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Pursuing enlightenment in Vienna, 1781-1790

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PURSUING ENLIGHTENMENT IN VIENNA, 1781-1790

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
In partial fulfillment of the
Requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

In

The Department of History

by
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ABSTRACT

Radical transformations came about in Vienna during the 1780s, as intellectuals in the city embraced the Enlightenment and explored ways in which the movement could be spread. In 1781, Joseph II and his state reformed censorship. In an instant, the Viennese had access to the great scholarly works of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Europe. In an instant, Vienna spawned a multitude of writers, publishing houses, reading rooms and all the accoutrements of a culture of print. The newly generated intellectual culture produced an amazing amount of pamphlets, an era termed the *Broschürenflut* in Austrian history. Public debate on the state, religion, and society accompanied the flood of short tracts, bringing together a group of intellectuals in support of Enlightenment. These men of letters quickly consolidated their energies to bring rational reform to the people of the Habsburg state through the methods of print and association. Their first project was a weekly literary review focusing exclusively on the domestic press called the *Realzeitung*. The editors worked in association to promote the development of a more profound, internationally acclaimed publishing center in Vienna and to seek to overcome the years of intellectual isolation and Catholic repression. The Viennese also adopted freemasonry in their attempt to become a center of Enlightened progress; scholars, poets, reformers, and musicians joined together in a lodge modeled on Western Academies. *Zur Wahren Eintracht* pushed members to produce academic works, music or poetry for special, semi-public lodge meetings whose purpose was to spread specialized knowledge and foster

debate. The lodge did not stop at producing lectures; it also issued several successful periodical publications. Vienna thus quickly became a center of the Republic of Letters generating a remarkable amount of Enlightenment activity in a few short years. The ideas and methods of the Viennese Enlightenment were a product of and a response to the reforms of Joseph II. It would also be the king's wariness and lack of support that would cause the Enlightenment movement to recede; by the end of the decade freemasonry came under state regulation, secret police dampened public debate, and the press became less free.

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION: ENLIGHTENMENT IN VIENNA?

Vienna in the 1780s experienced a briefly flourishing Enlightenment. Taking advantage of enlightened absolutist monarch Joseph II's reform of censorship, a group of writers, scientists and bureaucrats attempted a transformation of the city's regressive intellectual scene into one that produced works rivaling those of the French, Protestant Germans and the British. Insecure, not profound, and stunted by a subsequent conservative reaction, this city's Enlightenment movement is nonetheless significant in showing the dedication of intellectuals to reform through publication and association. Historians have neglected these ten years of intense intellectual exchange, yet central, controversial aspects of the Enlightenment are well represented here: the role of localism versus cosmopolitanism, publicity versus secrecy, Enlightenment from above or popular Enlightenment, freemasonry, secret societies, and journalism.

The intellectuals of Vienna formed a group who publicly promoted the project of Enlightenment, first through publication and then by adopting successive social means of spreading reform. Associating was meant to further the effectiveness of the individual in achieving change by uniting each specialized scholar with complementary minds and talents. The new group shared the common goal of reforming all of society and the state under which they lived. With open access to Enlightenment texts and the opportunity to publish their own critical works first granted by Joseph II in 1781, the intellectuals of

Vienna instituted a reform movement seeking to fulfill the possibilities allowed by the political decision to grant press freedoms.

The first phase of enlightened reform took the form of a pamphlet debate on the methods the self-proclaimed Viennese *Aufklärers* should adopt in spreading enlightenment and furthering the intellectual life in Vienna. After two years of this public discussion, the initial organized method adopted was an improving journal edited socially by a group of learned men. The journal promoted the Viennese Enlightenment by trying to place the local publications on par with those of the rest of Europe. This, however, limited the social basis of reform to a small elite group of writers who could reform only insofar as they could reach a reading public with their journal. Next, a group of intellectuals opted to expand their efficacy by taking over a pre-existing freemason lodge—thus using an institution already focused on social means to improve morals and gain knowledge—to attempt to create an Academy of Arts and Sciences despite the state's notably absent support. Through their lectures and various publications, this 'secret' society became the major source of enlightenment production in Vienna from 1782 to 1785. After that time, as the regime began expressing distrust of freemasonry and public criticism in general, the *Aufklärers* in Vienna turned to more private forms of association and satirical works of literature that allowed for subtle criticism with the goal of promoting Enlightenment ideals.

The Viennese Enlightenment movement is characterized first and foremost by its extreme rapidity. The definitive work on the Austrian literature of this era argues that authors believed this “thaw” in literature would be fleeting.¹ The speed with which writers and intellectuals adopted language, ideas and activity in the name of

¹ Lesli Bodi, *Tauwetter in Wien: Zur Prosa der Österreichischen Aufklärung* (Frankfurt: S. Fischer, 1977).

Enlightenment influenced every aspect of the movement. A desire for rapid publicity and achievements further molded the types of writings published, the associational activity, and the perceptions and realities of the city's intellectual culture. Those products of the city's enlightenment were in turn further influenced by the rapidity of their development. The period of public Enlightenment activity confined itself to the period from Joseph II's accession to the reaction after his reign; this city therefore presents a condensed vision of the Enlightenment project.

The press was the primary means through which the Enlightenment articulated ideas and goals and then sought to disseminate them.² Old publishing houses increased their size, production rates, and changed their business practices to embrace the sudden development of a voracious reading public. Writers popped up seemingly out of nowhere, offering short pamphlets with comments and observations on virtually every aspect of Joseph II's reforms and everyday Viennese life. These authors resembled Robert Darnton's literary hacks of Paris who adopted and adapted Enlightenment ideas and language and spread their influence far and wide.³ This historian's body of work has been important in promoting the study of Enlightenment as not just a high intellectual movement, but a real, widespread change in beliefs across all levels in Europe. Although the ephemeral pamphlets were essential to Vienna's Enlightenment, other authors sought to raise the literary bar and provide more sophisticated reading material that would

² Press History has been a recently prolific field, with many excellent contributions to our understanding of the Enlightenment and its central institution. See chapters two and three for current historiography.

³ Robert Darnton, *Forbidden Bestsellers of Pre-Revolutionary France* (London: Norton, 1996) and *Literary Underground of the Old Regime* (Cambridge UP, 1979). Robert Darnton, in particular, has widened the scope of studying Enlightenment to include what he terms "low literature". This approach views Enlightenment ideas as particularly prone to adoption and adaptation by a wide variety of groups that sought to spread the influence of these ideas as far and wide as possible. Darnton's studies have included looking at pornography and the penny pamphlet and cheap book trade to analyze how the Enlightenment was transformed and spread through these means.

improve the reading public and bring an end to the superstitious mentality promulgated in the unreformed reaches of Catholicism. There was thus a tension in Vienna between two concurrent strains of Enlightenment: the high and the low.

Publications brought Enlightenment to a broader public, of course, but also important in its expansion were the new associations of the eighteenth century. The conviction that joining efforts through association increased the effectiveness of the individual in achieving a set program of reform in the intellectual sphere and through that the social, cultural and political world was a conspicuous trait of the Enlightenment in Vienna and elsewhere.⁴ Viennese intellectuals and writers were unusually zealous in promoting collective action, primarily because of the lateness of Viennese Enlightenment and the desire to catch up to intellectual development in the rest of Europe. One such association indispensable to institutionalizing Enlightenment was freemasonry.⁵ The intellectual freemasons of Vienna argued that joining together to achieve change accomplished exponentially more than private efforts and that by stimulating intellectual self-improvement among the intelligentsia, society as a whole would ultimately benefit. The adoption of freemasonry as a form to spread Enlightenment through social activity raises issues of the relationship of Enlightenment to the state and the role of secret societies in creating a debating public. A further issue in studying freemasonry arises from its diversity and the question of whether freemasonry can be considered as a

⁴ The study of association and the history of sociability provides yet another stream of Enlightenment historiography, furthering our understanding of the social world that idealized the practice of reason in society to better individuals and humanity. Nipperdey, Lawrence Klein, *Shaftesbury and the Culture of Politeness* (Cambridge UP, 1994).

⁵ Margaret C. Jacob, *Living the Enlightenment: Freemasonry and Politics in Eighteenth-Century Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), Reinhart Koselleck, *Critique and Crisis. Enlightenment and the Pathogenesis of Modern Society* (MIT Press, 1988), and Douglas Smith, *Working the Rough Stone: Freemasonry and Society in Eighteenth-Century Russia* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1999).

consistent phenomenon throughout Europe when members manipulated each lodge to suit their purposes.

Associations were a product of broader ideals emphasizing the benefits of sociability. The Enlightenment itself frequently invoked concepts of society and the social as the field upon which humanity practiced reason and the means through which its rational progress would occur.⁶ Collaborative projects like the French encyclopedia stimulated the articulation and publication of much of the criticism of the eighteenth century. Likewise in Vienna, intellectuals working together on periodicals and collections of poetry independent of formal associations provided another major fount for sophisticated intellectual production.

Informing associational and communal projects were eighteenth century ideals of intellectual friendship. First articulated through the Republic of Letters and the scientific exchanges of the seventeenth century, was the argument that happiness came through communication between equals. For them, that meant all who loved knowledge, fought superstition, and sought improvement for humanity were kindred souls who brought each other conversation, support, and stimulation. Friendship did not necessarily mean personal amity; it rather represented a partisan identification with the Enlightenment. Thus, Kant complained in a letter of an unflattering reviewer who was friends with his correspondent; he argued, “Actually he ought to be my friend as well, though in a broader sense, if common interest in the same science and dedicated if misdirected effort to secure its foundations can constitute literary friendship. It seems to me though that here

⁶ On the centrality of ‘society’ to Enlightenment, see Keith Michael Baker, “Enlightenment and the Institution of society: notes for a conceptual history” in *Civil Society. History and Possibilities*, Sudipta Kaviraj and Sunil Khilnani, eds. (Cambridge UP, 2001) 84-104.

as elsewhere it has failed.”⁷ This letter illustrates the conflict between the two Enlightenment ideals of friendship and criticism; a conflict that all too often was resolved by the belief that the superior morality and taste of philosophes would allow them to reach the one true knowledge. The cult of Reason did not conceive of debate within the ranks of Enlightenment.

Finally, the intellectual project of Vienna’s bureaucrats, writers and freemasons replicates the tensions felt in other regional Enlightenments between cosmopolitanism and local identification, between loyalty to the state and desire to reform, and between early feelings of national identification and competition within one language group.⁸ The relationship between the cosmopolitan exchange of ideas in the European enlightenment and local application in achieving set reforms promoted both enthusiasm and insecurity for the Viennese. Similarly, cultural identification with German lands only served to highlight the perception of the backwardness of Austria. The loyalty to the state and king was particularly strong among the bureaucratic *Aufklärer* discussed here, but they were even more enthused by Enlightenment, a set of ideas and practices many historians have seen as subversive of the Old Regime order.⁹

Historians have clearly established the interconnections between texts, methods, personalities and local circumstances in the Enlightenment; yet a comprehensive work

⁷ Kant to Christian Garve, August 7, 1783, in *Immanuel Kant: Correspondence* trans and ed., Arnulf Zweig, in Cambridge edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant (Cambridge University Press, 1999) 196.

⁸ Work on the varieties of National Enlightenments followed Porter and Teich’s influential *Enlightenment in National Context* (Cambridge University Press, 1981). One historian trying to create a balance between local and cosmopolitan enlightenments has been Franco Venturi. See his two-volume work *The End of the Old Regime in Europe, 1776-1789*. R. Burr Litchfield, trans. (Princeton University Press, 1991).

⁹ Students of the French Revolution have found in the adaptation of Enlightenment ideals among different sectors of the population contributing factors in the outbreak of the violent revolution that ended the Old Regime and brought into being the modern era. Keith Baker, *Public Opinion*, Dale Van Kley, *The Religious Origins of the French Revolution: from Calvin to the civil constitution, 1560-1791* (Yale University Press, 1996). Roger Chartier, *The Cultural Origins of the French Revolution*. Lydia Cochrane, trans. (Duke University Press, 1991).

incorporating all those elements is close to impossible.¹⁰ Where Enlightenment was limited in years and size and success, as in Vienna, such a view is possible.

Vienna: The *Großstadt*

Vienna was one of Europe's largest cities in 1780 with an estimated population between 200,000 and 275,000 people. The city's unique historical, cultural, economic, political, and social situation informed the Enlightenment that would develop there in the late eighteenth century. The publications of the 1780s also concentrated heavily on topics related to the city and its problems of development. Many of the writers discussed in this work published extensive descriptions themselves —seeking reform through popularizing criticism in an accessible form. Given the centrality of the city and the power of local loyalties to the Viennese Enlightenment, a tour of the eighteenth-century city, its culture and its residents is thus in order.

Johann Pezzl, a resident of Vienna in the eighteenth century, articulated the benefits of living in such a big city in opposition to the rural idealism of Rousseau. Having moved to Vienna in the mid 1780s and becoming one of its biggest defenders, in his multi-volumed description of the city, he cheered "Long live the big cities! They turn barbarians into men."¹¹ For intellectuals in particular, living in a large city was viewed as necessary for refinement, independence, and even for happiness: "As soon as one understands that laws and business, that arts and sciences, that culture and reflection, that society and refinement, are the true and only roots of human happiness: then one honors

¹⁰ The synthetic work by Thomas Munck, *The Enlightenment: A Comparative Social History, 1721-1794*. (London: Arnold, 2000), is an excellent attempt at such a comprehensive view.

¹¹ "Es leben die grossen Städte! Sie machen aus Barbaren Menschen." Pezzl, *Skizze von Wien* vol. 1, p 51.

the big cities."¹² Pezzl even ridicules the German states with their unfortunate preponderance of small cities distant from one another. Vienna in contrast offered convenience and luxury, constant society and activity.

Big cities were not all good. Among Vienna's problems, Pezzl cites bad air, horrible smells, bad water, crowded streets with rushing wagons, and problems with traffic, especially at the narrow gates.¹³ Dirt covered everything. Crime was one fear in such a big, anonymous city. Pamphlets reported an abundance of immoral women, waiting to corrupt the city's youth. Finding decent, pest-free housing with sufficient light in the overcrowded city center was difficult for recent transplants.¹⁴ Nevertheless, the latest in urban developments sought to reduce discomfort; two such modern developments often celebrated were the water wagons that wetted down the dirt and dust on the streets, and the lights at night through all the streets of the city.

Vienna owed its size, prestige, and economic importance to its position on the Danube. The Danube was the primary waterway for close to 80 percent of the monarchy's lands—it created the commonality that many thought missing in the multi-ethnic state and it apparently also created the basis for German dominance. The German capital of Vienna used its post on the Danube to become the economic and political center of far-reaching and diverse lands. The river also made itself felt as a reminder of uncontrollable Nature. In the spring, local newspapers reported continuously on where and how quickly the ice was beginning to break up; in the winter, the river's gradual

¹² "Sobald man gesteht, das Gesetze und Handlung, daß Künste und Wissenschaften, daß Kultur und Nachdenken, daß Gesellschaft und Verfeinerung, die wahren und einzigen Wurzeln der menschlichen Glückseligkeit, seyen: so verehere man die grossen Städte." Pezzl, *Skizze von Wien* vol. 1, (Vienna: Kraussischen Buchhandlung, 1787) p 49.

¹³ Pezzl, *Skizze* vol.3. chapter one.

¹⁴ Braunbehrens on Mozart's difficulties with rats, filth and darkness. *Mozart in Vienna, 1781-1791* Timothy Bell, trans. (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1986). The situation was so bad that some public servants had to be housed by the court.

reversion to an impassable mass of ice became the subject of reports. Every year it flooded, halting transportation but also endangering lives and livelihoods. The 1784 flood was devastating for the city. The populace came together to help the victims of this natural disaster. One freemason lodge alone raised 4,184 florins, which the historian Volkmar Braunbehrens estimated at about 80,000 dollars.¹⁵ Yet despite (or because of its) its dangerous unpredictability, the river further represented romance, history and the Austrian or German Habsburg spirit. In a poem on the Danube, Alois Blumauer wrote “In your calm, modest flow, that contains more than is known, there he uncovers your depth, and calls—German spirit!”¹⁶ In another poem on traveling on the river, Blumauer discussed the views from a river voyage and the pride in the Germans who built everything along it.

The city was the center of both the Habsburg Monarchical and Holy Roman Imperial courts.¹⁷ As such its diversity was unique on the Continent. Although many of the nobility living in the far-reaching Habsburg lands may never have felt it necessary to visit the city, there still were many elites from throughout the monarchy and the imperial lands in residence at least part of the year. Nicolai enumerated the various nationalities: “Other than the Germans, one sees Italians, Swiss, Alsacers, Czechs, Mähren, Poles, and Russians. One especially notices the many Hungarians and Transylvanians; which in the past forty years drew closer to the court.” He continues “One also sees (especially in the

¹⁵ Braunbehrens, *Mozart in Vienna*. 248.

¹⁶ “In deinem stillbescheidenen Lauf, Der mehr enthählt als weist, Da deck’ er deine Tiefen auf, Und rufe: — deutscher Geist!” Aloys Blumauer’s *gesammelte Schriften* (Stuttgart: Rieger, 1877) 318.

¹⁷ These two courts were distinct though the titles of Holy Roman Emperor and Habsburg Monarch were often held by the same ruler. The Holy Roman Empire was a weak federation, though its court did bring together ambassadors from various German-speaking regions, from imperial free cities to large duchies. The Habsburg Monarchy was a traditional monarchy that was the product of long historical accumulation and included distant and diverse lands throughout eastern Europe and including parts of Italy, the Netherlands, and some of the German speaking territories that were also nominally under the Holy Roman Empire’s domain.

Leopoldstadt) many neighbors of Hungary in their national dress, as Illyrians, Bulgarians from the Moldau, Greeks, especially also Turks who customarily stop in Vienna on account of business; also even Armenians, Maroniter, etc. Among the Dutch that live here, are some of the most famous learned names.”¹⁸

Vienna was a socially fragmented city. The high aristocracy was very visible there despite its proportionally small numbers. Pezzl discussed a list of twenty of the highest of the aristocratic houses that frequently served the state and spent much time in Vienna. They distinguished themselves through the splendor of their lifestyles: their palaces (including many designed by architect Fischer von Erlach), their extensive gardens, their lavish public dress and modes of transportation combined with their economic power in this city known for providing services ensured a degree of cultural dominance. In describing these princely families, Johann Pezzl states, "It is natural, that in a place like Vienna, many nobles gather. The throne, the businesses, the fine society; the desire to show, to refine, to enrich, spread, to develop, to turn into abilities one's talents; the family ties, the pleasures, and finally the comforts draw here a mass of people of rank from all the provinces of the Austrian hereditary lands."¹⁹ This upper class was sometimes criticized for superficial and wasteful lifestyles, the lower nobility in contrast earned characterizations that resembled the later middle class in traits and virtues. Pezzl described the lower nobility as moral businessmen and educated reformers, informed by a strong work ethic and sense of responsibility to the state and humanity as a whole. "This

¹⁸ Friedrich Nicolai, "Ueber die Einwohner von Wien" in *Aufklärung auf Wienerisch*, Joachim Schondorff, ed. (Wien: Zsolnay, 1980) 10.

¹⁹ "Es ist natürlich, daß sich an einem Plaz wie Wien ist, viel Adel versammelt. Der Thron, die Geschäfte, die grosse Welt; das Bestreben, seine Talente zu zeigen, zu verfeinern, zu bereichern, auszubreiten, zu entwickeln, in Thätigkeit zu fezen; die Familienverbindungen; die Vergnügungen endlich und die Bequemlichkeit, ziehn aus allen Provinzen der österreichischen Erblande eine Menge Standespersonen hieher." Pezzl, *Skizze* vol.1, 81.

class began to enlighten itself the most among all ranks, which achieves an excellent result. Since the societies of this class are for other honorable, but unaristocratic sons of the homeland not really carefully exclusionary as those of the first nobility: through them the enlightened way of thinking spreads out to more minds, and through these again to more ranks of the public.”²⁰ While the upper nobility were more likely to head the top functions of government, the lower nobility brought their activities and developments to broad swaths of society through their intellectual capabilities or economic activities.

In Pezzl’s social cross-section of Vienna, the final class, the ‘common man,’ comprised most everyone else. This is the term Pezzl applied to *Bürger*; despite the moniker’s connotations it did not represent the lower classes. Pezzl classified the *Bürger* as “the professionals and artisans, the lower class servants of the court and nobility, the small shopkeepers, in short, the customary human race between nobility and servants.”²¹ He described the class with many complimentary adjectives, some patronizing, all generalizing. The *Bürger* represent industry, patriotism, and accepting natures. Pezzl was not entirely flattering; he goes on to discuss the ‘deeply rooted weakness’ of the Viennese, namely the control exercised by clerics over their mindset and lifestyle. Pezzl does not devote a section to describing the lower class population that supported the famed luxury of the rest of the city; this group he dismissed as ‘the mob’.²²

²⁰ “Diese Klasse fängt an, sich unter allen Ständen am meisten aufzuhellen, welches eine trefliche Wirkung thut. Da die Gesellschaften derselben für andere ehrliche, aber ungeadelte Erdensöhne nicht sogar sorgfältig verpallisadirt sind, wie jene der ersten Noblesse: so verbreitet sich durch sie die lichtere Denkart auf mehrere Köpfe, und durch diese wieder auf mehrere Stände des Publikums.” Pezzl, *Skizze* vol.1, 88-89.

²¹ “den Professionisten und Handwerksmann, den Hof- und Herrschaftsbedienten von der untern Klasse, den Klainhändler; kurz, die gewöhnliche Menschengattung zwischen Adel und Domestiken” Pezzl, *Skizze* vol.1 p.91.

²² When discussing the lower class city dwellers in terms of their ignorance or need for reform, the term mob was generally used. When describing the majority subjects who the Enlightenment would seek to improve, the term *Volk* or *Gemeinde* was used.

Vienna was a city that supported the arts, where baroque style, slapstick theater, and innovative music thrived. Culture reached all levels of the divided society. Various theaters were open to the public, not only in the inner city, but also in the suburbs. There were also public music spaces throughout the city, while at times private musical gatherings were also open to larger segments of the community. Nicolai claimed the city's music "entirely befits the sensual character of the nation."²³ The active theater and musical culture supported a large contingent of performers in the city. These creative city dwellers came from all over Europe and ensured the city lasting fame for the innovations made there by men such as Gluck, Schikaneder, Mozart, and Haydn. They further set the stage for the subsequent generation of artists and writers, including Grillparzer and Beethoven. In addition to the theaters, there was an arts academy and public gardens; here, as in princely palaces and monarchical and imperial courts, the public was exposed to statuary symbolizing power, tradition, reigning culture and the good of the state. The court library and natural collections were also open to the public at certain times of day.

Crowded together in the city center were coffeehouses, the social promenades, and other sites for intellectual sociability. Various visitors to the city in the 1780s commented on the Viennese love for their public spaces. A park on the city's periphery—the Prater—combined popular entertainment (including a choreographed fireworks theater) with the long promenade for strolling. Children played along the city walls and on the Glacis. Various palaces of the upper nobility opened their parks to the public. The Graben and the square by the palace were places people went to see and be

²³ "schmeigte sich ganz an den Sinnlichen Charakter der Nation an." Friedrich Nicolai, *Des Berliner Freidenkers Friedrich Nicolai bedeutsame Aufzeichnungen über das Katholische Deutschlands 1781. Regensburg, Passau, Linz, Wien.* (Vienna and Leipzig: Leonhart, 1921). 104.

seen. Coffee shops, first established by an opportunistic looter of Ottoman camps after the last siege of Vienna, had become widespread in the following century. In the estimated seventy coffeeshops in Vienna and its suburbs, Pezzl claimed "One studies... one chatters, sleeps, negotiates, fertilizes, haggles, advertises, develops intrigues, plots and pleasure parties; reads newspapers and journals and on and on in the contemporary coffeehouses; in a few, people are beginning to smoke tobacco."²⁴ The coffee shop on the Kohlmarkt was particularly popular, with hundreds of chairs lined up out front. Nicolai claims that in the winter, the coffee houses were full, while in the summer all the coffee gardens were in full force: "so can one regularly find a mass of people that occupy themselves with nothing."²⁵ While drinking morning coffee, people like Georg Förster would read the papers,²⁶ which in Vienna included the German *Wiener Zeitung*, a French, and a Latin newspaper.

Contemporaries characterized Viennese days as filled with incessant activity. Nicolai claimed that more than any other city, Vienna was a public one; though he added a snide comment on the ability of the Viennese to spend their entire days out in public without accomplishing much of anything. Georg Förster's diary shows that socializing through the day proceeded without rest for a full twelve hours. Coffee shops were full by ten in the morning. People filled their days with strolls in public parks or gardens, visits to reading rooms or Masonic lodges, wandering about salons, going to a theater or to hear music. But by ten in the evening, everyone had scurried home to avoid the extortionate

²⁴ "Man studiert, man soielt, man plaudert, schläft, negoziert, kannegießert, schachert, wirbt, entwirft Intrigen, Komplotte, Lustpartien; liest Zeitungen und Journale u.u. u. in den heutigen Kaffeehäusern; in einigen fängt man auch an Tabak zu rauchen." Pezzl, *Skizze* Vol. 4, 553.

²⁵ "so findet man beständig eine Menge Menschen, die sich mit Nichts beschäftigen" Nicolai, *Des Berliner* 126-127.

²⁶ *Tagebüch*, Zincke and Leitzmann, ed.

fees charged by the doormen of the city's residences when aroused by stragglers needing to be let in. For those continuing their evenings into the early morning hours with drink or prostitutes, however, the city streets were safely lit for the walk home with oil lamps spaced every six feet—an innovation in urban development.²⁷

In addition to coffee, the Viennese were fans of alcohol. Johann Pezzl moralized on the phenomenon of *Kellerleute* who never see the light of day. Visitors to the shabby city wine cellars were predominately from the lower classes. Despite lower Austria's extensive vineyards, people drank as much beer as wine daily in Vienna. The popularity of beer, Pezzl explained, stemmed from its unique ability to fill you up and make you sleep, both quite useful at times. Pezzl reported that the beer houses hosted more than just the lower classes, also students, *Bürgers*, artists, and government officials. They were more polished and better decorated than wine cellars, and therefore would be more acceptable as a site for sociability. Pezzl described the extensive importance of these locales to the developing public sphere: "These taverns are, next to coffee houses, the real temples of political bluster. The people that visit them think they know a little something about the opinions of the cabinet, and mix themselves the more up in the arbitration of international trade, the less they know of the same."²⁸

Suburbs encircled the crowded city center. The *Skizze von Wien* described a rivalry between the city and suburb dwellers. Pezzl himself obviously favored the inner city, and argued of the (important) people in the suburbs, that there were few who "must not go into the city at least once a day; if only to seek protection, complete their business,

²⁷ Robin Okey, *The Habsburg Monarchy: From Enlightenment to Eclipse* (St. Martin's Press, 2001) 9.

²⁸ "Diese Bierhäuser sind, nebst den Kaffeehäusern, die eigentlichen Tempel der politischen Kannegießereien. Die Leute welche sie besuchen, dünken sich schon etwas von der Stimmung der Kabinette zu wissen, und mischen sich desto mehr in die Schlichtung der grossen Welthandel, je weniger sie von denselben errathen." Pezzl, *Skizze von Wien* vol. 2, 231.

pick up stuff for work, sell the products of their industry, withdraw money, offer their services, make visits, make their bows, visit the spectacles, speak to their friends, see the grand and refined world, or enjoy the multitude of pleasures.”²⁹ Indeed, the group studied in this thesis considered only inner city dwellings acceptable, with space on the Graben at a premium.³⁰

The city of Vienna was a fascinating spectacle to visitors. The unique situation of the capital stimulated all the senses. Pezzl, in describing the different national costumes to be seen around Wien calls it “A beautiful performance for the eyes.”³¹ Nicolai, impressed by the strangeness of it all in his first visit to a Catholic city, described the sights, sounds and smells that religion brought to the city. Not only were priests (3-4,000 Italians alone by his count) and monks highly visible in Vienna: Nicolai even argued the monks had a unique physiognomy in addition to their distinct dress. The court and the high nobility also added to the distinctness of Vienna, with the extravagant splendor and pomp of the palaces and public spaces. Over three hundred palaces were located in the city center of surrounding suburbs, many designed by Vienna’s famed architects from the early to mid eighteenth century.³² A single aristocratic family from the eastern territories might have a greater yearly income than all the merchants of Trieste because of the huge population they supported (and exploited).

²⁹ “nicht wenigst des Tags einmal in die Stadt gehen müssen; sey es nun, Protektion zu suchen, ihre Geschäfte abzuthun, Stof für ihre Arbeitin zu holen, die Produkten ihres Fleißes abzusetzen, Geld auszutreiben, ihre Dienste anzubieten, Visiten zu machen, Reverenzen anzubringen, die Spektakel zu besuchen, ihre Freunde zu sprechen, die grosse und schöne Welt zu sehen, oder die ausgefuchtern Vergnügungen zu genießen.” Johann Pezzl, *Skizze von Wien* vol. 1 (Vienna and Leipzig: Kraussischen Buchhandlung, 1787) 33-34.

³⁰ Mozart’s residence in the same building as the wealthy Arnsteins was one such coveted place. Braunbehrens, *Mozart in Vienna*. Nicolai also reported on his search for a space on the prized square/street in his *Reisebeschreibung*.

³¹ “Ein schönes Schauspiel für die Augen.” Pezzl, *Skizze* 63.

³² Braunbehrens, *Mozart in Vienna* 41.

The church policy of Joseph II brought about visible change after 1781: the closing of monasteries provided ample space for residential building in the growing city, so construction was ongoing.³³ The Vienna of the 1780s was not rife with the baroque courtly and Catholic splendor of the first decades of the century. Beginning with Maria Theresa, culminating with Joseph II, much of the pomp had been excised from church and state. Once Joseph II became coregent the court abolished the formerly mandatory Spanish dress and ceremony.³⁴ Maria Theresa eliminated many saints' days and other popular celebrations: Joseph II practically abolished them. The king further dispensed with all courtly ceremony once crowned, riding about in an everyday two-horse carriage and preferring to keep his life in the palaces private and Spartan.

Despite all the diversity in ethnicity and tongues, the German language predominated. From the middle class through the aristocracy, in Vienna but also in Bohemia and Hungary, German was the first language.³⁵ Nevertheless, most people remained multi-lingual, both because of education reforms that stressed language arts and because of the necessity of managing in the various dialects of the lower classes in the monarchy. Literate culture further stressed multi-lingualism. French and Latin and even Hungarian publications still constituted a substantial percentage of pamphlet and periodical print.

The Legacy of Maria Theresa

Of great importance to the development of an enlightenment movement immediately after her death is Maria Theresa's legacy was in the education and religion of her subjects. The original transformation of education in the first wave of Theresian

³³ Braunbehrens, *Mozart in Vienna* 46.

³⁴ Charles Ingrao, *The Habsburg Monarchy. 1618-1815*. (Cambridge, 2000) 183.

³⁵ Okey, 10-11.

reforms sought to cultivate good bureaucrats. Gottfried Van Swieten was the major reformer of the University of Vienna, wresting control from the Jesuits and overhauling the various academic divisions to make the University more competitive with Protestant universities. History, geography, science, civics and natural law were newly annointed as fields of study, providing more secular opportunities for future students.³⁶ The curriculum was also redesigned to reflect more recent theory from the rest of the continent, while Austria's own transplanted scholars, Justi and Joseph von Sonnenfels, built advanced disciplines on their own.³⁷

By 1770, Maria Theresa's concerns began to focus on the ignorance of her populace. Fearing that without education subjects could not be sincere, believing Catholics, she turned to the ideas of her newly created education commission. Calling themselves the 'Party of Enlightenment', Swieten, Karl Anton Martini, and Sonnenfels controlled the *Studienhofkommission*; they favored a complete reform that would involve rotating the monarchy's current teachers out of their offices in favor of secularly educated instructors. The court incorporated two strains of thought on the issue of education; fortunately the two frequently complemented each other. The jurist Martini and the queen viewed education as the opportunity to create good Catholics while Sonnenfels envisioned a popular literacy that would reinforce morality and enrich the work ethic.³⁸

The Pope's abolition of the Jesuit order forced on the monarchy the complete overhaul of the system in 1773, until then the Society of Jesus constituted practically the whole of the

³⁶ Ingraio, *The Habsburg Monarchy* 166.

³⁷ James Van Horn Melton, *Absolutism and the Eighteenth-Century Origins of Compulsory Schooling in Prussia and Austria*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984.. For more on their thought, see David Lindenfeld. *Practical Imagination: the German Sciences of State in the Nineteenth Century* (the University of Chicago Press, 1997) 25-39.

³⁸ The divergent development of the thought systems of jurisprudence and cameralism was outlined by Mack Walker, "Rights and Functions: The Social Categories of Eighteenth-century German Jurists and Cameralists" in *Journal of Modern History* 50:2 (June, 1978).

monarchy's teaching force. The new system developed three sets of schools for the monarchy. The primary schools, universally compulsory, would train good, working Catholics in rural areas and in cities might provide the foundation for later academic instruction. The more exclusive middle schools provided vocational instruction for the middle classes while also providing another avenue for the possibility of advanced education. Finally, the Gymnasium was the school for in-depth intellectual preparation for those going on to the universities. For the uniform training of new teachers for the Habsburg lands, teacher's colleges, or *Normalschule* were erected.³⁹

The state even transformed the basis of study in theology under Maria Theresa. Franz Stephan Rautenstrauch designed a new plan for the study of theology in seminary and other theological schools that went into effect in 1776. He placed special emphasis on developmental fields, and "At the foundation of every year of study belongs next to a Latin, Greek, and also a German dictionary; in the same way we find names like Herder... and Gellert's *Lectures on Morality*, mandated as required reading for certain grades." Study also included learning economics, biology, and chemistry as priests could be called on as economic and social authorities as well as spiritual advisers.⁴⁰ Franz Rautenstrauch created a new strain in the study of theology, known as pastoral theology, that ensured the men most able to form the minds of the entire population would create a

³⁹ Ingrao, 188-191.

⁴⁰ "Zum Grundstock jedes Studienjahres gehören neben einem lateinischen und griechischen auch ein deutsches Wörterbuch, ebenso finden wir Namen wie Herder (Vom Geist der Erbräischen Poesie, 1782/83) und Gellerts *Vorlesungen über Moral*, gefördert als Pflicht lektüre für einzelne Jahrgänge." Werner M. Bauer, *Fiktion und Polemik. Studien zum Roman der österreichischen Aufklärung* (Uni. Innsbruck Habilitation, 1976) 22-24. See also Eduard Winter on the priest Rautenstrauch, his position vis a vis the two types of enlightened reformers Sonnenfels vs. Eybel. Also brings in his diary. In *Der Josephinismus*. Note that this Rautenstrauch is not to be confused with Johann, who will be discussed at length in the following chapters.

population meeting the need for an increasingly secular, broadly-educated public while also developing morality and spirituality in line with that of the reform Catholics.⁴¹

The school reforms under Maria Theresa created a populace that was for the first time exposed to education throughout all levels of society. Rather than the rote memorization imposed by Jesuit teaching, schools stressed a type of learning that might better complement the Enlightenment ideals of reason and criticism. The reforms of the first half of Maria Theresa's reign further supported the development of a new class of teachers, formed by the secular educational program of the state: these teachers would quickly replace the Jesuits when, towards the end of her reign, the pope's abolition of the order necessitated it. The speed of this transformation is representative of the speed with which the reformed system of schooling would affect subjects. Thus, many of the *Aufklärers* active in the 1780s, especially those in their twenties and thirties, had already been touched by the incorporation of secular state sciences and cameralist ideology.

Secularism increased under Maria Theresa for various pragmatic reasons, including the decreasing power of the papacy and the increasing influence of the state; the model Prussia provided in the benefits of reason to politics and government also stimulated reform.⁴² However, the Queen herself was a devout Catholic and was eager to use state institutions to impose her morality on the populace. Secularization did not entail toleration. The state and queen were openly prejudiced against and repressive towards the Jews and Protestants, expelling or relocating whole communities, and

⁴¹ György Mraz. "Kirche und Verkündigung im Aufgeklärten Staat. Anmerkung zur Katholischen Pastoraltheologie im josephinischen Österreich" in G. Klingenstein, Friedrich Engel-Janosi, Heinrich Lutz, eds. *Formen der europäischen Aufklärung: Untersuchungen zur Situation von Christentum, Bildung und Wissenschaft im 18. Jahrhundert*. Vol. 3. (Wien: Verlag für Geschichte und Politik, 1976). 81-95.

⁴² Ingraio, *The Habsburg Monarchy*, 165.

instituting harsh punishments for anyone caught with the accoutrements of their religion.⁴³

Austrian Catholicism underwent various stages of reform under Maria Theresa. Many historians stress the dominance of the Jesuits under Maria Theresa; the Society of Jesus did control education in the early part of her reign. However, Maria Theresa's goals were antithetical to those of the Jesuits. Historian Robin Okey suggests that the empress was closer to Jansenism—the reforming, Calvinist-inspired form of Catholicism which emphasized plain belief and practice—then to Jesuitism. Piarists also influenced education reform with their focus on German language and natural sciences. “It is in the fusion of a reconceived piety and up-to-date intellectual motifs, drawn in part from Protestant models, that an Austrian Catholic Enlightenment may be seen emerging in the 1760s.”⁴⁴

Three successive wars against Prussia proved Austria could militarily hold its own against the reforming, militaristic Hohenzollerns. However diplomatic losses and Austria's failures to achieve more extensive compensation ensured the Habsburgs emerged without a clear indication of their victories. The loss of Silesia, and the important role the Hungarians played in the War of the Austrian Succession further ensured that the monarchy after 1748 would demand more proof of loyalty from the German-speaking lands while acknowledging the greater importance of and some autonomy for the Eastern territories. Further, the war-induced reforms of Maria Theresa in the military, finances, and bureaucracy permanently changed the monarchical power system. The inability of the monarchy to put the upstart Prussians in their place turned

⁴³ Edward Crankshaw, *Maria Theresa* New York: Viking Press, 1969. This biography effectively articulates the extent of influence religion had on the queen and her decisions of state.

⁴⁴ Robin Okey, *Habsburg Monarchy* 27.

the newly forming public's attention to that potential source of competition at a time when a contradictory trend stressed the importance of language and the cultural ties between Austrians and North Germans. It was under Maria Theresa's reign that the suggestion emerged that Catholicism had stunted the monarchy's intellectual and thus cultural and even political and economic development in contrast to the Protestant faith's tendency to foster progressive development.

Despite the queen's aversion to Enlightenment, she brought in ministers and top officials who would employ their rational, enlightened ideals in the reforms they pushed within the state. Chief among the powerful followers of the Enlightenment was Count Wenzel Anton von Kaunitz. The Dutch doctor, Gottfried Van Swieten, was also essential to the rationalization of censorship and education along enlightened ideas. In Lombardy, the monarchy employed Cesare Beccaria and Pietro Verri. Finally, with the death of Francis Stephen in 1765, the queen's son, now emperor Joseph, also became a loud advocate at court for cameralist and Enlightenment ideals.⁴⁵

The press under Maria Theresa's reign alternated between harsh suppression and relaxed censorship. Drama was one of the few avenues for criticism, as censorship rarely touched it. Ironically, ecclesiastical history also allowed more free expression of criticism.⁴⁶ Religious criticism could under no circumstances pass censors, nor could most of the work of the French and English *philosophes*. Pezzl stated that, "the fine arts, the light literature, the life philosophy in popular form... would be disclaimed and denounced through the hypocritical representation Dame theology, as bastards of the muses, as unruly, disorderly, cheeky children. One feared in every epigram a double

⁴⁵ Ingraio, 179, 182, 185.

⁴⁶ Paul P. Bernard, *Jesuits and Jacobins. Enlightenment and Enlightened Despotism in Austria* (University of Illinois Press, 1971)

meaning, in every novel a hail of stones against the church, in every philosophical thought piece an attempt upon the stability of the state. For that reason, one still read in Vienna the Robinsons, the Grandisons, and the speeches from the realm of the dead; while one in the rest of Germany readers had long before committed Voltaire, Wieland, Lessing, Bayle, and Helvetius to memory."⁴⁷

Despite the unfavorable comparison with her son's reign, Maria Theresa reigned over a remarkable expansion in literacy and publishing. Pezzl provided a history of publication in Vienna, stating, "Up until Maria Theresa's reign one hardly knew in Vienna what literature was. A theological compendium, a commentary about the *Pandekten*, a prayer book, were almost the only items occupying the very badly equipped contemporary publishing houses."⁴⁸ The publications of the 1770s provided the foundation and legacy for later Viennese reformers. Poets published their earliest works in this decade while many journals on the British model of improving weeklies appeared. The conversational tone and the moral content of the periodicals, and the patriotic sentiment and baroque style of the poets would continue to dominate later publishing.

In the mid eighteenth century, the state was slowly, steadily replacing the image based culture of the Habsburg subjects with a literate one, but the Catholic baroque traditions continued to influence culture for many decades. Historian James Van Horn

⁴⁷ "die schönen Wissenschaften, die leichte Litteratur, die Lebensphilosophie im populären Gewande... wurden durch die heuchlerischen Schildknappen der Dame Theologie, als Bastarde der Musen, als unbändige, zuchtlose, naserweise Kinder verschrien und angeschwärzt. Man fürchtete in jedem Epigram eine Zweideutigkeit, in jedem Romänchen einen Steinregen auf die Kirche, in jedem philosophischen Denkwort eine Absicht gegen die Ruhe des Staats. Darum las man in Wien noch die Robinsons, die Grandisons und die Gespräche im Reich der Todten; da man im übrigen größten Theil des Deutschlands schon lange die Voltaire, Wieland, Lessing, Bayle und Helvetius auswendig wußte" Pezzl, *Skizze* vol.4 474-475.

⁴⁸ "Bis auf Marien Theresiens Regierung wußte man in Wien kaum, was Litteratur sey. Ein theologisches Kompendium, ein Kommentar über die Pandekten, ein Gebethbuch, waren beinahe die einzigen Gegenstände, welche die sehr schlecht eingerichteten hiesigen Buchdruckereien beschäftigten." Pezzl, *Skizze* vol. 4, 473.

Melton describes the emergence of a religious reform movement under Maria Theresa that initiated the use of literate media in popular culture. Before, there had been distrust of lay Bible reading; after reform set in, literacy was viewed as integral to maintaining the purity of the church, and the theatricality of baroque popular piety increasingly came under attack. Circles promoting reform of this kind emerged first in Salzburg, and then in Innsbruck and Olmütz. The Olmütz society also concerned itself particularly with reform and promotion of the German language. Melton argues that these developments point to increasing contact with Protestant Germany within Austrian reform circles and a growing importance of literate culture within these societies. Societies promoting theater reform also stressed language and German cultural contacts. These Austrian reform groups aimed to promote literate culture through moral weeklies and literary societies. These groups actively attempted to “transform the plebeian stage into literate theater, suppressing extemporaneity and tying each performance to its text.”⁴⁹ The texts could thus be more easily controlled, and popular theater came under increased absolutist control through the mechanisms of censorship. Melton’s book thus illustrates the existence of reforming societies and increasing cultural contacts with Protestant Germany in Maria Theresa’s reign. These groups and their relationship with the state and cultural Germany were forerunners to the work of activist intellectuals in Vienna in the 1780s.

Through his position in the government and through his publications throughout the 1760s and 1770s, Joseph von Sonnenfels was fighting for many of the same reforms sought by associations in the provinces. Both argued Austria experienced difficulty in developing a literary movement because of the gulf between spoken and written language. Sonnenfels's weekly, *Mann ohne Vorurteil* (1765-67), heavily criticized

⁴⁹ Melton, *Absolutism* 88.

aspects of Austrian society: the undeserving nobility, oppression of the peasantry, guild system injustices, the Robot- labor obligations on the peasantry, and torture.

Maria Theresa's reign is an odd hybrid of progressive reform and arbitrary absolutism. Her reforms in many ways allowed the later enlightened acts of Joseph II as well as the development of a debating, literate public sphere in the eighties. However, harsh state repression and increasing state power also characterized her rule. The tensions between cameralist attempts to strengthen and improve the state and the old-fashioned strict Catholic spirituality at court, assured much inconsistency throughout the forty years of her reign. Despite the appointment of her reform-minded son as co-regent in the last years of her reign, the late 1770s saw increased conservatism and state control. This development would contribute to the popular excitement surrounding Joseph II's accession to office at the end of 1780.

Joseph II: His Position and Reforms

As the center of an absolutist state, Vienna would be heavily influenced, if not entirely shaped by the reform program of the Kaiser as would its intellectual culture. Joseph II, the 'people's emperor,' is a fascinating object of historical debate. Edward Crankshaw's biography of Maria Theresa describes Joseph II as arrogant, constantly in contentious dispute with his mother over some reform he insisted upon and she disagreed with.⁵⁰ Opposing all previous characterizations of Joseph by historians, Edward Crankshaw's in particular, Derek Beales argues, "His whole approach is moderate, prudent and pacific."⁵¹ Whatever Joseph's attitude and abilities, the two reigns were quite

⁵⁰ Crankshaw, *Maria Theresa*.

⁵¹ Beales, *Joseph II*, 277.

different. Joseph II himself clearly expressed differences with his mother on his intentions for government for years before he assumed sole rule.⁵²

Biographer of his early life and historian of Catholic Enlightened Reform, Beales describes Joseph as very knowledgeable and well-read. He had met many *philosophes*, but their teachings did not overly influence his actions and independence of thought. Also Beales points out that the king's Catholicism was strong, something that many forget to take into consideration because of all the changes he made to the state religion and all the battles he had with church leaders and traditionalist Catholics.⁵³ Joseph II's education guided his reform Catholicism.

Despite an elite education, Joseph was not a supporter of intellectuals.⁵⁴ This was a fact some authors commented on as they groused about the lack of state support. Pezzl lectured, "His Majesty, the Emperor, recently gave the author of a geography of Hungary as a reward for his work a hundred Ducats; and just now there is a prize offered of a hundred ducats for the best reader on Christian church history. Should it please his majesty to give any sign of his supreme commendation of a literary work more often, than the literature of Austria would thereby take unbelievably bigger and faster steps than it has hitherto. Institutions of government alone do not make princes immortal."⁵⁵ In

⁵² Okey, *Habsburg Monarchy* and Paul Bernard, *From the Enlightenment to the Police State: The Public Life of Johann Anton Pergen* (University of Illinois Press, 1971).

⁵³ Beales, "Christians and *philosophes*: the case of the Austrian Enlightenment" in *History, Society and the Churches. Essays in honour of Owen Chadwick* Derek Beales and Geoffrey Best, ed.s (Cambridge UP, 1985)

⁵⁴ T.C.W. Blanning, *Joseph II* (Longman, 1994) 166.

⁵⁵ "Se. Majestat, der Kaiser, hat vor kurzem den Verfasser einer Geographie von Ungarn zur Belohnung für sein Buch mit 100 Dukaten beschenkt; und eben jetzt ist ein Preis von 100 Dukaten für das beste Vorlesebuch über die christliche Kirchengeschichte ausgesetzt. Sollte es Seiner Majestät gefallen, öfters irgend ein Zeichen Ihres allerhöchsten Beifalls über eine litterarische Arbeit von sich zu geben, so würde dadurch die Litterature Oestreichs unausbleiblich grössere und schnellere Schritte machen, als sie bisher gethan hat. Regierungsanstalten allein machen die Fürsten nicht unsterblich." Pezzl, *Skizze* vol. 4, 481.

his work on the contemporary Enlightenment in Vienna, Blumauer faulted the state for not supporting intellectual development.⁵⁶

The atmosphere of security that Joseph II brought with his accession fostered the self-absorbed and zealous enlightenment activism of the early 1780s. The ongoing Prussian conflict during Maria Theresa's rule relaxed by 1780. For one, the renunciation of the single-minded pursuit to regain the lost territories of Silesia ensured that Austria would not be the aggressor in a new war between Habsburgs and Hohenzollerns. Also, the large army and efficient bureaucratic and fiscal edifice erected in the previous decades in response to the War for the Austrian Succession provided ample deterrent to invasion. Sealing the strength of the state were the diplomatic relations Joseph II quickly solidified as he traveled extensively through Europe in the first months of his reign. Alliances with Catherine II in Russia and Louis XVI in France by mid 1781 created a strong coalition that would deter any aggressor. That, complemented by the king's refusal to admit internal disagreement, ushered in years of domestic and international political stability despite the radical transformations affected by Joseph's 700 edicts a year.⁵⁷

Joseph II's reform of the censorship commission and transformation of the types of works that would qualify for bans provided the stimulus to a radical growth in intellectual culture. The fodder for the newly created debating public, though, would come primarily from the emperor's religious reforms. Under Joseph II, the state no longer persecuted non-Catholics. The humiliations imposed on the Jews were removed, such as the restrictions on dress and the forced payment of a head tax that had only

⁵⁶ Alois Blumauer, *Beobachtungen über österreichische Literatur und Aufklärung*.

⁵⁷ Ingrao, 197-198.

applied to cows and Jews. Protestants and Orthodox Christians could worship freely and build churches and schools for their communities. These subjects now qualified for the educational, economic, and civil service opportunities. Joseph II also turned his attention to reforming Catholicism. He continued his mother's policy of suppressing 'useless', purely contemplative religious orders, but went even further by abolishing all convents and monasteries that did not contribute to education, charity or agricultural development. 27,000 monks and nuns were now denied that calling.⁵⁸ Finally, the king asserted state control over the church hierarchy, intercepting any communication between the pope and his clergy and forcing the religious orders to swear an oath of loyalty to him. The population felt more directly other reforms such as the redrawing of parish lines and taking over the pay and education of all levels of the clergy down to the lowest parish priest. These reforms allowed the Habsburg state to mediate and regulate the influence of the church over the individual.⁵⁹

The writers of the 1780s in Vienna often replicated the state's belief in the importance of creating a capable and happy peasantry for increased state power and wealth (which they translated into arguments for enlightenment and progress, and perfectibility of the state). Though Joseph II also focused many of his extensive reforms on the labor requirements and legal standing of the peasantry and especially of the serfs, the pamphlet and periodical press of Vienna tended to neglect the, for them, distant topic in public discussions. Much more locally relevant were the urban poor—for example, the prostitutes and lower-class women accused of spreading venereal disease. Historians as well as contemporary writers question the importance of the legal reforms of Joseph II for

⁵⁸ Ingraio, 199.

⁵⁹ William D. Bowman, *Priest and Parish in Vienna, 1780 to 1880*. (Boston: Humanities Press, 1991). 1-2, 38-39.

the monarchy; the state did not enact the new penal code until 1787, and some historians argue it was neither particularly enlightened nor did it represent the ideals of a state undergoing consistent bureaucratization. At this point in Joseph II's rule, his reforms became more obviously contradictory.⁶⁰

Joseph II's musical interests and abilities replicate the same leanings among his subjects. Under his rule, musical culture steadily spread beyond the elite as public concerts and even playing in the parks became common. Musical salons themselves even became more accessible to broader segments of the public. The activities of men like Gluck, Haydn and Mozart were a tiny portion of all the music created or performed in Vienna in the 1780s. As the public and the nobility often commissioned music to celebrate one specific day or event, much of the music of the day, including Haydn's and Mozart's, will never be heard again.⁶¹

The Personalities of the Austrian Enlightenment

When discussing enlightenment in the eighteenth-century Habsburg lands, historians focus of course on the 'enlightened absolutist' Joseph II, and if they look any farther, perhaps on the top ministers and nobility associated with his and his mother's regimes.⁶² As the source of the lasting contributions and legacies that tie this odd ten years to the narrative of history as opposed to the ephemerality of the press and the failed enlightenment movement, the focus on the very top of the official bureaucracy is understandable. As a result, Enlightenment historiography has ignored Vienna as a city and failed to appreciate print, public, and sociability. The later acknowledgement of the

⁶⁰ Robert A. Kann, *A Study in Austrian Intellectual History from Late Baroque to Romanticism* (New York: Praeger, 1960) 140.

⁶¹ See Mozart historiography.

⁶² Robert Kann, *A Study*; Derek Beales, and even Grete Klingenstein is guilty of this focus on the courtly elite as locus of the Enlightenment.

failure of the reform movement combined with Joseph II's own deathbed renunciation of his changes in the face of popular dissatisfaction further provoked dismissal of the 1780s as a Viennese Age of Enlightenment. Yet Vienna had a place in the Republic of Letters and there were everyday writers, intellectuals and academics (often also officials, though lesser ones) who represented an enlightenment movement within the city and to the rest of Europe. And even among those 'men of letters' in the Austrian Enlightenment, there were differing groups. An older generation of enlighteners—the mentors who had often played a large role in reforming the state or providing earlier attempts at intellectual reform—constituted a different subset of *Aufklärer* than the younger figures that constitute the bulk of the enlightenment writers. It is this less distinguished, more numerous and prolific group that constitutes the Viennese Enlightenment surveyed in this study. It is the movement supported by these *Aufklärer* that parallels the Enlightenment studied in British and French historiography.

Although this work will study lesser known intellectuals, these men stood on the shoulders of those who made up what Derek Beales termed the 'luminaries of the Austrian Enlightenment.' These primarily high aristocrats and ministers to the king did much to allow the eventual development of the Viennese Enlightenment. The central example of this group is of course Wenzel Anton Kaunitz, who not only aided the development of an atmosphere favoring enlightenment in the court, but was also responsible for implementing so many of the acts of 'enlightened absolutism' of both Maria Theresa and Joseph II. In the decades before the *Broschürenflut* Kaunitz supported a book culture favoring Enlightenment amongst his coterie.⁶³ According to Derek

⁶³ Christine Lebeau, "Verwandtschaft, Patronage und Freundschaft. Die Rolle des Buches im Kreis um Kaunitz" in *Staatskanzler Wenzel Anton von Kaunitz* Grete Klingenstein and Franz Szabo, eds.

Beales, Prince Kaunitz was aware of the *philosophes'* works, but rejected them in favor of mathematical logic; Grete Klingenstein portrays him as leaning towards Enlightenment. Karl Martini also advocated reform, while Count Zinzendorf, another member of the high aristocracy and minister at court, was a strong follower of the French Enlightenment despite the strength of his Christianity.⁶⁴

Beyond the luminaries of the court, the accessible older and staid *Aufklärer* of Joseph II's court were Joseph von Sonnenfels, Tobias von Gebler, Gottfried van Swieten, and Ignaz von Born. These high officials had all been active in promoting intellectual development in the city of Vienna, and they themselves represent various carefully elaborated philosophies of enlightenment. In addition to their own intellectual production and influence, they supported the efforts of lesser writers and academics through mentoring, influence, or the provision of positions and pensions. Without these older statesmen, the activities and ideas of the Viennese Enlightenment would have remained negligible.

Chief among these was the Viennese University Professor Joseph von Sonnenfels. Nicolai claimed that Sonnenfels was a native Berliner and referred to some early discrimination he experienced as a convert from Judaism.⁶⁵ Sonnenfels more than sufficiently overcame the difficulty wrought by his background. Studying law in Vienna in the 1750s, he was heavily influenced by professors at the University: Joseph Riegger and Karl Anton Martini.⁶⁶ His work in the 1770s on theater, language and educational

⁶⁴ Beales, "Christians and *Philosophes*" 185. Klingenstein, *Staatsverwaltung und kirchliche Autorität im 18. Jahrhundert: Das Problem der Zensur in der thesesianischen Reform* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1970).

⁶⁵ From Friedrich Nicolai's *Beschreibung einer Reise* this section of which reprinted in *Das Berliner Freidenkers Friedrich Nicolai bedeutsame Aufzeichnungen über das Katholische Deutschlands 1781. Regensburg, Passau, Linz, Wien.* (Vienna and Leipzig: Leonhart, 1921) 167-168

⁶⁶ Eva H. Balázs, *Hungary and the Habsburgs, 1765-1800. An Experiment in Enlighthened Absolutism.* (Budapest: Central European University press, 1997) 76.

reform greatly influenced the later development of the enlightenment movement, though he is best known for his academic attempts to develop theories of state science and cameralism.

Although noble officials of the same stamp as Sonnenfels have received the most lasting acknowledgement for their connection to Enlightenment, the real workhorses of the Viennese Enlightenment were the prolific writers and friends among the younger generation. It was these men who collaborated on the big publishing projects and who provided the vast majority of the writings which compose the Austrian *Aufklärung*. This group also crafted the personal connections to the outside Republic of Letters through correspondence, travel and publishing abroad. Describing the contemporary publishing world Pezzl argued “Among the humanities, the Muse of poetry has the most and worthiest sons.”⁶⁷ The most cohesive group of young activists was found among the poets in the circle surrounding Michael Denis. Leopold Haschka was a central figure here and Franz Ratschky also joined the group. Alxinger and Blumauer’s letters betray the closeness of the friendships and working relationships between these poets, later labelled the ‘Viennese Friends’. Karl Leonard Reinhold also belonged to this circle of men. All were born in the late 1750s and embraced the chance to develop the city’s intellectual culture and support each other’s development.

Though home to Mesmer and countless alchemy enthusiasts, the Viennese intellectual world provided a heavy dose of natural sciences. The state’s educational reforms and patronage over the previous century played a large role in supporting this

⁶⁷ “Unter den schönene Wissenschaften hat die Muse der Dichtkunst die meisten und würdigsten Söhne” Pezzl *Skizze* vol.4 478.

development.⁶⁸ Unfortunately, unlike the poets, these *Aufklärer* were not energetic self-promoters, and did not leave much in the way of lasting personal records. Despite their comparative lack of representation, they nevertheless participated in the active promotion of Enlightenment, joining the lodges and publishing their own works.

Many of the *Aufklärer* studied here staffed the educational and cultural offices of the state. The court library, the education and censorship commission, and the natural history collection all employed lesser officials who comprised the intellectuals pushing for Enlightenment in Vienna. A striking number of the writers and academics in the bureaucracy also belonged to the *Illuminati*. The *Illuminati* specifically advocated pro-enlightenment forces infiltrating posts in the state to bring about rational reforms (see below).

Although the intellectuals of Vienna certainly played an important role in the functioning of the absolutist state, of much greater importance in the Enlightenment was the role of the state. As many of the writers were formed in a state that sought the training of modern bureaucrats, cameralism was a major influence. As historian Charles Ingrao points out, cameralism and Enlightenment ideals were quite complementary: “Both extolled the advantages of a secular, rational, educated society, that enjoyed a ‘free hand’ in pursuing material well-being. Admittedly cameralists like Justi strove to attain ‘the happiness of the state,’ while the *philosophes* focused on the people.”⁶⁹

The social rank of most of the intellectuals was admittedly high. Most came from the lower aristocracy, and if not that then at least from the middling, though non-noble, classes. Johann Pezzl conveniently chose to use a *philosophe* as an example in his

⁶⁸ Okey, 36.

⁶⁹ Ingrao, 182.

estimation of the cost of living for basic expenses for someone with a middling income without family, public office, or major vices. For a comfortable life and the ability to present oneself well at the houses of the ‘*mittelstand*’, such a man must have 60 gulden per year for an apartment, 24 for wood and light, clothing and washing 170 fl. Food and drink cost 180fl and services, 20 fl. The total for basics thus amounted to 464 Gulden, but if one added entertainment, socializing and the unidentified ‘secret pleasures’, then one could live comfortably on 500-550 Gulden.⁷⁰ Few intellectuals supported themselves through their work alone; if they did not inherit wealth, then tutoring or positions at court supported their other work. When Alxinger received his inheritance, he gave friend and fellow poet Haschka 10,000 of his 70 to 80,000 Gulden.⁷¹ The exception to the rule, as always, was Joseph Richter, who lived the truly independent life of the new type of author. Richter’s constant publications supported him, his wife and his son, but not without a few episodes of financial crisis in which he had to ask for support or pensions elsewhere.⁷²

Reform Catholicism and Cameralism both heavily influenced the Austrian Enlightenment. Reform Catholicism (Josephism) was a moderate form of Enlightenment which, as David Sorkin argues, parallels other religious-based Enlightenments, such as the Haskala. This intellectual movement aimed to combat the secular Enlightenment.⁷³ One historian argues that most of the promoters of Enlightenment in Austria never

⁷⁰ Pezzl, *Skizze von Wien*

⁷¹ Norbert Egger, *Aufklärung, Herrschaftskritik, Zensur: Zu Leben und Werk des österreichischen Dichters Johann Baptist von Alxinger (1755-1797) im gesellschaftlichen und politischen Kontext*. (Magister thesis in *Geisteswissenschaft*, Universität Salzburg, 1998) 22.

⁷² Pisk, H. V.. *Joseph Richter (1749-1813): Versuch einer Biographie und Bibliographie*. *Philosophischen Fakultät*. Wien, Universität Wien (1926). 74.

⁷³ David Sorkin, “Reform Catholicism and Religious Enlightenment” in *Austrian History Yearbook* 30, 187-219. 1999.

questioned their religious position, and counted themselves as practicing Catholics.⁷⁴ Many of the authors were religious despite their heavy attacks on monks; Blumauer himself was a strong Catholic despite his eagerness to attack the spread of ignorance by clergy and monks.⁷⁵ The king's religious reforms often, in fact, meshed with those of his intellectuals, as they all heavily criticized old church practice and the hierarchy of the Roman Catholics, but pressed for reforms that would allow them to retain their religious belief. Without such reform, they feared, Catholicism would no longer be tenable in the increasingly secular eighteenth-century world, a fact proved, by the Viennese, by the intellectual and cultural advancement of Pietists to the west. The adoption of Enlightenment rhetoric in Vienna thus refers first and foremost to secularization and religious reform. Just as historians of the nineteenth and twentieth century use the term Josephinism (or Josephism) exclusively in reference to the religious reforms and ideology of Joseph's reign, so to the *Aufklärer* of 1780s Vienna did Enlightenment involve reforming the educational, cultural and political practices of the Church.

This work will at times use the term 'men of letters'—and indeed the Austrian Enlightenment was heavily, if not exclusively male. Women were of course excluded from the intellectual activities of the freemasonic lodge studied here. But they were also notably absent from the press. The *Musen Almanach* published a poem by a woman, and this was duly remarked on in the correspondence of intellectuals.⁷⁶ Of the pseudonyms and anagrams of published works that are known today, none were employed by women

⁷⁴ Mraz, G "Kirche und Verkündigung im Aufgeklärten Staat. Anmerkung zur Katholischen Pastoraltheologie im josephinischen Österreich." In G. Klingenstein, Friedrich Engel-Janosi, Heinrich Lutz, eds. *Formen der europäischen Aufklärung: Untersuchungen zur Situation von Christentum, Bildung und Wissenschaft im 18. Jahrhundert*. Vol. 3 (Wien, Verlag für Geschichte und Politik, 1976). 81-95.

⁷⁵ Edith Rosenstrauch-Königsberg, *Freimaurerei im Josephinischen Wien: Aloys Blumauers Weg vom Jesuiten zum Jakobiner*. (Wien: Braumüller, 1975)

⁷⁶ Blumauer letters, in Rosenstrauch-Königsberg, *Freimaurer*.

writers.⁷⁷ As for published works, two different female authors wrote pamphlets defending women from a misogynist 1782 a pamphlet asserting women were not human.⁷⁸ Juliane von Mudersbach published a 1784 literary work imitating Ovid; two plays by Juliana Hayn appeared in 1784, and Hyazinth Heyne published two works, one on husbands and the other on wives in Vienna in 1782. Finally a Victoria Belltina published a work in Vienna on education for female domestic servants which may have been a product of the press in Joseph II's reign—but this is uncertain as no publication date is given.⁷⁹ Of the several thousand works published in Vienna, women thus penned but a few, and all but two wrote exclusively on issues of women's interests. The names of these writers never appear in the correspondence, city descriptions, or diaries that describe any of the city's noted female 'intellects/spirits' (Geist) or 'muses'. All this does not mean the reading public was necessarily hostile to female authors; Vienna's publishers issued works from several German and British female novelists, and in the 1790s several female playwrights emerged in Vienna.⁸⁰

Some historians have focused on the presence of salons in Vienna with female attendees as an indication of the visible activity of women intellectuals, yet there are problems with the interpretation. Countess Thun did hold a prominent salon. Yet, despite general appreciation for this woman's talents and activity, the salon factors in the records but only as a social site or in reference to musical interests. Fanny von Arnstein, important as a leader of a popular salon in Vienna and as a prominent Jewish woman in

⁷⁷ Ferdinand Wernigg, "Verzeichnis Ermittelter Pseudonyma und Anagramme" in *Bibliographie Österreichischer Drucke während der „erweiterten Preßfreiheit“ (1781-1795)* (Vienna: Jugend und Volk, 1973) 425-427.

⁷⁸ Elisabeth Seichter and Marianne Maixner in Wernigg, *Bibliographie* 178, 180.

⁷⁹ Wernigg, *Bibliographie* 91, 189.

⁸⁰ Wernigg, *Bibliographie*.

this conservative city, cannot be said to have been active until after Joseph II's rule despite some later historiographical confusion. In the 1780s, as Volkmar Braunbehrens argues, the position of Jews was still circumscribed as a result of lingering prejudice; by the turn of the century, however, her salons would host the intellectual and social elite.⁸¹ Caroline Pichler has also deserved her prominent place in history as the author of many noted works from the early nineteenth century. Indeed she is seen, with Grillparzer, as a forerunner of the later excellence of Austrian literature. This author was the daughter in the house of the most noted salon of the 1780s in Vienna, and further aided her identification with the literati of the time by writing extensively about them in her memoirs. However she was quite young in the 1780s and did not begin her publishing career until later. Similarly the poet Gabriele von Baumberg frequented the salon at the Greiner's and developed a friendship with Pichler, Alxinger and Leon. Yet she too would not publish and become an active part of intellectual life in Habsburg lands until the time of Jacobin persecutions and her marriage to the Hungarian poet George Batsanyi.⁸² Contemporary descriptions of cultured women are for the most part condescending. The few that earn real praise are known for their artistic or musical capabilities. Indeed, Alxinger found Nicolai's description of a publisher's wife as 'learned' worthy of ridicule.

The Problem of Vienna's Intellectual Institutions

In an age in which sociability and print constituted the sole means of action for private people, Vienna's intellectual culture was severely hampered by the lack of an official organization lending incentives and social support to the advancement of

⁸¹ Braunbehrens, *Mozart in Vienna* 66-67.

⁸² György Vajda, *Wien und die Literaturen in der Donaumonarchie: Zur Kulturgeschichte Mitteleuropas 1740-1918* (Wien: Böhlau, 1994).47-48.

knowledge. In a city without a state sponsored Academy, and with a University hampered by a lack of cohesiveness and by conservative tendencies intellectuals had no base for the exchange of ideas. The city additionally floundered in the realm of private associations, lacking influential salons, clubs, and reading societies. The academies, salons and clubs in France and Britain, and universities in Germany are the institutions that allowed the development of the Enlightenment as an intellectual movement, and Vienna's shortcomings in those areas were a serious hindrance.

The absence of an Academy of Sciences in Vienna seems unusual considering the city's size, cosmopolitanism and role as host to the courts of the Holy Roman Empire and Habsburg Monarchy. Earlier in the eighteenth century, when Leibniz and Gottsched joined by Prince Eugene of Savoy petitioned for the establishment of a state supported academy in Vienna, strong Jesuit opposition and lack of finances prevented the plan from coming to fruition.⁸³ In 1774, after more pressure for an academy, the official reason given by the state for not having an academy was that Vienna would become a laughing stock because they could only find three or four ex-Jesuits who warranted a seat.⁸⁴ Maria Theresa herself was not a friend to the intellectual developments in France and thus had no interest in copying their state-supported intellectual culture. Derek Beales characterizes the Queen and Empress as an anti-philosophe; she repeatedly denounced

⁸³ Bodi, *Tauwetter in Wien*, 94.

⁸⁴ Grete Klingenstein, "Despotismus und Wissenschaft. Zur Kritik Norddeutscher Aufklärer an der Österreichischen Universität. 1750-1790" in *Formen der Europäischen Aufklärung. Untersuchung von Situation von Christentum, Bildung und Wissenschaft im 18 Jahrhundert*. Grete Klingenstein, Friedrich-Engel-Janosi, Heinrich Lufa, eds. (Wien, 1976) 138.

these writers and critics denouncing them repeatedly, primarily as troublemakers and unfeeling men, advocating instead ‘Christian philosopher’ as a counterweight.⁸⁵

An Academy also would not be established under the rule of Maria Theresa’s son. Some historians argue that Joseph, like his mother before him, refused to establish an Academy fearing that large gatherings of free-thinking intellectuals would be too difficult for the state to keep under control.⁸⁶ The argument that fear of undermining the power of the state prevented the establishment of an Academy is weak, considering the king allowed and even welcomed freedom of debate in his realm. Joseph II argued extensively for promotion of knowledge through such open discourse as a means to achieving the cameralist objectives of improving citizens and improving the economy. It remains unclear why Vienna lacked a royal or imperial Academy. What is clear is that, in the mid-1780s, when intellectuals were looking for a place to discuss the ideas and discoveries made available through censorship reform, an official gathering of appointed intellectuals, whose achievements would serve the greater glory of the state, was missing.

Varied evidence indicates that the emperor and his advisors had a plan in the works to launch the freemason lodge *Zur Wahren Eintracht* as a trial for an Academy. The traveler Georg Forster reported in a letter of 1784 that the emperor asked the education minister to establish an academy, and had even set aside a fund of 200,000

⁸⁵ Derek Beales, “Christians and *philosophes* : the case of the Austrian Enlightenment” in *History, Society and the Churches. Essays in honour of Owen Chadwick* Derek Beales and Geoffrey Best, ed.s (Cambridge UP, 1985)

⁸⁶ See Alexander Giese, “Freimaurerisches Geistesleben im Zeitalter der Spätaufklärung am Beispiel des Journals für Freymaurer.” In *Bibliotheca Masonica. Dokumente und Texte zur Freimaurerei*, Band II, Teil II (Graz, 1988) 13. The argument that Joseph II did not tolerate the idea of allowing potential opposition runs strongly through the historiography on the enlightened absolutism or enlightened despotism of his rule. However, it seems clear that Joseph only became hostile to public opposition after years of actual experience of it. Nevertheless, the argument stands as a product of one school of thought on this form of government. See T.C.W. Blanning, *Joseph II* (Longman, 1994), and to some extent, Derek Beales’s biography, on the fallacies of previous historiography.

Gulden for it, but that Gottfried Van Swieten had replied that he would not set up an Academy when they barely had schools.⁸⁷ Van Swieten's dedication as an enlightener, and Austria's advances in compulsory schooling, however, call Forster's account into doubt. Jaroslav Vavra's argument that the Kaiser and Van Swieten decided to form a private society dedicated to intellectual development before establishing an official Academy is the most compelling explanation. He cites an issue of the *Prager interessante Nachrichten* of August, 1784, describing the fund the Kaiser established for the Academy, plans drawn up by von Sonnenfels, and lists of potential members. The freemason lodge *Zur Wahren Eintracht* appears to be a fulfillment of these plans.⁸⁸

An arts academy had not been as controversial, and Vienna did boast one of those. Kaunitz supported Lord Shaftesbury's idea of moral education through the arts, he further argued there were economic advantages in supporting the arts, so Maria Theresa refounded the *Akademie der Bildenden Künste* under Kaunitz in 1772.⁸⁹ But in general, the Habsburgs played a lesser role than the aristocracy in patronizing the arts in the mid- to late- eighteenth century. "The important role of the Austro-Bohemian aristocracy as patrons of culture ultimately rested on their wealth, which exceeded that of any other nobility in central Europe."⁹⁰

In addition to the dearth of state institutions, Vienna during the era of Joseph II's rule had few cultural venues suitable for intellectual sociability. There were coffeehouses, public houses, and salons held in the homes of a few influential elites, yet

⁸⁷ Forster to Heyne. 1 Sept. 1784, quoted in Irmen, *Mozart's Masonry*, 22.

⁸⁸ Jaroslav Vávra, "Ignaz Born als Schriftsteller der Aufklärung" in *Die Aufklärung in Österreich. Ignaz von Born und seine Zeit*. (Frankfurt: Lang, 1991) 78.

⁸⁹ Ernst Wangermann, "'By and By we shall have an enlightened populace': Moral optimism and the fine arts in late eighteenth-century Austria" in *Austrian History Yearbook* 30 (1999) 7.

⁹⁰ James Van Horn Melton, "The Nobility in the Bohemian and Austrian Lands, 1620-1780" in *The European Nobilities in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries. Northern, Central and Eastern Europe* H.M. Scott, ed (New York: Longman, 1995) 123-124.

their impact on intellectual life was miniscule. Coffeehouses and public houses lacked stability in constituency and times of meeting, and just as periodicity increased the effectiveness of publication, regularity and dependability was important to intellectual sociability. Salons also had limited potential in that the crowd was mixed, including those generally seen as frivolous, vain or mundane by the serious *Aufklärer*, who proclaimed that fashion, not reason, ruled in salons. Historians have argued that Viennese salons, unlike those of Paris, played no role in the development of a literary or political public sphere or in public opinion formation.⁹¹ Yet salons had been central institutions for intellectual sociability under Maria Theresa's reign—perhaps because then there truly were no other options. Freemasonry was certainly illegal, and salons provided that sociable yet nonetheless private space suitable to life under a reforming though intolerant queen. It was in the Greiner salon, in fact, that many of the young literati first met each other in the late 1770s and were taken under Sonnenfels' wing. Once intellectual discussions became more public, however, *Aufklärer* began to leave the salons to the musicians, penny authors and women ridiculed in their pamphlet descriptions of fashionable gatherings.⁹²

Also missing within intellectual culture were the ivory towers that provided German philosophers a place for Enlightenment. Grete Klingenstein studied the Protestant German critique of the Austrian Universities and the conservative- and church-controlled hierarchy brought in under Maria Theresa. The *Aufklärer* from the German

⁹¹ Braunbehrens, *Mozart in Vienna* 147-8.

⁹² See Grete Klingenstein, *Staatsverwaltung und Kirchliche Autorität im 18. Jahrhundert: Das Problem der Zensur in der thesesianischen Reform* (Munich, 1970) 127. Edith Rosenstrauch-Königsberg, "Alois Blumauer. Jesuit, Freimaurer, Jakobiner" in *Zirkel und Zentren: Aufsätze zur Aufklärung in Österreich am Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts*, (Wien, Deuticke) 12. On the contemporary pamphlet discussions of salons, see chapter 2, above. Also, on the musical nature of salons and on the dominance of women in conversation in the 1780s, see Ernst Wangerman, *The Austrian Achievement, 1700-1800* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1973) 127.

states, and their Austrian sympathizers, believed positive change would occur under Joseph II, but were disappointed in the education minister's restrictive model for the practice of *Wissenschaft* in the Austrian Universities. Klingenstein explains that Sonnenfels' and Van Swieten's policies for higher education were intended to create a useful system for educating future bureaucrats, not to build a critical institution.⁹³ The Kaiser believed education's value lay in the training of professionals, not in the creation of pure scholars or in advancing knowledge for its own sake. In taking over and reorganizing the universities, Joseph II made the system resemble the lower levels of education in assigning specific textbooks to certain programs of study, dictating broad and regular examinations and taking away the opportunity for research among professors, students or the public.⁹⁴ The limitations he placed on the university were also economically motivated. For instance, his refusal to bring in Protestant German scholars was based more on the higher salaries they would demand, then on fear of the ideas they might spread, and he declined to send Austrian students to Protestant universities for monetary reasons.⁹⁵ Volkmar Braunbehrens argues that under Joseph II, "the university was no longer a part of the intellectual community; its independence gone, it became a state-controlled training institute."⁹⁶

Despite the practical, and frugal, leanings of the king, the *Aufklärer* in Vienna did hope for more from their University and one of the first rounds of pamphlet debates focused on its reform. Johann Ahlen in 1781 published the initial pamphlet on the subject, saying that Maria Theresa had ensured that the university did not lack in funding,

⁹³ Klingenstein, "Despotismus und Wissenschaft" 133.

⁹⁴ Braunbehrens, *Mozart in Vienna* 223.

⁹⁵ Robert Kann, *A History of the Habsburg Empire 1526-1918* (University of California Press, 1977) 194.

⁹⁶ Braunbehrens, *Mozart in Vienna* 223.

library, equipment or buildings. He argued, however, that higher education in Vienna was severely disabled by divisions in the faculty and the lack of an overarching directive—clear leadership and a codified (classical) curriculum. Ahlen concluded that science and knowledge were sacrificed to university politics as teaching was not rewarded as the primary responsibility of professors.⁹⁷ Despite the moderate tone of his discussion of the University of Vienna, Ahlen became the instant focus of attack by conservatives bemoaning the results of relaxed censorship. Those pamphlets generally did not respond to the specific claims made about problems in the university and instead focused on the author's presumptuousness in bringing the University up for public discussion, as philosophy professor Joseph Mayer claimed criticism in print of such an institution was completely without merit.⁹⁸

Klingenstein concludes that without an academy or a critical university, “eighteenth-century Austria lacked primarily independently producing, experimenting, publishing lay-intellectuals; there were lacking first and foremost men, who possessed the ability to convey the new discoveries in commonly understood language to a broad public and to teach their application and utilization in professional life.”⁹⁹ As the official institutions of learning provided no cultural center for intellectual development, those wishing to change Vienna's failings in the sciences needed to consider a private society

⁹⁷ (Johann Michael Ahlen), *Ueber die Universität in Wien* (Wien: Hartl, 1781).

⁹⁸ *Prof. Mayers Schutzschrift wider für berüchtigte Brochure über die Universität in Wien* (Wien: Kurzbek, 1781) and Joseph Grossinger, *Freundliches Notabene für den Verfasser der Schmähchrift über die Universität in Wien* (Wien: Kurzbek, 1781).

⁹⁹ “Es fehlte somit im Österreich des 18. Jahrhunderts vorerst an selbständig produzierenden, experimentierenden, publizierenden Laie-Gelehrten; es fehlte vorerst an Männern, die die Gabe besaßen, die neuen Erkenntnisse in gemeinverständlicher Sprache einem größeren Publikum zu vermitteln und ihre Anwendung und Verwendung im Berufsleben zu lehren.” Grete Klingenstein, “Despotismus und Wissenschaft. Zur Kritik Norddeutscher Aufklärer an der Österreichischen Universität. 1750-1790” in *Formen der Europäischen Aufklärung. Untersuchung von Situation von Christentum, Bildung und Wissenschaft im 18 Jahrhundert*. Grete Klingenstein, Friedrich-Engel-Janosi, Heinrich Lufa, eds. (Wien, 1976) 138.

to promote Enlightenment. One benefit of private associations over state institutions is that all those gathering for the purpose of intellectual exchange are of a similar worldview. Whereas an Academy and a University would include people with very different goals, a private society could purposefully include only members who would share the goals of Enlightenment.¹⁰⁰

Joseph II's reforms of the university did not allow it to become a free site for the pursuit of profound philosophy or radical thought. Oskar Sashegyi, the historian of Joseph II's censor reforms, argued "Through determination of the teaching plan, the censorship of the textbooks and the—at least at first—supervision of teaching through the director of the Faculty, one could, it was believed, fashion secondary education after Enlightenment and government science, but allow the professors the necessary freedom through the free choice of textbooks and teaching methods." Sonnenfels expressed the resulting pride in the universities of Austria in his *Denkschrift* for Catherine II of Russia.¹⁰¹ Despite such boasting, the University could not become a host to enlightenment criticism. The University would not become the institution through which *Aufklärer* exercised enlightened methods and sought to achieve their illuminating goals. The Viennese Enlightenment proceeded without state support and outside state-sponsored institutions, but nevertheless would be heavily formed by the monarchy's historico-political traditions.

¹⁰⁰ Rosenstrauch-Königsberg, *Freimaurerei*.

¹⁰¹ "Durch die Festlegung des Lehrplans, die Zensur der Vorlesebücher und die—zumindest anfängliche—Überwachung der Lehrer durch die Fakultätsdirektoren glaubte man den Hochschulunterricht im Sinne der Aufklärung und Staatsräson gestalten zu können, durch die freie Wahl der Vorlesebücher und der Lehrmethode aber den Professoren die erforderliche Freiheit zu gewähren." Oskar Sashegyi, *Zensur und Geistesfreiheit unter Joseph II. Beitrag zur Kulturgeschichte der Habsburgischen Länder* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1958) 150-160.

The Historiography of the Viennese Enlightenment

Vienna is not known for its *Aufklärung*. History tends to focus on the rich culture of late 19th and early 20th-century Vienna. Those that study the early modern Habsburg past tend to focus on statecraft while the adventurous might venture into the multinational empire. The study of the Austrian Enlightenment may not be a huge field, but there are a few scholars whose works provide background or divergent interpretations of part, or all, of the subject of this study. The most well known comprehensive study of the Austrian Enlightenment in English is Ernst Wangermann's *Austrian Achievement*. This work surveys the political and cultural transformation of the Habsburg territories through the entire eighteenth century while entering the debate on when the empire reached its height or began its decline. In his estimation, 18th-century reforms produced a popular political, bourgeois culture that culminated in the production of *The Magic Flute*. Although the work provides valuable background, it remains impressionistic and its conclusions are at times flawed. Much like others of Wangermann's works, the author has a fascinating thesis but does not provide convincing arguments and detailed proof. Ernst Wangermann's recent exploration of the pamphlets of the 1780s is even more problematic than the survey discussed above. Here Wangermann argues that the political and religious literature of the 1780s was not just a mirror of Joseph II's reforms, but also a weapon "in the battle over their acceptance and their practical enforcement."¹⁰² He advances a weak thesis that the king and his ministers commissioned the pamphlets of the *Broschürenflut*, a thesis that misinterprets not only the writings of the individuals involved and their relationship with the king and his ideology but also the development of

¹⁰² Ernst Wangermann, *Die Waffen der Publizität. Zum Funktionswandel der politischen Literatur unter Joseph II.* (Wien: Verlag für Geschichte und Politik, 2004) 11.

the intellectual and publishing culture of Vienna and the working of the public sphere in general.

Other works on the intellectual culture of the eighteenth century include the body of work of Grete Klingenstein, who concentrates more of her efforts on the reign of Maria Theresa, but still manages to articulate the problems of the Austrian Enlightenment. She also published a few articles on the perspectives of foreigners in Vienna in the 1780s that aid our understanding of Vienna's relative place in Europe. Robert Kann offered a valuable look at Sonnenfels that served to establish broader conclusions on the intellectual history of Austria.¹⁰³ Historiography on Mozart also provides an invaluable source for understanding the city's culture.¹⁰⁴ The biographers of Joseph II and historians of the monarchy in the eighteenth century for the most part give the enlightenment movement of the 1780s but a cursory glance. Some do have more to say however. T.C.W. Blanning, for example, provides a good introduction to the emperor's effect on Enlightenment.¹⁰⁵

The study of freemasonry in Austria during the 1780s has been fostered by the extensive efforts of Helmut Reinalter.¹⁰⁶ His essays on the freemasons are particularly useful. Reinalter also made a few of the pamphlets of the 1780s accessible to the public

¹⁰³ Kann. *A Study*. Klingenstein, "Despotismus und Wissenschaft".

Klingenstein, G. (1988). "Lessons for Republicans: An American Critique of Enlightened Absolutism in Central Europe, 1785." *The Mirror of History: Essays in Honor of Fritz Fellner*. S. Wank, Heidrun Maschl, Brigitte Mazohl-Wallnig, Reinhold Wagnleitner. Santa Barbara, Ca., ABC-Clio: 181-212.

Klingenstein, G. (1970). *Staatsverwaltung*

¹⁰⁴ Braunbehrens. *Mozart in Vienna*.

¹⁰⁵ Blanning, *Joseph II*.

¹⁰⁶ Reinalter, H. (1983). "Die Freimaurerei zwischen Josephinismus und frühfranzösischer Reaktion: Zur gesellschaftlichen Rolle und indirekt politischen Macht der Geheimbünde im 18. Jahrhundert." *Freimaurer und Geheimbünde im 18. Jahrhundert in Mitteleuropa*. H. Reinalter. Frankfurt, Suhrkamp., Reinalter, H. (1987). Einleitung. *Joseph II. und die Freimaurer im Lichte zeitgenössischer Broschüren*. H. Reinalter. Wien, Böhlau., Reinalter, Helmut. "Ignaz von Born. Persönlichkeit und Wirkung", Reinalter, H., Ed. (1987). *Joseph II und die Freimaurer im Lichte zeitgenössischer Broschüren*. Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für neuere Geschichte Österreichs. Wien, Böhlau.

in his collection on the debate surrounding freemasonry at mid decade. Reinalter's knowledge of this field would certainly support a more expansive work, should it be forthcoming. Paul Bernard has offered a few monographs on intellectual culture under Joseph II, including a biography of Count Pergen, the chief of police, and an overview providing what he calls a 'literary history from below'; here he discusses some of the top "Josephins" of the 1780s as well as the role of masonry. Unfortunately, Bernard's work suffers from many of the same flaws as Wangermann's. Ironically, in the literature review introducing his recent work, Wangermann says of Bernard, that his work is unusable for academic purposes partly because of "his evident disdain for this 'colorless' material, partly because of his excessive undercurrent of mistakes."¹⁰⁷

There are some works published on the individual *Aufklärer*, mostly either dissertations or articles. But by far the most valuable and comprehensive work on the publications and authors of the Viennese Enlightenment is the work of Leslie Bodi.¹⁰⁸ This scholar presents his interpretation of the local literature from 1780 to 1795. A fascinating read, Bodi's work embraces an extensive body of material; it is full of interesting, if at times untenable, arguments influenced by his Marxian quest to find revolutionary material in this remarkable period. Bodi's work remains the authority on all the intellectuals discussed in this work. Another literary scholar whose works dominate the field is Edith Rosenstrauch-Königsberg. Her work on Alois Blumauer and the lodge *Zur Wahren Eintracht* provides the most substantial and thoughtful analysis of the Enlightenment ideas and methods in Vienna, but unfortunately her publications are fragmentary, providing but an impressionistic view of her subjects. Her study of Alois

¹⁰⁷ "seiner offensichtlichen Geringschätzung dieser 'blassen' Materie, teils wegen zahlreicher ihm unterlaufen Fehler." Wangermann, *Waffen*, 25.

¹⁰⁸ Bodi, *Tauwetter in Wien*.

Blumauer is an excellent foray into one individual and his role in the Austrian Enlightenment; more comprehensive, though incohesive, are the thoughts accumulated in her *Zirkel und Zentren*. An editor assembled this work from diverse prior publications or lectures and some of its most thought-provoking analysis is unfortunately little more than disjointed notes.¹⁰⁹

The people, the publications, and the general culture of Josephin Vienna are a fascinating subject of study. Much more historical interest needs to be generated on the field to begin to cover all of its complexities. What follows may seem a small topic, for who ever heard of a ten-year Enlightenment movement, and how progressive could one city, distant from Paris and London in more ways than miles, truly be? Yet these brief years of Enlightenment enthusiasm were informed by a complex historical situation, and insert themselves in major transformations in publicity that elsewhere occur over a hundred years. I hope what follows may begin to address that tangled web.

¹⁰⁹ Edith Rosenstrauch-Königsberg, *Zirkel und Zentren: Aufsätze zur Aufklärung in Österreich am Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts*. Gunnar Hering, ed. (Wien: Deuticke, 1992).

CHAPTER 2. THE *BROSCHÜRENFLUT* AND VIENNA'S RUSH TOWARDS ENLIGHTENMENT

The first regime change in forty years sufficed to stimulate exceptional public interest and discourse, but the prospect of a rational king provoked hopes for unlimited social and economic progress. Of particular interest to intellectuals was Joseph II's belief in the importance of free exchange of information. For Viennese intellectuals, the eighth decade of the eighteenth century was rife with revolutionary potential simply because of a few modifications in the state's practice of censorship. Tireless prolixity in print and in public inspired the worldly hopes of a circle of intellectuals who favored the international movement of Enlightenment. Both within the city and far beyond to the furthest reaches of the cosmopolitan Republic of Letters, expectant onlookers surveyed the portents of transformation from a conservative absolutist capital with an exclusionary, elite-controlled intellectual life to a city of letters and ideas, from the dominance of the nobility and high clergy in visible culture to public debate and prominent writers, intellectual conversations and coffee shops stocked with the latest news-bearing journals and thought-provoking pamphlets.

On taking the throne, Joseph II quickly enacted reforms of the censor's office and the press. The city responded speedily with an unprecedented expansion in publication, the events and products of which became known as the Viennese *Broschürenflut*. The *Broschürenflut* transformed the desert that was the Viennese intellectual scene to an oasis of debate generating ephemeral publications, public conversations, and journalistic reporting. Publishing developments immersed Vienna in a vibrant intellectual print

culture that stimulated the development of a unified movement for Enlightenment among a cadre of writers and academics. New authorship and masses of accessible reading material prodded Vienna's budding intellectual elite to overcome years of exclusion from the ideological transformations of Europe and brought together those of like mind in an atmosphere steeped in possibilities for action. The concentration of intellectuals and the availability of social and institutional space for intellectual production and debates allowed many to view the city as a new site for expansion for the already widespread Enlightenment.

Habsburg intellectuals first identified themselves as promoters of the Enlightenment through the forum provided by the *Broschürenflut*, listing their methods of fighting the nation's greatest enemy, superstition, as criticism, association and improvement. The pamphlet debates also identified the Enlightenment advocates' targets for reform within church, state and society while boasting of their patriotism and loyalty to the Kaiser. Though the products and culture of the *Broschürenflut* provided the basis for establishing an Enlightenment movement in Vienna, it would only be a first, soon to be surpassed, phase of intellectual activity. Once pamphlet debates initiated public criticism, intellectuals quickly outgrew the ephemeral and superficial nature of the penny press and sought more sophisticated dialogue and more effective means to contribute talents to improving the populace.

The transformations in print culture and the development of an informed 'public' that took place over the course of a century or two in England and France seemed to occur in Vienna in but a week. Historians' observations on France indicate that the eighteenth-century state experienced a gradual shift from orally-based communication to

one in which writing dictated society and culture,¹¹⁰ as book production increased three to four times that of the seventeenth century.¹¹¹ This transformation ensured that each book reached a wider audience through social situations organized around the act of reading aloud or through institutions that provided patrons free books.¹¹² The act of reading changed from focusing intensively on limited texts to the extensive consumption of a variety of books.¹¹³ Identification with books and the method of appropriating information from them also shifted: “a new way of reading, which no longer took the book as authoritative, became widespread.”¹¹⁴ With access to more texts (and thus more opinion as well as information) readers could more readily question the knowledge contained therein. The written word developed into immediate entertainment, growing apart from its traditional role as a symbol of permanency and truth. The availability of books, society’s obsession with print, the creation of spaces for public reading, and the critical eye towards texts all developed rapidly in Vienna after censorship reforms, as reading became the fashion.

In Vienna, the act of questioning and criticizing leapt beyond matters of exclusively scholarly interest to the state, society and religion: the connection between criticism of books and subversive rejection of authority has been aptly summarized by historian Roger Chartier: “If the French of the late eighteenth century fashioned the Revolution, it is because they had in turn been fashioned by books.”¹¹⁵ Vienna’s

¹¹⁰ Henri-Jean Martin, *The History and Power of Writing*, trans. Lydia Cochrane (University of Chicago Press, 1994) 345.

¹¹¹ Roger Chartier, *The Cultural Origins of the French Revolution*, trans. Lydia Cochrane (Duke UP, 1991) 190.

¹¹² Roger Chartier, *The Cultural Uses of Print in Early Modern France*, trans. Lydia Cochrane (Princeton UP, 1987) 5

¹¹³ Martin, *History and Power*, 366.

¹¹⁴ Chartier, *Cultural Origins*, 90.

¹¹⁵ Chartier, *Cultural Origins*, 68.

centrality to the Habsburg monarchy, the Holy Roman Empire and the Roman Catholic Church ensured a focus on policies of state as well as concern with cosmopolitan issues. During the *Broschiürenflut*, short critical essays and opinion pieces became the forum for new public participation in policy debates. Many pamphlets were not path breaking, and often expressed silly or petty arguments, but nonetheless, the excitement of participation created an atmosphere in which the people practiced and displayed their free use of reason.

As books interspersed with conversation, the discussion of policy left the exclusive domain of the administration and elite to become a matter of public interest and debate. Such a reasoning public, consisting of private persons independent from the state, was a phenomenon new to eighteenth-century Europe. Jürgen Habermas's seminal *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* inspired a generation of Enlightenment historiography on debating publics emerging in France, Britain and the Germanies.¹¹⁶ In this area, as in many others, the case of the Austrian Enlightenment presents an opportunity to see the broad developments emerging in Europe over a century but taking place in Austria over a brief ten years. In Vienna, the public's relationship to government policy transformed—by allowing free publication, Joseph invited public commentary on both his actions and needed reforms. Joseph II himself added to this new phenomenon by writing and publishing pamphlets explaining and justifying major reforms, thus, as Habermas would argue, creating a public sphere by invoking it.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁶ See the collection of essays edited by Craig Calhoun, *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (MIT Press, 1992) and the review essays by Anthony LaVopa and Dena Goodman, "Public Sphere and Private Life: toward a synthesis of current historiographical approaches to the Old Regime" on the influence of this work.

¹¹⁷ Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a category of bourgeois society*, trans. Thomas Burger (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1981)

A product of the independent reasoning public, studied most thoroughly in the French context, is public opinion. Defined by historians as an independent, reasoning institution of public debate capable of questioning the efficacy and right of statecraft, public opinion came into existence through published criticisms of state policies. The public, and public opinion, is wholly a product of the Republic of Letters: it is invoked through writers' pleas to a higher authority over that of the state, it is informed through the publications on the issue under debate, and it arrives at Opinion through Enlightenment reason and morality, thereby following the recommendations of the group that invoked it.¹¹⁸ This audience was ambiguous—invoked but never defined, readers clearly were not equated with 'the people,' as writers overwhelmingly viewed the masses as ignorant and dependent. Publicity and the popularization of knowledge were thus a strategy for change; once this revolutionary imagined community was called into being, even rulers needed to garner its support. Keith Baker traced the origins of the French Revolution to Enlightenment and print culture, arguing their complicity in creating an emergent public opinion debating public issues and influencing policies.¹¹⁹

In the Viennese context, as in the French, not all pamphlets were aimed at political revolution, and many were certainly without lasting literary or intellectual value, but they did create an emergent public opinion. The Habsburg king often felt the pressure resulting from a public that questioned his policies, and his disappointment in not persuading public opinion in his point of view would eventually drive him to curtail

¹¹⁸ On the creation of the public by a finite group of writers, see Mona Ozouf, "'Public Opinion' at the End of the Old Regime" in *Journal of Modern History* 60 (Sept, 1988) S1-21 and Sara Maza, *Private Lives and Public Affairs: The Causes Célèbres of Prerevolutionary France* (University of California Press, 1993). In the case of France, lawyers as well as men of letters are credited with its formation.

¹¹⁹ Keith Baker, *Public Opinion*. See also, Baker, "Politics and Public Opinion Under the Old Regime: Some Reflections" in *Press and Politics in Pre-Revolutionary France* Jack Censer and Jeremy Popkin, eds. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987).

the public's ability to debate freely.¹²⁰ Contemporary pamphlets and letters attest that a public sphere and public opinion existed in Vienna during the 1780s; moreover, far from being confined to print, the debates of the pamphlet press also dominated intellectual and social exchange.

Beginnings of the *Broschürenflut*

After ruling the vast Habsburg territories for forty years, fighting wars, and extensively reforming her kingdom, Maria Theresa died on November 29, 1780 with her son and co-regent, Emperor Joseph II at her side.¹²¹ The city mourned with elaborate processions and fireworks displays, as well as both incessant public chatter on the good, motherly queen and excited whispering on the implications of her death.¹²² Maria Theresa enacted many positive changes during her reign, but her intolerance and delegation of authority to high-church officials restricted the range of her reforms. There was a general acknowledgement among Vienna's public, betrayed through the city's publications, that radical differences would emerge between the two regimes in style of rule and types of reforms.

One anticipated change was the relaxation of the Church's strict control on publication. An epistolary work of 1781 evaluating the changes in Vienna's intellectual life dated the 'first fruits of publishing freedom' to November, 1780, concurrently with Maria Theresa's death and prior to Joseph's official changes of the following year.¹²³

¹²⁰ T.C.W. Blanning, *Joseph II* (Longman, 1994).

¹²¹ Edward Crankshaw, *Maria Theresa* (New York: Viking, 1969) 228.

¹²² The *Wiener Zeitung* is a good source on the city's mourning activities. It published the official rules and customs for mourning at court, speeches both at her burial and in the university, and Joseph II's arrangements to build a monument. See the editions beginning with the 2nd and running through the 16th December, 1780. Interestingly, though the public was kept informed of the illness and then death of the queen, the paper did not break from their format of according primacy to the news from foreign wars and cities over that of Vienna.

¹²³ *Briefe nach Göttingen über die neuesten Schriftsteller Wiens* (Vienna: Hartl, 1781).

One author described this early foreshadowing of the later *Broschürenflut* by providing an exhaustive litany of the kind and manner of books that appeared after Maria Theresa's death: first the *Trauergedichte* and *Trauerreden*, then "in the space of a week we had more criticizing than criticized pieces," followed by defenses; "after these defenses, observations on the defenses, after these observations, impartial thoughts, after these thoughts other judges roused themselves *ex officio*." Real mourning and honoring of the dead queen should have occurred in private and with perhaps one work of praise sufficing.¹²⁴ Indeed, by mid-December published eulogies on the empress's death provided many authors opportunity to articulate their hopes to the king and the public.¹²⁵ The recurring theme of the Queen as the good mother and the endless discussion of her family's sadness over her loss were not solely a tribute to the population's personal identification with the woman who had ruled throughout the living memory of most; it was also an indication of the public anticipation of the next regime and Joseph II's popularity on the verge of taking office.

Soon after accession to sole possession of the Habsburg throne, Joseph II began pushing his progressive changes in the hereditary lands. Central to the program was creating a climate of free discussion in which the spread of useful knowledge among the population would culminate in progress for the state.¹²⁶ The censorship office was therefore one of his early targets. Under Maria Theresa, the task of censoring was farmed out to various people on different levels of government, from the court to the provinces

¹²⁴ "hatten wir in Zeit einer Woche mehr kritisierende, als kritisierte Stücke" nach denen Rechtfertigungen Betrachtungen über die Rechtfertigungen, nach diesen Betrachtungen unpartheiliche Gedanken, nach diesen Gedanken warfen sich andere Richter *ex officio* auf, *Briefe nach Göttingen* (1781) 15.

¹²⁵ Franco Venturi, *The End of the Old Regime in Europe, 1776-1789. II. Republican Patriotism and the Empires of the East*, R. Burr Litchfield, trans. (Princeton UP, 1991), 605-622. Also the contemporary Blumauer (1781). The *Wiener Zeitung* began the publishers' advertisements on the eulogies December 16.

¹²⁶ Historiography has highlighted the importance of Utility over ideas of Rights in all of Joseph's 'enlightened' policies. See Kann, *History of the Habsburg Empire*, 174.

and between the towns, cities, the church and universities. Any manuscript imported to Austria and any product of the city's own presses passed first through the labyrinth of censors. The lack of organization, and the heavy presence of conservative Catholics in the ranks of the censors, meant that Maria Theresa's subjects had minimum exposure to contemporary ideas. The government banned the catalogue of prohibited books itself to prevent access to even the titles of dangerous books.¹²⁷ Derek Beales provides several examples from travelers to Vienna in the 1770s showing the extremism of the censor and the resulting intellectual isolation of Austria, but argues there was a *small* circle of elites who were very aware of the French Enlightenment and were allowed the freedom to discuss it. Beales concludes that while Maria Theresa wanted her subjects ignorant, she did not mind having a few informed advisors.¹²⁸

Despite the heavy censorship of the last years of Maria Theresa's reign, under her rule the Habsburg state prepared the ground for the massive print market emerging in the 1780s. The lack of standardization in the practice and law of censorship allowed for liberal periods in the history of Austrian publishing. This was especially true under Gottfried Van Swieten's leadership. A follower of the Enlightenment, this Dutch physician's influence with the queen allowed him to act on his convictions of the importance of freeing access to knowledge to improve society.¹²⁹ His policies led to a brief boom in publishing in the first years of the 1770s.¹³⁰ Also, as James Van Melton indicates in his discussion of education reforms, under Maria Theresa's rule the Habsburg

¹²⁷ Leslie Bodi, *Tauwetter in Wien: Zur Prosa der österreichischen Aufklärung* (Wien: Böhlau, 1995) 47. Bodi uses this information to make a case for the ability to get forbidden books in Austria.

¹²⁸ Derek Beales, "Christians and *philosophes*: the case of the Austrian Enlightenment" in *History, Society, and the Churches. Essays in honour of Owen Chadwick*. Derek Beales and Geoffrey Best (Cambridge UP, 1985) 180.

¹²⁹ Wangermann, Ernst. "By and By we Shall have an Enlightened Populace" in *AHY* (1999) 1-15. And see Ernst Wangermann, *The Austrian Achievement, 1700-1800* (1978).

¹³⁰ See Bodi, 46-7.

state developed a literate culture, as opposed to the early baroque, primarily image-based culture.¹³¹ Maria Theresa had aimed to improve the Catholicism of her subjects through new laws forcing compulsory schooling and increased literacy, by Joseph II's time these same measures ensured the existence of a broad audience eager to absorb print. The emphasis on German language reforms dating from the mid-eighteenth century also promoted literate culture, and, significantly, increased ties with Protestant Germany.

Throughout her rule, Maria Theresa pushed reforms of the government's censorship offices, seeking centralization and rationalization of their function. Originally, the Jesuit-controlled universities and the state shared censorship duties, with political writings sent through the government's censor office. But, in 1741, Maria Theresa transferred censorship entirely to the university. There the strictness of the censor depended on who currently dominated, whether reformers or the Jesuit faculty. Then in 1752 another restructuring established a *Zensurhofkommission* that took the duties over from the university. Jesuits controlled it until Van Swieten became president of the commission in 1759. With Van Swieten's death in 1772, the censor commission again fell into the hands of the party for state and church hegemony over print, and censorship drastically tightened to prevent popular access to ideas. Similar commissions like the one in Vienna existed throughout the lands, and it was only in the last year of her reign that some degree of centralization and unification of the local branches took place, thereby making censorship more consistent.¹³²

¹³¹ James Van Horn Melton, *Absolutism and the Origins of Compulsory Schooling*. (1988).

¹³² Oskar Sashegyi, *Zensur und Geistesfreiheit unter Joseph II. Beitrag zur Kulturgeschichte der Habsburgischen Länder* (Budapest, 1958). 15-16. This work is the authority on the censor reforms of Joseph II, and every historian since has relied on Sashegyi's account and their own readings of the *Grudnregeln*. The 1927 fire destroyed most of the records on the discussion over censor reforms in the *Staatsratsakten*, so there is little room for historians to offer a reinterpretation. This overview of censorship reforms will continue that tradition.

When Joseph took the throne alone, he instantly enforced plans for consolidation and went further by establishing regulations ensuring consistency and rationality in the commission. On 4 December 1780 Joseph sent a report to the Austrian and Bohemian court chancellery recommending consolidation of the censor commissions, letting the Viennese office take over for the whole realm. Joseph saw the method of censorship used in the monarchy as shortsighted, and most court advisors agreed, though they did negotiate a provision that local governments retain some minor decision-making powers.¹³³

Not yet finished with this government office, within a month and a half of his mother's death Joseph issued a declaration of his opinions regarding the need to reform state censorship extensively. Entitled "Ground rules for inaugurating an orderly, forthcoming Book Censor", the tract first articulated the utility of press freedoms. Writing on the importance of free access to books for the nation, the emperor argued that the benefits of allowing more literature through the borders far outweighed any potential danger from a few subversive ideas making their way to the subjects. He further argued that better-educated people made better subjects, and increasing knowledge was a prerequisite to improving industry and the economy. He summarized his convictions on the purpose of the censor: "Allow everything, as long as it did not harm the general public, hold back everything that could be detrimental to this: this and nothing else was the task of a government censor."¹³⁴

¹³³ Sashegyi, 18. The recommendation to abolish all the various censor offices and leave Vienna's as the center also made it into the first paragraph of the *Grundregeln*. Kurt Strasser, *Die Wiener Presse in der josephinischen Zeit* (Vienna: Verlag Notring der wissenschaftliche Verbände Österreichs, 1962) 10.

¹³⁴ "Alles erlauben, solange es der Allgemeinheit nicht schadet, alles hintanhaltend, was dieser nachträglich sein könnte: dieses und nichts anderes war die Aufgabe einer staatlichen Zensur" Quoted in Sashegyi, 17.

He showed his religious policies to oppose the rabid intolerance of his mother, insisting on access to works on their religion for Protestants, a measure that would grant the unfortunate minority more rights as citizens. The only critical works to be banned were ones that were extreme in their attacks on religion.¹³⁵ Friedrich Nicolai described the changes occurring in censorship for his international readership in a travel description of a trip to Vienna in 1781. Indicating the degree of transformation in the function of the censors, he described an office that was overwhelmed and uninterested in strict control of ideas. The censor, he reported, farmed out the works that were flowing through the presses. A friend of his who could not afford to buy his own books signed up for such work and the office asked only that he note if a piece contained ‘nation-endangering prejudice.’¹³⁶ This system allowed individuals the freedom to interpret such ‘prejudice’; despite the possibility this presented for complete variation between censors, there were certain areas the king sought the continuation of bans. Joseph II articulated different standards for different segments of the population: the unlearned masses still needed guidance and supervision in their access to the printed word, so popular works like novels and folk epics required stricter proofing than works that addressed a learned audience. He also wanted to retain heavy scrutiny of alternatives to rational religion and science, particularly works on alchemy and spirituality: Mesmer would not find his former home welcoming.

In addition to reforming the censorship of topical works, Joseph desired a reform of the practice of censoring periodicals and foreign works; no longer would a few lines of content result in the ban of a whole journal or newspaper issue. Another significant

¹³⁵ Bodi, 49.

¹³⁶ *Das Berliner Freidenkers Friedrich Nicolai bedeutsame Aufzeichnungen über das Katholische Deutschlands 1781. Regensburg, Passau, Linz, Wien.* (Vienna and Leipzig: Leonhart, 1921) 118.

revision allowed private persons to transport books freely across borders, advocating legal cross-fertilization with other European book markets. Indeed the king declared that the previous system had acted ‘barbarically’ towards traveling foreigners to ensure they did not smuggle in forbidden works.¹³⁷ Finally, and most radically, Joseph II urged that the administration review the entire list of censored works, averaging 4000 a year in the previous regime,¹³⁸ and remove the ban on any work that was not flagrantly abusive of religion, morality and the law. In particular, the king urged the free acceptance of all works influential in learned circles in the rest of Europe. This meant that the subjects of the Habsburg monarchy would finally be legally exposed to the centuries of intellectual work integral to the European Enlightenment.¹³⁹

The “Ground Rules” established a fundamentally new climate of relaxation in censorship, and following its release, institutional changes unfolded rapidly. Some of these changes were bureaucratic. The king and his court repopulated the censor’s office with forward-looking intellectuals and took censorship completely out of the hands of the church. On June 8, 1781, the new law on press freedoms passed, establishing the requirements for censorship following much of what Joseph II had written in his “Ground Rules.” It changed from his original missive in that it was short, no longer limited protestant books, did not demand referral of books to the *Staatskanzlei*, ended censorship of the stage and omitted the part about giving press freedom to all foreign scientific or knowledgeable works. In addition to eliminating the vagaries of censorship according to the personality of the office holder, the legislation also allowed the practice of publishing to change radically. This was especially significant in practice as periodicals and

¹³⁷ Strasser, *Die Wiener Presse* 12.

¹³⁸ Charles Ingrao, *The Habsburg Monarchy 1618-1815* (Cambridge UP, 2000) 198.

¹³⁹ Sashegyi, 18-22.

ephemeral works ranging from pamphlets to broadsheets could reach the public without first detouring through the censor's office.¹⁴⁰

In spite of all this seemingly liberal legislation, Joseph II and his administration never intended to establish a free press in Austria. Though many refer to this as an era of 'Press Freedom' there was still an active censor, and the authors of the 1780s would explore, and find, its limits. Censors subjected Hungary to special notice, but also among the Austrians, the censors acted to ban radical works of freemasonic or rabid anti-clerical origin. Joseph II himself acted to ban morally offensive works, especially when they featured his sister Marie Antoinette in indelicate situations.¹⁴¹ As Oscar Sashegyi points out, "Some of the pamphlets that expressed criticism about the governmental system of Joseph II were printed in Germany, or published in Vienna with a foreign place of publication to evade the censor."¹⁴² Joseph II showed a conspicuous lack of concern over critiques of himself, even belittling the attacks; he personally insisted upon the printing of a manuscript that someone had nailed to a newly constructed protestant church. As the work called the king a disciple of Martin Luther and was clearly opposed to toleration, the king sent profits of the sale of the pamphlet to the Protestant community.¹⁴³

Some did complain, not that the reforms were insufficient, but that they were not adequately implemented, as in late 1781, when Tobias von Gebler lodged an official protest claiming the old censors were "not open enough and still too prejudiced from the

¹⁴⁰ Sashegyi, 27

¹⁴¹ T.C.W. Blanning, *Joseph II* (Longman, 1994) 162.

¹⁴² "Ein Teil der Broschüren, die über das Regierungssystem Josephs II. Kritik übten, wurde in Deutschland aufgelegt, oder in Wien mit Umgehung der Zensur, unter einem fremden Druckort herausgegeben." Sashegyi, 131-132.

¹⁴³ Blanning, *Joseph II* 162.

mentality of the ‘previous system.’”¹⁴⁴ Others indirectly voiced a wish that reforms had gone further; many of the pamphlets praising the changes in censorship glorified total press freedom, thus subtly hinting of benefits to Enlightenment if the print market regulated itself. The pushing of press freedom among the intellectuals betrays the absence of fears of reprisal: this confidence in expression and criticism was perhaps the biggest effect of the censor reforms. Once Joseph II questioned the use and purpose of a state censor, everybody with any relationship to the world of print could freely explore their own criticisms of the institution.

The new system did not last long without another radical reform. In April of 1782, Joseph II abolished the Censorship Commission and transferred all duties to the *Studienkommission*, now known as the *Studien- und Zensurkommission*. As Sashegyi argues, this merging of the two functions indicated that censorship, like the schools, would propagate *Volksaufklärung*.¹⁴⁵ Professor Joseph von Sonnenfels, a member of the education department, took the office of *Zensurreferat*. This long-standing advocate of purifying language, using literature for moral example, and smoking out superstition and prejudice used his position to achieve those goals. Through his leadership, the office of censorship crawled with freemasons and illuminati, all of whom were concerned with defending the rights of authors. In 1782, Gottfried Van Swieten inherited his father’s former position of head of the commission, and brought with him his illuminati-inspired dedication to use the state to work towards Enlightenment. Further endorsing Enlightenment through education, the 1782 *Handbillet* legislating the censor reforms ordered that strictly scientific works be farmed out to appropriate professors in the

¹⁴⁴ “nicht freimütig genug und noch zu sehr in den Anschauungen des >>vormaligen Systems<< befangen.” Sashegyi, 39.

¹⁴⁵ Sashegyi, 41.

University for recommendations on censorship. "While there is seldom in this work something censorable, so this reading by the medical faculty serves to inform them of the newly released work and to increase learning."¹⁴⁶ As we have seen from Friedrich Nicolai's description of a man who used the job to have access to free books, other types of work were also farmed out to hired readers.¹⁴⁷ Sashegyi credits these changes to Joseph's efforts to rationalize the state system. Rationalization slowly reduced the number of censors, so that in 1784 the number reached only nine, and by 1788 it comprised a mere six souls.¹⁴⁸

The other institution of censorship was the office of the auditor (*Revisor*): "The censor judges, the auditor executes."¹⁴⁹ The *Revisor* interacted with the bookhandlers; reviewing their books, keeping records, and making the list of forbidden books available to them. The *Revisor*, rather than the censors themselves, thus became the focus of most of the conflicts over the press freedoms in the 1780s.¹⁵⁰ The *Revisor* also intercepted forbidden books sent from foreign presses, but only interfered with private people when they were suspicious or had large amounts of books with them. This division of the censorship bureaucracy resembled police or customs officials; only low-level bureaucrats took this office.¹⁵¹ As the *Zensurhofkommission* underwent reform, recommendations to restructure the system for auditing followed. These changes suppressed the door-to-door selling of books and restricted the right to sell to official booksellers.

¹⁴⁶ "Da selten in dergleichen Werken was zensurmässiges ist, so dient diese Lesung der medizinische Fakultät zur Kenntnis der neu ausgehenden Werke, und zu Vermehrung der Gelehrsamkeit." Quoted in Sashegyi, 41.

¹⁴⁷ *Das Berliner Freidenkers* 118.

¹⁴⁸ Sashegyi

¹⁴⁹ "Die Zensur richtete und die Revision vollstreckte". Sashegyi, 67.

¹⁵⁰ Bodi, *Tauwetter in Wien*, 52

¹⁵¹ Sashegyi, 72-73.

As was the case in other European states, Austrian censorship at times served *Aufklärung*.¹⁵² In the censor's review of schoolbooks and academic works the primary goal was the increased education of the people. The restrictions on church control of teaching paralleled press reforms as Enlightenment interests took control of both government functions of education and censorship. Just as Jesuits once used the functions of the press and schools to retain ideological primacy, many *Aufklärer* in the bureaucracy saw a clear opportunity to control the ideas absorbed by the populace. There were certainly those insisting that independence of the university from the state and freedom in teaching would serve improvement, but the Kaiser and the remaining members of the Education commission saw the possibilities of state control of thought through education as too good to pass up. In fact, the king no longer wanted the university lectures to be conducted from manuscript. Rather, they should be published when the field under study was short on publications. Joseph urged publication to popularize useful knowledge, which he believed should no longer be the exclusive property of the university.¹⁵³

The king often brought his own judgment to cases of individual censorship. This, combined with the fact that the censors exercised judgment rather than following established, explicit law, ensured that censorship remained a highly personal and thus unpredictable practice. Joseph repeatedly allowed the publication of works that attacked him, but banned publications that endangered religion, the state and morality as spelled out in the *Grundregeln*. Also, the king personally reviewed the imprisonment of individuals over issues relating to banned books or topics. One person who attacked the

¹⁵² See for example, Jeremy Popkin, "Censorship" in the *Oxford Encyclopedia of the Enlightenment* (2002) 216. I would like to thank the author for a copy of this entry.

¹⁵³ Sashegyi, 159-161.

king in print was released because Joseph reasoned that the pathetic soul and his words really were not the threat imprisonment implied.¹⁵⁴

The church, as ever, opposed decreased censorship. Discussing the eulogies that appeared in Italy upon Maria Theresa's death, Franco Venturi notes widespread public approval of her reign's censorship and strict government regulation, especially amongst clerics.¹⁵⁵ Joseph went so far as to censor church publications, despite storms of protest. A profound consequence of the new censorship methods was the complete elimination of the church censor, so that every little prayer was read for subversive content by the state. The state thus completely wrested from the church control of popular morality through literature. Sashegyi argues this illustrates Joseph's distinctions between state and church: censorship was political and so it was entirely a function of the state.¹⁵⁶ The state, not the church, decided what was dangerous. The censor reforms of Joseph II spell both the success of the transformation in early-modern Austria to a literate culture from an image-based one and of the state's secularizing tendencies begun over the previous forty years.¹⁵⁷

The high church officials fighting Joseph's reforms believed that unrestricted public discussion and opinion endangered morals, faith and government. The Archbishop Migazzi stridently protested encroachment on the church's ability to limit public access to texts that challenged Catholic doctrine or practice, with little success. As Migazzi and the church lost all ability to control anti-church literature, the most Migazzi

¹⁵⁴ Venturi, *The End of the Old Regime in Europe II*. 641.

¹⁵⁵ Venturi, vol.2, 610.

¹⁵⁶ Sashegyi, 29.

¹⁵⁷ James Van Horn Melton, *Absolutism and the eighteenth-century origins of compulsory schooling in Prussia and Austria*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984) discusses the beginnings of this transformation in Maria Theresa's reign.

could do was to hope to influence the government against individual offensive books. In his efforts against the periodical *Predigtkritiken*, the archbishop did not let up on his protests until he forced a debate in the Staatsräte. Only one member sided with Migazzi, yet the petitions from his office to ban the work would continue to flow for the next year.¹⁵⁸ Migazzi's various campaigns against particular diabolical writings had little success, as few friends of the Church hierarchy remained among the king's advisors. Graf Kollowrat (the only of Joseph II's council who vocalized disagreement with the *Grundregeln*) was the sole supporter of the church's stand, according to censorship historian Sashegyi.¹⁵⁹ Interestingly, it would be Kollowrat who was embroiled in one of Migazzi's attempts to expose the inadequacy of the new censor in protecting the church from rampant, print-fueled subversion. In this scandal, Migazzi reached the limits of Joseph II's patience with an attack on the *Revisoramt* that proved groundless. Poet Johann Alxinger spread the gossip in a letter to Friedrich Nicolai in May of 1785:

The Cardinal has seriously worsened his situation. A couple weeks ago a pamphlet appeared on *The expulsion of the Jesuits from China* in which there is not much, and at the most contains attempts at Voltairean wit on the birth of Christ. It was forbidden by the censor, and only a few people with official permission were allowed to retain it. Among those was head chancellor, prince Kollowrat; the Cardinal took it from his table, and handed it over to the emperor with a bitter complaint, that the censor let this book appear before the populace. The Kaiser demanded a list from the censor of those for whom copies were reserved, and saw there written Prince Kollowrat and so requested it from him. He went home, searched for it, and just then discovered the thievery of his eminence. The extremely exasperated emperor issued a Letter to Prince Kollowrat: that from then on he would not desire to speak with the Cardinal, instead, if he needed to report something to him he should do so in writing and he hoped Prince Kollowrat would follow his example: the Cardinal sought for a while to hush up the incident and went to the palace with a palliative in writing, in which he said the pamphlet was sent to him by an anonymous person. The Emperor sent him the report back with the Decision *si fecist, nega* (if you did it, deny it/ or stonewall).¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁸ Bodi, *Tauwetter* 130.

¹⁵⁹ Sashegyi, 34.

¹⁶⁰ "Der Cardinal hat seine Sache sehr verschlimmert. Es erschien vor einigen Wochen eine Broschüre *die Vertreibung der Jesuiten aus China*, an der nicht viel ist, und die meistens voltärisch seyn sollende Spasse auf die Geburth Christi enthält. Sie wurde von der Censur verboten und nur wenigen Leuten gegen Zettel zugelassen. Unter diesen war der Oberste Kanzler Gr. Kollowrat; der Cardinal nimmt sie diesem vom Tische weg, und übergiebt sie dem Kaiser mit einer bitteren Klage, dass die Censur dergleichen Schriften unter das Volk kommen lassen. Der Kaiser begehrt von der Censur die Liste derjenigen, denen Ein

It was the contrast to previous policies that caused the public to call Vienna's press free:¹⁶¹ but if limitations remained, this policy shift did indeed lay the groundwork for a revolution. The response to Joseph's new course was instantaneous and can be seen in the numbers and types of books published. The ability to send pamphlets and periodicals immediately through the press without prior approval ensured that these two genres were most dramatically affected. Within the first 18 months of tolerance following Joseph II's publication of his "Ground rules", a flood of pamphlets (*Broschürenflut*) swept over Vienna, offering printed material to every sort of reader: 1,772 writings appeared, creating an active press paralleled only in London.¹⁶² Whereas in 1780, only 3 new periodicals appeared, 22 came out in 1781, and 1782 saw the publication of 28 new journals or newspapers in Austria.¹⁶³ The trade in books became a substantial sector of the economy. Whereas book exports in 1773 amounted to 135,000 Taler per year, by 1793, that had climbed to 3,260,000 Taler a year.¹⁶⁴ Vienna's literary world was not the sole domain of intellectuals, as *Der Weltmann* reported in 1782; "Every person from houseboys that delight in murder mysteries, and the gracious rulers,

Exemplar ausgefolgt worden, und da er darunter den Gr. Kollowrat sieht, so verlangt er es von ihm. Dieser geht nach Hause, sucht nach und entdeckt erst itzt den Diebstahl Sr. Eminenz. Der Kaiser äusserst erbittert erlässt ein Billet an Gr. Kollowrat; dass Er künftighin den Kardinal nicht mehr sprechen wolle, sondern, wenn jener ihm Etwas vorzutragen hätte, er es schriftlich thun solle und er hoffe, Gr. Kollowrat würde seinem Beyspiele folgen; der Kardinal suchte eine Zeit lang die Sache zu vertuschen, und fuhr nach Hof mit einer Beschönigungsschrift, worinn er sagt, diese Broschüre sey ihm von einem Anonymo eingeschickt worden. Der Kaiser schickt ihm die Schrift mit dem Bescheide zurück Si fecisti, nega." Alxinger to Nicolai, 21 May 1784 in "Briefe des Dichter Johann Baptist von Alxinger" Gustav Wilhelm, ed. In *Sitzungsberichte des Philosophisch-Historischen Classe der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften* Vol. 140 (Wien: Carl Gerold's Sohn, 1899)18-19.

¹⁶¹ Sashegyi suggested this, page 35.

¹⁶² Ferdinand Wernigg, "Die Erweiterte Pressfreiheit" in *Bibliographie österreichischer Drucke während der „erweiterten Preßfreiheit“ (1781-1795)* Wernigg, ed. Series *Wiener Schriften* vol. 35 (Wien: Jugend und Volk, 1973) 16.

¹⁶³ Helmut W. Lang. "Die Zeitschriften in Österreich zwischen 1740 und 1815" in *Österreichische Literatur an der Wende vom 18. zum 19. Jahrhundert (1750-1830)*, Herbert Zeman, ed. (Graz, 1979) 205.

¹⁶⁴ Wernigg, 17.

who perfume a pamphlet at their toilet, down to brooding, system-building Intellectuals—everyone reads.”¹⁶⁵

One of the key traits of the *Broschürenflut* was the urgency indicated by its name. Initially, enthusiasm for the legal reforms led to a rush to print taking advantage of the very changes just instituted. As the press and public developed, however, the rapid and superficial nature of the publications stimulated through press freedoms fueled this urgency. Pamphlets are akin to a conversation in print, inspiring instant reception and response. These works were all about immediacy—they reacted to a current event or situation with speed, and any responses they provoked hurried to appear before the short attention span of the reading public was lost. Thus the ideas and issues of the *Broschürenflut* rapidly changed. One pamphlet answered another, whereupon new pamphlets, arguing all sides of the issue, fell from the presses. A pamphlet discussing ‘chambermaids’, for example, elicited 21 follow-up pamphlets; attacking the first, supporting it against the attacks, or arguing why the whole discussion should be dismissed as meaningless.¹⁶⁶ Topics of varying degrees of importance, ranging from religion to society to the economy, received this treatment.

Rapid appearance of tracts promoted zeal and created a culture that allowed people to conceive of a world where the ideas and the activism of intellectuals was integral to the state, society, or any area where progress seemed a possibility. Jeremy Popkin, writing about France and the publications along its borders, argues that the pamphlets of the late eighteenth century were just as influential as newspapers—though

¹⁶⁵ “Jedermann vom Hausknecht, den Mordgeschichte ergözen, und den gnädigen Herrschaften, die eine Broschüre an der Toilette parfümiren, bis zum grübelnden, systemgebährenden Gelehrten—alles liest.” Otto von Gemmingen, *Der Weltmann* vol. 1, Issue 8, 125.

¹⁶⁶ *Bibliographie Österreichischer Drucke während der „erweiterten Preßfreiheit“ (1781-1795)*, ed. Ferdinand Wernigg. from *Wiener Schriften* Heft 35 (Wien: Jugend und Volk, 1973).

depending on the publication's purpose, one genre or another might have an advantage. Pamphlets were irregular and sporadic, but this allowed flexibility of style. He states: "the production of occasional pamphlets did not require the same sort of all-absorbing professional commitment that periodical journalism demanded: the authors of pamphlet texts often included major actors in events, and first-rate writers and thinkers such as Voltaire or Condorcet who would not have tied themselves down to the routines of regular publication. In a world in which political events occurred irregularly, the flexible pamphlet was in some senses better adapted to serve as a vehicle of public opinion than the newspaper or magazine."¹⁶⁷

Texts influenced and were influenced by speech. The extension of written criticism into spoken debate was often invoked as an important aspect of Enlightenment culture. Discussions in pamphlets merged conversation with print and topics discussed amongst groups of intellectuals generated more ideas and writings. One pamphlet included a postscript defending the work from pre-publication criticism: "I do believe I heard someone, who certainly was learned, say: this one publishes a book and writes about this, which without wit something about something write, and yet there is absolutely no wit in his book, nothing but insults."¹⁶⁸ The author then defended himself from the attack while still complimenting the intellectual who voiced it, clearly carrying over into print what had begun as conversation. Many instructive pamphlets took the form of dialogues or claimed to be thoughts stimulated by a recent conversation,

¹⁶⁷ Jeremy D. Popkin, *News and Politics in the Age of Revolution: Jean Luzac's Gazette de Leyde* (Cornell UP, 1989) 63-65. Quote, p64.

¹⁶⁸ "Ich meine schon, als hörete ich jene, welche doch Gelehrte sind, sagen: Dieser gibt ein Buch heraus, und schreibt über diese, welche ohne Witz Etwas auf Etwas schreiben, und in seinem Buche ist gar kein Witz, nichts als Grobheiten." Pangel, *Etwas auf Etwas, oder ein Schreiben an meinen Freund für die unnützen Skibenten* (Wien, 1782) 8.

underlining what would be a key tenet of the Austrian Enlightenment: the necessity of both social interaction and print culture as the proper means to promote the spread of progressive ideas.

A byproduct of censorship reforms, tangential industries that fostered or fed off print consumption flourished. The complementary nature of book proliferation and cultural change becomes apparent in James Van Horn Melton's argument that "the organs of Enlightenment criticism—salons, journals, encyclopedias, literary lexicons, reading clubs—were generated by the eighteenth-century print explosion, but also were an attempt to impose order on it."¹⁶⁹ The institutions that accompanied a prolific and unhampered publishing industry—publishing houses, booksellers, lending libraries, reading societies and coffee shops—all proliferated. Within months, Vienna boasted a large reading public wrapped up in its authors, debates, publications and the publishing business. The *Wiener Zeitung* and other periodicals reported continuously on the latest pamphlets being published from each of the major publishing houses.¹⁷⁰ Lending libraries issued guarantees in their advertisements that they would stock all the latest debates. For just two Gulden a month, voracious readers could join the publisher Trattner's *Lekturkabinett*, whose holdings included all the latest local publications as well as French, German and English foreign journals, and whose final purpose was "Distribution of useful knowledge in the ancients and especially contemporary history, politics and economics—and agreeable knowledge in the fine, old and new literature

¹⁶⁹ James Van Horn Melton, *The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe* (Cambridge UP, 2001) 115.

¹⁷⁰ *Wiener Zeitung*. Also, see Nicolai's scornful discussion of this trend in the Viennese newspapers quoted in *Aufklärung auf wienerisch*, 51-52. (Probably from the *Beschreibung einer Reise*) Nicolai claims that newspapers outside of Austria would see the notices of the new pamphlets in the *Wiener Zeitung* and would assume it was a publication of note. Those papers would then publicize those pamphlets, and all of a sudden all over Europe people are being notified of the publication while in Vienna itself no one took notice of it and the pamphlet was forgotten there.

through the library.”¹⁷¹ Transformations to accommodate the new fashion for reading extended to material space: as a contemporary commented, there is “not even a room, where one doesn’t customarily find some books. Not a single well-furnished house, in which there was not also a so-called library.”¹⁷²

The formation of a debating public was a reality in Vienna within months of the emergence of the *Broschürenflut*. Supported by the institutions of literary culture (the press and the places reserved for public reading and conversation) the reading public arrived at judgments informed by print.¹⁷³ Pamphlets refer to constant discussion of the latest works in coffeehouses; the popular ‘Kaffee zum Kramer’ regularly appears in contemporary literature and the private writings of intellectuals as a center for the latest publishing news. An active public network of information surrounding authors and publications existed through these social spaces. Despite the preponderance of anonymous tracts in the *Broschürenflut*, various sources indicate authorship was popularly known and publicly discussed. Authors themselves were a visible part of this culture. Published attacks against Viennese pamphleteers refer to a limited community of hack writers known to coffee shop goers by their works as well as their background, habits, and pretensions. These clues indicate the existence of a relatively small, very active, and highly critical literary scene.

¹⁷¹ “Verbreitung nützlicher Kenntnisse in die alter und hauptsächlich Zeitgeschichte, Politik und Statistik—und angenehmer kenntnisse in die Schöne, alte und neue Litteratur durch die Bibliothek.” 16 December 1780, *Wiener Zeitung*

¹⁷² “nicht leicht ein Zimmer, wo man nicht gewöhnlich einige Bücher findet. Nicht bald ein gut meubliertes Haus, in dem nicht auch eine sogenannte Bibliothek ware.” Gemmingen, *Der Weltmann*. Vol. 1. Issue 8. (Wien: Trattner, 1782) 125-6.

¹⁷³ Arlette Farge describes this phenomenon in her study of the notes of police spies in late-eighteenth century Paris, although she concludes “while there was no public opinion...there were popular opinions” because of her view that public Opinion is by definition a unified threat to the state. See *Subversive Words: Public Opinion in Eighteenth-Century France*, trans. Rosemary Morris (Pennsylvania State UP, 1994). Quote from p.4.

From this milieu, a tight-knit circle of intellectuals in favor of promoting the Enlightenment in Vienna emerged. Often in the writings of this group, there seems to be an underlying dialogue. These writers not only established friendships with like thinkers, they brought these connections into the world of print. These men reinforced one another's arguments and promoted each other's works through their own publications. Thus the moral weekly edited by Otto von Gemmingen praised his mentor Joseph von Sonnenfels, dedicated an issue to Michael Denis, published a poem of Johann Baptist von Alxinger, and broadcasted Alois Blumauer's ode to the Kaiser from the freemason lodge with which they were all affiliated.¹⁷⁴ Similar public display of the group dynamic among the *Aufklärer* occurred in the literary journal, the *Realzeitung*. Blumauer, Denis, Karl Leonard Reinhold, Swieten and Sonnenfels, among others, joined talents to review the publications of Austria. Though the review claimed no partisan ties, the discussions of their own works can only be said to be supportive. Such evidence indicates the existence of a cohesive group of 'enlighteners.' In addition, the authors at times provided introductions for the books of their friends, or began their works with dedications to fellow authors—further evidence of this Enlightenment group.

The community of intellectuals united itself around a set of ideas. The basic assumptions of *Aufklärung* betrayed in the early 1780s pamphlet debates revolved around the themes of criticism and rational reform of either self or state. In an essay on taste that instructed readers as to how one might become enlightened, Gemmingen wrote, "The study of criticism (because this is what we will call the sciences from now on) is the best way to again urge our thoughtless souls closer to their intended purpose; the only means to bring a man of the world in the actual meaning of the word back to the class of

¹⁷⁴ *Der Weltmann* vol.s 1-3(Wien: Trattner, 1782-1783).

thinking beings.... In the proper pursuit of this study is produced the habit that will make more perfect all of our abilities, Reason a sufficient perspicacity, to perceive the way out through all the labyrinths of philosophy.”¹⁷⁵ In seeking the enlightenment of fellow citizens the scholars focused primarily on the need to improve morality.¹⁷⁶ Through Gemmingen’s discussion of criticism and Enlightenment, a barometer for judging what embodied an enlightenment text emerges.

But the rapid expansion in book publishing was not exploited by *Aufklärer* alone. Many works emerged that voiced a tradition-based opposition to the regime’s changes. Works supporting the clergy and decrying the state’s encroachment on religious prerogatives were common. T.C.W. Blanning has recently argued that conservatives used the press to more effect than supporters of Joseph II or radicals: “As so often before and since, it was the reactionaries which proved the more adept at exploiting the written word, not least because their arguments struck a much more responsive chord than those of their progressive opponents.”¹⁷⁷

Aside from conservatives and the *Aufklärer* who are the focus of this study, there were also (rare) anti-monarchical radicals and the (many) nameless, faceless writers who espoused simple, accepted ideas, discussed practical matters, and spent most of their words on commentary without critique. These writers, known variously as the ‘10 Kreuzer Authors’, the Viennese Satirists, or simply ‘useless scribblers’, published essays of short duration and meager value. Called by contemporaries *Makulatur* (waste paper),

¹⁷⁵ “Studium der Kritik (denn so wollen wir künftig die Wissenschaften nennen) ist die beste Art, unsre gedankenleere Seelen ihrer Bestimmung wieder näher zu führen; das einzige Mittel, einen Weltmann in der eigentlichsten Bedeutung wieder in die Klasse denkender Wesen zurück zu bringen.... im gehörigen Verfolge dieser Studien giebt die Gewohnheit, welche alle unsre Kräfte vollkommener macht, der Vernunft eine Scharfsichtigkeit, welche zureichend ist, sich den Ausgang durch alle Labyrinthe der Philosophie auszuspähen”. Gemmingen, *Der Weltmann*, vol.1, issue 5, 77-78.

¹⁷⁶ Gemmingen, *Der Weltmann*, vol. 2, issue 5, 87.

¹⁷⁷ Blanning, *Joseph II* 169.

the writings of these authors have little voice here. However, as Robert Darnton argues for the literary hacks of Paris, these ‘scribblers’ served an important function in the simplification and dispersal of more complex ideas.¹⁷⁸ Even the most complex writings of the Viennese *Aufklärers* do not beg simplification, yet the more pedestrian *Makulatur* had broader appeal. These often-frivolous pamphlets by writers-for-hire certainly abandoned the pretentious moralizing, elitist verse, and improving topics favored by the literary intellectuals of the city and thus drew in a broader reading public.

Unity of voice and actual social connections delimit the group of intellectuals who through their publications and pursuits actively built an Enlightenment movement in Vienna in the 1780s. The intellectuals who would later join together through social institutions and shared work adopted a common set of identifying terms during the early *Broschürenflut*. Relationships were established linguistically; first by the authors’ self-identification as ‘Gelehrten’ and ‘Weise Männer’ in the earliest pamphlets and then with the adoption of the term *Aufklärer*, which soon became ubiquitous in their publications. In the pages that follow, the writings, friendships and beliefs of these *Aufklärer* will be explored to provide a basis for understanding the movement as a whole. Although there were certainly differences between the individuals dedicated to enlightened reform, a cohesive group emerged and retained its mutually supportive functions until the second half of the decade. The early contributions of this group in the immediate post-censor-reform frenzy of writing and reading induced the clarification and consolidation of their position.

¹⁷⁸ Darnton, *The Literary Underground of the Old Regime* (Cambridge, 1979).

The Early Pamphlets for Enlightenment Reform

The early writings of those leaning towards *Aufklärung* focused on a few issues of central importance to the city's elite. The issues most often written about in both non-fiction and fictional form included: the king and his reforms; the press and its changing role; religion; and social fashions and manners. The Enlightenment-leaning pamphlets also adopted specific forms in keeping with the comparative and critical goals of the movement. As the pamphlet debates were by their very nature ephemeral, the debates were characterized by a sense of immediacy. The writings were clear yet not complex; the topics were often opportunistic and traceable to a current event or debate. These rapid-fire pamphlet debates established the personalities of the Viennese Enlightenment while also solidifying the beliefs and people of the opposition.

One topic that distinguished the circle of *Aufklärer* in the initial months of press freedom was praise for the monarch and his focus on utility and reason as the means to achieve fulfillment and perfection in all areas affecting the state and its people. Many historians have viewed this manifestation of Enlightenment as one that was imposed from above. The vast quantity of pamphlets focusing on the king would seem to support the view that Enlightenment was a royal prerogative that the Viennese could feel free to comment on, though perhaps not contribute to. Indeed the worldview of the Viennese was intractably tied to their experience of living under an absolutist king and Kaiser, and many depended on the court for their livelihood. The *Aufklärer* hoped to be useful to the public through their influence. Convinced of rational reform's importance to achieving happiness for state and subject, they believed that their activities complemented the reforms of the Kaiser. When printed observations of the necessary preconditions for

progress went beyond or disagreed with the king's views, which they often did, persuasion, not revolution was intended.

The early *Broschürenflut* was a complement to Joseph II's 'enlightened despotism', particularly in the writings of the *Aufklärer*. This thesis has been challenged in historiography. In the French case, historians argue print undermined the authority of the state, specifically the person of the king;¹⁷⁹ similarly historians of Austria argue that censor reforms, though initially bringing about an outpouring of enthusiasm for the king, allowed the public either to surpass the king's reforms in a desire for even more radical change, or to embrace tradition and see Joseph II's abrupt reforms as traumatic. Press freedom thus paradoxically allowed conservatives to force more restrictive practice by the state. Intensive study of the *Broschürenflut*, however, challenges this interpretation. The *Broschürenflut* was characterized by support for the king and only hinted at desires for increased reform. Among the groups disenfranchised by changes, no hint of criticism of the monarch yet appears.

One such 'enlightener' was Johann Rautenstrauch. Born in 1746 in Erlangen, he moved to Vienna in 1770. In his early twenties Rautenstrauch published works while living in Salzburg. In Vienna, though he continued to write and also worked as a lawyer. Lesli Bodi succinctly describes the complex man: "As a defense attorney for innocent convicts, he meddled in the sensational legal cases, got himself repeatedly into fights with authors who attacked his writings, and carried on a constantly ongoing aggressive polemic against the church authorities."¹⁸⁰ His position as a lawyer, his defense of

¹⁷⁹ Robert Darnton, *Forbidden Bestsellers*, 191.

¹⁸⁰ "Als Anwalt unschuldig Verurteilter mischt er sich in sensationelle Rechtfälle, gerät immer wieder in Streit mit Autoren, die seine Schriften angreifen, und führt eine ständige laute, aggressive Polemik gegen die kirchlichen Autoritäten." Bodi, 99.

victims of an outdated though reforming legal system, and his use of the pamphlet press suggest comparisons between Rautenstrauch and the French parliamentarians and physiocrats, whose championing of *causes célèbres* did so much to rouse French public opinion in the pre-revolutionary era.

Rautenstrauch's *Joseph II, A Dream*, published soon after the empress's death, told the story of a dream in which Joseph II took the throne and was instantly surrounded by an audience waiting to speak with him.¹⁸¹ The work appeared in 1781, when much was hoped of the new king, and aimed at broadcasting those hopes both to the king and the emergent public. Popular and published extensively in other languages for distant subjects or interested readers, *Joseph II, Ein Traum* provided an important discussion of the major issues that would occupy the Viennese *Aufklärer*, while illustrating too the relationship between authors and the king. To the public, the dream provided a romantic and part-utopian exposition of the political program of the state under Joseph II.¹⁸² Rautenstrauch used allegory to advocate the Kaiser's progressive stance towards the basic right of free speech and other hoped-for reforms. The work itself presented literary representations of the pamphlet debates themselves, replicating the publication of different types of essays through the figures of individuals or groups from different segments of Habsburg society. This, like most of the pamphlets praising the king's reforms, followed the areas of Joseph's actual reforms and echoed the major themes of the *Broschürenflut*, outlining too the sources of the ignorance they believed stifled the nation at mid-century.

¹⁸¹ (Johann Rautenstrauch), *Joseph II, Ein Traum* (Wien: Trattner, 1781)

¹⁸² Venturi, *End of the Old Regime II*. 636.

The pamphlet begins with the crowd surrounding and congratulating the king, after effusive condolences for his mother that served to remind the public of the published eulogies. Joseph gives everyone freedom to speak without fear of reprisal. There is such a clamor to speak to the king that Joseph has to demand that members of the crowd speak one after the other. Here, Rautenstrauch allegorized the rational process of reform he hoped would follow Joseph's policies. The author dreamed of an ideal royal audience, in which the problems and potentials of the monarchy paraded before the king, one by one, offering rational commentary in the service of utilitarian progress.

This allegory illustrates the author's understanding of the change in public culture. He represented the populace as eager to have their long-held opinions heard on how the government should function. The instruction of the king by the populace in Rautenstrauch's pamphlet served to denounce distant government, ignorant of the opinions of a population that knows first-hand what reforms will best improve the state, economy and society. The press of people and the king's own urging to make appeals short and quick (much like a pamphlet) not only provided the dream's representation of the *Broschurenflut*, it manifested the idea that throughout society, from the lowest serf to God himself, there was an awareness that this king represented the hopes of many, and a fear that his influence would be fleeting or that his interest in reform would be short-lived.

The body of this work detailed different segments of society individually stepping before the emperor to present their respective complaints. Rautenstrauch encapsulated through these imagined audiences the issues the public would, or to the enlightened mind should, raise once permitted to voice opinion. Framed by this literary device, the farmer

was the first to speak, addressing the king in the second-person familiar and damning flatterers for their ill intentions. He stressed the unity between Joseph and the people, insisting "with one word, we are the source of the populace, riches, power, strength, happiness of all nations."¹⁸³ The equality of all men, the recognition of real contributions to the common welfare, and the rejection of social forms would be consistent themes throughout the pamphlet.

Abandoning the forms of respect would certainly have been an intolerable act for a farmer, but Rautenstrauch used this figure to remind a self-absorbed and distanced courtly city of their real dependence. The rejection of flattery is itself a device excusing the author's own presumptuous outlining of problems to the king and the wider world. Roger Chartier and Dale Van Kley argue that the pre-revolutionary French press desacralized the monarchy through methods here employed by Rautenstrauch.¹⁸⁴ The use of the informal 'you' exposed readers to the idea of the king as a familiar. Yet here, though the work argued the equivalence of the king's humanity to that of the farmer, it did not reduce the king: the king is fallible but remains the center of the hopes and the fears of this world and the next. This king needs and wants to be told what is going on in his kingdom and how it can be improved.

Introducing another theme that would appear throughout the pamphlet, the farmer next informs the king that though the condition of people in his land is satisfactory, more is possible. Rautenstrauch thus appealed to pride in and love for Volk and State, describing the kingdom's superiority but suggesting rational means for further improvement. He then stated that the officials, their laws, and all the books written about

¹⁸³ "mit einem Worte, wir sind die Quellen der Bevölkerungen, Reichthümer, Macht, Kraft, Glückseligkeit aller Länder" Rautenstrauch, 6-7.

¹⁸⁴ Chartier, *Cultural Origins*, Dale Van Kley, *Religious Origins*.

the people and the land are products of people who never lived amongst them and know little of the subject. Adopting the methods of the Enlightenment, this work thus rejects accepted knowledge in favor of directly experienced truth. Going to the source for information on necessary improvement and thereby reforming the state according to the knowledge of the people was, to the author, the basis for enlightened government. The allegorical farmer of the nation and his discussion with the emperor represented specialized expertise and state access to that knowledge through the press.

The dream continued with Joseph II receiving recommendations for improvements to all areas of the state and economy from people with first-hand knowledge of practical matters. Requests included improved waterways, reforms to finance and government spending (described as uninformed and damaging up to that point), and reminders of the importance of arts and sciences. Throughout, each of the allegorical representatives of the trades and classes reminded the king of their right to status and recognition in the monarchy. One of the groups to speak is the serfs. Presented in chains and half starved, these poor souls complain of the impossible burdens placed on them. Rautenstrauch thus publicizes the inhumanity of serfdom as well as challenging its productivity. This blatant criticism of state rule up to 1780 indicates the extent to which the public knew of Joseph II's disagreements with Maria Theresa's policies.¹⁸⁵

Rautenstrauch also addressed the major themes of religion, manners and knowledge. A tearful virgin representing religion laments that religious feeling seems only a product of custom, pressure, or need rather than actual religious feeling. She

¹⁸⁵ Maria Theresa certainly sympathized with the wretched situation of the peasants, but could not and at times did not wish to challenge the prerogatives of the elite of Bohemia, Hungary and beyond. Joseph II, however, was not so conciliatory.

stressed the impressionability of the next generation and argued that the debauchery of the day would become ingrained. This discussion of religion was completely removed both from the context of Catholicism and the king's attempts to make the church a rational, state-supervised institution. Instead, the author stressed an oft-forgotten inner spirituality while obliquely referring to past abuses in the name of religion.

Catholicism's lack of place here represented the author's hope to see the Church's long dominance fade. Also the stress on inner spiritual development and an individual religion evokes comparisons with Pietism and that religious movement's effect on literature and philosophy. As a former Protestant who converted to Catholicism upon moving to Vienna in 1770, as an author continuously fighting against religious abuses in the press, and as a lawyer defending the powerless against monumental church and state systems, Rautenstrauch was very likely a Reform Catholic, if not an outright deist.

Custom follows Religion; the robed muses lament the population's lack of friendship and love for humanity or family. Justice, goodness, and wisdom were rare, suffocated by artifice, and mocked where they did exist. Thus the robes cloaking the muses represent artificial virtues that do nothing but hide underlying hideousness: "One calls them politeness, good manners, and so on. With that however nothing is meant, nothing thought."¹⁸⁶ The work equated the customs of the people with the well-being of the state and placed responsibility on the king (as the pinnacle of all society) for its improvement. Moral codes were the hope of the nation, and Rautenstrauch argued the Kaiser was the living representative of these laws of interaction and manners. Assisted

¹⁸⁶ "Man nennet sie Höflichkeiten, gute Lebensarten, und so weiters. Dabey wird aber gewöhnlich nichts gemeynt, nichts gedacht" Rautenstrauch, 17.

by wise men, the king's task was thus to improve civic behavior.¹⁸⁷ The class-based Viennese *Aufklärung* would not promulgate Rousseau's ideas on the beauty of simple manners and morals. Instead, rules of conduct passed down from the civilized elite promoted happiness in social man.

The next to hold an audience with the king were intellectuals, who desired to help the emperor to enlighten the populace that, until then, idled in tragic darkness, injustice and ineptitude. Perhaps narcissistically, Rautenstrauch wrote "only enlightened people can see their fate, feel, grasp, consider, judge and then enjoy completely. Only they alone can make and carry out laws, decrees, and institutions, and implement whichever of the best manners, the purest religion, and all the other things the well being of states primarily depends."¹⁸⁸ The metaphorical light of science, morality and statecraft shine over Joseph's deeds just as the physical sun does; amongst the population they shine fully on some, brightly on a few more, but for a good half of the people, these suns are shaded. The reason for inequality and the dearth of light is given as the limitations on freedom to speak and write. The discussion by intellectuals anticipated issues that would particularly occupy their writings in the *Broschürenflut*. Rautenstrauch asserted that without free expression of thoughts, people cease thinking altogether.¹⁸⁹ The intellectuals admit there will be problems with such 'unrestricted freedom', but as there are those that would spread false or useless knowledge Enlightenment is justified: the unceasing testing of everything until only truth remains promises to frustrate misinformers until they abandon

¹⁸⁷ Rautenstrauch, 19.

¹⁸⁸ "nur erleuchtete Völker können ihr Daseyn sehen, fühlen, begreifen, überlegen, beurtheilen, und dann wohl genießen. Nur sie allein können klare, weise, gute Gesetze, Verordnungen, Anstalten u. machen, und ausführen, von welchen die besten Sitten, die reinste Religion, und alles übrige Wohlseyn der Staaten hauptsächlich abhängen."

¹⁸⁹ Rautenstrauch, 23-4.

their pursuit. Other writers and the king would soon see the *Broschürenflut* as such an annoyance.

Rautenstrauch here suggests that truth is dangerous in dark times, when people were living under false or evil laws, beneficial to citizens and the state in enlightened times; but in half enlightened times, though freedom may be misused, its benefits far outweigh its disadvantages. "Let YOU then, Joseph, to please the common good, expand the borders of freedom in speech and writing, only so much as is possible, if there must even be borders therein. Cheer and spur everything on that can serve true Enlightenment... He who acts right has nothing to fear from you and it is to be wished that the unjust will be uncovered through this."¹⁹⁰ In a particularly controversial conclusion, the intellectuals discussed the dangers of Joseph making unknowing though unwilling mistakes. Rautenstrauch here urged the necessity of a monarch and state admitting to fallibility so that improvement can result. Thus the king's support of Enlightenment rectifies the unavoidable blunders of statecraft. The appeal to the king's decency indicates this writer, on behalf of Enlightenment, held Joseph II responsible for his actions and character.

A Rousseauian exposition on education, embodied by children of both sexes, occupied another part of the dream. The male youth states that *Erziehung* forms good or bad, just or unjust people, and then criticizes state education for neglect of the heart. In an argument replicating Rousseau's thought, Rautenstrauch insists that teaching religion too early for understanding results in empty belief. Instead, teaching must focus on "the

¹⁹⁰ "Laß DIR also, Joseph, wohlgefallen, die Gränzen der Freyheit im Sprechen und Schreiben zu erweitern, soviel nur immer möglich ist, wenn ja noch Gränzen dabey seyn müßen. Muntere auf, sporne alles an, was zur wahren Aufklärung dienen kann.... Wer gerecht handeltm der hat nichts von ihnen zu fürchten und es ist ja zu wünschen, daß der Ungerechte dadurch entdeckt werde." Rautenstrauch, *Joseph II*, 27.

ethical and scientific order, the civic virtues and duties."¹⁹¹ The girl then speaks up, discusses the importance of her sex (in relation to men) and then deplores girls' current education and occupations of passion-enflaming novels and idle balls and card playing. An account follows of the neglect of education in the arts of home and heart in the harmful convent schools. Not a dry eye was left in the fictional house over sympathy for the poor, misled children and the fate of women who never learn how to be proper wives or cultivate their nurturing nature.

The final section of the dream brought the reader away from hypothetical conversation, as a voice from heaven listed Joseph II's experiences and qualities. This biography was entirely laudatory and stressed his knowledge and desire to learn through comparison in his extensive travels. The celestial voice served to indicate the possibility of the dreamed-for improvements under Joseph II's rule. For the intellectuals, the issues of the king's attitudes toward free thought and expression surmounted all the others, for it was the very expression of free thought that would enable positive, useful reforms in all other areas of the state.

Like Rautenstrauch, many of the authors of the early *Broschürenflut* issued page after page praising the king's benevolent support for rational reform though few would equal the comprehensive coverage *Joseph II* gave to contemporary issues. These short essays on publishing freedom not only provide insight into the relationship of writers to the state, they also inform us both of the transformations in reading practice that accompanied increased availability of books and prevailing dominance of intellectual culture, and of the ways in which authors perceived their own role.

¹⁹¹ "Die sittliche und wirthschaftliche Ordnung, die bürgerlichen Tugenden und Pflichten" Rautenstrauch, *Joseph II*, 32.

Immediately following the public's appraisal of Joseph's reforms, writers issued statements of support that praised Joseph and his foresight in pushing freedom. Intellectuals brought to the Viennese public Enlightenment ideas on the importance of popularizing knowledge as an essential step toward improving the life and minds of the people, state, society, economy, and morality. One strain of praise for press freedom was cameralist ideology, which claimed that states improve through increasing knowledge among the population. In pursuit of useful reforms, the press brings progress to the world; publications furthered the common good by ending prejudice, promoting the development of useful ideas, stimulating industry, supplementing government, and allowing authors to serve the public.

Many writers supporting censor reforms in the early 1780s entreated the public to live up to the honor benevolently granted by the monarch. Undeserving of the favor granted them, the Viennese needed to strive to overcome previous deficiencies and surpass expectations for intellectual development. One pamphleteer argued "it is our duty through the use that we would like to make of the freedom of the press, to justify this freedom before the eyes of all nations; we could certainly put to worthier use this priceless gift from humankind's champion, than if we showed ourselves, so far as we could, as his co-workers in the grand design sketched here."¹⁹² There follows a self-effacing statement assuring readers the author begs their patient attention to his words only because he feels the issue is so important. The pro-enlightenment press in Vienna would not cease expressing such insecurity in the few years it enjoyed Josephin freedom.

¹⁹² "uns kommt es zu durch den Gebrauch, den wir von der Freyheit der Presse machen werden, diese Freyheit vor den Augen aller Nationen zu rechtfertigen; könnten wir wohl dieses kostbares Geschenk des Schätzers der Menschheit würdiger nützen, als wenn wir uns, soviel an uns liegt, als seine Mitarbeiter der grossen Ansicht deren hier erinnert worden, zeigen?" *Ueber den Gebrauch der Freyheit der Presse* (Wien: Trattner, 1781), 29

Commentary on press reforms frequently explored the issue of the position of the author. The author became both the representative and the leader of the people; thus Otto von Gemmingen, for example, argued the author transcended humanity in reporting on it.¹⁹³ Assumed knowledge, skilled observation and understanding characterize legitimate authorship. Little was written about the position of the author without the evocation of duty. According to Heinrich Diez in a 1781 defense of toleration and free speech, publication alone was the way to reach people and improve them, which is the duty of the *Denker*. Conversations were insufficient. Diez then stressed the importance of writing accessibly for the people by not using Latin (and not writing like Hobbes or Spinoza). He wrote, "The thinker has simply as his goal, to enlighten the better portion of the public and to share his convictions with those that through rank, occupation and knowledge are raised above the common man."¹⁹⁴ In promoting the role of the publishing intellectual, Diez argued extensively that freedom to write was essential; it allowed the articulation of ideas in a way that they could not be misunderstood or misrepresented. Further dismissing the effectiveness of social interaction for edification, he insisted conflict of opinion, to be productive, should be reserved for print because of the particular advantages provided by permanent, fixed words.

Diez gave a thorough discussion of the role of reading and writing and what those activities achieve, making connections between free speech and free thought explicit throughout this work.¹⁹⁵ Interestingly, this work differentiated between the ideas and beliefs of intellectuals and what they brought to the public. Diez argued that "The wise

¹⁹³ *Der Weltmann*, vol. 2, issue 25. p. 237.

¹⁹⁴ "Der Denker hat blos zur Absicht, den beßern Theil des Publikums zu erleuchten und seine Gesinnungen denen mitzutheilen, die durch Stand, Berufsgeschäfte und Kännntniße über den gemeinen Mann erhaben sind." Heinrich Friedrich Diez, *Apologie der Duldung u. Preßfreiheit* (Wien, 1781)

¹⁹⁵ Diez, *Apologie* 21. Quote p 19.

man allows himself to speak against the reigning system if he either surrounds himself with people who think just as he does, or if he instead meets with intellectuals who can comprehend the same concepts.”¹⁹⁶ This is portrayed as of little consequence, for when it came to law and propriety, the learned would always act appropriately. Therefore, though Diez admitted that intellectuals may voice ideas in opposition to the state, he insisted this is a private matter and of no concern for the authorities. The work distinguishes between the gatherings of non-intellectuals and intellectuals, though they may discuss the same issues: in the former, conversation is either superficial or dangerous, while amongst the latter occurs the useful development of a class of people who can reason and advise the state. Diez’s theories established the interrelationship in function and implication of the communication and spread of enlightenment thought in both the activity of writing and in conversation among intellectuals.

One argument for freedom of the press was that it allowed talents to emerge. Talent, as Anthony La Vopa illustrates with reference to poor students in Germany, was the potential to become socially productive by contributing to academic and professional achievement.¹⁹⁷ Thus, according to the pamphlet, *The Contemporary Press Freedom in Vienna*, the free development of talents in the Austrian Enlightenment would benefit all. In addition to promoting the achievement of everyone’s fullest potential, press freedoms stimulate the public to industriousness and charity. Thus, the free press became the means through which subjects and society as a whole would improve and work for the betterment of the state.

¹⁹⁶ “Der weise Mann erlaubt sich nur dann Reden gegen das herrschende System, wenn er entweder mit Leuten umgeben ist, die eben so denken, wie er; oder wenn er mit unparteiischen Freunden spricht; oder wenn er sonst mit Köpfen zusammentrifft, die dergleichen Vorstellungen ertragen können.” Diez, *Apologie*, 35.

¹⁹⁷ Anthony La Vopa, *Grace, Talent and Merit*

After establishing the purpose of written communication, pamphlets explored the question of the constitution and position of the audience. Gemmingen's *Der Weltmann* (The Cosmopolitan), was particularly concerned with the idea of audience and sought only a limited one for the moral weekly. Gemmingen addressed the nobility exclusively because he believed that someone familiar with the 'feinern Welt' should improve the class through well-considered recommendations. He desired no restrictions in the relationship between author and reader. Arguing for complete transparency, Gemmingen writes, "it would be good if you let the names of readers be printed, so that your reading public for once would be known, and then, so that one knows those for whom one writes, and who are strong and intellectually curious enough to accept and search out truth."¹⁹⁸ True to conviction, the *Weltmann* published the full list of its subscribers. Knowing one's public thus inspired the work of the author. This was yet another way in which print and public overlapped and fed the other's ideas or opinions.

A discussion on the effects of new publications after 1780 centered on the question of whether more books bring about more knowledge. Inspired by the ancients and moderns debate, some pamphlets damned the large amount of books being published for despite the bulk, they could not equal the value of the limited books of the past. The question also emerged then, much as it does in modern historiography, of the effect of the quantity and methods of reading on how much one learns. Contributing to the early modern quantity versus quality debate, Joseph Richter, under the heading for 'book' in his *ABC Book for Big Children*, writes: "The Ancients had few books and thought a lot.

¹⁹⁸ "Gut wird es seyn, wenn Sie die Namen der Leser abdrucken lassen, einmal damit das lesende Publikum unter sich bekannt werde, und dann, damit man diejenige kenne, für die man schreibt, und die stark und wißbegierig genug sind, Wahrheit zu dulden und zu suchen." Hofenheim, O. H. Edlen von (Gemmingen, Otto Freiherr von) *Der Weltmann*, vol. 1 (Wien: Trattner, 1782) From the 'Introduction' no page numbers.

We have a lot of books, and think little.”¹⁹⁹ Most of the *Aufklärer* however, including Richter, did believe that the more they published, the more the public would absorb, and that increased knowledge and practical progress would result. In articulating his purpose in publishing a moral weekly, Gemmingen thus argued that “deep in the soul of the man of the world lays the conviction, that truths that advance the common good, can never be said often enough.”²⁰⁰

Religious Debate

The most popular topic of the *Broschiürenflut* was religion and the battle against superstition. The religious discussion paralleled the free press question: the major theme here, too, was the dominance of ignorance and projected reform through tolerance. Knowledge made available through the press served, in the minds of the *Aufklärer*, to fight the ignorance rampant in the Habsburg state. Authors blamed this perceived widespread ignorance largely on the religious orders control of education and thought prior to Joseph II’s first year of sole rule.

Joseph II’s reforms of the state church provided the main fodder for public debate. David Sorkin argues that the reformist agenda implemented by Joseph and Kaunitz after the Seven Years War “was a policy of state absolutism on Catholic foundations. It combined secular criteria of *raison d’etat*, welfare, and utility--represented most clearly in the chair of cameralism established at the University of Vienna (1763) and its first incumbent, Joseph von Sonnenfels--with notions of enlightened piety and Christian charity--drawn from Reform Catholicism and neo-Jansenism--that contributed to a larger

¹⁹⁹ “Die Alten hatten wenig Bücher, und dachten viel. Wir haben viel bücher, und denken wenig “ Joseph Richter, *ABC Buch*, 14.

²⁰⁰ “Tief liegt in der Seele des Weltmanns die Ueberzeugung, daß Wahrheiten die das allgemeine Beste fördern, nie oft genug können gesagt werden” Gemmingen, *Der Weltmann*, vol. 2, issue 25.

vision of the renewal of the church and of church-state relations, that is, the idea of a state church."²⁰¹ Thomas Bowman, in his study of the parish priests of Vienna, argues the objectives of church reform in the 1780s centered on the priest's function as intermediary between state and people. Joseph wanted the human and material resources of the church to be used to more advantage for Austrian society, distributing material and moral aid more evenly to the people. But to change this, active government intervention was needed.

From 1780 to 1790, decrees from Joseph II restructured the church in Austria. Vienna served as the testing ground for reforms. Changes included the formation of new parishes to improve the ratio of priests to parishioners and paying the new priests through secularizing the wealth of contemplative religious orders. Feasts and pilgrimages were cut back as sermons and catechism were given a new importance. Religious brotherhoods were banned in favor of a single, state-sponsored confraternity. According to Bowman, "the clear intent of these measures was to use the available resources of the Catholic church to help produce loyal priests who could watch over and hopefully guide obedient, yet productive subjects."²⁰² Reforms sought both economic and doctrinal objectives: reducing feast days led to more workdays and the elimination of superstitious practices. The purpose of many reforms was to cultivate priests as hegemonic intercessors of the state who both helped to produce loyal subjects and reported on them. Joseph's biggest impact was on religion, even though it was this area that sparked the most controversy. Indeed, the term Josephinism, or Josephism, refers exclusively in historiography to his Reform Catholicism.

²⁰¹ David Sorkin, "Reform Catholicism and Religious Enlightenment" in *Austrian History Yearbook* 30 (1999) 208.

²⁰² William D. Bowman, *Priest and Parish in Vienna, 1780-1880* (Boston: Humanities Press, 1999) 1-2.

The critical viewpoint adopted by readers after the revolution in books led people to reject tradition and obedience and to regard sources of power with suspicion.²⁰³ In France, print culture led to questioning of the institution of the church as well as widespread dechristianization, as illustrated by the printing of fewer religious books. French eighteenth-century texts were antithetical to religion in spirit and substance, providing the basis for a widespread rejection of church belief and practice.²⁰⁴ Vienna's experience of the clash of print and religion differed in that while publishing promoted reevaluation of religious power and practice, ever more books on religion were published and the content of even "Enlightenment" texts did not counter Catholic beliefs. As in the debate on the free press, the king's articulation of needed changes permitted and limited the religious debate that would follow.

Austria's new state church adhered to reformed Catholicism and thus Josephinism. György Mraz argues that most of the promoters of enlightenment in Austria never questioned their religious position, and counted themselves as practicing Catholics. He labels this a Catholic enlightenment, and claims that these people sought to unify catholic religious and enlightenment goals, doing so however, in various ways; reform Catholicism incorporates a variety of beliefs and cannot be considered a homogenous group.²⁰⁵ Countering the evaluations of David Sorkin, Robin Okey argues anti-clericalism did emerge in the Josephin Enlightenment.²⁰⁶

²⁰³ Roger Chartier, *Cultural Origins* 187.

²⁰⁴ Robert Darnton, *Forbidden Bestsellers*, 191.

²⁰⁵ Gottfried Mraz, "Kirche und Verkündigung im Aufgeklärten Staat. Anmerkung zur Katholische Pastoraltheologie im josephinischen Österreich" In Greta Klingenstein, Friedrich Engel-Janosi, Heinrich Lutz, eds., *Formen der europäischen Aufklärung: Untersuchungen zur Situation von Christentum, Bildung und Wissenschaft im 18. Jahrhundert*, vol. 3. (Wien: Verlag für Geschichte und Politik, 1976). Part of this section is quoting Wandruszka, *Leopold II.*. See also Sorkin, Beale.

²⁰⁶ Okey, *The Habsburg Monarchy: From Enlightenment to Eclipse* (St. Martin's Press, 2001) 44-45.

The debate on religion in many cases can be traced to the population's personal experience of the abolished church practices. Writers issue religious polemics in an attempt to break free from their religious education or past personal connection with the church. The volumes of works against ignorant and intolerant monks and archaic religious orders were thus in many cases a cathartic psychological release from past personal religious issues. The Austrian *Aufklärer* received their education through the church, and most had a personal history in which they either took religious orders or considered it. The freedom from these vows granted by Joseph II's abolition of many of the orders inspired a euphoric embracing of the chance to renounce regretted convictions or forced associations with the Church. More than a hundred titles thus appeared on monks and religious orders.²⁰⁷

A pamphlet by F. A. Reinhard from 1782 commented on the publishing trends of the *Broschürenflut* and provides a synopsis of official Reform Catholic beliefs. He disputed the right to attack religion, not on the basis that it was dangerous, but on the basis of authority. Those with knowledge of theology, comparative religion, and church practices could publish a critique, while writers whose knowledge was based on literature could not: "thus believed the good young people, if they had read Wieland's Golden Mirror, Werther's Suicide, or even simply La Pucelle d'Orleans, they believe themselves qualified to write about religion."²⁰⁸ Reinhard represented the Catholic Enlightenment: he argued the necessity of knowing the history of the church in order to criticize it; he claimed that ignorance (in the criticism of the church) resulted in some of the worst

²⁰⁷ *Bibliographie Österreichische Drucke*. 250-260.

²⁰⁸ "da glaubten die lieben jungen Leute, wenn sie Wielands goldnen Spiegel, Werthers Selbstmord, oder wohl gar la Pucelle d'Orleans gelesen hatten, da glaubten sie verechttiget zu seyn, von Religion zu schreiben" Reinhard, F. A. *Blick auf die jungen Schriftsteller Wiens*. (Wien, 1782)

events in history; and he stated that people must go back to the pure source of church belief to be able to distinguish real religion from the false path of bad teachings and leaders. Reinhard urged the young penny-press authors to learn true religion in order to free the Volk from the oppression of ignorance and to restore the glory of the true Church. The work betrays the Catholic Enlightenment's tendency to equate knowledge and belief in the quest for reformed thought and practice.

Reinhard's work, however, was much more conservative than the bulk of the *Aufklärer's* writings. Many of these writers gloried in an age that applied rational criticism to the dogmas and practices of the church. Josef Valentin Eybel, a journalist who wrote mostly on church issues, began a popular series in response to the pope's visit out of concern for state encroachment on religious prerogatives. The series included 'What is a Priest?', 'What is the pope?' and 'What is a Bishop?'; through these pamphlets, described as 'enlightened educational writings', Eybel established his greatest influence. Many would copy his tone and style. As Eduard Winter described, these pamphlets "reached into broad circles and found just as much lively agreement as embittered repudiation." As he was really not anti-church, but did ask for reform of the pope's office, his ideas corresponded with Josephin Reform Catholicism.²⁰⁹ Joseph II intervened with the censor to allow their publication.²¹⁰

Viennese Society in the *Broschürenflut*

Vienna was defined not only by its Catholicism, but also by its nature as a city of strict social orders. Social distinctions were visible and concrete in the city; status permeated not only all of society but also all print. In his study of landscape's connection

²⁰⁹ "gelangten in breit Kreise und fanden ebenso lebhaft Zustimmung wie erbitterte Ablehnung." Winter, *Der Josephinismus* 111.

²¹⁰ Blanning, *Joseph II*, 162.

to power, Bob Rotenberg describes the extremism of Viennese social divisions through a discussion of the exclusivity versus openness of Vienna's gardens and public parks. Though Joseph II had done much to open public space to the people, Rotenberg states: "The effort to set aside a place in which to celebrate the ideal of liberty is only necessary in a world where liberty is scarce." Tickets to events in the parks (music/theater) were prohibitive for lower classes and since they were held on the nicest days and involved netting off areas of the park, "the public quickly got the message that the parks were really for the nobles, the intellectuals, and the writers of travel literature." The openness of the Glacis stood out in Vienna in contrast to its customary "locked gates, locked buildings, and closed social networks."²¹¹

The nobility were clearly the dominant force in society, the economy, culture and the state. In Johann Pezzl's voluminous description of Vienna, modeled on Mercier's of Paris, described society according to class. The high nobility stand distinct from the second tier of nobility as well as from then the *Bürger* and the *Pöbel*.²¹² The Austro-Bohemian nobility was international in character, populated not just by Czechs or Germans, but also by many Italians, Spanish, Walloons, and Scotch-Irish. Throughout the eighteenth century, military service provided considerable scope for advancement. By 1780, "the Austro-Bohemian nobility was the most cosmopolitan in Europe."²¹³ Contributing to this was the ethnic diversity of Habsburg lands, dynastic ties to Spain/Portugal, and, importantly, the Habsburg control of the imperial title: Vienna as the

²¹¹ Robert Rotenberg, *Landscape and Power in Vienna* (Johns Hopkins UP, 1995) 82-87.

²¹² Johann Pezzl, *Skizze von Wien*.

²¹³ James Van Horn Melton, "The Nobility in the Bohemian and Austrian Lands" in *The European Nobilities in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, H.M. Scott, ed. (1995) 110-112.

residence of the Holy Roman Empire lured nobles who sought positions from all over Central Europe and many of them stayed.

The system of stepped orders molded Vienna's publishing *Aufklärer*, though they did embrace a rational questioning of some basic assumptions of such a striated society. As in France, the reading revolution did not (yet) topple the supremacy of the aristocracy, but print and reading profoundly challenged accepted truths. Writing influenced conduct; Roger Chartier asserts that "reading is endowed with such power that it is capable of totally transforming readers and making them into what the texts envisage."²¹⁴ This transformation was observable in Vienna, in the wake of the proliferation of popular moral works, conduct books, and novels.²¹⁵ Reading and the book culture in Vienna both replicated and subverted the social structure of the city. The aristocracy remained privileged in the written word, but they began to enter the focus of reforming tendencies; at the same time books themselves created a homogenized culture and argued for the universal nature of humanity.

An improving journal of the time, modeled after British moral weeklies, betrayed an acceptance of orders while also criticizing them. The purpose of the *Weltmann* was to improve the manners and opinions of the influential upper classes. In this publication, the author critiqued society, yet fundamentally approved of the divisions and the privileging of the nobility and wealthy. Beginning in mid-1782, *Der Weltmann* sought to improve and enlighten the upper classes while maintaining a light-hearted yet earnest tone in short and easy-to-read editions. As one of the goals of the journal was "re-ignite the fire in their cold souls," one can presume that the publisher did not idealize the

²¹⁴ Chartier, *Cultural Origins*, 68.

²¹⁵ Chartier, *Cultural Uses of Print* 6.

aristocracy. Despite consistently disparaging noble mores, the author assumes the unquestioned social supremacy of the class. The moralist urged the aristocracy to aspire to a true humanity, and spoke of the example they would provide from their “cleaned up heights”, as opposed to “how they once, through their example, poisoned and bewitched other classes.”²¹⁶ Although the elite were unquestionably superior in their power and influence, birth and background, Gemmingen asserted the virtue of overlooking class divisions when achievement permitted. In fact, hospitality to the non-elite, particularly intellectuals and foreigners, was a virtue that brought honor to the nobility for it allowed favorable impressions of the city to circulate abroad and promoted ties between the artists and writers of the city that further stimulated development.

The improving weekly for the aristocracy was a critical mirror, reflecting its ignorance, pride and vices. It was also a blueprint for improvement, pointing towards reform of the mores and customs of society. One specific critique at the end of the second issue damned the artifice of the nobility by claiming that the class as a whole was inwardly in misery because more than any other class it disassociated itself from nature. The example of an aristocrat’s reformation from a pleasure-focused society woman into a good mother, loving wife, and true friend provided the model for returning to nature and happiness. Returning to human nature alone was not sufficient; readers were urged into the woods with a book of poetry to aid their internal reformation.²¹⁷ Another major critique of the nobility in Vienna that was widespread in the literature of the

²¹⁶ “feuer in ihren erkalteten Seelen wieder entzünden”, “eingeräumte Höhe” and “wie sie einst durch ihr Beyspiel jede andre Klasse vergifteten und bethörten.” Gemminngen, *Der Weltmann*, vol.1 “Introduction”. No page numbers.

²¹⁷ Gemmingen, *Der Weltmann*, Volume 1, Issue 1.

Broschürenflut was their empty socializing. The trivial pursuit of game playing at noble dinners was a repeated object of scorn.

The damnation of artifice extended into an elevation of politeness as a natural art of men in society. In a section on the means of speech in society and fashionable words, the *Weltmann* indulged in a lengthy discussion of the word *Höflichkeit*, or politeness, which also held huge sway in Britain and France in the eighteenth century.²¹⁸ Agreeing with the depiction of politeness by the Earl of Shaftesbury, Gemmingen argued that true politeness (as opposed to false or artificial politeness) comes from the soul and is coaxed out through true understanding of the world, society and individuals' inner souls. Whereas some forms of politeness descend into flattery, real politeness is informed by virtue and the desire to create enjoyment in a gathering of people. Although politeness is integrally tied to social class, station alone does not make a polite person. A certain something stemming from the enlightenment of one's soul is the true source of politeness, not effort and not millions of empty compliments.²¹⁹ The *Weltmann* thus admitted the undeniable advantages of being born to the upper rungs of the social ladder in Vienna's class-based society but attempted to show that virtue and knowledge create a more fulfilling, just and natural character in those of fortunate birth.

In addition to skilled *Höflichkeit*, the *Weltmann* urged the importance of conversational skills, yet another topic that occupied the French over the previous century. An essay from the third issue of the *Weltmann*, titled "Conversation more than physiognomy", argued that people must be judged not by physical characteristics as Lavater claimed, but rather by the method and content of their speech. He criticized the

²¹⁸ Laurence Klein, *Shaftesbury and the Culture of Politeness: moral discourse and cultural politics in early eighteenth-century England* (Cambridge University Press, 1994).

²¹⁹ Gemmingen, *Weltmann* vol. 3, 270.

lack of good conversation among the Viennese elite, claiming the two main problems, bad pronunciation and poor word choices, resulted from the nobility's habit of employing a mixture of French and German words. Another problem that publicly revealed the dearth of understanding in the Viennese nobility was the emptiness of social conversations. The author urged the elite, even when speaking on everyday topics, do so with knowledge. The social skills deemed important for the aristocracy indicate the dominance of French social models among the elite in Vienna.²²⁰ Gemmingen's writings in the *Weltmann* argued that 'society' needed improvement in the social arts so it would not only be a model to the lower classes, but also be seen as an example to foreigners. True change, the periodical argued, would have to come through the upper classes. This acknowledgement could depress those seeking extensive reform, but Gemmingen took up the challenge to redeem the backwards elite in the hopes that they in turn would aid enlightenment.

The nobility remained a focus of improving literature. A self-described work of practical philosophy called *Ideal für Vorbereitung eines Hof- Staats- und Weltmannes* urged love of country, religion and fellow men over its fourteen octavo pages. Honorable private lives and an interest in developing knowledge were other traits to be cultivated. It placed particularly great importance on friendship.²²¹ Friendship provides the basis for the development of sensibility; emotions, spirituality, and virtue stem from that foundation. To be valued and have a purpose in life, one must cultivate the human proclivity to establish such emotional bonds. This anonymous tract is of little note except

²²⁰ Lawrence Klein, *Shaftesbury*; Linda Colley, *Britons* (Yale, 1992); Michèle Cohen, *Fashioning Masculinity* (Routledge, 1996); John Barrel, "The Dangerous Goddess" in *Birth of Pandora* (MacMillan, 1992); David Bell, "Recent Works on Early Modern French National Identity" in *JMH* 68 (March, 1996): 84-113 on British or French identity as fashioned by the elite.

²²¹ *Ideal für Vorbereitung eines Hof- Staats- und Weltmannes* (Wien, Schmidt, 1781)

for the argument that dictating the morality and lifestyle to the upper class constituted applied philosophy. The Enlightenment as understood by the writers of Vienna was a positive force for progress that could apply to anything and bring about improvement for everything and everyone.

Books on society also commented on the situation of the lower class in the city. Rautenstrauch's anonymously published pamphlet entitled *Ueber die Stubenmädchen in Wien*, became a major focus of public interest. The pamphlet not only generated talk, it stimulated dozens more publications on the same, rather narrow topic while going into four editions itself. Leslie Bodi claims the success of the work "can only be explained through a literary situation in which a completely ravenous public plunges blindly upon every manifestation of a somewhat free expression of opinion."²²² However, the public obsession with venereal disease and loose women was hardly unusual for a big city: both London and Paris experienced mass public outcry in the press on prostitution, disease, mendicancy and lower class presumptions to upper class privilege.²²³ The pamphlet itself both betrayed and criticized the class-based arrogance and fears of the Viennese public. As Rautenstrauch describes it, the barmaids of Vienna had somehow evolved (at least in public perception) into dangerous yet irresistible seductresses who read widely, pretended to knowledge of aesthetics, discussed Goethe's *Werther* and otherwise represented Sensibility. Through their enticing dress and appealing conversation, they constituted a danger to the upper-class youth and public health. Rautenstrauch used satire to criticize

²²² "nur aus einer literarischen Situation erklärt werden kann, in der sich ein völlig ausgehungertes Publikum wahllos auf jede Manifestation einer etwas freieren Meinungsäußerung stürzt" Lesli Bodi, *Tauwetter in Wien*, 124. Both Blumauer in *Beobachtungen*, and Nicolai in his *Beschreibung eine Reise* refer to the massive public interest and the publications stimulated by *Über die Stubenmädchen*.

²²³ See for example, Donna Andrew, *Philanthropy and Police: London Charity in the Eighteenth Century* (Princeton UP, 1989) and Schwartz, *Policing the Poor in Eighteenth-Century France* (North Carolina, 1988)

the concerns of the king and police over these supposed monsters, as well as ridiculing the idea that the ‘gnädige’ women of Vienna could not compete with the lowest classes of working women. On the one hand, Rautenstrauch argued against the targeting of lower class ‘public’ women by society and state. On the other hand, his means to their defense was an assertion of strict differentiation in the abilities and talents of the orders.

The Enlightenment was not mere criticism—making knowledge available was its other purpose. The *Broschürenflut* as a series of tracts critiquing religion, state and society dominates historians’ perceptions of the world of books and ideas in the 1780s. Although there is good reason to focus on that trend, Vienna’s publishing houses also stocked their shelves with scientific, instructional and foreign academic works. The publications in this genre did not lead to a challenge of Protestant North German claims to distinctive profundity; however, the readers and writers of Vienna were clearly fascinated by science, ideas, and literature inaccessible to them prior to the creation of this semi-free intellectual culture of the 1780s. Specialized works on education, agriculture, medicine, law, crime, philosophy, science, technology and engineering comprised over five hundred of the publications emerging from the city of Vienna.²²⁴ Lessing, Wieland, and translations of French and English works were published in the Viennese presses—including many authors previously censored, like Montesquieu. Voltaire remained banned, although it took eight years for that decision to be reached.²²⁵ Also, fulfilling Joseph’s hopes for utility and access, professors’ lectures were brought before the public. Joseph von Sonnenfels’s lectures were in demand, and Leopold Alois Hoffmann printed his lectures from the university of Pest on the German language.

²²⁴ *Bibliographie österreichischer Drucke 1781-1795*, Teil 2. Ferdinand Wernigg, ed. pp20-92.

²²⁵ Okey, 45, Bodi, 55.

The forms favored in the *Broschurenflut* are indicative of Vienna's unique literary culture. Satire was a favored form in Austrian literature because of the heavy influence of popular theater, and many pamphlets used this as a method to express criticism.²²⁶ The city's authors, in fact, were frequently called as a whole the 'Viennese Satirists'.²²⁷ Writers were ridiculed for their style, monks for their looks. Authors adopted fake narrators in order to illustrate the ignorance or absurdity of that representative group. Satire itself can be seen as the extreme form of the eighteenth-century technique of making the familiar strange in order to question its rationality, justice and utility. Making the familiar absurd instead hit people over the head with the ignorance, injustice and pointlessness of the systems and practices at work in the Viennese state.

The primary influence on Viennese literature in the eighteenth century was the Baroque theater—encompassing comedy, operas and musical theater. Earlier court theater was Italian and French influenced, but comic interludes in the form of vulgar servants (bearing Italian names) descended from the seventeenth-century German stage. The City of Vienna built the 'Theater by the Kärntner Gates' at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Italian actors occupied this playhouse and imitated Italian opera, but its subjects included popular German material. "The principal appeal of his company to the Viennese public, however, lay in its comedy, which centred on the traditional German comic figure Hanswurst, played by Stranitzky himself in a stage version of a Salzburg peasant costume." Mary Wortley Montagu commented on its vulgarity, but admitted to

²²⁶ Werner M. Bauer, *Fiktion und Polemik. Studien zum Roman der österreichischen Aufklärung* (Uni. Innsbruck Habilitationsschrift, 1976) Says satires and dialogues were adopted as the most convincing styles for the reading public. Also, see Lesli Bodi, *Tauwetter in Wien*, on literary inheritance, why satire a favored form among the Viennese.

²²⁷ *Briefe nach Göttingen* (1781).

its entertainment value. Thus the tradition of parody in Viennese theater had roots in the early eighteenth century.²²⁸

In 1776 in one of the early indications of Joseph II's enlightened cultural politics, the Kaiser issued two decrees turning one of the court theaters into a 'National Theater' and most importantly breaking the monopoly of court theaters by permitting 'freedom for spectacles.' New theaters were then built (outside the city walls, though) and thus began the flourishing popular Viennese theater that continued through the nineteenth century.²²⁹

"Whereas in Germany Harlequin as the representative of extemporized comedy was ceremonially 'banished' from the stage in 1737, in Vienna extemporization survived in the *Kärtnertortheater* until the 1770s, and far from dying out, the popular comedy associated with Hanswurst was able to move its base after 1776 to the new theaters built in the districts outside the walls. This whole tradition of vernacular entertainment was to become the most distinctive element of the theatrical culture of Vienna."²³⁰ The influence of the theater extended into print. The press was most often occupied with publishing plays, satirical comedies in particular. Joachim Perinet alone was responsible for the publication of close to one hundred Singspiele, Lustspiele, satires, and Operas.

The influence of theater on other forms of literature in Austria was formidable. One popular pamphlet form was the dialogue. When taking the form of the dialogue, which Werner Bauer argues was highly effective due to its pedagogical and polemical precursors, the author would place the dialogue "in a determined framework with highest possible efficacy" such as the author remembering a conversation or dream.²³¹ The

²²⁸ W. E. Yates, *Theatre in Vienna: A Critical History, 1776-1995* (Cambridge UP, 1996) 4.

²²⁹ Yates, *Theatre in Vienna*, 1.

²³⁰ Yates, *Theatre in Vienna*, 5.

²³¹ "in einen bestimmten, möglichst wirkungsvollen Rahmen" Werner Bauer, *Fiktion und Polemik*, 43.

conventions of the form generally follow those of moral weeklies. The work first tries to establish believability and the fictional author often physically stages a dialogue in a public space, frequently in a place where reading and sociability merge. Tracts and letters were other popular forms adopted to spread knowledge because of their conversational tone. “Here is where the satirical letters of 1780 to 1787 had the biggest importance in number of editions and popularity with the public.”²³²

Poetry was omnipresent in the Austrian Enlightenment; in fact, many of the most active *Aufklärer* originally connected in the late 1770s through their common interest in poetry. The long-standing dominance of baroque Christianity can be held responsible for this characteristic of Viennese publishing. “Josephinism achieved for the poetry of the time strong and earnest advancements and inserted it, especially in its dramatic form, which was recognized as the most valuable because of its strength and extensive efficacy, into its education plan for citizens.”²³³ Poetry created moral citizens, it developed taste, and it relied on superior usage in language; it could thus become the means to improve the populace by example. The poets publishing in the *Broschürenflut* employed poetry to varied effect. Satirical poetry criticized, while celebratory poetry provided the means to voice opinion on the reforms of the Kaiser or the successes of intellectual achievement in the capital.

Though the forms used by the writers of the early 1780s for the most part had a long pedigree in Vienna, the way in which they were employed constituted a transformation. Theater, satire, poetry all grew in terms of topics, quantity and even

²³² “Hier hatten die Briefsatiren zwischen 1780 und 1787 das größte Gewicht an Auflagenzahl und Beliebtheit beim Publikum.” Bauer, “Introduction.”

²³³ “Der Josephinismus stellte an die Dichtung der Zeit strenge und ernste Forderungen und fügte sie, besonders in ihrer dramatischen Form, die er wegen ihrer starken und ausgebreiteten Wirkungskraft am meisten zu schätzen wußte, seinem staatsbürgerlichen Erziehungsplane ein.” Sashegyi, 206.

quality. Despite the rapidity of publication, the works of the *Broschürenflut* entertained their readers while also providing them with matter for public debate. Even beyond Vienna, the poets in particular began earning recognition. Despite the clear signs of literary progress, however, not everyone would applaud the products of the *Broschürenflut*.

Criticism Critiqued

Not all publications discussing the press were filled with praise for the recent reforms. Many continued to see a relaxed censor as a possible danger. In addition to those disagreeing with press freedom, though, progressive fans of the king's reforms also were not entirely happy with the publishing industry and the response it provided to the change. The *Aufklärer* wanted a polishing of the press—moral improvement and rational utilitarianism applied to the print market to ensure people bought and read only works that followed taste and served improvement. In other words, the intellectuals were jealous of the press freedoms and new burgeoning publishing industry that they had regarded as their own, but that in reality favored writers who did not share their pedigree and restrictive worldview.

Vienna's pamphlet debates portrayed critical awareness of the function of the press and the author in a climate of intellectual reform. This self-consciousness would allow further development of the Enlightenment in Vienna, as readers and writers keenly observed the nature of criticism in the city's publishing industries. Discussions of criticism articulated a need for discernment, taste, and the institutionalization of enlightenment. In evoking taste, *Aufklärer* sought to limit who would be allowed the distinction of being an author and thereby of representing the city, while at the same time

they were pushing for an expansion of activity, arguing more impressive action was necessary for the success of Enlightenment.

Those concerned over the dangers of unrestricted thought did not fail to respond to the praises of press freedoms. Many conservatives saw criticism itself as amoral, endangering society's stability by attacking tradition. These writers feared the loss of order implied in allowing broad segments of the population influence over state policy. Ingenious critics issued scores of pamphlets lamenting the preponderance of pamphlets and condemning any who dared contribute such a pamphlet for debate. One attack on the pamphlet phenomenon was the essay, *Something about Something, or a Note to my Friend about the Useless Scribblers*. In addition to condemning the Viennese authors for being more concerned with quantity than quality, the author attacked the harmful content of contemporary publication, thereby extending improving literature to moralizing on print itself. It argued that these penny authors pointlessly attack the honor of their fellow man by ridiculing the customs of various ranks in society, from the Holy Monarch himself to the common man. Scribblers committed their offences in their eagerness to display wit. This pamphlet, like many others, derided the youth of the hack writers; highlighting their impetuosity, lack of wisdom and experience, and their frivolous social pretensions and pursuit of economic gain. The attack became highly conservative when discussing the monarch's initiative in starting the reform. Speaking directly to the offending authors, Pangel insisted they not write another word before affronting the good monarch again, and asserted if given the opportunity he would address the monarch with: "Most fair Prince! You expected something else from our Viennese than you received, they went behind your back and fixed their wit on something of the opposition, that

brought poisoning of the youth, anger of the age, and decline of religion.”²³⁴ This angry critique of authors taking advantage of press freedoms goes so far as to recommend imprisonment for the little minds with loud voices.

The landscape painter J.A. von Lewenau also added his voice to the criticism of the contemporary Viennese press. His primary focus of attack was religious pamphlets. Not only was he disgusted by requests to shut down churches and criticism of the pope; he also found the writing lamentable. The prose of the *Broschürenflut* fell short of von Lewenau’s standards; the works relished in confusion, and the tone, content, and writing style were not worthy of public perusal. He continued by describing the years of effort that go into writing masterpieces. Refuting justifications provided by those writing religious critiques, Lewenau stated “Judging by the example of all of these learned polemical pieces, whose corpus of theological and canonical teachings would not suffice to completely purify the religion of the common man.”²³⁵ This religious traditionalist viewed the world of print as a united, hostile, aggressive world. He began his pamphlet saying he was sure to be attacked for his views, despite his precaution of not naming any of the authors he was criticizing. However, one nefarious group was the subject of several lines of damning description; Lewenau called their criticisms treachery, their characters evil, and their souls base. It is clear that the opposition to reform saw the press as conspiring to aid the progressive agenda.

²³⁴ “Gerechtester Landesfürst! Du hast etwas anders bey unsern Wienern gesucht, als Du bekommen hast, sie haben Dich hintergangen, und ihren Witz auf Etwas geheftet, was das Widerspiel ist, was Gift der Jugend, Aergerniß dem Alter, und Untergang der Religion bringet.” Pangel, *Etwas auf Etwas*, 4.

²³⁵ “Um die Religion des gemeinen Mannes vollkommen zu reinigen würde ja selbst nach dem Beyspiele aller dieser gelehrten Streitschriften der ganze Umfang der theologischen und kanonischen Lehre nicht hinreichend seyn.” J.A. Von Lewenau, *Was sind die Wienerhschriften überhaupt?* (Wien: Sonnleitner [1782]) 25.

Pamphlets also attacked anonymous publications, because conservative writers feared criticism uninhibited by accountability. The king himself betrayed this fear. In his *Grundregeln*, he wrote: “Critiques will not be forbidden... they can now come across them if they wish...especially when the author allows his name to be printed on it, and therefore represents himself as guarantor for the truth of the matter.”²³⁶ Owning authorship ensured the public could trust the work’s veracity. Without the responsibility brought through publicity, morality fails. The pamphlet debates did result in the appearance of hundreds of anonymous publications. Few of the progressive *Aufklärer*, however, would publish works without attaching their name or a pseudonym widely known as theirs (except in the cases where they shared a popular fake name). Ironically, it was the vitriolic conservative works that most often went unclaimed despite their fears of the potential of unleashing publication without reprisal for subversive ideas. Here, the elitist shame of writing for money and pandering to the public most likely discouraged acknowledging authorship.

Criticism of the Josephinian pamphlet debates was not just the domain of conservatives who condemned popular (and state) attacks on the traditional order. Intellectuals also submitted works lamenting the state of the Viennese publishing industry after the 1780-1781 reforms. These critiques urged the authors of Vienna to produce more substantive literature, in order to enlighten the population and represent the Viennese literary scene well to other lands. This group of critics formed Vienna’s circle of Enlightenment reformers—writers dedicated to promoting the spread of knowledge through the newly prolific publishing industry. In this circle, writing was noble: it

²³⁶ “Kritiken... sie mögen nun treffen, wen [sic] sie wollen...besonders wenn der Verfasser seinen Namen dazu drucken läßt, und sich also für die Wahrheit der Sache dadurch als Bürge darstellt, nicht verboten werden.” Joseph II, “Grundregeln”, quoted in Bodi, *Tauwetter in Wien*, 49.

involved effort, independence and virtue. Believing in the role of the author as one with a social responsibility to further reason, combat superstition, and use talents to serve the people and improve the state, these Men of Letters reacted virulently against the use of the press by people unmoved by those noble aims. Authors were particularly protective of their dominion in publication because of the perception of the market as finite; they argued the crowding of the market with competition from the unworthy, less than noble pamphlet authors stifled the virtuous (Enlightened) press. Writing for monetary gain was seen as debasing the calling of enlightened authors, or as Blumauer argues, turning authorship into a common, blue-collar trade.²³⁷

The subject of hack authors, those financially dependent on publishing, called forth an extensive round of debates, and engendered the writing of thirty-three pamphlets in four years.²³⁸ As in London's Grub Street and Paris's Literary Underground, popular Austrian writers posed a threat to the intellectuals and their elevated tone. The writers were thus ridiculed for their derivative writings, their financial dependence on the ten Kreuzers they got for each pamphlet, the lack of weighty subject matter in their publications, and their social pretensions in attempting to live off their reputations as 'authors'. The speed with which the pamphlets were produced also affronted the intellectuals, who ridiculed the idea of writing a useful text in a day. As the poet Alois Blumauer referred to these worthless scraps, "most appear simply for the money, were finished in one day, read the second, and forgotten on the third."²³⁹

The satire *Plea of the 10 Kreuzer Authors* published in 1781 attacked these rapid publications for not contributing to true knowledge. Adopting the form of a letter from

²³⁷ *Beobachtungen*,

²³⁸ Wernigg, *Bibliographie*

²³⁹ Alois Blumauer, *Beobachtungen über Österreichs Aufklärung und Litteratur* (Wien: Kurzbeck, 1782). 8.

the authors under attack to the public, the work condemned penny press authors' attempts to commodify reason. It depicted the origin of the price of pamphlets in a ridiculous idea of the opportunistic writers to sell their wares in the Prater under the sign "Buy your knowledge here for 10 Kreuzer."²⁴⁰ The satire repeatedly returned to the money theme and the financial desperation of pamphlet hacks, and claimed the idea for the *Broschürenflut* was the product of a drunken night—the only of many brilliant ideas not entirely forgotten by the next morning. With the approach of dawn the group of young writers suddenly hits upon the idea of selling their ruminations for 10 Kreuzer apiece. The methods and 'higher purpose' of the penny press are not the sole points of satirical attack; content is derided as well. When the authors "borrow" from other learned works, they are merely attempting to show how well read they are and clearly this 'reading', like their writing, is far too superficial to deserve the audience's respect.²⁴¹

This satire also critiqued the topics occupying the *Broschürenflut*. The ephemeral press often fixated on minor human faults, and the hack authors voice their conviction that they are purifying the world of its human imperfections. The collective of authors work non-stop to gather more situations to comment on: "Nothing, absolutely nothing shall escape our pen."²⁴² The public could look forward to such enlightening manuscripts as "On salami" and "About the difference between summer and winter". Though the description of the topics of the *Broschürenflut* reaches the absurd, the author adroitly conveyed his point. The works of the pamphlet press did not question or criticize circumstances of import, and thus did not approach the philosophy or literature published in the international press.

²⁴⁰ Anonymous, *Bitschrift der 10 Kreuzer Autoren* (Kraus, 1781) 6,9

²⁴¹ *Bitschrift*, 4.

²⁴² "Nichts, gar nichts soll unsrer Feder entwischen" *Bitschrift*, 13.

As the mass of fruitless publications came under fire, intellectuals felt it necessary to justify printing their own thoughts. Alois Blumauer distanced the true, intellectual author from the cheap pamphleteers by portraying the occupation of a writer as a compulsion to serve the subject and the public, as opposed to following the base needs of the stomach.²⁴³ When introducing a work, the author or publisher usually explicitly listed why the work did not fall into the patterns attributed to the 10 Kreuzer authors. Thus, critiquing criticism and attempting its reform resulted in increasing self-consciousness among the authors. To justify a pamphlet's publication, they invoked the dire need for reform, their desire to expose a problem, or their hope to spread some important morsel of knowledge. Reforming writers often claimed that the debate in the press neglected the one very important issue that they were obliged to present. One pamphlet writer claimed that for anyone to publish a pamphlet, patriotism must be the driving force behind the contribution.²⁴⁴ The claims to benefit Austrian society or leave important information for posterity reinforced the perception of publishing as a philanthropic activity.

In addition to arguing for Enlightenment, the pamphlet debates offered clear suggestions for how to achieve it. Though the press provided the initial *Kampfplatz der Aufklärung*, transient critical debates were no longer enough. The honeymoon for the *Broschurenflut* was indeed short; pamphlets discussing the need to supercede ephemeral print began appearing as early as 1781. The calls by intellectuals to move from print to action frequently appealed to the learned people of Vienna to unite their efforts to work for Enlightenment. One such pamphlet, *Today's Press Ffreedom in Vienna* (1781), argued that when divided, societies decline. From this broad concept the author moves

²⁴³ Blumauaer, *Beobachtungen*.

²⁴⁴ *Ueber den Gebrauch*, 27.

on to discuss the benefits of uniting the efforts of large numbers of men in association to achieve progress, arguing that the contribution of each member of his their best attributes to society allows for mutual improvement. The rather naïve *On the Need for a Free Press*, also argued for the importance of an idealized publishing world, devoid of conflict. The problem with pamphlet debates, argued the author, is that they degenerate into never-ending strife. There is no progress, no truth-seeking, only endless conflict. Authors should instead work together to achieve progress by agreeing on all matters. This commune of truth seekers would thereby benefit state and society.²⁴⁵ The pamphlet betrayed the belief that the nobility of the written word had been demeaned through misuse. Without the learned ranks of society creating a common front, the author asserts, the press became a place for endless meaningless chatter. Other published tracts repeated the exhortation for association among the literary and intellectual elite. As public culture dictated press content, so print dictated cultural action: the *Aufklärer* of Vienna began to organize.

Conclusion

The quirky traits and ideal achievements of the intellectuals of Vienna were worked out over a few years of active discussion during the *Broschürenflut*. The pamphlets allowed the activists for Enlightenment to work out a common ideology and a basis for united efforts. The pamphlets emerging immediately after censorship reforms may not have themselves made lasting contributions, but they were essential for the development of Vienna's Enlightenment. The expert on the era's literature, Leslie Bodi, points out the sudden immersion in a critical literary culture during the first months of the

²⁴⁵ *Ueber den Gebrauch*, 22.

Broschürenflut allowed these writers to learn how to write.²⁴⁶ As the pamphlet debates unfolded, the belief of intellectuals in the importance of maintaining public interest through print remained strong, but disappointment over the limits of publications quickly emerged. Through this dialogue in print, concern over Vienna's intellectual development and the role of the literate in creating positive change stimulated active reform efforts. It was not enough to debate public issues and attempt to educate the public through print; intellectuals increasingly saw the *Broschürenflut* as a stage that, though initially productive, needed to be surpassed. The next stage was that of association. Increasingly, writers believed the only way to be useful to the state and promote Enlightenment was through uniting the efforts of intellectuals socially, creating a common, united front, and thereby searching for ways to advance real knowledge and create social change. Print would, of course, remain integral to Enlightenment in Vienna, but now the learned people of the city needed to band together, and not leave the bulk of print to silly scribblers. Intellectual friendship would also serve to stimulate the right groups to produce, but even more motivation would come from patriotism.

²⁴⁶ Lesli Bodi, *Tauwetter in Wien*

CHAPTER 3. VIENNESE LOCALISM, GERMAN NATIONALISM, ENLIGHTENMENT COSMOPOLITANISM: CONFLICTING IDENTITIES AND FEARS OF INFERIORITY IN THE PRESS

The transformations wrought in public culture by the *Broschürenflut*, accompanied by the major changes to religion, society, and state in Joseph II's first years as sole ruler, brought the situation of Vienna and its place in the world to the attention of both its residents and much of the rest of Europe. Rapid changes in intellectual and publishing practice stimulated an ongoing evaluation of Vienna's comparative prestige in the German publishing world. The city's right to participate on an equal footing in the cosmopolitan Republic of Letters absorbed Viennese sympathetic to enlightenment ideals. With the city's intellectual culture achieving similar privileges and freedoms like those enjoyed by Leipzig, Weimar and Berlin, many Austrians argued Vienna needed to step up and claim its rightful place as the intellectual capital of German-speaking lands. In an essay on the state of Enlightenment in Vienna, Alois Blumauer asked, "Is not Vienna the center around which Germany's smaller and bigger planets turn? Is it not—at least now—the focus of attention for all of Europe?"²⁴⁷ Blumauer was not claiming Vienna's literary preeminence in this essay, but he certainly was asserting its ability to achieve it. Vienna's literary, philosophical and scientific contributions would become the measure of success, as intellectuals challenged those within the capital through their focus on the intellectual world without.

²⁴⁷ "Ist nicht Wien der Mittelpunkt, um den sich Deutschlands kleinere und größere Planeten drehen? Ist es nicht—zumal ißt [jetzt]—das Augenmerk von ganz Europa?" Alois Blumauer, *Beobachtungen über Oesterreichs Aufklärung und Litteratur* (Wien: Kurzbeck, 1782) 52.

The learned population of Vienna formed their identities based on a complex division of loyalties, between city, state, empire and the cosmopolitan ideals of the Enlightenment. Vienna, “this in every regard remarkable place”²⁴⁸, formed a particularly strong urban identification in its residents. As a major city with a large population, Vienna had many of the conveniences and luxuries necessary to draw residents. In addition to the economic, social and cultural benefits common to many big cities, Vienna claimed distinction as center of the courts for both a monarchy and an empire. The two courts gave the city two entirely different functions: one made the city the traditional, if impotent, political center for all German speakers, and the other court brought together many nationalities under the dominance of the cultural Germans. The concentration of people and ceremony from the courts built Vienna into a cultural and international center, yet it retained a somewhat provincial character that made the size less alienating.²⁴⁹ Informed of and exposed to the persistent light from the west through the press, personal contacts, and political role as the center of the Holy Roman Empire, the Viennese could nevertheless cultivate a sense of the centrality of their own city. The city had many religious, commercial and political affiliations to the south, but as Habsburg capital and commercial center on the Danube, the Viennese also had frequent interactions with regions to the east. The Viennese cultivated perceptions of the city as the middle point of Europe, and any sign of political, cultural or economic marginalization notably disturbed city patriots.

²⁴⁸ “dieses in jedem Betracht merkwürdigen Plazes” Johann Pezzl, *Skizze von Wien*, vol.1 (3rd ed., 1787) 2.

²⁴⁹ Contemporary characterizations of the city repeatedly invoke the welcoming, friendly character of the city, a characteristic they also claim is taken advantage of by outsiders without any sense of irony. See in particular responses to Nicolai’s visit and subsequent attack on the city and its character. Blumauer, *Prologue*, Pezzl’s *Skizze*.

Learned groups in Vienna were also, without doubt, loyal to their state in the early 1780s. Many intellectuals devoted their energies to bureaucratic and courtly affairs, and all identified with the person of the ruler and the history of the crown. Cameralist theories, such as those adopted by the Professor of Practical Philosophy at the University of Vienna, Joseph von Sonnenfels, had long dominated in Vienna. The intellectuals writing in the 1780s thus accepted advancement in knowledge as prerequisite to improving the populace and thereby the state. Patriotism infused any and all intellectual endeavors undertaken by them.

Patriotism itself could become utilitarian, if not downright opportunistic. In studying the activities of the *Aufklärer* Ignaz von Born, Mikuláš Teich discusses the ambiguities of patriotism in Bohemia in the eighteenth century. "Let us look at Born," he starts, "who came from a German Transylvanian aristocratic family and was admitted to a Bohemian knighthood in 1768. Identifying with the new country, where he settled and acquired landed property, he made patriotism a major ideological plank of his efforts to revitalize its scientific and literary life. However, Born's 'Bohemian' patriotism did not prevent him from upholding 'Austrian' patriotism especially after he left in 1776 for Vienna where he became equally active as organizer of scientific activities, reformer of Freemasonry, critic of monasticism, and fighter for tolerance."²⁵⁰ Teich further notes that most Czech intellectuals identified themselves as sometimes Czech and sometimes German.

²⁵⁰ Mikuláš Teich, "Bohemia: From Darkness to Light" in Porter, ed. *Enlightenment in National Context*. 161.

The Habsburg state lacked a name, other than the inappropriate use of the term Austria,²⁵¹ but this cannot be equated to a lack of an identity to impart to its residents. The pre-modern form of the subject's identification with the personality of the ruler remained, but intellectuals also worked on behalf of the anonymous state they lived under through their bureaucratic functions and through generating and transmitting theories on improving the state and its people. Subjects of the Habsburg monarchy shared a unique background, and that created a common worldview. Historians like Teich may want to take into consideration that regional patriotisms may have overlapped in the minds of the subjects, though they adopted terms that in the present day connote one region to the exclusion of the Habsburg whole.

German-speaking residents of Vienna did not have the same sort of conflicts with the overarching state as other subject nationalities because of the dominance of their language and culture. In 1784, German became the official language. Thus, German-speaking Viennese could envision a widespread empire that resembled their German-catholic-urban selves more than, say Slavic peasants, Dutch merchants or Italian villagers. In other words, the Viennese Germans had the luxury to embrace their identity as Habsburg subjects when other residents might have found this identity in conflict with their other, regional and proto-national identities. But even this did not apply to all of the other nationalities: intellectuals and the elite from other ethnic regions had accepted German by the 1780s, often losing their fluency in their traditional language. As Johann Pezzl reported in his *Sketch of Vienna*, the different national backgrounds faded into

²⁵¹ Johnston, *The Austrian Mind*.

nothing once people moved to the city and ‘nationalized.’ Everyone there was from somewhere else, but all assimilated.²⁵²

Many factors contributed to the uncertainty existence of national feeling among the Viennese. People living in Vienna called themselves Viennese, Austrian, lower-Austrian, or German, thus establishing no tie to fellow residents of their monarchy to the east, the south, the north or the west. The 1760s witnessed an attempt to purify the German language, uniting it linguistically with the German employed in the north and west. The lack of an overarching name, adoption of regional labels, and concern to unify cultural, linguistic German caused confusion then; now, historians are even more at a loss in defining the identity of people in 1780s Vienna, as the progress of nationalism and the question of the German nation-state in the nineteenth and twentieth century certainly did not help clarify the issue. With knowledge of the events of the late-nineteenth and the twentieth centuries, historians stressed the existence of strong linguistic bonds and weak political ones in their studies of earlier periods. Similarly, in the study of German literature through this past century, Germanists subsumed Austrian literature into the whole, although pietist individualism and sensibility, ‘Sturm und Drang’, and the eras, themes, and questions of the North did not parallel the satirical baroque of Austrian literature.²⁵³

Much divided the North Germans and the Austrians of the eighteenth century. Religion, political situation and different cultural memories were the obvious distinctions. The experience of multi-nationalism also differentiated the two sets of German speakers. Residents of the Habsburg lands, more so than the residents of the nations-states of early

²⁵² Johann Pezzl, *Skizze von Wien* vol. 1 (1786) 75.

²⁵³ Lesli Bodi, *Tauwetter in Wien* 22-23.

modern Europe, were informed and influenced by the internationalism of their political and social structure. People and publications were dispersed through the diverse hereditary lands, bringing together national Dutch, Italians, Germans, Romanians, Hungarians, Ukrainians, Czechs, Gypsies and Poles to name a few. Translations of many of the pamphlets of the *Broschürenflut* appeared for the various language markets as lands distant from Vienna nevertheless shared in its transformative experience under Joseph II.²⁵⁴

Lesli Bodi argues that whereas protestant Germany, with its fractious political existence, turned to literature and philosophy to build an ersatz nation, in Austria, there was a long existing state whose concern was to bring together heterogeneous groups and to preventing national-language identities from developing in order to retain efficiency and function.²⁵⁵ Vienna itself, as court and intellectual center, to some degree reflected the diversity in the empire. Of the most famous of Austrian intellectuals, Sonnenfels came from a Jewish family, Born hailed from Transylvania, and the two Van Swietens were Dutch. Many other intellectuals had traveled through parts of the hereditary lands, taken jobs in other regions for a time or studied in other parts of the monarchy. In Prague too, there was much intellectual cross-fertilization. The major personalities of the city and the state were thus themselves representatively multi-national. The far-ranging geographic background nevertheless retained commonalities of experiences—in particular, educational background (mostly Jesuit) was overwhelmingly uniform and Catholicism remained a common denominator.

²⁵⁴ Bodi, Venturi discusses pamphlets that had been translated into Italian.

²⁵⁵ Bodi, Tauwetter 59.

The study of nascent German nationalism since the Second World War provides ample material for debating late-eighteenth century identity formation. The political conglomeration that was pre-revolutionary Germany creates for historians a complexity that discourages much of the theorizing developed in eighteenth-century French historiography on regional identity formation. There is some speculation, however, that an Austrian identity existed prior to the spread of a broader German feeling of connection. Friedrich Heer in *Der Kampf um die österreichische Identität*, argues that during the reigns of Maria Theresia and her son Joseph II, the Austrian psyche suffered a permanent, devastating fracture, between the old, baroque Austrian soul, and the new, ‘German’ type. “That in this new Austrian... arose those torn, those singular, those fundamentally singular characters, that carry at least two souls in their breast, both not infrequently with the weight of the world: an old ‘catholic’ and a new, radical, anti-clerical soul. A Hapsburg soul and a soul of the German Nation. A soul as official, officer, civil servant and a very private soul.”²⁵⁶ This psychological portrait of the Austrian in history raises interesting questions about the timeframe of German identity formation in the Habsburg lands. The interpretation characterizes Austrians’ admiration for yet destruction by the three major German political figures of Friedrich II, Bismarck, and Hitler. Thus, just as Austrians face their own political and military weakness, he argues, they identify with their aggressors, who are fellow Germans. Heer’s questionable interpretation is heavily influenced by his perception of the house of Habsburg’s

²⁵⁶ “Da in diesem neuen Österreicher... entstehen jene ‘Zerrissenen’, jene ‘Einzelnen’, jene zutiefst einsamen Existenzen, die zumindest zwei Seelen in ihrer Brust tragen, nicht selten beide atlasschwer: eine alte ‘katholische’ und eine neue radikal antiklerikale Seele. Eine habsburgische Seele und eine Seele ‘Deutscher Nation’. Eine Seele als Beamter, Offizier, Staatsdiener und eine sehr private Seele.” Frierich Heer, *Der Kampf um die österreichische Identität* (Wien: Böhlau, 1981)123.

weakness after Maria Theresa, “the last ‘man’ of the house of Austria”²⁵⁷, Austria’s decline after the war for the Bavarian Succession, and by his conviction that the personality of rulers, even Prussian ones, dominated identity formation.

There are legitimate reasons many historians have pointed to a proto-national German identity among the Viennese in the late eighteenth century. The common language, and the interest in North German, protestant literature was not the sole tie between cultural Germans. For Viennese, in particular, inhabiting the symbolic capital of the Germans, the Holy Roman Empire constituted a major basis for identifying with German-speaking cities and states to the west. In fact, that historical tie was more compelling than literature as a basis for German identity because of the long segregation and disparate development of protestant and catholic cultures. The Holy Roman Empire is easily dismissed in its late-eighteenth century manifestation because of its lack of real power, yet in Vienna more than anywhere else, it remained real and relevant through the court, the ceremony, and the courtiers. The frequent self-conscious comparisons between the literature and intellectual life of Vienna versus Berlin, Protestant Germans versus Catholics in Viennese literature indicate a sense of disparity for these writers. Vienna claimed the rank of symbolic capital, yet many considered Berlin developmentally far ahead of the Austrians despite its small size.²⁵⁸ Focus thus turned to the differences and developing rivalries between the two.

Viennese intellectuals in the late eighteenth century increasingly turned their attention towards the west as their state freed communications, and they did identify with

²⁵⁷ “der letzte ‘Mann’ des Hauses Österreich” in *Ibid.*, 130.

²⁵⁸ The Prussian military challenge and acknowledgement of its political example provided the basis for some of the insecurity, but literature, culture and religion rounded out the perception of Vienna as backwards. See Nicolai, *Beschreibung eine Reise*.

fellow German speakers as mutual residents of the Empire. Thus, Vienna in the 1780s felt a constant and often unflattering comparison with Berlin. In addition to a sense of rivalry stemming from four decades of warfare and the differing paths afforded by adherence to Protestantism and Catholicism in education and the development of culture, the Viennese and the North Germans also established friendly personal ties and attempted to create more intellectual and literary exchange between the two, as illustrated most often in the person of Christoph Martin Wieland. The mutual curiosity of North Germans and Austrians did not begin with the reforms of Joseph II; however, as with publication, the 1780s brought urgency in expanding previous relations. The writers in Vienna of the previous decades had published works outside state borders and developed communication networks for that purpose. Despite changes in the censorship laws in the 1780s, this farming out of publication would continue as writers were reluctant to abandon a more international exchange of ideas, and also found some of their essays, poems and other writings still lacked appreciation from the state.²⁵⁹

In addition to the overlapping regional, state, and imperial sources of identity formation, the literary public in Vienna was absorbing and bolstering some of the enlightenment ideals of cosmopolitanism and borderless intellectual exchange. Going beyond simply publishing and traveling in Habsburg and Imperial lands, residents of Vienna were able to take advantage of communications and transportation developments and satisfy increasing curiosity in different regions to travel elsewhere in Europe. ‘Men of letters’ in Europe and America had for two centuries built an international entity

²⁵⁹ Both Alxinger and Blumauer continued to run afoul of censors in their poetic works and published several in the *Merkur*. Blumauer’s pornography was not published anywhere, but was passed through the mail throughout German lands.

located in various forms of communication known as the Republic of Letters.²⁶⁰ The Enlightenment as an intellectual movement depended much on this pre-existing system of extra-national intellectual exchange, and its ideal of cosmopolitanism and universalizing tendencies was undoubtedly a product of the Republic. Intellectual comparisons and fear of inferiority with respect to Protestant Germany, combined with the Viennese intellectuals adoption of the cosmopolitan ideal caused much self-reflection and absorption. Vienna's intellectual history separated it as a whole from the Republic of Letters although there were some active individual scholars in the city before 1781. To the learned people in the city experiencing Joseph II's reforms, entering the Republic of Letters depended on reviving the prestige of the local identity. At the same time, the Enlightenment ideal of cosmopolitanism battled the city's natural preoccupation with self through all its rapid changes. Through all the writings of the *Aufklärung* in Vienna, there is a notable tension between modern, international ideals such as the virtues of cosmopolitanism and continued local loyalty and focus on that urban identity. As residents of a *Großstadt*, and subjects of a vague state and even vaguer empire, the writers of Vienna's Enlightenment betray in their works many of the conflicting loyalties to which they were accustomed.

Internationalizing the Viennese Press

The natural consequence of the openness and proliferation supported through the spirit of Joseph II's reforms and the reality of the *Broschürenflut* was the increasing

²⁶⁰ The two most influential studies of this Republic of Letters differ frequently over the what, who and when of the Republic of Letters. Anne Goldgar, *Impolite Learning* and Brockliss, *Calvet's Web*. Brockliss delineates in the life of one man the ways in which the Republic of Letters and the Enlightenment intersected, and concludes in opposition to Goldgar that the Republic of Letters was flourishing in the second half of the eighteenth century, to meet its demise only with increasing specialization in the century's last decades. I would challenge even that report of the Republic's death, for the proliferation of specialized journals would indicate to me success and expansion of the communications and institutional development of international academe rather than an end to a unity that really must in itself be artificial.

internationalism of Viennese publishing. Not only were the products of the Viennese press to be influenced more and more by European-wide intellectual developments, the rest of Europe would start bringing Viennese literary and academic contributions into their purview. A whole category of literature thus emerged that melded Enlightenment comparative criticism and proto-nationalist articulations of difference and competition. By juxtaposing the character and practices of the Viennese with those of other European capital, comparative works provided a means to suggest areas for improvement. More often, though, such comparisons became defensive; aware that they too became fodder for comparative discourse in other Enlightenment centers, the Viennese sought to preempt potentially negative international evaluations of their culture and literature.

The changes Joseph II enacted upon the death of his mother, influenced by his own intellectual leanings and corresponding with many desires of enlightenment thinkers, turned the eyes of European intellectuals toward Vienna. The church reforms alone constituted a massive revolution, one that is only too easily forgotten because they were later reversed, and because we have devoted so much attention to the French Revolution. The press throughout Europe reported on and debated the social changes occurring in the early 1780s in the Habsburg lands. This external observation was comprehensive: the historian Franco Venturi was able to write an extensive account of the changes in law, society, and religion in Vienna based almost exclusively on the contemporary bulletins on Vienna in a few Italian newspapers.²⁶¹ Often, and particularly among followers of Enlightenment, the attention in the periodical press was flattering and indicated public desire to see Austria become a leading example of progress in government. Other times,

²⁶¹ Franco Venturi, *The End of the Old Regime in Europe, 1776-1789*, vol. II: *Republican Patriotism and the Empires of the East*. R. Burr Litchfield, trans. (Princeton UP, 1991). See Chapter VIII, "The 'Grand Project' of Joseph II." 605-763.

however, criticism was mounted against this heavy-handed use of power by the state in realms traditionally left to individuals, the nobility, or the Church. Thus, Friedrich Jacobi's 1782 "Etwas, das Lessing gesagt hat" in the *Deutsches Museum* criticized what he saw as an infraction against personal religious liberty in the king's attempts to 'enlighten' the church and make it more useful to society.²⁶²

Vienna's debut in publishing naturally raised questions Leibniz and others had long been asking—was there a cultural capital of German language lands, and if so, was Vienna that capital? With the history of cultural contestation and the spectacle of rapid press changes, evaluations of the Viennese performance emerged as rapidly as the press's first exploratory products. On one side, within Vienna there was ongoing commentary on the *Broschürenflut* and the dialogue of Enlightenment. Outside Vienna, the European press offered observations and judgments of developments there for widespread readers. The Viennese were conscious their city was in the European eye, and though self-conscious, they were also stimulated to some extent by the pressure. Pamphlet exchanges emerged, both informing the Viennese of outside evaluations, and using the concept and format of this view from outside to invent novel criticism. Pamphlets in Vienna claimed to be from Berlin or adopted the guise of a traveler going west, and used that outsider perspective to allow the public the discretionary distance necessary to rationally dissect their own developmental progress.

The method of comparison used in the Enlightenment, most notably through the popularity of travel narratives and Montesquieu's philosophical and literary works, became a model for Viennese publications. Though the form allowed criticism, Viennese

²⁶² Frederick C. Beiser, *Enlightenment, Revolution, and Romanticism: The Genesis of Modern German Political Thought, 1790-1800* (Harvard UP, 1992) 145-6

patriots also adopted it to instill reasonable pride in the achievements and character of the city. One such work appeared immediately upon the release of publications from the grips of conservative Theresian censors. In 1781 an anonymous series of letters published under the title *Reise von Wien nach Paris*, provided the reading public with a chance to evaluate their own city against the intimidating Paris.²⁶³ This 87 page epistolary work was the work of Joseph Richter, based on his own personal voyage the year before. Joseph Richter was a prolific Viennese writer who prided himself on making Enlightenment ideas available to a lower class of readers. A true popularizer, he published poetry, novels, theater pieces, newspapers, essays and dictionaries. Diverging from Sonnenfels's strict insistence on publishing in proper literary German, Richter, though born and raised in the city of Vienna, occasionally adopted regional, peasant dialects as a challenge to traditional class-based arrogance of the Habsburg capital.²⁶⁴

Much of Richter's publishing career consisted of persistent social critique; through his methods of dispersal and language use, Richter can be seen as an exemplar of the democratizing literary hack. Unlike practically all the other Enlightenment writers of Vienna, Richter held no government post, and subsisted (not well) on his writings alone, which numbered well over a hundred titles. He personally segregated himself from the mainstream enlightenment crowd, as well, dismissing the idea of joining their associations. A self-perceived member of the Volk, he sought to address the widest

²⁶³ Johann Richter, *Reise von Wien nach Paris. In Briefen an einen Freund*. (Wien: Kurzbeck, 1781)

²⁶⁴ On Richter's biography see the short summary by Paul Bernard in *Jesuits and Jacobins: Enlightenment and Enlightened Despotism in Austria* (University of Illinois Press, 1971) and somewhat more completely, though unfortunately with some variation, and still superficially, in a thesis by Pisk, H. V. ((1926)). *Joseph Richter (1749-1813): Versuch einer Biographie und Bibliographie*. Philosophischen Fakultät. Wien, Universität Wien: 169.

possible audience.²⁶⁵ Richter's parents were petty bourgeoisie, his father occupied the post of 'dishhandler' for the court. He attended the University of Vienna, received a degree in Philosophy and began publishing in the mid-1770s, providing short pieces in the literary periodicals of the time, the *Musen Almanach* and the *Realzeitung*.²⁶⁶

Much of Richter's writings focused on his home city, and he consistently addressed an exclusively Viennese audience; unlike most of the writers studied here, Richter never sought an international readership. His relationship to Vienna in his writings varied: he clearly was a product of the region and his opinions were formed by his experiences there. However, he was highly critical of Viennese society and customs, ridiculing them frequently with his dry, satirical style. He frequently used epistolary style, and would make the commentator view Vienna from a strange perspective, thus elucidating its particular quirks or flaws. He would later pursue the letter from afar to its extreme, penning a "Briefe aus dem Himmel" which criticized developments in masonry. In that satire, he pokes fun at readers who may doubt the veracity of the letters' origins, thus indicating general public consciousness of this particular method of critique.

Reise von Wien nach Paris brought to the public a series of letters from a young, educated man's journey in search of an appointment. On leaving Vienna, he hopes to return soon, but through his journeys and discussion of other cities, he makes it plain that the Vienna of early 1780 is in desperate need of change. The narrator claims that he praises Vienna to the skies when he is absent, though he criticizes the city extensively

²⁶⁵ See Pisk, H. V. ((1926)). *Joseph Richter (1749-1813): Versuch einer Biographie und Bibliographie. Philosophischen Fakultät*. Wien, Universität Wien: 169 p. Richter himself often wrote on his personal popularizing philosophy, and his position vis-a-vis the associationswesen of the other Viennese Aufklärer becomes clear in his 1786 pamphlet "Ueber die Freimaurerrevolution in Wien."

²⁶⁶ Paul Bernard, *Jesuits and Jacobins* 139. Rosenstrauch-Königsberg attributes late 1770s essays in the *Realzeitung* to Richter.

while there—as mothers do with their children. This statement provides an excellent summary of the views of this patriot; his love for Vienna is palpable in the letters, yet, his frustrations cause crises in that loyalty. The supposed editor of the letters, a C. G. Melzer, argues in his preface that he felt the need to publish these personal letters from his friend, because of the utility that the reading public be exposed to and juxtapose the opinions and character traits of different nations. As the letters purportedly began in mid-1780, much of the criticism of Vienna, when contrasted to more progressive kingdoms or cities, show grudging admiration of Joseph II's policies upon taking the throne. Thus, when questioning the dearth of poets in the beautiful city of Linz, he reasons, "Linz sighs like Vienna under the dreadful yoke of the censor."²⁶⁷ Also, when talking about the policies of Maximilian in Bavaria, and the king's freer press, school improvements, and the restrictions on the power of the clergy, the reforms praised there reflect the reforms Joseph had made by the time of the letters' publication.

The letters are mostly informative, describing the different regions, towns and cities he passed through, their architecture, habits, culture, and political situation. Yet through all its descriptive content, comparison to Vienna is prevalent, making it clear the work is intended entirely for a Viennese audience. In addition to Vienna being a comparative foil to evaluation of other areas, attitudes towards Vienna among non-Viennese are discussed. Hatred of the Viennese is considered widespread in Bavaria. He finds many people expressing opinions about the Kaiser—some despising him, others tearing up at the mere mention of his name. One Lothringen man he met insisted they hated the French and wanted to once again be under Habsburg rule, and when asked why

²⁶⁷ "Linz seufzt wie Wien, unter dem fürchterlichen Joch der Censur ." (Johann Richter) *Reise von Wien nach Paris*. In *Briefen an einen Freund* (Wien: Kurzbeck, 1781) 8.

claimed it was because the Kaiser took the title of Herzog von Lothringen, the young traveler responded: "I told him that he also calls himself the King of Jerusalem."²⁶⁸

On arrival in Paris, everything is seen as a disappointment, from the pestilential stink to the ridiculous hairstyles and non-stop promenading. The city's reputation for learning is undeserved: "On every Frenchman there appears to be shining a spark of the light of the sciences. Six Frenchmen are in the position to have an entire discourse on every situation; separated each one alone cannot express three connected thoughts. You understand certainly, that I am talking about the common class here."²⁶⁹ The recentness of access to Enlightenment ideas in Vienna of course stunted such universal adoption of the fad of philosophy there, but Richter's criticism of Paris provides the Austrians with some consolation. Though late, or perhaps because of its lateness, their Enlightenment could develop (through a restricted elite determined by talent) into a sincere and deep transformation of intellectual culture.

Richter's work presented a direct and relatively straightforward comparison between Vienna and another major city. Some of the work presented readers with a broader base of knowledge of the functioning of other states and society; this then allowed the newly informed public to evaluate their own. Most of the content promoted pride in Vienna's ability to compare favorably to rival *Großstädte*. There were many works, however, that used the method of comparison differently: to lead the readers indirectly to desired conclusions about how Vienna should progress.

²⁶⁸ "Ich sagte ihnen, daß er sich auch König von Jerusalem schreibt." Reise von Wien nach Paris, 56.

²⁶⁹ "Auf jeden Franzosen scheint ein Funken vom Licht der Wissenschaften gefallen zu seyn. Sechs Franzosen sind im Stande über jeden Gegenstand der Philosophie eine ganze Abhandlung zu halten; getrennet kann jeder allein nicht drey Gedanken im Zusammenhang vorbringen. Du merkst hier wohl, daß ich von der gemeinern Klasse rede." Reise von Wien nach Paris, 70-71.

In 1784, Joseph von Sonnenfels republished a late 1760s four hundred plus paged tome on Viennese theater. Patriotism, a damnation of the literary culture in Vienna before 1780 and implicit confidence in the contemporary intellectual climate motivated the rerelease. "When the truth, in order to be able to appear before the gaze of the prince, disguises itself in fantastic Asiatic dress, when criticism, in order to not be rejected by a nation, must borrow the language of another nation, does it bring praise to the prince, does it bring praise to the nation? I do not know. One had to conceal the writer of the *Letters on the Viennese Stage from a Frenchman* as a farcical traveler, while he spoke to his fellow Austrians about this situation in his own name; as a Frenchman—as long as people took him for one—they allowed him almost *shamelessness*, and called him *beloved Wanton*. In order to be read, in order to be celebrated in society, one must be a foreigner."²⁷⁰ This polemic provides an interesting critique of the previous regime and its censorship policies, a regime in which he played a central part. Sonnenfels's writing here thus provides praise of Joseph II's reign. By saying that before the reforms, one must pretend to be a foreigner to be read, he is implying that in 1784 this intellectual snobbery and dismissal of the Viennese publishing world no longer existed. The reason behind reissuing the old tract on theater and identifying himself as the Viennese author is essentially patriotic, Sonnenfels is adding this work to the list of works that Austria can claim as its own. The introduction admits that the circumstances that prompted writing

²⁷⁰ "Wenn die Wahrheit, um vor dem Blicke der Fürsten erscheinen zu dürfen, sich in einem asiatischen Märchenkleide verummummen, wenn die Kritik, um bei einer Nation nicht abgewiesen zu werden, die Sprache eines Ausländers borgen muß, macht es den Lobspruch der Fürsten, macht es den Lobspruch der Nationen aus? ich weis es nicht. Man hatte dem Verfasser dieser *Briefe über die Wienerische Schaubühne von einem Franzosen*, da er über diesen Gegenstand in seinem eignen Namen zu seinen Landsleuten sprach, den *Possenreissern* nach Wohlgefallen preisgegeben: als Franzose — so lang man ihn dafür hielt — vergab man ihm beinahe *Unverschämtheiten*, und nannte sie *allerliebsten Muthwillen*. Um gelesen, um in Gesellschaften gefeyert zu werden, muß man ein Fremder seyn." Joseph von Sonnenfels, *Briefe über die wienerische schaubühne von einem Franzosen*, 1784. No Page, from the forward.

the letters no longer exist, but claims this is one of those works that is still read despite the situation no longer being applicable. The concession of futility in publishing work indicates that the motive behind the retraction of French attribution was to claim a work that earned respect and thus could confer pride to Vienna's intellectuals.

The earlier fame of the supposedly French letters criticizing Viennese theater created a model for many writers of the 1780s to open a discussion on what Vienna's intellectual culture looked like in the eyes of the outside world. Epistolary works emerged, often purporting to be an exchange with Protestants over the situation in Vienna. These works served to remind the city of the outside perspective; leading locals into awareness of their estimation abroad. This practice sought to inspire improvement in action and intellectual development. In the *Briefe nach Göttingen* of 1781, letters to a friend are published that refer to an engraving in an almanac from Göttingen that ridiculed the stereotype of the Viennese Author. This epistolary work claims it is trying to give a true account of the reality of Viennese satire and publishing. The work evokes the specter of protestant Germans, or other European intellectuals, gathering with other learned people and ridiculing Vienna, pleading "when you make fun of us in the company of mature men and respected authors, do not betray your author, for what means less than to be an author from Vienna?"²⁷¹ This embarrassing picture was only the beginning of a long apologetic theme in the Viennese publishing industry, implying that good authors in Vienna do not publish because of the poor quality of much of the press. This backhanded defense of the city's intellectual abilities was meant to pressure good

²⁷¹ "wenn du dich in Gesellschaften gesetzter Männer, und angesehener Schriftsteller hierüber lustig machst, verrate nur deinen Autor nicht, den was heist dermal weniger, als ein Autor von Wien zu seyn?" *Briefe nach Göttingen* (1781) 8.

city patriots to bring their quality works to the publishers of the city in order to redeem them.

The whole frame of the work, private letters to the university town of Göttingen, implies a lack of bias in observation while also distancing itself from everything else appearing in print in Vienna. But, this makes the author seem a bit hypocritical and even laughable when he takes a high moral stance, saying it is better not to publish on every little thing unworthy of our philosophical attention. In trying to preserve the sphere of print for an elite class, ridiculing the pretense of having *Stubenmädchen* write their own defense, the author betrays a fear of being left behind in a rapidly changing world. In general the work is vituperative and unoriginal: the youth of the day are in decline, education is failing, and the greed and desire for fame consume the unworthy. Yet the work is somewhat emblematic of ‘defenses’ of the city. The claim to truth and lack of bias, the argument that there are invisible good thinkers in the city, and the claim that the *Broschürenflut* should not be held up as an example of what the city is capable of producing are all common themes of works with a comparative perspective.

Another work comparing the two German regions was also highly critical. *Warum ist oder war bisher der Wohlstand der Protestantischen Staaten so gar viel grösser als der Katholischen* had as a clear purpose a critique of the catholic dominance over education in the Austrian territories.²⁷² The author claims the Catholics spread ignorance, but to do this and thereby support Joseph II’s religious reforms, he artificially elevates the estimation of Protestant intellectual culture. Thus even farmers in the west are philosophers, while Austrians are depicted as living in darkness. ‘Menschenfreund’ (a pseudonym) argues for freedom of religion and speech, claiming that these measures

²⁷² Christ. Fried. Menschenfreund, *Warum ist...* (Wien, 1782).

would draw many nationalities to the city. Diversity would then bring new talents, arts and sciences, agricultural methods, and general intellectual *Reichtum*.

This comparative pamphlet offered a thoroughly enlightened critique of the Catholic Church and the state's relationship with it. It goes into all the usual subjects of cameralist utility: church holy days taking away from workdays and profits, costs of catholic accoutrements, damage to the public health of fasting requirements, problems with celibacy, and the drain on society and the economy by convents and monasteries. Throughout, Grossinger compares the mostly negative situation in Catholic lands with the progressiveness permitted by Protestant churches in their lands. The pamphlet aimed to support the more extreme reforms brought about in the 1780s by arguing that otherwise the state would become ever more inferior to those in the west. By raising the issue of diversity and the potentials of tolerance, however, the author is stressing the potential of a city such as Vienna, with its multi-national connections, to overcome superstition and excel in knowledge and the arts.

Not all such comparative portraits damned Vienna entirely, and soon a work would be published that challenged the notions of the preceding pamphlet. The work by one (or both) of the Grossinger brothers from 1784, called *Berlin und Wien in Betreff der Gelehrsamkeit und Aufklärung unpartheyisch gegeneinander*, pokes fun at the presumption of the Protestant Germans to judge Vienna's publishing industry by claiming that one must be in Berlin in order to judge intellectual worth. Aiming more barbs at Nicolai's criticisms of Vienna, Grossinger claims Berlin also for a time had 'a universal situation of criticism' as even Mendelssohn and Lavater bickered. Berlin has not been lowered in the eyes of the world because of this spirit of strife, therefore the

Viennese should not be concerned with losing their worth in the eyes of the world
"through the calumny of big-talking and little-achieving travelers."²⁷³

Several points in Grossinger's pamphlet offer specific challenges to the complaints of Menschenfreund. One such disagreement concerns the intelligence of the common man, arguing that the Viennese Volk were much more intellectually advanced than those of Berlin. Attacking the idea that religion was a source of perpetual disadvantage to the Viennese, Grossinger attempts to equalize in the face of a difference that many had claimed would be insurmountable for the Catholic Viennese. He poses a rhetorical question: must one read and believe the works of Luther, Calvin and Huß to be really learned and enlightened? While attacking the exclusivity of protestant enlightenment, the author also tears down the divisions between neighboring nations instituted by these men, their writings and their followers. In an argument that clearly adheres to enlightenment universalizing, he argues free thought for every individual is necessary "so that one finally adopted either the one or the other teaching, and thought freely, what one personally believed to be good and in accordance to reason."²⁷⁴

The pamphlet asks if Berlin is really the center of *Gelehrsamkeit* and *Aufklärung* just because a massive amount of writings flow out of it over what is learned and not learned. Grossinger then poses another question: "could another place not have just as enlightened intellectuals, who however seek to improve themselves in isolation, and in their speculations in unauthoritative essays *nonum in annum*, and also continue to

²⁷³ "ein allgemeiner Gegenstand des Tadels" and "durch die Verleumdungen grossprechender und kleinhandelnder Reisenden" Joseph Grossinger, *Berlin und Wien in Betreff der Gelehrsamkeit und Aufklärung unpartheyisch gegeneinander gehalten* (Frankfurt und Leipzig: Friedrich August Hartmann, 1784) 9-10.

²⁷⁴ "so daß man endlich weder des einen, noch des andern Lehre annimmt, und *Frey denkt*, was man selbst gut und der gesunden Vernunft gemäß zu seyn glaubet" Grossinger, *Berlin und Wien* 21.

improve things as needed through their whole lives, without announcing [their feats] with pedantic trumpets to the deafened world?"²⁷⁵ By juxtaposing these descriptions of the work of Berlin and Vienna, he is clearly promoting the Viennese way: quietly going about the business of improvement as opposed to frivolously and incessantly debating meaningless questions. The author further seems to poke fun at the seriousness of the Berlin intellectuals, whereas in Vienna, people are quite ready to make fun of any and everything.

Berlin und Wien is an attempt to end some of the petty wrangling between the two German-speaking centers in favor of focusing on their commonalities. "Whom should be wounded thereby: that is, if Berlin acquired universal fame for its learning and enlightenment before Vienna? —Why should their intellectuals not simply accept this as a sign of their learning and Enlightenment, after all the Germans take them for such; the French complement them for it, the English acknowledge them as true successors, the Russians admire and reissue their writings, and the Italians denounce the same with their mouths while deifying them in their hearts."²⁷⁶ Thus, Grossinger makes the point that priority doesn't much matter, when in the eyes of Europe's other national language groups, *all* Germans are lumped together and viewed with admiration.

This pamphlet recognized many problems in Vienna's nascent publishing industry, but refused to dismiss the entire group of young authors who had emerged there.

²⁷⁵ "kann ein anderer Ort nicht eben so erlauchte Gelehrte haben, die aber in der Einsamkeit sich selbst zu vervollkommen suchen, und in ihre Muthmassungen in unmaßgeblichen Aufsätzen *nonum in annum*, und nach Gestalt der Sache auch ihr ganzes Leben hindurch verbessern, ohne dieselben mit diktatorischer Possaune der betäubten Welt zu verkündigen?" Grossinger, *Berlin und Wien* 15.

²⁷⁶ "Wen soll es demnach wunde: nehmen, daß Berlin den allgemeinen Ruf der Gelehrsamkeit und Aufklärung vor Wien sich erwarben habe? — Allein warum sollten es ihre Gelehrten nicht bey diesen Kennzeichen der Gelehrsamkeit und Aufklärung bewenden lassen, nachdem alle die Deutschen sie für solche annehmen; die Franzosen Ihnen dafür Komplimente machen,; die Engländer sie für ihre ächten Nachfolger anerkennen; die Russen ihre Schriften bewundern und nachdrucken; die Italiäner selbe mit dem Mund Verketzern, im Herzen aber vergöttern?" Grossinger, *Berlin und Wien* 8.

In mounting what is obviously a defense of Vienna's pretensions to *Aufklärung*, Grossinger first established the connection between having learning and striving for enlightenment, as one must bring about the other. From there he asserts, referring obliquely to Sonnenfels and Born, that the learning of some in Vienna cannot be questioned. Grossinger also paints a very different picture of the intellectual culture than the usual focus on the literary hacks. He concedes that Vienna doesn't have a learned society as does Berlin, but "daily fifty and more men sit together in the imperial monarchical library, so one can find a learned society with which the Berliners may have difficulty taking on. I have observed for eleven years nineteen men in this library that incessantly find themselves here, and feed their minds on the central and original sources of all sciences and arts without actually being counted as intellectuals." Grossinger argues that though the library holds no popular works, there are daily four men busy with the requests of readers. "Even the head of the library remains to serve in the customary hours to provide original pieces and also to share these things with equals, without differences of character."²⁷⁷

The author, unlike most of the *Aufklärer* in Vienna, was already in mid-decade an opponent of Joseph II's reign. The brothers Grossing(er) would publish more strident antijosephin pamphlets underground in Vienna in the following years, and would themselves be attacked by the other enlightenment-leaning, but Joseph-loving authors in Vienna, like Rautenstrauch. Hailing from a city on the Danube halfway between

²⁷⁷ . "täglich fünfzig und auch mehrere Männer in der k.k. Bibliothek beysammen sitzen, so könne man eine gelehrte Gesellschaft finden, mit welcher es die Berliner schwerlich aufnehmen dürften. Ich beobachte seit 11 Jahren in dieser Bibliothek 19 Männer, die ohne Unterlaß täglich sich einfinden, und aus den Haupt= und Ur=quellen aller Wissenschaften und Künsten für Herz und Sinn Nahrung schöpfen; ohne daß sie bezahlte Gelehrte sind" and "Selbst die Vorsteher der Bibliothek stehen in gewöhnlichen Stunden zu Diensten, um originäle Stücke aufzuweisen, und auch dieselben allen — ohne Unterschied der Charakteren— der Sache gewachsenen Männern mitzutheilen" Grossinger, *Berlin und Wien* 16-17.

Bratislava and Budapest, the two radicals supported the separatist movement of Hungarian elites later in the decade, and argued for making Karl August of Weimar the king of Hungary.²⁷⁸ Earlier, though, the writings of Grossinger opposed monarchy as a form of government. In *Berlin und Wien*, despite his obvious attempts to take the Berlin intellectuals down a few pegs, Grossinger claims there is no question of Berlin's importance and worth of the intellectual contributions to Enlightenment. He refers in particular to their having laid the foundation for a Universal Republic as opposed to monarchy. In another section Grossinger predicts the Vollkommenheit of the Viennese intellectual scene despite its challenges. He states, "insofar as such an Enlightenment can be established in a monarchy, even in Vienna where one was not already entirely established, [Enlightenment] certainly will soon appear."²⁷⁹

These bald statements against the monarchy, rather than a proof of neutrality like the title might suggest, probably informed the author's decision to publish the pamphlet outside of the Habsburg state. In a letter to Nicolai in 1785, however, Alxinger reports "Fear no ban; even Grossing[er]'s writings are allowed."²⁸⁰ Not only were Grossinger's writings tolerated, he held a position in the king's cabinet until his expulsion from the hereditary lands—not for treason, but for an undisclosed slander against a woman.²⁸¹ His pamphlets published prior to this incident, despite a marked lack of enthusiasm for Josephinism, indicate Grossinger's local patriotism remained strong.

²⁷⁸ Lesli Bodi, *Tauwetter in Wien*, 265-266.

²⁷⁹ "so weit auch eine solche Aufklärung in einer Monarchie kann gestattet werden, selbe in Wien wo nicht schon ganz hergestellt, gewiß baldigst wird hergestellt werden." Ibid. 18.

²⁸⁰ "Fürchten Sie keinen Verboth; sogar Grossing[er]'s Schriften sind erlaubt." In Alxinger to Nicolai, April 1785. In Gustav Wilhelm, ed., "Briefe des Dichters Johann Baptist con Alxinger" in *Sitzungsbericht des Philosophisch-Historischen Classe der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften* vol. 140 (Wien, 1899) 15.

²⁸¹ Alxinger to Nicolai, 26 October, 1787, in Wilhelm, ed. "Briefe" 34.

Also convinced of the abilities of the Austrians, Wilhelm Beyer, in *Die Neue Muse* of the same year, lamented French trends in Austria. The author urges the Habsburg people to fulfill their potential in the arts, by creating a distinct national style. In using the phrase “reawaken” in imploring academy members to raise the taste of the public in the arts, the author implies pre-existing Austrian artistic glory and the desire to revive it. Beyer’s insistence that building monuments to the prince will ensure lasting fame to his subjects, reveals a distinct loyalty to the monarchy.²⁸²

Publications focusing on the improvement of Vienna under the reign of Joseph II perpetually emphasized loyalty to the city and region. Not blind to some of the city’s shortcomings, authors in Vienna nonetheless insisted on holding the city to the same standards as a Paris or Berlin, and believed that in some fields Vienna could excel. The relationship to these other two cities of the Republic of Letters illustrated the author’s perception of distance from achieving the cosmopolitan ideal. Only when acknowledged as true equals would the Viennese feel comfortable abandoning their focus on self-development; until then, improving Vienna would be their priority. Similarly the discussions of a unified German identity were summarily dropped if Vienna was not to be the cultural capital of that German nation. It was the German question that would create the most powerful personal divisions between Enlightenment intellectuals of the Protestant North and the Catholic South.

Personalities in the German/Austrian competition

Making the familiar strange in works comparing Vienna with other European capitals should not be conflated with the actual evaluation of Viennese intellectual culture

²⁸² Beyer, Wilhelm. *Die neue Muse, oder der Nationalgarten den akademischen Gesellschaften vorgelegt*. (Wien: Trattner, 1784)

in travelers' journals, German periodicals advertising updates, and the writings, letters and conversations advertising judgment of North German intellectuals. The Viennese were particularly sensitive to such evaluations; as the capital of the German Empire (such as it was), a few local intellectuals also claimed for Vienna the distinction of cultural capital of the Germans.²⁸³ Others were more circumspect and acknowledged the disadvantages wrought by their state church. Nevertheless, they too hoped to see their city valued in the International Republic of Letters.

Friedrich Nicolai, a tireless popularizer of Enlightenment ideas and collaborator on important literary periodicals, was a prominent *Aufklärer*, friend to Moses Mendelssohn and G. E. Lessing and active participant in the international network of intellectuals supporting Enlightenment. Recognized as a uniquely tireless promoter of *Aufklärung* specific to one place, this loyal Berliner began a huge trans-German clash of personalities that occupied many intellectuals there for the next couple years. His multi-volume *Reisebeschreibung*, published in the mid-1780s, described Nicolai's impressions from a lengthy journey through Austria and Hungary. It can be argued that, like the works discussed above, the purpose of Nicolai's work was really a patriotic panegyric to his home city by way of a comparison with less fortunate regions. Some readers (especially Viennese ones) considered his discussion of Vienna, that potential rival, particularly harsh. Nevertheless there are many similarities between Nicolai's appraisal of the *Broschürenflut* and the city's own pamphlet debates on criticism and recent publications. He provided some criticism but combined it with an acknowledgement of vast future possibility and recognition of recent achievements. When reading his

²⁸³ Sonnenfels was one of the most strident patriots, see Bodi, 69. Blumauer also claimed Vienna as the Hub of German intellectual activity—the north Germans revolved at a distance around this center. *Beobachtungen*.

evaluation of the city with the knowledge of the reaction it provoked, it is difficult not to be impressed by the mostly measured nature of his comments. Where Nicolai becomes offensive for the Viennese, though, is in his position as an outsider. The Berliner portrayed Vienna and its customs as strange, and exposed its culture before 1780 as closed and barbaric. He also drew fire as an outsider attacking one or two of the city's most beloved writers (mostly from one of those authors himself). His main focus of criticism was Catholicism and its detrimental effects on the state of learning in the Habsburg lands. However, he did not shy from trivial jabs at the personalities and traits of the Viennese. Ironically, one of his major critiques of the Viennese character was excessive loyalty to the city.

In evaluating the literature of the capital, Nicolai asserted that the publications were very useful within the city, but not beyond it. In Vienna during his residence there, most print that appeared came in the form of innumerable short tracts, most occupied with Vienna itself. While the works were of little worth, they did allow the intellectual development of the city by introducing the population to 'certain ideas'. There was promise for the future of Viennese thought, as "the population accustomed itself to hearing free debate over such materials."²⁸⁴ While such developmental growth took place, though, Nicolai insisted the North Germans would not accord the city's press the respect due an intellectually advanced city. He points out the contradiction for the Viennese: "On the one side they [certain unnamed Viennese authors] ask for forbearance

²⁸⁴ "das Volk sich gewöhnt, über solche Materien frey disputiren zu hören." *Das Berliner Freidenkers*, 118-119.

for Austria while everything there is still in development. On the other side they are not ashamed to burden the whole rest of Germany with their laughable conceit.”²⁸⁵

Viennese conceit, for Nicolai, was the source of another problem. The Viennese, he argues, were not realistic in their self-appraisal. Discussing Blumauer’s pamphlet, the *Observations on the Austrian Enlightenment*, Nicolai ridicules the claim that Vienna is the *Mittelpunkt* of Germany; in culture as in politics and lectures “the German learned Republic must be an absolute democracy.”²⁸⁶ He further asserts that even if Vienna were advanced in culture and enlightenment, freedom and abilities (implying it was not), it still would not be justified in claiming the advancement of learning must occur from the center provided by Vienna. Later, when discussing the city’s potential for improvement, Nicolai describes for the international reading public Viennese ignorance of how the rest of the world appraises the city’s cultural life. Blaming earlier censorship, he states, “they are heavily put down by the rest of Germany and do not know it.”²⁸⁷

Publications and intellectual conceit did not provide the only basis of criticism for Nicolai. He also widely condemned the majority of Viennese public entertainments. Much of this is damned as immoral, as is, for example, the card and billiard playing of the nobility; absurd, as in the obsession with the massive displays of fireworks that reenact Werther’s meeting with Lottchen or the eruption of Vesuvius with the light and noise of controlled explosions on the Prater ; or appalling, as in the barbaric animal fights

²⁸⁵ “Von einer Seite verlangen sie Nachsicht für Oestreich, weil daselbst alles noch im Werden sey. Von der andern Seite schämen sie sich nicht, das ganze übrige Deutschland mit ihrem lächerlichen Dünkel geradezu zu beleidigen.” *Das Berliner Freidenkers*. 119.

²⁸⁶ “die deutsche gelehrte Republik ihrer ganzen Natur nach, eine vollkommene Demokratie seyn muß” in *Das Berliner Freidenkers*. 120.

²⁸⁷ “Sie sind von dem übrigen Deutschlands sehr abgelegen, und kenne es nicht.” *Das Berliner Freidenkers* 193.

patronized by all classes.²⁸⁸ In the theater, however, Nicolai did see potential for gaining enlightened advantage; as authors could use the popular figure of Kasperl (a descendent of Hanswurst, the laughable carnivalesque figure that makes fun of the Viennese on all levels of society) to garner public enthusiasm for ideas. Nicolai's general summation of the Viennese character, however, is that its continued tendency to frivolity prevents improvement. "The fatal dependence on entertainment, dissipation, and leisure... up to this point unconcern and frivolity spread through everything."²⁸⁹

It is in his criticism of the previous regime, though, that Nicolai is most dismissive. He reserves his harshest statements in the *Description* for the censorship and state police, the bigotry and love of luxury that to him characterized the reign of Maria Theresa. His only concession to years past was in his praise of Sonnenfels's moral weeklies of the Sixties and Seventies, to which, he states, the pamphlets of the *Broschürenflut* do not compare.²⁹⁰ Nicolai's comments on contemporary Austria were not entirely dismissive or offensive, excepting a few choice phrases; he was not shy, however, in damning the city before Joseph II took power. To the domestic population who had lived through the time, this foreigner's tendency to condemn the past while praising current advancements was offensive. Someone who did not experience the complexities of actual life under Maria Theresa's rule could not help but sound excessive in evaluating its backwardness.

Similarly, Nicolai's outsider status influenced his perspective on Catholicism. He described the strangeness of Catholicism as viewed by someone who was experiencing it for the first time. This transformation of Catholic belief and practice into an 'Other', or

²⁸⁸ *Das Berliner Freidenkers*, 125-149.

²⁸⁹ *Das Berliner Freidenkers*, 183.

²⁹⁰ *Das Berliner Freidenkers*, 165.

at the very least an archaic leftover, could not help but offend Viennese readers. He also tapped into the fears of Viennese intellectual culture, arguing that the dominance of Catholicism ensured Reason would have an uphill battle. Here, even though he praises the work of J. Eybel, a Viennese writer who attempted to fight religious ignorance and promote reform Catholicism, Nicolai invokes the possibility of religion obstructing Enlightenment in the city.

Consistently accompanying praise with condemnation and vice versa, Nicolai's assessment of the Austrians echoed many of their own works that argued for improvement. His evaluation of the Viennese *Aufklärung* is emblematic: he argues the city has misappropriated the word in fashionable usage to create a wholly imaginary existence. Nevertheless, Nicolai ends a later edition of his description of the city praising the "true Austrian Patriots"—the authors that stridently served legitimate enlightenment—rather than the "small yapping and teasing of the average minds".²⁹¹ In defending himself against the criticisms he received for his evaluation of the city's intellectual culture, Nicolai reinforces the points he made throughout on the potential in the city despite its very real disadvantages.

Just as Nicolai held Blumauer up as an exemplar of mistaken Viennese pride, Blumauer became one of the most vitriolic of the defenders of the city against Nicolai. His *Prolog* of 1783 begins with a quotation about hatred for Nicolai, and then in verse, discusses the poison that comes out of his mouth: 'er spielte allen mit' and made the Viennese into fools. Blumauer symbolically, and disturbingly, turns the poison against the critic, and elaborately imagines the long, drawn out death throes of this new-found

²⁹¹ "Der Beyfall dieser wahren österreichischen Patrioten ist mir eine süße Belohnung; und ich kann dabey sehr leicht die kleinen Klaffereyen und Neckereyen der mittelmäßigen Köpfe vergessen."

enemy. His is described as the worst of all possible betrayals, one people will learn from and grow to be more wary, as throughout time man has turned against one another. The personal nature of the attacks published by Blumauer was certainly excessive, but show the extent to which cosmopolitanism was challenged by an often irrational loyalty to place.²⁹²

Not all of the Viennese *Aufklärer* took up the battle cry against Friedrich Nicolai, however. Returning from a delightful trip where he enjoyed the company of various learned Berliners, Johann Baptist Alxinger wrote glowing reports of the intellectual climate in Berlin and the reception he received there. Going beyond simply cultivating this friendship with the demonized Berliner, Alxinger had Nicolai ship him copies of the *Reisebeschreibung* as each volume came out, and offered his comments in return. In his correspondence with Nicolai, Alxinger distanced himself from the jealous patriotism of his fellows. “If Patriotism means willfully misjudging foreign merit and with stupid self-satisfaction preferring one’s home city, where there is hardly a glimmer, over the cities that themselves have sat in the brightest light for forty years, to whom all owe their own faint light, or even if it means simply scolding and attempting to denigrate them [the advanced cities], then must I admit that I am extremely unpatriotic.”²⁹³ His commentary on the volume of the *Reisebeschreibung* pertaining to Vienna, was thus not an arbitrary defense against all that Nicolai had insulted, but rather a discussion of his interpretation of the Catholic inheritance.

²⁹² Alois Blumauer [pseudonym Obermayer] *Prolog zu Herrn Nicolai’s Neuester Reisebeschreibung* (Wien: 1783).

²⁹³ “Wenn das Patriotismus heisst, fremde Verdienste muthwillig verkennen und mit dummer Selbstgenügsamkeit seine Vaterstadt, in der es kaum dämmert, anderen Städten, denen allen man dieses schwache Licht zu verdanken hat und die selbst seit vierzig Jahren in dem hellsten sitzen, vorzuziehen, oder wohl gar sie zu schimpfen und herunter zu machen, so muss ich gestehen, dass ich höchst unpatriotisch bin.” Alxinger to Nicolai, April 1785, in Wilhelm, ed “Briefe” 15.

Alxinger offers a reasonable evaluation of the role of religion in intellectual development—he neither unduly glorifies Vienna in opposition to Nicolai, nor does he entirely allow Nicolai’s position to escape criticism. He agrees in principle that Protestantism was much less of a hindrance than Catholicism to intellectual progress, and even admits, “It is true that wher we have twelve idiots, the protestants only have seven.” Alxinger does, however, dispute the extent of this differentiation, arguing that there is much in Vienna’s favor that is not heard of abroad and points out that Protestantism as well as Catholicism fosters zealotry. His critique went further: “Even more hurtful to me was the bitter tone with which you warned Protestants of us. Such a tone will sooner incense than convert. And finally, as distant as we are from the true spirit of toleration, in all of Europe —the Prussian and Russian states excepted—still exists nowhere so much tolerance as with us.” His defense ended there, for his final criticism of Nicolai’s description of the city was, that by describing the publisher Trattner’s wife as a learned woman, Nicolai became the laughing stock of many in the city. He ends saying that such a preposterous mistake would unfortunately make some in the city dismiss the work as a whole.²⁹⁴

Despite Alxinger’s disappointment in the work, and Blumauer’s ire, the German corner of the Republic of Letters remained mutually supportive and friendly. Alxinger helped Nicolai go after subscribers to the *Reisebeschreibung* who had not yet paid, and consistently updated Nicolai on Blumauer’s life and work. Indeed, even in 1784, Nicolai sought to pacify Blumauer through appeal to the older, established Tobias von Gebler,

²⁹⁴ “Wahr ist es, dass wenn wir Dummköpfe =12 sind, die Protestanten es nur =7 sind” and “Noch weher hat mir die bittere Ton gethan, mit dem Sie die Protestanten vor uns warnen. Ein solcher Ton wird eher aufbringen als bekehren. Und endlich so weit wir auch von dem wahren Duldungsgeiste entfernt sind, so herrscht doch—die preussischen und russischen Staaten ausgenommen—in ganz Europa nicht einmal so viel Duldung also bey uns.” In Alxinger to Nicolai, 29 July, 1785. In Wilhelm, “Briefe” 19-21.

and by 1787, Alxinger was assuring the Berlin author that Blumauer's behaviour was only damaging to himself, and that reconciliation was possible and desirable between the two talented *Aufklärer*.²⁹⁵

Localism in the Viennese Press

Dedication to improvement resulted from local (hurt) pride as production focused more and more on the local press. Local periodicals were meant not to compete on an international level, but to serve local needs and push local intellectual progress. In seeking improvement of the intellectual standing of Vienna, periodicals could take advantage of the different standards of censorship applying to them. Thus, any remnants of conservatism could be evaded. Periodicals themselves are particularly useful in understanding a particular worldview as they seek to fit in with the needs and interests of a particular region while they also react to international developments more quickly than other genres. The frequency and regularity of their publishing schedules freed periodical writers to express their thoughts and opinions on contemporary society and literature, this form of writing, then, is notably transparent. One such transparent commentary on the state of affairs in Austrian publishing thus emerged in a literary, erudite weekly review that had as its agenda the promotion of the Viennese press, proclamation of Viennese rational authority, and collecting and preserving the intellectuals by stimulating their social communication of knowledge.

The Realzeitung

Within the contemporary Viennese context of press activity and concern about the poor quality of writing produced in the penny press, hopes arose that quality publications would remedy the presumably faulty start for Vienna's free(er) press. To this end, a

²⁹⁵ Alxinger to Nicolai, 3 July, 1787. Wilhelm, "Briefe" 31.

group of well-placed bureaucrats and writers combined association and journal production. In organizing and taking over production of a literary periodical these men sought to improve the nation's press and reputation abroad, joining their efforts to improve the journal's scope while improving themselves. Called the *Realzeitung, oder Beytrage und Anzeige von gelehrten und Kunstsachen*, the weekly functioned as the voice for discernment and taste and publicized the Enlightenment's reach in the Habsburg capital. *Aufklärer* chose the *Realzeitung* as the public organ of Enlightenment for Vienna both because of its existing base of readers and its longevity, and because its form complemented the goals of the group. Though not as dramatic, visible or prolific as the *Broschürenflut* or the adoption of masonry for the Viennese Enlightenment, the literary review served as a stable means to carry their program for reform to the public and as yet another social and communicative network for the intellectuals of the movement. The weekly's dedication to the act of criticism, and in categorizing and popularizing knowledge—those fundamental Enlightenment activities—made the *Realzeitung* arguably the most successful production of the Viennese Enlightenment. By claiming the authority of taste, reviewers definitively established the right of Enlightenment ideas in reforming religion, gathering scientific knowledge and serving the utility of the state and its people. The review journal further served to codify the collaborative groundwork for the most active of Viennese *Aufklärer*, while establishing the major source of conflict for the intellectuals of the age—the allures of localism, national patriotism and cosmopolitanism.

In studying the literary review in Vienna, the focus of this analysis will be on the producers of the periodical. Thus, content will be looked at not in terms of reader

reception, but rather authorial intention. While the effect the journal had on readers in the 1780s cannot be definitively evaluated, the journal can be used to describe the proactive attempts of the several dozen intellectuals who constituted Vienna's Enlightenment movement.²⁹⁶ Weekly literary reviews provided the *Aufklärer* with a public space from which their platform could be codified and disseminated, a space that also allowed for beneficial interaction between contributors. As the reviews also came to focus exclusively on Vienna's publishing market, the symbolic literary space represented by the weekly made patriotic action (supporting the national press) comfortably accessible. Statements within the reviews reveal the goals editors had for the city, and the international framework in which they placed themselves, as their intention to improve the local literary market was based on knowledge of what had been achieved elsewhere.

Vienna had worthy antecedents in journals devoted to literature and learned works. Joseph Von Sonnenfels recognized the power of periodicals in allowing the dissemination of his ideas, and in the 1760s and 1770s issued moral weeklies and learned literary periodicals. The titles of these works include *Der Vertraute*, *Der Mann ohne Vorurtheill*, *Theresie und Eleonore*, *das Weibliche Orakel*, and *Briefe über die wienerische Schaubühne aus dem Französische übersetzt*. These attempts had short runs,

²⁹⁶ Much current historiography on Enlightenment literary reviews has attempted to use a quantitative analysis of content of the journals to determine the reading tastes and predominant ideas in circulation in the Enlightenment. For a discussion of the shortcomings of this approach, see Brendan Dooley, "From Literary Criticism to Systems Theory in Early Modern Journalism History" in *Journal of the History of Ideas* 51:3 (July-September 1990) 461-486. His main argument is that while press historians frequently attempt it, they cannot prove the effect journals had on their readers, only illustrating the journalists' point of view. This applies to most of the methods used by historians of periodicals. The most successful histories of journalism thus aim at understanding journals from the production end by looking at their editors or writers and their aims. The qualitative method is adopted here, not only because of my interest in the intentions and ideas of a small group of intellectuals, but also because, for a time, the review attempted comprehensive coverage of the publications emanating from Viennese presses. A quantitative analysis of content would thus be simply an analysis of works coming from the Viennese press, a goal more easily achieved elsewhere.

lasting but a year or two.²⁹⁷ Concurrently with the emergence of these periodicals, another prolific generator of periodicals, Christian G. Klemm, was at work bringing out six journals to either edify or entertain the Viennese public in the two decades before Maria Theresa's death. Nevertheless, Von Sonnenfels was certainly the major influence, not only for having already attempted the publication of journals in Vienna, but also because he was present, and had established himself as a mentor to the young group of poets and thinkers who enthusiastically tackled the Enlightenment of Vienna.

In addition to the work of the famed political theorist and language reformer, the early 1770s saw a rash of periodicals devoted to learned news or literary discussions. The *Realzeitung* itself first was published in 1770, and was followed by several periodicals that either published descriptions or excerpts of literature or literary periodicals outside Austria. *Der hungrige Gelehrte* of 1774-5, the *Litterarische Nachrichten and Wienerisch Dramaturgie* of 75-76, the *Litterarische Monate* from 1776-7, the *Osterreichische gelehrte Anzeigen* from 1777, 1780s *Wiener Verzeichniss neuer Bücher* and the following year's *Annalen der Litteratur in den Kayserlichen Erbländern*²⁹⁸ all indicate the interest in establishing literary periodicals and an assumption that the city would benefit. The short duration of the literary reviews, however, indicated that the literati would have to struggle to gain consistent and lasting public patronage.

Despite the tradition of failure in publications, the 1770s did create the framework from which the editors of the 1780s' manifestations of the *Realzeitung* would gather their

²⁹⁷ Helmut W. Lang, "Die Zeitschriften in Österreich zwischen 1740 und 1815" in *Die Osterreichische Literatur. Ihr Profil an der Wende vom 18. zum 19. Jahrhundert (1750-1830) Teil I.* Herbert Zeman, ed. (Graz, 1979) 207, 212-213.

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 213-216.

experience as well as their connections. Some of the editors discussed here attempted to publish literary journals before joining the *Realzeitung*, and thus brought to the journal experience plus knowledge gained from past mistakes. More importantly, however, many of the editors had been brought together in the late 1770s under the wing of older sociable intellectuals, including Von Sonnenfels and Van Swieten, and frequently met in private houses or salons. The Greiner Salon and the poet Leopold Haschka's house were both formative in creating the bonds between the group of young poets and thinkers in their twenties later dubbed the Wiener Freunde.²⁹⁹ Once Joseph II's censorship reforms allowed a publishing industry extensive and popular enough to support a journal exclusively concerned with its products, the experience and the network were pre-existing and extensive, and the contributors idealistic and enthusiastic.

The *Realzeitung*, though one of the longest-lasting periodicals of eighteenth-century Viennese press history, hardly had an enduring framework or method. It was originally published as the *Realzeitung der Wissenschaften, Künste und Commerzien* beginning in 1770. Joseph Edler von Kurzböck, who ran the busiest press of the 1770s and early 1780s outside the firms of Ghelen and Trattner, published the journal. Kurzböck himself was an enthusiastic promoter of the goals of the journal; the publisher's forwards inserted before the bound editions reflected optimism about the work of the associated journalists, and a commitment to the intellectual development of the city.³⁰⁰ The journal's early focus was on economics, and a reading library developed in connection with it. But the weekly experienced fluctuating success in its first decade of existence, and thus went through constant transformations by its editors. In 1777,

²⁹⁹ Robert Keil, "Introduction" in *Wiener Freunde 1784-1808* (Vienna, 1883) 5.

³⁰⁰ "Vorbericht" to *Realzeitung* of 1780. Signed Dec. 26, 1780.

Sonnenfels took over the editorship and the journal took a more literary and philosophical turn. By 1780, the editorship was taken over by Friedrich Justus Riedel, and in these early years, collaborators included Gerhard Van Swieten, Ignaz von Born and Joseph Richter.³⁰¹ By 1780, the weekly settled its focus exclusively on intellectual and literary publications, yet its evolution remained continuous in terms of style, subject and focus.

The periodical literary review was a phenomenon new to the eighteenth century, and its development parallels the expansion of the press in that century. Some argue that these literary reviews served as a virtual library or great bookstore in a world where publication was expanding, yet public access in the market was not yet sophisticated enough to ensure ease of access. Where large public or private libraries or extensive collections in bookstores were rare and frequently inaccessible, the literary review presented to readers a view of contemporary literature. The precedent for learned journals in German was established with the *Acta Eruditorum* (1682-1782), best known in association with Leibniz's editorship. Other German literary journals that reviewed literature include the *Monats Gespräche* of Christian Thomasius, Haller's *Göttingische Zeitungen von gelehrten Sachen*, and Friedrich Nicolai's *Allgemeine Deutsche Bibliothek*.³⁰² The French had two predominant review journals, the *Journal des sçavans* and the *Memoires de Trévoux*.³⁰³

The literary reviews of the late eighteenth century were in transition. Anni Carlsson stresses a difference between *Literaturkritik* that views works in terms of literary science by defining genres and using literary theory in analysis and comparison, and *Buchkritik*, which is purely informative, informing the public on content and what its

³⁰¹ Edith Rosenstrauch-Königsber, *Freimaurer, Illuminat, Weltburger*. 69.

³⁰² Rowland, "The Physiognomist Physiognomized" 17.

³⁰³ Dooley, "From Literary Criticism to Systems Theory" 461-486.

impact or importance will be. Thus, the first is self-referential and exclusive, while the latter has its public in mind.³⁰⁴ The *Realzeitung* used a combination of review types, putting extensive analyses together with short synopses depending on the editors' interest or belief in the importance of the work. Thus, providing merely a short description was in itself a critique of the work's importance to the ideals of Enlightenment and local pride among the editors. But, by the late eighteenth century, it is clear that reviews were scientific and promoted specialization, while also remaining popular. The Enlightenment ideal of improving oneself in all fields through conversation (or conversational writing) served to promote both functions in one form. As the *Realzeitung* developed through the 1780s, it sought to provide the public with critical commentary on all the fields of knowledge being produced in Vienna. Readers could thus be informed on the latest debates on religion while also keeping up on recent successes in Austrian theater or belletristics.

From 1780 to 1786, the editorship of the *Realzeitung* changed hands four times, altering its content and purpose with each new director and adapting to the rapidly changing contemporary publishing situation. Simultaneously, the review was stimulated by both the reforms of Joseph II and the resulting rapid expansion in publication and intellectual life in Vienna. At the end of December in 1780, Joseph Edler von Kurzböck, the publisher, informed readers that Riedel was resigning as editor, stating "From now on the *Realzeitung* will be managed by several learned men communally; also the former editor of the journal, though he just released himself from its formal direction, will not refrain from making known his judgments on new books or printing other small essays of

³⁰⁴ Anni Carlsson, *Die Deutsche Buchkritik von der Reformation bis zur Gegenwart* (Francke Verlag, 1969) 13.

his own in the pages of this newspaper (still always with signature of his name).” Kurzböck further assured the readership that the weekly would continue to strive for perfection in the goals outlined earlier by Riedel, and that the learned friends of the former editor would continue to aid in its publication.³⁰⁵ In the first issues of the new year, responses to letters were written in the name of “our trusted reviewing society” rather than adopting a singular editorial voice. They further stated “we assure through our critical conscience”, that their collective full attention went to answering a reading society’s question on an ode.³⁰⁶ This emphasis on the communal nature of the *Realzeitung*’s production, added to the claim to critical authority, was an important foundation for the weekly.

In 1781, Anton Scharf, member of the Masonic lodge ZWE and professor of philosophy, took over the *Realzeitung*.³⁰⁷ Under his lead, the weekly began its focus on exclusively Austria-related subjects.³⁰⁸ Another lasting change instituted by this man was the weekly’s connection to the intellectual lodge—from then on, all collaborators were drawn from the list of members and publication would end with the demise of the lodge. The review apparently became a public voice for the semi-secret society of Enlightenment writers and intellectuals.³⁰⁹ It was only in late 1782, and early 1783,

³⁰⁵ “Es wird künftighin die Realzeitung von mehrern gelehrten Männern gesellschaftlich besorgt werden; auch wird der bisherige Aufseher derselben, ob er gleich von der förmlichen Direktion sich losgesagt hat, doch nicht ermangeln, seine Urtheile über neue Bücher, oder andere seiner kleinen Aufsätze in den Blättern dieser Zeitung (jedoch allemal mit Unterschrift seines Namens) bekannt machen.” In “Vorbericht” in *Realzeitung, Oder Beiträge und Anzeigen von Gelehrten und Kunstsachen* (Kurzbeck: 1781).

³⁰⁶ “unserer vertrautem Recensirgesellschaft” and “wir versichern bey unserm kritischen Gewissen” *Realzeitung*, Erster Stück, 2 Jänner, 1781.

³⁰⁷ Irmen, “Biographische Miszeilen” in *Protokolle*, 335

³⁰⁸ *Realzeitung*, 1781.

³⁰⁹ Rosenstrauch-Königsberg argues this in her literary biography of Alois Blumauer. *Feimaurer, Illuminat, Weltburger*, 69-70. Unfortunately, there was no proof cited that I can confirm, though the personalities and coincidences in timing support the argument.

however, when Alois Blumauer served as the journal's editor, that the review was fully identified with the promotion of both Enlightenment and Austria.

The reforms of 1780 and 1781 provided the foundations for the *Realzeitung's* later transition to concerning itself solely with local publication by pursuing its own campaign of Enlightenment. After the press reforms, the periodical sought to establish a basis for future intellectual development in the city by first promoting exposure to outside, novel ideas, and then by creating a united intellectual culture within the city. In 1781, the *Realzeitung* offered reviews not only of the products of the recently active Viennese press but also informed their readers of works emerging from distant Enlightenment centers. The editors of the *Realzeitung* included a discussion of Protestant German and foreign language publications as a means to keep the Viennese reading public up to date on intellectual developments that were relevant to them. This earlier focus on non-Austrian works fulfilled an important function for the time. Many pamphleteers (some of the editors included) stridently argued, that most of the current print from the city was of poor quality, repetitive and derivative. A literary review thus needed a broader body of work to evaluate. In addition, relaxed censorship was so new, that the reading public could only benefit from more background on outside intellectual developments. Thus, the role of the review was essentially patriotic; it sought to make the reading public in Vienna more sophisticated, thereby stimulating improvements in its intellectual culture and publishing industry. As the press freedoms became less novel, and the Viennese press and public more sophisticated, the reviews of the *Realzeitung* focused on their own home-grown Enlightenment.

During the early 1780s (under Riedel and Scharf) at the height of the *Broschürenflut*, the journal included letters to the editors, establishing a dialogue between the journal, reading societies and individual readers. Through these letters, the weekly became a communication center for the developing reading public. The discussions conducted in this epistolary section, whether on interpretations of poems, styles of reviews, or activities of local reading societies, established a feeling of intellectual community in Vienna.³¹⁰ The dialogue was very real and elevated the journal and its editors to the position of the ultimate literary authority in Vienna. At the beginning of 1781, for example, a reading society wrote in to ask a question of interpretation on one of Klopstock's odes, a debate that was carried through the subsequent issue.³¹¹ The discussions elicited by reader's comments were sometimes critical, as when, for example, the editors were forced to explain their use of irony or justify harsh criticisms to their public. The publication of readers' letters ended with the abdication of Friedrich Riedel as editor and the takeover by a succession of intellectuals, who usually worked together to produce the journal.³¹²

While the journal did promote a feeling of community, that community remained somewhat limited by the anonymity of many of the contributors. In this stage of the *Realzeitung's* existence, criticism remained anonymous. The unsigned book review theoretically allowed for free, open criticism without fear of disturbing interpersonal relations and networks of a small literary world. Reviews of both close acquaintances' and enemies' works could be more consistent and direct. Nicolai wrote extensively on the

³¹⁰ *Realzeitung* 2 Jänner, 1781.

³¹¹ *Realzeitung*, 2 Jänner, 1781, and 9 Jänner, 1781.

³¹² Strasser, Kurt, *Die Wiener Presse in der Josephinischen Zeit* (Wien 1962) 73.

reasoning and justification behind the controversial literary practice of anonymity in his review journals and his essays on criticism. Without identification of the authors, freedom of expression and criticism could be assured.³¹³ This is a different phenomenon from the anonymity of many penny press pamphlet authors—whereas pamphleteers might be avoiding police or state vitriol, the reviewers sought only to ensure impartiality and freedom of expression.

From Riedel's abdication on, the *Realzeitung* changed focus in response to the increasingly secure establishment of the city's print culture and intellectual scene. The major change that occurred was to identify the review exclusively with the local and national publishing world. In 1782, reviews began focusing exclusively on Viennese works. At first this happened steadily yet without an overt statement of design, but at the end of the year, the newest editor, Alois Blumauer introduced 1783 with a discussion of his aims in producing the journal, stating the *Realzeitung* would aim to provide an overview of the country's literature.³¹⁴ Within a year of the press reforms, the *Realzeitung* was thus transformed into a representative organ of Austrian literature. The new focus on the city's print market was by design. These changes resulted from an increased confidence in the ability of the public to keep itself informed and the increased availability of north German literary journals. Supporting a literary review of entirely local publications represented the success of the intellectual development of the capital.

Alois Blumauer, a poet and well-connected advocate for the Enlightenment movement, officially took over the editorship of the *Realzeitung* in mid-1782. Blumauer

³¹³ The anonymity of Rezensionists was a well established tradition in German literary periodicals. See James Van der Laan, "Introduction" in *Eighteenth Century German Book Review* 12, and Van Der Laan, "Nicolai's Concept of the Review Journal" 104-5 in the same collection.

³¹⁴ *Realzeitung* (1782) No page numbers, inserted before the bound collection of weekly issues, must have accompanied the first issue though printed separately.

was particularly adept at heading the production of this literary review thanks to his international letter network, his strong local friendships and his family of fellow masons. Under Blumauer's role as coordinator, spokesman and frequent contributor to the journal, the *Realzeitung* became an integral part of the coordinated movement for Enlightenment.³¹⁵ Blumauer also edited the Masonic *Journal für Freymauer*. Though the two journals were distinct in their aims and audience, both were identified with the project for Enlightenment by Blumauer and his contemporaries.

As editor, Blumauer would further many of the goals stated for the journal earlier in the year and would make some organizational changes by returning to the more regimented divisions in each issue, categorizing the reviews topically, and attempting to keep the reviews concise. It was under this editor that the *Realzeitung* attained its joint focus on enlightenment and Austria. Blumauer also solicited a variety of experts to help with reviews, ensuring there was a broad range of expertise available to produce knowledgeable essays. The list of editors from this time includes active promoters of Enlightenment and modern academic subjects. Gerhard Van Swieten, the director of the Imperial library; Josef Richter, the popularizer of Enlightenment ideas in satirical essays; the geologist and active reformer Ignaz von Born; Michael Denis the poet; Hoffmann the enlightenment enthusiast who later turned conservative; novelist Friedrich Hegrad; and religious critic and later Kantian commentator Karl Leonhard Reinhold were among the known essayists collaborating with Blumauer. Another distinct feature of the *Realzeitung* while under Blumauer's leadership was the occasional lengthy editorial in which he expounded on issues of particular concern to him. In these long deviations from the

³¹⁵ Rosenstrauch-Königsberg, *Freimaurer*, 70.

typical contents of the journal, Blumauer provided an effective platform for his Enlightenment activism.

Announcing in early 1783 his intentions for the weekly, Blumauer detailed not only the changes in form he would make, but also the goals he hoped to achieve through the publication. Central to this was the role he thought the literary review could play in regulating the press in Vienna. He intended to unite the editors to ban works of no value from their presses while promoting works that were worthy additions to the intellectual scene. Even in this introductory essay written on the assumption of the editorship, Blumauer begins his work by chastising the reading public for not supporting useful works, citing a periodical publication to prove his point. He also claims that the *Realzeitung* will single-handedly expand the worldview of the Viennese through its criticism. Throughout, Blumauer eagerly expresses the desire to advance the city's intellectual culture to its fullest potential through the united efforts of capable *Aufklärer*. Within the work, the articulation of local patriotism covers everything from economic loyalty to intellectual fealty.

One of the changes beginning after Blumauer took over the journal was in the tradition of anonymity of contributors. By 1783, all reviews had identifying initials after each critique. Though the initials were in code, they were not all that complex, frequently using partial initials and/or reversing their order. For example, Reinhold's contributions were signed Dr., while Denis adopted the name Sined.³¹⁶ The accessible anonymity of reviewers reflected Blumauer's belief in the importance of identifying this literary review with *Unpartheilichkeit*. In his discussion of the review's new direction,

³¹⁶ Gerhard W. Fuchs, *Karl Leonard Reinhold--Illuminat und Philosoph--Eine Studie über den Zusammenhang seines Engagements als freimaurer und Illuminat, mit seinem Leben und philosophischen Wirken* (Frankfurt: P. Lang, 1994) 26.

he stressed that the sciences proved that reasonable, honorable men could reach differing views. Dialogue between different points of view could only improve authors and readers, so the anonymity or exposure of a critic would not dramatically affect freedom to criticize in an age of rational debate. Many of these developments betray the extensive influence of the North German literary critics, Nicolai, Lessing, and Mendelssohn.

The organizational change of the *Realzeitung*, namely categorizing works according to topic, also revolutionized the function of the weekly. Blumauer established in his notice to readers on upcoming changes that works would be slotted into the following categories: “1. Theologie und Kirchenwesen. 2. Rechtslehrsamkeit, und politische Wissenschaften. 3. Arzneykunde, Naturlehre, Chymie, Naturgeschichte, Oekonomie. 4. Mathematik. 5. Philosophie, Moral. 6. Geschichte, Erbebeschreibung, Altherthümer, u. 7. Schöne künste und Wissenschaften. 8. Makulatur.”³¹⁷ Blumauer explicitly writes that one of the top functions of the *Realzeitung* would be to ‘sort’ the works coming from the nation’s presses. This listing and categorizing is, in itself, an Enlightenment practice. By classifying topics into broad yet firm rubrics, the *Realzeitung* functioned to delineate specializations in an intellectual climate of increasing specialization in intellectual endeavors and increasing professionalization of those specializations. Thus, by naming specific sub-disciplines from the presses for the public, the journal advanced professional definitions that were slowly taking hold through the Enlightenment.³¹⁸

The culmination of the changes that turned the *Realzeitung* into a periodical representing Vienna’s Enlightenment indicate a strong influence from Friedrich Nicolai’s

³¹⁷ “Anzeige der neue Einrichtung der kais. Königl. Realzeitung in Wien” inserted toward the beginning of the bound edition for 1783. *Realzeitung* (Vienna, Kurzböck).

³¹⁸ Richard Fisher, “Introduction: Concept Formation in the German Review Journal” 85-94.

review journals, especially the *Allgemeine Deutsche Bibliothek* published from 1765 to 1772. The *ADB* sought to review all the works newly published in German, thus becoming a basis for a national culture. In addition to long reviews and short notices of works not covered by a lengthy commentary, the journal also included news items.³¹⁹ But the most telling resemblance lies in the conception of the function of criticism showed by Blumauer and Nicolai. Both emphasized non-partisanship, a belief in the nobility of criticism, and the importance of expressing refined Taste. Nicolai's example provided the form and theory behind the *Realzeitung's* adopting the responsibility for Vienna's Enlightenment. The influence of this Protestant German example on the *Realzeitung* made the fallout of Nicolai's comments about Vienna the more painful. The *Realzeitung*, jumping out of Austrian territory in a special review of the first two volumes of Nicolai's *Reisebeschreibung*, attacked Nicolai's motives and divisive style. This review, answered in the *ADB*, and then again eliciting a response in the *Realzeitung*, was a notorious international incident in the circles of men of letters.³²⁰

Patriotism in Vienna's *Realzeitung*

The *Realzeitung* was without doubt a patriotic organ. The purpose of the review journal was to present Austrian national literature and to stimulate production within that cultural region to allow it to compete in the cosmopolitan world of the European Enlightenment. The reviews thus created a basis for national identity while also trying to prevent the westward drain of intellectuals and their writings. While the language of the journal focused on 'inländische' literature, the Viennese press was the almost exclusive focus of the reviews and stimulating the Viennese intellectual scene was the predominant

³¹⁹ Van Der Laan, "Nicolai's Concept of the Review Journal" 95-97.

³²⁰ Rosenstrauch-Königsberg, *Freimaurer*.

motive. This Viennese localism was intricately tied to the patriotism of the journal's editors; the reviewers who wrote for their distant and unknown co-nationals believed they would only benefit from a Vienna-centric literary and academic world.

After appearing in a respectable literary review, local works gained legitimacy. The *Realzeitung* established a forum in which publications from the Habsburg capital could be evaluated in their own right. And yet, the reviews consistently made comparisons between their press and non-Austrian presses. If Vienna's inferiority complex helped to stimulate the intellectual scene in the city, then it was perhaps a sign of the limits of the journal's achievements that acceptance of local works depended entirely on their being compared to and approved by Protestant Germans. A review of a poetry anthology thus had as its ultimate compliment—"The *Musen Almanach* for the previous year may feel itself even less ashamed before the eyes of our German Brothers. It is a clear proof, that young poets are found in our circles that through proper taste and true knowledge and powers of discernment have already reached impressive heights, and leave us hoping that we will still, through them, one day reach the level of our northern Germans."³²¹

Viennese works could not truly stand alone in this age of intellectual exchange, not even for their own public. After 1783, and the publication in Berlin of Friedrich Nicolai's damning description of the intellectual pretensions of the Viennese press, many of the journal's reviews specifically addressed Nicolai's critiques to redeem their damaged intellectual pride. Valued contributions to science and literature disproved the German writer's contentions, but the Viennese also chastised works of poor quality for

³²¹ *Realzeitung* (1 January, 1782) 1.

providing potential targets for Protestant German scorn.³²² The *Realzeitung* illustrates the forced cosmopolitanism of an insecure yet patriotic emergent literati.

One of the formational dualisms working upon the editors was that though they felt the insecurity of working from a city that had not achieved intellectual recognition, they were also informed by the elitist pretensions of a group that felt it possessed a superior talent for discernment and taste. They further espoused the program for change thought necessary for human progress and optimistically believed in their ability to reform not only Austrian national literature but the state of knowledge in their time. Throughout the entries in the weekly from the time of Blumauer's assumption of editorship, both influences are continuously present and inform the evaluations of works and the solicitations for change. The editors both were fighting for prestige within the international press market, while proclaiming their superiority within the domestic market.

A new area of insecurity for Viennese writers was their usage of standard literary German. The provincial Viennese and south German dialects were shameful inheritances for the *Aufklärer* who bought completely into the language reform movement of the 60s and 70s. Although the learned elite producing the *Realzeitung* was intent on promoting the publication of the work of Austrians in German, they were highly sensitive to the type and quality of the German produced. Reviewers criticized, for one, the liberties taken by poets with standard written German; "as gladly as we see our mother tongue enriched, so do we not like it, when young poets create new words."³²³ Interestingly, this review praised the poems of Denis and Prandstetter, but Blumauer was the one under attack for

³²² See, for example, *Realzeitung* March, 1782.

³²³ "so gerne als wir unsere Muttersprache bereichert sehen, so gefällt es uns doch nicht, wenn junge Dichter sich neue Wörter schaffen." *Realzeitung*, Issue 1 (1 Jenner, 1782) 1.

the irresponsible corruption of language in his poetry.³²⁴ Needless to say, such criticism of Blumauer's writings would soon disappear from the review's pages. Preventing the corruption of literary German would be one of the big tasks for the intellectuals trying to equal the north Germans, especially as the quality of their German usage functioned as an excuse for non-Austrians to dismiss content.

Though improper German was an embarrassment, a far worse sin for the *Aufklärer* was to write in a language other than German. Devoted to the cause of improving Viennese literature and academic press, the reviewers emphasized repeatedly the need for more and better Austrian publications. Thus, in a review of a French work in 1781 (before the transformation to an exclusively Austrian literary review), the reviewer ends by chastising the writer for not writing in German, "and also provide his mother tongue a portion of the honor that his writings have already achieved for him in the learned Republic, and will continue to acquire."³²⁵ The review thus had as its only complaint that the work could not be added to the corpus of German publications. This focus on the honor denied the Viennese in the cosmopolitan Republic of Letters illustrates the battles this group of intellectuals was willing to fight to gain not just their own personal literary fame, but to give their region its proper international recognition.

Insecurities also arose over the identity of the authors of Vienna, and whether they were men of pure motive, morals, and adequate talent. The profit motive became the object of attack for those seeing no value in the pamphlet press; needy (or greedy) authors were said to write anything that might sell. The *Realzeitung* expressed the

³²⁴ Rosenstruach-Königsberg also discusses the criticism of Blumauer in this review on the *Musen Almanach* in *Freimaurer, Illuminat, Weltbürger*.

³²⁵ "und seiner Muttersprache auch einen Antheil an der Ehre zu lassen, die ihm seine Schriften in der gelehrten Republik bereits erworben haben, und noch erwerben werden." *Realzeitung*, 16 January, 1781, 48.

assumption that the true Enlightenment in Vienna was ennobled by the quest for truth, not material gain. The *Realzeitung* was more generous than many who condemned the products of Vienna's *Broschürenflut*. One review argued that poor quality of many works was the unfortunate result of the lack of a support system or patronage for artists and writers.³²⁶ This criticism blames the Austrian state and society's lack of financial support and cultural interest for Vienna's shortcomings. The review itself aimed to reverse that trend by interesting the public more in their national press.

Enlightenment Methodology in the Reviews

As literary reviews were a new genre, they allowed for experimentation and thus progress in both writing and ways of thinking.³²⁷ The development of this new form of criticism furthered Enlightenment ideas and practices. In an apt summary of the role of the review, Herbert Rowland states that the "critical debate of the age was conducted primarily in the reviews appearing in the pages of these organs [literary periodicals], where thinkers as diverse as Gottsched, Lessing, and Wieland demonstrated and sought to promote their notions of enlightened aesthetics in daily practice."³²⁸ These reviews practiced criticism, but also more specifically functioned as discerning literary criticism. Not only did they provide an example of rational questioning of accepted knowledge and proper delineating of techniques in order to arrive at truth, the reviews also established a moral example and a definition of Enlightened taste through the articulated judgment of critics.

The *Realzeitung* aimed to further Enlightenment and even epitomize the movement in print much like the *Encyclopedie* in France. This raises the question of

³²⁶ *Realzeitung*, Issue, 3, January, 1782, 40.

³²⁷ Carlsson, *Die Deutsche Buchkritik*, 14.

³²⁸ Rowland, "The Physiognomist Physiognomized" 18.

what it was about the journal, its contents, and its production that made it an Enlightenment activity. The editors had as their goal promoting knowledge to better serve the state. As *Aufklärer*, the core group of contributors to the journal recognized the central role of the press for the success of the intellectual movement—this was an active and evangelical movement that promoted self-sacrifice but brought self-content for those that worked in its name. The *Realzeitung* is identified with Enlightenment also through their similar functions. The weekly practiced criticism and the use of reason, while also displaying that rational activity as an example to the reading public. Finally, the *Realzeitung* provided the sense of community necessary to inspire further endeavors for the movement of Enlightenment.

Journals held more prestige than pamphlets—one of the differences between the two was in the professionalism and status of the writer. Perhaps because of anonymity, or more likely a result of the higher purpose and regularity of the journal's appearance, the journalists do not betray the insecurities of a Grub Street or penny press. By their very nature, the reviewers writing for the weekly claim authority: the authority to judge, to classify, and to publicize. The contributors were thus among the elite of Viennese writers and academics, at the least in their self-appraisal. Through their work, they brought to the city's readers a progressive focus on the importance of criticism.

The role of reviewers and journalists in the Enlightenment has generated many an interesting debate. Journalism in general can be regarded as a lowly career, where money and the struggles of Grub Street take precedence over high art and taste. Reviews, however, contradict this image, for by their very nature, reviewers are claiming taste, or the abilities of aesthetic discernment and moral judgment, and knowledge. Thus,

historians differ on how to characterize the nature of the reviewer. Karl Fink places literary reviews firmly in the camp of sophisticated Enlightenment criticism and academic professionalism, stating the review was “designed as a formal instrument of criticism, servicing the advancement of knowledge and legitimating the authority of professionals trained in the academy.”³²⁹ A more balanced understanding, however, recognizes the learned aspects of the review were complemented by the popular function of the journals. These works were not simply written for an exclusive group of intellectuals; instead, they addressed a popular audience, and sought to inform and mold the tastes of that group.³³⁰ The early reviewers of the *Realzeitung* held prestige in the city, represented especially by the two most favored and famed intellectuals, Swieten and Sonnenfels. Other editors held various claims to authority. While Joseph Richter resembled the stereotypical literary hack, he was a skilled and prolific popularizer of Enlightenment ideals. Karl Leonard Reinhold provided the authority on religious criticism and Blumauer, as poet, critic and censor, claimed for himself complete ascendancy in taste. Acknowledged authority among the reviewers was central to establishing the sophistication of a literary review, and would be especially important to these learned men seeking to establish Viennese intellectuals within the international Republic of Letters.

In criticizing Viennese works of poor quality, the *Realzeitung* represented to Vienna and the outside world the ability of the Viennese reading public to discern between hastily scribbled trash and lasting contributions to literature and knowledge.

³²⁹ Karl Fink, “The Rhetoric of the Review: Schlözer and Herder on Universal History” in *The Eighteenth Century German Book Review*, Herbert Rowland, Karl Fink, eds. (Heidelberg: C. Winter, 1995) 57.

³³⁰ James Van Der Lann, “Introduction: the Shape of a Genre” in *The Eighteenth Century German Book Review*, Herbert Rowland, Karl Fink, eds. (Heidelberg: C. Winter, 1995) 13.

Thus, criticism itself became a basis for instilling confidence in this beleaguered print market. The literary review was an Enlightenment work in its own right. Criticism was widely adopted in this intellectual movement that sought to bring about Progress in Reason and Knowledge. Blumauer described the importance of criticism as a 'means of instruction and regulation' for the readers, and argued that Enlightenment involved the 'unlearning' of things through thoughtful evaluation.³³¹

The reviews also urged writers to work for civic improvement, making the achievement of international recognition seem within reach. The *Realzeitung*, though by nature critical of much Viennese intellectual achievement, was also optimistic in its belief in the perfectibility of their publications. They also evaluated the journal itself as a slowly improving part of the Viennese press. Through their position as arbiters of taste in the print market of Vienna, the editors of the journal spread their optimism to the readers. The sociability of the editors combined with their social responsibility as men of letters enabled the much-invoked concept of improvement to reach the intellectuals themselves, and then through print, the rest of the Austrian reading world.

The editors of the *Realzeitung* took care to advertise that their activities were pursued 'in Gesellschaft'. There were international precedents and contemporary manifestations of similar literary periodicals that both reviewed literary and academic works and proclaimed the importance of association. Sociability depended on the press for topics of conversation while the press depended on institutions of public sociability for sales, but the two also occasionally merged. Editing the *Realzeitung* constituted the act of socially producing a periodical. Both sociability and periodical publications are

³³¹ In the essay on "Beobachtungen über Oesterreichs Aufklärung und Litteratur", included towards the end of 1782. Page 28 and 30 of the pamphlet (Kurzbeck, 1782).

two aspects of the eighteenth century that are regarded as stages of the transformation to modernity, and were not seen as entirely separate identities because of the fluidity between the two. The partnership between Lessing, Mendelssohn and Nicolai in producing two review journals in the 1750s and 1760s provides the ultimate example of communal editing. The writing of the journals became a simple task, it was said, for the published version only recorded the convivial conversation between the three exemplary friends.³³²

Contemporaries applied the theories of the benefits of sociability to journal production—arguing improvement could only occur when more minds were brought together to stimulate intellectual curiosity and rigor, to combine knowledge and simply to make the task altogether more pleasant. Interestingly, even journals that were written or compiled by one editor claimed a group pedigree to legitimize content. The *Gazette de Leyde*, studied by Jeremy Popkin, claimed to have been produced ‘in Gesellschaft’, but was, in fact, the sole product of the publisher Jean Luzac.³³³ Luzac was unusual, however, given that most Enlightenment reviewers had many things on their plate at once. Not only did association ease the workload; in the late eighteenth century knowledge had become specialized to the extent that only communities of scholars could be authoritative—the best intellectuals had to offer was stimulated through their society

³³² The two reviews were the *Bibliothek der schönen Wissenschaften und der freien Künste* and the *Briefe, die neueste Literature betreffend*. Nicolai himself wrote in No. 76 of the *Literaturbriefe* that the three barely did anything except write down their typical conversations on the latest literature and then sent it off to the publisher. See James Van der Laan, “Nicolai’s Concept of the Review Journal” in *The Eighteenth Century German Book Review*, Herbert Rowland and Karl Fink, eds. (Heidelberg: C. Winter, 1995) 95, 108.

³³³ Jeremy D. Popkin, *News and Politics in the Age of Revolution: Jean Luzac’s Gazette de Leyde* ((Cornell UP, 1989). Luzac was aided by a large network of correspondents as well as other sources of information, and at some points the paper was owned in common with Luzac’s partners in the publishing trade, but everything was controlled and filtered through the editor.

with others of like mind but different specialization.³³⁴ That admission of the necessity of diversification spelled the success of academic specialization and professionalization, and review journals would further the acknowledgement of intellectual specialties by sorting publications into modern fields. The diversity of book topics and the increasing quantities under review resulted in the need for experts. The community of collaborators, though continuously fluctuating, consisted of pre-existing ties. Friendship networks provided the men of letters with the opportunity to write, as well as the connections in different fields to allow the farming out of assignments. This tight circle determined the direction of Enlightenment for the Viennese public through their complementary knowledge strengths, their taste, and their moral example.

One distinctive section of the *Realzeitung* thus served a regulatory (perhaps hegemonic) purpose—Blumauer and his circle dictated to the Viennese reading public what material was worth their time. Each issue contained a section on *Makulatur* (waste paper). The editors stated that this section would not describe or criticize these works. Instead, the titles listed there would just be recommendations on what not to read. Blumauer believed that this would lead the public to better spend their book money, thereby regulating quality through the print market. With money going only to good, deserving thinkers and writers, the chaff would be sorted out. This would further stimulate intellectuals to publish because of renewed confidence in the city's publishing. Occasionally, a special lengthy essay would be devoted to refuting one strand of

³³⁴ Contemporary writings from across Europe reiterated this conviction, from British moral weeklies lamenting the detrimental effects of studying alone in dark attics, to Parisians writing on the benefits of salons and extensive letter networks, to German cosmopolitans such as Wieland and Lessing writing on ways to overcome the lack of an intellectual center in German speaking lands. The introduction to the *Encyclopedia* also voiced these beliefs. Vienna itself had many pamphlets stating the benefits of association, especially in relation to the debate over freemasonry. The connection between journalism and association has not been explored in a specific context in current scholarship on the eighteenth century, though much of the historiography generated by debates on the public sphere and public opinion applies.

Makulatur—the anti-Enlightenment assaults of the conservative fathers Fast and Pochlin, who had large followings in the city for their lively sermons. The *Realzeitung* represented the core group of Viennese Enlighteners, so the attacks on these popular polemicists were strident, extensive and very personal.

In the years 1782 and 1783, when the *Realzeitung* was coming into its own as a representative branch of the Viennese Enlightenment, Karl Leonhard Reinhold was a major contributor. As a former monk who had to flee to Protestant lands upon experiencing a conversion to Enlightenment secular thought, Reinhold represented a potentially hostile authority on the subject of arbitrary religion. Reinhold's reviews consistently attacked certain types of religious practice. In his rational arguments, dogmatic Christianity becomes both irrational and lacking in spirituality. The enemy of the enlightened mindset as represented by Reinhold is the *Andächtige* or devout. This type encompassed those that ignore that doubt exists and is widespread, those that surround themselves only with others and works that similarly are walled off from reality, and those that arrogantly take pride in their frequent, though mechanical memorized prayers. Without questioning, without in-depth evaluation of belief, religious pretensions are dogmatic and worthless. In reviewing religious works that perpetuate Reinhold's belief in the ignorance of dogmatic religion, like the work *Jesu Christi*, Reinhold challenges their blindness and the way they present no challenge to narrow minds.

From a general attack on the superficial spirituality of such religious, Reinhold raises the problem of intellectual progress. The author of *Jesu Christi* in his regressive, reactive conservative theology dismisses new developments in print. Reinhold defends non-church writers by turning the tables against such dogmatic religious convictions. He

uses rational theological arguments to support development of Enlightenment thought while also challenging the quality of the spirituality claimed by conservative Catholics. Reinhold did in many ways complement Josephinism in his secularizing thought; however, in his essays for the *Realzeitung*, one can see the beginnings of a much more radical ideology. It is interesting that Reinhold became a preeminent popularizer of Kant.

In addition to reviews, the *Realzeitung* had a section on ‘gelehrten Nachrichten’—learned news. Here, the editors advertised intellectual competitions and the activities of widespread intellectual societies, thereby asserting their position as mediators between the Viennese, and Austrian, public and the rest of the cosmopolitan world of letters by including extensive sections in the journal on ‘learned news’. These notices kept Viennese intellectuals connected to and active in the Republic of Letters. Achieving this would be one of the most effective means for the *Realzeitung* to improve the accomplishments of the Viennese and the foreign recognition of that achievement (stimulating publication was the other). The section ranged far and wide in types of intellectual news and regions represented, including notices from St. Petersburg to Philadelphia, and from fields including anything from mechanics to literature. In the early period of Josephin reforms, these sections resembled mere gossip. The personal lives of major thinkers in France and elsewhere was commented on, and little space was given to useful information. These briefs informed the Viennese readership on major social intellectual developments in Europe, and therefore established themselves as authorities within the local context. These selections of literary “-ana” outnumbered books under review in editions pre-dating Blumauer’s ascension to editorship, though

length of contributions did indicate criticism remained the primary function of the weekly.

Blumauer also published a lengthy essay in the *Realzeitung* during his time as editor that offered his evaluation of the Viennese Enlightenment. Diverging from the normal output of the paper, the commentary served the important purpose of defending the Viennese intellectual scene and stimulating it to further production. Reviews alone achieved this subtly, but the editor reinforced the messages of the literary review by speaking personally to his readers. From his position as Vienna's intellectual gatekeeper, Blumauer ardently argued for the improvement of the Enlightenment in the city.

Towards the end of 1782, Blumauer published a lengthy commentary on the state of the Enlightenment in Austria. His *Beobachtungen über Oesterreichs Aufklärung und Litteratur* appeared first in the *Realzeitung*, and later extended its readership through the pamphlet press. The lengthy essay represents a rare, positive review of Vienna's intellectual development, even with the comparison to Protestant Germany. Blumauer extends patriotism to the literary sphere, while at the same time acknowledging the centrality of cosmopolitanism to the literature of the day.

Blumauer attributed the *Broschürenflut* to a long history of *Wißbegierde* that existed at odds with the constraints of pre-1780 intellectual life. Austria, according to the poet, was an enlightened land that lacked the opportunity to express itself, and the flood of publications emerging after Joseph II's reforms cannot be dismissed as worthless. Though not profound, the excessive publications, he argued, were a necessary part of the process of Vienna finding its Enlightenment voice.

In this missive, Blumauer again places responsibility for changing the Viennese print market on the reading public. Because of declining prestige for writers, Blumauer claims the intellectuals with something to contribute want to abandon their craft as a result of the company they keep. Blumauer urges that “Only the public can forestall this evil.”³³⁵ The reading public must practice discernment in literature, thereby ending the reign of worthless penny pieces and bringing the qualified authors back to their noble craft. He further urges the loyalty of the Viennese reading public to their own press (urging readers away from their consumption of print from England, France, Holland and lesser Germany), and argues for protectionism in the book trade.³³⁶ The poet also seeks to inspire other writers to action, citing the virtue of making talents useful to one’s community. Blumauer ends by issuing a call to action for writers to unite to redeem and celebrate the intellectual in Vienna.

Blumauer’s essay campaigned against the judgment of foreign intellectuals condemning the city’s cultural progress. He argues that Vienna’s *Aufklärung* is not just its literature, as the best minds do not write at all, being occupied in their careers. While in foreign lands, office holders are rewarded with advancement for their writings, Vienna’s bureaucrats cannot gain such advantages. According to Blumauer, the Viennese Enlightenment is finding its own footing. He argues that only a short time before, intellectuals in Vienna identified exclusively with non-Austrian writers, and felt isolated in their own city. But, at the time he wrote, he saw a need to change this identification with foreign thought. Recognizing inequalities between the Viennese and the Protestant Germany, Blumauer nevertheless argues that precisely for that reason, the

³³⁵ “Das Publikum kann diesem Uebel allein zuvorkommen” *Beobachtungen über Oesterreichs Aufklärung und Litteratur* (Vienna, 1783) 42

³³⁶ *Ibid.*, 55.

writers of Austria, as true ‘Patriots’ must unite and turn Vienna into the cultural center it is destined to be as the middle point of not only Germany, but all of Europe. He writes that if the Austrians “must learn of the talents of their fellow countrymen from foreign Journals, then there can be no hope of a true arrival (Fortkommen) of domestic Literature”.³³⁷ One can suppose that Blumauer directed the activities of the *Realzeitung* directly against that end.

The *Realzeitung* was the product of a group of reforming activists whose zeal in promoting Enlightenment in their city led them to combine their talents in the weekly issues. The literary journal contains some of the most self-conscious writings by members of the Viennese Enlightenment. Constant comparisons with North Germany are a case in point. As a literary review, it had to evaluate the standards of the local press, gauging them by the standards set by the German and international publishing world. Through their publication, these poets and academics optimistically sought to change both the abilities of the reading public of Vienna and the opinion of the rest of the Republic of Letters on the intellectual culture of their city. The editors of the *Realzeitung* not only saw their cause as a dual attack on and defense against Protestant German writers, but they also combatted their own critics within Vienna and attacked those who did not advance the cause. In addition to revealing a fierce patriotism and desperate desire to enhance local intellectual life, the self-conscious criticism found in the periodical presents the journalists’ views on the meaning and methods of Enlightenment. The reviews not only indicate the type and nature of works that promoted the ideals of the *Aufklärer*, they present an opportunity to view these men of letters practicing the methods of criticism, classification, and dissemination of knowledge.

³³⁷ *Beobachtungen*, 53.

The *Brieftasche*

A very different periodical appeared that nevertheless equally supported the local development of the cosmopolitan Enlightenment. This daily from late 1783 and early 1784 sought to reach as wide an audience as possible, through criticizing the habits and assumptions of the region. This second periodical with an exclusively local focus was the daily *Brieftasche* edited by Joseph Richter. Joseph Richter of all the writers in Joseph II's Vienna most resembles a Darntonesque literary hack. He published extensively, yet absented himself from the high sociability of the men of letters, even vowing never to join their exclusive associations. The *Brieftasche*'s goals and methods incorporated Enlightened ideals of diversity of knowledge collection, popularization, criticism in popular, witty form. Yet this was an entirely domestic product—there appear no pretensions towards an international audience. The work was also not competitive in nature as the *Realzeitung* seems to be, displaying no high mindedness or even intent to create a local intellectual culture that other cities would admire or envy. Another difference is that the work is the product of one mind, and as the labor of a professional author, also aimed at making money.

The writers in Vienna were very aware of the tension between local pride and the benefits and popularity of cosmopolitanism. In his *ABC Buch für Grosse Kinder* from 1782, Richter defined “Foreign” as “This word, that was spoken only with disdain by the Romans, is for my beloved fellow citizens the essence of all perfection. Wine, fabric, languages, even vices and sicknesses are welcome to him, if they are gifts from abroad.”³³⁸ This damnation of the love of all thing foreign was a recurring theme,

³³⁸ “Dieses Wort, das doch bey den Römern nur mit Verachtung ausgesprochen wurde, ist bei meinen lieben Mitbürgern ein Inbegriff aller Vollkommenheiten. Weine, Tücher, Sprachen, selbst Laster und

particularly in the work of local patriot Richter. Despite (or because of?) his fealty to the city, criticism of the Viennese became an essential component of the writings of the regionally focused author.

A witty paper offering city commentary, this paper provided a huge variety of information for the Viennese in a concise, popular form. Hardly as erudite as the *Realzeitung*, Richter's daily nevertheless offered literary news and reviews alongside poetry, anecdotes, and essays on topics as diverse as wine and politics. Promoting diverse knowledge was a specialty of the paper, enlightening readers with daily lessons in etymology and providing a forum for discussions on how best to improve the city. Such propagation of public opinion occurred in the form of letters to the Kaiser and the public, indicating the new role of the people tied intricately to concerns of the state. This daily was aimed at a broad, common public, and avoided sophisticated arguments or critiques. In the poem that acts as a prologue to the paper, Richter announced his hopes that everyone will find something of interest in it, and that a thousand readers of different types will reach for a Kreuzer.³³⁹ The *Brieftasche* provided the public complement to the state's agenda of reforming the public through controlling and improving the information they absorbed.

Joseph Richter's philosophy in many ways corresponds with that of Blumauer, Alxinger and Reinhold, though he cultivated different methods and audiences. In one of the issues of the *Brieftasche*, Richter included a review of a book by a monk. Rather than launch into an exhaustive review of the book itself, Richter attacked monasticism using the popular device of comparative critique and satire. He argued that poets, monks and

Krankheiten sind ihnen willkommen, wenn sie ein Geschenk des Auslandes sind." In *ABC Buch der grossen Kinder*.

³³⁹ *Die Brieftasche* November 17, 1783.

slaves all sacrifice truth, the poet to wit, the slave to his tyrant, and the monk to his order. Of course, the argument develops to point to the monk's destruction of truth as the most nefarious because its purpose is to spread superstition and ignorance in the people. Richter's ideas replicate those of his fellow *Aufklärer*, yet he is popularizing them in a much more accessible way. He also goes farther than the other writers of his day in his criticism of the function of the poet, for few of the Viennese *Aufklärer* were comfortable enough with the new, fragile Viennese literary culture to poke fun. He did, however, use his position and witty style to promote fellow writers in the city, and the *Brieftasche* incorporated reviews of the works of men like Alois Blumauer and Johann Pezzl, providing a more accessible discussion of their literary work than was to be found in the pages of the *Realzeitung*.

The *Brieftasche* was more representative of the genres and concerns specific to the Viennese than the elite *Realzeitung*. Austria's particular baroque sensibilities and the predominance of poetry in all forms of public entertainment, and the favoring of satire all influenced the style used in the daily. The work thus catered to the proclivities of the existing reading market. In a section on *Aberglauben* and *Aufklärung*, Richter provides such an extreme popularization of 'high' ideas through providing commentary on the absurdities of superstitious practice. But he also instructs his readers to use the knowledge he presented in popular form to make their own judgments, further inculcating enlightened methods in the public.³⁴⁰

The *Brieftasche* produced only fifty editions, and Richter lost a great deal of money on the venture that lasted just shy of two months. Paul Bernard attributes the sarcastic pamphlet, *Vertheidigung der Wiener und Wienerinnen* of 1784 to the writer's

³⁴⁰ *Die Brieftasche* November 25, 1783, 32-34.

lasting bitterness at his daily's failure.³⁴¹ Thus the local patriotism that prompted 'altruistic' ventures in regional publications could disappear quickly when that beloved region failed to support its authors. Richter eventually persisted in his efforts as Enlightened man of the people, carrying his populist satire through successive regime changes and eventually becoming a major influence on nineteenth-century Austrian theater. Richter's popular enlightenment fails to sustain the ideals of cosmopolitanism and international friendship. His role is less cosmopolitan idealist than realistic local example.

Conclusion

The local urban identity of the Viennese *Aufklärer* informed their perceptions of the position of the Austrian Habsburg lands and states to the west. Patriotism and loyalty to the state were prevalent among writers in the 1780s, but the inhabitants of this state were visualized as a German-speaking, urban men rather than as a diverse population composed of rural and heavily of Slavic individuals. As followers of Enlightenment, these thinkers espoused cosmopolitanism, but their international connections were flavored by their home city, and their concern for international intellectual exchange was predicated on the requirement that their city be a proud center of the Republic of Letters. Despite the tensions between cosmopolitan ideals and the reality of a multi-national state, the residents of Vienna who dominated the literary markets betrayed continuously their obsession with outsiders' estimation of Viennese culture. Like many other centers of the Republic of Letters, personality often provided a point of identification for what constituted the Viennese identity. A few individuals came to represent, or believe they

³⁴¹ Paul B. Bernard, *Jesuits and Jacobins: Enlightenment and Enlightened Despotism in Austria* (University of Illinois Press, 1971) 144.

represented, the whole Viennese literary world, for good or for ill. It was perhaps this regional identification that drove many to publish works focused on claiming the city for the intellectuals. Personal responsibility and civic pride became the two most noted themes of Austrian *Aufklärungs*-literature.

CHAPTER 4. *ARBEIT* AND *ÜBUNG* IN *ZUR WAHREN EINTRACHT*, 1782-1786

While providing one avenue for displaying erudition and promoting a rational worldview, the *Realzeitung*'s format, readership, and finite number of participating intellectuals limited the reach and effectiveness of the literary review. Vienna's men of letters found a likelier means for spreading Enlightenment in the social institution of freemasonry. Without an Academy or other institution of intellectual sociability and production in Vienna, the writers and academics of the city lacked a physical center until 1782. The only social institution in Vienna to be identified fully with Enlightenment was the short-lived freemason lodge, *Zur Wahren Eintracht*, existing contemporary to and complementary with the efforts of the *Realzeitung* editors.

Enlightenment in Vienna cannot be extricated from masonry in general and *Zur Wahren Eintracht* in particular. This lodge became equated with the Enlightenment project as its members adapted the pre-existing form of masonry to promote the development and publication of original intellectual and literary works. The activism subscribed to by this lodge enabled the rapid achievement of a sophisticated and prolific intellectual culture in Vienna, thereby successfully introducing Enlightenment to the Habsburg capital.

Freemasonry in the late eighteenth century enjoyed both popular caché and internal exclusivity. Thus a lodge that had an intellectual bent could limit membership to like-minded individuals within, while their beliefs and actions would be publicized

without. The Masonic temple allowed the freedom to share ideas and enjoy the basic pleasures of social interaction. In the era of clubs, salons, reading societies and academies popular moral philosophy argued sociability improved individuals and increased knowledge exponentially in comparison to solitary scholarship. Accompanying improving sociability with regularity in associational life further increased potential for sharing and expanding of knowledge. Freemasonry, the most common and widespread of late eighteenth-century associations, provided a way to gather sympathetic souls with disparate skills for a purpose, thus appealing to an intellectual movement grounded in reform.

Masonry's popularity stemmed not only from its novelty, but also from its social function. Freemasonry's purpose was primarily the creation of a distinct space for gathering pleasurable society, and its form supplied both artificially strengthened bonds between members and a protected space for gathering. By idealizing the bonds between members as fraternal and having members communally participate in elaborate rituals, freemasonry provided the basis for an easy sociability that distinguished masons from members of other associations. In addition to the pledge of brotherhood between members of a given lodge, freemasons also claimed commonality between all masons everywhere. To promote these external connections, masons wore signifiers of membership (pins, gloves, colors) or employed hand gestures that distinguished them in the outside, unprotected world. These symbols identified an individual as belonging to a widespread, international association, but also tied him to a specific lodge. Heightened identification with the local club added to ideals of universality replicated the tensions between the specific and the universal in the cosmopolitan Enlightenment.

The protected space offered by the Masonic temple also appealed to elitist instincts. Strictly guarded access, testing and voting on new members, and the elaborate insistence on secrecy of rituals, members, actions, and proceedings, all offered a titillating sense of belonging to something distinctive, important and one's own. Secrecy continued within the temple walls and between different ranks of membership. This insured continued fascination with the growth allowed to the member as his knowledge advanced. The sharing of guarded knowledge further promoted the ties of brotherhood, giving a proud and strong collective identity to the masons. The stated purpose of associating under the aegis of a lodge was primarily improvement both for the individual and society, adding a sense of mission to the strong draw and lifelong commitments of masonry. The Masonic stress on expanding knowledge further identifies the institution as a product of and complement to the age of Enlightenment.

Masonic lodges were not necessarily connected to Enlightenment figures, but the structure and organization of masonry insured that lodges catering to intellectuals could be effective in promoting the exclusive sociability of the literary and academic elite. In addition, masonic values easily meshed with Enlightenment ideals; both promoted universal human progress, the importance of moral action, anti-clericalism, and increasing knowledge. This secret society stressed the civic duty of any elite in actively striving for reform and its internationalism also complemented Enlightenment cosmopolitanism. Masonry provided the enlighteners with mutual support and encouragement, as well as a means to influence progress through production, publication, dissemination, and government action. The writings of lodge members portrayed

thoroughgoing optimism that by applying Reason, this Masonic institution would improve humanity.

Zur Wahren Eintracht's activities from 1783 to 1785 represent the height of the Viennese Enlightenment both in terms of local activism and international recognition. Freemasonry at the very least increased production and raised standards for Enlightenment activity in this once intellectually provincial city. Through *Zur Wahren Eintracht's* regular meetings and constant activity, a stronger, more unified movement for Enlightenment emerged in Vienna. Further, the influence of the lodge ensured that moral tracts, social commentaries, even scientific and historical writings produced by Viennese intellectuals during these years would be formed and flavored by the context of its production. As one member wrote to another, "you can quickly give any philosophical essay a spin so that it can count as a Masonic work."³⁴²

Freemasonry's Historical Significance and Background

Despite the mystery invoked through the name freemasonry, and the myths propagated by the masons themselves, much is known about the history of this popular historical association.³⁴³ Founded in early modern Britain, this unique organization experienced rapid mutation and expansion as it developed in the independent lodges of Europe's cities and towns over the eighteenth century. Originally connected to the craft of masonry, lodges before 1600 served as a communal center and temporary home for

³⁴² Letter from Ignaz von Born to Reinhold, 19 April 1784, quoted in Robert Keil, "Introduction" *Wiener Freunde, 1784-1808*, ed. Robert Keil (Vienna, 1883) 34.

³⁴³ Unfortunately for students of Austrian masonry, much of the historiography has been contributed by modern masons, who insert the myth in with the history, and write in order to glorify the institution they are a part of. Steven Tull. *Die politischen Zielvorstellungen der Wiener Freimaurer und Wiener Jakobiner im 18. Jahrhundert*. (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1993). Also, *Die Übungslogen der Gerechten und Vollkommenen Loge Zur Wahren Eintracht im Orient zu Wien 1782-1785*. (Wien: Wiener Verlag, 1984).

British stonemasons traveling far for building projects. The ceremonies and traditions within the lodge centered on their craft, a craft that, by virtue of its grand buildings, inspired awe in the public. Fascination with masons among non-masons deepened when the guild adopted mystical rituals and, by the early seventeenth century, many members of the Scottish elite began joining lodges.³⁴⁴ This detachment of the communal and ceremonial lodge from its occupational roots and adoption of claims to historical rights and self-jurisdiction signifies the origins of modern masonry.

Over the seventeenth century, lodges in northern England ornamented the practice of freemasonry by adding higher degrees of membership and constructing ever more elaborate ceremonies. In 1717, the formation of the Grand Lodge of London regulated masonry with its constitution and organization of leadership that officially established the purpose and rituals of freemasonry. Through the activities of British merchants the secret society spread first to the Netherlands and then into France, gaining popularity with every passing year. The first lodge in Germany, established in 1737 by English merchants, was naturally in the port city of Hamburg. Within a year, Prussia's crown prince entered the order and established its social legitimacy for the rest of German-speaking lands.³⁴⁵ Freemasonry's adaptation beyond the port cities fell under the influence of French aristocrats and diplomats, establishing variations in customs between lodges.³⁴⁶

³⁴⁴ David Stevenson, *The Origins of Freemasonry. Scotland's Century, 1590-1710* (Cambridge UP, 1988). For a brief and insightful summary of Stevenson's argument, see Douglas Smith, *Working the Rough Stone. Freemasonry and Society in Eighteenth-Century Russia* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1999) 8-9. On the early charters of masons under Shaw establishing their rights, see *Internationales Freimaurerlexikon Unveränderte Nachdruck der Ausgabe 1932*, Eugen Lennhoff and Oskar Posner, eds. (Vienna: Amalthea, 1932) 1412.

³⁴⁵ Smith, *Working the Rough Stone*, 10-12

³⁴⁶ Richard van Dülmen, *Society of the Enlightenment: The Rise of the Middle Class and Enlightenment Culture in Germany*, Anthony Williams, trans. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992) 54.

The nature of freemasonry's historical development ensured that different lodges within this fraternal order were highly individualized and mutable. As lodges developed organically, one sprouting from another or through members gathering in a new city, each one developed its own personality in content and purpose. The distinct individuality of each manifestation of this popular association handicaps attempts to write comprehensive histories of freemasonry in eighteenth-century Europe—accounting in part for vast differences in interpretation. Like all forms of association, orders tended to pick men of similar worldviews for selection in their lodges, thus creating a distinctive type for each lodge. These variations in social rank, nationality, locality, political orientation, or sometimes gender of the members of lodges, created stark contrasts even between lodges in the same city and ruled by the same grand lodge. Also, vehement debates on fundamental lodge practice resulted as members became increasingly invested in their lodges. Freemasonry thus splintered into diverse orders that coexisted in various European capitals by the late eighteenth century.

Zur Wahren Eintracht was a product of the moderate St. John's Order of freemasonry that practiced a relatively egalitarian division of orders and adopted a conservative version of the originating myth. Coexisting in Vienna were other forms of freemasonry including the Scottish Order, Rosicrucians, and Asian Brethren lodges, all three of which, in varying degrees, practiced a more mystical version of freemasonry. The search for the philosopher's stone and the support of alchemical endeavors consumed the Rosicrucians. The Scottish rites formed a variation of masonry that resembled a pseudo-religion, claiming direct descent from antiquity and performing complex rituals

and complex stratification of members into degrees.³⁴⁷ The Asian Brethren, formed for the laudable goal of creating a freemasonic order that would allow Jews as well as Christians into the order, became a bastion of conservatism, adopting characteristics from the Scottish rites and the Rosicrucians heavily influenced with ancient Jewish tradition. Though these alternative orders may have colored state, popular, and historical perceptions of masonry, St. John's freemasonry was the most visible and prevalent form.

In addition to having different sects in practice, freemasonry's strength as a preexisting popular and organized association made it appealing as a host to a more secret, more controversial, and more potentially subversive group. Adam Weishaupt, a professor in Ingolstadt, founded a truly secret society that cultivated a limited number of intellectuals and bureaucrats to infiltrate existing institutions of power in order to implement enlightenment policies. The illuminati joined a select few in secret association to give social support and protection to members while providing them with an ideological platform that defined Enlightenment and how they were to achieve it through their official positions.³⁴⁸

The ideals of the illuminati were not intended to subvert the power of the monarchy, contrary to popular contention, both then and now. Weishaupt believed that enlightened absolutism was an important step in the progress of reason, and his vision involved working through the government to achieve desired changes.³⁴⁹ Though Weishaupt's leadership was important, Adolf von Knigge's collaboration beginning in

³⁴⁷ Hans Josef Irmen, *Mozart's Masonry and the Magic Flute*. Ruth Ohm and Chantal Spenke, trans. (Prisca, 1996) 15-17.

³⁴⁸ R. van Dülmen, *Society of the Enlightenment* 107-111.

³⁴⁹ Gerhard W. Fuchs, *Karl Leonard Reinhold—Illuminat und Philosoph—Eine Studie über den Zusammenhang seines Engagements als Freimaurer und Illuminat mit seinem Leben und philosophischen Wirken* (Frankfurt: Lang, 1994) 21-24.

1780 brought success to the Illuminati. Knigge's effectiveness as an organizer and extensive social networks enabled the association to spread through Bavaria, Austria and into northern Germany, reaching its peak in 1783 with at least 600 to 700 known members.³⁵⁰ The Illuminati's organization resembled the structure of the Jesuits; both exclusive, evangelical brotherhoods effectively spread their ideas and activities to encompass large territories and take over positions of power. From 1780, the League looked to Joseph II's state as a possible site for the success of the Enlightenment and heavily recruited members among the Viennese over the next few years.³⁵¹ Many of the intellectuals of Vienna were identified later as illuminati, and interestingly, many of them were also former Jesuits or had been educated by the Jesuits before abandoning that system for Enlightenment.³⁵²

The illuminati realized their strict secrecy would hamper efforts to forward their ideas and Knigge advocated the adoption of masonry, a less secret form of association, to allow members to gather and influence others. Weishaupt and von Knigge suggested followers downplay ceremonial in the Masonic lodges and focus on creating an atmosphere promoting moral cultivation and progress in knowledge. Illuminati writings show that the group urged members to develop their abilities as scientists and their virtues as men. All this the Illuminati would "accomplish within the framework of a 'collective' enlightenment educational and academic institution, with which the structure of the order merged itself behind the backs of its members, but upon the foundation of

³⁵⁰ Norbert Schindler, "Der Geheimbund der Illuminaten—Aufklärung, Geheimnis und Politik" in *Freimaurer und Geheimbünde im 18. Jahrhundert in Mitteleuropa*. Helmut Reinalter, ed. (Suhrkamp, 1983) 286-8.

³⁵¹ R. Van Dülmen, *Society of the Enlightenment*. 108.

³⁵² After 1790, former members of ZWE were being turned in to the secret police as former members of the Illuminati, with one of the major snitches being the former ZWE member turned conservative, Leopold Hoffmann.

their research accomplishments.”³⁵³ The members of the lodge *Zur Wahren Eintracht*, several of whom were also Illuminati, established such a lodge with a collective intellectual bent.

Freemasonry in Austria spread first through benefit of royal patronage, much as it had in Prussia. The Duke of Lorraine, later Emperor Francis, became a member while in the Netherlands in the early 1730s.³⁵⁴ Nevertheless, masonry under Maria Theresa experiences official challenges. The Catholic church banned freemasonry with two papal bulls in 1738 and 1751, protesting the order’s integration of people of different religions, its secrecy, and finally, the statement publicized by masons on toleration.³⁵⁵ Despite the connection of the royal consort with freemasonry, the queen’s devout Catholicism and her suspicion of any potential challenges to her authority informed her consistent animosity towards the secret order, though she only once overtly suppressed freemasons by sending in military troops to dissolve the lodge *Aux trois Canons* in 1743.³⁵⁶

Despite state and church prohibition, freemasonry established itself in Vienna during the last few years of Maria Theresa’s reign. At the time of her death, there were six lodges with an estimated two hundred members. Despite the need for strict secrecy under the empress’s rule, the general public was well aware of the existence of freemasonry in the city and of Francis Stephan’s Masonic leanings.³⁵⁷ With the

³⁵³ “im Rahmen einer >Kollektiven< aufklärerischen Bildungs- und Wissenschaftsorganisation vollziehen, zu der sich das Ordensgefüge hinter dem Rücken [sic] seiner Mitglieder, aber auf der Grundlage ihrer Forschungsarbeiten zusammenschloß.” In Schindler, “Der Geheimbund” 297, 303.

³⁵⁴ Edward Crankshaw, *Maria Theresa* (New York: Viking, 1969) 24. Ernest Krivanek, “Die Anfänge der freimaurerei in Österreich” in *Freimaurer und Geheimbünde in 18. Jahrhundert in Mitteleuropa*, Reinalter, ed. (Suhrkamp, 1983) 178. See also Smith, 13.

³⁵⁵ Lennhoff and Posner, *Internationales Freimaurerlexikon*, 819.

³⁵⁶ Lennhoff and Posner, *Internationales Freimaurerlexikon* 996.

³⁵⁷ Helmut Reinalter, “Die Freimaurerei zwischen Josephinismus und frühfranzösischer Reaktion. Zur gesellschaftlichen Rolle und indirekt politischen Macht der Geheimbünde im 18. Jahrhundert,” in *Freimaurer und Geheimbünde im 18. Jahrhundert in Mitteleuropa*, ed. Helmut Reinalter (Frankfurt, 1983)

increasing freedom of public expression under Joseph II in the 1780s, freemasonry sparked extensive interest. The king explicitly stated his toleration of freemasonry, admitting that certain forms of masonry could achieve much good. He argued that prohibition only made lodges more attractive and governments only appeared ridiculous when ignorant of the innocence of these societies.³⁵⁸ Official toleration also extended to the publication of Masonic writings once Joseph II reformed censorship. Within the space of a few years of the death of Maria Theresa, lodge numbers in Vienna rose to eight, with one lodge alone inducting two hundred members.³⁵⁹ Joseph did publicly criticize the more superstitious, unproductive forms of freemasonry and warned other masonic groups to continue their good works and not give any cause to regret his toleration of their order.³⁶⁰ This foreshadowed later developments; in late 1785 the emperor would enact controls on the structure and membership of masonry in late 1785 when he believed there was a danger of masonry falling under the sway of anti-Habsburg elements.

Freemasonry certainly had a problematic relationship with Absolutism: indeed, historians have looked to masonry as a precursor to the French Revolution in developing subversion against the Old Regime. Reinhart Koselleck's influential *Kritik und Krise* asserts that the Enlightenment served to criticize the state. According to this theory, social institutions arose as a result of political exclusion; freemasonry especially held a unique function as the only institution that recognized state absolutism yet took measures

39-40. On the emperor's masonry: Derek Beales, *Joseph II. In the shadow of Maria Theresa, 1741-1780* (Cambridge UP, 1989), Jacob, *Radical Enlightenment* 111. Crankshaw, *Maria Theresa*, 24. The member of the *Eintracht* would also refer frequently to Joseph's being a son of their order.

³⁵⁸ Beales, *Joseph II* 486, looks at a letter arguing all this in opposition to his mother's policy of oppression.

³⁵⁹ Hans-Josef Irmen, "Zur Einführung: die St. Johannes Loge "Zur Wahren Eintracht" (1781-1785) in *Protokolle*, Irmen, ed. (Frankfurt, 1994) 11. The reference to the edict is from Venturi.

³⁶⁰ Karl Gutkas, *Kaiser Joseph II. Eine Biographie*. (Wien: Paul Zsolnay Verlag, 1989) 326. Franco Venturi, *The End of the Old Regime*, Vol II. 650.

to evade it. The social and intellectual functions of lodges constituted an indirect power and their subversive political potential resulted in a need for secrecy. The crackdown on freemasonry by states was a result of recognition of the political threat they posed.³⁶¹

Although the extent of subversion practiced in the temple walls can be called into question, the Habsburg state saw danger in Austrian lodges' ties to the Berlin Grand Lodge, and once Joseph II allowed masonry to exist in his state, he quickly forced the process of establishing a governing lodge for the territorial lands.

Theorists have identified various functions of masonry that place it among the most important social developments of the eighteenth century. Beyond its social purpose, the lodge might have secondary pursuits that could be charitable, intellectual, cultural or political in nature. The connection between masonry and the Enlightenment has been the most studied aspect of eighteenth-century freemasonry.

One of the distinctive traits of masonry was its adoption of a constitution, laws, and system of government to rule the meetings. Because of this Republican practice within the lodge, freemasonry has been interpreted by some as a political development that offered individuals a means to experience the Enlightenment ideals of rights and rational government. Historians following Margaret Jacob's lead recognize the primarily social function of freemasonry, but stress the political implications of training large numbers of Europeans in essentially civic functions, though nominally private and contained within the walls of a lodge. The transformation of words and concepts like equality and fraternity in the context of masonry would eventually become the force behind revolution. Jacob argues: "in the final analysis freemasonry, for all its exclusivity,

³⁶¹ Reinhart Koselleck, *Critique and Crisis. Enlightenment and Pathogenesis of Modern Society* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1988). 66-70.

secrecy, and gender bias, transmitted and textured the Enlightenment, translated all the cultural vocabularies of its members into a shared and common experience that was civil and hence political.”³⁶²

Another aspect of masonry of interest to academics is the unique thought system produced in the lodges. Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann’s work, primarily on the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, provides a good analysis of the major tenets of masonry—including many of the ideals that were expressed in eighteenth-century lodges, such as cosmopolitanism and natural human virtues.³⁶³ In addition to being a practical field for Enlightenment theories, masonry as an associational form supports theories on the developing public sphere in the late early-modern era. Masonry was located in a non-political, but also not private space, allowing people to come together and express their opinions.³⁶⁴

The theoretical importance of masonry becomes entangled in the problem of diversity within freemasonry, so historians have favored the method of case studies of

³⁶² Margaret C. Jacob, *Living the Enlightenment: Freemasonry and Politics in Eighteenth-Century Europe*, (New York: Oxford UP, 1991) 224. The influence of Jacob on the study of freemasonry has been great, though I believe has caused too much identification of Freemasonry with Enlightenment. The fact is that most lodges either had no intellectual pretensions, or were anti-Enlightenment. The selective focus of Jacob on particular lodges that she knows well has perhaps overly influenced her conclusions. The lodge I study in many ways fits neatly into her theories, but the lodges she has studied in France and the Netherlands, and the one I study in Vienna, were highly unusual in their roles as transmitters of Enlightenment. Finally, the discussion of the democratizing practice of masonry is misguided--this was an association that was exclusive and hierarchical. It damned the rabble, or the masses of the ‘profane’. It was easily adopted by pro-absolutist Illuminati.

³⁶³ Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann, “Nationalism and the Quest for Moral Universalism. German Freemasonry, 1860-1914” in *The Mechanics of Internationalism: Culture, Society, and Politics from the 1840s to the First World War*, Martin H. Geyer, and Johannes Paulmann, eds. (Oxford UP, year/?). Also, his full-length study on the same subject goes further back in time, with an introductory chapter on eighteenth century freemasonry in Germany. Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann, *Die Politik der Geselligkeit: Freimaurerlogen in der deutschen Bürgergesellschaft 1840-1918* (Göttingen, 2000).

³⁶⁴ Jürgen Habermas initiated the exploration of the public sphere as a space separate from state and family. Since his influential work came out, historians have produced many case studies on the emergence of the public sphere in different areas of eighteenth century Europe, including in the institution of freemasonry. One collection of essays on the public sphere is Craig Calhoun, ed. *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (MIT Press, 1992).

individual lodges or of the practice of freemasonry in one region. Jacob's studies of Dutch masonry, Daniel Roche and Roger Chartier's analysis of French freemasons, and Douglas Smith's work on freemasonry in Russia are all excellent examples of the recent scholarship on this eighteenth century phenomenon. Though recent historians neglect much of the intellectual and cultural life of eighteenth-century Austria or Vienna, the study of freemasonry has many followers. The historiography surrounding the masons—including that concerning Mozart and Haydn's activities in Vienna—is rich in comparison to all other topics regarding the eighteenth century in Vienna save the study of the personal rule of the enlightened despots. *Zur Wahren Eintracht* itself has also been studied by modern historians because of its connection both to the Enlightenment and Mozart.³⁶⁵ Several works have also made primary sources widely accessible, publishing lodge records and pamphlets on masonry.³⁶⁶ Despite this promising attention, there are aspects of the lodge's history that have been neglected or misrepresented. This study will

³⁶⁵ Reinalter, Rosenstrauch-Königsberg, Irmen. Also to a lesser extent Wangerman and Bernard. The problem with these specialists is that they repeatedly cover the same information, giving mostly a statement of facts about the founding of the lodge and its membership. Despite this unified approach, there are frequently factual contradictions between the historians. Though they grant the lodge importance for being an Enlightenment association, they do not describe in depth what it means for this lodge to be identified with Enlightenment. This work will thus add something, both in its focus on the neglected aspects of freemasonic Enlightenment, but to also in clarifying the background information on the lodge.

³⁶⁶ Hans-Josef Irmen, a music professor in Essen, has produced an edited collection of the protokolls from the lodge *Zur Wahren Eintracht* found in the Haus, Hof und Staatsarchiv in Vienna. His introduction to the collection is also useful in the collection of data on lodge membership, giving statistical analysis of members and a basic chronology of the lodge. This work provides hope for the expansion of interest on this unusual lodge's activities. Irmen also published a full length work entitled *Mozart's Masonry and the Magic Flute*, in which he spends much of the work discussing the lodge *Zur Wahren Eintracht*. Irmen's work is unfortunately beset with problems that make me question its reliability. His interpretations of characters and events seem completely misguided at times, and there are also a few disturbing factual errors and at least one case of unattributed close paraphrasing. The concept of the work is also somewhat odd—Mozart was really a member of a sister lodge (thought they were close relations), so the extensive discussions of this Enlightenment lodge and its members are sidebars that nevertheless take up at least half the work. Hans-Josef Irmen, *Mozart's Masonry and the Magic Flute*. Ruth Ohm and Chantal Spenke, trans. (Prisca, 1996). The edited book is Irmen's *Die Protokolle der Wiener Freimaurerloge "Zur Wahren Eintracht" (1781-1785)* (Frankfurt, 1994). Reinalter, a prolific editor of collaborative works on freemasonry, has reproduced the pamphlet debate on freemasonry responding to the king's published position. Helmut Reinalter, *Joseph II und die Freimaurer im Lichte zeitgenössischer Broschüren* (Böhlau, 1987).

seek to understand the implications of one lodge for Enlightenment, citizenship and statecraft.

Freemasonry and Enlightenment in Vienna: The founding of *Zur Wahren Eintracht*

A true center for enlightenment activism within Austria emerged in 1782. *Zur Wahren Eintracht*, a freemason lodge bringing unity to Viennese writers and academics, closely imitated the work of an Academy. Like the pamphlet press and literary journal of Vienna's Enlightenment, freemasonry within this lodge underwent constant, rapid self-evaluation and transformation during its short existence. It was *ZWE* however, that became the most effective base for collective action among the groups identifying themselves as *Aufklärer*. The freemasonic life, the heavy concentration of academics, writers and musicians, and the encouragement these men received within the lodge to further enlightenment aims transformed the intellectual culture of Vienna.

The lodge *Zur Wahren Eintracht*, whose fifteen original members detached themselves from *Zur gekrönten Hoffnung*, first met on March 7, 1781. It started slowly, meeting only every couple weeks, but within a few months membership numbers and frequency of meeting doubled. There seems to be little to distinguish this new lodge from others, as the records of their meetings record little besides discussions of funds, initiation of new members and occasional reference to the system of lodges as a whole.³⁶⁷ One member inducted in August, 1781, was Angelo Soliman, an educated former slave who married a Viennese woman and became a fixture in Viennese social circles.

Soliman's intelligence and character was such that European society assumed he was atypical of Africans, earning him the disingenuous nickname the 'black prince'. He

³⁶⁷ The detailed minutes of lodge meetings have been preserved in the Haus- Hof- und Staatsarchiv, and have been gathered and published by Hans Josef Irmen in *Die Protokolle*. For the beginnings of the lodge, see *Protokolls*, 24-45.

achieved social acceptance in Vienna, even if his economic situation did not bring him a comfortable life (or death—his body would be appropriated by the crown to be stuffed and displayed in a curiosity cabinet despite the petitions of friends and family).³⁶⁸ Indeed, the masons used the man’s skin tone to make rituals more effective, appointing *Zur Wahren Eintracht*’s “fürchterliche Brüder” whose job it was to intimidate the ‘seekers’ in the trials of the initiation ritual. The tall black man, standing ominously silent while dressed in archaic black shrouds and holding deadly weapons tested the courage and dedication of the candidates. Soliman nominated Ignaz von Born for membership in late 1781, initiating the process that would turn the lodge into Vienna’s center of Enlightenment.

The “leader, friend and father” of Viennese enlightenment masonry was the Transylvanian mineralogist Ignaz von Born.³⁶⁹ This former Jesuit, trained in theology, law, and finally geology, had long been convinced of the value of association in improving intellectual life and spreading knowledge. He was a member of several academies of sciences, including the Royal Society in London, academies in Russia, Toulouse and Danzig, the Royal Academy of Sciences in Turin, and the Munich Academy of Sciences. Born also belonged to learned societies in Göttingen, Uppsala, Lund, Burghausen, and Siena. His experience with these associations and as the founder of the *Böhmische gelehrte Privatgesellschaft* in Prague, a learned scientific society that published a journal, would allow for effective leadership in Vienna’s Masonic

³⁶⁸ HHSTA: Protokoll XVIII discusses the incorporation of Soliman, and that the members agreed to waive the fees because of his “nicht so glücklichen umständen.” Soliman’s life and death is briefly described in a publication of the grand lodge of Austria from 1984, called “Die Übungslogen der Gerechten und Vollkommenen Loge Zur Wahren Eintracht im Orient zu Wien 1782-1785” (Wiener Verlag). 32. The material was taken from another source, but there was no citation or bibliography.

³⁶⁹ The quote is from a toast written by Ratschky on Von Born’s birthday in December, 1783, and was published in the *Journal für Freymaurer* 1:1 (1784) 245.

Enlightenment.³⁷⁰ Also while in Prague, Born first joined the freemasons.³⁷¹ Prague provided the early stimulus to this eminent geologist and allowed him to envision the changes that could be wrought in the intellectual sophistication of a city by a few dedicated and sociable souls through their own association and publication.

Intellectual credentials supplemented Born's eminent sociability. He made a name in mineralogy and geology, but also achieved recognition for satires he published on public issues. His writing was acerbic, using enlightenment methods of classification and witty criticism to draw attention to abuses both religious and social.³⁷² Government restrictions on revealing industrial secrets affected his early publishing career as a scientist, giving him first-hand experience and conviction of the role of censorship in stifling of knowledge.³⁷³ Born, a state bureaucrat, received the post of leading and organizing the Court's Natural History collection and transferred to Vienna in the late 70's. Born's social and intellectual development prior to his arrival in Vienna prepared him for the task of creating a learned society.

Perhaps the most influential associational and ideological affiliation for Born was his membership in the League of the Illuminati. Not only did the Illuminati provide Born with connections in Vienna, but the group also raised an agenda of fomenting

³⁷⁰ Von Born's contemporary, Johann Pezzl, published a mini-biography of Born after his death describing the work of this Prague society as a pre-cursor to the efforts Born would make in Vienna.

Lebensbeschreibungen des Fürsten Raimund Montekukuli des Fürsten Wenzel Lichtenstein des Hofraths Ignatz von Born samt einem Portraite (J.V. Degen, 1792) See also Mikuláš Teich, "Bohemia: From Darkness to Light" in *Enlightenment in National Context*, Roy Porter and Teich, eds. (Cambridge UP, 1981) 141-164, and Hans-Josef Irmen, *Mozart's Masonry and the Magic Flute*, Ruth Ohm and Chantal Spenke, trans. (Prisca, 1996) 25.

³⁷¹ Helmut Reinalter, "Ignaz von Born—Persönlichkeit und Wirkung" in *Die Aufklärung in Österreich. Ignaz von Born und seine Zeit*. Helmut Reinalter, ed. (Frankfurt, 1991) hn

³⁷² He published *Die Staatsperücke* in 1773, a work criticizing public taste and social conventions in the different social orders from the standpoint of a traveling wig, and *Neueste Geschichte des Mönchswesen* in 1783 under the pseudonym Pater Kuttenpeitscher that categorized monks according to Linnaeus' system in order to attack their fanaticism.

³⁷³ Irmen, *Mozart's Masonry* 25. The decree he reacted against was the Wiener Maulkorberlaß of 1772.

Enlightenment through masonry. Like Masons, the Illuminati were divided into sharply differentiated grades of membership. Most members remained at the journeymen stage, but some progressed to the Minerval class, which is described as the priests of illuminatism, and the third and later fourth classes were mere chimera, never to be realized. Interestingly, Ignaz von Born had advanced to the level of Minerva, and this secret order's priest would go on to establish a congregation for himself in Vienna.³⁷⁴

Within a month of his nomination the lodge accepted, inducted, and then advanced Born to the highest degree of membership.³⁷⁵ On March 9, 1782, the Master of the lodge, Ignaz Fischer, stepped down from his post for personal reasons and necessitated an election. Only a few months into membership, Ignaz Von Born headed the lodge, with thirty-one votes to the one vote to each of his three challengers for the position of 'Meister von Stuhl'. Elections extended to the remaining offices and lodge leadership completely changed hands and redefined its direction.

Immediately lodge practice underwent evaluation and transformation. During the same session as the election, von Born began his work by revoking several of the lodge's laws and, as recorded in the minutes, "he proposed, to carefully examine them at the coming Deliberations lodge and allowed every brother the freedom to express his opinions thereon: thereby after deep consideration they will decide whether to strengthen aforementioned special lodge decisions and laws, or whether they would like to throw them out."³⁷⁶ This early decision by the new leader indicated an extensive democratizing

³⁷⁴ Norbert Schindler, "Der Geheimbund der Illuminaten—Aufklärung, Geheimnis und Politik" in *Freimaurer und Geheimbünde in 18. Jahrhundert in Mitteleuropa*, Helmut Reinalter, ed. (Suhrkamp, 1985) 298.

³⁷⁵ See the Protokolls 33-35 for November 11, 19th and 27th of 1781. Irmen, *Die Protokolle*, 54

³⁷⁶ "behält er sich vor, sie bey den künftigen Deliberations Logen genau zu untersuchen läßt jedem Bruder die Freyheit seine Meinungen darüber zu äussern: welche jedoch schriftlich geschehen muß:/ auf daß besagte besondere Loge Schlüsse und Gesätze, nach reifester überlegung bekräftiget, oder verworfen

process would occur within the lodge. The next day's lodge session did not record its proceedings, however the record for the amount of alms collected on that day indicated those present and debating freemasonic practice numbered three to four times the typical turnout.³⁷⁷

Another issue for debate arose when Born attended a meeting of the “Provincial Lodge” that gathered the heads of all the Viennese lodges. This leading body of Viennese masonry raised the issue of popular knowledge of masonic secrets, including amongst people from the ‘lowest and most dangerous classes’. To his brothers in *Zur Wahren Eintracht*, Born said he would seek to obey the request of the Provincial lodge and closely regulate the access of masons from other lodges and non-masons to their temple. But, Born implied the order from above did not apply to them and further argued that guarding the ritual and social aspects of freemasonry was unnecessary as only the specific interests and activities of individual lodges required cloaking.³⁷⁸ At the following meeting Born reintroduced the issue of outside access to the secret Temple and read both the *Allgemeine Freymaurerverordnung* and the laws on Reception and Incorporation. Afterwards he again asked the members to deliberate on the issue, so that at the next lodge all members could express their opinions on “how these laws should relate to each other and how they should be observed.”³⁷⁹ The new Chairman thus allowed members to consider rejecting not only the authority of the central body of the

werden mögen.” Protokoll of the lodge *Zur Wahren Eintracht* for March 9, 1782. Irmen, *Die Protokolle*, 67. The deliberation lodge appears to have taken place the following day—tacked on to the end of the protokoll cited here, was the recording of alms collected at the lodge the next day. All other meetings were listed under their own protokolls with lists of attending members. Based on the amount of money collected for the poor, the meeting seems to have been three to four times the size of typical meetings.

³⁷⁷ Protokoll LIV. Irmen, 67.

³⁷⁸ Protokoll LIX, 4/8.82. Irmen, 70.

³⁷⁹ “wie diese Gesätze gegen einander zu halten und zu beobachten sind.” Protokoll LX, 4/10/1782. Irmen, 70.

Masonic system in Austria, but also to evaluate freemasonic government and even its practice of secrecy.

The lodge quickly transformed itself under the scientist's energetic rule, and the former leader Fischer eventually resigned in frustration at the radical departures from his original plan. Protest did arise with each radical change, though the old members never successfully blocked the new Meister's plan. The founding members of the lodge were left in the dust, though Soliman continued to be a frequently attending member. Thus the temple-hall putsch and the transition into an intellectual lodge appears to have been well-planned, efficient and highly effective.

Within a year, aided by the emperor's statement on toleration for freemasonry, *Zur Wahren Eintracht* expanded rapidly and solicited leading scientists, intellectuals and writers to join. Elaborate dinners advertising lodge goals aimed to bring members into the lodge.³⁸⁰ Also, the pre-existing social bonds between Viennese writers, academics and bureaucrats proved useful in expanding membership. Though some intellectuals who were already members of other Masonic lodges in the city retained their lodge affiliation, they frequently attended lodge meetings as visiting brothers.³⁸¹ The focus on known intellectuals, talented writers, and admired scientists not only provided the lodge with the legitimacy to approach the task of establishing a productive intellectual society, it also ensured the group would be a dynamic force in the development of new ideas and the stimulation to further work for the Enlightenment.

³⁸⁰ Irmen's *Mozart's Masonry*, 32.

³⁸¹ The Protokolls list the members present at every meeting, and there are consistently members of *Zur Wohltätigkeit*, *Zur Gekrönte Hoffnung* and *Zur Beständigkeit* in the lists. Alxinger and Mozart are just two such auditors.

Born also explicitly sought young, energetic minds tending toward a more optimistic ideal of Enlightenment reform.³⁸² Forty-one percent of members were under the age of thirty, and when incorporating the statistics of members in their thirties, that figure rises to about three-quarters of its members.³⁸³ As membership determines the direction and practices of a Masonic lodge, the predominance of youth in this lodge inculcated vitality, idealism, enthusiasm, and productivity in the adopted program of Enlightenment. The constitution adopted by the Berlin Grand Lodge established the minimum age of entrance at twenty-five years old, and also regulated the spacing between advancements between degrees. *Zur Wahren Eintracht*, however, found these rules too restrictive, and in many cases voted to bypass them. One Hungarian noble transferring from Vienna in short order skipped much of the process of acceptance and initiation, justified in the lodge records by his imminent departure and the fact that many lodge members could vouch for him. This decision benefited the lodge greatly, as János Festetics would be a magnanimous donor over the next month, giving large sums to help rent new quarters and having new clothes made for the rituals. At the next meeting, however, a different applicant was not admitted to the lodge because of his age. The stated reason for rejection was an inability to think of a reason to dispense with the minimum age requirement in his case, implying that anyone of benefit to the lodge could more easily gain entrance.³⁸⁴ The lodge leaders manipulated at will their discretionary powers in bringing people into the lodge, often running counter to Masonic law.

³⁸² Von Born to Reinhold. 9 June, 1784. Says the lodge continues to attract more and more ‘geschichter junger Männer’. Reprinted in Keil, *Wiener Freunde*. 35.

³⁸³ Irmen, “Einführung”, in *Protokolle* 13.

³⁸⁴ Protokolls 80 and 81, in Irmen, 81, 83.

In addition to courting the youthful, idealistic types, the lodge welcomed international members. Integral to Viennese Enlightenment sociability was its openness to foreigners. Vienna's international and multi-national functions factored heavily in the cosmopolitanism of the lodge, and the cosmopolitan ideal promoted within masonry, added to local interest in outside intellectual developments, ensured that *Zur Wahren Eintracht's* multi-nationalism was an intentional developmental decision within the lodge. Beyond Austria proper, members heavily concentrated in Habsburg Eastern and Southern European lands as well as in other German and Italian regions.

Apart from simply developing to fulfill intellectual goals within the walls of the lodge, the *Aufklärer* leading the lodge also sought to extend influence over the practice of masonry as a whole in the Habsburg lands, and beyond. In October of 1782, the members recorded in the minutes the decision “to ever increasingly occupy the Regional Lodge with members of our lodge.”³⁸⁵ Ensuring a visible presence in the governing lodge allowed *Zur Wahren Eintracht* influence over the decisions and direction of all the lodges, to some degree. The lodge also focused on establishing close relations with sister lodges, insisting on being updated on major proceedings and member lists of the other Viennese lodges. *ZWE* regularly sent report of their own actions to fellow lodges and asked for the same consideration in return. Born further suggested having their own members present at the ‘Arbeit’ of every sister lodge, reporting back to their own members on what they learned.³⁸⁶ This infiltration indicated the broad aspirations of the *Aufklärer* that dominated *Zur Wahren Eintracht*; the enigmatic institution of freemasonry

³⁸⁵ “die ProvincialLoge mit Mitgliedern unsrer Loge immer mehr und mehr zu besetzen.” Protokoll 93, Irmen, 89.

³⁸⁶ Protokoll 67, Irmen, 74.

could foster both enlightened progress and superstitious fanaticism, and Born wanted to ensure their rational influence was both seen and heard.

Through the experience of the early days of ‘press freedoms’ the intellectuals of Vienna had established goals, exposure to wide-ranging intellectual development, and, for some, pre-existing bonds of friendship. Entering the bonds of freemasonry presented further chances for articulation and propagandizing of ideas. *Zur Wahren Eintracht* identified itself as an Enlightenment intellectual society and imitated many of Weishaupt’s writings on Illuminati goals. Articulating the group’s ideology and history, Born reported: “Since its founding, the lodge *Zur Wahren Eintracht* in Vienna established as its main occupation the improvement of the inner self and striving for truth, the only things they consider warrant a mason calling work. Convinced that only powers unified and focused in a similar direction can bring them closer to their goals, they were intent in their choice of brothers on first-rate men having will and ability enough to offer up their hands for these deeds. In possession of these collaborators, they went to work.”³⁸⁷ In true optimistic Enlightenment spirit, the lodge leaders intended to cultivate the ‘brothers’ as producers of knowledge and proceed to effect real transformations among the conservative and backward-thinking sectors of their homeland. The use of the word *Arbeit* (Work) throughout the lodge’s literature signifies the desire to produce quantifiable results through the association of like-minded men.

³⁸⁷ Von Born, “Circularia an hieziger und Auswärtiger Logen”. HHStA: Vertraulichen Akten, 66. “Die [] zur W.E. im Orient von Wien machte sich seit ihrer Entstehung Vervollkommung des inneren Menschen und Streben nach Wahrheit zu ihrem Hauptgeschäfte, dem einzigen, das, wie sie glaubte, den Maurer berechtigen könnte, von *Arbeit* zu sprechen. Ueberzeugt, daß nur vereinigte, und nach einerley Richtung geordnete Kräfte sie diesem Zwecke näher bringen könnten, war sie in der Wahl ihrer Brüder vorzüglich auf Männer bedacht, die Willen und Fähigkeit genug hätten, ihr zu diesem Werke die Hände zu bieten. In Besitz dieser Mitarbeiter gieng sie ans Werk.”

The intellectual masons did not merely talk about the work at hand. Once organized, they changed the intellectual climate of Vienna.

Whether *ZWE* functioned as a state-approved precedent of a future academy remains in question. There is no way to determine Ignaz von Born's intentions for the lodge, but it does seem that Joseph II explicitly tolerated the type of freemasonry this lodge practiced. Also, the people cultivated for membership were generally those who qualified to belong to an Academy—even the conservative Professor Mayer was given an honorary membership. The lodge explicitly identified itself as being in favor of the 'enlightened' policies of the monarch, and frequently sang his praises even within the halls of an institution that historians view as a site for fomenting dissatisfaction with Old Regime Absolutism.³⁸⁸ Gathering reforming minds under the auspices of Freemasonry benefited both subject and ruler. The king could appreciate the useful and charitable contributions the intellectuals made without concerning himself with the ideas or the process used (and without having to act as a buffer between the anticlerical freemasons and the archbishop Migazzi, whose antagonism to Joseph created enough problems). Alternately, the Freemasons could work towards more profound changes without publicly risking their positions in a capital run by two courts. Freemasonry's structure, secrecy and adaptability ensured that it was a society that could be conveniently ignored when minor lines in the sand were crossed.

Masonic *Arbeit* and Enlightenment *Übung*

Once formed, the lodge focused on achieving its purpose: becoming an active intellectual center modeled on the academies of the west. Like the flurry of pamphlet publication after 'press freedoms' earlier in the decade, the achievements of the lodge in

³⁸⁸ Both Kosselleck and Jacob take this view.

such a short time are unparalleled. *Zur Wahren Eintracht* became an active base of the cosmopolitan Republic of Letters, patronized and published major contributions in arts, sciences and the humanities, and created a social space for lectures, discussions, and informal exchange of ideas. All of these results of Masonic *Arbeit* furthered the lodge's goal of stimulating Enlightenment. *Zur Wahren Eintracht* cannot be separated from its achievements as the lodge promoted a sense of duty and purpose in its members by inculcating the virtues of strenuous intellectual work and the social responsibility of the intellectual to effect change. Born preached, "Noble minded and virtuous men are not for themselves alone wise. They unite their efforts towards informing and communicating. The assessments that they gather are the property of humanity, for whom they toil [*arbeit*]. They spare nothing, instead placing their entire fame and happiness on enabling this contribution."³⁸⁹ Not only was the establishment and *Arbeit* of ZWE Born's driving passion, he expected fellow intellectuals to accept their responsibility to contribute to and spread knowledge through the available institutions of change. In many ways, the purpose of the lodge was not focused so much on the end result—the knowledge brought to the world through the lodge—as on the process, or the intellectual community and exercise provided by this sect of freemasonry.

Masonry fought popular conceptions of their association as either purely sociable in function or fundamentally silly with its symbols, signs and talk of secrets.³⁹⁰ The

³⁸⁹ "Edelmüthige und tugendhafte Menschen sind nie für sich allein wise. Ihr vereinigt Strehen geht auf Mittheilung und Ausbreitung. Die Schätze, die sie sammeln, sind das Eigenthum der Menschheit, für die sie arbeiten. Sie geizen damit nicht, sondern setzen ihren ganzen Ruhm, ihre ganze Glückseligkeit darein, selbe ausspenden zu können." Ignaz Von Born, "Ueber die wissenschaftliche Maurerey" in JFF 2:3 (1785) 66-67.

³⁹⁰ Contemporary plays tended to focus on the institution's absurdity, as Viennese theater was wont to do with any topic. One example from one of the most prolific playwrights of the 1780s is Schröder, F. L. *Die Freymaurer. Ein Lustspiel in drey Aufzügen. Aufgeführt auf dem k.k. Nationalhoftheater.*, (Wien "Zum

group expressed serious intent through their articulation of Masonic ideals and goals. Central to all other concepts in masonry was the ideal of *Arbeit*. Purposeful activity complemented the concept of masonry as an improving, charitable society, while also making the group ideal for those promoting Enlightenment as a program or method. *Arbeit* was a requirement for all members and it focused on direction. A member's work must have as its end the betterment of humanity. Through *Arbeit*, masonry was not limited to the space of the Temple where improvement would be without importance. Instead, the exclusivity within masonry served the general good through the ideal of work cultivated in its members.

The lodge provided a supportive social space whereby intellectuals could freely share ideas and could count on help and encouragement. The benefits of fraternal organization were substantial. Not only could members develop and mobilize through cooperation, confidence, and conviction inspired through trust and informal conversation among 'brothers', the structure of the lodge also provided the incentives for collective action as well as the leadership and expertise to make it effective.³⁹¹ Ignaz von Born himself stressed the importance of the language of fraternity within the lodge in a private letter. Though for some the word 'brother' was without meaning, Born argued that within their order, it represented "a summons to activity and the most worthy of pretensions to helpfulness".³⁹² Thus, more than just the comfort of fraternal bonds, the

finden bey dem Logenmeister", 1784). See also Elisabeth Großegger, *Freimaurerei und Theater, 1770-1800: Freimaurer Dramen an den k.k. privilegierten Theatern in Wien* (Wien: Böhlau, 1981).

³⁹¹ See Mary Ann Clawson, *Constructing Brotherhood. Class, Gender, and Fraternalism* (Princeton UP, 1989) 7-8. She elaborates a theory on fraternal organizations and the reasons for their efficacy and popularity.

³⁹² Born to Reinhold, 9 June 1784. In Keil, *Wiener Freunde* 35.

identification between members of the lodge created a stimulating group dynamic that provided an environment suited to productivity as well as improvement.

Through its diverse members, the lodge became a self-sufficient intellectual unit. Members not only provided a market for each others' works, they also helped promote and publish them. Alois Blumauer actively used his network of correspondents in Protestant Germany and Italy to promote his poetry, the publications of the lodge and those of fellow lodge members.³⁹³ There were also publishers in the lodge who provided their services to fellow *Eintrachters*; the publisher Artaria brought out the musical creations of members.³⁹⁴ Stimulating discussions, literary atmosphere and an environment that promoted the creation and publication of original work, *ZWE* provided the social connections and location that aided intellectual and artistic development in Vienna.

The diversity of fields represented in the lodge also ensured an interesting, productive exchange. The case of “the Magic Flute” is a perfect example, and one that is fully covered by modern historiography. Mozart, though not inducted in *Zur Wahren Eintracht*, was a member of the sister lodge sharing their temple space. The two lodges frequently met together and Mozart was well acquainted with the personalities and practices of the intellectual lodge. Many musicologists have identified within “the Magic Flute” personalities and literary background originating from the lodge. Characteristics and personality traits of Ignaz von Born and Angelo Soliman are represented in the opera

³⁹³ Blumauer letters held in Stadt und Landesbibliothek, H.S.I.N. 24905, ÖNB—Handschriften und Inkunabel Sammlung, Autograph 8/5, and in HHSTA, Vertraulichen Akten if correspondence was conducted on behalf of the lodge. Also, two scholars have published some of his extant letters—Edith Rosenstrauch-Königsberg, *Zirkel und Zentrum* and Robert Keil *Wiener Freunde*. The *Realzeitung* and *Journal für Freymaurer* were especially frequently promoted by Blumauer to his friends abroad.

³⁹⁴ Irmen, *Mozart's Masonry*, 100.

and even more compelling are the literary influences on the opera. Historians and musicologists point to an historical essay of Born's produced for and read in the lodge on ancient Egyptian mysteries as a major influence on the opera. In addition, Johann Alxinger, the poet and mason who transferred from one of the older Viennese lodges to *Zur Wahren Eintracht*, translated an old medieval epic into German that heavily influenced the libretto's storyline.³⁹⁵ The example of "The Magic Flute" thus illustrates the function of friendship as intellectual exchange in Viennese masonry. The stimulation of such mutual borrowing, aid, and discussion provided the basis for the most famed works of the Viennese Enlightenment.

In addition to intellectual cross fertilization, members found government positions for fellow members, wrote introductions to each other's works and helped each other out with references. In this way, the lodge *Zur Wahren Eintracht* functioned in much the same way as its contemporary society in London, the Literary Club of Samuel Johnson. John Brewer's recent work has shown the extent to which the intellectual support network created within that private society shaped the intellectual production of that period in Britain.³⁹⁶ I would argue the same for Vienna and *Zur Wahren Eintracht*, while adding that the Viennese masons also published members' work.

The cosmopolitanism of the lodge played a central role in extending Viennese access to Enlightenment developments elsewhere as well as communicating their advancements in learning to the rest of Europe. Freemasonry thus provided the Viennese Enlightenment with the means to ease the tension between their cosmopolitan longings

³⁹⁵ See Braunbehrens, *Mozart*, Irmen, *Mozart's Masonry*, and Paul Nettl, *Mozart and Masonry*. (New York, 1957)

³⁹⁶ John Brewer, *Pleasures of the Imagination*, 46-48.

and their contested and insecure local loyalties.³⁹⁷ The officers of *Zur Wahren Eintracht* conducted extensive correspondence with other Masonic lodges, learned societies and individuals throughout Europe.³⁹⁸ They maintained strong ties with other freemasons, giving updates on their activities and sending out lists of their members and officers.³⁹⁹ Foreign intellectuals also sent the lodge leaders requests for information on the city or suggestions to allow a visiting foreigner into the lodge.⁴⁰⁰ The lodge's publications played a major role as a source of international communication, as they broadcasted news of their activities and those of other orders throughout Europe.

In addition to correspondence, personal contacts ensured constant communication and connection with figures advancing Enlightenment throughout Europe. Members armed themselves with recommendation letters from the lodge when touring. A 1783 letter recommends the author Franz Ratschky on the basis of his merit, talent, and zeal for freemasonry and urges a brotherly reception by all fellow masons.⁴⁰¹ Such letters allowed *Wahren Eintracht* members access to other exclusive societies in their travels, made them representatives of the activities and achievements of their lodge abroad, and further expanded the circles of networks emanating from these intellectuals gathered in Vienna. Johann Alxinger, for example, traveled with letters for Friedrich Nicolai and others in Berlin, and while there struck up a permanent friendship that produced

³⁹⁷ See chapter 3 on the conflict of localism, nationalism and cosmopolitanism among the Viennese Aufklärer. On the role of masonry in “healing a split between nationalism and cosmopolitanism” see Scott Abbot, *Fictions of Freemasonry: Freemasonry and the German Novel* (Detroit: Wayne State UP, 1991) 22-23.

³⁹⁸ HHStA; Vertraulichen Akten, Carton 65/1 contains much of this intersociety correspondence.

³⁹⁹ *Circularia an hieziger und Auswärtiger Logen*, and *Tableau des Freres et membres de la tres juste, et tres parfaits Loge de st. jean sous le titre distinctif: de la vraie Concorde a l'orient de vienne en autriche l'an la lumiere 5785*. There were also such descriptions printed and sent out in German. HHStA, Vertraulichen Akten, Carton 66.

⁴⁰⁰ Blumauer to Graf Fekete, Spring, 1785. in Rosenstrauch-Königsberg, 253-4.

⁴⁰¹ Officers of *Zur Wahren Eintracht*, Recommendation Letter for Ratschky, 14 May 1783. HHStA: Vertraulichen Akten.

extensive correspondence. Nicolai after receiving a letter from Michael Denis through the visitor, responded, very pleased with Alxinger's company, "if more sensible people traveled from Berlin to Vienna, and from Vienna to Berlin, then entrenched prejudices finally would be rooted out."⁴⁰² The cosmopolitan connections supported in the lodge ensured that the Viennese would have a personal means of improving their image abroad.

Intellectuals and freemasons from throughout the world would in turn visit the lodge and report back the favorable impressions they formed there. In his visit to Vienna, the traveler and diarist Georg Förster became a lodge enthusiast. Impressed by its enlightened leanings, Förster became a contributing member within weeks of his arrival.⁴⁰³ The 1785 compilation of 176 active members listed seventy-eight as absent, and reported their regions of residence, encompassing a broad geographical range. Many of these members had been intellectuals visiting the city and quickly initiated to join the lodge's social practice of enlightenment. For regular lodge meetings, the inducted members of the lodge constituted an average of two-thirds of the attendants, the rest being masons from other lodges. At some meetings, the number of visitors reached as high as two-thirds of those present.⁴⁰⁴ The high number of visiting members like Förster attests to the success of the lodge in its goal of participating in the international intellectual scene, as well as an intention to spread their cause through example.⁴⁰⁵

⁴⁰² "wenn mehr verständige Leute von Berlin nach Wien und von Wien nach Berlin reisten, so würden eingewurzelte Vorurtheile endlich ausgerottet werden" Gustav Wilhelm, "Briefe des Dichters" in *Sitzungsberichte*, 5.

⁴⁰³ *Die Protokolle der Wiener Freimaurerloge "Zur Wahren Eintracht" (1781-1785)* Hans-Josef Irmen, ed. (Frankfurt, 1994) 41. Paul Zincke and Albert Leitzmann, eds. *Georg Forsters Tagebücher* (Berlin, 1914) 146, 155, 160.

⁴⁰⁴ Irmen, "Introduction" in *Protokolle*, 14. Irmen provides a chart of participants for various lodge functions from 1781 to 1785.

⁴⁰⁵ *Tableau des freres tres juste, et tres parfaite [] de St. jean sous le titre distinctif de la vraie concorde, a l'orient de vienne en autriche l'an de la lumiere 5785*. From HHSA, VA, Karton, Folio... Helmut

Also contributing to the internationalism of the order, the ex-patriate Karl Leonard Reinhold sent contributions and aided in the production of the lodge's journal from his home in Weimar. As a refugee in Protestant Germany, this Jesuit-in-flight and famed Kantian commentator remained a leading member of his former lodge, frequently solicited by his Viennese friends for essays and kept up to date on their activities.⁴⁰⁶ This association of determined intellectuals inspired enlightenment activity that transcended local origins, indicating a dedication to promoting learning throughout Europe, not just to further their own prospects or pursue exclusively Austrian reforms.

The international scope of the membership and the prominence of lodge brothers would give the group collective 'Ewigkeit'—this eighteenth-century obsession with leaving a mark through writings and Enlightenment actions applied to the group as well as individually. Members such as Brother Taufferer ensured the eternity of the lodge's name in scientific circles when he, heading for the Black Sea, had his ship named after *Zur Wahren Eintracht*.⁴⁰⁷ Also, two Masonic brothers commissioned by the king to circumnavigate the globe brought the group's fame to the broadest geographic extent possible.⁴⁰⁸ The lodge fêted and promoted members who through their activities made advancements for the state or for knowledge.

Reinalter, "Ignaz von Born als Freimaurer und Illuminat" in *Die Aufklärung in Österreich. Ignaz von Born und seine Zeit* (Frankfurt, 1991) 49.

⁴⁰⁶ See *Protokolle*, 31-32 on his academic contributions to the lodge. "Wenn Sie Musse haben, so schiken Sie uns Abhandlungen, Reden, Gespäche oder was Sie immer wollen, für unser Journal; wo die Zensur nicht so strenge ist, als in foro fori. Denn z.B. Ihr Mönchsgeist, der in Gemmingens Journal eingerückt werden sollte, hat die Zensur nicht passirt. Sie können jeder philosophischen Abhandlung bald so eine Wendung geben, dass sie für eine maurerische Schrift gelten kann. Bluamauer wird Ihnen für jeden Bogen 2 Ld'or entrichten." Letter from Ignaz von Born to Reinhold, 19 April 1784, quoted in Robert Keil, "Introduction" *Wiener Freunde, 1784-1808*, ed. Robert Keil (Vienna, 1883) 34.

⁴⁰⁷ Protokoll 85, p.84.

⁴⁰⁸ Protokoll 92, Irmen.

In addition to promoting ties between the Viennese intellectual community and the international Republic of Letters, *Zur Wahren Eintracht* played a substantial part in supporting Vienna's writers and artists. One type of patronage was monetary support in the form of grants or waived membership fees for impoverished intellectuals, Haydn and Soliman included.⁴⁰⁹ The masons also served as major buyers of enlightenment production by commissioning art, patronizing musicians (including Mozart and Haydn), financing scientific expeditions and paying the members for their contributions to the lodge's publications. Added to this financial role, the lodge also created a physical space conducive for learning, discussion, and intellectual production. The lodge collected its own library and Naturalia cabinet and the building opened daily for members to stop by to read, socialize with other members, and discuss and exchange books.⁴¹⁰ The lodge's amenities for relaxation, dining, and conversation ensured the space itself would promote intellectual sociability, and provided the furnishings and artwork to facilitate such functions. In patronizing the arts and sciences, the lodge acted in a capacity that the state and private society neglected and thus contributed substantially to the developing culture in Vienna.

A major ideal of many Masonic lodges was charity, and lodge activities focused on serving and aiding humanity. Born's freemasonry came by way of a Prague lodge that established and ran an orphanage in the 1760s in response to rampant problems of crime and prostitution by children without any other means or support.⁴¹¹ *Zur Wahren Eintracht* likewise had substantial philanthropic activities. At the end of every meeting

⁴⁰⁹ Paul Nettl, *Mozart and Masonry* (New York, 1957) 16. Soliman's incorporation, protokoll 18.

⁴¹⁰ HHStA, Vertrauliche Akten, Carton 66, and Zincke, ed., *Georg Forsters Tagebücher*. 179.

⁴¹¹ Ernest Krivanek, "Die Anfänge der Freimaurerei in Österreich" in *Freimaurer und Geheimbünde in 18. Jahrhundert in Mitteleuropa*, Helmut Reinalter, ed. (Suhrkamp, 1983) 185.

officers gathered donations. In addition to giving to poor artists and intellectuals, members could suggest where donations might be particularly useful. Also, the lodge received letters expressing and relating circumstances of want from non-masons. The lodge democratically determined the distribution of charity, with members discussing how much should go to whom.⁴¹² This participation in contributing and doling out funds, enabled all members to participate communally in philanthropic work, a function that furthered their collective sense of importance and justified the panegyrics to the brotherhood's role in helping humanity.

Vienna is known for its music, as is the Viennese Enlightenment. True to form, the lodge also made music a central part of their reforming activism and social intellectual life. The speech given upon Haydn's election into the lodge equated freemasonry with the virtues of music and spoke of the benefits he would bring to the lodge by contributing his musical talent.⁴¹³ The lodge began and ended meetings with songs, and frequently members composed songs to celebrate special events, birthdays, lodge anniversaries and saints days. An attribute specific to the Viennese Enlightenment, according to historian Ernst Wangerman, is the setting of poems to music. Using ideas inherited from writers ranging from Lord Shaftesbury to Moses Mendelssohn, Wangermann argues, Viennese masons believed this form of music promoted the achievement of the proper moral and emotional state. Some of the musical selections of the lodge were released under the title *Musicalisches Unterhaltungen der Einträchtigen Freunde*; adhering to the theories on the benefits of conversation between friends, even musical works purport to such edification through sociable exchange.

⁴¹² The Protokolls of the lodge have constant references to the discussion of the Alms collected and the handouts decided on.

⁴¹³ Irmen, *Mozart's Masonry* 98.

Much of the music in *ZWE* glorified the achievements of lodge members. Many songs were either dedicated to the Kaiser or Born, or were entirely about these two ‘fathers’ of the lodge. The first issue of the *Journal für Freymaurer* reprinted the lyrics dedicated to Born for the birthday festivities held in his honor in 1783, that praised Born and his central role in the lodge’s existence and success.⁴¹⁴ The same issue also published the songs the lodge produced for its fourth anniversary, including one entitled “Es lebe der Kaiser” which attributed the atmosphere of freedom in which they thrive to the king. Mozart’s cantata *Maurerfreude* was written to accompany a poem celebrating a commission Von Born received from the emperor. These celebratory works, though certainly not all as transcendent as Mozart’s, were highly effective in establishing unity and pride in the work of the lodge. All songs express a sense of gratitude for their contemporary circumstances and undying optimism in the potential achievements of the lodge.

Music was especially important in the calls to action in the name of Enlightenment reform; lyrics frequently described the struggle for Enlightenment as a battle, and the music within the lodge became rousing battle songs. A cantata written by Blumauer, reproduced in the *Journal für Freymaurer*, reinforced the messages the lodge promoted. In one verse, the masons fight a long, difficult war on behalf of humanity, winning that, they turn to the future, following the light of Truth, and (in a stanza anticipating the likes of Woodie Guthrie) “we build this land without force.”⁴¹⁵ The song illustrated the extent of enthusiasm and conviction in both their cause and the group ethic integral to a call for action, but it also portrayed a strong belief in a successful outcome—

⁴¹⁴ These songs and folk songs were authored by Leon, Ratschky and Blumauer, all of whom were frequent producers of music lyrics for the lodge. *Journal für Freymaurer* (1784).

⁴¹⁵ “baun wir ohne Zwang dieß Land” *Journal für Freymaurer*, vol 1; issue 1 (1784) 205.

a world where reason reigns. Referring to Hume's *Essays*, J.G.A. Pocock defines the enthusiasm of the Enlightenment as generated by the excessive hopes of the human mind.⁴¹⁶ In stating progress will occur without force, Blumauer reflected the Illuminist principles of the role of reformers as active and enthusiastic, but despite the intense investment in their hopes for change, they remained behind the scenes and not revolutionary.

In his most significant contribution to the transformation of the lodge, Ignaz Von Born created a new type of meeting distinct from ritual proceedings. In July of 1782, the lodge first determined to ensure the speeches, poems and other works performed by members as their lodge *Arbeit* would be collected and preserved in a separate, special folio. Then, in October, in a move indicating many more academic and literary readings would be forthcoming, the lodge expanded the office of the speaker to allow others a chance at 'Übung'. Singled out for the chance to "build the work-lodges through their lectures" were Jacobi, Kolzmeister, Ratschky, Blumauer and Köfil.⁴¹⁷ Finally, on November 4th, 1782, the first *Übungsloge* hosted lengthy readings including ones by Born on the "Mysteries of the Ancient Egyptians" and Sonnenfels with an essay on the "Influence of Masonry on Civil Society".⁴¹⁸

Born explicitly established this new type of meeting as a gathering devoted exclusively to intellectual discussion of works produced by members for fellow members. In a handwritten circular sent to other European lodges, the *Übungslogen* were advertised as a chance for masons to evaluate the conditions of freemasonry in history and today,

⁴¹⁶ J.G.A. Pocock, "Enthusiasm: the Anti-Self of Enlightenment" in *Enthusiasm and Enlightenment in Europe, 1650-1850*, Lawrence Klein and Anthony J. LaVopa, eds. (Huntington Library, 1998) 21.

⁴¹⁷ "unsre Arbeit=logen mit ihren Reden auferbauen" Protokoll 106, Irmen, p. 95

⁴¹⁸ Protokoll 112 records the events of the first *Übungsloge*, even providing abstracts of the works that were read, though these would later be published in the *Journal für Freymaurer*.

and thus allow further development for the institution. Essential to the gatherings was freedom, as essay contributors “believed that through it they could envision for their work a Masonic public, where the reader would not conceal his person and one could not evade his direct judgement, to prevent a certain anonymous security that makes authors only too often indifferent to their work.”⁴¹⁹ This belief, that Masonic lectures realized both a public and the self through uncensored and unrepressed intellectual work, held revolutionary implications. The implications therein were that the autonomous self and public held intrinsic value, that only freedom would result in the responsible development of knowledge, that contemporary practices of intellectual control and repression no matter how mild were damaging, and that the state needed reform.

The use of the word *Übung* in the name of the meetings indicated intent to create a space for the social *practice* of enlightenment. Practicing Enlightenment meant encouraging the exercise of reason through both the production of critical works and their discussion in social settings. This collective method of increasing knowledge and promoting mutual self-improvement was prized during the Enlightenment over all other forms of intellectual production. The *Übungslogen* thus fulfilled the stated goals of the association: stimulating Viennese intellectual production through company, example, and the intense pressure on members to contribute substantially to the meetings. In a letter to Friedrich Nicolai, the poet Johann Baptist Alxinger complained of this workload, as

⁴¹⁹ “glaubte dadurch, daß sie ihren Arbeitern ein maurerischen Publikum vergegenwärtigte, dem der Vorleser seine Person nicht verbergen, und dessen unmittelbarem Urtheile er nicht ausweichen konnte, jener anonyme Sicherheit vorzubeugen, die den Schriftsteller nur allzuoft gleichgültig für den Werth seiner eigenen Arbeit macht.” Circularia an hiesiger und auswärtiger [] in HHStA, Vertrauliche Akten, Karton 66.

writing for meetings in addition to his own work kept him completely overwhelmed.⁴²⁰

The lodge was indeed highly productive; twenty-one of these ‘exercises’ were held in two and a half years, with each meeting averaging three lengthy essays and numerous small toasts, songs and poems.

The *Übungslogen* were open to a variety of potential topics, allowing members opportunity to present anything from poetry and music to moral essays, history or scientific contributions.⁴²¹ There were rigorous standards for the work brought to the lodge. Essays needed to be reviewed by specialists and submitted to the lodge over a week in advance so members could prepare discussion.⁴²² Intellectual production by members fulfilled their Masonic requirements of *Arbeit*. These meetings succeeded in allowing exchange of ideas and collaboration between intellectuals, thus fully identifying the lodge with Enlightenment. It is in the context of the *Übungslogen* that the lodge most successfully replicated the functions of Academies.

The numbers of masons present at the *Übungslogen* more than doubled the attendance records for normal lodge business. In addition to the lodge’s constituency, these academic meetings brought in a large number of visiting members; anywhere between forty and sixty percent of those present were not inducted in *Zur Wahren Eintracht*.⁴²³ These types of meetings became ever more prevalent while ceremonial lodge meetings dwindled in proportion to the total number of times members gathered in a year. The success of the new form of meetings forced the leaders to rent a new, larger

⁴²⁰ Alxinger to Nicolai, 22 October 1785, quoted in Gustave Wilhelm, ed. “Briefe des Dichters Johann Baptist Alxinger”. In *Sitzungsberichte der Philosophische-Historischen Classe der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften*. Band 140. (Vienna, 1899) 21.

⁴²¹ HHStA, Vertraulichen Akten, Carton 70, contains copies of all the talks presented at these meetings.

⁴²² Irmen, “Zur Einführung” *Protokolle*, 17.

⁴²³ Irmen, “Zur Einführung”, *Protokolle* 14.

meeting space.⁴²⁴ The matter discussed in these intellectual lodges was not exclusive or narrow in scope nor did it encompass specific lodge matters or secrets. These lodges were semi-public intellectual gatherings benefiting from the structure and space provided by masonry, yet were distant from Masonic practice. It is thus apparent that the Viennese masons held the rituals and beliefs of masonry as a lesser priority to that of Enlightenment. Accessible, widely reported and well attended, the meetings dedicated to academic lectures and discussions were the fulfillment and answer to the goals of the *Aufklärer* in associating, yet its nature defied the privacy and exclusivity required in Masonic practice.

The lodge did not hesitate to spur members to produce for the audience at *Übungslogen*. The leaders also ensured that their enlightened, masonic *Arbeit* would be published and disseminated to enable a wider impact on the advancement of knowledge. Publications of the lodge included several collections of poems and music created for its ceremonies.⁴²⁵ Yet more significant were the two periodicals they issued. These journals were two of the most successful and enduring works of Vienna's typically ephemeral publishing business. One of these works, *Physikalische Arbeiten der einträchtigen Freunde in Wien*, served as a public outlet for the scientific work of members.⁴²⁶ The

⁴²⁴ Irmen, *Mozart's Masonry* 34.

⁴²⁵ Wernigg, *Bibliographie Österreichischer Drucke, 1781-1795*. (1973). 182. Lists 1783 and 1784 editions of *Gedichte und Lieder verfasst von den Brüdern der Loge zur wahren Eintracht*. Also, *Musikalische Unterhaltungen der einträchtigen Freunde in Wien. Erstes Werk, enthaltend Zwölf Lieder auf das Piano=forte*. Can be found in HHStA, Vertraulichen Akten, 66.

⁴²⁶ *Circularia an hiesiger und auswärtiger Logen*. HHStA, Vertraulichen Akten, 66. Helmut W. Lang, "Die Zeitschriften in Österreich zwischen 1740 und 1815." In *Die Österreichische Literatur. Ihr Profil an der Wende vom 18. zum 19. Jahrhundert (1750-1830)*. Herbert Zeman, ed. Teil I. (Graz, 1979) 216. See also Johann Pezzl, *Lebensbeschreibungen des Fürsten Raimund Montekukuli des Fürsten Wenzel Lichtenstein des Hofraths Ignatz von Born samt einem Portraite*. (Vienna, 1792).

lodge sponsored scientific works from start to finish, financing scientific expeditions and publishing accounts of expeditions in the popular, instructive form of travel memoirs.⁴²⁷

The other journal replicated the strange tension between secrecy and openness consuming the lodge as a whole. The leaders of *Zur Wahren Eintracht* created the *Journal für Freymaurer* to ensure that the work produced in the lodge would achieve its maximum usefulness through publication. The editors intended the journal specifically for other freemasons in part because, as Born claimed, the *Übungslogen* covered a great deal of Masonic material.⁴²⁸ In private correspondence, however, intellectuals also described the benefits of publishing a ‘private’ journal outside the power of the state censor, even indicating that publicly censored philosophical tracts were given only a nominal connection with masonry to enable their inclusion.⁴²⁹ In any case, the manuscript’s connection with the secret order offered the pretense for evading censorship. Flouting their separation from the state, the freemasons asked that subscribers send their orders to Aloys Blumauer, the editor of the *Journal*, at his office at the state censorship commission. Blumauer himself used the journal to circumvent censorship, publishing his own work in the journal after the Cardinal of Vienna had one of his publications suppressed.⁴³⁰

Despite nominal privacy, the degree of exclusivity in readership is in any case highly questionable. In its four years of existence, the quarterly maintained a popular subscription rate of a thousand copies. As many subscribers were entire lodges, it can be

⁴²⁷ Fuchs, “Karl Leonard Reinhold” 24. On contents of the journal, Blumauer provides some description in a letter to the Weimar publisher Beruch in 1785. Blumauer to Bertuch, 15 January, 1785, collected in Edith Rosenstrauch-Königsberg, *Freimaurer, Illuminat, Weltbürger* p. 234.

⁴²⁸ Von Born, *Circularia an hieziger und auswärtiger Logen*. HHStA: Vertrauliche Akten; 66.

⁴²⁹ See note 15.

⁴³⁰ Alxinger to Nicolai, 22 Oct., 1785. In Wilhelm, 23.

assumed its local and international audience exponentially exceeded that number. Copies of the journal have been found in ‘profane’ hands, and considering the popular practice of book exchange and the open lending policy of Masonic libraries, one cannot presume the *Journal für Freymaurer* remained secret.⁴³¹ Blumauer attempted to lure subscribers, and solicited entire lodges as well as consumers as diverse as a prince in Trieste and a bookseller in Weimar to handle international subscriptions.⁴³² Regardless of the question of subversive intent and exclusivity of readership, the *Journal für Freymaurer* and *Physikalisches Arbeit* provided the forum for Viennese masonry’s *Arbeit* of collecting, popularizing and preserving knowledge, and the *Übung* of Enlightenment ideals.

Enlightenment through the Lens of Freemasonry.

The peak of intellectual production in the Viennese Enlightenment occurred in the middle of the 1780s, thanks in large part to the contributions made by members of the lodge on Preßgasse. Through unremitting focus on *Arbeit*, the Viennese *Aufklärer* produced a large body of work that, though purportedly focusing on masonry and the masons, constitutes much of the most sophisticated social, moral, political and religious criticism of the Viennese Enlightenment. Quarterly for three years, journal issues of 250 pages in length would emerge from the Viennese presses, with content provided entirely by the masons of the city. Their intellectual production reached some degree of sophistication, producing quality pieces that explored a broad spectrum of contemporary issues and displayed a far-ranging erudition. This forum for intellectual development, in its style and content, represented a brand of Masonic Enlightenment unique to the

⁴³¹ Friedrich Gottschalk, “Vorwort” in *Bibliotheca Masonica. Dokumente und Texte zur Freimaurerei*. Band II, Teil, II, *Freimaurerisches Geistesleben im Zeitalter der Spätaufklärung am Beispiel des Journals für Freymaurer*, by Alexander Giese. (Graz, 1988) 3. Later in the book, Giese states that copies of the Journal were later found in Jesuit libraries, 23.

⁴³² Blumauer letters, in Rosenstrauch-Königsberg. pp. 248. 255-6. Alxinger letters, 1787, in Wilhelm, p27.

Viennese. This section explores the subjects of the masons' collective critique and the effects of filtering ideas through the secret society.

The adoption of the label of men of Enlightenment for the members of *Zur Wahren Eintracht* needs some clarification, and indeed justification, through an exploration of the thought produced in the lodge. Theories and desired reforms labeled as Enlightened by members, and use of methods commonly practiced in the European Enlightenment contribute to the identification of this lodge as an Enlightenment institution. This section will define Enlightenment broadly as a movement in attempting to determine the ways in which the Viennese masons of *Zur Wahren Eintracht* represented Enlightenment ideals and adapted them both to the practice of freemasonry and to the reformist projects they believed essential for Austria. It will become clear that the Viennese masons in the mid-1780s were active *Aufklärer*; their *Aufklärung* had specific aims and contours that need to be examined as it played a central role in fomenting public debate and establishing a system of thought identifiable as specifically Viennese. The lodge itself can claim no unified method or even ideology as the structure of the institution tolerated huge differences between the poets, scientists and philosophers. However, the focus on masonry and the opportunity that subject provided for exploring questions of the uses of association, the potential of moral man, the problems of superstition and religious abuses and evaluations of history, progress, citizenship and religion indicate a common dedication to Enlightenment criticism as well as some degree of anticlericalism.⁴³³

⁴³³ Edith Rosenstrauch-Königsberg, *Freimaurerei im Josephinischen Wien: Aloys Blumauers Weg vom Jesuiten zum Jakobiner* (Wien : Braumüller, 1975) 55, 58.

The freemasons' approach to Enlightenment was association, and the intellectual works emerging from this group often latched onto the subject itself. Intellectuals widely agreed association was a means for spreading Enlightenment, for uniting men served to increase their strength. Joseph von Sonnenfels' essay for the lodge on the influence of masonry on civil society stressed the necessity of society for man and argued that association was the means to achieve perfection. Through history, men who felt a higher calling to better humanity tended to gather in close circles, where their knowledge, abilities and virtues in pursuing a common goal would benefit all of society. "What steps towards perfection will such societies not await" he exclaimed.⁴³⁴ Sonnenfels' exclusion of those without 'calling' betrayed the elitism of the freemason and illuminati. However, even amongst the elect, he argued, potential could only be reached after uniting with fellows. Sonnenfels' arguments were also repeated in many forms, often in less sophisticated arguments, by fellow lodge members.

One focus of lodge writings was on locating freemasonry within a world divided into the state and the private sphere. Descriptions of the lodges as not tied to government nor to the daily private duties of subjects seemed to anticipate the Habermasian idea of a distinct public sphere. In evaluating the role of the lodge in 1784, Karl Michaeler discussed the disappearance of the great patrons that had allowed the development of a strong intellectual culture. Since individuals could not support a free life of thought, he thought the masons should adopt the role of providing the means for individuals to have "time and space to think." Whether that meant providing them with necessities or teaching them how to live independently as intellectuals, masonry would replace

⁴³⁴ "Welche Schritte zur Vervollkommenung konnten solchen Gesellschaften nicht erwarten werden"; Joseph von Sonnenfels, "Von den Einflusse der Maurerey auf die bürgerliche Gesellschaft" in *Journal für Freymaurer* 1:1 (1784) 135-164.

traditional elite and court patronage.⁴³⁵ This lodge member thus saw masonry as providing his contemporaries the opportunity for opinion formation and criticism; he argued that without the physical and metaphorical space of the lodge, there could be no intellectual culture. The very independence and isolation of this separate space allowed for reason to raze backwards traditions and suggest the means for achieving progress towards enlightenment. Though many of the lodge members were bureaucrats, they did not have the king's ear nor could they enact substantial policy changes. Through the gathering of the lodge brothers, however, they assumed a substantial public voice.

The group's most vocal public stance was urging the reform of masonry and supporting the tolerance to the order proclaimed in the Tolerance Patent. Lodge members also made their religious opinions heard, praising the changes with which Joseph II began his rule and establishing their order as a solid, rational institution that checked the power of the Catholic hierarchy in Vienna. Simply by standing up to Cardinal Migazzi and the Catholic hierarchy in its attempts to repress all religious criticism and persecute anyone abandoning the faith, and the popular Fathers Fast and Pochlin who preached a highly conservative, regressive Catholicism that the masons blamed for spreading ignorance, the lodge created the opportunity for the public to question and critique this formerly unopposed authority.

The claim that masonry also occupied a middle space between society and nature further distanced masons from the mundane allowing them to claim authority and the ability to initiate progress. Augustin Schittlersberg argued masonry began when a few philosophers, recognizing some advantage in being separated from civil society, wanted

⁴³⁵ "Zeit und Luft zum denken"; Karl Michaeler, "Ueber die Verbindung der Künste und Wissenschaften mit der Maurerey" in JFF 1:2 (1784) 77-8.

to create a society that would be "the medium between the independent state of nature, and between civil society." Masonry thus combined the security of being a member of a state and the protection of being in a lawful society with natural freedoms, basic equality, and dependable friendship.⁴³⁶ Placing masonry in a privileged space that both allowed absolute rule and protected the members from its infringements functioned as a critique of the loss of natural rights and comforts in modern governments.

Lodge literature not only lauded association for its improving qualities, it also recognized the social function of the institution as it made for a more pleasant life. In the lodge, songs would proclaim, the community made *Arbeit* was made 'sweet'.⁴³⁷ The intellectual community formed is equated with paradise, or simply described as a welcome refuge and site of support. In contrast, essays also raised the specter of life without brothers. Franz Kreil argued that without masonry, members would grow depressed by the backwardness of the world; only with other lovers of mankind surrounding one would individuals develop the strength needed to fight for improvement.⁴³⁸ The social function of the lodge was not a frivolous one to its members; intellectual friendship provided the brothers with motivation, support and the basis for collective action. Mobilizing a group united by bonds of loyalty not only benefited from increased security and enthusiasm in action, it also provided the ability to coordinate and organize.⁴³⁹

⁴³⁶ "das Mittelding zwischen dem unabhängigen Stande der Natur, und zwischen der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft": Augustin Schittlersberg, "Ueber das Zeremonial" in JFF 1:2 (1784) 105-137.

⁴³⁷ Ratschky, "Es leben die Brüder unsrer [] und die Eintracht" in *Journal für Freymaurer* 1:1 (1784) 213.

⁴³⁸ Franz Anton Kreil, "Von der Wirkungen der Maurerey auf den Muth und Thätigkeit des Menschcnfreundes" *Journal für Freymaurer* 2:1 (1785) 59-76.

⁴³⁹ Mary Ann Clawson, *Constructing Brotherhood. Class, Gender and Fraternalism* (Princeton UP, 1989) 7.

Many authors offered explanations of why masonry provided a perfect form of association. One argument claimed that the complete trust in brotherly unity and love instilled in the brothers the confidence to strive for change against obstacles. Through all the discussions of association and masonry, the brothers were unwaveringly supportive of their institution. They produced excessive panegyrics, such as Retzer's description: "A tremendous number of rays of spirit divided through the entire world will be collected in one single focal point, the most diverse skills trained on one and the same big enterprise, and the countless streams of human knowledge will flow in the current of the common welfare."⁴⁴⁰

Mere sociability generated better, more virtuous men; the group's philosophy thus focused on the idea of what constituted moral man. In *Übungslogen*, everyday gatherings, and throughout the pages of the *Journal für Freymaurer*, the members of *Zur Wahren Eintracht* attempted to define the ways in which their society bettered its adherents, and thus sought a definition of the virtues and behaviors that would improve all of human society. The Viennese Enlightenment thus connected moral philosophy to sociability and social action because of the centrality of the system of freemasonry to virtue formation.

After providing evidence for the heavy influence of Shaftesbury's thought in Vienna, Ernst Wangermann argued that moral aestheticism was the main characteristic of Austrian Enlightenment.⁴⁴¹ Though he did not evaluate the specifically Masonic-based

⁴⁴⁰ "Eine ungeheure Anzahl durch die ganze Welt vertheilter Stralen des Geistes werden auf diese Art in einem einzigen Brennpunkte aufgefangen, die mannigfaltigsten Geschicklichkeiten auf einem und eben demselben grossen Geschäfte ausgebildet, und die unzähligen Kanäle menschliche Kenntnisse in den Strom der allgemeinen Glückseligkeit geleitet": Joseph von Retzer, "Mönchtum und Maurerey" in *Journal für Freymaurer* 1:4 (1784) 187.

⁴⁴¹ Wangerman, E. "'By and By we shall have an Enlightened Populace': Moral Optimism and the Fine Arts in Late-Eighteenth-Century Austria." *Austrian History Yearbook* (1999). XXX: 1-15.

Enlightenment of the 1780s, his argument can be applied to the writings of *Zur Wahren Eintracht* members. Blumauer sums up the connection between Enlightenment and morality in arguing that “Nature gave him [man] reason to think well, to act well it gave him the heart!”⁴⁴² The development of the virtues of members for their self-improvement is a frequent subject of the essays on freemasonry produced by the *Übungslogen* and printed in the *Journal*. The most accomplished and profound of Vienna’s Enlightenment thinkers, Josef von Sonnenfels, argued the importance of masonry for developing moral man by drawing a direct line between the virtuous mason and the improvement of humanity, claiming the purpose of masonry was “to increase the numbers of virtuous citizens through the order’s singular means, and to promote the common good of humanity through the welfare of states.”⁴⁴³ The discussion of cultivating the moral virtues of the freemason to improve society exposes the influence of British moral philosophers from Shaftesbury through Smith on the Viennese enlighteners.⁴⁴⁴

The *Eintracht*’s writers equated *Aufklärer* with *Menschenfreund*—thus, as philanthropy was one of the duties of masonry, according to this equation, the orientation of the lodge alone fulfilled necessary virtues. Humanity received the benefits of the associational activities of the masons. The order became “a Temple for humanity’s common welfare, that united good people from all classes, peoples, and regions.” Thus,

⁴⁴² “Natur gab ihm [mensch] Verstand um recht zu denken, Um recht zu handeln gab sie ihm das Herz!” Blumauer, “Glaubensbekenntnis eines nach Wahrheit Ringenden” in *Journal für Freymaurer* 1:1 (1784). 216.

⁴⁴³ “durch die dem Orden eignen mittel die Zahl der tugendhafter Bürger zu vergrößern, und durch das Wohl der Staaten, das gemeinschaftliche Wohl der Menschheit zu befördern.” Sonnenfels, “Von dem Einflusse der Maurerey” in JFF 1:1, 135-164.

⁴⁴⁴ Lawrence Klein, *Shaftesbury and the culture of politeness* And Oz-Salzburger’s *Translating the Enlightenment: Scottish Civic Discourse in Eighteenth-Century Germany* (Clarendon, 1995) though focusing on the transformation of Scottish moral philosophy when adopted by Protestant Germans, is an impressive study of what happens when ideas cross cultural and national borders. The popularity of Scottish thought among north Germans as shown in this work also implies that the moral philosophy of the Viennese mason could have arrived through various sources.

masons represented the order as working on behalf of, and symbolically representing, all of humanity, no matter their identity or allegiance. Interestingly, it is this love of humanity that is used to justify exclusivity, for in their generous love of all humanity the brothers themselves monopolized human virtue.⁴⁴⁵

Recognizing the moral example of the mason, one writer suggested allowing children access to the lodge so they could benefit from this incomparably virtuous society.⁴⁴⁶ In Ratschky's discourse on the education of youth, Rousseau's influence is blatant. Following from the principle that the best means of teaching is through example, and that in the 'profane' world, children customarily only learn 'dry knowledge' or lies, Ratschky argued that children should have the opportunity to observe the freemasons. Masonry provided an example of "virtue in its original purity." Ratschky continued his argument, representing masonry as the school of virtuous, useful men; thus "no institution is more capable in its design to make into men again those turned into degenerates through education or relationship, to either improve his heart or perfect it, to completely erase away the early influences of profane corruption, to continuously develop the propensity for good, to make commonly useful through friendly exchange with fellows the sentiments originally concentrated on the self alone, and thereby to transform the cold, insensitive self-love into general, warm brotherly love." The opportunity to open oneself completely to others in friendship plus the gradual demise of egotism allowed the fulfillment of humanity—the feeling, moral man in society. Transparent communication within the lodge was a gift allowing masons the ability to

⁴⁴⁵ "eine Tempel des allgemeinen Menschenwohls, der gute Menschen aus allen Ständen, Völkern, und Welttheilen vereinigt." Retzer, "Monchthum und Maurerey" JfF 1:4 (Vienna, 1784) 167-188.

⁴⁴⁶ Ratschky, "Von dem Einfluß der Maurerey auf die Bildung der Jugend" in JfF 2:2 (1785) 163-174.

improve. Ratschky thus ends: “Freedom to think is the prerogative of mankind. Freedom to say what one thinks, must be the prerogative of the free Masons.”⁴⁴⁷

The practice of masonry indicated that not all men could become virtuous through the lodge. Lodges judged initiates first for their moral superiority, and would turn ‘seekers’ away. *Zur Wahren Eintracht* went far in their adopted role as social court and even sought to control standards of virtue among potential members in sister lodges. When members heard the lodge *Zur Beständigkeit* was considering inducting a man who recently fought in a bar brawl, they entered into their books; “so it was decided, to inform the aforesaid Lodge of this and leave it to their own discretion whether they want to admit as a brother someone whose company the profane avoid.”⁴⁴⁸ This was not a sole occurrence with *Zur Beständigkeit*, and *ZWE* even threatened to end relations with them and force action by the provincial lodge for their poor standards. Though the Masonic essays glorified the function of the lodge in improving the individual and extolled the virtues of equality between brothers, the system of masonry nevertheless allowed an elitism that was hard to resist, even for these ‘friends of humanity’.

Another topic predominating the discussions and writings emerging from *Zur Wahren Eintracht* was the rhetoric of their reforming activism in which they assumed the positive changes brought about through application of reason. Reason to the *Aufklärers* was moral—they thus focused on the veracity of their beliefs. For the most part their

⁴⁴⁷ “die Tugend in ihrer ursprünglichen Reinigkeit,” “kein Institut in seiner Anlage fähiger ist, den durch Erziehung und Verhältnisse entarteten Menschen wieder zum Menschen zu machen, sein Herz entweder zu bessern oder zu vervollkommen, die frühen Eindrücke der profanen Verderbniß allmählig wegzutilgen, die Neigung zum Guten immer mehr auszubilden, das ursprünglich auf das eigne Selbst konzentrierte Gefühl durch freundschaftliche Vertheilung an Mitgeschöpfe gemeinnützig zu machen, und so die kalte unempfindliche Selbstliebe in allgemeine warme Bruderliebe umzuwandeln.” And “Freyheit zu denken ist das Vorrecht des Menschen. Freyheit zu reden, was man denkt, muß das Vorrecht des freyen Maurers seyn.” Ratschky, “Ueber die Einfluß” 168, 174.

⁴⁴⁸ “so beschloß man, dieses besagter Loge bekannt, und es ihr anheimgestellt seyn zu lassen, ob sie einen als Bruder aufnehmen will, mit dem der Profane umzugehen sich scheut.” Protokoll 76, Irmen, 79.

reformist language focused on either the eradication of religious bigotry or on the creation of useful subjects or citizens; these desires became imperatives as a result of the freemasonic assertion of reason's moral authority.

Morality and Reason, when applied to religion and society, generated a major cause for Enlightenment thinkers throughout the continent. Toleration was a fulfillment of the Masonic virtue of generosity combined with belief in universality of man. *Zur Wahren Eintracht* sought to enforce tolerance in masonry as a whole and to right instances of injustice committed within Vienna's Masonic lodges. In the early summer of 1782, an incident of a Greek merchant's mistreatment because of the darkness of his skin was brought to the attention of Born through a colleague of his in the *Hofkammer in Münz und Bergwesen*. This man, also Greek, related the "unlawful treatment" of brother Rali, a member of *Zur Beständigkeit*. The lodge Protokolls over the course of the next two meetings decided to step in on behalf of the slighted man. This incident is important for both its indication of active enforcement of equal treatment, and the group's adoption of responsibility in protecting masons, even when members of sister lodges. The practice of toleration, however, seems to have been limited to masons: when it was discovered the victim of racism was not the same Rali as the one who was a Masonic brother, the issue disappeared from the lodge records.⁴⁴⁹

The lodge further practiced toleration of various religions. Though the majority of members were Catholic as a result of the high number of members from the Habsburg hereditary lands, the number of non-Catholics was a surprisingly high ten percent.⁴⁵⁰ The lodge membership incorporated diversity of belief and practice, including Catholic

⁴⁴⁹ Irmen, *Protokolle* 78.

⁴⁵⁰ *Tableau des Freres et membres de la tres juste, et tres parfaite [] de st. jean sous le titre distinctif: de la vraie Concorde a l'orient de vienne en autriche l'an de la lumiere 5785.* in HHStA, VA 66: Nachlass 15.

monks, protestant preachers, orthodox and atheists as brothers. Despite this proof of the practice of toleration, there were no Jewish members of ZWE. Joseph von Sonnenfels, a converted Jew, was of course a very influential member, but practicing Jews were not present.⁴⁵¹ Jews were not barred from Viennese freemasonry, however, for one of the founding members of Vienna's first lodge in 1742 was a Jewish jeweler whose fellow members were multi-national but overwhelmingly high nobility or diplomats.⁴⁵²

The Masonic ideal of equality informed tolerance as well as the practice of brotherhood. Social equality was held as one of the most important practices within masonry, despite the surrounding world's practice of granting privilege and advantage according to birth. A striking example of the equalizing effects of membership can be found in a collection of Alois Blumauer's letters. For years, Blumauer cultivated a correspondence with a prince in Trieste. Before Blumauer became a mason, the exchange was highly formal and stylized, but once they established the common bond of 'brothers of the order', all formality melted away, and if still stylized the later letters expressed brotherly love rather than obedient servitude.⁴⁵³ This adoption of belief in the universalizing effects of masonry increased satisfaction among the *Aufklärer* in their work because of the reinforcement of the idea of working in common for the common good. It further justified their hope in the potential for intellectual advancement within

⁴⁵¹ R. William Weisberger, "Freemasonry as a source of Jewish Civic Rights in Late Eighteenth Century Vienna and Philadelphia: A Study in Atlantic History" in *East European Quarterly*, XXXIV, no.4 (January 2001) 419-445. This study of attitudes towards Jewish civic rights in the lodge *Zur Wahren Eintracht* as well as a Philadelphia lodge is a disappointing piece of scholarship. Mr. Weisberger, in trying to make a case for a Jewish emancipation movement in Vienna ignores the vast evidence that contradicts his argument, including the anti-Jewish writings of some of the members and the fact that the writings in favor of the Edict of Toleration take on the same formula that all the pro-Joseph panegyrics adopted. Unfortunate wording in his thesis asserts that Enlightenment ideas and Masonic formulas were adopted to free the Jews.

⁴⁵² Krivanek, "Die Anfänge der Freimaurerei in Österreich" 180.

⁴⁵³ Blumauer to Graf Fekete, 1783-1784. reproduced in Rosenstrauch-Königsberg, "Anhang", 244-249.

their city. Despite the equalizing rhetoric, the lodge had a large number of members associated with the ‘second nobility’. So in reality, there was not much in the way of de facto cross-class socialization. Lodge member Joseph Haydn was extremely unusual in the low situation of his birth to a family of serfs and life in service to the Esterhazys, as was Angelo Soliman, the recently freed slave.

Masonry’s conception of equality had contradictory implications for social practice and concepts of the social order. Within the walls, all members had to be treated equally and the bond of brothers could not discriminate between members. In an essay entitled “On the observance of Masonic Equality outside the lodges”, one member stressed the benefits of this practice of equality, but argued that the rejection of social conventions should not be freely shown to the “profane”. He insisted the masons respect the hierarchical social order and used Montesquieu to support his argument that discrimination is a civic duty that must be upheld as a citizen’s highest concern. Even with the emphasis on equalizing within the lodge, masonry justified and made acceptable the divisions of society outside the lodge.⁴⁵⁴ Here, again, the masons created a conceptual barrier between enlightened Masonic virtues and their application to society as a whole. This provided yet another justification, or at least explanation for, exclusivity and privacy. The article by Augustin Schittlersberg ended provocatively, however, with the idea that the philosophy of equality could be of no value if its implications—that all people have virtues and reason in common—did not extend beyond the walls of a single

⁴⁵⁴ James Van Horn Melton, *The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe* (Cambridge UP, 2001) 253-254.

private society.⁴⁵⁵ This inconsistency points to the tension between enlightened ideals for humanity and the potential for their realization in an Old Regime state.⁴⁵⁶

Another area of contradiction for the masons was the tension between exclusivity and openness. Viennese intellectual sociability enforced a certain degree of openness in order to ensure the city's intellectual culture did not close itself off to essential outside influences. However, the masons were at their most exclusive when it came to the activities that most concerned enlightenment: i.e. intellectual production for the lodge and journals. Many of the essays in the *Journal für Freymaurer* reproduced these contradictions by arguing in defense of their exclusivity. Sonnenfels in particular argued for strenuous testing of the virtues and potential contributions of men before consideration for membership. Because of the model masons provided for citizenship and morality, he argued their goal should be "when the world will never be mistaken in holding every just, noble-minded, and noble-acting man for a mason, and assuming from a mason that he is a just, noble-minded, and noble-acting man."⁴⁵⁷ Though all the masons appreciated the results of exclusivity within their lodge, many of them repeatedly wrote on the need to reform lodge secrecy and other conventions to allow for the spread of Masonic knowledge and improvement. In contrast to the older Sonnenfels, they believed that only when the ideas and practices within masonry were spread to the rest of the world would humanity approach perfection and enlightenment.

⁴⁵⁵ Augustin Edler von Schittlersberg, "Ueber die Beobachtung der maurerischen Gleichheit ausser den [] [Logen]" JFF, 2: 1 (1785) 77-82.

⁴⁵⁶ To be fair, few philosophes argued for total equality, as Gordon argues in *Citizens without Sovereignty*, 3-5.

⁴⁵⁷ "wann die Welt jeden rechtschaffenen, edeldenkenden, edelhandelnden Mann für einen Maurer hält, und bey einem Maurer die Vermuthung, daß er ein rechtschaffener, edeldenkender, edelhandelnder Mann sey, niemals irre fallen wird." Joseph von Sonnenfels, "Von dem Einflusse der Maurerey auf die bürgerliche Gesellschaft" in JFF 1:1 164.

The lodge literature superimposed the jargon of Enlightenment on the language of Freemasonry, so that the ideals of one became equated with those of the other. This interpretation of one system through another allowed the ideas of Enlightenment to adopt the supporting structure and marketing capabilities of this popular association. Problems arose, however, when the ideas of Enlightenment came in conflict with the traditions of the secret order, most tellingly in the need for justification of secrecy and exclusivity. Yet, the masons contributing works to *Übungslogen* and the *Journal für Freymaurer* did not recognize the tension between the Enlightenment ideals they expressed and the practice of privileging their own order. Choice of brothers was necessary to creating the supportive atmosphere fundamental in intellectual sharing and development. And, as Sonnenfels argued, the improvement of the few in the lodge would spread when the members went about in the world until eventually, this Enlightenment would infect all of society, improving the entire population, the state and the economy to boot. By gathering those with talent apart from the rest of society, the abilities of the few would be cultivated and nurtured, allowing the exponential explosion of ability the masons impatiently awaited.⁴⁵⁸ Sonnenfels' interpretation of masonry thus closely resembles the elitism and exclusivity comprising the ideals of the Illuminati.

In addition to developing a critique of the social order, masons addressed the issue of citizenship: its duties, development, and society's role in creating citizens for the state, a role that tied the everyday practice of independent, thinking individuals to the grand projects of an absolutist monarchy. The masons stressed their role in elevating the nature of citizenship, but also allowed a theory on the nature of monarchy complementary to Enlightenment. They argued attachment to masonry led to awe of power and

⁴⁵⁸ Von Sonnenfels, *Von dem Einflusse* 137-138.

appreciation for the good in life, so the citizen produced there was someone who combined the dependence and obedience of a subject with the love of a son. This citizen obeyed laws because he recognized their benefits for the common good. He also developed his own abilities in order to become useful to 'his brothers, the state, the world.' In turn, the duties applied to the king included offering tolerance, patience and protection, providing the atmosphere in which masons achieve their work.⁴⁵⁹ Implicit in the portrait of a functioning state with useful citizens was a damnation of tyranny, or monarchy functioning outside the law, and against public opinion.

The reforming zeal of this community of Enlightenment activists focused on the creation of useful subjects to both improve the state and aid the economy. Central to the mason's political position was the idea of creating citizens who might demand civil rights. A work criticizing the abolition of the oath masons took upon entering the order claimed to honor the tradition of the oath, but questioned its continued usefulness. Grezmüller, the author of the essay, argued the secret knowledge of the masons would not be harmful to outsiders, nor would it obstruct the order's constitution or goals. The major focus of the critique was the implication within the oath of a desire for the lodge to function as a state within a state, and for members to practice citizen's rights. This revolutionary, republican suggestion was seen as dangerous to the order's true purpose, which according to Grezmüller was the forfeiture of worldly power and the exercise of caution with respect to relations with the state. In suggesting its reform, he tried to argue that the offending part of the oath was originally meant only as allegory. The author, however, also argued the order produces better citizens and should expand membership

⁴⁵⁹ See Sonnenfels, "Von dem Einflusse" 148, and Blumauer, "Gesundheit auf den Kaiser. Der Hausherr und die Schwalbe. Ein Fable." In JFF 1:4 (1784) 190-194.

in order to expand influence.⁴⁶⁰ This essay is of particular importance to historiography today because of Margaret Jacob's influential thesis that freemasonry did in fact allow members to experience the practice of civil rights based in Enlightenment thought within the lodge, thus challenging the power of the state. Whether or not lodges were proto-governments, they did institute a degree of social leveling in their halls, and it is clear that even writers like Grezmüller, who hoped to end the damaging conception of civic functions of lodges, thought that there were real civic benefits to be had from masonry.

The members of *Zur Wahren Eintracht* looked beyond masonry as a tool for the development of modern moral, civic man to mount a criticism of contemporary practices in religion, the economy, academic disciplines, and freemasonry itself. Writers used criticism extensively as a tool to analyze freemasonry and this in turn often served as a cover for general state, social or religious criticism. The application of a critical stance towards a major lodge practice was a frequent topic of essays for the *Übungslogen*. Everything from rituals to mythology was assessed to determine how rational or useful it was. Grezmüller's essay *Ueber den Freymaurereid* is a typical example of this genre. He argued for the abolition of the freemasonic oath, claiming it no longer had relevance and implied an insult to the honesty and integrity of members. Grezmüller also advocated opening membership so that more could be improved by this guild united through virtue and reason.⁴⁶¹ Most of what was brought under the rubric of reform democratized and promoted the rationalization of Masonic practice. Underlying all Masonic critiques were implied broader aims—first to improve masonry to reach its potential and thereby to achieve broad societal changes. The questioning of lodge

⁴⁶⁰ Grezmüller, "Ueber den Freymaurer-Eid", *Journal für Freymaurer* 1:2 (1784) 151.

⁴⁶¹ Grezmüller, "Ueber den Freymauereid", 138-154.

practice often reflected on the outside world; for example, masonry's moral training became a replacement for the flawed church and bigoted religious orders. Criticism of lodge tradition replicated the critique of monasticism—the lodge rejected the superstitious strains, the diversity of practice and adherence to beliefs, and especially the divisiveness between orders in freemasonry in Vienna and throughout Europe. Such rigorous evaluation of the art of freemasonry was the status quo in the lodge dedicated to the Enlightenment.

Condemnation of the mystical practices allowed by masonry showed the distance between most European lodges and what Von Born's represented to its members. Articulating the dissociation of their lodge from general masonry, a letter of Alxinger's in 1785 states, "in any case, it is not in the least to be feared that our lodge spreads superstition or whatever fool notion, that it should try to assume for itself monarchical authority, and tease or tyrannize, so long as Born is secretary and prompter of the national grand master. If he however concerned himself no more with Masonry, then so falls our lodge, which actually is the gathering place of unclouded Masonic intellectuals, and I would hang my trowel on the wall."⁴⁶² Masonry's adaptability meant it encompassed the extremes of *Aufklärung* and *Aberglauben*: though adherents to masonry could lean toward superstition as in the groups of Rosenkreuzer, yet the intellectual masons of *ZWE* guided their lodge in the opposite direction—toward the light of *Aufklärung*. The academic lodge established in Vienna provided a useful forum for

⁴⁶² Alxinger an Nicolai, 22 October 1785. in "Briefe des Dichters Johann Baptist Alxinger". "Dass übrigens unsere Landes [] abergläubischen oder was immer für einen Unsinn verbreiten, dass sie sich eine monarchische Autorität anmaassen, und necken oder tyrannisiren soll, ist, solange als Born Secretär und Souffleur des Landes Grossmeister ist, nicht von weitem zu befürchten. Giebt sich aber der nicht mehr mit Maurerey ab, so fällt unsere Loge, die eigentlich der Sammelplatz unbenebelter Maurerköpfe ist, und ich hänge meine Kelle an die Wand." 22-23.

pushing forward enlightenment reforms despite the apparent contradiction between form and ideals.⁴⁶³ The evaluation of freemasonry and Vienna's intellectual lodge in the letter from Alxinger indicated a rejection of much of what defined masonry in this iconoclastic adaptation of the order.

Criticism of Austrian religious practices was also widespread in the lodge literature. The 1780s saw a major overhauling of the relationship between church and state, with Joseph II asserting his prerogative and initiating a major battle with the papacy, and especially the pope's emissary in Vienna, the Cardinal Migazzi. There were many progressive changes established, especially in relation to monastic orders. The public discourse surrounding religion paralleled the changes Joseph II enacted, with public opinion closely following the initial moves of the rational ruler.

The *Aufklärer* considered monks one of the most important sectors in need of reform in the critical literature of the 1780s in Vienna. The lecture, "Mönchtum und Maurerey", given to gathered freemasons by Retzer, evaluated the two systems of brotherhood. Retzer claimed there was similarity between the two types of orders in their service for the brothers, and the intensity of feelings inspired amongst them. With that, however, the comparison ended. Retzer equated slavery in the cloisters to slavery in new world plantations, and damned monks for retreating behind the walls of their cloister, as opposed to the masons who virtuously worked in the world in order that they may better it. Descriptions that might traditionally have been reserved for monks were conceptually transformed into attributes of masons; thus, masons become the brothers working for God in this world. Masonic temples developed higher spirituality. The author further argued

⁴⁶³ "Vorerinnerung über die Veranlassung, den Zweck, und die eigentliche Bestimmung dieses Journals" *Journal für Freymaurer* 1:1 (1784) 7-9.

that monks, as the enemies of enlightenment, were the main opponent of the masons who embraced enlightenment as the most charitable work they could perform for humanity.⁴⁶⁴

The experience of prominent members heavily influenced the attitudes expressed by the masons on monastic orders and their resistance to change and reason. The biographies of most of the intellectual participants of the lodge, including Born, began with an early stint in which the member entertained the idea of taking orders. Some actually took orders, later renouncing their belief—Reinhold himself was forced to flee his intellectual friendships in Vienna for the Protestant states and the support of Wieland and Kant—or being released through the abolition of the Jesuits or other orders in 1781. The fate of the religious who lost their faith was thus an enduring preoccupation. Alxinger related one of their causes—the fate of a Franciscan who renounced orders to adopt Protestantism—in a letter to Friedrich Nicolai in 1785. The monk asked the bishop for release from his vows and, when denied this dispensation, declared he wanted to convert to Protestantism. The issue fell before the Kaiser, who decided, despite recent findings in favor of men later regretting their vows, that the monk would spend a year in prison, followed by house arrest, during which time he could not be seen without his cowl.⁴⁶⁵ Alxinger fired off another indignant letter after the burial of *ZWE* member Maximilian Stoll. This imperial doctor and professor of medicine had in his youth, like many of the other lodge brothers been a Jesuit. Despite decades of life outside that order, his wife had him buried in a cowl; “so shall this great man wear in his grave the mask that he set aside.”⁴⁶⁶ These instances of injustice and inability to escape the church

⁴⁶⁴ Retzer, “Mönchtum und Maurerey”.

⁴⁶⁵ Alxinger to Nicolai, 21 May, 1785. in Wilhelm, 18.

⁴⁶⁶ “so sollte dieser grosse Mann die Maske, die er weglegte, noch im Grabe tragen.” Alxinger to Nicolai, 3 July, 1787 in Wilhelm.30.

paralleled the damnations of Catholic injustice made by men like Voltaire and Diderot in France. Though the Viennese generally refrained from detailing a loss of belief, the anger over Catholicism's hold over men's freedoms devolved frequently into anti-monastic ranting. Yet, attacks on monks were rarely raised to Voltairean levels of *écrasez l'infame*. The institution itself was under attack, not Christian dogmas. The contemporary abolition of certain monastic orders by Joseph II allowed a damning of the practice of monasticism to be cast as support for the inspirational actions of their king.

Complementary to the vilification of monks, the favorite specters raised by the reformers were superstition, religious bigotry and persecution. These evils were omnipresent, whether in society, church, history or within other forms of masonry. All of these issues were personally relevant for the members of *Zur Wahren Eintracht*, and the application of light to superstition was foremost among the group's goals. Many of the writings published in the freemason's journal applied reason to religion in anti-Catholic discussions of what constituted belief. In the study of ancient religions as a means to establish the roots of masonry, Born mounted an implicit critique of Catholicism. Indeed the belief in ancient secrets and veracity of Masonic rituals as endowed by God and the ancients ran counter to Catholic doctrine. In describing the precursors to freemasonry the essayists recognized the religiosity of their practices and lauded them for their soundness. In discussing Hinduism, the geologist praised its rationality, asking "who does not recognize in these fundamental principles a pure philosophy and enlightened religion worthy of being known by the wise."⁴⁶⁷ The histories of ancient religions aimed to establish direct connections to Masonic practice and knowledge. The similarities

⁴⁶⁷ "wer erkennt nicht in diesen Grundsätzen eine gereinigte Philosophie und aufgeklärte Religion, würdig von Weisen bekannt zu werden." Born, "Ueber die Mysterien der Indier" in JFF 1:4 (1784) 27.

between religious beliefs in disparate ancient societies indicated some degree of conviction in the universality of belief that inspired contemporary Deists.

Where less than a decade before there existed no toleration of religious discourse other than Catholicism, *Zur Wahren Eintracht* allowed members complete liberty to discuss religious beliefs. Though the public in general experienced increasing religious freedom under Joseph II, freemasonry further protected intellectuals from conservative religious forces still seeking to stifle the questioning of doctrine. Alois Blumauer attempted to publish a poem advocating reason over belief only to have Cardinal Migazzi force the state's hand in censoring it. The *Journal für Freymaurer*, protected as it was by freemasonic secrecy, provided Blumauer with the venue to broadcast his religious critique. The poem asserted that faith is easier than reason, but reason more beneficial. He concluded that only through the use of reason in questioning faith can a way be found to end the strife and establish reasonable faith.⁴⁶⁸

In addition to criticism of major societal issues like religion, the freemasons applied Enlightenment criticism to academic disciplines. History and the history of freemasonry became one popular venue for evaluating the purpose and methods of intellectual *Arbeit*. According to Edith Rosenstrauch-Königsberg, the popularity of histories of the ancient or mythical past resulted from the *Aufklärer's* response to and rejection of the predominance of the Baroque in Austrian tradition.⁴⁶⁹ The lodge initiated a series of lectures on the history of the mysteries of ancient societies in order to explore the roots of the practices of masonry. Von Born introduced the series with his multi-part

⁴⁶⁸ Alois Blumauer, "Glaubensbekenntnis eines nachWahrheitringenden" in *JFF* 1:1 (1784) 215-232.

⁴⁶⁹ Edith Rosenstrauch-Königsberg, "Die Philosophie der österreichischen Freimaurer und Illuminaten" in *Zirkel und Zentren. Aufsätze zur Aufklärung in Österreich am Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts*. Gunnar Hering, ed. (Wien: Deuticke, 1992) 296-300.

“Ueber die Mysterien der Aegyptier”, followed by “Ueber die Mysterien der Indier”.

Born wrote the histories with the contemporary agenda of glorifying masonry, justifying the lodge’s present bent, and establishing a framework from which to further reform freemasonic practice according to his set program.

Born, the natural scientist, was a prolific writer in this genre. He did use what sources were available to him, including ancient histories and contemporary travel accounts that recorded oral histories, folklore, or provided descriptions of the archaeological material remaining from ancient societies. The resulting works, however, count less as history than as contemporary commentary. “Ueber die Wissenschaftliche Maurerey”, for example, asserted the importance of the scientific bent of masonry by arguing that the ancients had instilled secrets within the rituals and orders of masonry to preserve them from the dangerous times of the dark ages. Using ‘logic’ as his proof, Born claimed the ancients ensured the secrets could emerge when masonry created minds virtuous enough and exercised them in the practice of the sciences.⁴⁷⁰ As this, of course, culminated in Born’s own lodge, the moral of the tale promoted the further development of the scientific exercises of the group. Reinhart Koselleck asserts that freemasons in the eighteenth century adopted a philosophy of history that allowed them to advance Masonic morality as a replacement to the reigning Christian thought system.⁴⁷¹ Born represented this elevation of masons to divinity as protectors of knowledge and morality in his historical studies produced through the lodge.

Other lodge members, however, took up the call for history and refused to follow Born’s example of selective reporting and rewriting of traditional history. Michaeler, a

⁴⁷⁰ Born, “Ueber die Wissenschaftliche Maurerey” in JFF 2:3 (1785) 49-78.

⁴⁷¹ Reinhart Koselleck, *Critique and Crisis*, 130-131.

historian at the University, used his historical knowledge differently. In “On the connection of the arts and sciences with masonry”, he compared and contrasted the practices of contemporary masonry to the esteemed ancient Pythagorean circle in order to establish the importance of the function of masonry in learning. No direct inheritance was claimed from this ancient society, as Born might have done; instead masonry is simply placed in a tradition, stemming from the ancients, whereby associations allow for developments in arts and sciences.⁴⁷² Similarly, when the lodge solicited Reinhold for a contribution to the series on the history of ancient mysteries, he explicitly rejected the assumptions of the Chairman. In “Ueber die Kabirischen Mysterien”, Reinhold argued that the reason for the freemasonic obsession with this type of work was that history provided the best means to self-understanding. He proposed, however, a break with the past because the ancient secret mysteries did not work in favor of *Aufklärung*. He concluded: “One should primarily never forget through the comparison of the kabirischen mysteries with our own, that we have the luck to live in enlightened times.”⁴⁷³ Though members of the lodge used history was used to very different ends, its primary purpose remained to better understand the present. Whether history provided a critique of and answer to contemporary practice, or it allowed for a better appreciation for the advancements of the enlightened world, the discipline remained integral to the formation of Masonic ideology.

This brief exploration of the Enlightenment-inspired ideology produced in Viennese freemasonry, if nothing else, illustrates the idealistic dedication to rational

⁴⁷² Karl Michaeler, “Ueber die Verbindung der Künste und Wissenschaften mit der Maurerey” in *JFF* 1:2 (1784) 65-137.

⁴⁷³ “Allein man darf bey der Vergleichung der kabirischen Mysterien mit den unsrigen nie vergessen, daß wir in aufgeklärten Zeiten zu leben das Glück haben.” Karl Leonard Reinhold, “Ueber die Kabirischen Mysterien” in *JFF* 2:3 (1785) 48.

reform, and altruistic dedication to the forming, formulating and fomenting of ideas within the separate, privileged space provided by masonry. Deservedly, the ideas produced by the lodge did not become part of the canon of texts representing continental Enlightenment. The ‘masonic twist’ given to all the essays limited their audience. Also, because of the rapidity with which prominent lodge thinkers produced essays, freemasonic tracts were often formulaic proselytizing and abstracted criticism. Perhaps a function of the brevity of essays read in the lodge, their theories lack specificity, rarely addressing a specific issue beyond Masonic practice. The freemasons and writers borrowed many terms and ideas in vogue across the continent, and produced general texts riddled with catch phrases. Even the most enduring contributions of any of the members, the cameralist textbook of Joseph von Sonnenfels, has been accused of lacking theoretical precision or originality.⁴⁷⁴ Despite the questionable profundity of the Viennese Masonic Enlightenment, the lodge’s writings are nevertheless remarkable for the context of their production. A city that a few short years before could not read Montesquieu hosted a large group of prolific critics and thinkers that sustained a challenge to traditional authorities and beliefs.

Conclusion

The unifying fraternalism within and exclusivity without gave members of this freemasonic lodge the ability and will to publish and promote the international intellectual movement of Enlightenment that sought to bring light to the world. In Vienna, where exposure to this symbolic light was as yet but a brief flash, association

⁴⁷⁴ Keith Tribe, *Governing Economy: The Reformation of German Economic Discourse 1750-1840* (Cambridge UP, 1988) 60. To be fair, Tribe when damning Sonnenfels continues by condemning cameralist literature as a whole, thus, “The vast literature of Cameralism is almost, but not quite, like a large stick of rock—wherever one bites into it, one encounters the same terms, definitions and redefinitions.” 60.

provided the comfort and optimism necessary for action. Brotherhood and friendship in enlightened masonry allowed discussion between equals, privacy in criticism, and the resources for collecting knowledge in a centralized place. *Zur Wahren Eintracht* was both practical, with its institutionalization of cosmopolitan exchange and intellectual production, and inspirational, providing an alternate perception to the intellectual provinciality of the Habsburg capital. Rather than representing an intellectual elite that was comparatively underdeveloped, the Viennese masons were progressive: experimenting with the limits of the revolutionary institution of freemasonry, producing a brand of literary and artistic production unique and unrivalled, and subverting the traditional system of the sciences dependent on state patronage by establishing private support for research and publication. Finally, the freemasons established that independent public seminal to the modern era, evoked in their own writings as the sole means for improving humanity. Their freemasonic public furthered specialization of academic knowledge, created the market that supported independent intellectual life, and claimed to better the lives of the masses through their truths, critiques and dissemination of Opinion.

This belief in the masons' creation of lasting improvement in the situation of the people of the Habsburg monarchy was perhaps naïve and idealistic, but it was nevertheless palpable, pulsing through the records left by these ideologues. One member depicted spiraling achievement by claiming the lodge provided the masons with confidence, inspiring the work done by the lodge, this then furthered their optimism and so on.⁴⁷⁵ One historian has argued that the resort to secret societies by Enlighteners

⁴⁷⁵ Franz Kreil, "Von den Wirkungen der Maurerey auf den Muth und die Thätigkeit des Menschenfreundes" *Journal für Freimaurer* 2:1 (Vienna) 62

indicates the demise of early-enlightenment optimism.⁴⁷⁶ However, the works produced by this secret society do not indicate even a slight tendency towards defeatism and resorting to masonry did not represent a rejection of their own society. Instead, enthusiastic adherence to masonry reflected confidence in what association could achieve. Certainly many of the works reflected a belief in the limits of man's abilities, but these limits were relative. Much like the moniker 'press freedoms' given to limited reforms of censorship, the contrast between earlier structures of knowledge and the potential foreshadowed by the lodge activities belied finite achievements.

The function, structure and achievements of Viennese masonry brings to mind parallel institutions of Enlightenment sociability and intellectual production, but the comparison to the state academies of science to the West is arguably not simply subjective. The long list of members undeniably broadly represented the brightest scientific and literary minds on hand—even the conservative Professor Mayer was given an honorary membership, proving this was not purely a partisan affair. Ignaz von Born's intentions for the lodge cannot be incontrovertibly asserted, but it does seem that Joseph II was, for a time, explicitly tolerant of the type of freemasonry practiced in this lodge even if he was not yet ready to establish an official academy. The lodge proclaimed its support for the 'enlightened' policies of the monarch, and frequently literally sang his praises within the halls of an institution that many historians have viewed as a site for fomenting dissatisfaction with Old Regime Absolutism.⁴⁷⁷ Gathering reforming minds under the auspices of Freemasonry benefited both subject and ruler. The king could appreciate the useful and charitable contributions the intellectuals made without

⁴⁷⁶ Schindler, "Der Geheimbund" 288-9.

⁴⁷⁷ Both Reinhart Koselleck in *Critique and Crisis* and Margaret Jacob in *Living the Enlightenment* take this view.

concerning himself with the ideas or the process used (and without having to act as a buffer between the anticlerical freemasons and the archbishop Migazzi, whose antagonism to Joseph created enough problems). Alternately, the Freemasons could work towards more profound changes without publicly risking their positions in a capital run by two courts. Freemasonry's structure, secrecy and adaptability ensured that it was a society that could be conveniently ignored when it crossed minor lines in the sand.

Throughout the lodge literature, the success of *ZWE*'s form of freemasonry is equated with the success of Enlightenment. Similarly, expansion of the lodge is equated with the success of their primary goals.⁴⁷⁸ The primacy of freemasonry in Viennese Enlightenment discourse and the successes of the lodge in stimulating intellectual production may have diverted intellectuals who placed all their Enlightenment eggs in a freemasonic basket rather than diversifying their approach to reform. With Enlightenment defined so heavily in terms of freemasonic values, duties, and methods, when *ZWE* failed to become the Academy its intellectuals desired, the movement for Enlightenment would not be able to recover. The rapid splintering and dissolution of the lodge that follows this episode of remarkable production of freemasonic thought would bring to an end the meteoric success of the city's transformation, and, even before the backlash against 'jacobites' following the French revolution, the Viennese would either turn conservative or return to more oblique means of spreading criticism.

⁴⁷⁸ Gretzmüller, "Ueber den Freymaurereid", *JFF*. 153.

CHAPTER 5. LETHARGY AND LYRIC: THE RETIREMENT OF ENLIGHTENMENT ACTIVISM

By 1787, *Zur Wahren Eintracht* was long gone and few writers or academics remained active in freemasonry. Johann Baptist Alxinger turned himself increasingly towards his international network of correspondents, hoping for fame for his knight's epic outside the hereditary lands. Aloys Blumauer frustrated his former friends with the direction he took the *Musen Almanach*. Joseph von Sonnenfels became an international joke while Ignaz von Born and Johann Rautenstrauch occupied themselves with petty cabals and literary feuds limited to the narrow social world of Vienna. In public, the specter of police spies proscribed conversation and the 'free' press was no longer fooling anyone. The age of state-given freedoms, local pride, Masonic idealism and Enlightenment activism appeared dead.

This final chapter explores the last years of Joseph II's rule and the gradual decline in intellectual enthusiasm. Indeed, the 1790s saw the situation drastically worsen as Blumauer fell under suspicion as a Jacobin, Hoffmann began to supply the government with lists of former friends now named Jacobins, and former *Aufklärer* were executed for their ideas and activities. But already before the death of Joseph and subsequent changes in policy, before the French Revolution and the Jacobin witch-hunts of publishers and writers, the achievements and activities of the Viennese *Aufklärer* began to recede.

Right at mid-decade some major changes took place that would create a road block to Enlightenment. In 1785, Joseph II abolished Freemasonry in its contemporary form. He restricted lodge membership numbers and forced the consolidation of the

Viennese lodges; within weeks of this change, the law forced *Zur Wahren Eintracht* to abandon its activities. At about the same time, the king also changed police organization and established provisions for the creation of a force of police spies; this new type of informant institutionalized the state's ability to encroach into even the minds of its citizens through spy reports on the public conversations of private people. December 1785 also witnessed the last wave of the *Broschürenflut* as writers abandoned their hope that 'press freedoms' existed, or would last. Simultaneously the close intellectual friendships that inspired and assisted the Enlightenment project and characterized the early years of the 1780s shattered.

Various factors played a role in both the concrete changes from above and the slightly more subtle transformation within intellectual culture. As we have seen, Joseph II's changing views certainly contributed—to what extent remains an open question. Joseph II did not favor intellectuals, and reforms benefiting them had always involved practical considerations. If he sided with the *Aufklärer*, the king was often siding *against* an opponent like Cardinal Migazzi. But, some historians argue, divisions between Joseph II and the intellectuals worsened after 1785, creating what Bodi calls a 'crisis of Josephinism'.⁴⁷⁹ Many historians see the second half of Joseph II's reign as an admission of defeat, as the state backtracked on many of its reforms even before Joseph II's famous deathbed withdrawal of most of his reforms.⁴⁸⁰ Whatever the motive, freemasonic activity and the prestige of the Illuminati were brought to an end through state actions. The role of the king may be somewhat ambiguous in the failure of the Enlightenment movement in Vienna, yet it would be wrong to claim the monarchy lost the support of

⁴⁷⁹ Lesli Bodi, *Tauwetter in Wien*

⁴⁸⁰ Robert A. Kann, *A History of the Habsburg Empire 1526-1918* (University of California Press, 1974) 206.

intellectuals through its regressive stance. The support of the Austrian intellectual-bureaucrats remained unequivocally strong for the Kaiser, who they viewed as the sole means of achieving lasting reforms.

Though a change in the king's attitudes towards the intellectual culture in Vienna was palpable, there were also internal factors involved in declining enthusiasm. Intellectuals experienced disappointment as the moral philosophy of Enlightenment failed to create a utopic brotherhood dominated by love of humanity. Various prominent men of letters got caught up in attempts to limit the freedoms of their opponents: claiming access to moral truth as they had in the pages of the *Realzeitung*, the critics refused to tolerate other viewpoints. Hypocrisy could thus be adduced as a factor in the decline and fall of the Viennese Enlightenment. Conservative intellectuals—those who either rejected Enlightenment from the beginning or those who turned to conservatism after the early, heady days of the Josephin Enlightenment—dealt a further blow to movement. The rejection of enlightened doctrine challenged the optimism and convictions of the remaining *Aufklärer*, as their belief in the ability to change the world depended on the idealized unity of their efforts. Viewing their stance as the only justifiable or reasonable position, enlightenment intellectuals thus found the emergence of differing viewpoints hard to accept; controversies challenged the ideas of brotherhood and the inevitable improvement of all through the education of Taste. The failure of 'friendship', whether through actual divisions or the loss of spaces of sociability, attacked the core of the intellectual and moral philosophy of the Viennese Enlightenment. Once the social bonds improving sociability frayed, intellectuals had no way to repair them.

Pragmatism provides another explanation for the changes in tactics in pursuit of enlightenment; these former Illuminati continued in their conviction that any real change occurs through the state. Intellectuals thus retained their positions and dependence on the state even when it destroyed their favored institutions. Another potential issue was continuingly frustrated attempts to surmount the problems of living under an absolutist state and limitations in its reforms led to reticence to take on any more projects and a decline in enthusiasm. As the state continued to withhold support, the project for enlightenment began to seem fruitless. A final factor to consider was the natural development of the nascent publishing culture. Perhaps the shift from ephemeral tracts to literary publication represented an advance for Viennese intellectual culture rather than the fading of a political public sphere, though here such perception of progress would be narrowly limited to a few poets and novelists and not the extensive, diverse group of those who had formerly promoted Enlightenment.

The visibility and transparency of the active, enthusiastic proponents of enlightenment would in the second half of the 1780s recede. When their names do appear, it is often in relation to divisions or in more behind-the-scenes roles in the bureaucracy or as authors of novels, city descriptions or other highly satirical and more oblique forms of writing than those of the *Broschürenflut*. A shift also occurred from public association to private life. The public sphere became less political and less safe because of increased activity of the secret police to root out internal sources of treason. The activist ideal faded; individuals became complacent, rejected their ideals, and the widespread culture of activism disappeared. Aspirations to make Vienna the intellectual center of Germany faded and by the end of the decade, those that still hoped for

intellectual and cultural unity turned to an institution outside Austria—the *Deutsche Union*—as a group that offered support to authors and intellectual development: at least until Joseph II investigated or imprisoned some of its more notorious members.

As the intellectual culture shifted, an increasingly realistic evaluation of the limits of Vienna, the state, and the learned elite developed. The unbounded optimism of the earlier years was now reined in. The intellectuals of Vienna were finally starting “to take people just as that are.”⁴⁸¹ In measuring their own personal talents, in estimating the role of sociability, in discussing the extent to which the king would act according to their ideals, the *Aufklärer* became more measured. Though no intellectual could bring himself to subvert the monarchy, inevitable disappointment applied the brakes to *Arbeit*.

The decline of freemasonry

By order of the king, *Zur Wahren Eintracht* and many other Masonic orders held their last meetings in late 1785. Freemasonry would continue in a much more circumscribed form, but for the most part, the masonry practiced by the *Aufklärer* was gone. The destruction of the institution of freemasonry was a major sign of change in intellectual culture in the city. The structure of freemasonry, as a public association that hid itself from state view and kept itself outside state power, was oppositional under absolutism, even if the intent supported the state. Joseph II’s explicit toleration of freemasonry was very advanced and represented a concept of state power that could not be threatened from within. Joseph II even used freemasonry and the illuminati to his own

⁴⁸¹ “die Menschen so zu nehmen, wie sie sind “ Quoted from Graf Fekete’s 1787 city description in György M. Vajda, *Wien und die Literaturen in der Donaumonarchie: Zur Kulturgeschichte Mitteleuropas 1740-1918* (Wien: Böhlau, 1994) 49.

purposes, according to Helmut Reinalter.⁴⁸² This earlier tolerance ended in 1785 when the Kaiser limited freemasonry's numbers, freedoms of association, and ability to cloak itself from state view. The suppression betrayed a monarchy increasingly fearful of the development of opposition within the crown lands and represented more closely the intolerance of the preceding monarch. The king was no longer secure in the support of his subjects and felt he could no longer act in a way that assumed their rationality and loyalty. Reinhart Koselleck argues that the new social institutions of the eighteenth century had political potential and upon recognizing this, states started cracking down on them. He describes freemasonry as the only institution that both recognized state absolutism and took measures to evade it. Lodges were "an indirect power within the Absolutist state," declares Koselleck, "and their mystery/silence was necessitated by its nature as such."⁴⁸³ Others however declare masonry as a reflection of early modern stratified states and societies, despite their constitutional rhetoric.⁴⁸⁴

Preceding state distrust of masonry came the suppression of the illuminati in Bavaria in 1784 and 1785. The Austrian state also soon banned the Illuminati.⁴⁸⁵ In addition to suppressing the order, the Bavarian government published the secret papers of Weishaupt and von Knigge outlining the extensive and radical goals of the secret society. The Illuminati papers caused a backlash; they showed, some insisted, that Enlightenment ideals could be taken too far and would result in chaos. Leopold Alois Hoffmann was

⁴⁸² Helmut Reinalter, "Die Freimaurerei zwischen Josephinismus und frühfranzösischer Reaktion. Zur gesellschaftlichen Rolle und indirekt politischen Macht der Geheimbünde im 18. Jahrhundert" in *Freimaurer und Geheimbünde im 18. Jahrhundert in Mitteleuropa*, Helmut Reinalter, ed. (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1983) 48.

⁴⁸³ Reinhart Koselleck, *Critique and Crisis. Enlightenment and the Pathogenesis of Modern Society* (MIT Press, 1988) 70.

⁴⁸⁴ James Van Horn Melton, *The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe* (Cambridge UP, 2001) 262.

⁴⁸⁵ Norbert Schindler, "Der Geheimbund der Illuminaten—Aufklärung, Geheimnis und Politik" in *Freimaurer und Geheimbünde*, Reinalter, ed., 288.

one intellectual whose conversion to conservatism coincided with his reading of the group's goals in 1787.⁴⁸⁶ Hoffmann's memoirs assert that many other masons and former Illuminati also rejected those orders and joined him to vow to fight the forces of Illuminatism, and elected him spokesman.⁴⁸⁷ Hoffmann's campaign to label the Illuminati as subversive revolutionaries apparently succeeded, as years later the Austrian romantic novelist Caroline Pichler claimed it was the Illuminati that caused the disorder under Joseph's last years: "so much for the Illuminati, and with which a great deal of spectacle and even much mischief was produced in the final years of the reign of Emperor Joseph."⁴⁸⁸ Regardless of subversiveness of the Illuminati, the timing of their persecution in nearby Bavaria and the reaction it aroused suggests the event influenced the king's suppression of Austrian masonry.

This portrayal of the Illuminati as serious threats to the state was certainly inaccurate. Though rigidly clandestine and though its founders intended an eventual end to monarchies, the extensive membership of the Illuminati most likely found the doctrine of the need for bureaucrats to change the state from the inside to achieve *Aufklärung* satisfying as it provided a noble purpose to their official careers. Historians have also argued that the Austrian Illuminati were not so radical as the Bavarian, as the membership of Sonnenfels and Swieten suggests. The demise of the Illuminati in Bavaria did not have an immediate effect on the Viennese illuminatist masons. However, it did provide a case of *l'infame*, or outrage committed by a source of authority, to which the lodge publicly objected. Even if the structure of Illuminatism ensured the Viennese

⁴⁸⁶ Epstein, 519.

⁴⁸⁷ Quoted in Epstein, 519-520.

⁴⁸⁸ "endlich sogar die Illuminaten, und es ward damit in den letzten Jahren der Regierung Kaiser Joseph's großer Spektakel und wohl auch großer Unfug getrieben." Caroline Pichler, Glaubensbekenntnis 106.

would not be affected by the destruction of the center of the society, the knowledge that a nearby state would persecute people with similar political and intellectual stances was probably eye opening. The events in Bavaria were closely followed in the lodge and Born also publicly withdrew his membership from a learned academy in Bavaria in protest; the intellectuals ought to have defended the clandestine local society.⁴⁸⁹

Joseph II had reservations about the structure of freemasonry; all the Austrian lodges descended from the Berlin grand lodge, and thus submitted to the rulings of this mother lodge. Many freemasons in Vienna also agreed that there needed to be an Austrian grand lodge, to which the individual lodges owed obedience. The debate on the formation of a grand lodge became the basis of a struggle by enlightened freemasons and Josephinists to purge freemasonry of its less enlightened brothers. Von Born spearheaded the movement to create an Austrian grand lodge and exclude superstitious or ignorant, non-rational orders. In the spring of 1784 the national lodge came into being with seven underlying provincial lodges assigned to different parts of the hereditary lands.⁴⁹⁰

The Kaiser's *Handbillet* came out on 11 December 1785. The monarch, while not fully abolishing freemasonry, made freemasonry governable. The law permitted but one lodge per city, except Vienna's two; barred rural lodges where the king's representatives could not supervise; and restricted membership to 180 people per lodge and required quarterly submission of membership lists.⁴⁹¹ Never known for slow action, the king soon

⁴⁸⁹ *Journal für Freymaurer*

⁴⁹⁰ Reinalter, "Die Freimaurer zwischen Josephinismus und frühfranzösischer Reaktion." In *Freimaurer und Geheimbünde im 18. Jahrhundert in Mitteleuropa*, Helmut Reinalter, ed. (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1983) 47.

⁴⁹¹ "Das kaiserliche Handbillet vom 11. Christmonat 1785" reprinted in Helmut Reinalter, ed. *Joseph II und die Freimaurer im Lichte zeitgenössischer Broschüren* (Wien: Böhlau, 1987) 64-65.

added a postscript stating the bill would take effect on the first of January, in a matter of weeks. The treatise ended with Joseph's statement "I do not doubt, that my decisions will bring benefits and security to all upright, honest-thinking masons, it will serve to prevent all others from further subversive gatherings."⁴⁹² Rationalization of a chaotic system could not offend the masons in the purview of this king that leveled inefficiency everywhere. Through the *Handbillet*, the Kaiser makes clear that the practice of freemasonry could take place only so far as the state would allow.

Joseph II foresaw the dangers of establishing civic leaders outside the structure of the state. He acknowledged that lodges did good works, but argued the potential of danger from lodges without appropriate leadership and thus would not allow the continued existence of lodges without transparency for the authorities. Thus, Joseph framed the reorganization of freemasonry as providing state custody to protect the institution from being led astray. The size and popularity of the Masonic lodges in the monarchy made them attractive for someone seeking to sway the public. Joseph had little faith in the strength of discernment among the majority of his subjects. He feared the activities of a few might spread subversive fantasies. Though not specifically calling for the demise of masonry in Vienna, the bill ensured that the brand of masonry practiced by the *Aufklärers* would no longer be possible.

By making freemasonry uniform, as well as answerable to the state, Joseph II ensured that a hybrid lodge like *Zur Wahren Eintracht* could no longer exist. Thus rationalizing freemasonry worked against the lodge brothers. Even if lodges did not stop

⁴⁹² "Ich zweifle nicht, daß diese meine Entschliessung allen rechtschaffnen, und ehrlich denkenden Mäuern zum Vergnügen, und zur Sicherheit, allen übrigen aber zur billigen Enthaltung von weiteren dergleichen strafbaren Nebenversammlungen, oder Ausschweifungen dienen wird." "Das Kaiserliche Handbillet" in *Joseph II und die Freimaurer*, 65-66.

functioning altogether, the former habits and pressures of *ZWE* could not take place in the state lodge—this new formation did not have the potential ‘openness’ necessary for an association whose goal was spreading *Aufklärung* and did not have the exclusivity required by a successful, productive intellectual association. As a product of the merger of diverse lodges and with the state’s defining of the limitations of public access to the lodge (by allowing only 360 members in a city of 250,000 and by articulating the secrets held from the state in the system of masonry) masonry could no longer aspire to ersatz-academy status.

Kaiser Joseph’s freemason patent stemmed from many sources. The persecution of the illuminati in Bavaria and the known support of the Bavarian intellectuals by freemasons in Vienna was a serious public relations problem for the masons. At the same time, there was a strengthening of conservatism in the city that partially resulted from economic and social problems as well as a backlash against the Josephinist program. Growing internal divisions and external allegiances are certainly major causes, but historians have offered several conflicting theories. Klaus Epstein points to the influence of the conservative and Rosicrucian Prince Dietrichstein-Proskau on Joseph II as the source of the *Handbillet* that restructured and limited masonry; “a measure obviously aimed at purging 'subversive infiltrators' like the Illuminati.”⁴⁹³ Another research of *Zur wahren Eintracht*, Hans Joseph Irmen, argues conversely that Born and his coconspirators won their case, and the *Handbillet* was meant to insure total control for the *Aufklärer* of Austrian masonry, but the plan backfired.⁴⁹⁴ One biographer of the king argues that Joseph II’s decision for the *Handbillet* came after the rapid expanse in

⁴⁹³ Klaus Epstein, *The Genesis of German Conservatism* (Princeton UP) 111.

⁴⁹⁴ Hans-Joseph Irmen, *Mozart’s Masonry*

members, numbers and influence of lodges after the creation of the National Grand lodge in 1784 and the state's express toleration. The king thus acted from concern over this institution that functioned outside state control and exercised his prerogative to bring an end to that autonomy, despite the masons' enlightened and charitable works. Karl Gutkas further asserts that they were a political danger to stability because of the battles between lodges and types of masonry.⁴⁹⁵

Helmut Reinalter argues that Joseph clearly intended the *Handbillet* to end the dominance of Berlin over freemasonry in Austria.⁴⁹⁶ The problem with this argument is that the Austrian grand lodge formed in 1784, officially ending allegiance of Austrian freemasons to the Berlin system. Elsewhere, Reinalter cites a letter from Förster stating he heard a prince claim that the *Handbillet* came about because groups in Hungary were using freemasonry as a pretext for secret gatherings of opposition to the king and state, and this is why the *Handbillet* outlawed freemasonry outside areas where government had direct representatives, and why it insisted on the transparency of membership.⁴⁹⁷ This motive is consistent with the reasons for the king's other regressive, post-1785 measures in censorship and state police. One man's hearsay, however, does not constitute proof, especially as the king himself offered his own explanation in writing.

Surprisingly, the members of *Zur Wahren Eintracht* responded to the edict with published cheers for the Kaiser. Various panegyrics extolled the king's 'offer of protection' for masonry and for his recognition of their good works. Poet and playwright Gottlieb Leon's *Empfindungen über den der Freymaurerey in den k.k. Erbländen öffentlich ertheilten Schutz*, has the quality of a victory chant, and argues that the

⁴⁹⁵ Karl Gutkas, *Kaiser Joseph II: Eine Biographie* (Vienna: P.Zsolnay, 1989) 327.

⁴⁹⁶ Helmut Reinalter, "Iganx von Born. Persönlichkeit und Wirkung" p.25.

⁴⁹⁷ Reinhold, "Introduction", *Joseph II und*

Eintracht defeated forces of darkness in the city.⁴⁹⁸ Blumauer's poem, *Joseph der Zweite, Beschützer des Freymaurerordens*, placed parallels between the praised actions of the king and the work of the freemasons.⁴⁹⁹ These odd celebrations of an edict that places extreme limitations on their order were most likely motivated by a desire to influence Joseph II to consider a different course of action.⁵⁰⁰ However, as the progressive freemasons were legitimate supporters of Joseph's reform program, the continuation of public praise for the monarch perhaps stemmed from the intent to keep a united front against the conservative opposition.⁵⁰¹ Interestingly, the pamphlets functioned on two levels; they argued the case for sustaining the order directly to the emperor and they presented a united front against public opinion in denying the activities of their lodge brought about the bill, or that the bill ended the group's *Arbeit*.

In *Gesammelte Bemerkungen und Urtheile über die k.k. Verordnung in Ansehung der Freymäurer...* Johann Rautenstrauch brought his usual broad social perspective to analyze the real implications of the *Handbillet* for masons and various segments of 'profane' society, including the 'mob', priests, the 'reasonable' and women. In the preface, Rautenstrauch tells of the stimulation of public interest in and idle speculation on the masons brought about by the *Handbillet*. Everyone participated in this debate, and it resulted in vastly different opinions and assertions that were overwhelmingly misinformed. His stated purpose for his pamphlet was explanatory: to inform the initiated, reassure the profane who thought freemasonry a beneficial institution, and educate the ignorant. The pamphlet is thus a compendium of public debate on masonry

⁴⁹⁸ Gottlieb Leon, *Empfindungen über den der Freymaurerey in den k.k. Erbländen öffentlich ertheilten Schutz* (Wien, 1786). Reprinted in Reinalter, *Joseph II und die Freimaurer*. 83-4.

⁴⁹⁹ See Reinalter, *Joseph II und die Freimaurer* 79.

⁵⁰⁰ Ibid., 20.

⁵⁰¹ Blanning, 168-169.

along with commentary from Rautenstrauch. He concluded his preface proclaiming the lesson learned from the debate was the truth of the maxim “the voice of the people is the voice of fools.”⁵⁰² Disdain for the common mob’s opinion dominated Rautenstrauch’s first section. He argued that the ignorant masses associated freemasonry with some quasi-religious sect, and the imperial bill only confirmed them in their suspicions. Apparently they believed the order had been completely dissolved rather than understanding, as Rautenstrauch argues, that the freemasons would be taken under imperial protection.⁵⁰³ In addressing the opinions of priests, Rautenstrauch claimed that the few priests of understanding realize ‘true’ masons desired the Kaiser’s order, as it presented the opportunity to purge masonry of people who “nur dem Namen nach Mäurer sind.”⁵⁰⁴ The pamphlet systematically insulted the public while defending masons and justifying the *Handbillet*.

After these persuasive arguments for a lenient reading of the bill, an organized campaign began in defense of masonry. This strain of the renewed *Broschürenflut* articulated freemasons’ conception of the purpose of their order and its relationship to *Aufklärung* and state. Blumauer’s pamphlet *Was ist Gaukeley?* was not only a thorough defense of his order, it also showed that the masons of *Zur Wahren Eintracht*, despite the setback proffered by the bill, hoped to use it to their advantage. Blumauer mounted a sustained attack against ‘unworthy’ freemasons and expressed feeling wounded by Joseph’s equating the good and the bad forms of freemasonry, especially when their good

⁵⁰² “die Stimme des Volks ist die Stimme der Narren.” Johann Rautenstrauch, “Gesammelte Bemerkungen und Urtheile über die k.k. Verordnung in Ansehung der Freymäurer, und ihren Ordenüberhaupt” (1786) in Reinalter, *Joseph II und die Freimaurer* 74.

⁵⁰³ Rautenstrauch, “Gesammelte Bemerkungen” in *Joseph II und die Freimaurer* 72-78.

⁵⁰⁴ Rautenstrauch, “Gesammelte Bemerkungen” in *Joseph II und die Freimaurer* 76.

deeds were plain to see.⁵⁰⁵ As lodge numbers were severely restricted under the new law, the former members of *Zur Wahren Eintracht* were intent on ensuring the dominance of the St. John's order of freemasonry—the rational, three-grade system adopted by the enlightenment leaning lodges. Thus the masons, after experiencing defeat, quickly regrouped to attempt to rescue the way of life they had formed for themselves. The *Aufklärer* portrayed a continuing commitment to the association they had chosen to provide organizational force to their program, and hoped with increasing desperation to salvage their prized order.

The poets and scientists of Vienna failed to resurrect their lodge, though the restructuring ordered by Joseph II was not solely accountable. Before the two new lodges of Vienna even took shape, internal conflict splintered brotherly unity. Förster's letter on the *Handbillet* stated, "In any case this story gave occasion for great disruption among the freemasons, in Vienna itself. Born and Sonnenfels have completely fallen out. Born has had unending annoyance and anger over the event, and the reputation of masonry is entirely destroyed."⁵⁰⁶ Born became the chairman of the new lodge *Zur Wahrheit* while Sonnenfels and many other intellectuals never joined the new lodge.

The failure of freemasonry was not instantly apparent, as Franz Kratter, who visited the lodge after consolidation, wrote. According to this former mason, the new national lodge was entirely taken over by the Bornisch elements—none of his fellow lodge members from *Heiligen Joseph* were brought into the post-*Handbillet* lodge, and in

⁵⁰⁵ [Aloys Blumauer], *Was ist Gaukeley, oder Vielmehr Was ist nicht Gaukeley?* (1786)

⁵⁰⁶ "Uebrigens hat diese Geschichte zu großen Zerrüttungen unter den Freimaurern, selbst in Wien, Anlaß gegeben. Born und Sonnenfels haben sich darüber ganz entzweit. Born hat unendlichen Verdruß und Aerger von der Sache gehabt, und das Ansehen der Maurerei ist gänzlich gefallen." Quoted in Reinalter, "Einleitung" to *Joseph II und die Freimaurerei im Lichte zeitgenössische Broschüren* 17. From *Georg Forsters Werke. Sämtliche Schriften, Tagebücher, Briefe 1784-Juni 1787* (1978) vol. 14, 563f.

Kratter's 1786 pamphlet, Born and the National Grandmaster were hand in hand, and most of the masons there were in Born's circle. He refers in a long footnote to the group's disparaging of the respectable authors and intellectuals Sonnenfels, Alxinger, and Mayer. Kratter's pamphlet also tells us that the national lodge kept a philosophical character—after the meal, Born stood up and said, as is our custom, we will end with a philosophical address, though that lecture turned into a personal attack against Kratter and his writings, hardly contributing to *ZWE*'s pursuit of knowledge of mankind. Despite these indications of splintering within the post-reform lodge, Kratter's pamphlet informs us there was still a united Masonic community protective of its literary prerogative and led by Born's personal interests.

Despite continued Masonic activity and his public assertion that the bill was a victory for the masons, Gottlieb Leon announced the end of the project for enlightenment in Vienna in a letter to Reinhold in August, 1786. "For awhile there has been neither discussion nor question of Illuminatism with us," Leon stated, articulating the inseparability of Illuminist goals and the activities of *Zur Wahren Eintracht*. This statement indicated the extent to which the goals of the Illuminati were tied in the minds of some lodge members to the activities of *Zur Wahren Eintracht*. Referring to the dissolution of the lodge Leon stated "While its existence and activity—to my knowledge—lasted not more than one and three quarters year in our stifled, equally musty and muggy, climate." and explained his own sense that he was only beginning to understand the workings and goals of the group as a relative newcomer. His letter provided a eulogy for the lodge, praising the members of the order and especially their deeds, but ended with a damnation of the newly consolidated lodge; stating "now through

the resulting foul pest under the name of the Truth, hatches nothing more than foolishness, quarrelling, and discord, will now soon begin their wholesale flight into the eternal freedom.”⁵⁰⁷ This description matches the public one Franz Kratter gave of *Zur Wahrheit*. Even Born would find the lodge too divisive, as Leon states that “Born will—from what everyone hears—at most until New Years, and—as expected!—together with all his trusted fellows also quit the lodge.”⁵⁰⁸ The dissolution of the Maurerbund projected an end to the *Journal für Freymaurer*, though similarly there, the end was not immediately at hand. Publication continued through 1786. *Physikalische Arbeit der Einträchtige Freunde* had a longer run, appearing until 1788.⁵⁰⁹ Indeed, some were not willing to pronounce Masonic activity dead until a couple years after the *Handbillet*.⁵¹⁰

The end of masonry and the repression of the Illuminati were the primary influences in the decline of Enlightenment activity in Vienna. Alxinger took the end of the Illuminati philosophically, writing in January, 1786, “The men of the Illuminati have their own saying: it is better to work with sure steps for centuries long, than through one misstep destroy the work of millennia, it should bring good things in execution. That’s enough about this matter.”⁵¹¹ The dissolution of *Zur Wahren Eintracht* illustrates the

⁵⁰⁷ “Von Illuminationswesen ist bey uns lange schon weder Rede noch Frage mehr”, “Da sein Leben u. Weben—meines Wissens—nicht länger als 1. u. ¾ Jahr’ in unserm gepressten so dumpfigen als sumpfigen Klima dauerte” and “nun aber durch die dazugekommenen faulen Hummeln unter den Namen der Wahrheit, nichts anders als Narrheit, Unverträglichkeit u. Zwietracht ausheckte, werden nun bald ihren gänzlichen Ausflug in die ewige Freyheit beginnen”. Leon to Reinhold, 16 August 1786, in Keil, *Wiener Freunde*, 60.

⁵⁰⁸ “Born wird—dem noch allgemeinen Vernehmen nach—längst bis Neujahr, u.—wie natürlich!—auch all seine traute Mitgenossenschaft die Loge decken.” Leon to Reinhold, 16 August 1786, in Keil, *Wiener Freunde*, 60.

⁵⁰⁹ Helmut W. Lang, “Die Zeitschriften in Österreich zwischen 1740 und 1815” in *Die Österreichische Literatur. Ihr Profil an der Wende vom 18. zum 19. Jahrhundert (1750-1830) vol. 1* Herbert Zeman, ed. (Graz: Akademische Druck u. Verlagsanstalt, 1979) 218.

⁵¹⁰ See Leon’s letters to Reinhold from 1786 and 1787 in Keil, *Wiener Freunde*. 60-66.

⁵¹¹ “Die Herrn Illuminaten hätten ihre eigen Lehre: besser mit sicheren Schritten Jahrhunderte lang gearbeitet, als durch Einen Fehltritt die Arbeiten von Jahrtausenden zerstöret, fein hübsch in Ausübung

intellectuals' connection to the state and their view of authority. Although they certainly took full advantage of their years of driven activity under the guise of freemasonry and truly believed they were achieving improvement for the state and its populations, once the state stepped in to guide their project, the *Eintrachters* would not consider defiance. Thus, though many historians have seen within masonry and the Illuminati a challenge to absolutism, the case in Vienna clearly illustrates outright subversion was not part of the Masonic platform.

Limitations of Censorship Reform

With intellectual sociability reverting to private spaces, publication was left to propagate ideas and change. This area too lost its polemical, strident activism. In part, regression in Enlightenment publication and public discussion stemmed from a changing climate in the state and censor's office. But the intellectual culture itself deserves much of the blame. Though authors could often still publish in 1787 what they had published in 1782, the glow of excitement from rapid development had worn off. Whereas in 1781, everyone spoke of press freedom despite the continued presence of restrictions, five years later, writers were not so naive. Edith Rosenstrauch-Königsberg argues the disillusionment was rapid: though at first full of optimism, the *Aufklärers* quickly expressed disappointment in the censor. She quotes contemporary letters only six weeks apart in the first years of the decade that expressed the two moods.⁵¹²

Johann Rautenstrauch used the benefit of hindsight to provide a history of the changes in censorship, describing the process used by censors as primarily inconsistent:

bringen sollen. Soviel indessen über diese Materie."Alxinger to Reinhold, 3 January 1786, in Keil, *Wiener Freunde*, 43.

⁵¹² Edith Rosenstrauch-Königsberg, "Aloys Blumauer. Jesuit, Freymaurer, Jakobiner" in *Zirkel und Zentren. Aufsätze zur Aufklärung in Österreich am Ende des 18. Jahrhundert* ed., Gunnar Herring (Vienna: Deuticke,) 15.

“Some persist in their former strict principles and excise, despite the increased freedom, every and all passages that appear in the least bit offensive to them: others in contrast let everything pass through without difference, and so often appear Skarteken, that one without doubt should have suppressed.”⁵¹³ Later he challenged Academies to debate the question of whether Austria had press freedom, “Here and there passes a writing that is very open or—if you please—boldly written, often on the other hand will an essay be thrown out, that three years earlier didn’t raise a single scruple.”⁵¹⁴ In addition to the inconsistency of the office, de facto censorship occurred regularly despite the seemingly liberal policy of the king. Authors were certainly increasingly disgruntled at the continued existence of what they now saw as an unjust, and even more damning, not useful, state censorship. Poets that once thought nothing of sending works for publication to the North German lands, became increasingly embittered at not having the right to publish their works fully and freely in their homeland. The issues of patriotism and neighborly jealousy recurred in this discussion—though in 1781, the Viennese were cognizant of their backwards position, a few years later they increasingly felt the pain of this as injustice, and desired to assert their rightful stake as the intellectual center for Germans.

As early as 1781 Joseph II publicly expressed his displeasure with the effects of his censorship reforms through a suggestion to introduce legislation to limit the pamphlet press. The proposed law stipulated authors must pay six Dukats to the Revisors office to

⁵¹³ “Einige beharrten bey ihren ehemaligen strengen Grundsætzen, und strichen, trotz der erweiterten Freyheit, alle und jede Stellen aus, die ihnen im mindesten anstoessig schiennen: andere hingegen liessen alles ohne Unterschied passiren, und so erschienen oefters Skartekn, die man ohne Ruecksicht haette unterdrucken sollen.” Rautenstrauch, quoted in *Aufklärung auf wienerisch*, Joachim Schondorff, ed. (Wien: Zsolnay, 1980) 46.

⁵¹⁴ “Hie und da passirt eine Schrift, die sehr freymuethig oder—wenn man will—kuehn geschrieben ist, Oefters hingegen wird ein Aufsatz verworfen, der drey Jahre frueher nicht einmal einen Skrupel erregt haette.” Rautenstrauch, quoted in *Aufklärung auf wienerisch* 48.

submit their work for approbation by the censor. If the work passed state standards the deposit would be returned to the author; if not, the state forfeited the money to the poor and banned the work. Disgust with the worthless, uninformative publications produced in the *Broschürenflut* motivated the idea of limiting authorship and the press through financial penalty.⁵¹⁵ The new system would quiet the ‘scribblers writing only for grain’ and, more importantly to Joseph, make the Censor more diligent in the job of preventing such trash from appearing.⁵¹⁶ The Kaiser thus apparently thought his enlightened censor’s office staff was too lax and excessively lenient beyond what he argued was publicly beneficial in a state censor. The court chancellery and the censor bureau both fought Joseph II’s suggested changes, preventing the stamp tax from being enacted. In defending press freedoms, officials argued the tax would prevent good as well as harmful works from appearing, that it would lead authors to publish overseas; moreover, it would be seen as a defeat of Joseph’s reformist state abroad. Rather than fining poor work, the censors voted to categorize works of negligible worth in style or content as ‘*Typum non meretur*’ and then deny publication.⁵¹⁷ But the king’s discontent with the press had further resonance. He held a low opinion of the publications in his lands and felt the censors were lax in the suppression of works contrary to morals or damning of spirituality. Under an arbitrary, if enlightened, state, authors surely noted the government’s growing dissatisfaction with the quality of the press. Though the state changed its position only in regards to works of no substance, the shift raised the possibility of future recriminations for progressive authors.

⁵¹⁵ Leslie Bodi, *Tauwetter in Wien*, 168.

⁵¹⁶ Suggestion from the king to the Zensurkommission, 1784. Quoted in Bodi, *Tauwetter* 169.

⁵¹⁷ Bodi, *Tauwetter* 169.

In 1784, the Kaiser again revised his opinions on the execution of censorship, though to more effect. Although much of the periodical press experienced extensive practical freedom under the censorship laws, not so the daily news press. The king saw newspapers solely as instruments for the publication of official information and banned papers like the “Wiener Zeitung” and “Die Post” from reporting on the King himself. He held publishers responsible for content. As Oskar Sashegyi argues, “This interpretation saw in the newspaper hardly more than what is customarily in posters and leaflets. They viewed the newspapers simply information source and expected from journalists complete objectivity and relating of news without any expression of opinion.”⁵¹⁸ The pamphlets and more substantial periodicals like journals were not similarly circumscribed. There, immediacy and openness continued to feed public debate. Thus the king not only again raised the issue of continued limits on the so-called free press, he also dictated the nature of newspapers to conform to the needs he felt they should fill.

Also in that year, some control of intellectual culture passed from the education-centered censorship office to the police. From 1784, the state granted the police the authority to oversee the theater and the reading rooms, two very popular methods of delivering ideas and satirical depictions of current events to the public.⁵¹⁹ On the other hand, the middle of the decade saw the temporary cessation of activity by the *Vorcensor*, allowing the printing of many pamphlets that would otherwise have been suppressed.

⁵¹⁸ “Diesse Auffassung sah in der Zeitung kaum mehr als in gewöhnlichen Anschlagzetteln und Flugblättern. Sie betrachtete die Zeitungen als bloße Nachrichtenorgane und forderte vom Zeitungsschreiber völlige Objektivität, Mitteilung von Nachrichten ohne jegliche Meinungsäußerung.” Sashegyi.

⁵¹⁹ Sashegyi, 81.

Publishers who pushed the limits of censor laws and catered to the underground market took full advantage of the temporary anarchy.⁵²⁰

Another office experiencing difficulties in the exercise of its duties was the *Revisor*. Throughout the early part of Joseph's reign, this office had trouble working out the logistics of controlling all the territories. Wucherer had an entire system for smuggling books in, while a Hungarian officer carrying censored books like *Nouvelle Héloïse* and *la Pucelle d'Orleans* among others, had them taken away even though he was no book dealer.⁵²¹ This occurred despite the king's mention in his *Grundregeln* about the barbarism of a state that interferes with private people seeking to travel in the crown's lands.

After 1786 and the establishment of the *Geheimpolizei*, with its mission to monitor public opinion and the image of the king, police observation of literary traffic increased. Robert Kann argues that although much of the strict suppression of literature and religious writings ceased after Maria Theresa's reign, after 1785, "however, though no longer under the label of censorship but of various other administrative licensing devices, the printing and therefore dissemination of doctrines not essential to government objectives was made difficult, if not impossible."⁵²² A power struggle resulted between police and the *Zensurhofkommission* under Van Swieten. In 1786 Ignaz von Born went to the police about an anti-freemason pamphlet aimed at Born and the Prince Dietrichstein that he suspected was being printed. The police looked into the matter and confiscated the offending work from the publisher after entering his home and conducting

⁵²⁰ Bodi, *Tauwetter*, 260. Reinalter, "Introduction" to *Joseph II und die Freimaurer*, 19-20.

⁵²¹ Sashegyi, 77-80.

⁵²² Robert A. Kann, *A History of the Habsburg Empire, 1526-1918* (University of California Press, 1974) 195.

a search. The critique's author complained to the censor, at which point Van Swieten wrote to the Kaiser, about the ethics of police ransacking a private citizen's home. Joseph shrugged off Van Swieten, but the *Hofkanzlei* reacted against the idea of an unlimited police able to encroach on the privacy of a citizen. The Kaiser agreed to some restrictions on the police: ruling out the possibility that they could take over independent censorship functions and preventing action based on private denunciations.⁵²³ This decision safeguarded some individual rights, but the incident nevertheless represented a regression in freedoms.

Although the king eventually agreed to the enlightened ideals of limitations on state power over the individual, the acts of the police themselves represented real expansion in arbitrary state action. But if the police symbolize persecution and repression, as intellectuals too sought to have a say in that repression. Born's resort to the police was interesting as it indicated that even when there was no basis for censorship, individuals opposing works could argue libel or subversive intent.

Joseph II's policy changes stemmed from his own dissatisfaction with the results of his reforms. The writers in 1781 who worried they were not living up to the privilege the king granted were right. T.C.W. Blanning argues that the quality of publications produced by the city's press disappointed Joseph II and his ministers especially as conservative voices predominated.⁵²⁴ Intellectuals also found the strength of the conservative opposition to be a major threat. The major problem with censorship was not that it restricted the press, but that the promoters of enlightenment expected it to serve their own goals. Born's resort to the police to silence an opponent was not an isolated

⁵²³ Sashegyi, 82-84.

⁵²⁴ T.C.W. Blanning, *Joseph II* (Longman, 1994)169.

case. Rautenstrauch also provides an illustration in his attempts to force an end to the publisher Wucherer's illegal book trade. Wucherer was a publisher who specialized in subversive literature for the hungry market in Vienna. Through (brown-nosing) he carried special favor with the king and used that position to push the limits in the illegal book trade until Johann Rautenstrauch attacked him in 1786 for "piracy, profiteering and unpatriotic bearing."⁵²⁵

This one-sided application of the concept of rights was not unusual in Europe at the time. Jeremy Popkin points to D'Alembert's request to the censor Malesherbes to suppress a journal for attacking the (banned) *Encyclopédie*.⁵²⁶ C.B.A. Behrens, in arguing that the censors in Europe did not often suppress dissident voices, describes an incident in which prominent *Aufklärer* Friedrich Nicolai shocked the censor in Berlin with a request to ban a book.⁵²⁷ The state's authority to ban works was not questioned in the 1780s, and neither was the utility of a censor. Men of letters worked overwhelmingly in concert with censorship, often depending on state functions to ensure their supremacy in publishing.

Johann Alxinger was one writer though who continually expressed discontent with the reversion in the intellectual culture and the failure of earlier goals. Alxinger was one of the few who kept up constant complaints on the regressive repression of literature and ideas, even during the most free period. His collected edition of poetry had to be published without four of the poems, including one titled "On Toleration." In letters to Reinhold and Nicolai in early 1785, Alxinger expressed anger at being censored and

⁵²⁵ Volkmar Braunbehrens, *Mozart in Vienna, 1781-1791* Timothy Bell, trans. (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1990) 36.

⁵²⁶ Jeremy Popkin, "Censorship" in *Oxford Encyclopedia of the Enlightenment* (2002) 219.

⁵²⁷ C.B.A. Behrens, *Society, Government and the Enlightenment*, 184.

especially at the inconvenience of not having his book run through the press when he expected. Van Swieten notified him through the post that the work, though already printed, could only be released if certain poems were taken out. Apparently the Cardinal Migazzi was behind the tardy suppression. He ended the letter to Reinhold with “In regards to the excised poems, I’ll publish them separately and set aside all the copies that I will send to heterodox lands.”⁵²⁸ And he further notified Nicolai that the poems “would be printed as an appendix (for foreign readers and my friends here), but nevertheless with the caution of pretending as if I had not published them.”⁵²⁹

Alxinger’s reactions betray his incredulity at his own works being banned, as he was not, he felt, writing subversive literature and therefore should not be suppressed by the state. Though he experienced the disadvantages of Austria’s inconsistent censor directly, he was not willing to give up entirely on the liberality of the ‘free’ press. Alxinger wrote to Nicolai two months later, “Fear no ban; even Grossing’s writings are allowed” despite misinformation and lack of purpose in those writings. He then explained that an author of Nicolai’s known stature would hardly be censored.⁵³⁰

A trip to Germany in 1783 and 1784 dramatically influenced Alxinger and his perceptions of Vienna. He consistently took up a defense of Nicolai against Blumauer in the feud over the *Reisebeschreibung*. He further frequently complained to Nicolai and Reinhold about the shortcomings of the Viennese *Aufklärung*, writing against blind patriotism as in his letter commenting on Nicolai’s *Reisebeschreibung*. Alxinger

⁵²⁸ “A propos die ausgeschnittenen Gedichte lass' ich besonders drucken und lege sie allen Exemplaren bey, die ich in heterodoxe Lande schicke.” Alxinger to Reinhold, early 1785, in Keil, *Wiener Freunde* 38.

⁵²⁹ “als eine Anhang (für auswärtige Leser und meine hiesigen Freunde) nachdrucken lassen, dabey aber die Vorsicht gebraucht Miene zu machen, als ob nicht ich sie herausgegeben hätte.” Alxinger to Nicolai, February, 1785 in *Sitzungsberichte*, 13.

⁵³⁰ “Fürchten Sie keinen Verboth; sogar Grossings Schriften sind erlaubt” Alxinger to Nicolai, April 1785, in *Sitzungsberichte* 15.

published much of his work outside the hereditary lands despite Van Swieten urging on him the importance of supporting the local literary market.⁵³¹ Throughout Alxinger's correspondence and literary contributions, he expressed disappointment over Joseph II's lack of respect for intellectuals. By 1786 and 1787, much of his energy went to his constant concern over the reception of his epic *Doolin von Mainz*. He sent copies to Herder and Goethe; he continuously asked Nicolai about its reception; and he discussed his own collection of reviews. What is interesting here is that Alxinger does not mention the work's reception in Vienna and is most absorbed with its reading elsewhere in German lands. There seems to be a marked decline in mentions of Vienna in Alxinger's letters by 1786 and 1787: whereas before the lodge situation, fellow friends and debate over the evaluation of Vienna as a cultural center had been topics of central concern, at that point the focus to shift to reading, writing, and international connections through letters.

Alxinger's correspondence illustrates the failure of censorship reforms in establishing a permanent and advanced intellectual culture in Vienna. Both Nicolai and Alxinger viewed the idea of uniting culturally with protestant Germans as absurd by the end of the decade, especially if Vienna expected an honorable place vis-à-vis the Berliners. Both men exchanged stories on the absurdity of Sonnenfels' conduct and viewpoint in his visit to Berlin and his articulation of the goal of culturally uniting the Germans.⁵³² The perception of the Viennese as on par with the intellectuals of Berlin and Sonnenfels' own arrogance provided ample imagery for the ridiculous pretensions of the

⁵³¹ Norbert Egger, 96.

⁵³² Nicolai to Alxinger, 5 September 1787, Alxinger to Nicolai 20 September 1787, in *Sitzungsberichte*, 31-33.

Viennese circle of intellectuals that still hoped to claim a place for their *Aufklärung* in the continental sun.

As Alxinger's discontent shows, a sense of disappointment on both sides partly influenced the relationship of intellectuals to Joseph II in the second half of the decade. The king's rational utilitarianism was open and public. For every major reform he pushed, he publicized convincing arguments for why such enlightened measures were necessary to the state's welfare and progress.⁵³³ Universal awareness of the king's love of reason begged the question of why he did not support intellectuals or a free but state-supported public intellectual culture. Johann Pezzl, in his *Skizze von Wien* inserted a section on the creation of archival collections that would allow some future historian to create a composite picture of "this indeed strange prince."⁵³⁴ The philosophe's reference to the king's oddness indicated a sense of imbalance in the king's ideas and practices: Pezzl in particular had been inspired by the potential of the free press and freemasonic base of action to move to Vienna as a center for Enlightenment activities.⁵³⁵ He was, like many others, doubtless disappointed in the king's reversals. The remarkable thing to note here, though, is that his section on the king's legacy contained no bitter denunciations. Instead the tone of the panegyric spoke to the king's quality, and retained optimism in his reason and good qualities. T.C. W. Blanning argues that even in the latter half of the decade, intellectuals continued to view the king as their best hope, and despite the restrictions to the lifestyle they had so briefly yet wholeheartedly embraced, writers

⁵³³ The *toleranzpatent* and the *Grundregeln* on the censor reform are but two examples. One Austrian historian goes so far as to argue that the king commissioned many of the products of the pamphlet press to drum up public support for his controversial measures. This, however, is a highly suspect thesis. See Ernst Wangermann, *Die Waffen der Publizität* (2004).

⁵³⁴ "dieses in der That merkwürdigen Fürsten" Johann Pezzl, *Skizze*, vol. 1, 54.

⁵³⁵ Lesli Bodi, *Tauwetter* Edith Rosenstrauch-Königsberg

continued to eulogize him and the reforms of toleration, censor reform, and social and judicial transformations. “Unlike some later historians, the enlightened intelligentsia could appreciate that the best chance of progress lay in an alliance with the enlightened state against the vested interests.”⁵³⁶

A Public Not Free to Debate: Police Spies

Outside masonry, other sites for intellectual sociability were tainted by the presence of police spies. In 1782, Joseph allowed the governor of lower Austria, Johann Anton Pergen, to organize the police under his direct control. The new office of the police, called the *Polizei-Direktion*, would take responsibility for the city’s safety and suppress prostitution. It also encompassed another aim: the secret accumulation of information on the opinions and actions of prominent members of the public. Pergen garnered sole authority over the police, reporting only to the king. Pergen’s biographer claims that by thus subverting the authority of the chancellery, “in effect, if not in name, he had established an independent ministry of police, which was limited in its powers only insofar as its area of competence did not extend beyond the capital and Lower Austria.”⁵³⁷ Then, in September of 1786 Pergen received responsibility for the secret police throughout the monarchy, which now took on the name of *Geheime Staatspolizei*. No instant network of skilled informants emerged, though. Six month later, there were but three members of the secret police force, and Pergen was having problems with the limited budget at his disposal.⁵³⁸

⁵³⁶ T.C.W. Blanning, *Joseph II* (Longman, 1994) 167-168.

⁵³⁷ Paul P. Bernard, *From the Enlightenment to the Police State: The Public Life of Johann Anton Pergen* (University of Illinois Press, 1991) 128-129.

⁵³⁸ Bernard, *From the Enlightenment* 150.

The king had had a pre-existing network of informants, though they were unorganized and highly varied. Bernard argues that establishing an extensive system of secret police was a scheme of Pergen's to serve his self-appointed duty to protect the king from assassination, to expand his necessity or use to the state, and to curry Joseph's favor by providing the niggling details of goings-on in his state that the king loved to occupy himself with.⁵³⁹ Bernard's study portrays the presence of a secret police in Vienna as of no consequence until after 1789. However, the contemporary discussions of the secret police, and indications of people becoming informants against others based on intellectual differences provides a basis for viewing Vienna in 1786 as initiating the transformation to a police state. Though perhaps without effect, organization or power, the public remarked the existence of a secret police; as subjects of the legislated gaze of organized state informants, the public inevitably fretted at knowing their words were, at least on paper, of interest to the king himself. In addition to spies, informants drew the ire of authors. Richter's 1785 periodical, the *Wienerische Musterkarte* advertised the perception that any Hausmeister in the city was potentially a police informant, an occurrence Richter described as unbearable and coarse.⁵⁴⁰

Whatever the actual effect of the police or the extent of their presence, the adoption of these tactics was of concern to intellectuals, as evidenced by Johann Pezzl's abnormally lengthy chapter devoted to the police spies in his multi-volumed description of Vienna of 1786. Here he raised the issue of police spies for the state and the city. The section began descriptively, numbering the police employed by the state at one hundred police-kommisars and 300 *police-soldaten*, not all of whom were stationed in Vienna.

⁵³⁹ Bernard, *From the Enlightenment* 147.

⁵⁴⁰ See Bodi's discussion and excerpt from Richter in *Tauwetter*, 199.

He contrasted the city's police with those of Paris, arguing that Vienna had not yet developed into that sort of police state: Vienna's police "is not so hated as that of the Parisians, although they have in certain ways modeled themselves after them."⁵⁴¹ Pezzl was very careful not to damn Vienna or the crown any more than other big cities or the states in control of them, but he clearly portrayed police spies as vermin. He asserted that the Viennese felt no pressure to limit their speech despite the presence of police as residents of smaller, less stable countries would—those governments had more to fear than the Habsburg state and thus needed to be more harsh. Resorting to secret police would thus imply weakness for the monarchy. Pezzl's argument here replicated Joseph II's earlier articulation of his beliefs regarding censorship.

A further point made by Pezzl was that as of yet none had been pressured or suppressed by the current regime. He thus differentiated between being observed and being persecuted or oppressed. The lack of persecution to that point was a sign of the state's intelligence, though between the lines Pezzl was also warning the state against suppression, which would indicate a marked lack of control. He concluded that oppression, rather than freedom of speech, was dangerous to the state.⁵⁴² This section of the Sketch was published in 1786, before Pergen put his newfound powers to effect. However, the criticism of the creation of the police and system of state control over public opinion indicates that though there was little fear of immediate persecution, there was concern about its potential and the potential for the coming of even more repressive state action.

⁵⁴¹ "ist nicht so übertrieben gehässig, wie die Parisische, obschon sie manche Einrichtungen derselben nachgeahmet hat." Johann Pezzl, *Skizze von Wien*, vol. 2 (1786) 189.

⁵⁴² Pezzl, vol.2, 201-202.

Despite written protest on the existence of police infiltrating the public, in the letters of the active *Aufklärer*, there are few examples of arbitrary state or police action. Religious persecution remained the main source of *l'infame* in Habsburg lands rather than persecution of individuals by the state. Franz Grossing, one of the most radical of Viennese writers in the 1780s published explicitly Republican, anti-monarchical works, but was not persecuted for his ideas. He was even a member of the emperor's cabinet, until he was let go for what are now unknown reasons. Even after his dismissal, his continued drawing of a pension indicated he was still officially in favor. In 1787, though, the state finally arrested and banned Grossing from the hereditary lands—not for treasonous activities, but for an affair in which he was accused of slandering a woman. Alxinger wrote on Grossing's behalf in an attempt to limit the extent of the ban because of the weakness of the case against him.⁵⁴³

A major turning point in the reign of Joseph II occurred when he heard through his sundry informants of a plot among Hungarian landholders to oust Joseph II and turn the Hungarian crown over to Prussia. From this information, Joseph instructed Pergen to have the secret police find information on the conspiracy. In the spring of 1788, the court received information about the conspirators meeting in Vienna, and the police found their informant in a Hungarian tailor. Three prominent Magyars (one of whom was the Count Festetics who helped pay for new lodgings for *ZWE* a few years before) had commissioned elaborate custom outfits from the tailor, giving explicit directions on the colors and decorations to be used. The group put off the tailor's questioning of the purpose of the outfits, saying only he would find out in good time. This ominous secrecy ended the affair; police historian Paul Bernard found no further evidence of the well-

⁵⁴³ Alxinger to Nicolai, 26 October 1787. in *Sitzungsberichte*, 34.

dressed plot. The non-event however provided Pergen and the police with more crown support.⁵⁴⁴

In addition to those changes, the state began to employ a category outside normal judicial procedure for subversive criminals. Over the following year, seven people were tried in this category of *Staatsverbrecher*.⁵⁴⁵ One of these ‘traitors’ was Franz Rudolf Grossing, then in exile in Bavaria for the immoral conduct Alxinger described in his letters. Joseph heard through informants that Grossing was serving as liason between Hungarian dissidents and German political radicals, lured Grossing back into the crown lands under false pretenses, and then placed him under arrest for breaking his exile. The category of *Staatsverbrecher* allowed this illegal maneuvering, and even Count Kollowrat failed in his attempt to question the arbitrary actions of the police in this matter. Grossing’s subsequent extensive confessions revealed a massive conspiracy between Hungarians, German radicals, and some of the Monarchy’s freemasons. Despite indications of a grand plot, Pergen did not think Grossing deserved prison, but he would remain there, a victim of the king’s determination.⁵⁴⁶

Phillip Wucherer, a latecomer to the Viennese publishing world, specialized in underground works to carve out a niche in the city’s competitive publishing world. He pirated works already published abroad, and offered pornography and banned works under the table. He had a well-developed system of subverting the censor by sending out books to the provinces before the censor viewed them and by taking extensive advantage of the break in pre-censorship. Wucherer had already come under attack from the author

⁵⁴⁴ Bernard, *From the Enlightenment to the police State*, 151-152.

⁵⁴⁵ Bernard, *From the Enlightenment*. 153. This was a pre-existing category for cases that needed secrecy and was newly applied to traitors or subversives.

⁵⁴⁶ Bernard, *From the Enlightenment to the police State*, 154-155.

Johann Rautenstrauch for the damage he was doing to authors, censors and publishing in the monarchy, but he retained for a while support from the state.⁵⁴⁷ Wucherer was also a radical who joined the *Deutsche Union*, a group of former Illuminati who sought a cultural unification of German lands through writers and publishers.⁵⁴⁸ This allegiance caused his fall from Joseph II's grace and brought about another entrapment scheme from the police. Wucherer's arrest and conviction stemmed from charges of selling an illegal work to a spy, but Bernard argues that the crimes of more importance to the state were his allegiance to this extra-Austrian radical group and his large stockpiles of forbidden works. These crimes could not be prosecuted by the state because there was no proof of his intent to sell. For the lesser charge, Wucherer was exiled and his stockpiles of illegal books destroyed.⁵⁴⁹ The judge in the case was Joseph II himself.⁵⁵⁰

Although intellectuals may have protested some aspects of the development of the police over the 1780s, they did favor its organization and redefined focus. In fact, the theoretical groundwork for the police stemmed from Sonnenfels's *Grundsätze*, which argued the need for the police to serve as the basis for internal security in a state.⁵⁵¹ Most of the *Aufklärer*, who also served as state officials, had not only been exposed to Sonnenfels' philosophy on state science in social exchange, they had all been required to follow his courses at the University.⁵⁵² In this area of state encroachment on individual liberties, as elsewhere, the position of the *Aufklärer* was complex to say the least. The

⁵⁴⁷ *Wie lange noch? Eine Patriotenfrage an die behörde über Wucherers Skarteken Großhandel* (Wien, 1786).

⁵⁴⁸ Leslie Bodi, *Tauwetter*, 262-263. On the goals and limits of the Bahrdr's Deutsche Union, see Klaus Epstein, *The Genesis of German Conservatism* (Princeton UP, 1966) 95.

⁵⁴⁹ Bernard, *From Enlightenment to the Police State*, 156-158.

⁵⁵⁰ Bodi, *Tauwetter*, 263-264.

⁵⁵¹ Karl Gutkas, *Joseph II.* 239.

⁵⁵² David F. Lindenfeld, *The Practical Imagination: the German Sciences of State in the Nineteenth Century* (The University of Chicago Press, 1997) 36.

bureaucratic enlightenment created reform-minded but pragmatic intellectuals. The elitism of the Austrian enlightenment also factored in the evaluation of state prerogative; the writers always distinguished between the upper ranks (enveloping themselves especially in that category), who could wisely benefit from freedoms, and the *Pöbel*, who would find relief in state strength and guidance. The unknown masses, in addition to needing a guiding hand, also represented the potential for the success of *Aberglauben* over *Aufklärung*. With massive peasant unrest in living memory, and knowledge of the continued control of the superstitious elements in the church over the majority, the failure of state control also meant the demise of the Enlightenment.

Personal Animosity Between the Former Aufklärer

In addition to disappointment in intellectual sociability and publication, the former environment of a united Vienna defined by camaraderie between intellectuals backing reform changed to an atmosphere of recriminations and broken ties between ‘brothers.’ Authors and publishers were affected not only by censorship, but also by the atmosphere of recriminations in Vienna’s intellectual society. The divisiveness of the late 1780s irretrievably brought to an end the enthusiasm and friendship ideal of the city’s age of Enlightenment.

Even among the ranks of men who agreed on Enlightenment principles, sharp personal divisions and petty rifts broke out in the second half of the decade. A shining example of this was the feud between Ignaz von Born and Franz Kratter over divergent views of the intellectual climate of Bavaria after the suppression of the Illuminati and freemasonry there. Born published a letter in 1785 to the head of the Bavarian academy asking that his name be crossed from the list of honorary members. Kratter, as a

Bavarian by birth, was unwilling to support Born's symbolic break with the academy of sciences, and wrote a piece countering Born's. This manuscript provoked what Kratter termed the freemasonic '*Auto da fé*,' a series of events that Kratter brought before the public in a pamphlet that sought to chastise his attackers among the freemasons while defending his own writings and actions.⁵⁵³

The story of the *Auto da Fé* is compelling, if somewhat anticlimactic. Kratter mailed his manuscript to the publisher Hartl anonymously with the underwritten assumption that the manuscript would not be passed into the hands of others. The traitorous publisher took the manuscript to von Born who withheld it from publication, sent the payment through Hartl to the address Kratter gave, and had a lackey spy lay in wait until they discovered the author. Born then issued a polite invitation to Kratter through fellow mason Weber to be a dinner guest of the freemasons on the following Friday. Kratter accepted the invitation. Sometime later, Kratter ran into Weber at a dining hall, whereupon Weber told him that Born suspected Kratter of authoring the pamphlet *Drey Briefe über die neueste Maurerrevolution*. Kratter admitted to penning the work, claiming he was in no way ashamed of it. Though before he claimed indifference to Born's invitation, now he had some suspicions.

At dinner, many of his former acquaintances greeted Kratter with reserve. Kratter bowed upon Born's arrival, and "it cost him [Born] pain to thank me." As the gathering sat for dinner, the spy who uncovered Kratter's identity sat next to him, while the "National grand master frequently during the dinner stared at me for long minutes with a continuous, wild, reproachful, enraged, vengeful look. The calm, cold, undisturbed

⁵⁵³ Franz Kratter, *Freimaurer Auto da Fé in Wien* (Wien: Wucherer, 1786). Reprinted in Helmut Reinhalter, ed. *Joseph II und die Freimaurer im Lichte zeitgenössischer Broschüren* (Wien: Böhlau, 1987)

glance with which I answered him, sought to say: these are not the men, before whom I could quake!”⁵⁵⁴ After this hair-raising, silent exchange, Born quieted the crowd and proclaimed it was time for the accustomed philosophical speech. He began discussing the letters he had written to the Munich Academy at which point Kratter wrote he “pulled my confiscated manuscript out of his bag, and read a few choice fragments from my attached notes of commentary of his letter.”⁵⁵⁵ Defensively, Kratter argued that Born’s selectivity in reading sections added to the lack of context for the listeners made his work sound almost offensive. The *Landsgroßmeister* broke in on occasion with violent exclamations and threats, while Kratter tells us he sat there calmly listening to it all. Then Born informed the gathered Masons that the author of the manuscript and the author of the *Drei Briefe* were one and the same. He presented the issue before the gathered masons, to discuss discovering the author’s identity and determine what was to be done with him. When discussing the first point, someone even recommended bringing in the police, and others suggested various dire punishments in answer to the latter issue. When the discussion came to Kratter, he excused himself by saying he was not one of their association.

After thus rousing the indignant crowd, Born retook the spotlight and began speaking. “My brothers, began brother Born with an air of greatest official importance, we have already discovered the author. *Pause!* He is even amongst us. *Pause!* He broke bread with the Master. *Pause!* And this man is (with his Finger pointing at me)

⁵⁵⁴ “es kostete ihn [Born] Zwang, mir zu danken.”, then “Landsgroßmeister sah mich während der Tafel oft zu langen Minuten mit einem ununterbrochenen, wilden, Vorwürfe, Wuth, und Rache sprühenden Blicke an. Mein ruhiger, kalter, unzerstörter Blick, womit ich ihm antwortete, hätte ihm sagen sollen: Ihr seyd die Männer nicht, vor denen ich zittern könnte!” Kratter, *Freymaurer Auto da Fé in Wien* in Reinalter, ed. *Joseph II und die Freimaurerei* 141.

⁵⁵⁵ “zog mein aufgefangenes Manuskript aus der Tasche, und las mit besondere Auswahl einige Bruchstücke aus meinen zur Erläuterung seiner Briefe hinzugefügten Noten” Ibid., 141.

Brother *Kratter!*” Kratter claimed his composure never failed as the shocked freemasons looked his way, but he decided his only option was to lie. “I had been suspiciously, murderously locked up in this society. Six strong servant Brothers stood not far behind me.... Who could guarantee me that at the end of the philosophical beating the brothers would not dance around on my back?”⁵⁵⁶ He parried with Born and the Großmeister, the one admitting he had only invited Kratter to entrap him, and the other threatening him and insulting him by addressing him with ‘He’, a habit used only with lowly servants and serfs. Kratter reported “To bring an end to the situation, I said with meaning: I am no ****He! Took my hat and coat, and politely took leave of the brotherly association. A loud, and under the circumstances for the men very commendable, clapping followed me out the door.”⁵⁵⁷ With this denouement, the battle would have to continue in the press.

An important element of the story is Kratter’s defense of the rights of an author over his manuscript and the responsibility of the publisher to uphold his side of the contract. Kratter argued that the only person with the right to buy and thus own his manuscript was Hartl, and then only if he upheld his side of the bargain by publishing it in a timely manner. Thus Born, despite paying for the manuscript, had no right to either obtain it from Hartl or withhold it from publication.⁵⁵⁸ Kratter insisted that even if Hartl had rightfully acquired the manuscript, he still would not have had the right to employ the work to the disadvantage of the author. Kratter ended his discourse on the rights of

⁵⁵⁶ “Meine Brüder, fuhr Br. B**n mit einer Miene der ersten Staatswichtigkeit fort, wir haben auch den Verfasser schon entdeckt. *Pause!* Er ist sogar unter uns. *Pause!* Er hat mit dem Meister in die Schlüssel getaucht. *Pause!* Und dieser ist (mit dem Finger auf mich deutend) Bruder *Kratter!*” and then, “Man hatte mich meuchelmörderischer Weise in diese Gesellschaft gelockt. Sechs handfeste dienende Brüder standen nicht weit hinter mir.... Wer garantierte mir, daß nicht am Ende die philosophischen Berathschlagungen der Herren Brüder mir auf dem Rücken herum tanzen würden?” Kratter, 142.

⁵⁵⁷ “Um der Sache eine Ende zu machen, sagte ich mit Bedeutung: Ich bin keines***Er! Nahm Hut und Mantel, und empfahl mich der brüderlichen Gesellschaft. Ein lautes, für die Herren in der That sehr rühmliches Händeklatschen folgte mir nach.” Kratter, 143.

⁵⁵⁸ Kratter, 138-139.

authors vis-à-vis publishers with “From opposing intentions no understanding, and also no purchase, no contract can arise. I must therefore here reclaim my manuscript.”⁵⁵⁹

The machinations of the Born conspirators and the publisher undermined confidence in the system of publication; the ability to remain anonymous was publicly questioned and authors were held accountable for their writings outside the realm of print. In society and in public spaces, others identified individuals with the publications they released, and disagreements with those could result in actual disputes. The exposure of corruption in Vienna’s publishing industry provided a formidable barrier to the arguments of those claiming the city was finally achieving sophistication in its press.

Further debasing intellectual culture for the city of Vienna was the moral character of the freemasonic *Aufklärer* as displayed in their treatment of Kratter. Kratter appealed to his readers, as ‘men of honor, empathy, and humanity’ to consider the behaviour of these respected freemasons in that era of tolerance and enlightenment, recounting their behavior towards him, he asked, “are these men, freemasons, brothers?” He continued, “the human rights of hospitality was from the beginning holy and inviolable!”⁵⁶⁰ There was thus great shame for violating that. Attacking a published work was itself base, for Kratter pointed out his publication would appear only after state approbation. Further, if the work contained lies, the only suitable course of action would be to refute them in print. Kratter rested in his confidence as a citizen to be protected from the abuse of others through the state and its resulting security.

⁵⁵⁹ “Aus entgegengesetzten Absichten kann kein Einverständniß, also auch kein Kauf, kein Kontrakt entstehen. Ich muß also hier meine Manuskript zurückfordern.” Kratter, 139.

⁵⁶⁰ “sind das Männer, Freymaurer, Brüder?” and “Die menschlichen Rechte der Gastfreyheit waren von jeher dem teutschen heilig, und unverletzbar!” Kratter, 143.

In a lengthy footnote to the *Auto da Fé*, Kratter discussed other instances of honorable intellectuals being disparaged by their fellows. He told of an incident at Born's apartment where the gathering read from the latest work of Alxinger and dismissed it as dishonorable, ignorant and pernicious. Referring also to their treatment of the most venerable contributor to the Viennese *Aufklärung*, Kratter asked "What kind of man is Sonnenfels? And what are these people who wish to make him ridiculous?"⁵⁶¹ After this he developed a short discourse on the work and contributions of that great reformer. Finally, Kratter discussed the virtues of Professor Mayer in contrast to the insults he received at the hands of the intellectuals around Born.

Indicative of the culture of pamphlet debates, even before Kratter's tell-all was published, a refutation of his version of events had been sent to another publisher. Timing was the basis of the refutation, the pamphlet argued primarily against Kratter's depiction of the dinner as a planned inquisition. The work corroborates the perception that the Born circle tolerated no dissent; this could be seen in its tone of incredulity at someone who once sought support and advice from their circle, publishing writings that expressed differences of opinion with them. Here, Born's excessive anger at writings critical of himself and his ideals resembles Blumauer's earlier campaign against 'that traitor' Nicolai.

Indeed, the pamphlet clearly represents Von Born's desire to hold this man, his actions and his writings publicly accountable even at the freemasonic table that to many represented love of fellow man. Regardless of the degree of intimidation practiced among the freemasonic intellectuals in debates over opinion, the *Auto Da Fé* made clear

⁵⁶¹ "Was ist Sonnenfels für ein Mann? Und was sind diese Leute, die ihn lächerlich machen wollten?" Kratter, footnote, p144.

that criticism in the press was a public matter. After the ‘crisis of Josephinism’ in 1785-1786, philosophy itself devolved into warfare rather than the improving sociable exchange idealized earlier.⁵⁶² Internal strife dealt a blow to a local Enlightenment founded on unity and collective action.

In addition to attacks on individual *Aufklärer*, some extended their offensive to Enlightenment ideals. A 1786 pamphlet entitled *Über Tadel, Urtheilen und Freymüthigkeit. Zur Belehrung für Johann Rautenstrauch und seines gleichen*, attacked one of the Enlightenment circle in particular and the idea of criticism in general. This writer presented a total rejection of free criticism and combined that with personal attacks against Rautenstrauch, the society surrounding him, and learned newspapers, all of which were grouped together as one and the same evil. Criticism was attacked not just in the new literature coming from the likes of Rautenstrauch, but also within the societies “that think themselves learned.” The author contends that only one form of critique is acceptable, and that is ‘proving a fool publicly a fool’. Further, permission to publish criticism should only go to those “who because of their impartiality, intelligence, virtue and because of age and experience, will serve [criticism] this with wisdom.”⁵⁶³ Thus the claims to authority previously used by the *Aufklärer* in their own publications, periodicals and associations (with the exception of age) became self-aggrandized traits of the conservatives seeking to shut them up. The author of *Über Tadel* reviled the foundation of criticism—the ability to use reason and thus to arrive at sound judgment—contending the age did not permit reasoned judgement because of the surfeit of prejudices and biases.

⁵⁶² The term Crisis of Josephinism is Leslie Bodie’s.

⁵⁶³ “die sich gelehrt zu sein dünken” and “die wegen ihre Unpartheylichkeit, Klugheit, Tugend, und wegen ihres Älters und Erfahrungheit, sich desselben mit Weisheit bedienen würden.” *Uiber Tadel, Urtheilen und Freymüthigkeit. Zur Belehrung für Johann Rautenstrauch und seines gleichen* (Wien, 1786) 9-10.

Using damning anecdotes of Rautenstrauch and his friends' behavior, especially when they "attack well-deserving people in the bitterest way," the author described a lack of understanding and honor among the critics, portrayed their dismissal of works as petty and personal, and argued that through such cultural control, critics stifle publication.⁵⁶⁴ This denunciation shows the damage incurred from the arrogance and combativeness of Born, Blumauer and Rautenstrauch. Their well-publicized behavior provided the basis for a rejection of Enlightenment.

Former friends fell out as the enthusiasm that once bound them faded. Already in 1786, Alxinger badmouthed Blumauer in a letter to Reinhold: "À propos Blumauer. Our Almanac has turned out very badly, that's for sure! The others are, so I hear, no better. But that Blumauer (for Ratschky has no part in it and will from now on not edit with him, as he is going to Linz to be Secretary to the Governor) that Blumauer took up such a frustrating dirty trick that serves nothing as the Voice of Nature is, angers me not a little. How much must one be hostile to the graces, to do such a thing!"⁵⁶⁵ Leon similarly quetsched about Blumauer at this point.⁵⁶⁶ Sonnenfels was also increasingly criticized for his manner and the ways in which his thought diverged from the younger *Aufklärer*. Graf Fekete defends the contributions of Sonnenfels "despite," as he says, "all reproaches against the Herr Professor von Sonnenfels and his views..."⁵⁶⁷ Many thus

⁵⁶⁴ "wohl verdiente Leute auf die bitterste Art zu tadeln"

⁵⁶⁵ "À propos des Blumauer. Unser Almanach ist sehr schlecht gerathen, das möchte hingehen! sind doch die andern, wie ich höre, aich nicht besser. Aber dass Blumauer (denn Ratschky hat keinen Theil daran, und wird ihn künftighin auch nicht mehr mit herausgeben, da er als Gubernialsekretär nach Linz gehet) dass Blumauer so eine ärgerliche zu nichts dienende Schweinerey als die Stimme der Natur ist, aufnahm, ärgert mich nicht wenig. Wie sehr muss man doch mit den Grazien verfeindet seyn, um so Etwas zu thun!" Alxinger to Reinhold 20. November, 1786 in Keil, *Wiener Freunde* (44-46)

⁵⁶⁶ See his letters to Reinhold in the late 1780s, particularly in relation to the *Wiener Musenalmanach*.

⁵⁶⁷ "Trotz aller Vorwürfe gegen den Herrn Professor v. Sonnenfels und seine Ansichten..." Vajda, 43.

expressed a general disappointment that their erstwhile friends were not living up to high critical standards.

There was a dangerous development in the divisions between intellectuals at the end of the 1780s, as former ‘brothers’ began turning on their liberal former friends. Hoffmann was a major culprit in implicating Illuminati to the police during the widespread panic surrounding the Illuminati that followed the suppression of the order in Bavaria and the discovery of what seemed to the states of Europe to be plans for taking over governments. Though the illuminati’s existence was meant to be kept under the strictest secrecy, Hoffmann was able to identify many of its members. He did say that he almost joined the group, so it can be presumed that the illuminati revealed themselves to worthy members for recruiting purposes. Hoffmann turned conservative in 1787 after the Illuminati papers confiscated in Bavaria became widely available, advertising the subversive plot. Hoffmann’s reaction to this publicity led him to try to convert other former masons and illuminati to work with him to end the influence of Illuminatism in Vienna.⁵⁶⁸ By the time Leopold II took power, Hoffmann began submitting lists of liberals who had been his friends and ‘brothers’ before 1787 to the police, urging the dangers of the masons and illuminati to the public. Klaus Epstein argues, “Hoffmann easily convinced himself that Vienna was haunted by a dangerous Radical party whose chiefs stood in close contact with the Parisian Jacobins.”⁵⁶⁹ The fear Hoffmann apparently harbored for years of his former friends is perhaps a better indication of the unity of the group before 1787 than a sign of their potential for subversion.

⁵⁶⁸ Epstein, *Genesis of German Conservatism* 519.

⁵⁶⁹ Epstein, *Genesis of German Conservatism* 521.

The reversion to Conservatism displayed by Hoffmann was not an isolated event. In the entire political, religious and social culture of the Habsburg state, a shift had occurred away from those enthusiastic supporters of rational reform, utility and an end to superstition, and towards groups wishing for a stronger state and church. Hoffmann himself came to believe criticism of Catholicism would undermine the social order. Professor Mayer also was a conservative who would seek to hunt out Jacobins.⁵⁷⁰

Alternatives to Public Opinion

With the failure of open public discourse, division among intellectuals, rancorous debates on the veracity of enlightenment claims, the increasing presence of police spies, and continued press censorship, the extensive group of well-known academics and writers who worked together over the previous years for change slowly turned from their public activities and direct entreaties to a more private life the state would not find threatening. The Enlightenment ideals so enthusiastically supported by the former masons did not die. But many of the intellectuals and literati employed less activist forms of ideological expression. Many turned to publishing fictional or satirical works in place of straightforward essays. The late 1780s saw a large number of satirical novels and dramatic works published. Anecdotal and observational works also surged in popularity.

The popularity of Mercier's *Tableau de Paris* generated imitation throughout the continent. Popular in the latter half of the 1780s, the city description sought to provide a full picture of and commentary on the capital. Before about 1785, there were various works with Vienna as the topic, but they were largely responses to Nicolai's

⁵⁷⁰ Epstein, *Genesis* 519, 522.

Reisebeschreibung or written in the form of letters from Vienna to Berlin.⁵⁷¹ The popularity of the descriptions of Vienna has two implications: first, that criticism must be buried in reams of descriptive content; and second, that the writers of Vienna turned their attention to producing narrow works on their city, thus indicating the failure of the cosmopolitan project.

Johann Pezzl's introduction to his *Skizze von Wien* provides a good summary of the genre as not a topographical description, not a philosophical treatise, but simply a sketch by someone who loved the city but found it "in jedem Betracht merkwürdig".⁵⁷² Included among the works emerging from the Viennese press on the capital were: De Luca, *Beschreibung der K.K. Residenzstadt*. (1785); Johann Friedel, *Anekdoten und Bemerkungen Über Wien* (1787); Hegrad and Haschka added their contributions, Hegrad's has no date, Haschka's was a song from 1793; Kurzboeck the publisher put out a *beschreibung* in 1792; Richter, *Wienerische Musterkarte* (1785), *Das alte und neue Wien. Verfaßt von einem Erzpatrioten* (1788).⁵⁷³ Hungarian nobleman János Fekete also published a 'sketch' of the city in French in 1787, called *Esquisse d'un tableau mouvant de Vienne. Tracé par un cosmopolite*.⁵⁷⁴ Thus Pezzl's *Skizze* (1787-1788) was but one in an extensive list of published local descriptions. Taking from Mercier's and Nicolai's work, these descriptions often sought to invoke an image for the reader. Visual imagery was central not only in the title, but throughout the works.

General accounts of Vienna in the second half of the century do show a shift in public culture. Whereas before, any discussion of the city focused on its publications and

⁵⁷¹ This work was in response to the work *Briefe aus Berlin*.

⁵⁷² Pezzl, *Skizze*, vol. 1, 3.

⁵⁷³ Wernigg, ed. *Bibliographie*

⁵⁷⁴ György M. Vajda, *Wien und die Literaturen in der Donaumonarchie: Zur Kulturgeschichte Mitteleuropas 1740-1918* (Wien: Böhlau, 1994) 42.

freemasonic activities, now lengthy chapters discussed beer halls, taverns and coffeehouses; gardens and other public spaces; musical performances, fireworks and the demeanor and appearance of everyday people on the street. Johann Pezzl's massive *Skizze von Wien* provides a good source for recreating the city in the late 1780s. It was "An immense city.... A population of at least 270,000 people.... A coming together of all European nations.... an unceasing swarm of people, horses and wagons.... A numerous, wealthy, splendid nobility.... A very prosperous citizenry."⁵⁷⁵ Pezzl insisted every type of man could find himself a place in Vienna.

One section of the first volume described a day in the life of a Wiener, discussing all classes, and who can be found out on the streets at what time of day. Pezzl separated men and women and different classes into distinct activities. After ten o'clock the coffeehouses filled up. The Graben and Kohlmarkt were a big place for meeting and being seen, as was the area in front of the Milanische Kaffeehaus. In the evenings he speaks of theater, opera, concerts, spectacle, society rooms, and taverns. Around ten, everyone went home because the houses closed up and after ten one would have to pay a groschen to be let in by the doorman, and by eleven the streets are completely empty except the occasional last guests of a coffeehouse or pub. In the summer the palaces were empty as the families retreat to their other homes.

Though much of the *Skizze* is purely descriptive, within that descriptive content Pezzl often included moralizing sections on the importance of supporting intellectual culture. Other parts take a defensive tone—Pezzl repeatedly compared the characteristics and situation of the Viennese favorably to the French or Germans, especially harping on

⁵⁷⁵ "Eine ungeheure Stadt.... Eine Population von wenigst 270 000 Menschen.... Ein Zusammenfluß von allen europäischen Nationen.... Ein unaufhörliches Gewühl von Menschen, Pferden und Wagen.... Ein zahlreicher, begüterter, glänzenden Adel... Eine sehr wohlhabende Bürgerschaft." Pezzl, *Skizze* vol. 1, 40.

Vienna's claim to status to be one of the great cities of Europe. One chapter focused on the political character of the Viennese, claiming they were confident in the power of their state and did not fear a recurrence of the earlier threats to the city. "It was no entirely indifferent matter for the Viennese public, to tolerate the so-called heretics, abolish monks and nuns, bring an end to church music, lessen prayers, strip the holy, and have on their back a visit of the holy father Pope. In all this, the Viennese tolerated everything with a happy calm: and did not concern themselves much in the efforts of the monks and bigots, creeping about in all the houses, inciting people against heretics, to blaspheme the new institutions of the sovereign, to embitter various pasquilles: so would one also not have once heard in private society a voice of dissatisfaction and subversiveness."⁵⁷⁶ The Viennese are thus depicted as either apolitical or completely in favor of the reforming state under Joseph II.

Much of the *Skizze* centers on the collecting and preserving of knowledge on different facets of Viennese life. Pezzl gathered volumes of information on Viennese industry and the economy. He detailed the consumption of the city, listing tonnage of different products the city used. The occasional chapters on political freedoms or religious practice included much criticism of the state and church. Here, as in his novels, Pezzl was obviously modeling his work on French predecessors. The text made blatant comparisons to Mercier's *Tableau de Paris*, but also notably included Encyclopedic diversity of detail and Voltairean criticism and arguments for rights.

⁵⁷⁶ "Es war für das Wienerische Publikum keine ganz gleichgiltige Sache, die sogenannten Kezer toleriren, Mönche und Nonnen aufheben, die Kirchenmusik abstellen, die Andachten vermindern, die Heiligen entkleiden, und sich einen Besuch vom heiligsten Vater Pabst auf den Hals zu ziehen. Indessen duldeten die Wiener alles mit froher Gleichmüthigkeit: und hätten sich in die Mönche und Bigotten nicht so viele Mühe gegeben, in allen Häusern herumzuschleichen, die Andächtigen aufzuhezen, über die neuen Anstalten des Souveräns zu lästern, verschiedend pasquillantische Schriften zu verbittern; so würde man auch nicht einmal in Privat Gesellschaften die Stimme der Unzufriedenheit und Schmähsucht gehört haben." Pezzl, *Skizze* vol. 1, 105.

Viennese authors would not produce novels until late in the decade. Once forthcoming, these works were popular and polemical, incorporating methods specific to Vienna with imitation of the European Enlightenment corpus and critiquing Viennese mores and institutions through the application of widespread eighteenth-century methods. Leslie Bodi provides a timeline of 1783 to 1785 when “Romanembryos” appeared, novels that supported the Josephin program and relied heavily on the satirical, polemical style of the *Broschürenflut*.⁵⁷⁷ Then in 1785, with the ‘crisis of Josephinism’, a representatively Austrian literary novel developed. Heavy on irony and criticism, Austrian enlightenment novels peaked in the late 1780s; after the Jacobin scare, strengthened censorship and conservatism cut their appearance short.⁵⁷⁸

The aspects of the novel that worked to alter the social and political consciousness of the public under Joseph II were, according to Werner Bauer, “the convincing and comical behaviour of the narrator and in the powers of persuasion that lie in the exemplary character traits of the personalities of the proffered epic world”.⁵⁷⁹ Thus conversation and imitation provide the means to improve, much as had been the case in associations. The Viennese *Aufklärung* evolved with the adoption of this genre to pursue the goals that masonry once worked towards. In addition to seeking to improve, the

⁵⁷⁷ Problematic discussion of the embryotic novels because Bodi mostly refers to Pezzl—Faustin was published when Pezzl still in Switzerland; though read in Wien, cannot claim to be a product of the local literary world. Pezzl’s next novel—the marrokanische briefe—is better, Pezzl had moved to Vienna, would soon be taken into Kaunitz’s employ, and based this novel from real Moroccan ambassadors coming to Vienna. However, Bodi’s argument is still on the birth of the Austrian novel: could such a recent transplant really be credited with that? Then his next example of these romanembryos is a discussion of Richter: but Richter only publishing periodicals and pamphlets in that early period. Bodi himself launches into a discussion of the periodicals before getting to Richter’s novels, the first of which was published in 1786, then a couple more in 1787. The timeline and concept of the Romanembryo thus fails. Bodi, *Tauwetter* 179-183.

⁵⁷⁸ Bodi, *Tauwetter in Wien* 179-183.

⁵⁷⁹ “dem überredenden und komischen Verhalten des Erzählers und aus den Überzeugungskräften, die in den beispielhaften Charakterzeichnungen der Personen der gebotenen epischen Welt liegen.” Werner M. Bauer, *Fiktion und Polemik* xv.

novels of the late 1780s critiqued society and the state. The novels of the time—"as representation of the defects and wrongness of the immediate contemporary life"⁵⁸⁰—expose the irrational and unjust through the platform of satire and the absurd.

The comic absurdity of the Viennese novel borrowed much from Viennese theater tradition. The novels produced in France and Britain also provided a major influence on men of letters in the Habsburg capital. Voltaire and Montesquieu in particular inspired imitation, particularly as the Bavarian novelist and writer of descriptive works, Johann Pezzl moved to Vienna at mid decade and published a series of novels modeled directly after *Candide* and the *Persian Letters*. Werner Bauer also points to a trend in novels that followed the style of *Don Quixote*. In addition to absurdist novels that distance contemporary custom in order to criticize it, Vienna developed a taste for erotic literature. Blumauer circulated his own pornography privately while Wucherer kept large quantities available for his customers 'under the counter'.⁵⁸¹

The poets turned to epic tales of knights or ancients in their major works of the second half of the 1780s. Edith Rosenstrauch-Königsberg argues the literary *Aufklärer* reacted against the baroque tradition and promoted a gothic style that relied on humanism, ancient Greece and Rome, and Gothic literature. By focusing on the ideal, mythologised past, the Viennese intellectuals found the means to criticize their present. Knights' epics perhaps replicated some of the desire for a mystical past aroused in freemasonry. All in all, Rosenstrauch-Königsberg argues the literature of the time offered a "dialectical contradiction between utopia and cult of the past, between

⁵⁸⁰ "als Darstellung von Mängeln und Verkehrtheiten des unmittelbaren Gegenwartslebens" Bauer, xvii.

⁵⁸¹ Blanning, and Blumauer's correspondence in Rosenstrauch-Königsberg.

esotericism and rationalism.”⁵⁸² Alxinger’s major work, *Doolin von Mainz* provides a cogent example of this genre. The poem contains criticism of Joseph II, though in the introduction Alxinger wrote that this could only be voiced by him because he doesn’t live under a petty prince or king, but instead the kaiser is his ruler, who himself proclaimed his thick skin to such writings. Norbert Egger finds within the text heavily ironic criticisms of Joseph II’s antipathy to the sciences and the arts, but later editions brought out in subsequent, more repressive regimes saw Alxinger revise his criticism of the king to include a much more favorable evaluation. The epic established many connections between magic and freemasonry and paralleled alchemy to natural science.⁵⁸³

Even the newspaper and short critical tracts that Vienna specialized in after press freedoms experienced an evolution by the end of Joseph II’s reign. *Aufklärung* and criticism no longer reigned in fashion, ephemeral publications in periodicals and the pamphlet press focused on defending enlightenment itself. No longer were works simply concerned with the city’s ability to achieve enlightenment, now intellectuals feared its failure in the face of opposition. Otto von Gemmingen, the author and editor of works discussed earlier like the *Weltmann* issued yet another periodical in Vienna in 1787 that followed and in many ways represented the notable shift in intellectual culture. He argued the intellectual’s quest for perpetual fame and contemporary respect is achieved not independently, but through periodicals. "In a state where the Enlightenment is completely behind, where one must imitate others; there the utility of the periodical is

⁵⁸² “dialektische Widerspruch zwischen Utopie und Vergangenheitskult, zwischen Esoterik und Rationalismus.” Edith Rosenstrauch-Königsberg, “Die Philosophie der österreichischen Freimaurer und Illuminaten” in *Zirkel und Zentren. Aufsätze zur Aufklärung in Österreich am Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts*. Gunnar Hering, ed. (Vienna: Deuticke, 1992) 296.

⁵⁸³ Norbert Egger, *Aufklärung, Herrschaftskritik, Zensur: Zu Leben und Werk des österreichischen Dichters Johann Baptist von Alxinger (1755-1797) im gesellschaftlichen und politischen Kontext*. (Thesis. Uni. Salzburg, 1998) Chapter Five.

considerable; that is so clear that it need no further explanation.”⁵⁸⁴ Gemmingen thus admitted the backwardness of the Austrian enlightenment, the need for imitation, and expressed the desire to change this situation through his newspaper. The agenda of the new periodical was the revitalization of interest in the intellectual academic pursuits of serial publications. The bi-weekly would not allow intellectual interests to fade because of lack of success, and would focus on increasing dedication to providing a foundation for future intellectual development. The limits of audience, content and authorship in Vienna thus should not engender shame and reticence, but properly conceived goals and dedication.

The *Ephemeridan* continued the tradition of content compiled from multiple writers. Contributions were thus signed with full or abbreviated names, most of whom had previously collaborated on journals or through masonry. Participation of many of the *Aufklärer* in the work indicates a still extant community in 1787. The journal further continued the tradition of representing the tensions of localism, nationalism and cosmopolitanism, though here Gemmingen seems to offer a solution to the former conflicts. The *Ephemeridan* provided brief updates on political, economic and intellectual news as well as miscellany typically academic in nature. In political news, Gemmingen gave Austria prime of place, followed by Germany, “in part because this state belongs to a part of it, and then because it enjoys the common happiness of being under the same leader.”⁵⁸⁵ After local and national information, the journal reported news from afar. Indicative of the increasingly inward turn of the Viennese

⁵⁸⁴ “In einem Lande vollends, wo man in der Aufklärung [sic] zurück ist, wo man andern nacharbeiten muss; da ist der Nutzen der Zeitschriften sehr beträchtlich; das ist so einleuchtend, dass es keiner weitern Ausführung bedarf.” Gemmingen, *Wiener Ephemeridan* 7.

⁵⁸⁵ “einmal weil diese Staaten zum Theil dazu gehören, und dann weil sie das gemeinschaftliche Glück geniessen unter dem nähmlichen Oberhaupte zu stehn.” Gemmingen, *Wiener Ephemeridan* 12.

Enlightenment, motivated by failure to rapidly achieve a place in the international Enlightenment, Gemmingen defended the practice of cosmopolitan exchange of information. The journal would represent international news "only in so far as we, as cosmopolitans taking part in the whole, as humans under every bit of sky, under every state constitution seek to observe humanity. And in this point of view, amongst foreign histories that of England would certainly most captivate our imagination, where human abilities and human strength stand in the brightest light."⁵⁸⁶ Enlightenment universalism continued as an ideal in Gemmingen's worldview, though he perceived the Viennese as potentially unreceptive to it. The focus on England as a place where humanity neared fulfillment provided an oblique critique of the contemporary Austrian system of government. Whereas the initial publications after censor reforms freely argued for the application of Enlightenment to statecraft, in the latter half of Joseph's regime authors refrained from direct suggestions on state reform. This indirect criticism actually went further than the treatises on statecraft published earlier, perhaps indicative of waning satisfaction with the possibilities provided by enlightened absolutism.

Gemmingen introduced the bi-monthly with a disavowal of criticism in a piece titled 'Apology for Periodicals. The new periodical claimed to differ from most in writing only on the good of society, and aimed to educate rather than repeat popular critical discourse. Gemmingen interpreted Viennese critical literature as primarily derivative—as saying only what everyone was already thinking about. He argued newspapers should be instructive rather than merely report; so "must their teaching be consistent and

⁵⁸⁶ "nur in so ferne wir, als Weltbürger am allgemeinen Antheil nehmen; als Menschen unter jedem Himmelstriche, unter jeder Staatsverfassung den Menschen zu beobachten suchen. Und in diesem Gesichtspunkte wird [sic] freylich unter den fremden Geschichten die von England zum meisten unsre Aufmerksamkeit fesseln, wo Menschenwürde und Menschenkraft im hellsten Lichte steht."

foundational; it must discover what about a situation is to be known; not meander about from one science to another; tearing apart everything enjoying nothing; after the usual usage of periodicals.”⁵⁸⁷ Though Gemmingen took a stand against superficial knowledge, he also did not favor excessive erudition. Periodicals in his view provided the public with a foundation for knowledge. This introduction provides a clear indication of the public’s waning interest in superficial criticism. The article further stressed the importance of the abilities of the editor—not just any hack should put out a periodical—they demanded discrimination and organized thought.

Gemmingen urged the importance of improving knowledge despite indications of declining receptivity to enlightenment methods. The *Aufklärer* thus argued the importance of retaining the centrality of academic subjects for the new public sphere. To promote this goal, journalists would serve to feed the knowledge to the people in small, easily digested chunks, like the *Weiner Ephemeridan* would do. He continued with an analogy to the economic market: "Honestly speaking, we have nothing aligned with the sciences as long as these rule only in study rooms and lecture halls; they must come into common usage, like money, or both are dead riches: they must weave themselves into the typical character, become the substance of social conversations, and so spread participation and the spirit of activity and industry through all the social ranks. Comfort and indifference are the actual promoters of ignorance; whoever wishes to work against these must know how to garner attention and spare comfort.”⁵⁸⁸ The purpose of the

⁵⁸⁷ “muss seine Lehre doch zusammenhängend, gründlichseyn; sie muss erschöpfen, was über einen Gegenstand zu wissen ist; nicht herumtändeln von einer Wissenschaft zur andern; alles benaschen und nichts geniessen; nachleidendem Gebrauch der Zeitschriften.” Otto von Gemmingen, *Wiener Ephemeridan* (Wien: Gayischen Schriften, 1787) 4

⁵⁸⁸ “Im Ernste geredet; wir haben nichts mit den Wissenschaften ausgerichtet, so lange sie nur in Studierzimmern und Hörsalen herrschen; sie müssen in Umlauf kommen, wie das Geld, sonst sind beyde todter Reichthum: sie müssen sich verweben in das gemeine Wesen, Gegenstand gesellschaftlicher

periodical was primarily utility, and to be useful the work must serve the needs of its public. Gemmingen imparted the benefits of short writings that refrain from taxing attention; as few people of importance, he claimed, have leisure to read. The defense of periodicals extended into a discussion of the problem of the “unthankful intellectuals” who did not value this type of work despite its role in “the cultivation of fundamental sciences.”⁵⁸⁹

Gemmingen presented here a new, updated view of *Aufklärung* in the city. Though the importance of the Enlightenment was still stressed, the work presented a much less optimistic view of the developments of the Viennese *Aufklärung* than the periodicals of a few years before did. In discussing the rapid developments of 1781, Gemmingen blamed intellectuals for jumping the gun in proclaiming the success of enlightenment in the city. “The charitable gift of press freedoms was hardly handed down, so was the cry of the night watchmen of the learned Republic universal. Some blew heartily on their horn and proclaimed everything that had yet to occur as already occurred: other resentful or peevish universal critics already sought, before the seed was fertilized, rich fruits and cried loudly over their lack.”⁵⁹⁰ He then argued that the wisest stood back to observe where freedom took the city, while everyone enjoyed the relief from former suppression. In the opinion war that followed, he derides the pamphlets of the early *Broschürenflut* as ‘untimely or untasteful’. Gemmingen attributed pamphlet

Unterhaltung werden, und so Theilnehmung und Geist der Thätigkeit und Gewerbsamkeit durch alle Stände verbreiten. Bequemlichkeit und Sorglosigkeit sind die eigentlichen Beförderer der Unwissenheit; wer dieser entgegen arbeiten will, der muss die Aufmerksamkeit zu reizen und der Bequemlichkeit zu schonen wissen”. Gemmingen, *Wiener Ephemeridan* 4-5.

⁵⁸⁹ “die Pflege gründlicher Wissenschaften” Gemmingen, *Wiener Ephemeridan* 7.

⁵⁹⁰ “Kaum war das wohlthätige Geschenk der Pressfreyheit vom Throne heruntergelangt, so wurde das Geschrey der Nachtwächter in der gelehrten Republik allgemein. Einige bliesen mächtig in ihr Horn und verkündigten alles was erst werden sollte, als schon geschehn: andre missgünstige oder milzsüchtige Alltadler suchten, ehe der Saamen noch keimte, schon reife Früchte und schrien laut über ihren Mangel.” Gemmingen, *Wiener Ephemeridan*, 61.

publication to simple desire for publicity and their shortcomings to a precipitancy that would not allow the subjects due consideration. Thus some works could have been of greater worth, but in an atmosphere characterized by petty conflicts and speed, higher culture could not flourish. He concluded with a more benign statement, arguing that the publications and advancements of the time were collectively impressive, “as constrained also as the limits of the individual powers.”⁵⁹¹

Gemmingen described the benefits resulting from the *Broschürenflut* primarily as the cultivation of a spirit of inquiry among all the social orders. As the obsession with newness disappeared, however, so did the followers interested purely out of curiosity and not a desire to improve. Gemmingen’s periodical thus betrays the elitism of the Viennese intellectuals; exclusivity was necessary for intellectual progress in this worldview, only when popular clamor died out could intellectuals begin their work. He announced: “and now it is time to illuminate the new fruits of our literature with the torch of criticism.”⁵⁹² The periodical proposed a thorough evaluation of the country’s literature; its purpose and methods. The review would achieve appreciation for the published works of the nation as they were. Understanding the true nature of the local enlightenment would lessen the need for imitation and end the negative comparative focus of those observing the literary cultures to the west or north. Gemmingen proposed a program for reform that placed particular importance on language. Though Austria lacked major intellectual advancement, purification of language and education of the Volk could rectify traditional retardation. ” finally, the thing we must most carefully see

⁵⁹¹ Gemmingen, *Wiener Ephemeridan*, 61-62.

⁵⁹² “und nun ist es Zeit mit der Fackel der Kritik die neuen Früchte unsrer Litteratur zu beleuchten” Gemmingen, *Wiener Ephemeridan* 63.

to purity, correctness, and certainty of the language for the country's literature."⁵⁹³ The improvement of literature through the focus on speech would then effect improvements in taste and philosophy. In a section voicing ideas that resemble Herder's thought, Gemmingen continued with a discussion about differing national modes of thinking and resulting differences in national opinion.

A section on the actual achievements of the local press and academic circles followed. On the new fruits of literature, the article informed readers that writers were finally publishing major works rather than ephemeral pieces. There followed a discussion of academic specializations outside the realm of literature, crediting Van Swieten's work in medicine with providing the only field in which Vienna excelled beyond the rest of Europe. The arts also would achieve prominence because they were valued. The author asserts "Where truth won ground, there beauty is not far behind."⁵⁹⁴ As in the introduction, Gemmingen argued again the importance of knowledge of arts to enlightenment; this permitted an evaluation of Vienna's culture as progressive rather than lacking distinction as it might be appraised if judged on academic achievement.⁵⁹⁵ Gemmingen discussed future achievement in the arts—providing no mention of contemporary achievements in music. This is a common omission throughout the writings of the period; ironically music, the one subject that brought late-eighteenth-

⁵⁹³ "Reinigkeit, Wohllaut und Bestimmtheit der Sprache wird endlich dasjenige seyn, worauf wir bey der innländischen Litteratur am sorfältigsten sehn müssen" Gemmingen, *Wiener Ephemeridan* 65.

⁵⁹⁴ "Wo Wahrheit Land gewinnt, da ist Schönheit nicht ferne." Ibid., 68.

⁵⁹⁵ Gemmingen, *Wiener Ephemeridan*, 12.

century Vienna immortality, was not used at the time to create a favourable comparison with other nations.⁵⁹⁶

Like the publishing culture, enlightenment itself fell victim to fashion. In an essay entitled “On the misuse of the word *Aufklärung*” signed with an *R*, (Most likely Ratschky or Retzer) the *Ephemiridan* states “for us, Enlightenment is currently the common topic of conversation at the tables of the great, and at the bar in taverns.”⁵⁹⁷ And because of this fad, everything the term embraced all, becoming a panacea despite a general lack of understanding for the buzzword.⁵⁹⁸ The Berlin Akademie and its goal of “decreasing the number of those in error, and to increase those of the truth” provided an ideal. The 1784 essay competition on the meaning of Enlightenment hosted by the Academy is then defended as as important as the earlier debate over the meaning of the institution of the papacy.⁵⁹⁹ In trying to stress the importance of defining enlightenment, the article questioned the necessity of *Aufklärung* when it was rarely understood and often feared or opposed by those such as monks. “Actually we are too indifferent in regards to Enlightenment to find it worth the trouble to apply ourselves in finding a proper term. But even this indifference is proof enough that we are in need of the

⁵⁹⁶ All the research on Mozart and Haydn similarly laments that they don’t pop up in contemporary references, very unlike the writers of the day who would not achieve the lasting fame they consistently sought.

⁵⁹⁷ “Aufklärung ist nun bey uns der allgemeine Gegenstand der Unterhaltung bey den Tafeln der Grossen, und bey den Schenktischen in Bierhäusern.” Gemmingen, *Wiener Ephemeridan*, 86.

⁵⁹⁸ Gemmingen, *Wiener Ephemeridan*, 87.

⁵⁹⁹ “die Summe der Irrthümer zu vermindern, und die der Wahrheiten zu vermehren” Gemmingen, *Wiener Ephemeridan*, 97. Indicative of the place of religious questions in the intellectual culture of Vienna is the perception of that pamphlet exchange exceeding in value the still famous essay competition.

Enlightenment.”⁶⁰⁰ Apathy thus emerged as a characteristic of Viennese Enlightenment in stark contrast to the optimism of the freemason literature.

Another periodical representative of the late days of Joseph II’s reign was J. Richter’s *Eipeldauerbriefe*. Using the trusty popular Enlightenment method of making the familiar strange through the letters of an outsider, in this case an uncouth rustic, Richter provides heavy satire for the amusement of the city, and for the satisfaction of his own critical tendencies. The inconsistent intellectual atmosphere is well represented through Richter’s activities and the publication of the *Eipeldauerbriefe*. Richter provides a work very satirical and critical, but he becomes a voice for Leopold’s government.

The types of works published in Vienna after 1786—when compared with the polemical pamphlets of the *Broschürenflut*, the cosmopolitan-sensitive local periodicals, and the activist writings of the freemasons—notably represent a less direct form of commentary on Enlightenment and a defense of the need for sciences and *Aufklärung*. This raises the standard chicken and egg question: did the turn to novels, theater and epic poetry bring decline to intellectual, critical debating culture, or are the literary products of the second half of the decade a product of the disillusionment of the era. Does *Aufklärung* and its progress cease to exist when it is no longer directly invoked through tracts and treatises, or are the satirical novels and local descriptions the form a successful enlightenment movement naturally assumes?

Sociability did not entirely die out with the destruction of masonry and the addition of public spies. Salons were a potential site of retreat from the falling public sphere. Pezzl described women of upper-class houses combining male reason and female

⁶⁰⁰ “Eigentlich sind wir gegen Aufklärung zu gleichgültig als dass wir es der Mühe wehrt fänden, uns um einen richtigen Begriff von ihr zu bewerben. Aber eben diese Gleichgültigkeit, ist Beweises genug wie sehr wir der Aufklärung bedürfen.” Gemmingen, 98.

grace much like descriptions of French salonières did. He described the pleasant evenings they hosted, and states that this is where the local and international learned are to be met.⁶⁰¹

Johann Pezzl's post-homous biography of Ignaz von Born reported on some of the social gatherings at the home of the former leader of enlightened masonry. Pezzl claims Born was known throughout Europe and few foreigners came to Vienna who did not seek his acquaintance and friendship. "Born was everything to everyone: he had a completely natural ability to bewitch people that was a unique ability of his; people, that were indifferent or even completely prejudiced against him, sometimes became after a conversation of a few hours, his warmest admirers."⁶⁰² Thus the skills of sociability governed satisfactory intellectual exchange, much like a salonière in Paris. This was not the only time for sociability at Born's house. He continued meeting with his select group of followers in the evening. As Pezzl tells us, "In the evenings Born had an especially small, exclusive society in his house; because since his foot became lame he went out seldom."⁶⁰³ At the time of the demise of freemasonry Born could walk, so this select group probably constituted the remainder of the *Aufklärer* who supported his movement.

Blumauer also played host to his literary friends. János Fekete, in his *Esquisse* of 1787 reported "his house stood open for the weekly gathering of the Viennese literati."⁶⁰⁴ Another Hungarian noted in 1786 "At Blumauer's assembled his reading buddies Sunday

⁶⁰¹ Pezzl, *Skizze*, vol. 1, 89.

⁶⁰² "Born ward Allen Alles: er hatte eine ganz natürliche, eine ihm ganz besonders eigne Gabe, die Menschen zu fesseln; Leute, die gegen ihn gleichgiltig, oder wohl gar wider ihn eingenommen waren, wurden manchmal durch einen Umgang von wenigen Stunden mit ihm, seine wärmsten Verehrer." Pezzl, *Lebensbeschreibung*, 252-253.

⁶⁰³ "Auf den Abend hatte Born eine besondere kleine ausgewählte Gesellschaft in seinem Hause; denn seit ihm sein Fuß lahm geworden war, gieng er wenig aus " Pezzl, *Lebensbeschreibung*. 253.

⁶⁰⁴ "Sein Haus stand für die wöchentlichen Zusammenkünfte der Wiener Literaten offen." Quoted in Vajda, *Wien und die Literaturen* 45.

morning at nine o'clock. His door was open to all strangers, who would like to hear who lectured on his reading matter and in what way ... Present were Blumauer, Ratschky, Alxinger, Gottlieb Leon, the Dominican friar Poschinger and others, they at the table as workers towards the same purpose, we in chairs."⁶⁰⁵

Although the changed forms of intellectual sociability did not leave the detailed records of the earlier associational activity in Vienna, the occasional reference to private gatherings in the late 1780s in the city does indicate some extension of the literary culture to the era after Joseph's reforms proved less reforming than hoped. There is not much detail on what occurred in such salons. Reports on the more popular gatherings at the Greiner's or Kaunitz's depict sociability without serious intellectual content, instead music, games, and social conversation predominated. This type of sociable institution thus proved less inspirational than masonry. No writer claimed a salon inspired publication, and the rhetoric of *Arbeit* and *Übung* was not revived.

Personalities Fail to Impress

The international appraisal of the Viennese enlightenment and circle of literati declined from the hopes and enthusiasm of 1781 to a paltry valuation by 1790. Though many North Germans still acknowledged the work done by the Austrians and the cosmopolitan fame they had achieved, little besides disappointment was expressed in their persons. Describing the intellectual scene in Vienna on 14.Mai 1791, an acquaintance of Reinhold extensively evaluated the personalities of the intellectuals. The quoted letter describes the Viennese poets as "are immeasurably conceited, from the

⁶⁰⁵ "Bei Blumauer versammelte sich seine Leserfreunde sonntags früh um neun Uhr. Seine Tür stand offen für alle Fremden, die es hören wollten, wer und in welcher Weise über seine Lektüre der Woche referiert.... Anwesend waren Blumauer, Ratschky, Alxinger, Gottlieb Leon, der Dominikaner Poschinger und andere, sie am Tische als für den gleichen Zweck arbeitender: wir auf den Stühlen." Quoted from Ferenc Kazinczy in Vajda, *Wien und die Literaturen* 45.

insurmountability of the poetry that contained unbridled concepts and thereby make fun of philosophy as the idle broodings of dark, isolated intellectuals." Forberg continued, "Blumauer sank immeasurably in my eyes since I have known him. As much as his inexhaustible wit had from the start afforded me such immensely enjoyment, so could I hardly persuade myself that his type of poetry the only type that could bring to a thinking mind noble and rewarding conversation. Similarly, Blumauer is convinced of the truth, that the only calling of the author is to write for a big public, therefore the People." He then complains that Blumauer hasn't kept up with the most important recent scholarship of Schiller and the *Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung*, saying "he could not stand, he said, all the reviews of books, while partly he is used to seeing all men of letters gather under him and consequently appraise them himself without having seen them on the witness chair; partly the books are either good or bad; if it is good, then all he needs is the title or a word to read it himself and to judge it, if it is bad, why a judgment about a bad book?" Forberg did find some intellectuals he could identify with, saying, "In Herr Leon I have found an extremely affable and kindly man, that at least received a noticeably smaller portion of the deadly sin of the Viennese intellectuals, conceit." Born was described as "a dull, grim man, that either spoke absolutely nothing, or (what is even worse) uncommonly quietly." Sonnenfels similarly failed to impress by refusing to enter into conversations over the *Allgemeine Literatur Zeitung* because he had not read it in years and had even put out a pamphlet against it because it wasn't written in proper German. Sonnenfels also spoke derogatorily about the intellectuals he encountered on a trip to Sachsen and Brandenburg.⁶⁰⁶

⁶⁰⁶ "unmässig eitel seien, von der Unübertrefflichkeit ihrer Gedichte die allerausschweifendsten Begriffe hätten, und dabei die Philosophie als müßige Grübeleien finsterer Stubengelehrten verspotten" and

Indeed the Viennese *Aufklärer* increasingly showed themselves distant from the aspects of enlightened thought that would retain lasting influence. Not only did they not bother to keep up with the latest literature, they also increasingly spoke of works of the past with nostalgia. Alxinger in a letter in the early 1790s claimed Reinhold's discussions on Kant were beyond his abilities. "Kant appears and pulverizes everything. He does not just prove the invalidity of many basics, instead he refutes the possibility of finding such. He collapses the temple that Leibniz, Wolf and Mendelssohn deluded themselves, as they did at the time, to have built." He then says his taste runs more towards poetry, laments the lack of poets, and says, "the golden age of German poetry appears to have reached its end."⁶⁰⁷

Josephins as Jacobins? *Aberglauben und Schwärmerei* in Austrian History.

Were there Jacobins active in the Habsburg crown lands? Miklós Molnár in his history of Hungary claims that there was a small minority in that region that favored the French Revolution and gathered in clandestine, seditious groups and dodged the

"Blumauer hat in meinen Augen unendlich verloren, seitdem ich ihn kenne. So unermesslich viel Vergnügen mir sein unerschöpflicher Witz von jeher gewährt hat, so wenig habe ich mich doch überreden können, dass seine Gattung von Gedichten die einzige sei, welche einem denkenden Geist die edelste und belohnendste Unterhaltung verschaffen könne. Gleichwohl ist Blumauer selbst lebendig von der Wahrheit überzeugt, dass der einzige Beruf des Schriftstellers sei, für ein grosses Publikum, d. i. für das Volk, zu schreiben.", then "er könne, sagt er, alle Beurtheilungen von Büchern nicht leiden, denn theils sei er überhaupt gewöhnt, alle Gelehrte unter sich zu sehen und folglich blos sie selbst zu beurtheilen, nicht aber sie auf dem Richterstuhl zu sehen; theils sei das Buch entweder gut oder schlecht; sei es gut, so brauche er nur den Titel oder Ein Wort, um es selbst zu lesen und zu beurtheilen; sei es schlecht; wozu ein Urtheil über ein schlechtes Buch?" then, "An Herrn Leon habe ich einen äusserst liebreichen und gefälligen Mann gefunden, der wenigstens von der Erbsünde der Wiener Gelehrten, der Eitelkeit, eine beträchtlich kleinere Portion empfangen hat.", finally "ein trockener, finsterer Mann, der entweder garnicht, oder (was noch schlimmer ist) ungemein leise spricht." Letter extensively quoted in Keil, "Introduction" to *Wiener Freunde* 25-26.

⁶⁰⁷ "Kant erscheint und zermalmet Alles. Er beweiset nicht nur die Nichtigkeit so vieler Gründe, sondern sogar die Unmöglichkeit geltende zu finden. Er stürzt die Tempel ein, die Leibniz, Wolf, und Mendelssohn sich für die Unsterblichkeit, wie man damahls wähnte erbauet haben." And "Das goldne Zeitalter der Deutschen Dichtkunst scheint sein Ende zu erreichen." Keil, *Wiener Freunde*, 55-56.

numerous spies, however he also asserts that the sympathy with the Revolution decline with the advent of Robespierre.⁶⁰⁸

Under Leopold II's reign, intellectuals felt even more embattled than they had under the indifferent Joseph II. Leopold did not just arbitrate; he manipulated. Paul Bernard points out the emperor's tendency to play the conservatives and the *Aufklärer* against one another. While the king supported the former Josephin-turned conservative, Leopold Alois Hoffmann, now editor of the anti-enlightenment *Wiener Zeitung*, "Leopold also cut the ground from under the efforts of the minister of police, Pergen, who was attempting to suppress exactly the sort of activities that Hoffmann was writing about."⁶⁰⁹

Historians have hunted for Jacobins just as did the fearful monarchs and elites of the fading old regime in the 1790s. Vienna provided historians with a shining example. The story goes: the secret police uncovered a revolutionary plot and reported it to Francis II, who immediately expanded the police's powers to begin the process of the monarchy's transformation into a police state. The war with France and the zeal of police director von Saurau ensured excessive intrusion on the part of the police. Spies, recriminations, opened letters and constant observation of suspicious or foreign persons predominated. Authorities keenly watched intellectuals as the city turned itself into a protective fortress complete with newly functioning city gates and newly established garrisons. The Jacobin trials persecuted former officials, masons or illuminati: many of the people active in the Josephin enlightenment.⁶¹⁰ In the trials of Jacobins, the king established a court that functioned outside the law and thus was more severe. Fifty-two people were charged,

⁶⁰⁸ Miklós Molnár, *A concise History of Hungary* trans. Anna Magyar (Cambridge UP, 2001) 159.

⁶⁰⁹ Paul P. Bernard, review of Gerda Lettner, *Das Rückzugsgefecht der Aufklärung in Wien, 1790-1792* (1988). Need to look this up again on J-Store—what journal was it in?

⁶¹⁰ Walter Consuelo Langasm, "Emperor Francis II and the Austrian 'Jacobins', 1792-1796" in *AHR* 50:3 (Apr., 1945) 471-490.

eighteen death penalties were issued, and there were seven executions and heavy prison sentences for the others. Few were acquitted.⁶¹¹ Of those notorious Jacobins, most were Hungarians, while Franz Hebenstreit and Andreas Riedel were both out of Vienna for the whole of the 1780s. Riedel was serving Leopold in Florence while Hebenstreit was stationed in the military near Prague.⁶¹²

Though initially stunned, popular Schadenfreude set in as the public grew impatient for the outcome of the trials. By the punishment stage, the Viennese turned out in huge crowds. In explaining the popular enthusiasm for the trials and sentencing, Walter Langsam cites Franz Xaver Huber's discussion of popular anti-Jacobinism from 1792 that expressed Huber's own experiences of the dangers of expressing opinions in public. The French language could no longer be used without reprobation, and there was a series of incidents of anti-French bigotry. Huber recounted an incident when he publicly predicted the success of the French Republic and that Austria would not be able to retain control of the Netherlands and Lombardy, whereupon, in his own words, "a host of archpatriots pounced upon me, labeling me a Jacobin and an emissary of the French."⁶¹³

The effect of the Jacobin trials was extensive. It was this event that encapsulated the regression of the Austrian monarchy from Enlightened absolutism to a conservative jealous state power. From 1794, there is a general intellectual flight from politics in Austria and the literary life of the 1780s all but disappears.⁶¹⁴ Later repression

⁶¹¹ From Molnár, need to check the reference, page.

⁶¹² From the trial testimonies of Hebenstreit and Riedel, in Alfred Körner, *Die Wiener Jakobiner* (J.B.Metzler, 1972) 109, 130.

⁶¹³ Quoted in Langsam, 484.

⁶¹⁴ Langsam, 490. and Vajda, 66.

overwhelmed what now seems a minor shift, but at the time appeared a dramatic halt to the activities of *Aufklärer* under Joseph II.

Conclusion

There is no clear downward trajectory for the Viennese Enlightenment during Joseph II's lifetime—to ascribe one to these years is to pass a value judgment on Viennese literature and bureaucratic loyalty, and to ignore real developments and contributions. It is furthermore not clear what the intentions of the reform of freemasonry and the police were, and an argument could be made that changes to police and censorship did not entail a change in policy as could one argue the reform of freemasonry sought to protect it from conservative encroachment. But, already in Joseph II's later years, the reigning optimism and enthusiasm of the early years of the city's *Aufklärung* seems to have dissipated. Leon summarized the situation in August of 1786:

With regard to the further activity of our national literature, now a small pause prevails. Even the flying pamphlet corps stop at a standstill in their with us so widespread battles, supposedly only so long until again another situation occurs in which they can display their abilities. The freemasons were for a long time the subject of this, but now we again have peace and quiet. Other than the *Wienerephemeriden*, in which Sir von Gemmingen transforms his disassembled magazine into much beloved grand quarterlies, we do not have one single substantial Journal here.⁶¹⁵

The intellectuals in Vienna continued to support Joseph II and the possibilities for reform that 'enlightened despot' embodied. In studying the Rumanian nationalist Samuel Clain, Keith Hitchens illustrates that even those seemingly most radical of intellectuals active in the 1780s never lost admiration for Joseph II. He argues, "Clain believed that man, by use of his knowledge and reason, could eliminate hardship and injustice and that

⁶¹⁵ "Was die anderweitige Betriebsamkeit unserer innländischen Litteratur betrifft; so herrscht in derselben nun eine kleine Pause. Selbst das fliegende Broschürenkorps halt nun mit seinen bey uns so häufigen Streifereyen einen kleinen Stillstand, vermuthlich nur so lange bis sich wieder ein neuer Vorfall bey uns ereignet, seine Tummelfertigkeit zu zeigen. Die Fr. Maurerey war lange der Gegenstand derselben; nun aber hat sie auch wieder Ruh' und Friede. Ausser den *Wienerephemeriden*, in welchen Frhr. V. Gemmingen sein ins Stocken gerathenes Magazin in beliebten Grossquart varwandelte, haben wir hier kein einziges beträchtliches Journal." Leon to Reinhold, 16 August 1786 in Keil, *Wiener Freunde*, 62.

he could create instead a society which would assure the well-being of all. He emphasized repeatedly in his writings that change, to be beneficial and enduring, must come about peacefully, from above, from the enlightened—never from the masses risen in revolt.”⁶¹⁶ Though the state functioned through the 1780s without reliance on the intellectuals, intellectuals could not imagine achieving extensive reforms without the state.

Other factors not directly related to the response to Joseph II’s direct actions also influenced the changing climate. Requisite to the development of the intellectual culture Vienna experienced between 1780 and 1785 was a stable secure state. Those years were a time free of direct threat both outside and within the state. As Hungarian dissatisfaction raised the government’s fears of internal dissent and possible Prussian intervention, and then at the end of the king’s reign with the Turkish war, the stability necessary to a comfortable and free debating public had diminished. Proving the connection between stability and Enlightenment in a discussion of the importance of freedom of speech, Johann Pezzl asserts that the state is stable enough not to lose “Calm, Fatherland, or Freedom!”⁶¹⁷

Another factor influencing the recession in Enlightenment activity may have been the very intensity of friendship that stimulated its growth in the first place. Johann Rautenstrauch, Alois Blumauer, Joseph von Sonnenfels, and Ignaz von Born all had markedly strong, some would say difficult, personalities. After four years of enduring intellectual sociability in lodges, taverns, coffeehouses, salons; through collaboration on books and periodical; and even working together at the court, the Viennese could no

⁶¹⁶ Keith Hitchens, *The Rumanian National Movement in Transylvania, 1780-1849* (Harvard UP, 1969) 67.

⁶¹⁷ Pezzl, *Skizze*, vol.2. 201-202.

longer bear one another. The conceit Nicolai harped on as the primary characteristic of the Viennese intellectual resulted in pettiness and strife when men of letters could brook no disagreement.

Human nature also dictates the fascination with newness. Once publications, public debate, and Opinion became customary, the public lost their craze for pamphlets. Writers no longer so eagerly rushed their thoughts into print when the immediacy of pamphlet publication lost its novelty. Those that could not support themselves through publishing most likely developed other careers and interests after a few years of failure. Writers with talent would also eventually find pamphlets themselves too rigid and constricting. Fame had to be sought in less ephemeral print. The degree to which intellectuals were disappointed in the developments of the 'crisis of Josephinism' varied between them. Consistent, however, was the confidence in the power of the state and its right to reform whether or not public opinion was on its side.

CHAPTER 6. CONCLUSION

Vienna is not known for its *Aufklärung*. History tends to focus on Vienna's nineteenth and early twentieth century. Those that study the early modern Habsburg past tend to focus on statecraft while the adventurous might foray into the multinational empire. Within Vienna itself, the same trend occurs. People discuss Viennese writers and artists of the fin de siècle, and in considerations of the eighteenth century, Mozart dominates the discussion. When I arrived in Vienna I hoped to be able to find some of the novels or poems of the Viennese writers of the eighteenth century. Bookshop staffers have never heard of them. One in ten Antiquariat bookstore might have one of the last printed editions of their work- say the 1862 collection of poetry by Alois Blumauer, or an edition of Joseph von Sonnenfels' cameralist textbook. University students, when asked if they read their enlightenment authors, respond: of course we read Kant.

So, for someone who is interested in the social and cultural history of the Enlightenment, the question remains, Why Study Vienna? There is nothing amazing to be found in Alxinger's poetry or Pezzl's novels. The critical writings of the day are not incredibly profound. The one enduring Enlightenment scholar of Vienna in the 1780s, Karl Reinhold, was forced to flee to Germany where he became an important member of and contributor to intellectual circles there. Those who stayed sent their writings out to Germany to be read or even published there. Others wrote in a German that they did not hear on a day-to-day basis to conform to the language of the smaller states to the North. And in the end, this so-called Enlightenment lasted only a few short years.

Despite limitations in extent or individual abilities, the Viennese enlightenment is worth a closer look. Vienna's was a brief, though astonishingly complex, era of enlightenment activity. The intensity of Enlightenment activity alone allows the historian to witness how individuals came together in an attempt to create an enlightened public and promote positive church and state reforms and also to see the internal contradictions of the Enlightenment. Joseph II's Vienna thus affords the historian a rare opportunity for studying the Enlightenment movement in microcosm. Over a brief ten-year period, Viennese intellectuals attempted to quickly create a basis for Enlightenment in the Habsburg monarchy through their social and journalistic efforts while at the same time battling the stigma of centuries of weak intellectual achievement compared to other great European capitals. The rapid transformation from a conservative monarchical center to a city with a small but thriving intellectual scene had various repercussions in print, intellectual friendship, international exchange and associational life. Ideas and the possibilities for individual or social action inspired enthusiasm for Enlightenment. This enthusiasm in turn motivated intense activity and defensive jealousy.

In perceiving the Enlightenment as an intellectual, social, and cultural program, the zealousness and near fanaticism of its promoters become clear. Enlightenment was something that was identified with and believed in; it was thought of as a means to save the world to improve society for good: to rid the world of evil and darkness. As distant as they are, it becomes clear through the essays, letters and lodge minutes that these were heady days. One man, by writing, publishing and being a productive part of his intellectual community, could help reverse the control of the worst elements of the Catholic Church. He could inspire economic reforms that would touch the lives of many.

Perhaps his satire would reach the king and influence him on a desired policy change. The Enlightenment, as adopted by Viennese intellectuals, thus represented real potential for improvement through the application of reason and criticism.

Men of letters found in print the primary means for the expansion of knowledge. Ideas of reason brought secular thought to the Habsburg Catholic subjects while theories on nature and rights were used to complement their own limited concept of the state. Ephemeral works dominated Vienna's publishing culture as rapidity influenced form. Pamphlets were used to criticize situations or circumstances that were limited in nature: no universal critique would be voiced. It was in print that intellectual culture initially took off, while the men of letters within it struggled for the control that might make for a more useful and respectable intellectual center. Frustration at the dark side of speed rose; people could no longer keep up with the publications of local authors, and lost desire to even if they could.

This Viennese Enlightenment adopted the traits of an activist movement in the cohesion of its adherents and the mythologized specter of its opponents. This movement functioned in a set realm (print, culture) and was pursued through set means (publication and sociability). In its expansion, Enlightenment adopted a hierarchy. This was an active movement that wanted to achieve serious reform in the intellectual sphere and through that the social, cultural and political world. The success of the movement, measured through 'improvement,' was layered, beginning with the individual man of letters, expanding to an elite corps of intellectuals, and ending in the ideal of reforming the entire populace. People who sought self-improvement, in whatever area, believed that their

development fit into the larger development of the world. This absolute belief in Progress influenced the way intellectuals sought to cultivate themselves.

The rapidity of the changes in Vienna following Joseph II's *Grundregeln* formed all elements of the Enlightenment there. The intensity of intellectual friendship that developed from groups experiencing in common the excitement of change was one result. Bonds strengthened as intellectual culture and participation in the public sphere involved twelve-hour days of constant social exchange and absorption of new print. Friendship inspired a sense of greater purpose amongst the writers while also stimulating further work through the nearness of an interested community.

The eighteenth century had its favored form of revolution. This was the association. Inconceivably to the isolated intellectuals of our day, in the eighteenth century intellectuals sought each other's company, sought to cultivate friendships with people who worked in various fields in order to cultivate themselves. Thinking that through social relations knowledge and progress in knowledge would be achieved to a greater degree than could be hoped for by any isolated reformer, intellectuals throughout Europe created connection between themselves, through working together on periodicals, creating private clubs, forming regular informal social gatherings, and working through state sponsored institutions such as Academies, state Libraries, Natural collections, and Universities.

In Vienna, freemasonry provided an organized associational form with many advantages for the intellectual development of a socially divided and absolutist state. Not only did the exclusivity and secrecy built into freemasonry's structure benefit the reform-minded, but the ideals of hard work and striving towards a purpose that involved gaining

knowledge ensured this Masonic group would be prolific in its practice of Enlightenment. Alongside masonry existed smaller, collaborative efforts that benefitted from sociability. One such working community centered around the publication of a literary review combined the benefits of association with the potential influence of print to create an ideal forum for promoting the local manifestation of the cosmopolitan Enlightenment.

In addition to experiencing the tension between localism and cosmopolitanism common to the Enlightenment movements throughout the continent, one characteristic of the Viennese Enlightenment was its self-defeating insecurity. The writers of Catholic Vienna looked to Protestant Germany's intellectual advances with a sense of inadequacy. Writers urged others to live up to Joseph's press reforms so as not to appear ridiculous to the intellectuals in the rest of the world. The desire for affirmation of their intellectual legitimacy from Protestant centers is diffused throughout the writings produced in the Viennese Enlightenment. This decade also saw the Viennese intellectuals borrowing heavily from other Enlightenments—both the rational Protestant discourses emanating from Germany and the more secular criticism of Paris's Enlightenment.

Though this cosmopolitanism is a primary characteristic of the Viennese enlightenment, it needs to be tempered with an understanding of the confessional differences. Much of Vienna's contributions were informed and guided by Reform Catholicism. The largely unwavering Catholicism of the most active of Vienna's intellectuals served as a filter in their emulation of both ideas and practices. Priests educated most of the writers studied here and those writers had themselves often belonged to religious orders or considered ordination. Vienna, despite its eager perusal of deistic, Pietist, and even atheist Enlightenment tracts, remained overwhelmingly

uncritical of Catholic doctrine. This does not mean they did not apply their newfound Enlightenment abilities of critical debate and improving reform movements to the Church—on the contrary, the authors under study largely produced arguments for a reformist Catholic Enlightenment. Fighting superstition and prejudice was conceived of as being guided by rational Catholicism.

The Viennese Enlightenment ultimately experienced failure. Rapidity itself may have been a factor, yet bureaucratic loyalty ensured an easy state despotism over intellectual affairs. As Joseph II called the Enlightenment into being in the capital through his press reforms, so too did he create the conditions for its demise. The increasingly conservative practices of subsequent Habsburg monarchs ensured the city's Enlightenment was but a short, bright flash in intellectual culture.

The brevity of the period of enlightenment activity did not prevent Vienna from experiencing the major trends and dilemmas of the Enlightenment throughout Europe. Instead, I argue that as it emerged and ended in so brief a time, elements of Enlightenment can be viewed in a concentrated form, thereby aiding historical understanding of issues such as the emergence of 'the public' and the social basis of Enlightenment reform activity. The focus here on the social production of the Enlightenment ideals and reforms brings the topic into the realm of debate on the creation of the public sphere and the role of association in the Enlightenment. While Habermas argues the emergence of the public sphere was gradual, Vienna's experience seems to indicate otherwise. Within Vienna in the space of a few years, the emergence of criticism in print through the initial period of *Broschurenflut* and the critical journals that emerged shortly afterwards led to the creation of an aware, debating public that discussed church

and state reforms in public venues, such as coffeeshops, parks like the Prater, and in salons and Masonic lodges.

The relationship of the reforming intellectuals to sources of power is another interesting area of debate. The commitment of Viennese intellectuals to promoting useful reforms through any means at their disposal reflects Franco Venturi's arguments that Enlightenment intellectuals were above all devoted to concrete action in aspiring to change and in their creativity in promoting reforms. However, departing from Venturi's understanding, these intellectuals were not individuals working outside the institutions of power; they adapted institutions to their goals of reform. More applicable to the case in Vienna is Reinhard Koselleck's arguments on the social practices of Enlightenment intellectuals in institutions such as freemasonry—though Vienna's Enlightenment freemasons did not, as Koselleck argues, withdraw from active politics.

This study of enlightenment activity in Vienna adds markedly to the historiographical debate on the cosmopolitanism of the enlightenment versus the distinctly local or national forms of it that emerged in the eighteenth century. Here again, I must agree with Franco Venturi, who sees cosmopolitanism and patriotism as two mutually productive elements of the Enlightenment. This movement saw a remarkable openness to outside ideas and unprecedented exchange of information while at the same time diverse and creative methods of applying ideas to local contexts were employed. Though I see value in the burgeoning field of study on different national enlightenments, the cosmopolitan aspects of the enlightenment cannot be abandoned. The complex interrelations between cosmopolitanism and localism or nationalism is seen clearly in

Vienna's intellectual production, especially as it was influenced by the unflagging Catholicism of the capital city.

For these reasons, the dedicated pursuit of Enlightenment in Vienna provides an important opportunity for an exploration of the entire intellectual and social program as a movement not just restricted to its leading centers. Robert Darnton has already impressed upon historiography the importance of considering the low-lives of literature as part and parcel of a broader publishing world. Perhaps Vienna can stand as the rediscovered underdog of European cities that will serve to elucidate the transmission of Enlightenment ideas, print culture, social forms and methods beyond the ennobled Paris.

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