

## MOZART AND THE AUSTRIAN FREEMASONS

His life, works and Masonic initiation. With a short history of the Austrian Freemasonry at his times.

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Mozart

According to the Viennese social historian Ilsa Barea:

"Mozart died in a mean two-roomed flat in the Rauhensteingasse on 5th December 1791 and was taken to St Marx cemetery in a third-class funeral against the blast of wind and sleet that made the few mourners turn back at the city gate and leave the light coffin on the hearse to hired men, to a priest at the graveside, and to a gravedigger who had no duty to mark the spot if no one else did."

This image of Mozart's passing, the knowledge of his poverty at the end of his days and the tragedy of his death at the age of only 35, has haunted the great composers many admirers ever since. Especially in our present era, in which are accustomed to musicians making huge fortunes from the performance of a single tune and receiving universal recognition amounting to idolization, we are left to wonder how one of the greatest composers in history could have died in poverty and be buried in an unmarked paupers grave, apparently unloved and unrecognized by society. We shall see, however, that the image is deceptive and so worthy of a final scene in the opera of life that it could almost have been choreographed by Mozart himself.

Born in Salzburg on 27th January 1756, he was baptized the following day at St. Ruperts Cathedral as Johannes Chrysostomus Wolfgangus Theophilus Mozart.

Theophilus means 'beloved of God' and Mozart later used the Latin form Amadeus, - stylized sometimes as Amade or Amadeo- or the German form Gottlieb. His father, Johann Georg Leopold Mozart was born in Augsburg in Bavaria, where the Mozart family can be traced back to the 14th Century.

Several ancestors were stonemasons and sculptors. Leopold Mozart was educated by the Jesuits at St. Salvador, from whence he moved to Salzburg in

1737 where he attended the Benedictine University. At the time of his son's birth, Leopold was leader of the Court orchestra of the Prince-Archbishop of Salzburg and was a celebrated violinist, composer and author of books on the science of music. Baby Mozart's mother, Maria Anna (nee Pertl) has born in St. Gilgen near Salzburg and she was the daughter of an important local official. Together the couple had seven children, only two of whom survived infancy - Wolfgang and his elder sister Maria Anna, nicknamed 'Nannerl'.

Leopold Mozart undertook his son's education entirely himself and it soon became apparent to him that he had sired a boy possessed of prodigious talent. By the age of four young Mozart had learned to play eight minuets and by the age of six had become an accomplished performer on the keyboard, violin and organ and was highly skilled in sight-reading and improvisation.

In his sixth year he composed five short piano pieces, which are still frequently played. Consequently Leopold decided to take young Wolfgang and his sister

Nannerl, who was also very accomplished at the keyboard, on a series of concert tours of Europe.

The first documented tour, in 1762, was to Vienna, where the children performed twice before the Empress Maria Theresa and her consort Francis 1 as well as at the homes of several ambassadors and nobles. The tour was very profitable for the Mozart family. Early in 1763 Leopold Mozart was appointed Vice-Kappelmeister to the Archbishop of Salzburg and later the same year the family set out on a three-year tour of Germany, France, the Low Countries, England and Switzerland. In late 1766, the Mozarts set off again for Vienna and whilst there Wolfgang composed his first two operas. This was followed by a year back in Salzburg where young Mozart wrote a Mass and a series of serenades. In October 1769 he was appointed an honorary Konzertmeister at the Salzburg court.

One of the objectives, if not the main objective, of the concert tours was to promote young Mozart as a prospect for employment at one of the noble courts of Europe, at least as a virtuoso musician, or better still as a chapel-master, concertmaster or court composer. The tours of Italy, which started in December 1769, marks the start of an intensified effort to secure Mozart permanent employment, but also featured an example of the kind of obstacle to his ambition, and that of his father, he was to face until the end of his life. The tour took in Verona, Mantua, Milan, Bologna, Florence, Rome, and Naples. Whilst in Milan, Mozart composed his first Italian opera *Mitridate, Re di Ponto* which established his reputation in Italy and hence in Europe as an opera composer. At the age of thirteen Mozart was made a Knight of the Golden Spur by Pope Clement XIV. At Bologna he was admitted to *Accademia Filarmonica* -a great honour considering the preminence of Italian music at the time.

The first Italian tour was an outstanding success and after a short break back in Salzburg he set off back to Italy to fulfil a commission to write the serenade *Ascanio in Alba* for the wedding of Archduke Ferdinand and Princess Maria Beatrice Ricciarda of Modena. In this way Mozart was brought to the attention of the Archduke who considered giving him employment. However, the Archduke being the dutiful son of Empress Maria Theresa, he wrote to his mother to ask permission, and this was part of her reply:

"You ask me about taking into your service the young Salzburger. I can't think what as, for I do not believe you have any need for a composer or of useless persons. But if it would give you pleasure I will not prevent you. What I say is do not burden yourself with useless persons, and the claims of such persons on your service... and he has, furthermore, a large family".

The Empress, who was a traditionalist in most things, clearly regarded musicians as potential 'hangers-on' and far less useful than other servants, for servants they were indeed regarded to be. This attitude was typical of the nobility of the time and whilst the courts and chapels of Europe needed music and tended to compete against other for the glory of being regarded as a home of great music and courtly entertainment, the nobility nevertheless tended to be cautious about granting permanent appointments to aspiring musicians and composers. Court orchestras were still regarded as something of a luxury and were the first to suffer if the purse strings needed to be tightened.

Back in Salzburg old Archbishop Schrattenbach was succeeded in by Heironymus von Paula, Count Colloredo as Prince Archbishop of Salzburg in 1772.

Colloredo was an unpopular choice. He was temperamental and somewhat arrogant -in a word 'difficult'. Colloredo set about reforming the Salzburg diocese and province along Viennese lines by importing prominent scientists and writers with the intention of transforming Salzburg into a cultural centre of renown, but he did not regard music as being part of the exercise.

On the contrary, Colloredo curtailed court concerts, shortened the Mass and placed restrictions on the performance of purely instrumental music. This all greatly distressed Leopold Mozart, who envisaged Salzburg as a potential music capital of Europe, with himself and young Wolfgang Mozart very much in lead roles. Nevertheless, young Mozart was appointed as a full Konzertmeister and he composed prolifically in the early years in Colloredo's employ and the Mozart family enjoyed a period of relative security and prosperity.

Archbishop Colloredo, however, continued with his reforms and there resulted a deepening antipathy between himself and the Mozarts. As both temporal and spiritual ruler of Salzburg and its surrounding province, Colloredo was determined to streamline government by ridding it of antiquated, inefficient and superfluous practices. Likewise, he purged the Church of superstitious practices and tedious, drawn-out liturgy. Colloredo was, in fact, a product of the new age of enlightenment, one of the new men in the mould of the new Emperor Joseph II who sought to launch Austria into a new age but, like the Emperor, Colloredo was autocratic and consequently just as unpopular. As far as the Mozarts were concerned, Colloredo wanted value for money and kept them on a tight rein. Already, father and son had made trips to Munich and Vienna whilst under his employ, but Colloredo had no intention of paying retainers to absent musicians. Eventually things came to a head and young Mozart petitioned for his release in order to travel, which was granted, but Leopold had to stay in Salzburg.

In September 1777 Mozart, accompanied by his mother, set out on a tour with the objective of securing employment at one of the great courts of Europe. Calling first at Munich, he made a botched attempt to find employment at the court of the Elector of Bavaria. His approach to the Elector was a clumsy mixture of cocksuredness and pretended servility and the Elector gained the impression that Mozart had a difficult personality. Besides, as the Elector pointed out, there was no vacancy at Munich and this, as Mozart was to discover, was the situation wherever he went. Incumbent court musicians were very seldom dismissed or summarily replaced - provided they did a competent job and maintained themselves in good repute, they had a job for life and a pension for their widows after their death. Only very rarely did a court musician petition for dismissal and the fact that Mozart had petitioned Colloredo was cause for suspicion.

From Munich, mother and son moved on to Mannheim, a court that featured the most famous orchestra in Europe. There Mozart came into contact with the musical Weber family and fell in love with Aloysia Weber, one of four sisters all of whom were singers, though she was the best. Mozart became involved in an ill-conceived plan to tour Italy with Aloysia and his mother, in desperation, wrote to Leopold in Salzburg urging him to bring their son into line. Leopold took two days writing his reply, concluding with:

...it now depends on you alone to raise yourself gradually to a position of eminence Such as no musician has ever obtained You owe that to the extraordinary talents which you have received from a beneficent God; and it now depends solely on your good sense and your way of life whether you die as an ordinary musician, utterly forgotten by the world, or as a famous Kappelmeister, of whom posterity will read - whether, captured by some woman, you die bedded on straw in an attic full of starving children, or whether, after a Christian life spent in contentment, honour and renown, you leave this world with your family well provided for and your name respected by all. Off with you to Paris! And that soon! Find your place among great people.

Mozart duly dispatched to Paris but the venture did not turn out well. The French court showed little genuine interest in him and he, for his part, was very critical of French music and of the French court - and not without justification. Eventually he was offered an appointment as court organist at Versailles but it was a poorly paid, subordinate post, which he declined.

Mozart did not feel at home in Paris. The French court tended to be frivolous and light-minded, given to intrigues and scandals and markedly morally debased - starting from the top. Mozart, who throughout his life was deeply religious and inured in the solid morality of the Austrian way of life, would not have lasted long at Versailles. Then, on 3 July 1778, his mother died of a sudden illness and he was left alone to make his way back to Salzburg.

Mozart retraced his steps to Mannheim and then to Munich, where he caught up with Aloysia Weber, but she gave him the cold shoulder this time and so he returned reluctantly to Salzburg. On arrival, he found to his surprise that his father had secured for him the position of court organist. Archbishop Colloredo, obviously not a man who bore grudges, had given Mozart another chance. But the second honeymoon was not to last long. A commission to write an opera came from the court of Bavaria and by November 1780, Mozart was off to Munich to complete and conduct Idomeneo. This tour was done with Colloredo's permission but in March 1781 Mozart was summoned to join Colloredo's entourage in Vienna. On his arrival there, Mozart was provided quarters and meals with the rest of the servants in the Palace of the Teutonic Knights and found himself regimented into a whirlwind series of chamber concerts in the houses of the nobility. Mozart resented being paraded as a show pony but at the same time being treated like just any other servant and made to wait in the antechamber until required to perform. On one occasion he exerted a show of independence by storming past the flunkies and walking straight up to Prince Galitzin, the Russian ambassador, whom he addressed as an old friend. Mozart also believed that he was being cheated out of concert fees which were rightfully his and that he was being tied down and denied opportunities. He began to plan a way to free himself from Colloredo's employment.

Matters came to a head in May 1781, when Colloredo ordered Mozart to return to Salzburg. An agitated Colloredo took Mozart to task for having made no preparations to leave and there followed a heated interview in which Colloredo addressed Mozart in the language of the street and summarily dismissed him. Mozart replied that the pleasure was his! Even so, the final dismissal did not come until a month later; during which time Leopold Mozart acted in collaboration with Count Arco, the Archbishops chamberlain, to get Mozart to return to the

fold. These attempts having failed, Count Arco formally dismissed Mozart in June, concluding with a dressing down and a kick up the backside.

In 1782, at the age of 26, Mozart found himself alone in Vienna and forced to make a living as a freelance. Handel was the only composer before Mozart to attempt it. Mozart still hoped for a court appointment but, in the meantime, he made a living by giving music lessons to the daughters of the nobility and from virtuoso performances at private salons. More important, he now had more time to compose with a view to staging subscription concerts. What's more, he had become engaged to one of the Weber sisters, Constanze, the second youngest. Although he pretended at first that the relationship was merely "playful" and not serious, the true love he felt for Constanze could not be withheld from his father's knowledge for long.

Leopold feared that he was losing his position as his son's best advisor and that his son was in danger of marrying an uneducated girl who was his inferior.

July 1782 saw the performance of the hugely successful opera *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* and his establishment in Vienna as a serious rival to the Imperial Kappelmeister, Antonio Salieri. Mozart was now claiming the attention of the Emperor and of the great nobility, at whose palaces Mozart staged regular of chamber concerts. Amongst the foremost of these aristocrats were Baron Gottfried van Swieten, Prefect of the Imperial Court library, President of the Court Commission for Education and Head of the Court Censorship Commission, Prince Galitzin the Russian ambassador, Count Orsini-Rosenberg, Intendant of the Vienna Court Opera, Count Cobenzl and Countess Thun. Mozart became a regular name-dropper in his letters to his father describing his grand life in Vienna. On 4th August 1782, after an escape from the clutches of his future mother-in-law worthy of a soap opera, Mozart married Constanze Weber in the St. Stephens cathedral. They were to have six children, only two boys survived infancy.

Mozart went on to compose many great works including the operas *Le nozze di Figaro* (1786) and *Don Giovanni* (1787) several symphonies and concertos amounting to an eventual catalogue of over 600 works, but he hoped for court appointment alluded him until the Emperor Joseph II appointed him as a chamber composer in 1787 in order to keep him in Vienna. Mozart also volunteered himself as honorary Kappelmeister to St. Stephens cathedral in the hope of succeeding the aged incumbent whom, however, refused to die.

This was Mozart's problem - there were no vacancies - and Mozart did not have the right sort of approach to obtain a position, even if available. He was too full of himself, cocksure and emotional, too critical of others and too inclined to act above himself in the eyes of the nobility. Also, his music was too experimental for some tastes, or too Germanic for others in spite of his Italian operas - he was up against the Viennese preference for Italian musical style. The Emperor had all he wanted in the Imperial Kappelmeister Antonio Salieri, who was a typical career musician - diplomatic and deferential without being fawning or flattering, highly competent without being brilliant, hardworking and productive, cooperative and undemanding on his employer. What's more Salieri knew his patrons taste in music and gave him what he wanted. Mozart, by contrast, tended to write for Mozart - "Too many notes, my dear Mozart" said the Emperor .

Mozart Freemason

Mozart was made a Freemason in 1784. He was initiated in Lodge 'Zur Wohltatigkeit' (Beneficence) on 14th December but it is not known when he was passed and raised or whether he ever took office. He is recorded in a list of members as having completed his third degree and he is known to have been a very regular attendee of Lodge. It is not known who introduced him to freemasonry but it is clear from the overtly Masonic cantata *Ok, Seele des Weltalls* (To Thee, Mind of the Universe) that he had absorbed Masonic ideas some time before his initiation into the craft. It is known that both his father-in-law and brother-in-law were Freemasons, but they were not members of Mozart's lodge. Joseph Lange, who had married Mozart's old love Aloysia Weber was also a Freemason, but like wise not a member of the lodge, so it is probable that he was proposed by one of his noble acquaintances.

In 1786, at Emperor Joseph II's orders lodge 'Zur Wohlthatigkeit' was amalgamated with the lodges 'Zur gekronten Hoffnung' (Crowned Hope) and 'Drei Feuern' (Three Fires) into 'Zur neugekronten Hoffnung' (New Crowned Hope), under the leadership of the well-known scientist Ignaz von Born. A list of members dated 1791 shows that 'Zur neugekronten Hoffnung' had 89 attending members, 111 absent members and 12 serving members.

Wofgang Mozart is listed among the attending members and his occupation is stated as Imperial Kappelmeister - which he was not! Among the members are no less than four Counts Esterhazy, as well as several others of the highest nobility, and no less than 49 Officials of the Imperial Court as well as officers of provincial and noble courts throughout the Empire. Mozart was in good company. The Esterhazy family of Hungary were possessed of fabulous wealth and Prince Nicholas Esterhazy was the patron of Joseph Haydn, who started life as the son of a 'free serf' on the Harrach estates (Field-Marshal, Frederick, Count Harrach was a member of lodge Zur neugekronten Hoffnung). The Esterhazy family as a whole were enlightened and humane masters of huge estates in Hungary, Austria and Bohemia. It is worth stressing at this juncture that the vast majority of the Austrian and Hungarian Freemasons were devout and active members of the Roman Catholic Church. They were all intelligent and well-informed men who saw no contradiction between Freemasonry and their faith, even though they were well aware of the opposition of the clergy.

Mozart's major contribution to Freemasonry was, as might be expected, in the field of music. In 1785 he composed the cantata *Die Maurerfreude* (Mason's Joy) which was performed in lodge 'Zur gekronten Hoffnung' on 24th April to honour Ignaz von Born, Master of lodge 'Zur wahren Eintracht' (True Concord) on his being made a Knight of the Empire. Also in 1785 he composed *Maurerische Trauermusik* (Masonic Funeral Music) to be played at a lodge of sorrows. This Music was in honour of two deceased brethren; Franz, Count Esterhazy de Galantha and Georg August, Duke of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, honorary member of the 'Three Eagles' lodge in Vienna and a member of the 'Three Globes' lodge in Berlin. It is clear to experts on music that Mozart associated certain musical characteristics with Masonic ideas: tied notes and suspensions, descending pairs of slurred notes, parallel thirds and sixths, the rising interval of the major sixth, dotted rhythms and various rhythmic embodiments of Masonic ritual knocks, were used consciously as musical symbols, bearing mind that music is the geometry of sound. The Symphonies Nos. 39 and 41, the Clarinet Quintet, the Clarinet Concerto, the Requiem Mass, the opera *La Clemenza di Tito* all have Masonic aspects and Die

Zauberflöte (The Magic Flute) is wholly Masonic. His last completed work 'Eine kleine Freymaurer Kantata' (Little Masonic Cantata) was performed on the occasion of his last visit to his lodge, only a month before his death.

Apart from Mozart's wholehearted involvement, the year 1785 saw further injections of talent from the world of music. On 11 February, Joseph Haydn was initiated into lodge 'Zur wahren Eindracht' and on 6 April Leopold Mozart, whilst on a visit to Vienna, was initiated into the same lodge. By special dispensation, Leopold Mozart was passed on 16 April and raised on 22 April. Amongst other prominent musicians, Paul Wraniszky, Music Director to Count Johann Baptist Esterhazy, and Vittorio Colombazzo the celebrated oboist, were members of Mozart's lodge.

Mozart enjoyed his Freemasonry at a time when the craft in Austria was strong and protected by a benevolent Emperor who was well aware that many of his most trusted friends were members of the craft. But just as Mozart was near to the end of his days, so Freemasonry in Austria was drawing close to its' demise, so we will now delay an account of Mozart's last years in order to trace the progress of Freemasonry in Austria.

In 1731, John Desaguliers, Past Grand Master of England, traveled to The Hague to preside over an occasional lodge held under special dispensation to initiate and pass Francis, Duke of Lorraine. Later the same year, the Duke traveled to England where, at Houghton Hall, Sir Robert Walpole's house in Norfolk, an occasional lodge was formed in which Lord Lovell, Grand Master of England, raised the Duke to Master Mason. The Duchy of Lorraine was at that time an independent principality and thus the Duke was the first European Prince to be made a Freemason. Unfortunately the Duke was coerced into renouncing his ancient inheritance as part of a European peace settlement and in order to win the hand of Archduchess Maria Theresa von Habsburg, heir to the thrones of Austria, Hungary, and Bohemia. He was, however, compensated by being made Grand Duke of Tuscany.

In 1738, the year in which the Duke of Lorraine and Maria Theresa of Austria were married, Pope Clement XII issued the Papal Bull In Eminentissimi in which Freemasonry is condemned on a number of grounds and Freemasons ipso facto ex-communicated by continuing membership of the society. Several Roman Catholic countries including Austria, moved swiftly to ban Freemasonry, but the suppression of the craft was by no means universal. The French, for example, although predominantly Catholic, were nevertheless fiercely supportive of the independent rights of the Gallican church and besides - no king of France would take orders from a pope.

In 1740, Maria Theresa succeeded to the throne of Austria and immediately appointed Francis, now Grand Duke of Tuscany, co-regent and so Europe now had a situation whereby a Freemason was joint ruler of a vast empire with his spouse, who was fiercely anti-freemasonry, Fortunately the couple genuinely loved each other, which was just as well because in 1742 Francis was instrumental in the formation of the Austria's first Masonic lodge 'Drei Kanonen' (Three Cannons ). The Lodge was consecrated by officers of the Lodge of Breslau, under its ruling master, the Catholic Prince-Bishop. The following year the Three Cannons lodge was broken up by a detachment of 100 grenadiers and thirty lodge members were arrested and imprisoned for having met in contempt of the authorities. Archduke

Francis managed to escape by a rear staircase and was later able to secure the release of twelve of his brethren and the rest were released soon after.

The suppression of the Three Cannons lodge was a disaster for the Austrian Freemasons but the lodge struggled on in secrecy, After Archduke Francis was crowned Holy Roman Emperor in 1745, new lodges were formed which survived under his patronage, but the craft also survived, in an irregular form, in the shape of the rather curious Order of Mopses, Several brethren of the Catholic states of Germany who were fearful of offending the ecclesiastical authorities inaugurated the Order of Mopses in Vienna on 22 September 1738, The Order of Mopses pretended to be anew association, but was in fact an imitation of Freemasonry under a different appellation. The title is derived from the German word mops, signifying a pug dog and was indicative of the mutual fidelity and attachment of the brethren, these virtues being characteristic of the animal. The alarm made for entrance was to imitate the barking of a dog. The order admitted both males and females and women were admitted to all offices except that of Grand Master. There was, however, a Grand Mistress, and the male and female heads of the order alternately assumed overall authority for six months at a time.

In 1751, Pope Benedict XIV issued the Bull Providas, which confirmed and renewed the Bull of Clement XII, and there followed a new round of suppressions of the craft in Catholic countries but not, it seems, in Austria. Emperor Francis was, however, very deft in thwarting the authorities in his Duchy of Tuscany. The flame of Freemasonry was kept alight in Vienna until in 1764 Empress Maria Theresa issued an edict closing all Masonic lodges in her dominions. Her husband, Emperor Francis, died in 1765 and by his death the Austrian Freemasons lost a great protector. Francis was replaced as co-regent to Empress Maria Theresa by the couples' own son Joseph von Habsburg-Lorraine, who also became the new Holy Roman Emperor. Joseph II was an avid reformer, the very epitome of the new age of enlightenment. He went on to abolish serfdom, to guarantee religious freedom before the law, to grant freedom of the press, and following the death of Maria Theresa in 1780, Freemasonry was able to emerge from the shadows and embark on a period of rapid expansion. Under Joseph's tolerant administration, the craft was able to establish lodges in Hungary, Bohemia and Transylvania, as well as Austria, under the authority of the Grand Lodge of Germany and in 1784 the Grand Lodge of Austria was formed and the Count of Dietrichstein installed as Grand Master .

In 1785, and in response to mounting pressure from the Church, Joseph II issued an edict restricting the number of lodges to three in anyone city and, in fact, of forty-five lodges then existing, only three survived, The same edict required the lodges to supply the magistrates with an annual list of members and lodge meeting times. However, the edict did have this to say:

"In return for their compliance with this ordinance, the government accords to the Freemasons welcome, protection, and liberty, leaving entirely to their own direction the control of their members and their constitutions. The government will not attempt to penetrate into their mysteries. Following these directions the Order of Freemasons, in which body is comprised a great number of worthy men who are well known to me, may become useful to the state."

It is this edict that caused the amalgamation of the Viennese lodges detailed earlier. On his death in 1790, Emperor Joseph II was succeeded by his brother Leopold, who was not unfriendly to the craft, But Leopold died suddenly and unexpectedly in 1792 and the enemies of Freemasonry were quick to allege a Masonic plot or at least a plot by the mysterious sect called the Illuminati.

Emperor Leopold had been concerned about the Illuminati, a secret society which had been founded on 1st May 1776, by Adam Weishaupt, who was professor of canon law at the University of Ingolstadt. Its professed object was to attain the highest possible degree of morality and virtue, and to lay the foundation for the reformation of the world by the association of good men to oppose the progress of moral evil. To give the order higher influence, Weishaupt connected it with Freemasonry by introducing a system of degrees, lectures of instruction and means of recognition. Weishaupt was himself initiated into a masonic lodge at Munich in 1777. Although its main base in Bavaria, the Order of Illuminati established lodges in several countries and tended to infiltrate Masonic lodges. Certainly many Freemasons were also members of the Illuminati and it became very difficult for non-masons to distinguish between the two societies. Since the state authorities of Bavaria and Austria tended to suspect the Illuminati a having a dangerous political agenda -the freemasons were also under suspicion.

In 1792 Emperor Leopold asked Count Rottenhan, his Lord Lieutenant in Prague, to report on the Illuminati and the Freemasons in Bohemia. Count Rottenhan's lengthy and intelligent reply is revealing. First the Count is well aware of the identities of the Illuminati and Freemasons in his jurisdiction and knows all about their backgrounds. He stresses that there is no cause for alarm and that the people in the lists do not appear to be at all dangerous. He says:

"if I consider the everyday activities and family background of these men, the whole organization is, in my view, rendered very innocuous".

He is here referring to the Freemasons and concludes:  
"there is no reason for concern about the Masons in this district".

His one criticism of the Freemasons, and a serious criticism at that, is that of favoritism. He states that until recently it had been impossible for a man to make a career unless he was a Freemason. He also confirms that most of the Illuminati are also Freemasons, but for that very reason Illuminatism is harmless in Bohemia. He also states his belief that no revolutionary movement would make headway in the Habsburg dominions because of the policy of enlightened reform, good government, and a moral and decent society. By contrast, the Revolution in France had been the inevitable consequence of inefficient, unenlightened government and a decadent and immoral society.

History proved the Count to be right. The list of Illuminati, containing 65 names, shows that the sect included some of the highest born nobles of Europe, several of them holding high office, several high ranking clergy, government ministers and diplomats from various countries and a large international selection of university professors. The Bavarian Illuminati were suppressed in 1785 by the Elector of Bavaria, who was himself a Freemason.

The death of Leopold II left the Empire to the young and inexperienced Francis II. He was only twenty-four and soon found himself caught up in the wars which

followed the French Revolution, when the French were attempting to spread revolutionary ideas by force of arms. Francis became suspicious of any society of men who espoused a spirit of reform and slowly but surely he turned Austria into a police state. In 1794 the Masonic lodges were formally closed down and in 1801 Francis issued a decree which forbade the employment in public service of anyone attached to a secret society. Freemasonry was not to remerge in Austria until 1918.

Mozart's remaining years were typified by intense musical activity coupled with serious indebtedness. Mozart had borrowed freely from his fellow Mason, Michael Puchberg, the textile manufacturer and banker. His indebtedness was partly due to Constanze's health problems, which required expensive treatment at the spa at Baden. Also, many of his wealthy patrons were called away to the war against the Turks. Nevertheless, the 'Magic Flute' was a great success and he was commissioned to compose the opera La Clemenza di Tito for Leopold's coronation as King of Bohemia. Mozart was also commissioned by Count Walsegg-Stupach, under conditions of strict secrecy, to compose a requiem for his wife. Count Walsegg was an amateur musician who commissioned works that he then performed as his own. It was the Requiem Mass, which Mozart was composing on the very day of his death. Mozart sometimes commented that he thought he was composing his own requiem - a comment that was taken seriously by some of his friends.

Mozart's health rapidly deteriorated during 1791. On 18th November he was able to conduct fine Kleine Freimaurer Kantata at the dedication of a new Masonic temple but within a few days he became seriously ill and died, probably of rheumatic fever on 5th December 1791. Because of his Freemasonry, his sister-in law Sophie had great difficulty in finding a priest to perform the funeral service, but this nevertheless took place at St. Stephens cathedral on 7th December. The mourners included van Swieten, Salieri, Albrechtsberger and Sussmayer (two pupils of his), Hofer and Lange.

Van Swieten arranged the funeral and its simple nature was in keeping with the spirit and customs of the times and so as not to put demands on the widow's purse. The grave was not marked and has never been found. A benefit concert was later held, which paid off all Mozart's debts and provided Constanze with a useful lump sum.

So Mozart was far from forgotten in his last days and, had he lived, would undoubtedly have gone on to ever greater things. His financial position had also greatly improved by the time of his death, his indebtedness considerably reduced. But what would Mozart have made of the suppression of the Freemasons? Undoubtedly, he would have been greatly distressed to see the disappearance of a society of upright and enlightened men, all of them true friends. Would Mozart have fought back? We cannot be sure, but The Magic Flute with its' Masonic message, is a clear indication that Mozart made a conscious use of music to promote Masonic ideas. After his death the authorities made several attempts to 'reinterpret' The Magic Flute in order to come up with a meaning palatable to the Emperor and his aristocratic government. They did this by changing the characters, so that Mozart's good guys (the enlightened freemasons) became the Jacobin revolutionary bad guys, and Mozart's bad guy's (the aristocratic tyrants) became the good guys. The authorities didn't dare close the opera down altogether

and neither did they get away with their new interpretation. Mozart's Masonic statement outlived them all.

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