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Leopold Mozart the Rationalist?

Humanism and Good Taste in Eighteenth-Century Musical Thought

Katherine Walker

Twenty years after Dale Van Kley's *The Religious Origins of the French Revolution*, which situated Catholic theology, in general, and Jansenist-related controversies, in specific, at the heart of French Revolutionary politics, it is now commonplace to acknowledge the religious underpinnings of eighteenth-century cultural, political, philosophical, and social life in Europe.¹ To paraphrase Jonathon Sheehan, one of the earliest and most probing examiners of this historiography, eighteenth-century studies have now richly embraced religion.²

This is not to say that the traditional narrative, which identified the Enlightenment as the “cradle of the secular world,” was entirely unfounded. The antireligious posture of the Philosophes, among the most vocal and

prolific voices of the pre-Kantian rationalistic Enlightenment, provides undeniable evidence of secularization. Nonetheless, as recent historiographies have shown, the assumption that the Philosophes' writings reflect the broader intellectual climate of the Enlightenment is simply not supported by evidence.³ Notwithstanding the tenor of those writings, the Enlightenment was, it turns out, deeply and broadly informed by religion.

The religious turn in eighteenth-century studies has created opportunities to revisit and refine some of our most entrenched narratives about this period in history. Prominent revisionist histories incorporate religion and anticlericalism, tradition and progress, reason and faith into what are now richer and more complex tapestries of the Enlightenment.

One acknowledged point of intersection among these seemingly tendentious ideologies in the age of Enlightenment is the Jesuit education system. Although The Society of Jesus was widely propagandized in the eighteenth century as obstructive to reason and progress, current scholarship is increasingly attuned to the ways in which the Jesuit education system nourished the progressive tendencies of the Enlightenment.⁴ This sys-

¹ Dale Van Kley, *The Religious Origins of the French Revolution: From Calvin to the Civil Constitution, 1560–1791* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996).

² Jonathan Sheehan, “Enlightenment, Religion, and the Enigma of Secularization: A Review Essay,” *American Historical Review* 108 (2003): 1061–80. See also Simon Grote, “Review-Essay: Religion and Enlightenment,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 75/1 (January 2014): 137–60; Ritchie Robertson, “Religion and Enlightenment: A Review Essay,” *German History* 25 (2007): 422–31; Jeremy Gregory, “Introduction: Transforming ‘the Age of Reason’ into ‘an Age of Faiths’: Or, Putting Religions and Beliefs (Back) into the Eighteenth Century,” *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 32 (2009): 287–305; Charly Coleman, “Resacralizing the World: The Fate of Secularization in Enlightenment Historiography,” *Journal of Modern History* 82 (2010): 368–95; Ulrich Lehner, *The Catholic Enlightenment: The Forgotten History of a Global Movement* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016).

³ Sheehan discusses the recent scholarly effort to de-center the philosophically oriented French Enlightenment, in “Enlightenment, Religion,” 1070. See also Derek Beales, “Christians and Philosophes: The Case of the Austrian Enlightenment,” in *Enlightenment and Reform in Eighteenth-Century Europe* (New York: I. B. Tauris, 2005), 60–89.

⁴ Marc Fumaroli, “The Fertility and the Shortcomings of Renaissance Rhetoric: The Jesuit Case,” in *The Jesuits: Cultures, Sciences, and the Arts, 1540–1773*, ed. John W. O'Malley, Gauvin Alexander Bailey, Steven T. Harris, and Frank Kennedy (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 100; Marcus Hellyer, “Jesuit Physics in Eighteenth-Century Germany: Some Important Continuities,” in *ibid.*, 538–54; Steven Harris, “Boscovich, the ‘Boscovich Circle,’ and the Revival of a Jesuit Science,” in *R. J. Boscovich: Vita e attività scientifica: His Life and Scientific Work*, ed. Piers Bursill-

tem, which was founded on the humanist neoclassicism that proliferated in the Renaissance, was philosophically sophisticated, intellectually rigorous, and theologically unpromising.

Using Leopold Mozart, father to Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, as a case study, my purpose in what follows is to show, in the domain of music, how the Christian faith could accommodate and even encourage enlightened values. Leopold's philosophy of art and worldview, as exhibited throughout his *Versuch einer gründlichen Violinschule* (A Treatise on the Fundamental Principles of Violin Playing) and correspondence, reflect the influence of classical authors whom he would have studied in the course of his religious education. Far from manifesting tension, Leopold's religious education provided the very pathways to his enlightened philosophy.

To be clear, I do not argue here that Leopold's philosophy of art is inherently religious; to do so would require a separate study. I make the more modest claim that Leopold would not have perceived a tension between that enlightened philosophy and his Christian faith, and thus neither should we.

Despite many discussions in the literature of Leopold Mozart's enlightened philosophy of

art,⁵ there has yet been no effort to situate that philosophy within the boundaries of his Catholic faith. By reading Leopold's personal and professional writings intertextually, through classical authors that formed the basis of his Jesuit education, this study refines his traditional characterization as a rationalist, while offering new insights into his aesthetics and worldview. In doing so, it not only contributes to the growing consensus that the turn toward enlightened rationalism was not always a turn away from Christian faith; it further advances our understanding of Leopold's aesthetics in specific and enlightened rationalism in general. Thus begins a story of Leopold Mozart, Catholic, Jesuit, and Enlightenment man par excellence.

⁵ On Leopold and the Enlightenment, see Rainer Buland, "Leopold Mozart: Prototyp des aufgeklärten Bürgers," *Acta mozartiana* 58/2 (December 2011): 99–118; Hans Valentin, "Was die Bücher anlangt' . . . Leopold Mozarts literarische Interessen," in *Leopold Mozart. 1719–1787. Bild einer Persönlichkeit*, ed. Ludwig Wegele (Augsburg: Verlag Die Brigg, 1969), 102–10; Josef Mancal, "Neues über Leopold Mozart: Gedanken zum 200. Todestag," *Österreichische Musikzeitschrift* 42/6 (June 1987): 282–91.

On Leopold and rationalism, see Piero Melograni, *Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: A Biography*, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 6; David Schroeder, *Mozart in Revolt: Strategies of Resistance, Mischief, and Deception* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999), 51; Erich Broy, "Die 'gewisse gute Art' zu spielen: Überlegungen zu Ästhetik und Methodik in Leopold Mozarts Violinschule," *Neues musikwissenschaftliches Jahrbuch* 14 (2006): 17–62.

On Leopold and humanism, see Walter Kurt Kreyszig, "Leopold Mozart . . . a man of much . . . sagacity: The Revival of Humanist Scholarship in His *Gründliche Violinschule* (Augsburg, 1756)," in *Music's Intellectual History*, ed. Zdravko Blažeković and Barbara Dobbs Mackenzie (New York: RILM, 2009), 43–156; Eleonora Beck, "A New Reading of the Mozart Family Portrait," *Imago musicae: International Yearbook of Musical Iconography* (2017): 29.

Hall (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1993), 527–48; Maurice Whitehead, "'Superior to the Rudest Shocks of Adversity': English Jesuit Education and Culture in the Long Eighteenth Century, 1688–1832," in *Educating the Child in Enlightenment Britain: Beliefs, Cultures, Practices*, ed. Jill Shefrin and Mary Hilton (Farnham, England: Ashgate, 2009), 131–46; James M. Byrne, *Religion and the Enlightenment: From Descartes to Kant* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996), 43; Jeffrey Burson, *The Rise and Fall of the Theological Enlightenment: Jean-Martin de Prades and the Ideological Polarization of Eighteenth-Century France* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2010).

Leopold the Rationalist?

Rationalism is the key word in writings on Leopold Mozart, and it is set in frequent counterpoint to Wolfgang's perceived genius. Hermann Abert, for example, concludes that "as a rationalist at heart, [Leopold] utterly failed to appreciate the true nature of genius, whose workings are influenced by no external aims."⁶ In Alfred Einstein's similar view, Leopold "is half rationalist, half 'popular,' while Wolfgang is never rationalistic and never popular, but godlike, regal, and aristocratic."⁷ More recently, Maynard Solomon reads the "patchwork absurdities . . . plundered from myth" in *Die Zauberflöte* as ultimately giving way to "the service of patriarchal imperatives that would have been very much to the liking of such rationalists as Don Alfonso, Sarastro, and Leopold Mozart."⁸ For David Schroeder (in a consideration of an Italian translation of Leopold's *Versuch*), the text "expressed his own Gottschedian view about what the nature of the language of a manual of instruction should be," a view that comes "very near to Gottsched's ideals of 'Natur and Vernunft' (nature and reason)."⁹ For these scholars, in the words of Piero Melograni, Leopold was "an Enlightenment man, rational and concrete."¹⁰

In his own day, too, Leopold's professional outlook and activities were associated with reason and learning. F. W. Marpurg, for

instance, recommended Leopold's *Versuch* to the "sound and skilled virtuoso, the rational and methodical teacher, the learned musician; [for] all of those qualities that make a man of worth are developed together here."¹¹ And Dominikus Hagenauer's sober praise upon Leopold's death emphasized his "wit" and "wisdom,"¹² traits associated with the exemplary Enlightenment man.¹³ This character-

¹¹ "Der gründliche und geschickte Virtuose, der vernünftige und methodische Lehrmeister, der gelehrte Musiker, diese Eigenschaften, deren jede einzeln einen verdienten Mann macht, entwickeln sich allhier zusammen." F. W. Marpurg, *Historische-kritische Beiträge zur Tonkunst*, vol. 3 (Berlin, 1757), 160; trans. Alfred Einstein in the Preface to *A Treatise on the Fundamental Principles of Violin Playing by Leopold Mozart*, trans. Edith Knocker, 2nd ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1951), xxiv.

¹² "Witz" and "Klugheit," from Dominikus Hagenauer's diary, May 28, 1787, in Otto Erich Deutsch, *Mozart: Die Dokumente seines Lebens* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1961), 293; *Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Neue Ausgabe sämtlicher Werke*, Serie X: Supplement, 258. The English edition of Deutsch's work translates the passage as "wit and sagacity"; *Mozart: A Documentary Biography*, ed. Otto Erich Deutsch, trans. Peter Branscombe, Eric Blom, and Jeremy Noble (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1965), 293.

¹³ The ability to both "edify and entertain" was granted the highest status in this period. Alexander Pope's poetry, for example, was lauded by a contemporary reviewer for its interplay among "beauty, wit, and wisdom": "The distinguishing perfections of his poetry are beauty, wit, and wisdom. If we are not elevated, we are charmed; if we are not transported, we are diverted and instructed." "Memoirs of Alexander Pope," *Literary and Biographical Magazine, and British Review* 2 (London: J. Parsons, July 1793): 327.

A dedicatory poem to "immortal" John Gay similarly emphasizes his work's rare combination of wit and wisdom: "I perceive, you want to look, / at leisure hours upon a book; / And such an one wou'd gladly choose, / As may both profit, and amuse. / . . . / Immortal Gay, sure, all must prize, / who merry makes us, and yet wise. / . . . / Good poets are so wondrous scant, / we seldom meet with what we want. / Few rhyming authors (to be plain) / both edify and entertain. / But here, both wit and wisdom mix; / Here, sir, with lucky hand, you fix, / on one, a most by all confess'd / to be a most the very best." Anon., "I perceive you want to look. . . ." *London Magazine and Monthly Chronologer* 6 (London: C. Ackers, 1737): 98.

⁶ Hermann Abert, *W. A. Mozart* (Breitkopf & Härtel, 1923–24); ed. Cliff Eisen and trans. Stewart Spencer (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007), 343; see also pp. 8, 344, and 528.

⁷ Alfred Einstein, *Mozart: His Character, His Work* (London: Oxford University Press, 1945), 111.

⁸ Maynard Solomon, *Mozart: A Life* (New York: Harper Collins, 1995), lxxviii.

⁹ Schroeder, *Mozart in Revolt*, 51.

¹⁰ Melograni, *Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: A Biography*, 6.

zation reflects Leopold's correspondence with the elder Hagenauer, in which both wit and wisdom were on display. In a 1768 letter to Lorenz Hagenauer, Leopold famously condemned the Viennese public, who "are not curious to see serious and rational [*vernünftige*] things, of which they have little or no concept. They like nothing but foolish tricks, dancing, devils, spirits, magical spells, Hanswurst, Lipperl, Bernardon, witches, and apparitions—this is well known and their theater shows it every day."¹⁴ This and Leopold's numerous other allusions to *Vernunft* corroborate accounts from his own time to the present day: reason and learning were core elements of his worldview.

His enthusiasm for Gottsched, Gellert, Fux, Mattheson, Scheibe, and Marpurg (all prominent exponents of the early German Enlightenment),¹⁵ as well as his documented

interest in experimental physics, astronomy, and meteorology,¹⁶ further identify him with enlightenment and reason. As Volkmar Braunbehrens concludes, "Leopold Mozart is a characteristic exponent of the rationalistic Enlightenment: broadly educated, virtually universal in his interests, imbued with the idea that everything can be grasped and understood through proper application of the rational intellect, and possessed of an ability to convey his knowledge to others."¹⁷

In fact, Leopold was not imbued with the idea that everything can be grasped purely intellectually. As a devout Catholic, Leopold would have conceded that some truths are available only through divine revelation and are thus, in the words of Leibniz, "the proper matter of faith."¹⁸ To be sure, for Leibniz, as for Locke before him, reason and faith are complementary, as they both access and

¹⁴ "nicht begierig sind ernsthafte und Vernünftige sachen zu sehen, auch wenig oder gar keinen Begriff davon haben, und nichts als närrisches Zeug, tanzen, teufel, gespenster, Zaubereyen, Hanswurst, Lipperl, Bernardon, Hexen, und Erscheinungen sehen wollen, ist eine bekannte Sache und ihre theater beweisen es täglich." Wilhelm A. Bauer, Otto Friedrich Deutsch, Joseph Heinz Eibl and Ulrich Konrad, eds., *Mozart. Briefe und Aufzeichnungen. Gesamtausgabe*, 8 vol. (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 2005), 1: 254; cited and trans. in Daniel Hertz, *Haydn, Mozart, and the Viennese School, 1740–1780* (New York: Norton, 1995), 20. The Anderson edition translates "ernsthafte und Vernünftige" as "serious and sensible." See Emily Anderson, *The Letters of Mozart and His Family* (1966); cited from the 3rd ed. (New York: Norton, 1989), 80. Hanswurst, Lipperl, and Bernardon were three comedic stock characters in the eighteenth-century German theater, whom Leopold among others found to be in poor taste. See Hertz, *Haydn, Mozart, and the Viennese School*, 18–22.

¹⁵ On Leopold's views regarding Gottsched, see Schroeder, *Mozart in Revolt*, 51; on Gellert, see *ibid.*, 53–54, and specifically Schroeder's discussion of Gellert's response to Leopold's (presumably) admiring lost letter of April 1, 1754, *ibid.*, 54; on Fux, Mattheson, Scheibe, and Marpurg, see the introductory section of Leopold's *Versuch*, entitled "A Short History of Music," where he refers to these and other authors as "men who by their writings on music have earned great credit in the

scientific world" (die sich durch ihre Schriften um die Musik bey der gelehrten Welt ungemein verdient gemacht haben). Leopold Mozart, *Versuch einer gründlichen Violinschule* (Augsburg: Johann Jacob Lotter, 1756), 17; for English translation, see *A Treatise on the Fundamental Principles of Violin Playing by Leopold Mozart*, 2nd ed., trans. Edith Knocker (London: Oxford University Press, 1951), 22. (My translations here and throughout the article sometimes depart from the Knocker edition.)

¹⁶ Genevieve Geffray, "Die Narren sind halt aller Orten nicht gescheid': Leopold Mozart und die Sonnenfinsternis in Paris, anno 1764," *Mitteilungen der Internationalen Stiftung Mozarteum* 47/3–4 (November 1999): 19–23.

¹⁷ Volkmar Braunbehrens, "'Väterlicher Freund, gehorsamster Sohn.' Leopold und Wolfgang A. Mozart," in *Väter und Söhne: zwölf biographische Porträts* (Berlin: Rowohlt, 1996), 17.

¹⁸ "die eigentlichen Gegenstände des Glaubens sind." Gottfried Wilhelm Freiherr von Leibniz, *Neue Abhandlungen über den menschlichen Verstand* (1704), IV, §7; trans. as *Leibniz: New Essays on Human Understanding*, ed. and trans. Peter Remnant and Jonathan Bennett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 497.

conform to truth.¹⁹ Nevertheless, even in the age of reason, some truths can be accessed through faith alone.

Leopold's lifelong observance of Catholicism reflects his acknowledgment of faith, "above reason," as a source of truth.²⁰ Indeed, his childhood family was active in the congregation of the Assumption of the Holy Virgin (associated with the Marian Brotherhood in Augsburg); beginning in 1722, they lived in a house owned by the Jesuit Order (in the Jesuitengasse).²¹ His formal education, first at the Jesuit St. Salvator Gymnasium and then—though he withdrew after one year—at the corresponding lyceum, emphasized theology, science, and rhetoric in preparation for his would-be entrance into the priesthood.²² His godfather was a canon at St. Peter's and a prominent churchman in the community.²³ Following two failed academic terms, Leopold settled permanently in the predominately Catholic city of Salzburg, where he undertook his first professional position as chamberlain and musician to the Salzburg canon Count Johann Baptist Thurn-Valassina and Taxis. Leopold's daily devotional practices and strict observation of Catholic rites—as attested by his correspondence—identify him as a devout Catholic.²⁴

The contrast (and conflict) in this regard between father and son is particularly pro-

nounced in a series of letters spanning the years 1777–79, the period during which Wolfgang undertook a professional tour, in his mother's company, through Munich, Augsburg, Mannheim, and Paris. On Wolfgang's approaching name-day, for example, Leopold urged his son to protect his soul and honor his duties as a "true Catholic Christian."²⁵ Though Leopold elsewhere claimed to sympathize with Wolfgang's youthful disinclination to focus on his soul,²⁶ he nevertheless admonished him to put God first: "From his hands we receive our temporal happiness; and at the same time we must think of our eternal salvation."²⁷ He thus implored his son to avoid all "dangers to [the] soul";²⁸ to keep God and honor in his consciousness; and to prevent the irrevocable—indeed, eternal—consequences of foolishness.²⁹

When Wolfgang's tour led him to the Protestant city of Weilburg, Leopold urged his son not to linger there, for he would find no Catholic churches in which to attend Mass.³⁰ "Hold fast to God," Leopold repeatedly urged

¹⁹ John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1639), Bk. 4, §23; cited in 4th ed. (London: Awnsham and Churchill, 1700), 416.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ Solomon, *Mozart*, 22.

²² *Ibid.*; see also Robert W. Gutman, *Mozart: A Cultural Biography* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1999), 13–14.

²³ Solomon, *Mozart*, 22; Abert, *W. A. Mozart*, 2.

²⁴ For a summary of Leopold's religious beliefs and devotional activities, as exhibited in his correspondence, see Cliff Eisen and Simon P. Keefe, eds., *The Cambridge Mozart Encyclopedia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 324–25.

²⁵ "eines wahren Catholischen Christen." Bauer and Deutsch, eds., *Briefe und Aufzeichnungen*, 2: 79.

²⁶ "junge Leute hörn dergleichen Sachen nicht gerne, ich weis es, ich war auch jung; allein gott sey Danck gesagt, ich kam doch bey allen meinen jugendlichen Narrenspossen immer wieder zu mir selbst, flohe alle Gefahren meiner Seele und hatte immer gott und meine Ehre, und die Folgen, die gefährlichen folgen vor Augen" (Young people do not like to hear about these things, I know, for I was once young myself. But, thank God, in spite of all my youthful foolish pranks, I always pulled myself together. I avoided all dangers to my soul and ever kept God and my honour and the consequences, the very dangerous consequences of foolishness, before my eyes). Bauer and Deutsch, eds., *Briefe und Aufzeichnungen*, 2: 188; trans. Anderson, *Letters*, 422.

²⁷ "gott geht vor allem! von dem müssen wir unser zeitliches glück erwarten, und für das ewige immer Sorge tragen." *Ibid.*

²⁸ "Gefahren meiner Seele." *Ibid.*

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ Bauer and Deutsch, eds., *Briefe und Aufzeichnungen*, 2: 166–67; trans. Anderson, *Letters*, 407.

his son, “who will see to everything.”³¹ If in his constant pleas and reminders Leopold was sometimes overbearing, he was at least not hypocritical. As his correspondence in this period testifies, Leopold attended numerous daily church services, prayed morning and night, and continued to devote himself to what he regarded as his primary Christian duty: that is, to see to the full development of his son’s God-granted gifts.

Leopold’s investment in accommodating faith into his rationalist aesthetic and pedagogical framework comes to light in the introduction to his *Versuch*. He begins the brief section entitled “A Short History of Music” with an unselfconscious appeal to mystical aspects of Christianity, including the Creation, Adam, the Flood, and Noah’s ark.³²

When, however, his history extends beyond the scope of scripture, reasoned skepticism takes hold. In a footnote accompanying his reference to Orpheus and “the testimonies of the ancients” that this “wise and learned man” lived,³³ Leopold assures the reader that this ancient character, though elevated to mythic caricature, was as mortal as any other man:

At the time these men lived, learned people were idolized. And this is the very reason why everything seems so fabulous. Who knows? Perchance the poets of future centuries may have cause enough to celebrate as gods our present-day virtuosi of song, for it really seems as if old times might return.³⁴

³¹ “Ich bitte Dich, halte Dich an gott, der muß es thun.” Bauer and Deutsch, eds., *Briefe und Aufzeichnungen*, 2: 75; trans. Anderson, *Letters*, 334 (dated October 20, 1777).

³² Mozart, *Versuch*, 13–14.

³³ “die allermeisten Zegnisse der Alten” and “weiser und gelehrter.” Mozart, *Versuch*, 15.

³⁴ “Zu jener Zeit als diese Männer lebeten, wurden die gelehrten Leute vergöttert. Und eben dieses ist die Ursache, warum alles so fabelhaft läßt. Wer weis es?

This testimony could have come from the arch-rationalist Voltaire, who himself admonished the writer and statesman Sir William Temple for his naive and superstitious belief in the myth of Orpheus:

This enemy to his own times believed implicitly in the fable of Orpheus, and, it should seem, had never heard of the fine music of Italy, nor even of that of France, which do not charm serpents, it is true, but which do charm the ears of the connoisseur.³⁵

In this sense, at least, Leopold was a man of his times, a rationalist dispeller of myths, who nevertheless observed the most orthodox rites and “superstitious” beliefs of his Catholic faith.

Some scholars view Leopold’s dual emphasis on reason and faith as paradoxical.³⁶ Erich Valentin situates his rationalism in contrast and contradiction to his faith,³⁷ and David Schroeder similarly paints a picture of “a renegade Catholic” whose “sense of tolerance far outstripped the religion to which he remained loyal.”³⁸ For Schroeder in

Vielleicht haben die Poeten der künftigen Jahrhunderte Stoff genug unsere heutigen Virtuosen als Götter zu besingen? Denn es scheint wirklich als wenn die alten Zeiten wieder kommen mochten.” Mozart, *Versuch*, 15 (note *gg*). Though on a finer point Leopold and Voltaire may be seen to disagree—the former denying the supernatural elements of the Orpheus myth, and the latter denying the myth altogether—both focus their skepticism on the irrational and supernatural elements of the history.

³⁵ “Cet ennemi de son siècle croit bonnement à la fable d’*Orphée*, et n’avait apparemment entendu ni la belle musique d’Italie, ni même celle de France, qui à la vérité ne charment pas les serpents, mais qui charment les oreilles des connoisseurs.” Voltaire, *Oeuvres complètes: Dictionnaire philosophique*, 33: 355; trans. anon., *A Philosophical Dictionary, from the French of M. de Voltaire* (London: W. Dugdale, 1843), 1: 58.

³⁶ Gutman, *Mozart: A Cultural Biography*, 24–29 and 33; Erich Valentin, “Der gelehrte Vater des genialen Sohnes,” in Wegele, ed., *Leopold Mozart*, 78–101; Schroeder, *Mozart in Revolt*, 46.

³⁷ Valentin, “Der gelehrte Vater,” 78–101.

³⁸ Schroeder, *Mozart in Revolt*, 46.

particular, Leopold sought out literary mentors who provided “the missing link from his own Catholic education”; in Gottsched in particular Leopold is seen to have found an “approach to enlightened morality” that transcended “Catholic isolationism or doctrine.”³⁹ There is good evidence that Gottsched inspired Leopold, who was something of an intellectual omnivore. However, in order to understand how Leopold reconciled his philosophy with his faith, one is better served by looking beyond Gottsched, for whom, in the words of Detlef Döring, religion was “reduced to a mere cultural phenomenon.”⁴⁰ Leopold’s aesthetic also, indeed prominently, reflects the influence of authors who were endorsed by his religious institutions.

A clue to these alternative influences is provided by Walter Kurt Kreyszig, who corrects what he sees as a crucial oversight in the literature on Leopold Mozart and his *Versuch*: namely, the failure to “comment on the . . . solid anchoring [of] the work in the venerable tradition of musical humanism.”⁴¹ Thus unfolds a meticulous survey of the historical and historiographical aspects of the *Versuch*’s preface, which, for him, articulates a humanist concern for history and—in his ensuing discussion of the violin—progress.⁴² Kreyszig’s argument is persuasive; in fact, he might have gone further in arguing for Leopold’s investment in musical humanism.

³⁹ Ibid., 49. Erich Broy also associates Leopold Mozart’s aesthetic philosophy narrowly with Gottsched; see “Die ‘gewisse gute Art’ zu spielen.”

⁴⁰ Detlef Döring, “Leibniz’s Critique of Pufendorf: A Dispute in the Eve of the Enlightenment,” in *The Practice of Reason: Leibniz and his Controversies*, ed. Marcelo Dascal (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2010), 254.

⁴¹ Walter Kurt Kreyszig, “Leopold Mozart . . . a man of much . . . sagacity,” 58.

⁴² On the neoclassical orientation of Leopold Mozart’s *Versuch*, see also Pierluigi Petrobelli, “La cultura di Leopold Mozart e la sua Violinschule,” *Mozart-Jahrbuch* (1989): 9–16.

Though his study is limited to key markers of humanist scholarship in the preface—namely, in the listing of important theorists, the mentioning of prominent humanist scholars (such as Gaffurio), and the emphasis on the roles of Greek and Roman antiquity in his historical account—the rhetoric and ideology of humanism undergird the whole of Leopold’s *Versuch* and his other writings, providing insight into his aesthetic, moral, cultural, and even political values.

Humanism is strongly oriented toward the classical humanities. This is not to say that all neoclassicism is humanist, for classical references are among the most ubiquitous and generic style markers of the Enlightenment. Latin phrase books provided eighteenth-century authors with the veneer of erudition, although the depth of engagement often ended there. Even among the more probing engagements of the Philosophes, classical references were selective (and sometimes distorted). This is because the Philosophes, on the whole, narrowly equated classicism with paganism; above all, references to antiquity justified those Philosophes’ distanced relationship to Christianity. Diderot, who was convinced of Cicero’s atheism despite all evidence to the contrary, dismissed his sacred references as political jargon,⁴³ and Hume went so far as to cast doubt on Cicero’s religious musings to his wife (emphasizing his willingness to *appear* devout):

If there ever was a nation or a time in which the public religion lost all authority over mankind, we might expect, that infidelity in Rome, during the Ciceronian age, would

⁴³ See Denis Diderot and Jean Le Rond D’Alembert, “Aius-Locutius,” *Encyclopédie, ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers* (Paris, 1751–72), in *Œuvres complètes de Diderot*, ed. Jules Assézat and Maurice Tourneaux, vol. 13 (Paris: Garnier Frères, 1875–77), 268.

openly have erected its throne, and that Cicero himself, in every speech and action, would have been its most declared abettor. But it appears, that, whatever skeptical liberties that great man might take, in his writings or in the philosophical conversation, he yet avoided, in the common conduct of life, the imputation of deism and profaneness. Even in his own family, and to his wife Terentia, whom he highly trusted, he was willing to appear a devout religionist; and there remains a letter, addressed to her, in which he seriously desires her to offer sacrifices to Apollo and Aesculapius, in gratitude for the recovery of health.⁴⁴

Although Renaissance neoclassicists—like their eighteenth-century counterparts—were criticized by some contemporaries as “pagan worshipers” and atheists, such claims were on the whole unjustified.⁴⁵ On the contrary, they sought to achieve what Aby Warburg refers to as a “plastische Ausgleichsformel” (flexible compromise formula) between Christian faith and classical values.⁴⁶ Erasmus illustrated his deep investment in reconciling progressive epicurean values and Christian beliefs in his 1533 colloquy *The Epicurean*:

If people who live agreeably are Epicureans, none are more truly Epicurean than the righteous and godly. And if it is names that bother us, no one better deserves the name of Epicurean than the revered founder and head

of the Christian philosophy, Christ, for in Greek *pikouros* means ‘helper’. He alone, when the law of Nature was all but blotted out by sins, when the law of Moses incited to lusts rather than cured them, when Satan ruled in the world unchallenged, brought timely aid to perishing humanity. Completely mistaken, therefore, are those who talk in their foolish fashion about Christ’s having been sad and gloomy in character and calling upon us to follow a dismal mode of life. On the contrary, he alone shows the most enjoyable life of all and the one most full of true pleasure.⁴⁷

Like Erasmus, most Renaissance humanists sought reform of religion, education, and society from within the institutions and values of their Christian faith; their engagements with (and reconstitution of) classical values reflect this agenda. This aspect of Renaissance humanism—namely, the alignment of human-centered values and faith-based values—was carried forth in the soundly Christian German and Austrian Enlightenments, not least through the Jesuit education system.⁴⁸ Leopold’s decade-long Jesuit training had inculcated him with a humanist commitment to both reason and faith that had defined the spirit of the Renaissance.

Leopold’s Humanist Education

Leopold’s neo-Renaissance humanism was rooted in his Jesuit education. Educational policy and reform are among the greatest legacies of the Jesuit Order, the curriculum of which was detailed in a comprehensive manual titled *Ratio atque institutio studiorum Societatis Jesu*, or *The Method and System of the Studies of the Society of Jesus*. This curriculum was

⁴⁴ David Hume, *Four Dissertations: I. The Natural History of Religion. II. Of the Passions. III. Of Tragedy. IV. Of the Standard of Taste* (London: A. Miller, 1757), 81–82.

⁴⁵ Paul Oskar Kristeller, *Medieval Aspects of Renaissance Learning: Three Essays*, ed. and trans. E. P. Mahoney, 2nd ed. (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1974), 33–41; Paul Oskar Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought and Its Sources*, ed. and trans. Michael Mooney (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), esp. 78.

⁴⁶ Aby Warburg identifies a “plastic [or flexible] compromise formula” between faith in God (*Gottvertrauen*) and faith in one’s self (*Selbstvertrauen*) in the generation of Francesco Sassetti and Giovanni Rucellai. “Francesco Sassettis letztwillige Verfügung,” in *Gesammelte Schriften* (Leipzig: Bibliothek Warburg, 1932), 1: 151–57.

⁴⁷ Desiderius Erasmus Roterodamus, *The Epicurean* (1533); repr. in *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 43 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 1086.

⁴⁸ On Christianity in the German Enlightenment, see Beales, “Christians and Philosophes,” 79–82.

completed in 1599 (following preliminary versions of 1586 and 1589), and its use was mandatory in Jesuit schools (with some regional variation permitted) until the temporary suppression of the society in 1773. The Jesuit curriculum is indebted to the progressive University of Paris (where St. Ignatius and the other founders of the Jesuit Order studied) and the humanistic schools of the Netherlands (where they frequently traveled).⁴⁹ Humanism and theology were united in the Jesuit educational philosophy, as clearly articulated in the 1586 *Ratio's* statement of purpose:

The Society of Jesus conducts schools first, because they supply man with many advantages for practical living; secondly, because they contribute to the right government of public affairs and to the proper making of laws; third, because they give ornament, splendor and perfection to the rational nature of man; and fourth, and what is most important, because they are the bulwark of religion and guide man most surely and easily to the achievement of his last end.⁵⁰

In the succinct words of J. J. Chambliss, Jesuit education was thus designed to combine the

“practical, the social, the humanistic, and the religious aims . . . that flowed from the principles set down by Ignatius.”⁵¹

The foundation of the Jesuit curriculum, as outlined in the *Ratio*, was the study of the ancient Greek and Roman texts. A founding Jesuit educator in Germany, Jacobus Pontanus, famously remarked, “Without classical education the other branches of study are cold, dumb, and dead; classical learning gives these other studies life, breath, motion, blood, and language.”⁵²

As dictated by the *Ratio*, students progressed through a program in the *studia inferiora*, or humanities, that emphasized grammar, eloquence, and rhetoric through careful and studied engagement with classical texts. Greek and Latin reading and comprehension were acquired through the study of Cicero, Caesar, Lucian, Virgil, and others, such that, upon completion of the third grammatical tier, students had thoroughly studied the poems of Ovid, fables of Aesop, dialogues of Lucian, and—through every stage of study—the epistles, orations, and other writings of Cicero.⁵³ Cicero was indeed the focus of the entire classical training, and the centrality of his oeuvre became increasingly pronounced as students progressed beyond sheer grammar (though style and content were implicitly engaged through the material) and into the study of rhetoric. Cicero was supplemented by Quintilian, Aristotle, and—though to a lesser

⁴⁹ Gabriel Codina, “The Modus Parisiensis,” in *The Jesuit Ratio Studiorum: 400th Anniversary Perspectives*, ed. Vincent J. Duminuco (New York: Fordham University Press, 2000), 28–49; Robert Schwickerath, *Jesuit Education: Its History and Principles Viewed in the Light of Modern Educational Problems* (St. Louis: Becktold, 1903), 44 and 141. On humanistic education in Renaissance Netherlands, see Juan Luis Vives’s 1531 treatise *De disciplinis libri XX*; trans. Foster Watson as *Vives’s On Education: A Translation of the De transcendendis disciplinis of Juan Luis Vives* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1913); Vives, *Linguae latinae exercitatio* (1539); trans. Foster Watson as *Tudor School-Boy Life: The Dialogues of Juan Luis Vives* (London: Dent, 1908).

⁵⁰ Societas Jesu, *Monumenta paedagogica Societatis Jesu*, 7 vols. (Rome, 1965–92), 2: 528–29; cited in John W. Padberg, “Development of the Ratio Studiorum,” in *The Jesuit Ratio Studiorum: 400th Anniversary Perspectives*, ed. Vincent J. Duminuco (New York: Fordham University Press, 2000), 98.

⁵¹ Duminuco, ed., *The Jesuit Ratio*, 300.

⁵² From a memorandum extracted in Johannes Janssen, *Geschichte des deutschen Volkes*, vol. 8 (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1904), 100–103; cited and trans. in Schwickerath, *Jesuit Education*, 111.

⁵³ Society of Jesus, *Ratio atque institutio studiorum Societatis Jesu* (1599), repr. (Antwerp: Apud Joannem Meursium, 1635); trans. Allan P. Farrell as *The Jesuit Ratio Studiorum of 1599* (Washington, D.C.: Conference of Major Superiors of Jesuits, 1970); see also Schwickerath, *Jesuit Education*, 107–43.

extent—vernacular authors on whom students could form erudition “derived from the history and manners of nations.”⁵⁴

Although here, as elsewhere, specific curricular components varied,⁵⁵ Ciceronian classicism remained the staple of the entire Jesuit educational system. Leopold’s eight years at the gymnasium (1727–35) and his subsequent year at the adjoining lyceum in Augsburg (not to mention his university studies at the Benedictine University of Salzburg, which, though not a Jesuit school, was based on Italian models and—particularly in Leopold’s chosen degree areas of philosophy and jurisprudence—would have provided further training in the classics⁵⁶) ensured that he received regular exposure to humanist-oriented neoclassicism during his formative educational years.

This is not to say that Leopold was a model student. On the contrary, the six-year course of study at gymnasium took him eight years to complete (albeit *magna cum laude*); though the reasons for his delay are unknown, an Augsburg schoolmate provides a picture of a disenchanted and/or rebellious youth.⁵⁷ Franziskus Erasmus Freysinger’s diary reports of Leopold, “Ah, he was a great fellow. My father thought the world of him. And how he hoodwinked the clerics about becoming a

priest!”⁵⁸ His two subsequent failed academic pursuits—at the St. Salvator Lyceum, from which he withdrew before the end of his first year (upon the death of his father), and then at the University of Salzburg, where his poor attendance and apparent indifference to his studies led to his expulsion—rendered him, according to the rector at the latter university, “unworthy of the name of student.”⁵⁹

Nor is this to say that Leopold’s Jesuit education rendered him a faithful member of the Jesuit Order, for the few references to the Society of Jesus in his correspondence, though sympathetic, reveal no overt allegiances. Be this as it may, it is clear that Leopold’s education was centered on humanistic studies and, specifically, classic Greek and Roman texts; that his particular shade of rationalism is best understood in light of his internalization of humanist philosophy, aesthetics, and ethics; and that these humanist values and beliefs

⁵⁸ As reported by Wolfgang in a letter to Maria Anna, “Ja, ein ganzer Mann. bey meinem Vattern galt er sehr viell. und wie er die Pfaffen herum gefopt hat, wegen den geistlich werden.” Bauer and Deutsch, eds., *Briefe und Aufzeichnungen*, 2: 48; trans. Anderson, *Letters*, 307; cited in Solomon, *Mozart*, 23.

⁵⁹ “D. Johan. Georg Mozart August Suevus, qui ab anni, civilis scilicet, initio vix una vel bina vice Physicam frequentavit, et ideo se ipsum nomine studiosi indignum reddidit: fuit is paucis ante examen diebus citatus ad Magnificum, ubi sententiam percepit, se non amplius in numero studiosorum habendum esse, quam sententiam nullis interpostis precibus, ac si hoc non curaret, acceptavit e discessit; qua de ratione ne que ad examen amplius fuit citatus” (Don Johann Georg Mozart, a Swabian of Augsburg, has from the beginning of the civil year hardly attended Natural Science more than once or twice, and has thereby rendered himself unworthy of the name of student. A few days before the examination he was called before the Dean and informed that henceforth he would no longer be numbered among the students. Having heard this sentence, he offered no appeals, accepted the sentence, and departed as if indifferent; therefore he was not called for further examination). Cited in Latin and English in Erich Schenk, *Mozart and His Times* (Vienna, 1955), ed. and trans. Richard and Clara Winston (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1959), 12.

⁵⁴ Schwickerath, *Jesuit Education*, 120.

⁵⁵ See, for example, Father Kropf’s regional plan for Jesuit schools in upper Germany, “Ratio et via,” *Bibliothek der katholischen Pädagogik* 10 (1736): 340–48; cited in Schwickerath, *Jesuit Education*, 121.

⁵⁶ On the Italianate humanities curriculum at the Benedictine University of Salzburg, see Agostino Sottili, *Humanismus und Universitätsbesuch: Die Wirkung italienischer Universitäten auf die Studia Humanitatis nördlich der Alpen*, eds. Jürgen Miethke, William J. Courtenay, Jeremy Catto, and Jacques Verger (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2006), 108, 290–91, and 398; cited in Kreyszig, “Leopold Mozart,” 56.

⁵⁷ Solomon, *Mozart*, 22–23.

were accommodated, and further, endorsed by the keepers of his faith.

The influence of Ciceronian classicism is most prominent in Leopold's writings in the slippery and capacious concept of taste. Five central aspects of Leopold's aesthetic ideal of taste emerge from his personal and professional writings: moderation, clarity, propriety, expression, and ornamentation. These correspond to the teachings of Cicero and thus point to the complementary relationship between Leopold's religious education and his enlightened philosophy of art. The Ciceronian framework, reflected in Leopold's writings, promotes reason beyond rules—reason born of wisdom and experience and fitted to navigate uncertain situations that may defy a predetermined ideal. Taste, itself frequently associated with dogma and rules, is here revealed as a counterpoint to them and a keystone to Leopold's humanistic shade of rationalism.

Taste as Wisdom

Taste in Leopold's system is, *prima facie*, the province of rules. In the preface to his *Versuch*, for example, he states emphatically that “[there] is still much to be dealt with. . . such matters as the lighting of a beacon to guide the weak judgment of many a concert performer and, by means of the rules of good taste, to form an intelligent soloist.”⁶⁰ One such rule concerns overdotting, which Leopold promotes in slow pieces to awaken an otherwise “sleepy” passage:⁶¹

⁶⁰ “Es ist noch vieles abzuhandeln übrig. . . . Solche, die nur dazu gehören der schlechten Beurteilungskraft manches Concertisten ein Licht anzuzünden, und durch Regeln des guten Geschmacks einen vernünftigen Solospieler zu bilden.” Leopold Mozart, *Versuch*, Vorbericht; trans. Knocker, *Treatise*, 8.

⁶¹ “schläferig.” Mozart, *Versuch*, 39; trans. Knocker, *Treatise*, 41. Overdotting refers to the

Not only is the performance thereby enlivened, but hurrying—that almost universal fault—is thereby checked. . . . It would be a good thing if this long retention of the dot were insisted on, and set down as a rule. I, at least, have often done so, and I have made clear my opinion of the right manner of performance by setting down two dots followed by a shortened note. It is true that at first it looks strange to the eye. But what matters this? The point has its reason and musical taste is promoted thereby.⁶²

A rationalist promotion of rules permeates Leopold's *Versuch*, which presents an objective and exacting prescription for violin playing and—on the surface, at least—a rule-based concept of good taste. Although Leopold's apparent emphasis on rules presents much fodder for his characterization as a Gottschedian rationalist, upon closer examination Leopold's rationalism is far from rigorist; rather, he employs rules as *part* of a system that emphasizes taste and judgment born of time and experience and equipped to manage various, indeterminate situations that may defy a single, predetermined ideal.

For Leopold, rules such as that concerning overdotting, cited above, do not alone lead to a successful performance:

For not only must one observe exactly all that has been marked and prescribed and not play it otherwise than as written, but one must throw oneself into the affect to be expressed

performance practice of extending the duration of dotted notes.

⁶² “Denn nicht nur wird dadurch der Vortrag lebhafter; sondern es wird auch dem Eilen, jenem fast allgemeinen Fehler, Einhalt gethan. . . . Es wäre sehr gut, wenn diese längere Aushaltung des Puncts recht bestimmt und hingesezt würde. Ich wenigstens habe es schon oft gethan, und meine Vortragsmeinung habe ich mit zweenen Punkten nebst Abkürzung der darauf folgenden Note also zu Tage geleyet. Es ist wahr, anfangs fällt es fremd in die Augen. Allein was verschlägt dieß? Der Satz hat seinen Grund; und der musikalische Geschmack wird dadurch beförderet.” Mozart, *Versuch*, 39–40; trans. Knocker, *Treatise*, 41–42.

and apply and execute in a certain good style all the ties, slides, accentuation of the notes, the forte and piano; in a word, whatever belongs to tasteful performance of a piece; which can only be learned from sound judgment and long experience.⁶³

It is precisely this judgment that distinguishes the technically skilled soloist from the more versatile and better-equipped orchestral player. For Leopold, who was himself an orchestral violinist, the former need only “get everything well in tune. . . . A solo player can, without great understanding of music, usually play his concertos tolerably—even with distinction—but a good orchestral violinist must have great insight into the whole art of musical composition and into the differences of style.”⁶⁴

Such “understanding” and “insight” are not to be taken lightly, for although many “believe themselves to be doing well if they embellish and befrill a piece right foolishly out of their own heads, and . . . have no sensitiveness whatever for the affect, which is to be expressed in the piece,”⁶⁵ the “dexterity”

and virtuosity that they may exhibit in an allegro cannot compensate for the “ignorance and bad judgment in every bar” of a more expressively demanding adagio.⁶⁶ It thus follows that, for Leopold, perception and acuity born of “long experience and good judgment” are to be counted “among the chiefest perfections in the art of music.”⁶⁷

Taste, as a form of judgment that complements (rather than solely adhering to) the rules, pertains to several performance situations outlined in Leopold’s *Versuch*. First, taste must compensate for inadequacies of contemporary notation—such as the determination of the “natural speed” of a phrase that, though indicated with descriptive adjectives, is “impossible . . . to describe in an exact manner.”⁶⁸

Second, even when precise notation is available, taste compensates for “would-be composers . . . [who] either will not indicate the style of a good performance, or ‘put a patch to the side of the hole.’”⁶⁹

A third category of situations concerns expressive nuances of music, which require

⁶³ “Denn man muß nicht nur alles angemerkte und vorgeschriebene genau beobachten, und nicht anders, als wie es hingesezt ist abspielen; sondern man muß auch mit einer gewissen Empfindlichkeit spielen; man muß sich in den Affect setzen, der auszudrücken ist; und man muß alle die Züge, die Schleifer, das Abstossen der Noten, das Schwache und Starke, und, mit einem Worte, alles was immer zum schmackhaften Vortrage eines Stückes gehöret, auf eine gewisse gute Art anbringen und vortragen, die man nicht anders, als mit gesunder Beurtheilungskraft durch eine lange Erfahrunß erlernet.” Mozart, *Versuch*, 253; trans. Knocker, *Treatise*, 216.

⁶⁴ “zu Hause üben um alles rein herauszubringen. . . . Ein Solospieler kann ohne grosse Einsicht in die Musik überhaupts seine Concerte erträglich, ja auch mit Ruhme abspielen; wenn er nur einen reinen Vortrag hat; ein guter Orchestergeiger aber muß viele Einsicht in die ganze Musik, in die Setzkunst und in die Verschiedenheit der Characters.” Mozart, *Versuch*, 254; trans. Knocker, *Treatise*, 217.

⁶⁵ “die sehr wohl zu thun glauben, wenn sie ein Stück nach ihrem Kopfe recht närrisch verzieren und

verkräuseln; und die von demjenigen Affecte ganz keine Empfindung haben, der in dem Stücke soll ausgedrückt werden.” Mozart, *Versuch*, 252; trans. Knocker, *Treatise*, 215.

⁶⁶ “rechtschaffen”; “Unwissenheit und ihre schlechte Beurtheilungskraft in allen Tächten.” Mozart, *Versuch*, 252–53; trans. Knocker, *Treatise*, 215. Leopold’s comparison of orchestral and solo players also reflects his distrust of “empty virtuosity.” Knocker, *Treatise*, xxiv.

⁶⁷ “lange Erfahrung, und eine gute Beurtheilungskraft”; “unter die ersten Vollkommenheiten der Tonkunst zähle.” Mozart, *Versuch*, 30; trans. Knocker, *Treatise*, 33.

⁶⁸ “natürliche Bewegung”; “so kann er doch unmöglich jene Art auf das genaueste bestimmen.” Mozart, *Versuch*, 30; trans. Knocker, *Treatise*, 33.

⁶⁹ “Halbcomponisten . . . die selbst die Art eines guten Vortrags entweder nicht anzuzeigen wissen, oder den Fleck neben das Loch setzen.” Putting a patch “to the side of,” rather than over, a hole, refers to applying nonsensical and ineffectual solutions. Mozart, *Versuch*, 136; trans. Knocker, *Treatise*, 124.

taste in the translation of verbal adjectives to sounding expressive effects.

Fourth, taste pertains to moments of implied or prescribed subjectivity. With respect to the fermata, for example, “It is true that such sustaining is to be made according to fancy, but it must be neither too short nor too long, and made with sound judgment.”⁷⁰

For Leopold, then, good taste resides not merely in adherence to accepted, predetermined rules, but further, in the ability to successfully fill the gaps between their verbal prescriptions and actualized music.

Even genius cannot compensate for the taste and judgment born of time, education, and experience. Leopold, while acknowledging his son’s God-granted gifts, nevertheless admonishes twenty-two-year-old Wolfgang thus:

It is better that whatever does you no honour, should not be given to the public. That is the reason why I have not given any of your symphonies to be copied, because I suspect that when you are older and have more insight, you will be glad that no one has got hold of them, though at the time you composed them you were quite pleased with them. One gradually becomes more and more fastidious.⁷¹

Leopold’s meaning is clear. As he states elsewhere, that which “belongs to the tasteful performance of a piece” resides beyond the

⁷⁰ “Ein solches Aushalten wird zwar nach Gutdünken gemacht: doch muß es nicht zu kurz und nicht zu lang, sondern mit guter Beurtheilung geschehen.” Mozart, *Versuch*, 45; trans. Knocker, *Treatise*, 46.

⁷¹ “Was dir keine Ehre macht ist besser wenns nicht bekannt wird, deswegen habe von Deinen Sinfonien nichts hergegeben, weil ich vorauswuste, daß Du mit reiffen Jahren, wo die Einsicht wächst, frohe seyn wirst, daß sie niemand hat, wenn Du gleich damals, als Du sie schriebst, damit zufrieden warest. Man wird immer heickler.” Bauer and Deutsch, eds., *Briefe und Aufzeichnungen*, 2: 485; trans. Anderson, *Letters*, 619.

individual provinces of genius and theory (i.e., rules) alone, and “can only be learnt through sound judgment and long experience.”⁷²

This association of right judgment with acquired wisdom (rather than learned, extrinsic rules) was a fundamental tenet of Ciceronian humanism and likewise served as the foundation of Leopold’s Jesuit training. The three books of Cicero’s *De oratore*, which are devoted to the attributes of the ideal orator, emphasize time and again the importance of acquiring knowledge and skills that transcend the narrow rules of the art form.⁷³ It thus follows that the purpose of Cicero’s pedagogy is not to provide a rigid model of objective and correct practice, for, as with Leopold, rules cannot accommodate the more nuanced aspects of oratory.⁷⁴ Its purpose is rather “to reveal . . . the springs from which to drink and the approaches to them, not as one seeking to be myself your guide (an endless and superfluous task), but just indicating the road, and, in the usual way, pointing with my finger to the fountains.”⁷⁵ As with Leopold, these subtler skills are born of time and experience, and thus elude one such as the young (and admittedly talented) Sulpicius:

And so, Catulus, to begin with our friend here, I first heard Sulpicius, when he was almost a boy, in a petty case: as to intonation, presence, bearing and the other essentials he was well fitted for this function we are investigating, but his delivery was rapid and

⁷² “alles was immer zum schmackhaften Vortrage eines Stückes gehört”; “die man nicht anders, als mit gesunder Beurtheilungskraft durch eine lange Erfahriß erlernt.” Mozart, *Versuch*, 253; trans. Knocker, *Treatise*, 216.

⁷³ See, for example, Cicero, *On the Orator*, 2 vols., Loeb Classical Library, trans. E. W. Sutton and H. Rackham (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1942); repr. (London: William Heinemann, 1959), 2: 59.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 1: 235.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 1: 143.

impetuous—the result of his genius—his diction agitated and a little too exuberant, as was natural at his age. I did not underrate him, being well content that luxuriance should exalt itself in the youthful, for, as with vines it is easier to cut back the branches which have shot out too riotously than to produce new growths by cultivation from a feeble stock, even so in a young man I want something to prune, because the sap can never live long in anything which has ripened too early.⁷⁶

Extending the agricultural metaphor, Cicero thus claimed to require “talent which has been cultivated, soil, as it were, not of a single ploughing, but both broken and given a second ploughing so as to be capable of bearing better and more abundant produce. And the cultivation is practice, listening, reading and written composition.”⁷⁷

Cicero reverberates in Leopold’s writings: good taste is a form of judgment that incorporates rules, to be sure, but complements them with wisdom born of time, education, and experience and fitted to navigate nuanced situations that theory alone cannot sufficiently address.

The Civic Dimension of Taste

Leopold’s emphasis on acquired wisdom is rooted in the casuistical reasoning that formed the basis of Aristotle’s philosophy of ethics and emerged as a central feature of later Roman philosophy as well. For the Greek philosopher,

everything said on moral subjects ought to be said in outline, and not with exactness. . . . But if the treatment of the subject generally is of this nature, still less does it admit of exactness in particulars; for it comes under no art or set of precepts, but is the duty of the agents themselves to look to the circumstances of

the occasion, just as is the case in the arts of medicine and navigation.⁷⁸

Aristotle resounded in Cicero’s Rome, where skepticism, analysis, and dialogue were identified with a “rational way of life” and—implicitly—a healthy, productive society.⁷⁹

Drawing on these classical texts, a student of the Society of Jesus was thus “an honest and learned man [who] regards as surely probable an opinion that he has carefully examined, and which he believes to be true, or surely probable, for serious motives, when he judges it aside from all irregular passion.”⁸⁰

Such judgment was not only dispassionate; it was also the product of highly developed skills of moral and intellectual reasoning, which formed a central component of the Jesuit educational system.⁸¹ For, as elsewhere, rules cannot accommodate all ethical situations; wisdom born of knowledge and experience thus constitutes—according to this system—the engine of reason and the basis of a practical, aesthetic, and civic ideal.

Given the premium placed on acquired wisdom, it is fitting that after vowing purity of conscience, Jesuit students were asked “to keep firm and constant their resolution to apply themselves to their studies.”⁸² As the *Ratio* attests, the act of studying, of molding

⁷⁸ *The Nicomachean Ethics of Aristotle*, trans. R. W. Browne (London: George Bell and Sons, 1889), 36.

⁷⁹ John Higginbotham, *On Moral Obligation: A New Translation of Cicero’s De Officiis, with Introduction and Notes* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), 101.

⁸⁰ Paul Bert, Jean Pierre Gury, J. G. Settler, and Pierre Rousselot, *The Doctrine of the Jesuits* (Boston: B. F. Bradbury, 1880), 67.

⁸¹ See, for example, Maryks’s discussion of the lectures on Cases of Conscience as prescribed by the *Ratio Studiorum*. Robert Aleksander Maryks, *Saint Cicero and the Jesuits: The Influence of the Liberal Arts on the Adoption of Moral Probabilism* (Hampshire, England: Ashgate, 2008), 84–88.

⁸² *The Jesuit Ratio Studiorum of 1599*, trans. Farrell, 95.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 1: 265.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 1: 293.

the thinking mind, was not merely an intellectual pursuit; in its promise to produce citizens of wisdom and right judgment, it was also a moral, religious, and civic imperative of the Jesuit Catholic faith.

Leopold's rationalism is likewise inflected toward a greater civic ideal. In the dedicatory letter to Prince Siegmund Christoph Schratzenbach, Leopold associates the pedagogical aim of his *Versuch*—namely, the promotion of good taste in music—with the improvement of the citizenry and society as a whole:

How many young people, often endowed with the fairest gifts of Nature, would have grown to maturity, untended as the seedlings run wild in the forest, if your right fatherly help had not in good time brought them under the supervision of judicious persons for their upbringing? And how many would have had, in the increase of their years, to famish in want and poverty and to be a burden on the community as useless citizens of the world, if Your Grace had not graciously provided instruction in this or that path of knowledge, according to their talent and ability? Young people of both sexes and of all ranks can boast of this kindness: a kindness . . . which lives on in the memory of whole generations [for whom] the kindest of Princes grasped their great-grandfather by the arm and raised him to a position whereby through his knowledge he . . . was able to help his fellow citizens and after his death still to be useful to his descendants.

I may, therefore, surely venture to present to Your Grace in deepest loyalty, a book in which I have endeavoured, according to my poor powers, to pave a way for music-loving youth which shall guide them with certainty to good taste in music.⁸³

⁸³ “Wie viele junge Leute / welche oft die schönsten Natursgaben hatten / würden gleich den im Walde verwilderten Reisern unbesorgt aufgewachsen seyn; wenn Dero recht väterliche Hülfe sie nicht bey Zeiten unter die Aussicht vernünftiger Personen zur Erziehung gebracht hätte. Und wie viele müßten seiner Zeit bey dem Anwachse der Jahren vor Noth und

The taste and erudition to which Leopold so frequently alludes are acquired attributes that serve an intellectual, as well as greater civic and humanistic, agenda.

This agenda is also exhibited in Leopold's correspondence. In an admittedly obscure remark to Lorenz Hagenauer, Leopold refers to his having “transformed beasts into men,”⁸⁴ invoking a popular binary between instinctive/appetitive and cultivated/intellectual concepts of taste. The Comte de Buffon, Georges Louis Leclerc, was one of a number of eighteenth-century authors to give this binary fuller treatment:

The animals have only one mode for acquiring pleasure, the exercise of their sensations to gratify their desires. We also possess this faculty; but we are endowed with another source of pleasure, the exercise of the mind, the appetite of which is the desire of knowledge. . . . Uninterrupted passion is madness; and madness is the death of the soul.⁸⁵

Armuth darben / und als unnütze Weltbürger der Gemeinde zur Beschweruß seyn; wenn euer hochfürstl. Gnaden solche nicht nach dem Unterscheid ihres Talents und ihrer Geschicklichkeit in dieser oder jener Wissenschaft hätten gnädigst unterweisen lassen. Die Jugend beyderley Geschlechtes und von allen Ständen hat sich dieser Gnade zu rühmen: einer Gnade . . . durch ganze Geschlechtregister in lebendigem Andenken . . . der gütigste Fürst ihrem Urgroßvater unter die Arme gegriffen und ihn in den Stand gesetzt hätte durch seine erlernete Wissenschaft im Leben seinen Mitbürgern / und nach dem Tode auch noch seinen Nachfolgern nützlich zu seyn.

“Ich darf es demnach sicher wagen Euer hochfürstl. Gnaden ein Buch in tiefester Unterthänigkeit zu überreichen / in welchem ich mich nach meinen wenigen Kräften beflissen habe der Musikliebenden Jugend einen Weg zu bahnen / der sie ganz sicher nach dem guten Geschmacke in der Tonkunst führet.” Mozart, *Versuch*, “Zuschrift”; trans. Knocker, *Treatise*, 6.

⁸⁴ “habe . . . Bestien in Menschen verwandelt.” Bauer and Deutsch, eds., *Briefe und Aufzeichnungen*, 1: 260; trans. Anderson, *Letters*, 84.

⁸⁵ “Les animaux n'ont qu'un moyen d'avoir du plaisir, c'est d'exercer leur sentiment pour satisfaire leur

As this passage suggests, much was at stake in claims of good taste; for the cultivation of the intellect was tied to the suppression of the instinct's various appetites, wherein harbored madness and anarchy. The man of taste thus emblemized a civic ideal and a defense against an alternative—and, for many, frightening—social reality.

It may come as no surprise, then, that the frontispiece of Leopold's *Versuch* presents an engraved portrait of its author that melds the image of the artist to that of the eighteenth-century man of taste (Fig. 1). The distinction that comes with age is subtly conveyed in his hair, complexion, and noble, grave expression. His knowledge and skill are emphasized in both the compositions of various types, strewn about, and the violin in his hands (whose diminutive size elevates his own relative stature). Achievement and success are suggested by his gentleman's wardrobe and wig; and yet his presence—direct gaze, seated position, and partially unbuttoned vest—is unpretentious, unguarded, and direct. This image thus recommends the work that it introduces by portraying its author as a man of age, knowledge, and achievement; and the two aspects of taste—the aesthetic and the greater social/civic—merge into one mutually reinforcing characterization.

The Latin epigraph—playing, as it does, on the intersection between performative and social aspects of gesture—renders the portrait's meaning explicit: “Therefore it is

appétit: nous avons cette même faculté, & nous avons de plus un autre moyen de plaisir, c'est d'exercer notre esprit, dont l'appétit est de savoir. . . . Une passion sans intervalles est démence, & l'état de démence est pour l'ame un état de mort.” M. Le Comte de Buffon, *Histoire naturelle, générale et particulière*, Nouvelle Éd., Tome Premier (Lausanne: J. P. Heubach, 1784), 48–49; trans. William Smellie as *Natural History, General and Particular, by the Count de Buffon*, 9 vols. (London: A. Strahan and T. Cadell, 1791), 3: 242–43.

appropriate that there is neither conspicuous charm nor indecency in gesture, lest we appear to be either actors or people who work for hire.”⁸⁶

All of this evidence points to a concept of taste that incorporated aesthetic, cultural, and even political dimensions; the cultivation of taste went hand in hand with the cultivation of a society of virtuous, industrious, and upright citizens.



Figure 1. Leopold Mozart (1719–87), engraving by Jakob Andreas Friedrich, after Matthias Gottfried Eichler, 1756. Frontispiece to Leopold's *Versuch*. Public domain, accessed September 26, 2017, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=4138760>.

Moderation as a Tenet of Taste

Nowhere does the influence of Ciceronian humanism surface more prominently than in Leopold's frequent references to moderation. For Leopold, good taste seeks the “middle

⁸⁶ “Convenit igitur . . . in gestu nec venustatem conspicuam nec turpitudinem esse, ne aut histriones aut operarii videamur esse.”

ground” in nearly all performance situations. Of the trill that cues the end of a cadenza, for example, Leopold argues that

there is nothing in worse taste than in a cadenza, where one is not tied to strict time, to break off the trill so abruptly and unexpectedly that the ears of the listeners are more offended than entertained. . . . Therefore the middle road must be chosen, and a trill must be made which comes closest to good taste.⁸⁷

In his discussion of tempo indications, Leopold’s allegiance to the middle ground reaches almost comic proportions. Admittedly, performance indications referred as much to the character of a piece as to its tempo; however, where tempo was a factor, other theorists permitted a variety that Leopold denied in the service of “the middle ground.” Though it is fitting that *moderato* should indicate a tempo “neither too fast nor too slow,”⁸⁸ *vivace*, *spiritoso*, and *animoso* also suggest “the mean between quick and slow,”⁸⁹ and *tempo commodo* and *tempo giusto* likewise “tell us that we must play it neither too fast nor too slowly, but in a proper, convenient, and

natural tempo.”⁹⁰ Even *allegro* suggests to Leopold a “cheerful, though not too hurried tempo.”⁹¹

This last passage hints at the larger aesthetic-ethical compass of moderation, which condemns hurrying, exaggeration, and inconsistency—markers of the irrationality and untempered passion that good taste (and good conduct) condemn. With respect to overdoting, Leopold would thus have the performer err on the side of restraint, holding the dot “rather too long than too briefly. In this manner hurrying is avoided and good taste promoted.”⁹²

Consistency—which moderates impulsivity—is likewise incorporated into Leopold’s humanistic concept of taste. Of ensemble playing, he writes: “Many who have no idea of taste never retain the evenness of tempo in the accompanying of a concerto part, but endeavour always to follow the solo-part.”⁹³ And of bowing a given passage, he writes that “not a little is added to evenness and purity of tone if you know how to fit much into one bow. Yea, it goes against nature if you are constantly interrupting and changing. . . . one must always approximate to nature as nearly as possible.”⁹⁴

⁸⁷ The full passage reads: “Es ist auch nichts abgeschmackters, als wenn bey einer Cadenze, wo man an das Zeitmaaß nicht gebunden ist, der Triller so schnell und unerwart abgebrochen wird, daß die Ohren der Zuhörer mehr beleidiget als belustiget werden. Es wird in solchem Falle dem Gehör etwas entrissen; und man bleibt eben deßwegen unvergnügt, weil man noch eine längere Aushaltung erwartet hat: gleichwie es den Zuhörern gewiß ungemeyn hart fällt, wenn sie den Mangel des Athems an einem Singer bemerken. Doch ist auch nichts lächerlicheres, als ein über die Maase langer Triller. Man gehe demnach den mittlern Weeg, und mache einen solchen Triller, welcher dem guten Geschmacke am nächsten kömmt.” Mozart, *Versuch*, 221–22; trans. Knocker, *Treatise*, 190.

⁸⁸ “nicht zu geschwind und nicht zu langsam.” Mozart, *Versuch*, 49; trans. Knocker, *Treatise*, 50.

⁸⁹ “das Mittel zwischen dem Geschwinden und Langsamen.” *Ibid.*

⁹⁰ “sagen uns daß wir das Stück weder zu geschwind weder zu langsam, sondern in dem eigentlichen, gelegenen und natürlichen Tempo spielen solen.” Mozart, *Versuch*, 49; trans. Knocker, *Treatise*, 50.

⁹¹ “ein lustiges, doch ein nicht übereiltes Tempo.” Mozart, *Versuch*, 48; trans. Knocker, *Treatise*, 50.

⁹² “eher zu lang als zu kurz halten. Dadurch wird dem Eilen vorgebogen; und der gute Geschmack wird befördert.” Leopold Mozart, *Versuch*, 145; trans. Knocker, *Treatise*, 130.

⁹³ “Viele, die von dem Geschmacke keinen Begriff haben, wollen bey dem Accompagnement einer concertirenden Stimme niemals bey der Gleichheit des Tactes bleiben; sondern sie bemühen sich immer der Hauptstimme nachzugeben.” Mozart, *Versuch*, 262; trans. Knocker, *Treatise*, 223.

⁹⁴ “Zur Gleichheit und Reinigkeit des Tones trägt auch nicht wenig bey, wenn man vieles in einem

As Leopold repeatedly emphasizes, the performer who takes nature as his model and reason as his guide thus embodies the virtues of moderation—consistency, control, and restraint—and imbues his music with the good taste that they impart. Such virtues are to be lauded where they are found—as in Michael Haydn’s *Hieronymus* Mass in C Major, which “flows along naturally . . . the themes being most natural and without any exaggerated progressions or too sudden modulations”⁹⁵—and condemned where they are found to be lacking, as with the violinist of poor taste, who piles appoggiaturas one on another, toward an effect that “can surely never sound natural but only exaggerated and confused.”⁹⁶

Leopold’s aesthetic ideal of moderation casts him—in this regard, at least—as the consummate neoclassicist. Cicero identified moderation with the beauty, consistency, and order that are the virtues of his ideal humanistic society.⁹⁷ Cicero was not alone

Bogenstriche weis anzubringen. Ja es läuft wider das Natürliche, wenn man immer absetzet und ändert. Ein Singer der bey ieder kleinen Figur absetzen, Athem holen, und bald diese bald jene Note besonder vortragen wollte, würde unfehlbar jedermann zum Lachen bewegen. Die menschliche Stimme ziehet sich ganz ungezwungen von einem Tone in den andern; und ein vernünftiger Singer wird niemaal einen Absatz machen, wenn es nicht eine besondere Ausdrückung, oder die Abschnitte und Einschnitte erfordern. Und wer weis denn nicht, daß die Singmusik allezeit das Augenwerk aller Instrumentisten seyn soll: weil man sich in allen Stücken dem Natürlichen, so viel es immer möglich ist, nähern muß?” Mozart, *Versuch*, 107–08; trans. Knocker, *Treatise*, 101–02.

⁹⁵ “Es geht alles natürlich fort . . . die themata natürlich, und keine übertriebene modulation oder zu gähe Ausweichung angebracht.” Bauer and Deutsch, eds., *Briefe und Aufzeichnungen*, 2: 96; trans. Anderson, *Letters*, 352.

⁹⁶ “nimmer natürlich, sondern schon übertrieben und verwirret läßt.” Mozart, *Versuch*, 195; trans. Knocker, *Treatise*, 168.

⁹⁷ Higginbotham, *On Moral Obligation*, 43; M. T. Cicero, in a letter to his brother Quintus, upon the

among the ancients in promoting moderation; on the contrary, he owed his own debt to Aristotle, whose definition of stylistic excellence likewise seeks a balance between verbosity and curtness, banality and excess.⁹⁸

Taste and the Classical Virtues of Style

Moderation is further suggested in the canonical four virtues of style, which grew out of Aristotle’s definition of stylistic excellence and emerged as a central feature of classical aesthetics. The four virtues—correctness, clarity, ornamentation, and propriety—emerge in Leopold’s writings as a self-moderating system organized around two opposing dyads: clarity and ornamentation, on the one hand, and correctness and propriety, on the other.

It is no coincidence that Leopold’s concept of taste incorporates these four virtues, for they comprise the foundation of ancient Roman aesthetics and further articulate the interdependence of ethical and aesthetic dimensions, so central to the Jesuit educational ideal.

Clarity and Ornamentation

In classical aesthetics, oratorical ethics provided a needed defense against the charges associated with *moving* a listener to persuasion. Indeed, the targeting of emotions and impulses was at the root of much criticism directed toward rhetoric from antiquity through the

duties of a magistrate, in M. T. Cicero, *his Offices, or his Treatise concerning The Moral Duties of Mankind, his Cato Major, concerning The Means of Making Old Age Happy, his Laelius, concerning Friendship, his Moral Paradoxes, The Vision of Scipio, concerning A Future State, his Letter concerning The Duties of a Magistrate*, trans. William Guthrie (London: T. Waller, 1755), 378.

⁹⁸ Aristotle’s *Treatise on Rhetoric*, 3: 12,6; trans. Theodore Buckley (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1857), 248–49.

eighteenth century. This is why Cicero, for one, was so intent on grounding the orator's persuasive efforts in deep moral and intellectual conviction. Oratory was not to be mere manipulation, for "it is impossible for the listener to feel indignation, hatred or ill will, to be terrified of anything, or reduced to tears of compassion, unless all those emotions which the advocate would inspire in the arbitrator are visibly stamped or rather branded on the advocate himself."⁹⁹

Sincerity thus marked the difference between communicative and manipulative forms of expression. Communication rests on genuine shared experience, while manipulation reduces the speaker's expressive vocabulary to tools and tricks—tricks "that leave speeches so muddled up" and "inverted that there is no head or tail to them."¹⁰⁰ Through such means, "oratory, the proper function of which is to throw light on the facts, only contributes additional darkness."¹⁰¹

One of Leopold's most striking charges of trickery concerns not music but fashion. He writes,

I really cannot tell you whether the women in Paris are fair; for they are painted so unnaturally, like the dolls of Berchtesgaden, that even a naturally beautiful woman on account of this detestable make-up is unbearable to the eyes of an honest German.¹⁰²

⁹⁹ Ibid., 1: 335.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 3: 41.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² "Ob die Frauenzimmer in Paris schön sind, kañ ich ihnen mit Grund nicht sagen; deñ sie sind wider alle Natur, wie die Berchtesgadner Docken, so gemahlt, daß auch eine von Natur schöne Person durch diese garstige Zierlichkeit den augen eines ehrlichen Deutschen unerträglich wird." Bauer and Deutsch, eds., *Briefe und Aufzeichnungen*, 1: 121; trans. Anderson, *Letters*, 33–34. Wood carvers in eighteenth-century Berchtesgaden made fashionable dolls, doll beds, and other wooden toys.

In invoking honesty, Leopold articulates the Ciceronian line between persuasion and deception that informs not only his taste in fashion but in music as well. Indeed, the deception that he perceives in *la mode* of Parisian fashion is nothing short of criminal when applied to music:

Many imagine themselves to have brought something wonderfully beautiful into the world if they befill the notes of an Adagio Cantabile thoroughly, and make out of one note a couple of dozen. Such note-murderers expose thereby their bad judgment to the light, and tremble when they have to sustain a long note or play only a few notes singingly, without inserting their usual preposterous and laughable frippery.¹⁰³

Such frippery cannot compete with the pure and clear sentiment expressed in, for example, a "beautiful" beggars' duet in fifths.¹⁰⁴ For Leopold, as for his classical exemplars, clarity is the primary defense against and antidote to the potential abuse of the persuasive arts, abuse that reduces their communicative properties to manipulation and deceit.

However, neither oratory nor music aims solely to communicate; both art forms speak above all to the passions in order to *move* the listener to persuasion. Clarity, which is primarily intellectual, must therefore be complemented by the judicious use of ornamentation. Ornamentation comprises the expressive core of music, thereby elevating

¹⁰³ "Manche meynen was sie wunderschönes auf die Welt bringen, wenn sie in einem Adagio Cantabile die Noten rechtschaffen verkräuseln, und aus einer Note ein paar dutzend machen. Solche Notenwürger legen dadurch ihre schlechte Beurtheilungskraft zu Tage, und zittern, wenn sie eine lange Note aushalten oder nur ein paar Noten singbar abspielen sollten, ohne ihr angewöhntes, ungereimtes und lächerliches Fick Fack einzumischen." Mozart, *Versuch*, 50, note *p*; trans. Knocker, *Treatise*, 51, note 1.

¹⁰⁴ "schönes." Bauer and Deutsch, eds., *Briefe und Aufzeichnungen*, 1: 407; trans. Anderson, *Letters*, 173.

communication to art. Leopold defines the “common sense” required to execute proper embellishments by virtue of its absence:

They play without method and without expression: *piano* and *forte* are not differentiated; the embellishments are in the wrong place, too overloaded, and mostly played in a confused manner; or often the notes are far too bare and one observes that the player knows not what he should do.¹⁰⁵

For Leopold, the tasteful performance of a piece depended on the judicious use of expressive effects, in adherence to the expressive properties of the piece at hand and with an aim to move the hearer.

Correctness and Propriety

Correctness is quickly dispensed with in Cicero’s discussion of the virtues of style, for this is the province of rules and is therefore easily “conveyed by books and by elementary education.”¹⁰⁶

Propriety, by contrast—elsewhere expressed as “appropriateness” and “suitability”¹⁰⁷—defines oratory as fluid and therefore demands greater explication. Propriety relativizes correctness, for this virtue demands that style be appropriate to content and context. Although there is a place for the simplicity of the “popular style,” its use should be appropriate to the subject matter. Leopold thus admonishes his son,

Perhaps you will get a contract to compose one [a German opera]. If you do, you know

¹⁰⁵ “Sie spielen ohne Ordnung, und ohne Ausdruck; das Schwache und Starck wird nicht unterschieden; die Auszierungen sind am unrechten Orte, zu überhäuft, und meistens verwirret angebracht; manchmal aber sind die Noten gar zu leer, und man merket daß der Spielende nicht weiß, was er thun solle.” Mozart, *Versuch*, 253; trans. Knocker, *Treatise*, 215–16.

¹⁰⁶ Cicero, *De oratore*, 2: 31.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 2: 43.

that I need not urge you to imitate the natural and popular style, which everyone easily understands. The grand and sublime style is suited to grand subjects. Everything in its place.¹⁰⁸

This is not to say that Leopold’s emphasis on the “popular style” was always aesthetically motivated, for he further recognized the potential for “light” music to appeal to a wide audience. Even with light music, however, the master distinguishes himself by creating a work that interests and pleases the connoisseur without alienating the *Liebhaber* (amateur):

Do you imagine that you would be doing work unworthy of you? If so, you are very much mistaken. Did [Johann Christian] Bach, when he was in London, ever publish anything but similar trifles? What is light can still be great, if it is written in a natural, flowing, and easy style—and at the same time bears the marks of sound composition. Such works are more difficult to compose than all those harmonic progressions, which the majority of people cannot fathom, or pieces which have pleasing melodies, but which are difficult to perform. Did Bach lower himself by such work? Not at all. Good composition, sound construction, *son*—these distinguish the master from the bungler—even in trifles.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁸ “vielleicht bekommst Du eine zu machen? Sollte es geschehen, so weist Du ohne dem, daß ich Dir das natürliche, für jedermann leicht fassliche Populare nicht erst recommandieren darf; das grosse, erhabene gehört zu grossen Sachen. alles hat seinen Platz.” Bauer and Deutsch, eds., *Briefe und Aufzeichnungen*, 2: 99; trans. Anderson, *Letters*, 354.

¹⁰⁹ “glaubst Du Dich vielleicht durch solche Sachen herunter zu setzen?—keineswegs! hat dann [Johann Christian] Bach in London jemals etwas anders, als derley Kleinigkeiten herausgegeben? Das kleine ist groß, wenn es natürlich-flüssend und leicht geschrieben und gründlich gesetzt ist. Es so zu machen ist schwerer als alle die den meisten unverständlichen künstlichen Harmonischen progressionen, und schwer auszuführenden Melodyen. hat sich Bach dadurch heruntersetzt?—keines wegs! Der gute Satz, und die ordnung, il filo—dieses unterscheidet den Meister vom

As this passage testifies, propriety demands consideration of both the nature of the work and the given audience's taste. However, these two points of reference (namely, the audience and the work itself) are not always compatible; the tensions between them identify taste as Janus-faced: fluid and dialogic, on the one hand, and fixed and unyielding, on the other. As befits his neoclassical orientation, Leopold reconciles this contradiction seamlessly: the successful composer yields to his audience's taste ultimately as means to elevate that audience to a higher standard—in art and in life.

Humanism denotes not only an engagement with humanistic studies but, further, a belief in the power of those studies to engender certain cultural values.¹¹⁰ This is why the Society of Jesus placed such a high premium on classical learning; as I have suggested, Ciceronian classicism was seen to provide an intellectual and aesthetic complement to the ethical and religious teachings of the Jesuit faith, thus producing scholars of intellect, wisdom, faith, and moral uprightness.

Wisdom, morality, and faith were the three central tenets of the Jesuit educational ideal, and classical texts were viewed as one important resource for achieving it. I argue that Leopold was influenced by his classical studies, as his aesthetic concept of taste incorporates the principles and values therein.

It is no coincidence that these aesthetic values analogize with ethical ones. The Society of Jesus was an outward-facing religion, whose emphasis on classical learning served a

broad civic agenda. Leopold's aesthetic ideal of good taste, which emphasizes wisdom, uprightness, moderation, clarity, propriety, correctness, and expressive ornamentation, defines him as a humanist and, in the process, marks a further point of contact and complementarity between the rationalistic Enlightenment and the Christian faith.

Stümper auch in Kleinigkeiten." Ludwig Schiedermair, *Die Briefe W. A. Mozarts und seiner Familie* (Munich: G. Müller, 1914), 4: 68–69; trans. Anderson, *Letters*, 599.

¹¹⁰ Jill Kraye, ed., *Cambridge Companion to Renaissance Humanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 1.