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On the reception of *Le nozze di Figaro* in Vienna (addendum) (16 May 1786)

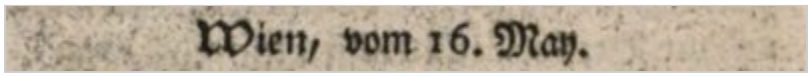
Dexter Edge

Bayreuther Zeitung, no. 61, Anhang, Mon, 22 May 1786

[399]

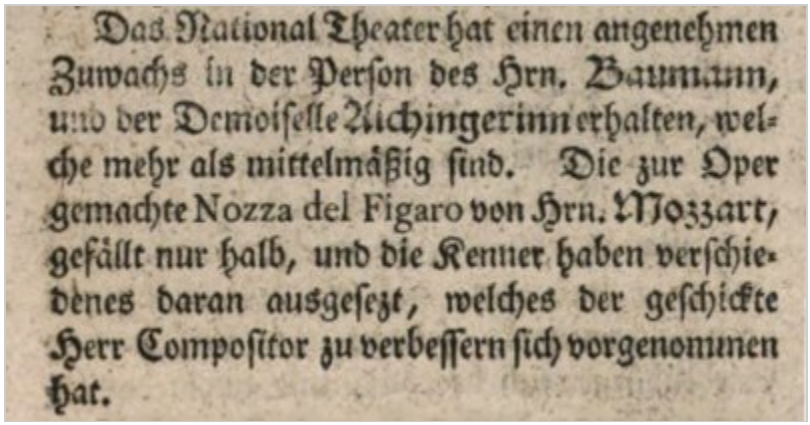
Wien, vom 16. May.

[...]


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[400]

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[translation:]

The National Theater has welcome additions in the persons of Herr Baumann and Demoiselle **Aichinger**, who are better than average. The opera made from *Le nozze di Figaro* by Herr **Mozart** pleased only by half, and connoisseurs have pointed out various things that the skillful composer has undertaken to improve.

Commentary

This is one of four early newspaper reports on the premiere of Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*, which had its premiere in Vienna on 1 May 1786. For the general background on the earliest reports and reviews of the opera, see the commentary to 3 May 1786.

This report from the *Bayreuther Zeitung* is of special interest because it states that the composer made changes in response to the suggestions from "Kenner" (connoisseurs). The original orchestral parts and the Viennese court theater's working score of the opera from 1786 do indeed show significant revisions dating to the time of the first production (see Edge 2001, esp. 1544–1668); whether these revisions were made in response to criticisms or suggestions remains a topic for further investigation.

Notes (⇧)

This report was also published in the *Prager Oberpostamtszeitung* on 30 May 1786 under the dateline "Aus Österreich vom 20 May" (*Neue Folge*, 47).

"Demoiselle Aichinger" was Elisabeth Aichinger, a member of the company of the court theater in Vienna from 1786 until her premature death in 1789 (von Alth & Obzyna 1979, ii:209). The identity of "Herr Baumann" is uncertain; no actor named Baumann is known to have appeared in any performance given by the court theater at this time. Friedrich Baumann and his brother Anton both joined the company of the Theater in der Leopoldstadt in 1786, so perhaps the correspondent to the *Bayreuther Zeitung* mistakenly thought that one of them had joined the company of the court theater. Friedrich eventually did join the court theater in 1795.

Bibliography (⇧)

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