

CONSTANZE MOZART VS. THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

PART II

H. S. Brockmeyer

In Part I of this article, I look at the hypothesis that Constanze Mozart did not really love Mozart, as well as other theories. I investigate the story of Mozart's skull, allegedly found by a grave digger at St. Marx, as well as the confusion around who was buried in Constanze and her husband, Georg Nissen's grave.

In this second part of my article, I will present shocking details of where Mozart's corpse was last seen – unnoticed, or ignored by scholars, and not in a usual place, but in a *very unusual* place. I investigate burial laws during Mozart's time in Vienna, as well as a strange confrontation between Constanze and the Catholic church in Salzburg, when she tried to pay for masses to be said for Mozart, Georg Nissen, Nannerl Mozart, and two other family members.

As it will be seen, truth can be stranger than fiction.

It is a myth that Constanze could not erect a stone over her husband's grave; this was *not* the "rule at the time," or, the custom, as scholars have stuck rigidly by.

Emperor Joseph II mandated seven burial laws on 23 August 1784, in order to prevent over-crowded cemeteries in the city, which might carry an unpleasant stench on the wind.



Emperor Joseph II of Austria

Wikimedia Commons. Org {{PD-US-expired}}

Source: Georg Decker (1819-1894) in pastel, a self-made photograph of painting, at the Albertina, "Kaiser Joseph II"

Peter Davies comments, "Emperor Joseph II, among his many reforms, was particularly anxious to crack down on ceremonial burials and to crush the superstitious practices concerning tombs and graveyards."¹

The emperor preceded the burial laws with this (rather sarcastic) explanation:

Every day I see – unfortunately – how living people think in such material terms. They go to great lengths to ensure their bodies will decay slowly after death, and thus remain stinking carrion for as long as possible. So I no longer care how they want to be buried. And you must explain to them after I have demonstrated how practical and reasonable this method of burial is, I have no desire to force reason upon anyone who is not convinced. As far as coffins are concerned, each person may freely do in advance what he considers appropriate for his dead body.²

Walther Brauneis notes:

Of all the decrees issued by Emperor Joseph II, those the populace found most upsetting were probably the radical decisions concerning religious life and the new regulations for the burial of the dead, regulations that completely disregarded long-standing traditions. Lacking popular

legitimacy, the Emperor instead reigned in the context of enlightened absolutism for the common good of his subjects.³

As of 1784, a “court decree on religious and police matters” was announced publicly. But city residents were not happy about them, as the Emperor’s mandate ruffled sensitive feelings about former customs.

Walther Brauneis explains:

The schedule was modeled after a similar decree for the Archduchy of Lower Austria, whereby each person of means, regardless of social class, could choose as he liked from the price categories on offer, so that no one could be forced to pay costs greater than those of the specific category one had freely chosen.

The poor, whose situation could be documented either by official affidavit or by a judge, did not have to pay any fees. The upper classes, on the other hand, had to pay twice the amount of the set fees. At the time of Mozart’s death on 5 December 1791, this schedule of fees was still in force.⁴

The false coffins that Leopold wanted used, immensely offended the Viennese. No. 6 of his burial decree, stated:

To save unnecessary costs each parish shall acquire a suitable number of well-made coffins in different sizes, which shall be provided free of charge to parishioners. No one shall be prevented from acquiring his own coffin for a deceased relative if he so desires, but the body must never be buried in the coffin. All coffins must be reused for other burials.⁵



A false-bottomed coffin from 1784, from the Josephinian era; this one has an under-bottom that opens, to allow the body to fall into the grave

En.wikipedia.org

Photo source: Kraxl-Maxl, 20 June 2008, "Mit freundlicher Genehmigung der Pfarr
Göss" ©CC BY-SA 3.0

This law, and the Emperor's rule that reuseable coffins and sack burials be mandatory, to prevent over-crowded cemeteries, angered Viennese citizens so much, that he rescinded his decree on 20 January 1785, and coffins were once again permissible.

Joseph II's burial decree, with regard to Mozart's burial site, stipulated;

7. If survivors wish to erect a memorial to the deceased as a demonstration of love, respect or gratitude, they shall be permitted to do so. Any such memorials must, however, be erected along the walls and not in the cemetery itself, in order to save space.⁶

It's not easily apparent what, exactly, is meant by a "memorial." It could mean a simple, small gravestone, or just a plaque, erected on the cemetery walls. Peter Davies notes:

Only two choices of grave were available at that time. Individual family vaults with headstones were permitted only to the nobility or, by special dispensation, to wealthy members of special merit.

All other corpses were interred in common graves (“Schachtgräber”). Such shaft graves were dug to a depth of about 7 ½ feet and could accommodate fifteen to twenty corpses, in three layers. These shaft graves were subsequently reused every seven to ten years, so that the setting of crosses on them was forbidden. However, the relatives were permitted to have memorial plaques attached to the walls of the cemetery.⁷

However, Brauneis disagrees with Davies’ assessment. The following statement blatantly disproves the long-held belief that Mozart *had* to be buried in a third-class grave, without a gravestone:

Moreover, none of the relevant cemetery regulations forbade the placing of a gravestone or a cross. The imperial degree of 12 August 1788 stated that “each person is allowed...to have the symbol appropriate to his religion placed at his gravesite.” *Mozart’s contemporaries would undoubtedly have found it appropriate to place a gravestone for him.* [My italics.]⁸

So, again we must ponder: why could Mozart’s many wealthy friends, Freemason Brothers, and acquaintances, not have collected a handful of florins, for a simple gravestone for the popular composer?

Brauneis follows, with an example:

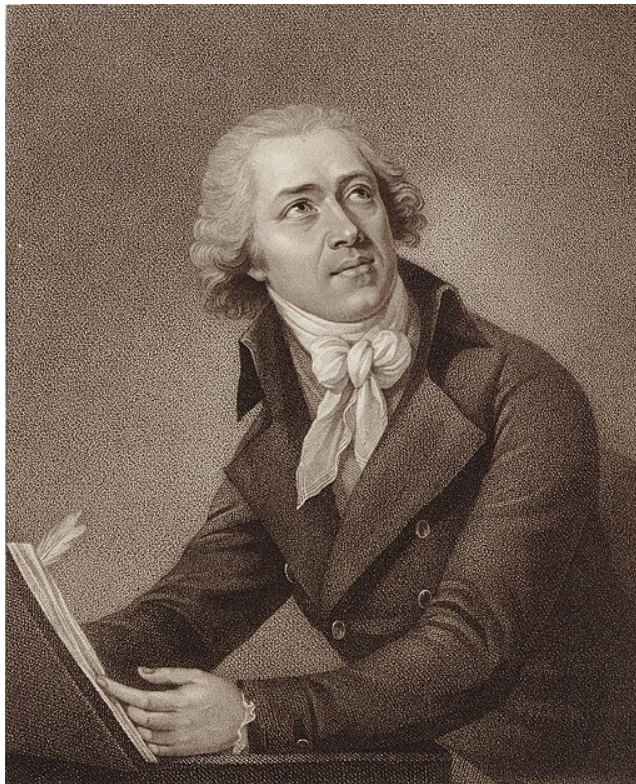
That certainty is the implication of the following insert found in the *Wiener Zeitung* of 31 December 1791 (also published in the *Grazer Bürgerzeitung* of 3 January 1792), in which an epitaph signed simply “K” (Leopold Koželuch?) appeared:

[TO MOZART
AN INSCRIPTION FOR HIS GRAVE.
Who rests here, as a child, swelled the world’s
Wonders with the strings of his lyre;
As a man, he surpassed Orpheus himself.
Go hence! And pray earnestly for his soul!]⁹

It was probably not Leopold Koželuch; he was living in Prague, where he had stalked Mozart there in 1790, openly slandering him during Leopold II’s coronation ceremonies. (Beethoven, a frequent denigrator of rival composers, referred to Koželuch as “Miserabilis” – miserable, pathetic.¹⁰)

Koželuch was a Freemason; his insulting behavior would not be tolerated by Lodge superiors. Point No. Five of the very important Masonic Points – the duties every Freemason owes his Brothers – stipulate:

A Brother's character I will support in his absence as I would in his presence: I will not wrongfully revile him myself, nor will I suffer it to be done by others, if in my power to prevent it. While with candor and kindness we should admonish a Brother of his faults, we should never revile his character behind his back, but rather, when attacked by others, support and defend it.¹¹



Leopold Koželuch [born Jan Antonin Koželuh], 1797, by C. C. Böhme, after William Ridley, from an original picture in the possession of F. Linley, today at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France. From 1792 until his death in 1818, he held imperial appointments as *Kammer Kapellmeister* [music director] and *Hofmusik Compositor* [composer], as Mozart's successor

en.wikipedia.org {{PD-scan}}

This image is a reproduction by scanning of a bidimensional work that is now in the Public domain: Gallica: Image btvlb8421462d

It's easy to investigate why Mozart's burial is portrayed by the wrapping of his body in sackcloth, and sprinkled with lime for quick composition, before being dumped into the cold winter ground from a false-bottomed coffin. It's a story that embodies the best of the most romantic myths surrounding the composer.



A romantic rendering of Mozart's corpse being transported to St. Marx Cemetery, followed only by a dog, as the alleged retinue had to turn back because of a severe storm: This poem describes the last journey, written under this painting:

Surrounded by a storm...on a snow-covered field
The last path – coffin illuminated by no rays--
He goes alone - no eye will cry for him,
His loyal dog follows -- his only friend!

En.wikipedia.org “Mozarts Begräbnis” {PD-US-expired}}
Artist: Joseph Heicke, engraving from circa 1860, a few years after Joseph Deiner's *Memoirs* was published, Vienna 1856 – at the Universitätsbibliothek Salzburg, G 992 II

Peter Davies enlightens:

On 23 August 1784, burial in church crypts was outlawed. Some existing crypts were even dug up, and their contents were transported disrespectfully to cemeteries, much to the horror and disgust of the masses.

Most funeral ceremonies were legally abolished, and a graveside ceremony by a priest was not permitted. Although individual parishes might hire out a casket for the transportation of the corpse to the chapel and cemetery, such caskets were to be returned to the parish, and burial of a corpse in a casket was forbidden.

Instead, the corpse was sewn into a sack at the cemetery and covered with quicklime before interment. The latter regulation was amended on 27 January 1785, following the righteous indignation and rioting of the common people; burial in a coffin was again reluctantly permitted if relatives of the deceased insisted on it.¹²

But the scholars argue; the burial laws at the time made it necessary that Mozart be buried quickly, with no funeral entourage, no family or friends present to say tearful prayers and farewells. But funeral services with music, prayers and a solemn walk to the gravesite, were permitted.

Case in point: Joseph Lange's wife. In 1779, Joseph Lange's beloved first wife, the singer Anna Maria Schindler, died. Her funeral included a Requiem mass, candles, bell ringing, black drapery, and funeral oration. The cost was 341 gulden.¹³

Fees for first-class funerals ran about 110 florins; second-class funerals cost around 40 florins. These extravaganzas could include six pallbearers, two priests, altar boys with candles, and a reusable coffin.¹⁴

The costs for an average funeral could be easily affordable: a single grave with a marker cost 15 florins; a single grave without a stone was 10 florins, and a marker by itself, 5 florins.¹⁵

Could not Mozart's friends have collected a few florins, between the very wealthy Baron van Swieten; the multimillionaire Esterházy in his Freemason Lodge, and other affluent acquaintances, to pay for a burial for Mozart, and provide even a simple headstone, for their friend?

Where was Michael Puchberg, a wealthy textile merchant in Vienna, who was a Freemason Brother, who had lent Mozart over a thousand florins, during the last two years of Mozart's life? After Mozart's death, Constanze paid Puchberg back, for the remainder of the monies owed to him. (On a sad note, Puchberg died in poverty in January 1822.¹⁶)

And where were the Brothers from Mozart's Freemason Lodge, *Crowned Hope*, who were supposed to provide a funeral for Master Mason Mozart, absorbing all funeral costs?

Scholar Albert G. Mackey provides this information: in his book, *Jurisprudence of Freemasonry*, under Section VIII, The Right to Burial, we uncover this gem:

The right to be conducted to his last home by his brethren, and to be committed to his mother earth with the ceremonies of the Order, is one that, under certain restrictions, belongs to every Master Mason.¹⁷

However, perhaps Mozart was not expecting a precipitous death. This would make some sense, because he would have to communicate his wish for the Masonic funeral to Lodge superiors. Mackey informs:

No Mason can be interred with the formalities of the Order, unless it be at his own special request, communicated to the Master of the Lodge of which he died a member...nor unless he has been advanced to the Third Degree of Masonry, from which restriction there can be no exception. Fellow Crafts or Apprentices are not entitled to the funeral obsequies.

The only restrictions...it will be perceived, that the deceased must have been a Master Mason, and that he himself had made the request.¹⁸

Mozart was last at his Lodge on 17 November [not the 18th, as has been claimed], when his Freemason Cantata, *Laut verkünde unsre Freude*, [K. 623] was performed, which received thundering applause from the Brothers.

During the last few days of Mozart's life, he could have sent a written message to the Lodge authorities, requesting the solemn, intimate Masonic funeral, which included music, personal narratives, speeches from Lodge superiors, and which would be attended by many Brothers, many who, like today, would travel from all distances, to be present at the funeral for a fellow Mason – especially for Wolfgang Mozart, whose Freemason compositions enlivened many Lodge events, and brought a glow to the hearts of every Brother who heard them.



Mozart, on the right, wearing his Freemason apron, showing red rosettes, a sign of his degree of Master Mason. In a Freemason burial, his apron would be draped over his coffin, and buried with him, upon request. From a crop shot of his Lodge painting of 1790. The larger Lodge oil painting resides now in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna. Ignaz Unterberger, an Italian/Austrian painter, is the assumed painter; but scholars have ignored the 1790 Lodge List for *Crowned Hope*, where a painter – *Maler* -- Joseph Kraftmayer, appears on the list of Serving Brothers, No. 7 ¹⁹

Wikipedia.org {{PD-US-expired}}

Finally, Walther Brauneis busts the myth that Mozart had to be buried in a pauper's grave, abandoned cold-heartedly by his family and friends:

Mozart's funeral and burial can be regarded as a faithful reflection of interment practices in the late Josephine period. A third-class funeral had nothing to do with an *Armenbegräbnis* but was rather the ceremonial category customary among the middle class, one that Gottfried van Swieten, himself deeply rooted in the court etiquette of the day, also found fitting for Mozart.

It was not reasons of money that primarily determined Mozart's funeral arrangements, but still deep-seated societal prejudices toward those who lived artist's lives. Even in death Mozart was confined to those ranks of imperial lackeys which he thought he had escaped by leaving Salzburg for Vienna ten years before.²⁰

But let us argue with Brauneis. Would Baron van Swieten, Mozart's close friend, whose Sunday morning concerts were graced for years with Mozart's compositions, have relegated him to a paltry third-class burial? Yes, the scholars argue; it was all to be economical, for Constanze Mozart. But Braunbehrens estimates that the Baron made ten times Mozart's salary [about 20,000 florins yearly²¹]; he couldn't contribute fifteen florins for a simple, but fitting gravestone? Certainly, his friendship with Mozart would have superseded "court etiquette."

What about the immense funerals of the musical artists, Beethoven, Gluck, Salieri? These elaborate affairs called for the entire citizens of Vienna to have the day off. Huge processions, solemn church exequies and chorale compositions were performed, with all of the city's most talented musicians and singers. Exalted speakers narrated the retelling of the glorious lives and compositions of the musician being honored at his burial. But, apparently, not for Mozart.

Over 20,000 persons – about half the population of Vienna's inner city -- attended Beethoven's funeral on 29 March 1827. His casket was carried through the streets of Vienna. Two of the torchbearers were Franz Schubert and Mozart's former student, Johann Nepomuk Hummel.



The huge crowd of mourners for Beethoven during the solemnities held in his memory on 29 March 1827

Title: *Beethoven's funeral as depicted by Franz Stöber, 1827*

Location: Today this watercolor is found in the Beethoven-Haus Museum, Bonn, Germany

A long stream of mourners arrived at his Schwarzspanierstrasse apartment to view Beethoven, in an oak coffin surrounded by flaming candles, his head wreathed by a garland of white roses, a cross and a white lily in his still hands.

The huge cortège walked out to the cemetery at Währing, about one and a half miles outside of Vienna. At the cemetery gates, an actor delivered an elaborate oration written by the great dramatist, Franz Grillparzer. On the way, singers and a trombonist performed a "Miserere," arranged by the composer Ignaz von Seyfried, from the two *Equale* for four trombones Beethoven had composed fifteen years previously.

More choral works were sung at this very solemn occasion. Later, when the Währing Cemetery was closed in 1873, Vienna took care to reverently move Beethoven's remains to a prominent place, in Vienna's Central Cemetery.

But for Mozart, Vienna, the city of his dreams, could do nothing for the man, despite the long streams of mourners crying and shrieking, as they walked continuously past the composer's apartment, on that cold morning of 5 December 1791.



Antonio Salieri's and Ludwig Beethoven's graves in Vienna's Zentralfriedhof

Wikimedia Commons.org

Salieri's grave photo: Wellano18143, 2021

Wikimedia Commons.org

Beethoven's grave photo: Z Thomas, 30 January 2020

Only in Prague, on 14 December 1791, where over 4,000 citizens gathered in the city, overcrowding the Wälsche Platz, to honor Mozart, their beloved composer, with glorious compositions and music – chorale and orchestral -- befitting the occasion, as aficionados tearfully remembered Mozart, with reverence and love.

“Solemn silence lay about,” reported the *Wiener Zeitung* on 24 December 1791, “and a thousand tears flowed in poignant memory of the artist who through his harmonies so often tuned all hearts to liveliest feelings.”²²

The Friends of Music in Prague sponsored the event, which included music from the Prague Orchestra of the National Theater, a Requiem, by Kapellmeister Rössler, performed with 120 of the city's leading musicians, with Josepha Duschek as soloist, singing her final farewell for her dear friend. A mass was read by Herr Rudolph Fischer, and other presentations in the ceremony held for Mozart, featured

“Twelve boys carried torches, wearing mourning-crepes draped diagonally across one shoulder, and bore white cloths in their hands.”²³

In Speyer, the *Musikalische Korrespondenz der Teutschen Filharmonischen Gesellschaft*, carried an obituary for Mozart:

All Vienna, and with the Imperial city the entire musical world, laments the early loss of this immortal man. His body has gone from us, his soul has soared upwards to higher harmonies, and for our comfort he leaves the beautiful products of his mind...²⁴

Only in Vienna, where Mozart’s magical concertos, operas, and other works, had enchanted, in concert venues and opera houses, was nothing done, in any kind of memorial. Only the clip-clopping of horses’ hooves, of coaches driving through the frozen city, were heard, as if nothing extraordinary had happened.

The day after Mozart died, Sophie Haibl described a continual crowd of mourners, “screaming and shrieking,” in front of Mozart’s apartment on Rauhensteingasse, in her letter of 7 April 1825, to Georg Nissen, who requested information of Mozart’s last days, for his biography of the composer. Freihaus Theater director, Mozart’s Freemason friend, Emanuel Schikaneder, allegedly ran up and down the street in front of Mozart’s apartment, shrieking dramatically, “I see his ghost ever before me!”

And yet, there is not one witness or piece of evidence, that Schikaneder, who hit the financial jackpot with Mozart’s *Magic Flute* opera, was interested in visiting his grave. The entire scenario after Mozart’s death is akin to a *Twilight Zone* television show episode.

That Constanze did not know where her husband’s grave was at St. Marx, is suspicious. That no priest or other authority, could tell where the composer was buried at St. Marx Cemetery, is bizarre. One would think that they would trumpet his interment at their cemetery, to the world.

Furthermore, Constanze, or one or more of Mozart’s friends, could easily have paid for a simple gravestone or memorial, along the St. Marx Cemetery walls. Mozart could have been buried in a “well-made” coffin. He was last seen in a coffin in his apartment by Ludwig Gall.

Then, the very last sighting of Mozart, is seen by a young woman, at Emanuel Schikaneder's Freihaus Theater, a secret that she kept silent about, for decades later, when she confessed her witness of Mozart's corpse in that theater, to her 17-year-old son and his friends, decades later.

These controversies, and the fact that Mozart *could have asked* for a Freemason funeral -- his right as a Master Mason, whose Lodge would be responsible for all funeral costs; that *all costs* and accoutrements for a proper burial, could easily have been arranged, *but were not* -- makes the entire speculation of what happened to Mozart's body, a matter of well-deserved suspicion, that something uncanny occurred.

The tale of the composer's burial spread; that he was buried in a third-class grave, where he was dropped rather unceremonially into the ground in a sack, from a false-bottomed coffin, his body sprinkled with lime for quick decomposition, and, other corpses, over time, would be buried there with him. (This scene is still especially poignant, in the final scenes of the movie, *Amadeus*.)

Every seven to ten years, the ground was plowed up, so it would be difficult to see who was there first, and who was there last.

But this was not what happened to Mozart. The real truth is stranger than all fiction. It is difficult to believe that Mozart's body, witnessed by a young woman at Schikaneder's Freihaus Theater, would *not* be transported to St. Marx Cemetery, where it should have gone in the first place, after last rites at St. Stephen's Cathedral. Where it shows up next, will make the hair stand up on the back of your neck.

Since several bodies would be buried in that gravesite at St. Marx, ten years after Mozart died, it seems highly circumspect that his skull would be found at the top of the site, where grave digger, Joseph Rothmayer, confiscated it in 1801, rather than toward the bottom, since ten years had gone by.

Another spooky event occurred:

[Jacob] Hyrtl went to the Town Hall who kept the records of the St. Marx Cemetery, to find more information of Mozart's grave. This official, instead of giving more information, abused him, telling him that no one had a right to possess a skull which ought to rest in consecrated

earth, and threatening both the engraver and the grave digger with serious consequences for keeping the skull without giving information to the authorities.

Hyrtrl, the engraver, thereupon reclaimed the skull from his brother, the professor, under the plea that he must return it to the grave digger and he afterward said that they had thrown it into the Danube to avoid further inconveniences.

But when the engraver Hyrtrl died, the skull was found wrapped in old paper, on his premises.²⁵

And, the best mystery of all: “Mozart’s” skull, on display at the Mozarteum, was removed from the public, after complaints that “it not only screamed but also emitted music.”²⁶ Another online article relates: “Museum staff in Salzburg refused for years to go near the case displaying the skull that had reputedly housed the brains of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Notes, even screams, were said to emanate from it at night: signs, perhaps, of a tortured soul.”²⁷

Sounds like a good story plot for an opera: *The Magic Skull*.

On 17 February 1836, six years before her own death, Constanze went into St. Sebastian’s Church office in Salzburg to pay for the annual upkeep of Nissen’s grave. Constanze’s official contract with the church offers telling information:

I pay herewith to the foundation 100 G.C.W. [Austrian currency] as a fee, that the interest from this be paid, so in the St. Sebastian’s cemetery at the entrance of the Gabrielle-Chapel on the left of the stone monument there, as well as the presently found wooden boxes, which are to be covered in winter, are always kept in good condition and that on the 2nd of November every year, as well as on All Soul’s Day, the grave site is properly cleaned, strewn with flowers, and with two gold wax candles to be provided, over which the attention and supervision of the current assistant Director of the foundation would be instructed.²⁸

Constanze also requested masses for both of her husbands and for Nannerl Mozart and Sophie Haibl, who was still living at the time; and for Sophie’s husband, Jakob, who died on the same day as Nissen. The total for the upkeep and masses came to 1 *gulden* 48 *kreuzer*, or about \$30.00 U.S.²⁹

Constanze’s attention to detail here is significant. If she took such care with every tiny detail for her second husband, doesn’t it follow that, if permitted the opportunity, she would have done as much for Mozart? As we know, she left

behind more than ample money – 27,191 gulden in cash and bonds, to have purchased a splendid memorial for Mozart.

Constanze had been a *revered* citizen of Salzburg since she and Nissen moved there in 1821 from Copenhagen, his home city. On her death in 1842, a massive funeral procession gathered at St. Sebastian's Church, where prominent officials, hundreds of townspeople, and musicians from miles around, paid final homage to Mozart's widow.

Agnes Selby writes poignantly:

On March 8 at 5 o'clock in the afternoon her body was consecrated in a moving ceremony conducted by a priest from Salzburg Cathedral. A beautiful four-part chorale composed by the choir director, Leopold [Deisböck]³⁰ was performed before the procession left for St. Sebastian's Cemetery.

The procession was led by the students of the Mozarteum, preceded by the school orchestra. The servants of Salzburg's prominent citizens acted as pallbearers, followed by distinguished members of the professions and members of the Mozart Committee.

The entire student body of the Salzburg High School formed a part of the procession... Constanze was laid to rest beside her beloved Nissen. Her constant friend and adviser, Abbé Maximilian Stadler was remembered by the performance of his *Regina Coeli*, and a four-part chorale composed by Alois Taux was also performed.

The following day Mozart's *Requiem Mass* was performed in Constanze's honour at St. Sebastian's Church. The church was so crowded that some people had to be content to listen outside. There was not a dry eye among the mourners.³¹

Yet, despite all this organized fanfare, in 1836, St. Sebastian officials and State authorities denied Constanze's request for a mass for her two husbands, Nannerl and Sophie and her husband, Jakob Haibl. The reason they gave was that Georg Nissen was not Catholic, which was true. (In present day, however, non-Catholic persons may be interred with their spouses in Catholic cemeteries.)

Many Danish, then and today, were and are members of the state church, the Evangelical Lutheran People's Church of Denmark, *folkekirken*. Lutheranism replaced Roman Catholicism as the country's official religion during the Reformation in 1536. Perhaps, suspecting that Nissen was not a practicing Catholic, this may have influenced the authorities at St. Sebastian to deny him burial.

Agnes Selby notes:

Nikolaus Nissen was a Protestant, but Constanze insisted on a Catholic burial. There is no description of the actual ceremony available but much of it can be reconstructed from the correspondence that ensued between Constanze and Augustin Gruber, the Archbishop of Salzburg. Because of some changes to the usual burial rites, Constanze feared that, according to the Catholic faith, the soul of her beloved husband would not be delivered into God's domain.

Deeply religious throughout her life, she had embraced the new burial rituals, so different from her youth during the rule of Emperor Joseph II, with the profound belief that only the Catholic Church could offer the route to eternal salvation.³²

Since Constanze had already paid for the masses, it is odd that she was denied her request. Perhaps in that long-ago time, church authorities at St. Sebastian may have frowned upon Nissen's Danish citizenship, though their denial of allowing masses to be said for Mozart, Nannerl, Sophie and Jakob, all who were Catholic, is odd.

Selby has probably uncovered the real reason Constanze's request for the masses was denied. The Salzburg Archbishop, Augustine Gruber, "explained that the ceremony for a non-Catholic could not be conducted in the same fashion as for a Catholic...Gruber assured Constanze that this was not due to a lack of respect towards Nissen but was because he was not a Catholic."³³

Since a part of Nissen's burial ceremony would involve holy water – the priest would bless the grave with holy water, Gruber explained "that the Protestant Church did not believe in holy water and its use would have been against Nissen's beliefs. Gruber assured her that the ceremony was performed according to the laws of the Empire."³⁴

The officials made no mention of Mozart, nor could anyone explain why the Catholics: Mozart, Nannerl, Sophie and her husband, could not receive the masses. Despite Constanze's prepayment, the Church staunchly refused her request to honor her first husband with a mass. Did the fact that Mozart had been a Freemason, play a part in their decision? The Freemasons had a history of being anti-religion and anti-clergy.

Appealing to the branch office of the City of Salzburg, Constanze was immediately informed that she should reclaim her money, because the mass blessing for her two husbands could not take place. Church officials then raised the fees; the priest for the Holy Mass would receive $37\frac{1}{2}$ *kreuzer*, $12\frac{1}{2}$ *kreuzer* more than previously asked.

Nissen's niece, Victorine Ringlehardt, wrote, on 15 July 1836, asking that the officials reconsider Constanze's request to allow the mass for her uncle, which would also include Mozart.

But the original judgment stood, and in the end, no mass was said for either man, or for the two women and Sophie's husband. Constanze received her formerly paid bequest of 100 gulden on 15 November from the Salzburg Comptroller's Office.³⁵

Years after Mozart's death, Constanze's detractors still criticized what they deemed her loveless refusal to erect a stone on her first husband's grave, even though by this time the fact was well known that no one in Vienna, including the St. Marx Church officials, could say exactly where Mozart was buried.

In 1841, Johann Ritter von Lucam, a member of the Society of the Friends of Music, wrote to Constanze, wondering why she was so lackadaisical on the gravestone issue. She replied, in an artificial word jumble:

Alas, all effort was in vain. The gravedigger told me that his predecessor had died recently. He therefore could not know who was buried there before he had started work there. I and my friends searched the entire cemetery with no success at all, since there could not be found the slightest clue.

It was the custom then for the departed to be collected only by the hearse, driven to the consecration in the church and then taken without further ado to the grave; it unfortunately happened that none of Mozart's friends went with the corpse, making it thereby impossible to gain information from anyone as to the place of the burial.

One will be indulgent considering my great pain and my youth, in that during the misfortune which shattered my entire being and numbed my senses, I did not think of having the place of the grave marked. A misfortune of which one has so many to regret in life. I was also reassured by the custom, usual in Catholic countries, of marking the burial place with a cross, bearing the name of the departed, but which also unfortunately was overlooked.

At any event, I know for certain that my husband was buried at St. Marx cemetery. Although unfortunate events have made it impossible to raise his remains with any confidence, I feel strongly about this intention, which particularly honours the departed man."³⁶

Was this explanation the best she could do? We have to wonder where Constanze, herself, was, when her husband's corpse was taken out of their apartment on 5 December, and, as the myth goes, was buried in a third-class grave at St. Marx.

Constanze offered Lucam information: look up Karl Scholl, at one time a flautist in the Vienna National opera. But Scholl was too old to remember. Lucam persevered, writing queries to two other musicians, who claimed they knew where Mozart was buried, but, for some reason, "they could not or would not go to the graveyard."³⁷ By now, the mystery surrounding Mozart's grave was a boring topic to the Viennese public.

Constanze suffered a breakdown directly after Mozart died, and was taken temporarily out of their apartment, to a friend of Emanuel Schikaneder, Joseph Edler von Bauernfeld, a financier to the theater director, and then, to Joseph Odilo Goldhann, an iron merchant, and the witness to the official list of Mozart's estate on 7 December 1791.³⁸

Again, we must ask – why was Constanze taken out of their apartment – ill with grief, and unable to stand (Deiner, *Memoirs*), with two young children, one, a baby of four months, to the homes of Bauernfeld (a Freemason), and Goldhann, on the 5th of December? Why wasn't she allowed to stay with her mother, Cäcilia Weber, or with one of her sisters?

Was the reason, that they were afraid that she would go to the authorities with dangerous information?

Another mystery confronts us here – Constanze was able to erect a small monument for Nissen; she was a wealthy widow – but she *could not*, for Mozart.

It was likely that she *would not* – Constanze refused to play the hypocrite, if she suspected that Mozart was *not* buried at St. Marx. That seems to be the most realistic reason why she never placed a headstone or marker on the site that was believed to be her husband's final resting place. She had the money to hire the best sculptor in Europe to create an elaborate monument for her beloved husband – but made no move in this direction.

The only person, it seems, who made a real attempt to find Mozart's grave immediately after he died, was the musician Johann Georg Albrechtsberger, who assumed Mozart's never-fulfilled position in 1792 as Kapellmeister at St. Stephen's Cathedral. He went to St. Marx on 7 December, but found no marker.



Mozart's close friend, Johann Georg Albrechtsberger, who attempted to locate Mozart's grave at St. Marx Cemetery

en.wikipedia.org {{PD-US-expired}}
Artist: Leopold Kupelwieser (1796-1862) oil on canvas
Source/Photographer: Rettinghaus 14 June 2016

Eight years later, the same question was being asked: “Good Mozart! you erected a gravestone to a favourite bird in a garden which you rented, and you even wrote an epitaph for him. When will that be done for you which you did for your bird?”³⁹

Given what I have learned about Constanze cherishing Mozart's personal possessions, his correspondence, and her bridal watch, I was unable to accept the conclusion that she did not love her first husband. There had to be another explanation for Constanze's puzzling behavior regarding Mozart's grave, and not providing a fitting memorial.

After all, she had made several attempts to sneak in some recognition for her dearly beloved first husband with yearly masses, only to be frustrated by bureaucracy.

Constanze tried, shortly before her death, to establish a music school in Mozart's name. Her last will and testament specified:

“For a monument for my departed husband Mozart I bequeath 300 f. C.M. [Austrian currency]. These 300 f. C.M. I give for the erection of a school for young musicians which should bear Mozart's name.” But this passage later was mysteriously crossed out; it was excluded entirely on the final draft of her will.⁴⁰

Perhaps Constanze meant this money to go to the newly founded Mozarteum, where her youngest son, Wolfgang, held the position of Honorary Kapellmeister since 1841. In 1841, the year before she died, Constanze, still mentally alert, worked to help organize the Salzburg Cathedral Music Society and Mozarteum, associated with a school of music; all to contribute to the “refinement of musical taste with regard to sacred music as well as concerts.”⁴¹

Yes, Constanze truly loved Mozart, but she could never erect a monument for him upon his actual burial site, which was very likely *not* at St. Marx. I have posited that a powerful group kept her silent about what happened to her husband on 5 December 1791, and were possibly involved in the disappearance of Mozart's corpse on the day he died.

Certainly, when she was visited by the Novellos in 1829 – staunch Mozart aficionados -- they would have been very curious as to where Mozart was buried. They would be visiting Vienna on their return journey back to London.

But Constanze offered not a word concerning his grave.

Vincent Novello, journeying to Vienna from Salzburg, with his wife, Mary, on their way home to London, went to St. Marx, seeking Mozart's grave. He noted in his travel diary on 25 July 1829:

Although I had heard that all that was known of the burial place of Mozart was that his remains were deposited in the burying ground of Saint Mark's, a small church belonging to what was formerly a convent of nuns, and that as no stone or mark of any kind had been placed to mark the grave of this illustrious genius, no one could tell which was the precise spot where he rests.

I had already heard all this yet as I always prefer seeing and hearing and judging for myself when it is in my power to do so, I determined to visit the church of St. Mark myself and ascertain whatever the particulars were still attainable.

I arrived about 7 o'clock and was glad to find that they were just going to begin Mass, as it afforded me an opportunity of accosting the Sacristan. In answer to my question whether this was St. Mark's church where Mozart was buried, he replied that the church was St. Mark's, but of Mozart he knew nothing and could give me no information as to where he was buried.

... You may be sure I walked over every part of [the cemetery] with the utmost veneration and in every path; but there was not only no stone to [be] found with his name upon it, but there were scarcely any traces to be found of a single grave.⁴²

Constanze stayed mum on the subject, even after hearing openly insulting accusations from the public, about her stubborn determination to refuse to place a gravestone over the place at St. Marx Cemetery, where Mozart allegedly was buried. The answer is clear: Constanze would not play the role of a hypocrite.

Joseph Haydn commented acridly in 1805, sending a barbed arrow in Constanze's direction:

Despite the many years which have lapsed since he departed from us, Mozart's grave is still not marked with any sign. It would be a crying shame if posterity were not to know the spot where his mortal remains were laid. This really pains my heart. I hope that something will be done, nevertheless, and that it will be carried out by the people whose primary responsibility it really is.⁴³

Another hostile remark ensued from Johann Andreas Streicher, a piano maker (from a generation of piano makers), who met the English couple, Vincent and Mary Novello in 1829. Mary noted in her travel diary: "Mr. Streicher spent the evening with us and was very chatty -- he says that it was Madame's fault that no monument was put up, but doesn't say why."

Vincent recorded in his travel diary: "Mozart's monument a sore subject with Streicher as well as with Gyrowetz [director of the Court opera in Prague] and with every other person of good taste and feeling I have yet met with."⁴⁴

It is also telling, that neither Georg Nissen – another fervent Mozart admirer, as well as Mozart's two sons, Karl and Wolfgang – made no effort (that we

know of) to discover the composer's grave, nor made any attempt to place a headstone over his actual burial site. But nobody could say where it was.

Constanze's second husband, Georg Nissen, bedbound and dying in Salzburg, in 1826, tried to make public an announcement, containing shocking information, "so that everyone will come here (and in a short time) bring everything to complete justice."⁴⁵

Nissen had been working in tandem with his stepson, Wolfgang, Mozart's youngest son, to ensure that he had everything in order for some sort of announcement, which they knew would cause an international scandal, shortly before he died on 16 March 1826 – but strangely, it never happened.

Nissen had been laying by witnesses; one, the powerful King of Denmark, Frederick VI, Nissen's employer in his position as *chargé d'affaires* to Vienna. Apparently, or most likely, in his casting about for information about Mozart for his *Bibliographie W. A. Mozarts*, he stumbled across some shocking information, that moved him enough to expose it.

I posit that Constanze Mozart was opening their mail, as Nissen was bedridden, and she came across his plan with his stepson. She quickly quashed it, as she knew how dangerous the silent, powerful group was, who were involved in nefarious behavior concerning Mozart's demise – just what Nissen and Wolfgang were preparing to expose.

She must have written frantically to her youngest son, imploring, possibly even ordering him, to cease and desist with their plan.

Possibly, Constanze still feared the group, and felt that they were among the Church hierarchy, the government officials, and the Salzburg Court—and she feared them, with good reason. Rationally, there was no reason that she could not place a gravestone over Mozart's grave; though, possibly – and this is a very plausible reason -- he is *not* at St. Marx.

That Mozart's corpse was last seen, obtusely, at the Freihaus Theater; unknown to the Viennese public, for the most part, and secretly transported there; it seems unlikely that he was taken afterward to St. Marx Cemetery, where he should

rationally have been buried, via St. Stephen's Cathedral, and *not* via the Freihaus, because Schikaneder's theater was not a logical place for Mozart's body to be transferred to, after being carried out of his apartment.

There seems to be outstanding factors, that we cannot know. Mozart's disappearance, immediately after his death, where even his closest friends had no clue as to his burial site, seems to be an outcome of some enigmatic conundrum, that occurred directly after Mozart's death, and has been concealed and protected for over two centuries since then.

Constanze, obstinately, would not play a hypocrite in erecting a monument at St. Marx. And there was no reason not to honor Constanze's paid request, to have masses said yearly for Mozart; if not for Nissen, and for Nannerl and Sophie and Jakob Haibl. Church authorities gave her no valid reason, and the city returned her money.

Arthur Schurig, one of Constanze Mozart's first biographers, wrote:

No one in Vienna concerned himself about the grave of the dead Master. No flowers, no stone, not even a wretched wooden cross, as was granted to the very poorest dear soul. His body decayed and was scattered to all four corners by the wind. Mozart has no grave. Transfigured however the Niegestorbene [Never-Dead] walks through the world in eternal youth.⁴⁶

Given all that we know, we cannot escape the sense that Constanze willfully refused to place a headstone over a false grave at St. Marx, where she knew that Mozart was *not* buried.

But something followed her all of her days. The powerful group was watching.

¹ Davies, Peter J., *Mozart in Person: His Character, His Health*, 168-169.

² Braunbehrens, *Mozart in Vienna 1781-1791*, 416.

³ Brauneis, Walther, "Exequies for Mozart: A New Documentary Finding concerning the Requiem Held for W. A. Mozart in St. Michael's Church in Vienna on December 1791," *Mozart Society of American Newsletter*, Volume II, Number 1, 27 January 1998, 5.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid., 415.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Davies, Peter J., *Mozart in Person: His Character, His Health*, 169.

⁸ Brauneis, Walther, “Exequies for Mozart: A New Documentary Finding concerning the Requiem Held for W. A. Mozart in St. Michael’s Church in Vienna on December 1791,” *Mozart Society of American Newsletter*, Volume II, Number 1, 27 January 1998, 5.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Hyperion*, “Leopold Kozeluch,”

<<https://www.hyperion-records.co.uk/c.asp?c=C6061>> (21 December 2024).

¹¹ Mackey, Albert G., *Revised Encyclopedia of Freemasonry*, Vol. 2, *Points of Fellowship*, New York: Macoy Publishing and Masonic Supply, 1909, 572.

¹² Davies, Peter J., *Mozart in Person: His Character, His Health*, New York: Greenwood, 1989, 169.

¹³ Davies, Peter J., *Mozart in Person: His Character, His Health*, 168.

¹⁴ Solomon, *Mozart: A Life*, New York: Harper Collins, 1995, 496.

¹⁵ Duda, Gunther, *W. A. Mozart: Den Göttern gegeben*, Verlag Hohe Warte GmbH: Pähl, 1994, 187.

¹⁶ Online, <chrome-

extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://dme.mozarteum.at/DME/obj/raradocs/transcr/pdf_eng/1121_WAM_Puchberg_1790.pdf> (27 December 2024), and Seattle Chamber Music Society, Summer Festival, Monday, July 8, 2013, <chrome-

extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.seattlechambermusic.org/wp-content/uploads/July-8_PN_web.pdf> (27 December 2024).

¹⁷ Mackey, Albert G., *Jurisprudence of Freemasonry, The Written and Unwritten Laws of Freemasonry*, Richmond, Virginia: Macoy Publishing and Masonic Supply Co., Inc., 1980, 172.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 173.

¹⁹ Apparently, I am the only author who discovered the presence of a *Maler* – painter -- on *Crowned Hope*’s Lodge list for 1790. For a look at *Crowned Hope*’s 1790 Lodge list, see H. C. Robbins Landon’s book, *Mozart: the golden Years*, 252-253. Kraftmayer’s name appears on 253, under ‘Dienende Brüder,’ No. 7. In 1791, his name does not appear on *Crowned Hope*’s Lodge list. See my book, *Echoes of a Distant Crime: Resolving the Mozart Cold Case File*, 122-124. Kraftmayer is initiated into the First Degree of Freemasonry, *Entered Apprentice*.

Crowned Hope would only use an initiated Freemason for this painting depicting their sacred Lodge. They would not commission someone, no matter how excellent their work was, for Lodge business. Apparently, they initiated him, paid him for his work, and then Kraftmayer disappears from the Lodge List in 1791. A research assistant whom I hired at the *Nationalbibliothek* in Vienna, discovered that Kraftmayer’s father and grandfather were miniature portrait painters.

²⁰ Brauneis, Walther, “Exequies for Mozart: A New Documentary Finding concerning the Requiem Held for W. A. Mozart in St. Michael’s Church in Vienna on December 1791,” *Mozart Society of American Newsletter*, Volume II, Number 1, 27 January 1998, 5.

²¹ Braunbehrens, Volkmar, *Mozart in Vienna, 1781-1791*, Translated by Timothy Bell, New York: HarperPerennial, 1990, 317.

²² Deutsch, *Mozart: A Documentary Biography*, 427.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid., 428.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ *Reason: Free Minds and Free Markets*, Culture: “Artifact: Shock Me, Amadeus,” Charles Paul Freund, from the January 2005 issue: <<https://reason.com/2005/01/01/artifact-shock-me-amadeus/>> (24 November 2024).

²⁷ *The Times*, from Roger Boyd in Salzburg, “DNA solves the 250 year mystery of Mozart’s skull,” Saturday, January 07, 2006.

<<https://www.thetimes.com/article/dna-solves-the-250-year-mystery-of-mozarts-skull-z39kl7cnplw>> (24 November 2024).

²⁸ I extend thanks to Mozart scholar and archivist, Michael Lorenz for this information. He cites Walther Brauneis, “Am Graben Leopold Mozarts,” *Auf eigenem Terrain, Festschrift G. Walterskirchen*, 401.

²⁹ According to Bryan Taylor, PhD, GlobalFinancialData.com., one *kreuzer*, a unit of Austrian currency, equaled approximately \$.05 U.S. (2003), and 60 *kreuzer* equaled 1 *gulden*.

³⁰ Thanks to the Mozarteum, who emailed information that Selby had misspelled Leopold Deisböck’s name in her book, *Constanze, Mozart’s Beloved*, as ‘Diasbeck,’ 217.

³¹ Selby, Agnes, *Constanze: Mozart’s Beloved*, Sydney: Turton & Armstrong, 1999, 217.

³² Ibid., 182-183.

³³ Ibid., 183.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Angermüller, “Eine (keine) Stiftung von Constanze Nissen (1836),” *MISM*, November 1996, Heft 3/4, 44.

³⁶ Carr, Francis, *Mozart and Constanze*, 177–78.

³⁷ Ibid., *Epilogue*, 179.

³⁸ Deutsch, *Mozart: A Documentary Biography*, Appendix II: Documents Pertaining To Mozart’s Estate, Suspense Order, 583. Odilo is noted as: “Josef

Odilo Goldhann/ as invited witness, but/ neither to my detriment nor/disadvantage,” Constanze Mozart née Weber.

³⁹ Deutsch, *Mozart: A Documentary Biography*, 489.

⁴⁰ Angermüller, “Mozartiana aus der Sammlung Hans Wertitsch,” *MISM*, 1986, Heft 1/4, 34.

⁴¹ Wikipedia.org, “Mozarteum University of Salzburg,”

<<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mozarteum>, Jan 27, 2008> (24 November 2024).

⁴² *A Mozart Pilgrimage: The Travel Diaries of Vincent & Mary Novello in the Year 1829*, ed. Nerina Medici & Rosemary Hughes, London: Eulenburg Books, 1975, 162-163.

⁴³ Carr, Francis, *Mozart & Constance*, 143.

⁴⁴ *Medici and Hughes, A Mozart Pilgrimage: The Travel Diaries of Vincent & Mary Novello in the Year 1829*, ed. Nerina Medici & Rosemary Hughes, 191.

⁴⁵ Valentin, Erich, “Das Testament der Constanze Mozart-Nissen – mit biographische Notizen über Constanze und Georg Nikolaus Nissen,” *NJM*, 1942, 165–67.

⁴⁶ Schurig, Arthur, *Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: sein Leben, seine Persönlichkeit, sein Werk*, Leipzig: Insel Verlag, 1923, 381.

“Not one of Mozart’s biographers,” adds Francis Carr “has mentioned any other Austrian, famous or obscure, who was buried in this unorthodox manner. Joseph’s decree of 1784 was rescinded in the following year, six years before Mozart died. It discouraged the use of coffins; but we know that Wolfgang was put in a coffin; and there was nothing in this decree which forbade burial in single, marked graves in graveyards.

Carr, *Mozart and Constanze*, 138–39 PUBLISHER, YEAR

Although their explanation—an esoteric conspiracy of Masonic assassins—does not hold, Dalchow, Duda, and Kerner are right to raise questions about the obscurities surrounding Mozart’s death, to ask why there is no contemporary report of a funeral procession from the house in the Rauhensteingasse to St. Stephen’s Cathedral; no authentic description of the blessing at St. Stephen’s; no believable memoir by anyone accompanying the body en route to the cemetery; and no witness to the burial.

Solomon, *Mozart: A Life*, 588, endnote 43

DECREES

Every day I see—unfortunately—how living people think in such material terms. They go to great lengths to insure their bodies will decay slowly after death, and thus remain stinking carrion for as long as possible. So I no longer care how they want to be buried. And you must explain to them that after I have demonstrated how practical and reasonable this method of burial is, I have no desire to force reason upon anyone who is not convinced. As far as coffins are concerned, each person may freely do in advance what he considers appropriate for his dead body. Braunbehrens, *Mozart in Vienna, 1781–1791*, 416.

So, the burial laws under Joseph II were less rigid than has been believed. As of 1784, a “court decree on religious and police matters” read, in part, as follows:

7. If survivors wish to erect a memorial to the deceased as a demonstration of love, respect, or gratitude, they shall be permitted to do so. Any such memorials must, however, be erected along the walls and not in the cemetery itself, in order to save space.

Ibid., 415–16.