only through special technical methods.

Looking at the color of the ink it becomes very clear which corrections have been made by Mozart at what stage and what was his last will.

We find many differences to contemporary editions which had access only to photographs of the autograph on which the differences in color are not clear visible.

Those editions contain even wrong notes such as for example in the play-out of Monostatos' Aria: The part of the second clarinet has been written at first with thick dark ink but has been later moved up a third with thinner ink.

The magic instruments and the backstage music

The first Tamino (Benedikt Schack) who is described by Constanze as „Mozart's friend who knew Mozart like no one else" was not only singer but also flutist.

This fact suggests to me that he might have played himself the part of the magic flute in the performance.

Looking at the score this assumption becomes quite evident because Mozart has counted in the time the performer needs to breath between singing and swapping to the instrument. Therefore in our performance we try to revive this impression although our Tamino is not a flute player himself. We try to move the magic flute from the pit on the stage and give it thereby a special meaning.

The „stählerne Gelächter" is to be treated similarly („Gelächter" doesn't refer to „Lachen" = laughter but to „Glächel" = clapper (a small drum stick)).

A quote from a letter by Mozart suggest this scenic solution: Mozart says that he went „on the theatre (auf das Theater)" to play the Glocks.

Sarastro's introduction music (trumpets and timpani) is to be played together with the chorus „from inside" according to the stage direction.

It should obviously not be played in the orchestra and we must assume that the musicians appeared on stage together with the chorus.

The cadence of the three ladies

The first trio of the three ladies originally ended with a cadence, Mozart did cut this cadence assumingly due to its technical and intonational difficulties.

Using a clearly different ink Mozart added later two bars to bridge the missing cadence as unremarkably as possible.

The first two and the last six bars of the cadence are still visible in the autograph but one entire double page has been ripped out by the composer. According to his way of writing at least sixteen bars are missing.

Previous reconstructions add only very few bars and therefore they obviously do not represent Mozart's will. Contemporary reports (such as in Hiller's „Gesangsschule“) show that cadences even for many voices could be quite lengthy.

We have tried to present a version which might come closer to Mozart's musical ideas respecting Hiller's advices.

Sprecher and Priester

The determination of these two roles is somehow confusing because the text book on one side and the autograph of the score as well as the play bill on the other side allow inconsistent results.

We have decided to follow the original score and the play bill as Mozart's original ideas. The Sprecher remains therefore purely a speaking role whereas the sung parts will be executed by the priest.

Chords of string instruments

All available editions don't respect Mozart's notation of chords in the string instruments. Mozart himself was an excellent string player and therefore his notation can't be read as random. Looking at the stems of the notes in his handwriting it becomes clear that some chords are to be played *divisi* and others broken over the string.

Even more interesting are places in which he asks for the same note played simultaneously on an open string and as a grabbed note on the finger board.

This is a substantial difference in sound of the string orchestra for the careful listener.

Dynamics

From the autograph it becomes clear already in the Overture that the common execution of sections with *sforzato - piano* is wrong.

Mozart very clearly writes the *piano* not before the beginning of the new phrase of the strings. This means that the strings should remain *forte* much longer.

Mozart's original dynamic changes are very interesting to observe: Most of today's performances don't do sudden changes of dynamics in the middle of a sentence or a word because it's considered to be illogical. Mozart's corrections make clear that he was more interested in expression rather than the individual word.

In the Pamina/Papageno - Duett he wrote first: *Forte* „reichen an“ *piano* „die Gottheit an“. Still during the formation process he changed (with dark ink): *Forte* „reichen“ *piano* „an die Gottheit an“

A similar correction can be found in the chorus at the end of Act 1 at the *sotto voce*.

At the place „Es lebe Sarastro der göttliche Weise" the *forte* was originally marked on the word „der". He moved it to the more important word „göttliche".

Like in many other works of Mozart and his contemporaries many places can be found in which phrases overlap which end in *forte* followed by the next phrase starting in *piano* (or the other way around).

Fermatas

The autograph makes it clear that the placement of fermatas is not as clear as it is executed in most performances today. For example:

In the first trio of the three ladies the first fermata is notated above the notes of the singers and the winds but not above the string orchestra.

Equally later a fermata is written above three notes of the woodwinds and the singers but only above the first note of the strings and an other fermata above the silence of the string orchestra. That means that Mozart wanted the final fermata to be executed only by the voices and the winds.

In the Duett Pamina/Papageno a fermata can be found on the wind chords which function as bridge between the verses.

Obviously no publisher had an explanation for these fermatas and eliminated them from their editions.

These fermatas suggest - similar to the „Martern-Aria" from „Entführung" - a free execution and choice of tempo.

In the second finale the publisher of the New Mozart Edition has combined two fermatas - one above the note and one above the rest - to one fermata which doesn't suggest any more that Mozart possibly expected a moment of silence before „die Schönheit und Weisheit".

General Pauses

Leopold Mozart describes in his violin school very clearly the meaning of fermatas and general pauses.

If the fermata doesn't require a cadence or an „Eingang" it is a symbol to execute freely the length of the note or the rest.

According to Leopold's interpretation a rest with fermata could be also shortened. That's how we read the general pause in the Tamino-Aria after „was würde ich?"* - as a shortened rest full of tension and expectation.

Instrumentation

The method to write down first the important leading voices followed by filling up the score with the missing parts was called „instrumentation" by Mozart.

It is interesting that the bassoon doubling Papageno in the Quintett when he sings with closed mouth has been added later (with lighter ink).

Maybe this was due to the fact that the voice doesn't carry very well when singing with closed mouth.

Stroke and dot

It's not always possible to identify the difference between stroke and dot in Mozart's handwriting. This is obviously also owed to the fact that Mozart wrote with a feather. However, it is clear that Mozart used those two articulation markings increasingly specific through his life. (see also the remarks in „About Grace Notes“)

Comparing different sections can lead to consequences for the interpretation. As a first example a section from the Overture:

In the Allegro above the first four notes of the main theme he writes very clearly four dots followed by two strokes which are missing in all available editions.

The consequence of this lack is that the theme is executed always differently. According to Mozart's notation the first four quavers are to be played lightly and staccato followed by two quavers with strokes which have to be executed more marked and heavier and shorter.

The consequence of this is that the following forte needs a certain preparation.

Double-dotted rhythms

Generally we assume that in Mozart's later works he writes out double-dotted rhythms because the notation of notes with two points already existed in this time.

After looking closely at the score one must understand that Mozart finds himself still in a period of transition. He writes out some double-dotted rhythms, others have to be added by the interpreter.

We start with the three chords which are formally closely related to the French Overture and have to be therefore played double-dotted. From the dramatical point of view this execution is crucial because Sarastro's world, the freemasonry with its rituals still exist and are intact (in contrast to *Parsifal*).

An example for the not notated double.dotted rhythm is to be found in the first Finale The chorus „Es lebe Sarastro" starts with a quaver upbeat. This quaver is written precisely above the orchestra's semiquaver upbeat and has to be shortened therefore.

An other similar example is to be found in the Quintett of Act 2 „Von festem Geiste ist ein Mann" where Mozart describes the rhythmical structure without notating the mathematical correct values.

Grace notes

Although Leopold Mozart pleads in his violin school to notate grace notes according to the value they should be executed.

W.A.Mozart doesn't follow this advice and rather trusts the common performance traditions especially since he usually is himself in charge of leading performances of his operas. Because of his „vertical" way of working different notations for the same grace note can be found simultaneously.

This is a reason to study the common rules of his time. If we look at the sources it becomes clear that until the late 19th century a long execution of the grace note was normal. During Mahler's tenure as music director in Vienna the short execution of grace notes (the values printed in the editions, which differ from the ones in the autograph) has become the performance standard until today. (see „About Grace Notes“)

The three chords

The famous opening chords consist not only of three but of five chords. The figure „five" represents the initiation of the female into Sarastro's order and also into the society of Mozart's times. This idea is reinforced by the fact that those first chords are played by the entire orchestra. Also the victory of the female (killing of the snake) is written in E-flat-major just like the first chords.

The repeat of the three chords in the middle of the Overture is not just a repeat but it represents the area of conflict of the piece.

In the middle of the Overture Mozart writes three times three chords - the figure „three" represents the male consecration.

In this place we also meet the typical instrumentation of the freemasons: only wind instruments („Harmoniemusik").

The key is B-flat-major which is also used later by Sarastro as key before the test.

In the autograph Mozart doesn't write any music at the beginning of Act 2 when Sarastro's disciples gather.

However, the text book says that „they blow three times their horns". All editions suggest that the three times three chords from the Overture should be played here.

This is questionable since the text book asks specifically for only three chords.

Tempo

Studying sources including statements of Mozart contemporaries who heard and saw him lead and play his music suggest a clear tendency of tempo choice after his death: fast tempi got faster and slow tempi slower.

- The opening of the Overture is marked *alla breve* and not 4/4 like in older editions. *Alla breve* derives from the „integer valor" and is based on the heart beat (average 72 beats per minute). Adagio therefore reads as the *alla breve tempo* of the heart beat (72) referred to the metre marking (*alla breve*). Consequently crotchets equal 72.

Having in mind this tempo approach the connection from the Marcia in the beginning of Act 2 through the Chorus of the Priests to the scene of the Armed Men becomes clear.

In the autograph of the Overture there is no double bar between the Adagio and the Allegro section. This suggests that the *Allegro* is also in *Alla breve* (even a quick *alla breve*). This is proved by the first movement of M. Clementi's Sonata op.6/2 in which he uses the identical theme in Allegro con brio 4/4. This theme has been used in the competition between Clementi and Mozart in 1781 or 1782.

In contrast to the tendency of playing everything either too fast or too slow I chose my tempi according to Mozart's instructions and the relations of metre markings. This is the only way of presenting the architecture and inner structure of the opera.

- Pamina-Aria: Gottfried Weber wonders in 1815 (in the „Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung") why he is always bored by the Aria. After having played it several times in different speeds he thinks that it is played way too slowly („almost in Adagio character"). It should rather be read as an Aria sung by a young girl who is passionately in love and angry because of having been rejected by her lover than as a lament of a girl who is sick of love. Weber suggests swings of the Pendulum which would translate to approximately 132 bpm. A little later four musicians who still have performed the Aria under Mozart's baton confirm this tempo in the same newspaper.

We have to take in consideration that metronome markings without the physical impression of the sound are usually too fast. Therefore the suggested quavers = 132

should be corrected to about quavers $MM = 108$ and would be geared to the previously mentioned proportion of the heart beat (3:2).

- In the so called „Sprecherszene" many of Mozart's „Andante" markings have been removed by the New Mozart Edition because the publisher assumed there wouldn't be new tempo markings throughout the scene.

Mozart however wants to make clear that a free recitative section is followed by a part in strict tempo.

- In the Duett of the Priests the New Mozart Edition writes „Allegretto". Mozart himself writes „Andante" and *alla breve* in the autograph. The Duett requires therefore a rather floating tempo.

- Monostatos Aria: Mozart erases the original „Allegretto" and changes it to „Allegro“.

- Sarastros Aria „In diesen heil'gen Hallen": Mozart erases the original „Andantino sostenuto" and changes it to „Larghetto“

Stage directions

In the autograph Mozart's stage directions are closely linked to musical lines, gestures or actions. The New Mozart edition doesn't print them in the right place and obscures Mozart's intentions therefore.

Mozart has obviously a very dramatic and pictographic approach when putting the text book of the opera into music.

Changes of text

Herder, Hegel and Goethe loved the text book. Goethe himself wrote a second part to the „Magic Flute“.

However, the second layer of the text is still not recognized well enough nowadays.

While putting the words to music Mozart has changed Schikaneder's text book significantly (about 50 changes). Those changes are the reason of the „fractures" in the dramaturgy of the opera - Queen of the Night as bad queen as well as good fairy, Sarastro as great emperor who still has slaves (like George Washington), two destructions of the three ladies.

Mozart changes one place only right after having finished the autograph: in Tamino's first Aria he changes „dem jähzornigen Löwen" to „der listigen Schlange"

J.E. Gardiner thinks this is because Mozart didn't want to insult emperor Leopold.

H.Haenchen suggests it would have been a contextual mistake because the lion is later a symbol for Sarastro. Also the snake is a symbol for the female, the queen and the three ladies.

The „fleeing prince" is a reference to Prince Louis and the Royal Family who tried to flee in-vainly out of Paris on June 25 1791 and got captured by the revolvers.

The black Monostatos: In Vienna of Mozart's times a „Schwarzer" was a synonym for a monk of the Order of the Jesuits. It's therefore obvious that these lines are not meant to be racist. Mozart, being a freemason himself, was understandably critical towards the Order of the Jesuits. The censorship didn't cut this hidden symbol. Anti racist laws were not existent in Mozart's times but open critics against the clerical authorities were not accepted.

Monostatos remains part of Sarastro's circle and gets punished (which doesn't agree with

Sarastro's "In diesen heil'gen Hallen kennt man die Rache nicht").

Remembering of the large-heartedness of Bassa Selim it becomes obvious the Mozart has lost his Utopia and has now a more realistic view on the world and its rulers.

Listening care fully it becomes clear that Sarastro hides his love for Pamina behind his moral speeches.

Duett Pamina/Papageno

Unlike to other composers Mozart almost never does general corrections in his autographs because the composition is already finished in his head before writing it on the paper.

In this Duett he moves the bar-lines after having completed it half a bar and balances this with cutting half a bar in the play out. He might have done this because the verses of the Duett have more a 3/8 song-like character whereas the play-out and interludes feel more in 6/8. This is also how the Duett has to be performed.

In the autograph there are 7 quavers rest after the 4 introducing quavers of the string orchestra. Usually the rest is bridged with two wind chords which are not by Mozart. One wonders what Mozart had in mind writing those 7 quavers rest. Knowing the performance practice of the time the answer is quite easy:

In a report by Mozart's first Don Giovanni (Luigi Bassi) we read that parts of dialogues were spoken over music in the introductions. The 7 quaver rest might function therefore as a silence in which Papageno speaks the last words of the previous dialogue („Wenn er's nur bald schickte").

Besides that, the genre „melodrama" became more and more interesting in the time of the genesis of the Magic Flute (also for Mozart himself in „Thamos").

With the direct connection of spoken and sung words we have a logical solution of the question risen above.

The contradictions between the Queen and Sarastro

The participation of women in all significant decisions is obviously a main question of the conflict between the two worlds.

Sarastro represents a world ruled by men. This is definitely a reason for the conflict between the queen and the chosen ones (Sarastro's disciples).

Pamina disproves Sarastro's verdict through her deed. She risks her mother's love rejecting her mother's plan to kill Sarastro.

Through this a solution for the problems risen in the Overture (which Mozart finished after the the completion of the rest of the opera) is presented.

Mozart and the freemasonry

In the time of Emperor Joseph II the freemasonry in Austria had the chance to renew itself.

Originally the freemasons used to be a medieval brotherhood of builders which was founded in the beginning of the 18th century in England („lodge").

They became not only carrier of humanitarian thinking but also of humanitarian living.

Mozart as well as Schikaneder were part of such lodges (but not the identical ones). The „Magic Flute“ assembles important theatrical and spiritual ideas of its time and links them in an extraordinary way. However, the work is not purely a „freemason opera".

Sarastro's Aria has been retexted by a Mozart contemporary and the words show in detail the goals of the freemasons:

The temple of liberty

In these holy halls
servitude is not known,
a vassal is not bound
to the bloody duties of a slave.
Everybody is unified
without regarding birth and class.

Among those holy walls
everything is free and equal,
Peasants as well as citizens
are respected - poor or rich.
He who is not delighted by such teaching
does not deserve to be a free man.

In this holy circle,
were we fight for freedom
and remembering our fathers
we loop the band of unity.
It is here where under god's eyes
liberty and the joy of equality matures.

Although Schikaneder used freemason symbols a lot in the first performance it's interesting to examine how Mozart was influenced by the ideals of freemasonry writing the music (beside KV 477 and KV 623). Mozart makes it very clear in his music that he belongs to the freemasons and puts himself in the centre of political discussions. The freemasons were forbidden for a long time (even through a papal ban) and were eventually considered to be the source of the French Revolution. It's not surprising therefore that the „Magic Flute“ was described in 1795 in a report of the Vienna secret service as an »Allegory on the French Revolution". Its success was partly based on the fact that it was also understood as such an allegory by the public (300 performances in only in Vienna until Jan 11 1789). It's a situation which we know from other times as well: a work of music is understood and celebrated by the public as a political message without the censorship being able to prevent this to happen. This becomes even clearer knowing that in 1786 when the progressive freemason illuminati order in Munich was abolished every European country became a „ancient camouflage“ „Egypten" (Egypt) was the chiffre for Austria. The public must have understood this hint in scenic and visual realization of the opera.

Symbols

- 12pm was for the freemasons the symbolic time to open the celebrations of initiation.
Tamino: „What time shows the sun? Are we getting closer to midday?"
Papageno: „We are close to midday.“

- When Sarastro sings in the Terzett „Die Stunde schlägt" the 12 beats of the clock can be heard in the orchestra. The 12th beat is even reinforced by an accent.

- Vogelfänger: In the rituals or the adoption lodges a living bird stood for the female

curiosity to which a chosen one (member of the order) had to resist.
It is therefore obvious why Papageno sells his birds to the Queen and the Ladies.

- The name „Tamino“ is very likely to derive from the order of the „Asian Brothers“
It could translate as „perfect with good characteristics“. The name is of course closely related to „Pamina“.
The two names include „Anima“* = soul, heart, mind and „Animo“ = spirit, will, boldness.