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Reports of Mozart's performance for the Munich court (Nov 1766), and *Die Schuldigkeit des ersten Gebots* (Mar & Apr 1767) (8 Apr 1767)

David Black

***Berlinische privilegirte Zeitung (Vossische Zeitung)*, Nr. 51 (1767), quoted in Buchner, *Das Neueste von Gestern*, iii:135–36**

Salzburg, vom 8. April. Da man schon lange keine Nachricht hatte, wo sich der Salzburgische Capellmeister, Herr Mozart, mit seinen bewundernswürdigen Kindern befinden: so wird es vielen nicht unangenehm seyn zu vernehmen, daß selbiger nach einer Reise von 3 und einen halben Jahre glücklich mit seiner Familie in Salzburg angekommen ist. Dasjenige, was diese Kinder aller Orten gethan, und ihre musicalische Wissenschaft, die sie besitzen, kan man weder beschreiben, noch glauben, ohne selbst gesehen zu haben. Der Münchensche Hof ward dessen überzeugt, da der kleine 10jährige Componiste bey der Tafel an der Seite Sr. Durchlaucht dem Churfürsten ein Stück hinschrieb, wozu Se. Churfürstl. Durchl. in ein paar Täcte ihm diejenigen Gedanken gaben, die er ausführen mußte; und Salzburg ward durch ein Singspiel, das er in die Music gebracht, in Erstaunung gesetzet, und welches alle Anwesende mit der äußersten Bewunderung anhöreten, welches die bey Gelegenheit des Fastenmarktes allda gewesene fremde Handelsleute nicht genug rühmen, und niemals ohne zärtliche Rührung davon sprechen können. Vielleicht werden sie bald eine Reise nach Italien machen.

[translation:]

Salzburg, 8 April. Since there was no news for a long time where the Salzburg Kapellmeister, Herr Mozart, with his miraculous children were to be found: so it will not be unpleasant for many to hear, that after a journey of three and a half years the same arrived safely in Salzburg with his family. What these children have done in all places, and the musical knowledge that they possess, can be neither described nor believed without having seen it for yourself. The Munich court was convinced of this, since the little ten-year-old composer at table by the side of His Highness the Elector wrote down a piece, for which His Highness gave him in a few measures the ideas he had to carry out; and Salzburg was amazed through a Singspiel that he set to music, and which all present listened to with the utmost admiration, which the foreign merchants who were there on the occasion of the Lenten market cannot

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praise enough, and are not able to talk about without tender emotion. Perhaps they will make a trip to Italy soon.

Commentary

On 8 Nov 1766 the Mozart family arrived in Munich on their way home from the Grand Tour. Wolfgang and Nannerl appeared before the court the following day and on 22 Nov before returning to Salzburg a week later. The passage concerning the unidentified "Stück" may be derived from Leopold's account of the event to Hagenauer:

> Gestern, Sontags [9 Nov], haben wir S:r Churfürstlichen Durchleucht bey der Tafel besucht; wir wurden gnädigst empfangen. Der Wolfgangl muste gleich neben dem Churfürsten ein Stück auf der Tafel componiren, davon ihm S:r Durchleucht den Anfang oder idea von ein paar Tacte vorsang, er muste es auch bey Höchstdenselben nach der Tafel im Cabinet Spielen. Wie erstaunt iederman war dieses zu sehen und zu hören, ist leicht zu erachten. (*Briefe,* i:231–32; on the possible identification of the piece see Zaslaw 1985, 345)
>
> Yesterday, Sunday [9 Nov], we visited His Highness the Elector at table and were most graciously received. Wolfgang had at once to compose, at the table beside the Elector, a piece for which His Highness sang him the beginning, or rather a few bars of the theme, and then he had to play it for him after dinner in his private rooms. You may easily guess how surprised everyone was to see and hear this. (translation from Zaslaw 1985, 345).

The "Singspiel" is the first part of *Die Schuldigkeit des ersten Gebots*, K. 35, which received performances on 12 Mar and 2 Apr 1767 (*Dokumente,* 68–70). Another report of the Lenten market in Salzburg in 1767, and the wonder experienced by visitors who heard Mozart's music for *Die Schuldigkeit des ersten Gebots* and saw him direct the performance, was printed in the *Augspurgische Ordinari Postzeitung* on 30 Mar 1767. The wording in the two reports is strikingly similar, and it may be that the Augsburg report was the source for this one in the Berlin *Vossische Zeitung*. As the report speculated, Wolfgang and Leopold later made trips to Italy.

This report was quoted in Eberhard Buchner's anthology of historical newspaper reports in 1911–1913, but was unknown to Deutsch and later editors. Schulze 2008 independently recognised the significance of Buchner for Mozart research. The report also appeared with identical wording but with a byline of 18 April in the Hamburg *Reichspostreuter* on 1 May 1767.

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