Beethoven's Sonatas Op. 31: Creative Process, Formal Structures and Performance

Istituto per la Musica
fondazione Giorgio Cini onlus

Edited by Gianmario Borio

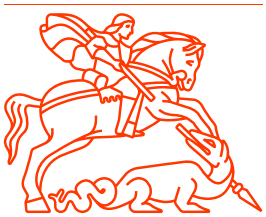
Istituto per la Musica
ISBN 9788896445280

Cover image: Beethoven at the piano, lithograph by Leonid Osipovich Pasternak after his own drawing, Beethoven-Haus, Bonn, B 1189

Beethoven's Sonatas Op. 31: Creative Process, Formal Structures and Performance

Edited by Gianmario Borio

Istituto per la Musica



fondazione Giorgio Cini onlus

Table of Contents

Preface
Gianmario Borio

Already described at the time of their publication and first performances as works of 'grand style', the three piano sonatas Op. 31 showed major departures from the formal models that Beethoven himself had helped to consolidate. Carl Czerny considered them to be important examples of the 'new way' which the composer suggested was necessary for his artistic development. The fact that they were composed around the same time as his Third Symphony (*Eroica*) and the 'Testament of Heiligenstadt' further underscores their significance. The unusual structure of the themes and the ambiguity of the formal functions, clearly emerging in the second sonata (*The Tempest*), attest to a willingness to experiment which set almost insurmountable challenges for generations of performers and music theorists.

The present volume originated from a workshop organized by the Institute of Music at the Fondazione Giorgio Cini, programmed for Beethoven's 250th anniversary; this initiative had to be postponed for one year following the restrictions caused by the pandemic and finally took place on the 15th-17th December 2021. The goal of this project was to obtain a deeper knowledge of a tryptic that represents a milestone in the development of Beethoven's compositional technique and aesthetic vision. To achieve it we embarked on an investigation from multiple perspectives, involving several areas of musicological research: assessments of music theory, the sources of the creative process, the performance history, and the changing attitudes of the audience. Moreover, we considered a dialectic between historical research and performance practice to be crucial for such a multifaceted approach; a refinement in the definition of the key questions can be produced more successfully through an observation of their sonic appearance and a discussion with performers. Andreas Staier masterfully conducted the phases of artistic research, leading a selected group of young performers who played excerpts of the sonatas on a fortepiano built by

Mathias Jakesch (Vienna, around 1823) and on a Fazioli grand piano, both held by the Fondazione Giorgio Cini.

This joint effort during the workshop formed a solid basis for the following stages of our work. The book's content reflects not only the subdivision of the tasks among the authors, but also the plurality of approaches and research methods which stems from their different backgrounds and experiences. This variety – which is sometimes manifested in the different use of a term or in the changing interpretations of a formal unit – has been safeguarded in order to offer to the readers alternative explanations of a certain passage or a number of plausible solutions for a given problem. Complex issues of the compositional technique may not have a single indisputable interpretation; such an oscillation of meaning can be considered a stimulus for the performing project of the players rather than a deterring factor for the understanding of the piece. Excellent compositions are often fields of forces which can be modulated in different directions, without breaking the kernel of their internal coherence.

I wish to thank all who collaborated in the realization of this book: the authors of the chapters, Maestro Staier, Samantha Stout for her accurate copy reading, Giacomo Franchi and Tommaso Maggiolo for the editorial finalization.

In Search of the Quintessential Op. 31

Janet Schmalfeldt

Whatever one might want to say about the three piano sonatas published by Beethoven under a single opus number for the last time, I trust we can agree that the essays on Op. 31 collected in this volume celebrate movements of astonishing novelty. Without diminishing the achievements of Beethoven's earlier keyboard works, the Op. 31 sonatas seem to have made a quantum leap forward in the domains of formal innovation and experimentation. Paradoxically, those qualities might be the features that most strikingly unite the three sonatas in face of their great variety. Do the sonatas share other common threads, ones that would warrant regarding the group as a 'triptych' in the strenuous sense of the term? This is the question I address.

We might begin by noting that the question has rarely been raised in reference to the earlier piano opuses that contain multiple sonatas – the Op. 2, Op. 10, Op. 14, and Op. 49 sets (Op. 49 was probably completed by 1797). The two sonatas Op. 27, from 1801, provide an exception; the composer's title, *sonata quasi una fantasia*, given to both sonatas, exhorts us to consider the interplay of two distinct genres – fantasy and sonata – as a unique feature that connects the two works. Of the piano sonatas, only the singleton *Pastoral* Sonata, Op. 28, from the same year, comes between the Op. 27 set and Op. 31, composed in Heiligenstadt in 1802. It thus behooves us to ask whether Beethoven further pursued elements of integration and continuity in his approach to Op. 31.

The well-known and much discussed hearsay that Beethoven announced his determination to take a 'new path' (*ein neuer Weg*) around this time invites the speculation that that path, whatever it was, might be traced within the three sonatas, as evidence of their relationships with one another. Carl Czerny, reporting as late as in 1842, 'remembers' the composer's comment to his violinist friend, Wenzel Krumpholz, 'around 1803': 'I am not satisfied with the works I have writ-

ten so far. From now on I will take a new path'.[1] Considering its lapse in time, Czerny's remembrance should probably be taken with a measure of caution. Beethoven himself wrote to Breitkopf and Härtel in 1802 that he had composed his new sets of variations, Opp. 34 and 35, 'in quite a new manner [*auf eine wirklich ganz neue Manier*], and each in a separate and different way'.[2] This comment is fully warranted by the novel nature of both variation sets, and it lends some credence to Czerny's reminiscence, but it hasn't dispelled skepticism.

Both the American William Kinderman[3] and the British Timothy Jones[4] have proposed that 'the new path' was not entirely new. For Jones, 'it is possible to view the innovative aspects of Op. 27 and Op. 31 as an unprecedented focusing of several features of Beethoven's style that had been emerging gradually during the 1790s'; amongst those features, Jones observes 'an increased element of fantasy'; large-scale forms that are 'shaped [...] by the idiosyncrasies of their unique contents'; 'the use of recurrent unifying ideas from movement to movement'; and 'the substitution of organic processes for mechanical ones', as suggested by Douglas Johnson.[5] The American theorist James Hepokoski takes a sharply critical stand on Carl Dahlhaus's processual analysis of a 'new path' in the *Tempest* Sonata: Hepokoski regards this as 'more a declaration of cultural solidarity with a long line of Austro-Germanic writers and high-modernist twentieth-century composers than it is an analysis *per se*'.[6] (Hepokoski is clearly referring to Dahlhaus's involvement with the music of Arnold Schoenberg. I shall turn to Dahlhaus's views below.)

The idea that *novelty – innovation* – is what gives coherence to the Op. 31 set has often been demonstrated through drawing attention to the 'highly characteristic openings of each sonata'.[7] For Lewis Lockwood, 'the openings of all three speak a new language';[8] for Jones, 'each sonata begins with an unstable opening,

---

1 'Ich bin nur wenig zufrieden mit meinen bisherigen Arbeiten. Von heute an will ich einen neuen Weg einschlagern'. Beethoven to Wenzel Krumpholz, as reported in Carl Czerny, *Erinnerungen aus meinem Leben* [1842], ed. by Walter Kolneder, P.H. Heitz, Strasbourg, 1968.

2 Beethoven to Breitkopf and Härtel, October 1802, concerning his Variations Opp. 34 and 35. *The Letters of Beethoven*, vol. 1, collected, trans., and ed. by Emily Anderson, Macmillan, London, 1961, p. 76.

3 William Kinderman, *Beethoven*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1995, p. 51.

4 Timothy Jones, *Beethoven: The 'Moonlight' and Other Sonatas, Op. 27 and Op. 31*, Music Handbooks, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1999.

5 *Ibid*., p. 15; Douglas Johnson, '1794-1795: Decisive Years in Beethoven's Early Development', in *Beethoven Studies III,* ed. by Alan Tyson, Cambridge University Press, 1982, pp. 1-28: 27.

6 James Hepokoski, 'Approaching the First Movement of Beethoven's *Tempest* Sonata through Sonata Theory', in *Beethoven's 'Tempest' Sonata: Perspectives of Analysis and Performance*, co-ed. by Pieter Bergé, Jeroen D'hoe, and William E. Caplin, Leuven Studies in Musicology, Peeters, Leuven – Walpole, MA, 2009, p. 186.

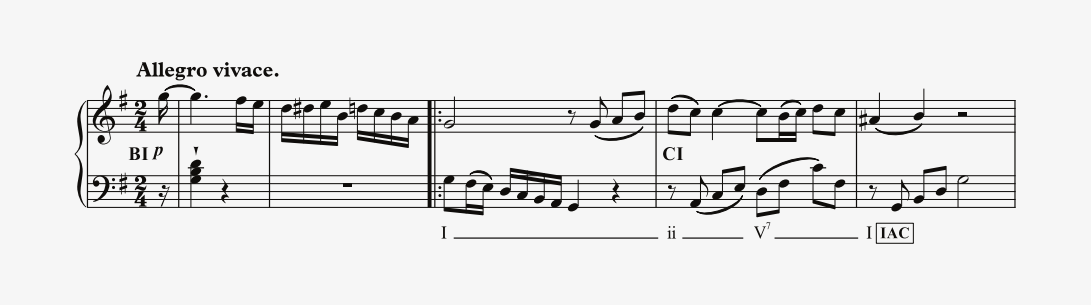
7 Scott Burnham, 'Reading Between the Lines: Hugo Riemann and Beethoven's Op. 31 Piano Sonatas', in *The Oxford Handbook of Neo-Riemannian Music Theories*, ed. by Edward Gollin and Alexander Rehding, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2011.

8 Lewis Lockwood, *Beethoven: The Music and the Life*, W. W. Norton, New York, 2003, p. 137.

whose implications profoundly affect the subsequent discourse'.[9] The outcome, for these and other authors, including me, is that especially the first movements of the Op. 31 group point to a real change in Beethoven's approach to form, on both the local and large-scale levels.

Let us consider *what might have been composed* for the opening of each sonata, within the context of a relatively conventional classical style; then we shall compare this with a consideration of what Beethoven actually composed.

I begin with Op. 31 No. 1 in G major. Example 1 shows a 'recomposed' – or shall we say, 'decomposed'? – opening for its first movement.



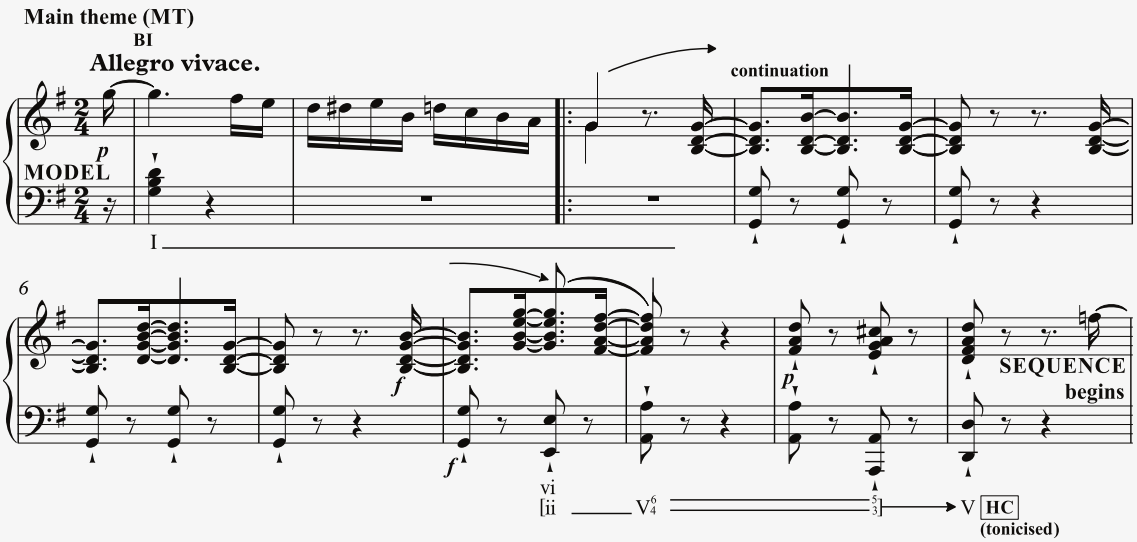
Example 1: Op. 31 No. 1, i, opening: 'recomposition'[10]

I mostly adopt Beethoven's own initial, basic idea (BI), but I extend its irregular 3-bar length to a more traditional 4 bars. I then proceed to a contrasting idea (CI), one that invokes the gentle lyricism of an earlier style and closes the regular 8-bar phrase with an imperfect authentic cadence (IAC).

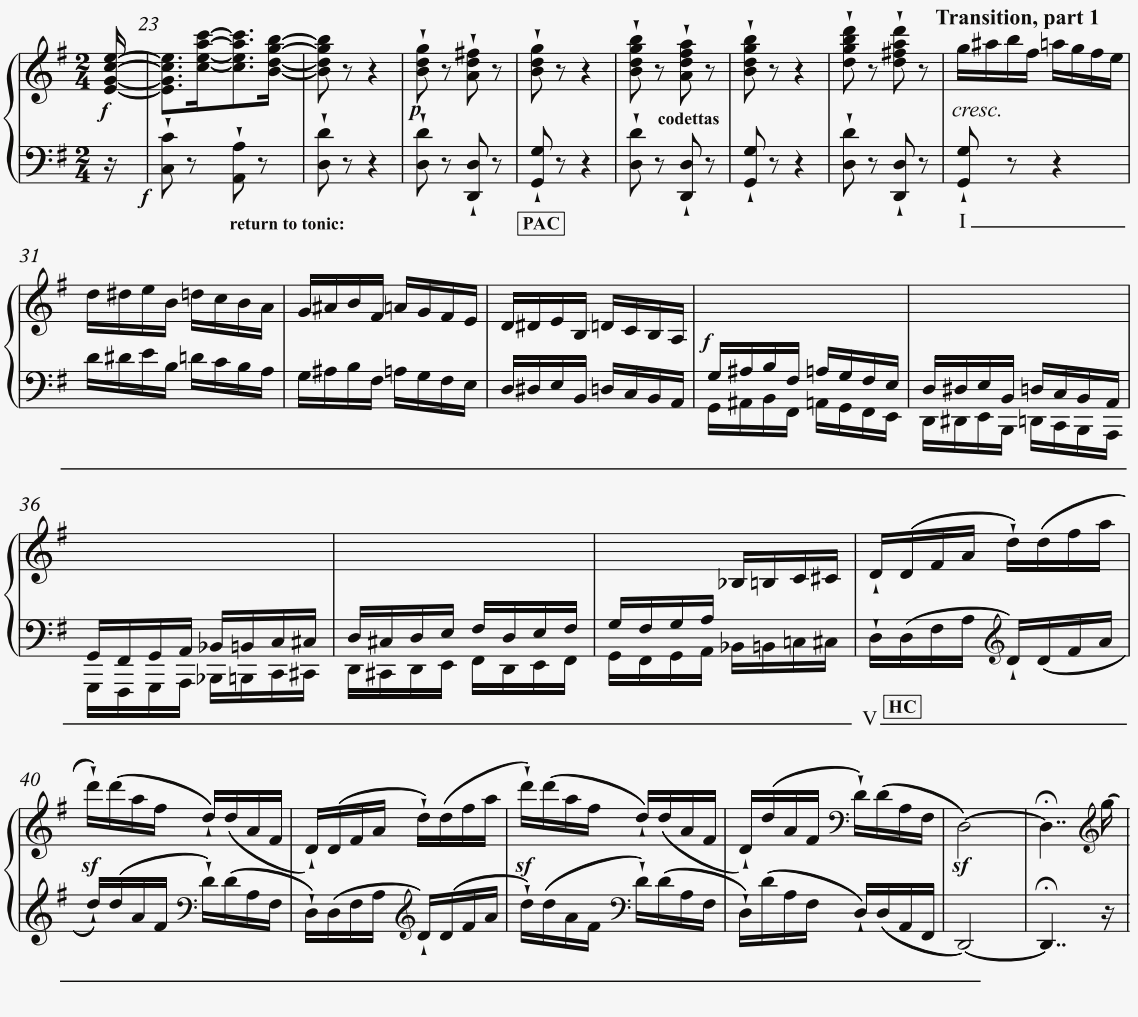
Here now is Beethoven's own, impulsive opening phrase (Example 2a). His initial idea is very much about *closure* – a rapid scalar descent from the stable scale-degree $\hat{8}$ to the ultra-stable $\hat{1}$, with just one detour on the way, an intrusive but seemingly insignificant little figure that delays arrival on the goal. Having opened with a closing gesture, the composer now proceeds with an expansive opening-up – of texture, register, dynamic contrast, and harmony. Provocative silences separate fragments as gestures; his 8-bar continuation ascends through a tonic arpeggiation and ends with a tonicised half cadence (HC). Most notably, until the cadential progression begins, the passage features a highly quirky reversal of typical relations between the pianist's right and left hands: the chords of the right hand jerk ahead of the bass – a comic stutter, if you will!

9 Jones, *Beethoven*, p. 92.

10 I am indebted to Eric Elder, candidate at the time of this writing for the degree of PhD in musicology (music theory and analysis) at Brandeis University, for the engraving of this and all other music examples in my article.

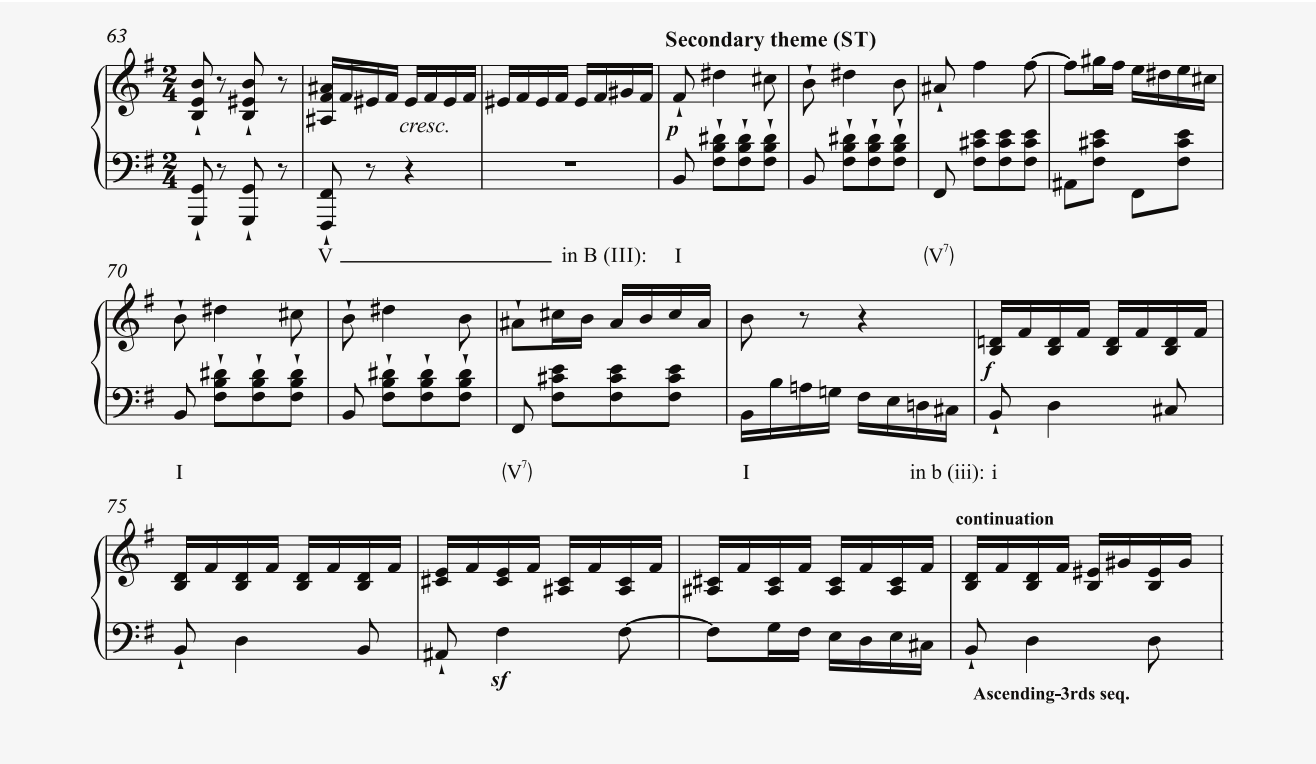


Example 2a: Op. 31 No. 1, i, opening, bars 1-11



Example 2b: Op. 31 No. 1, i, bars 23-45

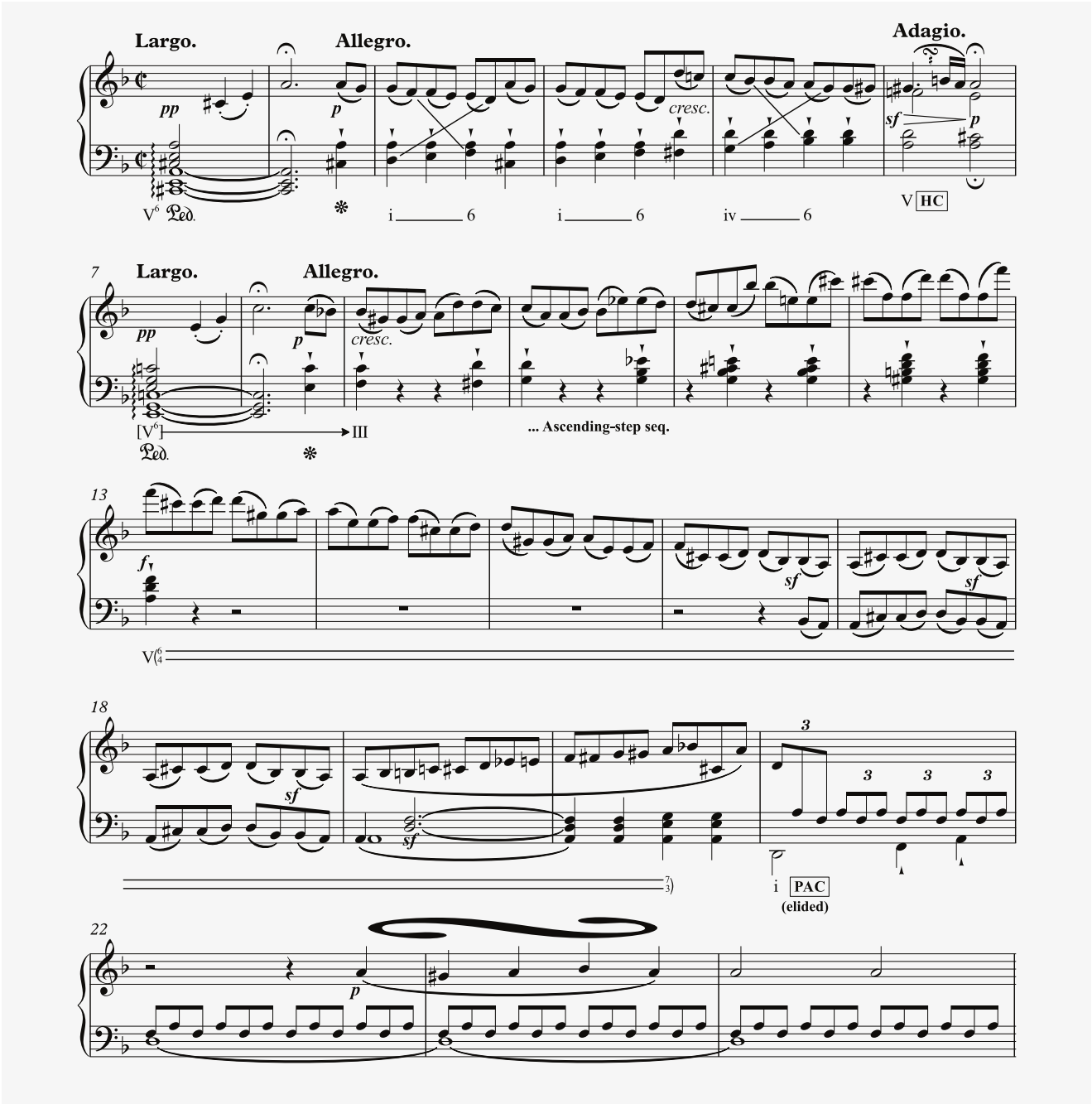
The sequence that follows, in flat-VII (F major), no less (not shown), looks ahead to the opening of the *Waldstein* Sonata, as many have noted; the half-cadential closure in flat-VII (at bar 22) necessitates a hasty return to a cadence in the home key and two abrupt codettas for reinforcement. Now, the tricky little delaying figure from bar 2 takes over, in an effort to effect a transition; but it reaches only what is colloquially called a 'standing on the dominant' (*Stehen auf der Dominante*) in the home key (the term is Erwin Ratz's), as shown at Example 2b. It will take a second effort – *a transition, part 2* (bars 46-65) – to reach the dominant of a new key, and now we hear the first of several innovative incursions into new chromatic mediants in the Op. 31 set: here, the *contradanse* of the secondary theme (ST) will feature a mixture of the major mediant (B: III) and the minor mediant (b: iii).



Example 2c: Op. 31 No. 1, i, bars 63-78

In symmetric relation to the home key of G, the recapitulation of this ST will at first appear in the *sub*mediant major, the key of E – a later Schubertian technique that was new for Beethoven in 1802. Finally, and unlike those of any of the earlier first-movement sonata forms for piano, the composer's witty, idiosyncratic opening idea announces the beginnings of all of the following sections: the transition, part 2, the development section, the recapitulation (of course), and the coda. To say the least, that gesture puts its unforgettable stamp on the movement.

I move now to the opening of the *Tempest* Sonata, Op. 31 No. 2. About this work, Hans-Joachim Hinrichsen has written: 'There is so much commentary literature [...] that it is hardly possible to mention even the most important authors'.[11]



Example 3: Op. 31 No. 2, i, opening: bars 1-24

11 Hans-Joachim Hinrichsen, '"Quasi una fantasia?" The Legacy of Improvisational Practice in Ludwig van Beethoven's Piano Sonatas', in *Musical Improvisation and Open Forms in the Age of Beethoven*, ed. by Gianmario Borio and Angela Corone, Routledge, Abingdon, 2018, p. 165.

This overflow of interest in the *Tempest* may have been prompted in part by two of its unusual details: for the first time ever in his piano works, Beethoven opens his sonata with a dominant-6th chord; and, for the very first time, he immediately juxtaposes an idea marked Largo with a phrase labeled Allegro.

As the Largo idea reaches its fermata, experienced 'first-time' listeners without a score cannot be certain about either the key or the mode of the movement; how would they know what to expect next? Like the fermata in bar 2, the one at the Adagio in bar 6 invites us to participate in the formal process, by giving us time to wonder what will happen next. Here are several possibilities:

a. on its own, the opening Largo idea might suggest the beginning of a slow movement, comparable to the Adagio first movement of Mozart's E flat Sonata, K. 282 (1774);
b. the Largo could be directly followed by the perfect authentic cadence (PAC) at bar 21 and the passage that follows; in this way the Largo would become a very short thematic introduction (note that an immediate connection between the low C sharp in the bass at bars 1-2 and the low D-natural in bars 21-22 would be achieved; note as well the unambiguous motivic connection);
c. if the Largo-Allegro-Adagio pattern at bars 1-6 were followed directly with the passage at bars 21*ff*, a more expanded introduction would be at hand;
d. and, finally, a longer introduction would emerge if the Largo were to be directly followed by an improvised recitative, with the opening rolled 6th-chord inviting an imaginary 'singer' to enter. As is well known, this actually happens at the beginning of the recapitulation.

With these four 'recompositions', I transform the opening of the movement into what I think we might hear as an introduction: each example is a bit longer, but in all cases the home dominant would be prolonged as a preparation for the first strong arrival on a structural tonic at bar 21, as if at this point the main theme (MT) of the movement proper will begin.

But we know that what Beethoven actually composed is quite another story. Instead, he gives a sequence to his opening 6-bar unit, in the mediant (F major); then his Allegro strives upwards to its apex – the high F natural – and elicits a *fantasia*-like cadenza that prolongs the cadential 6/4 chord, descends tumultuously, and reaches the elided PAC at bar 21. In the passage that follows, we will leave the home key.

Some readers will know that I am amongst those who have flooded the literature with commentary about the first movement of the *Tempest*. In an article from 1995, and then in a much expanded version that became the point of departure for a book in 2011, I introduced the notion of a 'Beethoven-Hegelian tradition' – a long-standing tradition in which Hegelian concepts have been brought to bear

on the music of Beethoven.[12] With precursors in E. T. A. Hoffmann's monumental 1810 essay on Beethoven's Fifth Symphony and in the writings of the Hegelian-influenced theorist Adolph Bernard Marx, the leading guardians of the tradition in the twentieth century have been the post-Hegelian dialecticians Theodor W. Adorno and Carl Dahlhaus. Dahlhaus took every opportunity to write about the opening of the *Tempest* as exemplary of the Hegelian concept of '*becoming*' and of the idea of '*form as process*' in the music of Beethoven, beginning around 1802. My work critically examines Dahlhaus's ideas, placing these in contact with the voice-leading principles of Heinrich Schenker and with recent writings about classical formal functions in the work of William E. Caplin.

The crux of the matter about the *Tempest* for Dahlhaus is the argument about whether the beginning of the movement should be heard as an introduction or as the exposition of a (main) theme; after all, the passage beginning at bar 21 provides the more substantial version of the initial Largo idea, but it also serves the modulatory function of a transition. In a characteristically Hegelian formulation, Dahlhaus claims that the beginning of the movement is *not yet* a 'subject' (by which he means not yet a 'theme' in the formal sense), and that the 'evolutionary episode' (starting at bar 21) is one *no longer;* he argues that the form of the movement '*comes into being* as a musically perceived *transformational process*'; that 'the form *is* process', and that 'the path, not the end, is the goal'.[13] I've regarded these statements about the *Tempest* as well worth pursuing, if not fully endorsing. In an effort to capture something of the processual nature in much of Beethoven's music and in later music of the early nineteenth century, I've introduced the notion of *a special case whereby the formal function initially suggested by a musical idea, phrase, or section invites the experienced listener to make a retrospective reinterpretation within the larger formal context*.

My voice-leading graphs in my 2011 study align with terms suggesting formal functions; there I propose that what can first be heard as an introduction in the *Tempest* might retrospectively be reinterpreted as 'having become' the main theme of the movement. I use the symbol with the double-lined right arrow (⇒) to stand for 'becomes', in German, *'es wird'*. What at first might sound like the beginning of the movement proper 'becomes' the modulatory transition. Further instances where we're encouraged to reinterpret formal functions arise as the movement proceeds.

In just one short paragraph, Dahlhaus offers a similar processual hearing of the opening of Beethoven's Sonata in E flat, Op. 31 No. 3. Says Dahlhaus:

> Firstly, the opening of the movement starts by seeming to be an introduction, and only later reveals itself as the main theme. Secondly, the continuation (bar 18), which seems to be a transition (and

12 Janet Schmalfeldt, *In the Process of Becoming: Analytic and Philosophical Perspectives on Form in Early Nineteenth-Century Music,* Oxford University Press, New York, 2011. In my section 'Dahlhaus and the *Tempest* Sonata' (pp. 37-51), I elaborate in greater detail on how experienced 'first-time' listeners might imagine the music that could follow after the movement's opening Largo idea.

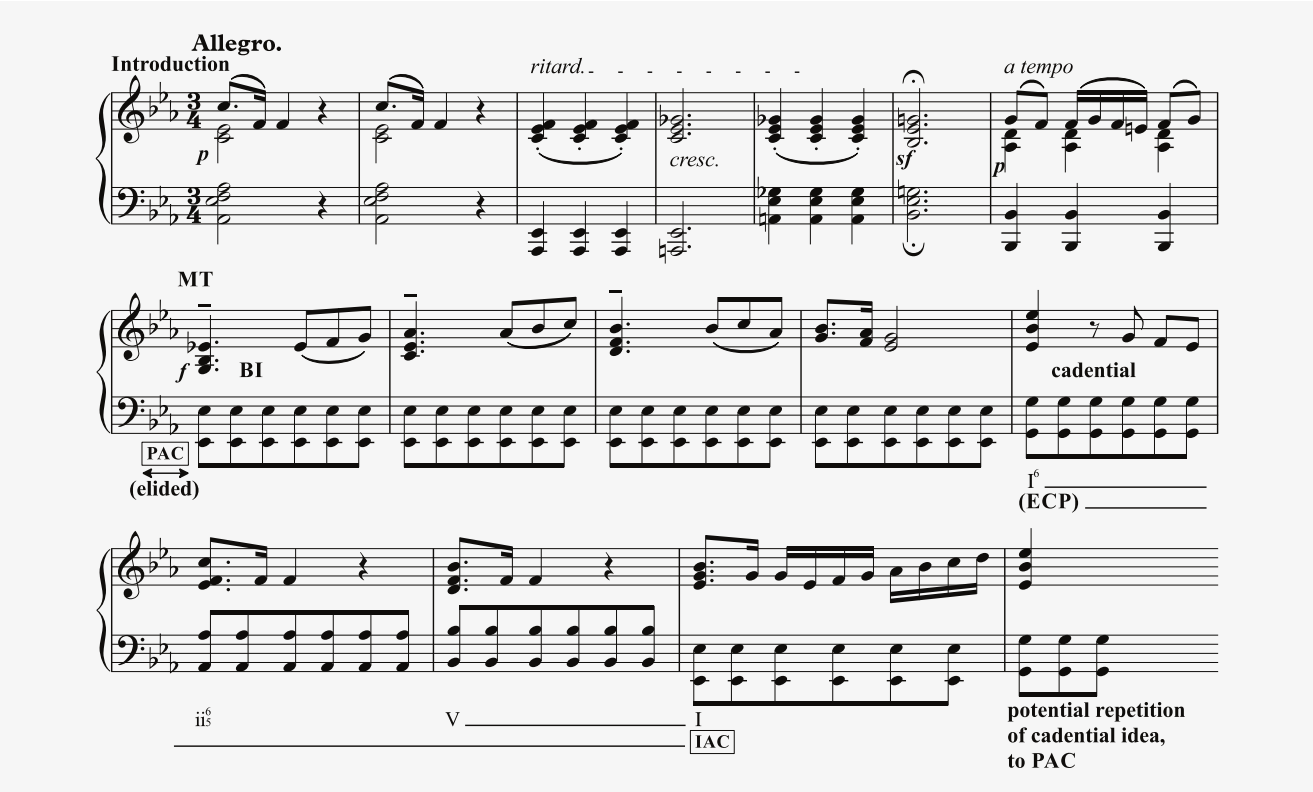
13 Carl Dahlhaus, *Ludwig van Beethoven: Approaches to His Music* [1987], trans. by Mary Whittall, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1991, pp. 89, 169, 170, 116-118 (my emphasis).

> indeed is such in the recapitulation), loses that role to an evolutionary section (bar 33) which must be regarded as the 'real' transition. By this means Beethoven shows that musical form is something created by the subject.[14]

Here Dahlhaus's 'subject' is the listener, and he continues with a profoundly experiential reminder to those of us who attempt to analyze Beethoven's music, and music in general. He says:

> 'Introduction', 'main theme', and 'transition' prove to be categories that are not 'given' as part and parcel of the musical object but are 'brought to' the structure. When the understanding of form is unreflecting, the subject is not conscious of its creative activity; it thinks of itself as the organ for the reception of a clearly defined 'thing' with certain 'characteristics'. It is only on being encouraged *to exchange categories for others,* that the listener becomes aware of himself as subject, and of his creative role in the formal process.[15]

As an example, to the attentive 'first-time' listener who has thought about the characteristics of specific formal categories, the opening 8-bar phrase might seem to predict that something like this will follow (Example 4).



Example 4: Op. 31 No. 3, i, opening: 'recomposition'

14 *Ibid.*, p. 42.

15 Dahlhaus, *Ludwig van Beethoven,* p. 42 (my emphasis).

To suggest that Beethoven's opening might at first be heard as an introduction, my 'recomposition' leads by cadential elision into a new, energized main-theme-like, tonic-grounded idea, borrowing the *Trommelbaß* that will actually soon appear; an expanded cadential phrase (ECP), with a touch of motivic play, then achieves an imperfect authentic cadence (IAC), inviting a repetition that could reach the fuller PAC.

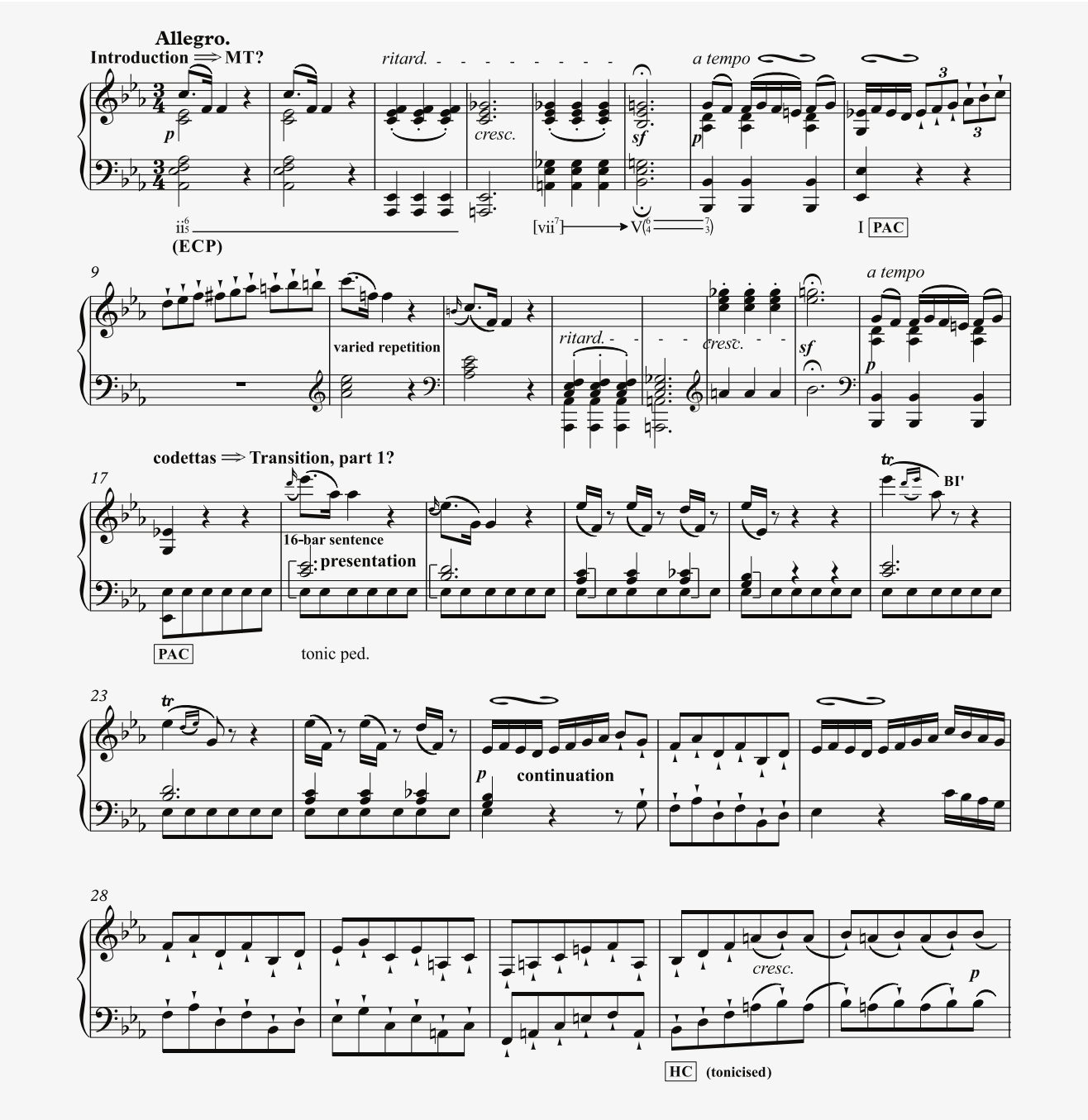
On what grounds can we agree with Dahlhaus that Beethoven's actual opening phrase seems like an introduction?

1. Like the opening idea of the G major sonata, but in a gentler, more lyrical mood, this phrase *opens by closing*; rather than beginning with a 'starting point', it promises to lead towards one. Like the *Tempest* Sonata, it begins 'off-tonic', but whereas the *Tempest* exaggerates the postponement of closure, this opening calls upon a well-known closing strategy – the expanded cadential progression.
2. The *ritardando*, the *crescendo* to a fermata at the *sf*, and the nonchalant cadential flourish surely contribute to an introductory character that works against the notion of a stable, tightly-knit 'classical' main theme (Example 5a).

Our first clue, however, that the opening phrase may *not* serve as an introduction might be that this phrase is given an immediate varied repetition; large-scale Baroque introductions are often repeated, but this rarely happens in classical styles. When the *Trommelbaß* gets underway, its tonic pedal might at first suggest a post-cadential codetta and its varied repetition, with each playing upon the initial 'sighing' gesture of bars 1-2. But now the continuation introduces a new staccato figure that activates the passage and drives to a tonicised HC. Dahlhaus argues that this passage seems to be a transition, but that it relinquishes this role to the passage that follows. I propose that, as in Op. 31 No. 1, an experimental *two-part transition* emerges: as in the G major sonata, the non-modulatory part 1 reaches only the home dominant. Also as in that sonata, the *transition, part 2* (Example 5b) begins with the movement's initial idea, though here it is given a wistful, proto-Wagnerian appeal. An internal sequential repetition wends its way, finally, to a triumphant HC in the key of the dominant, B flat. Now the first ST swings into a brilliant, sparkling mood, with a flamboyant improvisatory flourish extending the cadence and setting up the theme's varied repetition. This ST^{1}'s contrasting character is striking; but, remarkably, the repeated 8-bar theme shares with the opening of the movement an expanded cadential progression (I6–IV-ii6–V7 ... I).

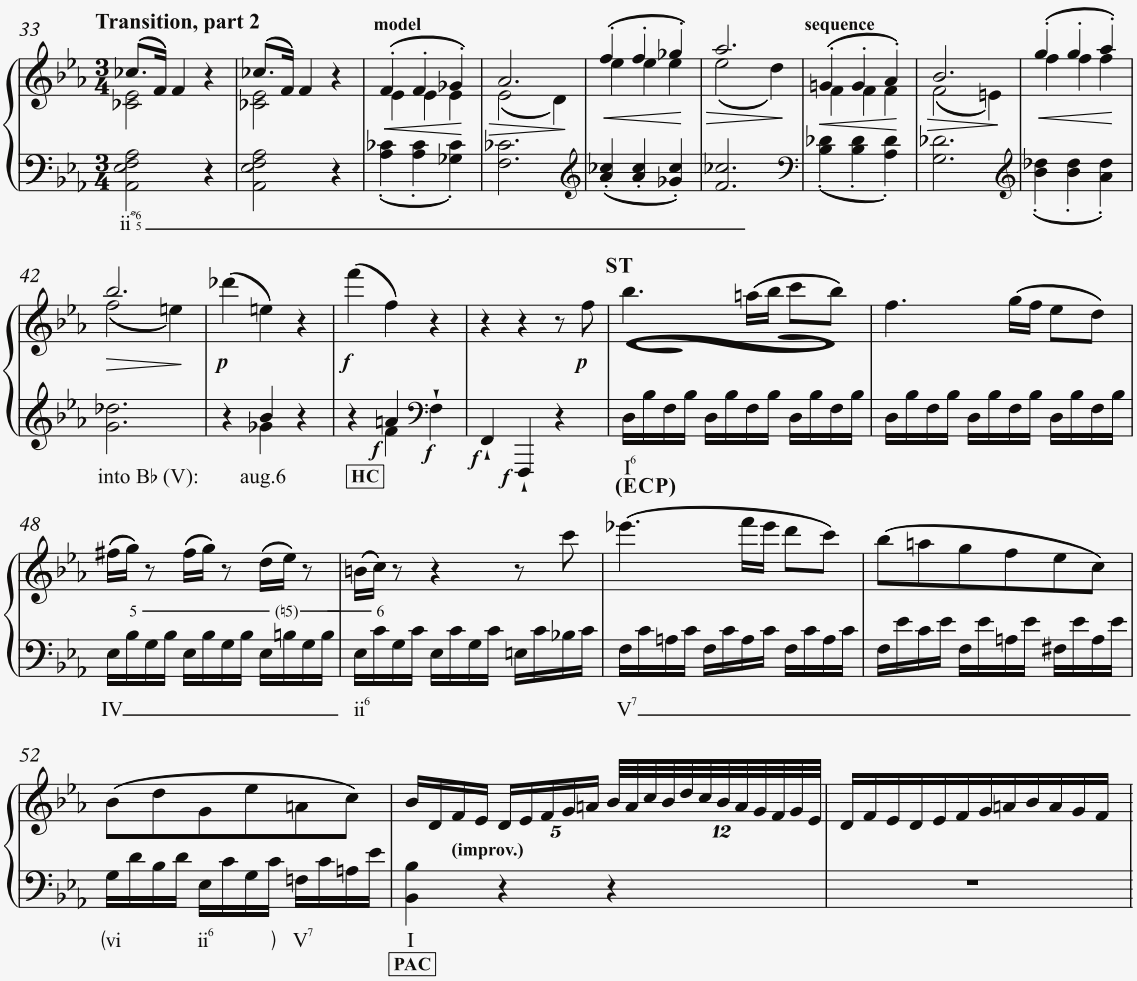
Looking back, we'll want to ask, Where's the main theme? Is there none? In agreement with Dahlhaus, but in my own terms, I propose that in retrospect we have only one choice: what seemed like an introduction at the beginning has 'become' (⇒) the main theme, because what follows has clearly accomplished the role of a two-part transition. Despite its enormous contrast in character, the first movement of Op. 31 No. 3 shares a formal strategy with the opening of the *Tempest* Sonata that cannot be ignored; the composer's insistence that we 'listen forward

and backward at the same time', as Adorno has said,[16] that we adapt to surprising changes of direction and intention within the formal process – this might just be the 'new path' that unites the sonatas of Op. 31.



Example 5a: Op. 31 No. 3, i, bars 1-32

16 Theodor W. Adorno, *Hegel: Three Studies*, trans. by Shierry Weber Nicholsen, with an introduction by Nicholsen and Jeremy K. Shapiro, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 1993, p. 136.



Example 5b: Op. 31 No. 3, i, bars 33-54

Let us now take a moment to remind ourselves of the overall content of Op. 31, and its breadth in respect to tempo, character, and large-scale forms. Table 1 presents a simple outline. The sonata form clearly dominates the first movements and finales, as is characteristic of instrumental works well before 1802; the composer also explores (1) a large ternary form, with its deeply serious interior theme (the Adagio grazioso of the G major Sonata); (2) a sonata-rondo (the finale of the same); (3) a sonata without development (the Adagio of the *Tempest* Sonata); and (4) a Menuetto/Trio (a kind of *Rückblick* moment in the E flat Sonata).

Op. 31 No.1, in G major

1	**Allegro vivace**	sonata form	
2	**Adagio Grazioso**	large ternary form	in C (= IV)
3	**Rondo, Allegretto**	sonata-rondo form	

Op. 31 No.2, in D minor

1	**Largo—Allegro**	sonata form	
2	**Adagio**	sonata without development	in B-flat (= VI)
3	**Allegretto**	sonata form	

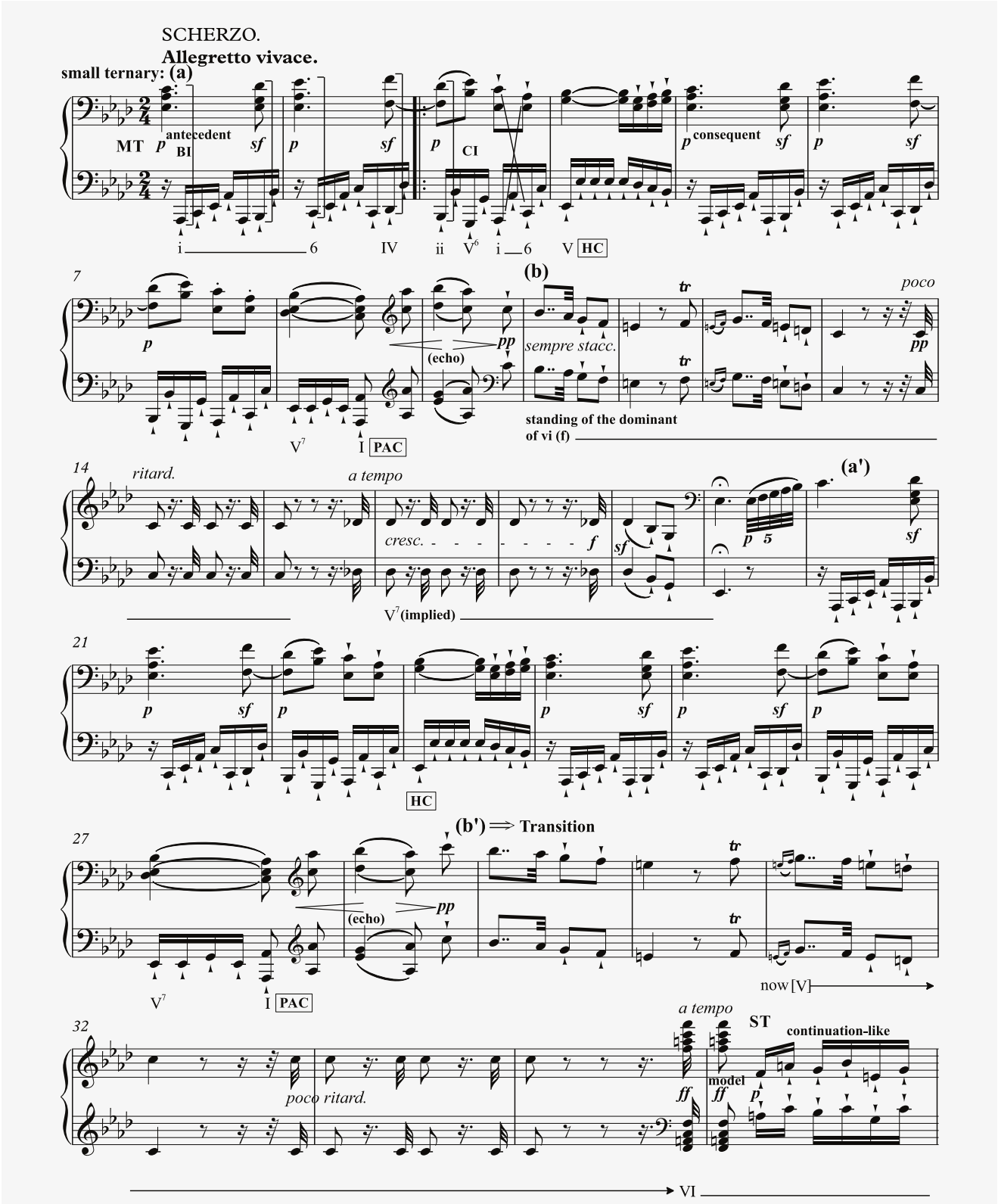
Op. 31 No.3, in E-flat major

1	**Allegro**	sonata form	
2	**Scherzo, Allegretto vivace**	sonata without development	in A-flat (= IV)
3	**Menuetto, Moderato e grazioso**	Minuet/Trio form	in E-flat
4	**Presto con fuoco**	sonata form	in E-flat

Table 1: The Op. 31 Sonatas – Movements and large-scale forms

One surprise arises with the highly original second-movement scherzo of Op. 31 No. 3 in A flat: unlike any of his earlier scherzos for piano, this most humorous of movements takes a duple, rather than the usual triple, meter and experiments with a full-fledged sonata form. Example 6 shows its jaunty, mock-march-like main theme, itself a small ternary. Within this a-b-a' form, the bare octaves of the b-section at first hint at a modulation into the submediant (F minor), but there's a subtle shift onto an implied home-dominant 7th at the last minute. Unusually, the b-section *returns* after the reprise of 'a', now suggesting that a broader rounded binary will materialise; the b-section now 'becomes' the transition – an unusually short one, of only 6 bars and, as before, *all* on the dominant of vi. But then what was promised earlier comes about: that dominant, with its teasing *ritardando*, sets up a *subito fortissimo* blast in F major – the *major* submediant – and the beginning of the ST. Another crashing *fortissimo* (not shown) gives us a sequence in the normative key, the dominant (E flat). Charles Rosen admonishes pianists to be sure to play genuine 32nd-notes within the ST's cadential phase;[17] the effect is stunning!

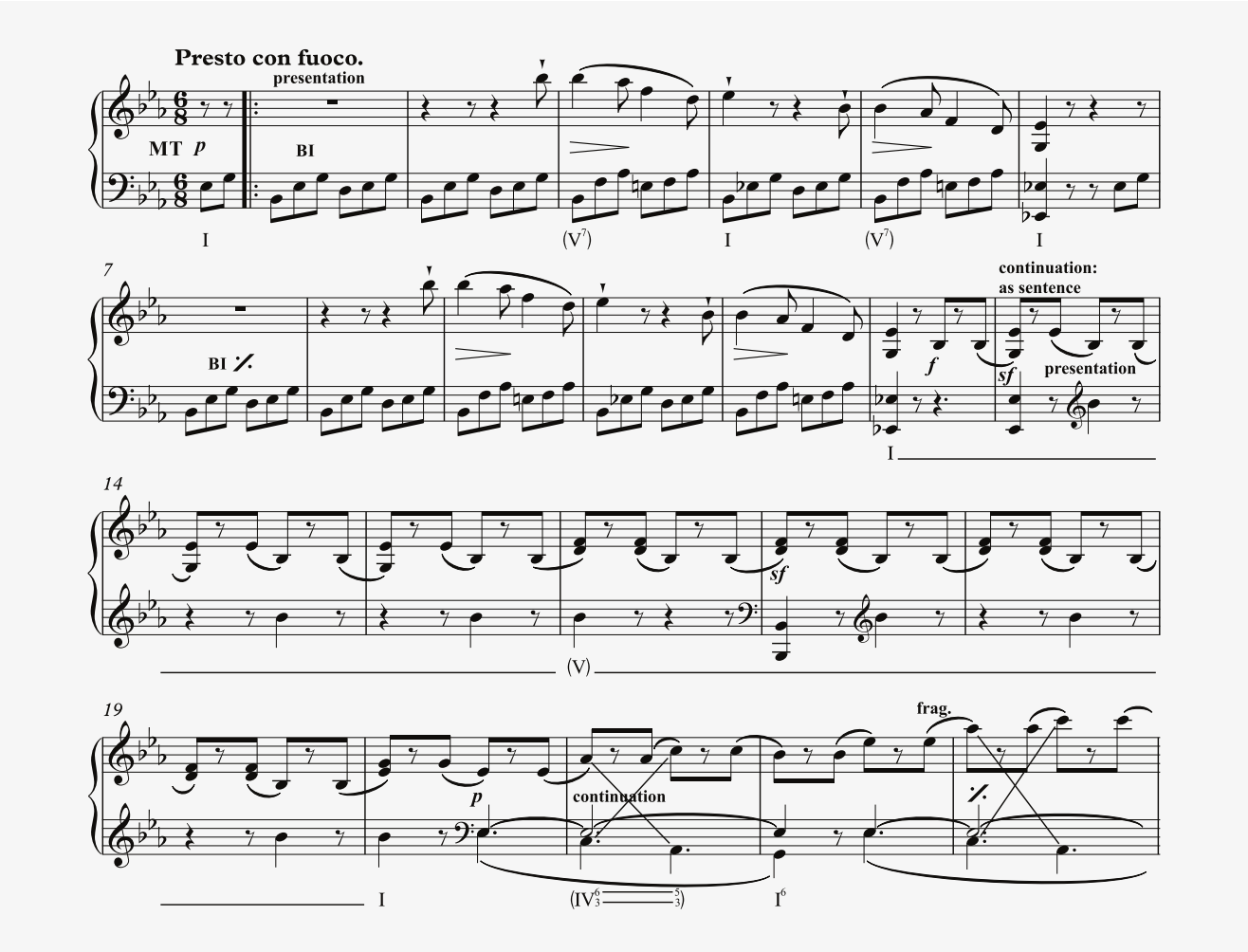
17 Charles Rosen, *Beethoven's Piano Sonatas: A Short Companion*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 2002, p. 176.



Example 6: Op. 31 No. 3, ii, bars 1-35

I now draw attention in brief to just a few additional moments within Op. 31 that capture and reinforce the innovative nature of the set.

1. Those who are especially sensitive to both local and larger-scale harmonic and tonal eccentricities will recall the opening of the E flat sonata's wild and crazy finale – the *presto con fuoco* tarantella that begins with a vamp in the left hand (Example 7). Here every second beat within the fast 6/8 meter creates a dissonance with the soprano melody; as in the first movement, this melody *closes*, rather than opens. Once again, the game and the rhetoric of *closure* are at play.



Example 7: Op. 31, No. 3, iv (finale), bars 1-23

2. In the exposition of this finale, the ST appears in the normative key, the dominant. But in the recapitulation Beethoven outrageously breaks the most fundamental 'rule' of the classical sonata form, which is that the reprise of the secondary theme should occur in the home tonic. In this recapitulation the ST and even most of the CS appear in the unimaginable key of G flat, the flat mediant (flat-III). An unequivocal return to the home tonic major occurs *only* at the beginning of the coda. What was Beethoven's motivation here? Is he asking us to remember that his development also began in G flat? Jones argues that references to this key are nested elsewhere within the development and the recapitulation.[18] Whether or not Jones convinces, we can take note of the composer's increased interest in chromatic third relations and his derring-do with the flaunting of discarded conventions.

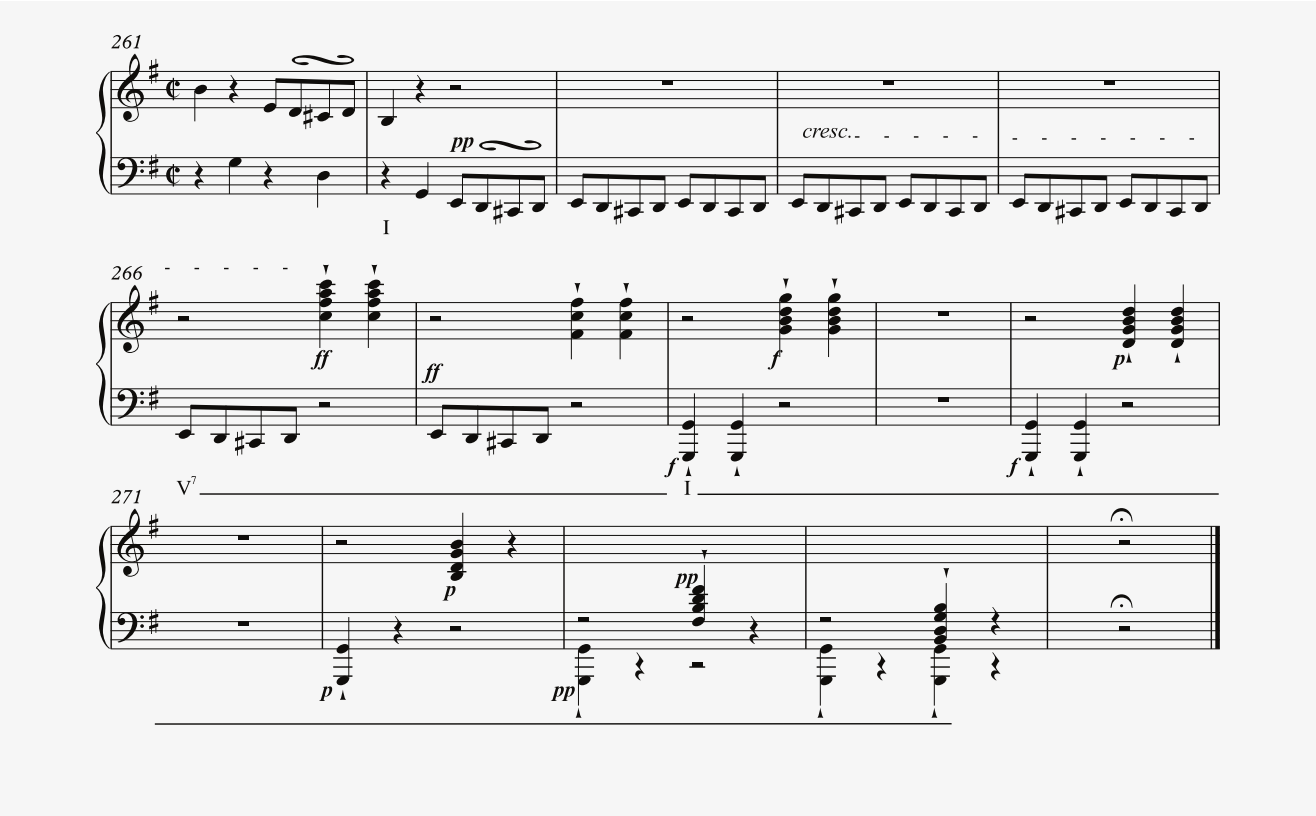
Finally, I wish to consider the possibility, suggested by a few, that the Op. 31 sonatas subtly explore a technique that I've called 'formal cyclicism' – whereby a passage from one movement within a multimovement work recurs in a later movement, thus affecting its form.[19] The monumental breakthrough in this technique occurs, of course, in Beethoven's Fifth Symphony (1807-1808), in which the finale brings back a passage from the dark, disturbing third-movement scherzo; the technique achieves its epitome within the Ninth Symphony (1822-1824), in which the finale recalls all three of its earlier movements. Two examples, from much earlier, can also be mentioned: the Adagio, titled *La Malinconia*, of Beethoven's String Quartet in B flat, Op. 18 No. 6 (1800) 'becomes' (⇒) the introduction to the finale and reappears towards the end of the movement; and, in the Piano Sonata Op. 27 No. 1, the finale (the fifth movement) recalls the self-contained Adagio fourth movement. I cannot claim cases of such overt 'formal cyclicism' in the Op. 31 sonatas, but I've observed a few hints of this technique, and perhaps some will have registered others. It should be noted that every example I've cited thus far involves a recollection in the finale of materials from an earlier movement; with one exception, the same will hold for the examples from Op. 31.

a. Dare we imagine that the ending of the coda in the finale of the G major sonata (Example 8) asks us to recall the opening of that fabulous first movement (Example 2a)? I invite you to consider.

---

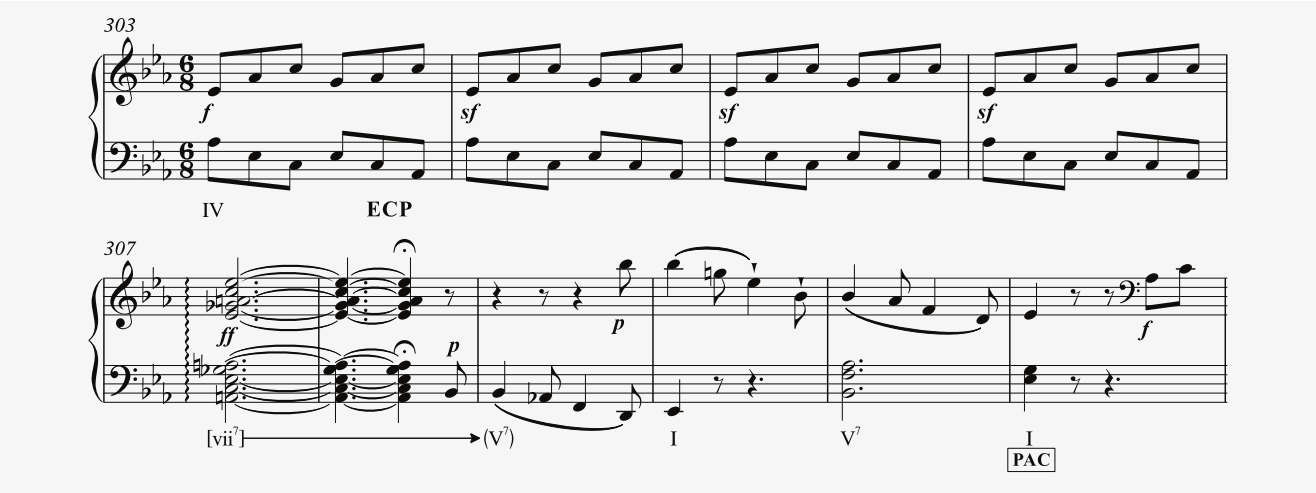
18 Jones, *Beethoven*, p. 124-125.

19 See Schmalfeldt, *In the Process of Becoming*, pp. 144-46.



Example 8: Op. 31 No. 1, iii (finale), bars 261-275

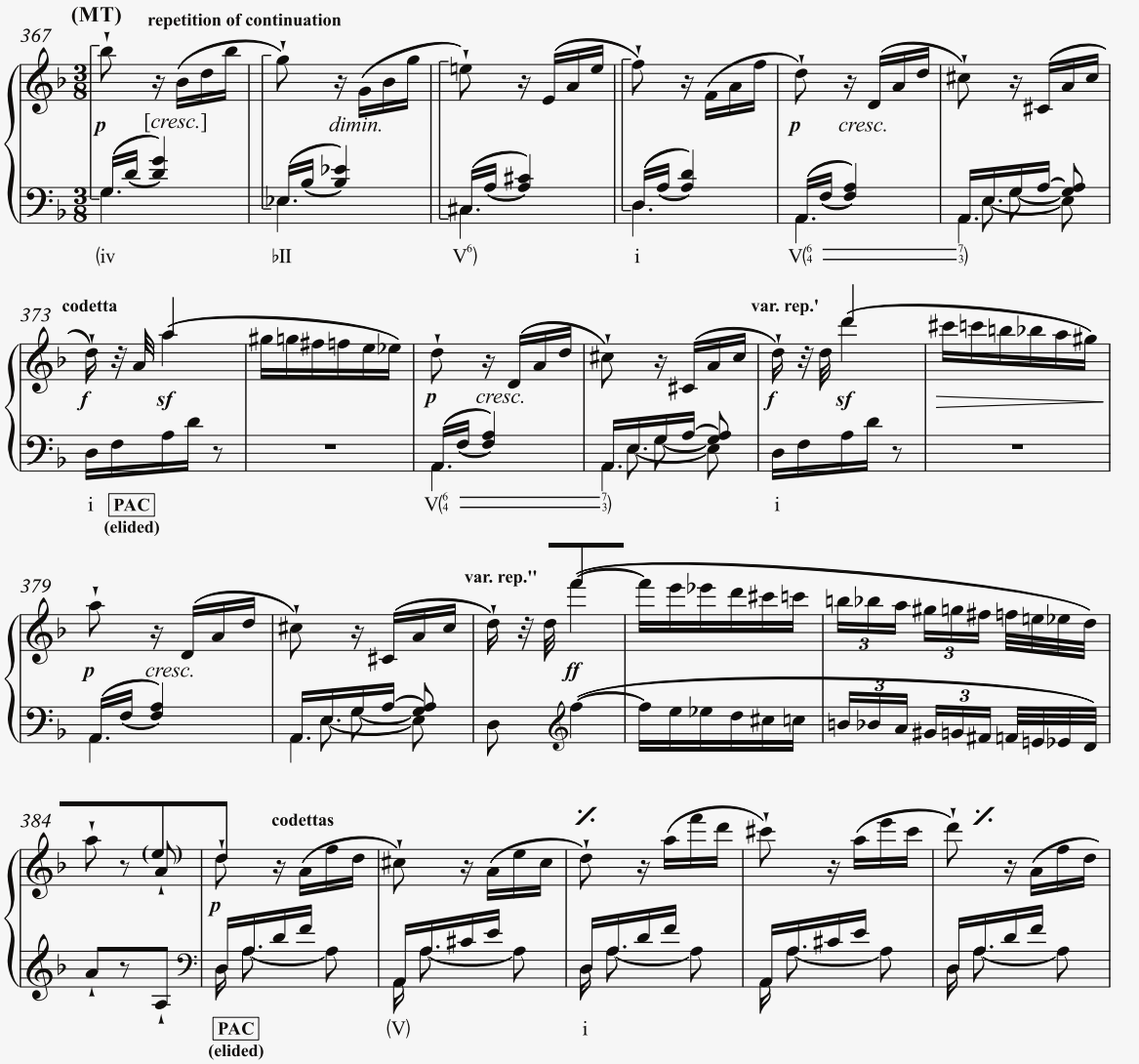
b. In the coda of the finale in E flat sonata, Jones hears a vastly transformed, chord-by-chord reference to the expanded cadential progression that opens the first movement (Example 9). More directly, this passage and its repetition retrieve the climactic sequences in the development of the finale. Whether or not a cyclic moment is at hand, Jones astutely notes that, for the first time, the closing-like idea that opens the finale now really does serve as the cadential close of the phrase.



Example 9: Op. 31 No. 3, iv (finale), bars 303-12

c. Surely the rolled B flat chord at the beginning of the Adagio second movement of the *Tempest* inspires us to remember those ghostly rolled chords in the first movement that announce the beginning of the exposition, the development, and the recapitulation.

d. Last of all, the finale of the *Tempest* Sonata is like no other movement in Beethoven's *œuvre*; are we bravely riding the waves of the *Tempest*, to borrow the composer's offhand remark? The movement's continuous, relentless 16th-note motion is *only* relinquished within the codettas that mark the end of the finale's main theme, which we hear in its apotheosis state at the very end of the movement. Here, not two but three iterations of the codetta idea create a broad ascending arpeggiation, from A ($\hat{5}$), through D ($\hat{1}$), to the uncontested apex of the movement – the high F ($\hat{3}$); doubled at the octave, this tone initiates a cascading chromatic descent to the final cadence. If we remember the climactic apex on $\hat{3}$ in the first movement's opening passage, the introduction that 'becomes' ($\Rightarrow$) the main theme, we shall recall the cadenza-like descent that follows. There is no question for me that the closing moments of the *Tempest*'s finale bring us full circle back to the sonata's point of departure.



Example 10: Op. 31 No. 2, iii (finale), bars 367-389

The Triptych Op. 31 in the Treatises on Musical Form: Focuses and Interpretations

Gianmario Borio

Looking at the recent literature on Beethoven's triptych Op. 31, the emphasis on the second sonata, especially its first movement, is patent. This focus on one single piece goes back to August Halm's book *Von zwei Kulturen der Musik;* it is witnessed more recently by the chapter on the 'new path' from the monograph by Carl Dahlhaus, who elaborated some thoughts by Arnold Schmitz and Erwin Ratz, and by Janet Schmalfeldt's *In the Process of Becoming*.[1] Halm's observations represent the first of two sections into which the chapter 'Der Geist der Sonatenform' ('The Spirit of Sonata Form') is divided. This focus is peculiar if we compare it with the treatises on musical form of the previous century, in which the first and third sonatas seem to have attracted greater consideration. What may have caused this change of focus at the beginning of the twentieth century?

Significant portions of Halm's argument arise from a critique of the interpretation by Paul Bekker.[2] Halm is irritated by the prevalence of the 'theatrical' or 'psycho-dramatic' perspective in Bekker's elucidations of the *Tempest* and is convinced that the spirit of sonata form can be regained only if one understands

1 Cfr. August Halm, *Von zwei Kulturen der Musik*, Georg Müller, München, 1913, pp. 38-81 (see also Laura Lynn Kelly, *August Halm's Von zwei Kulturen der Musik: A Translation and Introductory Essay*, PhD, University of Texas, Austin, 2008, pp. 71-102); Arnold Schmitz, *Beethovens 'zwei Prinzipe'. Ihre Bedeutung für Themen- und Satzbau,* Dümmler, Berlin, 1923, pp. 45-50; Erwin Ratz, *Einführung in die musikalische Formenlehre*, Universal Edition, Wien, 1951 (1973), pp. 154-155; Carl Dahlhaus, *Beethoven. Approaches to His Music*, trans. by Mary Whittall, Clarendon, Oxford, 1993, pp. 166-180; Janet Schmalfeldt, *In the Process of Becoming. Analytical and Philosophical Perspectives on Form*, in *Early Nineteenth-Century Music*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2011, pp. 23-58. In this article, I will focus on the contributions of the German *Formenlehre* from Adolf Bernard Marx to Arnold Schoenberg and his circle. I will refer to the new theories of musical forms only in cases of significant divergence.

2 Cfr. Paul Bekker, *Beethoven*, Schuster & Löffler, Berlin, 1912, pp. 151-154.

'form as spiritual act', as the result of a technical accomplishment.[3] Moreover, Halm maintains that the very essence of that 'spirit' is the conciliation of opposites, which can be achieved through a balance of contrary forces. The investigation of this movement shifts Halm's attention to the 'drama of forces' to be discovered in the thematic structures but also becoming manifest in certain states of the musical material.[4] Such a relativized concept of theme clearly appears at the end of his analysis: 'The Largo theme is a chord; the Allegro theme is a scale; the theme of the soprano (beginning in measure 23) is a turn. Thus, they are not themes. They are motives of the most ordinary kind – primordial motives – that appear on their own, but are not easily recognizable as themes'.[5] The first movement of the *Tempest* exhibits processuality in pure form, continuously insinuating doubts about the structures and functions of its constituent parts. Halm chooses this piece because it incorporates the 'spirit of the sonata' more than any other Beethoven composition. It launches the most powerful challenge: to be confronted with a music of raw materials and psychoacoustic processes.

Von zwei Kulturen der Musik marks the beginning of a new trend in the theory of musical form, reversing the nineteenth century perspective centered on the structural resemblances of music with verbal language. The Bruckner monograph by Ernst Kurth and the Wagner studies by Alfred Lorenz represent further developments of the attitude of considering form as energy; in both we can perceive a strong influence of the *Lebensphilosophie*.[6] The previous approach to musical form, which we may label 'syntactic', characterizes the very root of the *Formenlehre*, the third volume of the *Lehre von der musikalischen Komposition* by Adolf Bernhard Marx, and develops continuously over several manuals up until the end of the nineteenth century.[7] It reappears with renewed power and enlarged perspective in the writings of Arnold Schoenberg and his students, absorbing elements of the philosophy of language that flourished in Vienna in the first decades of the century.[8] Thus, the philosophical climate can be seen as a decisive factor in the paradigm shifts of music theory. If the 'syntactic' approach considers instrumental music as a language in sounds, the key questions to be tackled are: the structure of the themes, the function of non-thematic sections and their relationship with the themes, the means through which contrast is produced, the techniques of development, the various types of recapitulation and closing.

---

3 Halm, *Von zwei Kulturen der Musik*, p. 36; English translation in Lynn Kelly, p. 72.
4 *Ibid.*, p. 50; English translation in Lynn Kelly, p. 81.
5 *Ibid.*, p. 76; English translation in Lynn Kelly, p. 99.
6 Cfr. Ernst Kurth, *Bruckner*, two volumes, Max Hesse, Berlin, 1925; Alfred Lorenz, *Das Geheimnis der Form bei Richard Wagner*, four volumes, Berlin, 1924, 1926, 1931, 1933.
7 Cfr. Adolf Bernhard Marx, *Die Lehre von der musikalischen Komposition, praktisch theoretisch*, dritter Theil, Leipzig, 1845(1868); henceforth quoted as *Die Lehre von der musikalischen Komposition* 3.
8 Cfr. Allan Janik and Stephen Toulmin, *Wittgenstein's Vienna*, Simon & Schuster, New York, 1973; James K. Wright, *Schoenberg, Wittgenstein, and the Vienna Circle*, Bern: Peter Lang 2007; Allan Janik, *Wittgenstein's Vienna Revisited*, Routledge, Abington, 2018.

The triptych Op. 31 is an important test bed for both approaches: for the 'syntactic' because of the critical state of the thematic units and the pervasive presence of developmental techniques; for the 'energetic' because these pieces relocate the concept of theme on a more abstract level and involve mobility in a new manner.

The Role of Op. 31 in the Treatise of Adolf Bernhard Marx

Marx dwelt on the principal theme of the third sonata of Op. 31 in a crucial section of the third volume of his treatise, the 'supplementary notes on sonata form'. This book is not only an eloquent testimony to the status of the analysis of Beethoven's sonatas in the years following the composer's death, but it has also laid the groundwork for all subsequent theories of musical form. In the chapter 'Satzform' (sentence form), Marx comprehensively illustrates the dynamic drive of this thematic model. Quoting the first six bars, he shows the 'unusual reach content' of this sentence:

> The first bar is repeated; the next motive (included in the following two bars) is repeated and pushed forward; the whole has an extension of eight bars and numbers at least three different motives, including the one in the seventh bar. Hence, not every sentence, not the sentence in its inferior level, but the developed and thus enriched sentence appears to be suitable to our goal.[9]

Marx recognizes a sentence *par excellence* in the thematic structure that opens the sonata, a sentence which not only fully articulates a musical idea but also contains that internal mobility (*Beweglichkeit*) which generally 'characterizes the sonata form'.[10] Here, motion is produced by the systematic transposition of the motivic components in the upper and lower registers. Beethoven, aware of the internal forces, then uses the same motive to build a final segment (bars 18-25) that functions as an appendix (*Anhang*). The goal of such a complex aggregation of segments is to find a balance between the distinctiveness of the musical idea and its propulsive trend: 'mobility is produced by the frequent closings and the continuous transformation of the same content; one element after the other is liquidated [*abgetan*] and the repeated element becomes a new configuration'.[11]

If we consider the passages of the same book dedicated to other sections of the exposition of this sonata, we see that Marx aims to show how Beethoven created dynamism and how the thrust of the principal theme conditioned the subsequent choices. For example, the segment of bars 26-32 gives the impression of a *Gang*

---

9 Marx, *Die Lehre von der musikalischen Komposition* 3, p. 256.

10 *Ibid*., p. 257. Reissmann, who rarely uses the term 'sentence', labeled this theme as a 'period' (cfr. August Reissmann, *Lehrbuch der musikalischen Komposition*, 2. Band: *Die angewandte Formenlehre*, Guttentag, Berlin, 1866, p. 354).

11 Marx, *Die Lehre von der musikalischen Komposition* 3, p. 257.

preparing the entrance of the secondary theme; but, according to Marx, Beethoven felt that he had removed the first motive too early and thus it required a further consolidation. This happens in bars 33-45, following the underlying principle of change, with a shift to the dominant of the dominant and the coupling of the first with the second motive, whose repetitions bring us to the secondary theme.[12] As we will see, the idea of an extensive and intricate statement of the principal theme combining mobility with closeness is a signature of all three sonatas, each of which proposes a different realization. The example that we are considering here gives evidence of a thematic unit of 25 bars, suggesting the consequent of a period in bars 10-17 and – in apparent contradiction – presenting extraction (*Abspaltung*) and liquidation in the closing section (bars 18-25). If we keep this in mind, we can understand Marx's thesis of the compensatory role that the secondary theme has in respect to the fragmented arrangement of the principal theme: it is characterized by 'higher internal coherence and fluency'.[13] However, he maintains that its construction is again based on the sentence. Marx notes a certain number of similarities between the two themes: the *Gang* of bars 53-55 separating the first statement from its repetition (reminding the listener of bars 8-10); the staccato change in bars 75-77 (recalling bars 27-32); and the falling sixth of bars 83-84 and 87-88 (which can be considered as an augmentation of the motive of bar 1). To this list we may add the minor second appoggiatura of bar 48, which recalls the falling major seventh appoggiaturas of bars 20-21. Marx's theoretical deduction is that 'common and recalled motives' guarantee affinity by changing functions.[14]

Marx makes comparable observations with regard to the first sonata of the triptych. He remarks that, also here, Beethoven is engaged in constructing the principal theme as a process, an approach which has significant consequences for the dynamic character of the first movement as a whole. Marx's elucidation of this aspect illuminates the threads that bind together the three sonatas. When viewed in this light, Dahlhaus' later comments on the exposition of the second sonata unveil the theoretical background of all three first movements rather than just describing an eccentric case. In this sense, the hyperbolic set up of the exposition of the D minor sonata appears not to be the consequence of a subordination of the music to a literary program, but is rooted in the realm of compositional technique: Beethoven deals with the same compositional question in a different character, whose association with the state of melancholy and a wounded soul is signaled by the chosen key.[15] In the principal theme of the G major sonata,

12 Cfr. *ibid.*, pp. 270-271.

13 *Ibid.*, p. 282.

14 *Ibid.*, p. 283.

15 Cfr. Christian Friedrich Daniel Schubart, *Ideen zu einer Ästhetik der Tonkunst*, ed. By Fritz and Margrit Kaiser, Olms, Hildesheim, 1990 [Reprint of the first edition: 1806]. In his description of the characters associated with the keys Schubart connects D minor with 'melancholic femininity which broods spleen and steam' (p. 377).

too, Marx recognizes a 'kernel': the dotted motive of bars 4-5. Again, he insists on the changing function of the elements in the musical form as it unfolds. The three motives have different weights and functions: the first, labeled 'a' in Figure 2, initially has an introductory role but later on assumes the tasks of a transition (bar 30) and retransition (bar 158); the second motive, labeled 'b', being the 'kernel', is submitted to a number of repetitions everywhere it appears; the third one, labeled 'c', is set to mark the cadential segments (see particularly its extension in bars 53-64). The manner in which Beethoven deals with these elements (number of repetitions, rhythmic transformations, extensions etc.) is always related to the particular function they assume in each specific moment.

Marx also notices the link between the inner constitution of the motives and their behavior. Motive 'a' is crucial to build the fleeting character of this movement; it brings sprightliness and vigor, although this feature alone is only able to 'produce a *Gang* but not a sentence'.[16] Motive 'b' has the steadiness to give rise to a sentence, but the sudden interruption of the flow caused by the disappearance of motive 'a' requires a compensation after the cadence on the dominant; and this, according to Marx, is the reason for the repetition of the whole thematic structure. However, the principle of uninterrupted motion would be frustrated if this repetition were literal; thus Beethoven operates a transposition, and this transposition has to be on the flattered seventh degree, because the harmonic process aims to reach the opposite of the dominant D in the circle of fifths. Consequently, the repetition of the thematic unit ends in C major, but its final motive 'c' is reiterated three times to emphasize the return to G major. This idea of spiral repetitions also governs the 'return' of the principal theme in bar 46; here, the repetition of an entire formal block determines not a consolidation of the theme but a change of its function: it takes the place of the missing transition. Beethoven carefully measures out the relationships of proximity and distance. The entrance of the secondary theme will be an event with unexpected features; the principal theme should be present until the very last moment, but in an estranged form. The *forte* at the third repetition of 'b' is combined with a new interpretation of the VI of G major as IV of B minor (bars 53-54).

Marx devotes a similarly deep reflection to the secondary theme. Its first peculiarity is the harmonic degree, B major, which Marx understands as the fourth element of the 'connection series of the major keys', i.e. the major chord built on the fourth pitch of the circle of fifths beginning with G; this represents a 'significant deviation from the basic law of modulation'.[17] Marx maintains that the reason for this leap in the primary harmonic progression cannot be explained by recourse to a theoretical principle, but must be found by detecting the dynamics of the composition itself: 'Indeed, to judge each single composition one needs to consider not only the general laws and premises of its form but also the

16 Marx, *Die Lehre von der musikalischen Komposition* 3, p. 272.
17 *Ibid.*, p. 284

specific content, the idea, atmosphere etc. of the particular work'.[18] Also in this first member of the triptych Op. 31, Beethoven perceives a need to compensate for the fragmentary status of the principal theme; and also here, he chooses to reverse the relationship of loose and stable, attributing to the secondary theme a compactness and stability which is otherwise the domain of the principal theme. According to Marx, the degree of the dominant was largely exploited by the perfect cadence at the end of the first presentation of the principal theme and then by the long pedal which concluded the *Gang* (bars 39-45); thus, Beethoven shifted the focus to the relative key of the dominant, turning it into the major mode in order to keep the serene character of the movement. The original minor key is implied in the modification of the 'b' motive in bar 53, but does not appear as such; it will be recuperated in the repetition of the secondary theme (bar 74) and then again abandoned in favor of a modulatory process which restitutes B minor in the codetta (though alternating with its major form).

At this point Marx attached the 'appendix K', which represents one of the most significant supplements to his theory of form. Its subject is the relationship of form and content, a question which was introduced by Hegel and extensively debated throughout the nineteenth century.[19] This dialectic lays the ground to explain 'deviations' (*Abweichungen*) from the 'fundamental laws' (*Grundgesetze*). The uncommon structure and harmonic key of the secondary theme in the G major sonata are demonstrations of the meaning of these kinds of 'deviations', which Marx considers to strengthen rather than nullify the rule through an unexpected application. Thus 'deviation' differs from 'mistake' by virtue of it being a rational consequence of the inner life of the work. Indeed, the basic tenet of Marx's theory is that formal models are not abstract and rigid shells into which every possible idea can fit; rather, they are inscriptions of 'fundamental laws', which are so effective that they can be made to suit each individual expression. A corollary of Marx's argument could be the following: if there is a 'mistake' in musical syntax, this can only be attributed to a faultily conceived relationship between the intended content and its externalization in a concrete form. In the opening section of the second volume of his *Lehre,* Marx exposes the philosophical background of his view on the relationship between form and content in unmistakably Hegelian terminology: 'Form is the way in which the content of the work – feeling, imagination, the composer's idea – assumes an external configuration [*Gestalt*]; therefore, we should define the form of an artwork as the manifestation [*Äusserung*], the

18 Ebda.

19 Hegel dealt with the relationship between form and content in many sections of his *Aesthetics*; the passages regarding music are in Hegel, *Aesthetics. Lectures on Fine Art*, trans. by T.M. Knox, vol. 2, Clarendon, Oxford, 1975, pp. 901-904; Friedrich Theodor Vischer, *Ästhetik oder die Wissenschaft des Schönen. Zum Gebrauche für Vorlesungen*, *Erster Theil: Die Metaphysik des Schönen*, *Carl Mäckens Verlag,* Reutlingen-Leipzig, 1846, pp. 13-53; Christian Hermann Weisse, *System der Ästhetik*, Leipzig, 1872, pp. 28-44. In the field of musicology, a thorough discussion of the two terms can be found in August Reissmann, *Form und Inhalt des musikalischen Kunstwerkes*, in *Sammlung Musikalischer Vorträge*, ed. by P. G. Waldersee, Erste Serie, Nr. 1-12, Breitkopf und Härtel, Leipzig, 1879, pp. 141-166.

external configuration of the content'.[20]

Marx's illustration of the 'deviations' to be found in the secondary theme of the G major sonata refers mainly to the harmonic progression; its articulation is outlined metaphorically as 'the sound of a lovely song from a foreign land' (*anmutiger Liedklang aus der Fremde*).[21] The impression of a foreign song is produced by the periodic structure with the anticipation of the motive of the fourth bar of the antecedent (a metrically weak bar) as the third bar of the consequent. It is a variant of motive 'a' of the principal theme, which changes its function here from introductory gesture to a closing melisma.[22] The repetition of the period begins in B minor with the melody in the bass; the consequent introduces a modulatory process (bar 79; b: VII7 = D: V7), paralleled by variational statements of the motivic components, so that the codetta in B minor arrives as a consequence of the thematic process.

The similarity of the solutions that Beethoven adopted in the first and third sonatas also attracted the attention of Salomon Jadassohn in his comparison of their transitions (see Figure 1).[23] In both cases, Beethoven utilizes a fragment of the principal theme whose sequence quickly reaches the dominant of the tonic of the secondary theme. These examples give us additional input on the structure of the principal theme itself, as well as on the criteria which Beethoven considered in his production of irregular structures. A common pattern seems to guide the construction of the principal themes of the two sonatas: prefix (a) – nucleus (b) – suffix (c).

---

20 Adolf Bernhard Marx, *Die Lehre von der musikalischen Komposition, praktisch theoretisch*, zweiter Theil, Leipzig, 1838 (1864), p. 5. Cfr. also Marx, *Die Form in der Musik*, in *Die Wissenschaften im neunzehnten Jahrhundert, ihr Standpunkt und die Resultate ihrer Forschungen. Eine Rundschau zur Belehrung für das gebildete Publikum*, hrsg. von einem Verein von Gelehrten, Künstlern und Fachmännern unter der Redaction von J.A. Romberg, Bd. 2, Sondershausen, Leipzig, 1856, pp. 21-48.

21 Marx, *Die Lehre von der musikalischen Komposition* 3, p. 285.

22 Here, I am using the term 'period' in the later sense introduced by Schoenberg. Marx believes instead that the structure of the secondary theme is again a sentence.

23 Cfr. Samuel Jadassohn, *Die Formen in den Werken der Tonkunst*, Breitkopf & Härtel, Leipzig, 1885, pp. 108-109.

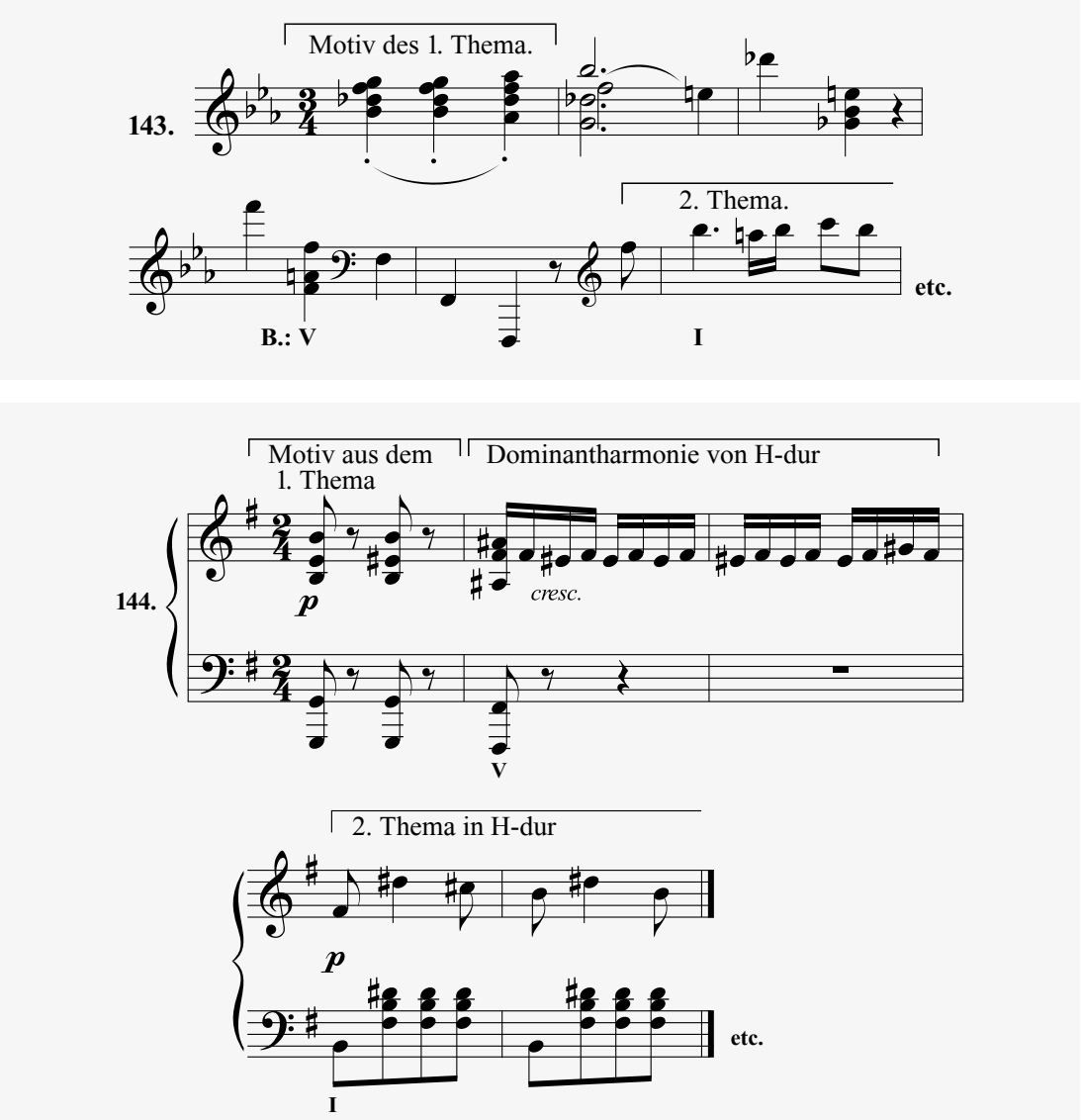


Figure 1: Salomon Jadassohn, comparison of the transitions of Op. 31 No. 1 and No. 3

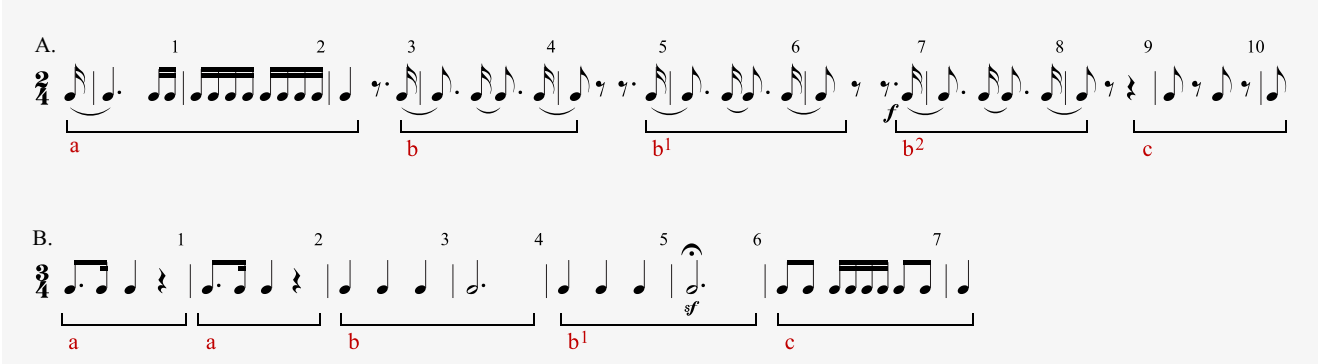


Figure 2: Rhythmic structure of the principal themes of Op. 31 No. 1 and No. 3

Threefold groups of this type do not adhere to the rules for sentence and period that Beethoven helped to establish in his earlier sonatas; rather, they may recall the pattern 'anacrousis-tonic accent-desinence' that Olivier Messiaen uses in his Mozart analyses.[24] The underlying conception by the French composer and theory teacher is that melodies behave like human language; they have a gravitation point in a strong and protracted sound, which is preceded by a preparatory segment and closed by an inflectional ending consisting of a weaker note or group of notes. This approach is based on notions of masculine and feminine rhythms, derived from Hugo Riemann and Vincent D'Indy, that are not relevant for our examples.[25] Instead I prefer to concentrate on the changing weights of the segments, which are reflected in the harmonic process and create a multifaceted reservoir for developments. The relationship between the thematic unit and its development has changed: the theme requires rearrangement after its first closure. This fact may help to explain the discrepancies that can be noted amongst various theorists in their writings on this piece.

Controversial issues

Hugo Riemann's analyses of Beethoven escape the tradition which began with the treatise by Marx.[26] Riemann's objective is to find a closer coordination between phrase structure and harmonic progression; thus, in his writings, the analysis of syntatic units with specific functions is abandoned in favour of an analysis of hypermetrical complexes which follow a logic similar to the one guiding the basic harmonic relationships: tonic-subdominant-dominant. The light/heavy model (iambic meter), which Riemann recognizes as the 'prototype of every form' (*Urtypus aller Form*), implies that only even bars are accentuated, and the 'period' evolves towards a progressively stronger accentuation with its climax at the cadence in the eighth bar.[27] A theme like the one that opens the first sonata Op. 31 challenges this approach because of its articulation in 11 bars, an odd number for

24 Cfr. Olivier Messiaen, *Traité de rythme, de couleur, et d'ornithologie (1949-1992)*, vol. 4, Leduc, Paris, 2000, pp. 133-136.

25 Cfr. Hugo Riemann, *Was ist ein Motiv?*, in Id., *Präludien und Studien. Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Ästhetik, Geschichte und Theorie der Musik*, vol. 1, Seemann Nachfolger, Leipzig, 1895, pp. 137-149, and Vincent D'Indy, *Cours de Composition musicale*, vol. 1, Durant, Paris, 1912, pp. 23-40.

26 Cfr. Hugo Riemann, *L. van Beethovens sämtliche Klavier-Solosonaten. Ästhetische und formal-technische Analyse mit historischen Notizen*, Hesse, Berlin, 1918-1919 (three volumes). Riemann criticizes the Marxian concepts of sentence, period and *Gang* in his *Große Kompositionslehre*, 1. Band: der homophone Satz, Berlin/Stuttgart, Spemann, 1902, pp. 424-425.

27 Hugo Riemann, *Grundriss der Kompositionslehre*, I. (theoretischer) Teil: *Allgemeine Formenlehre*, Hesse, Leipzig, 1922 (first edition 1897), p. 16.

a theory based on quadrature.[28] However, Riemann makes a virtue of necessity recognizing, here, the seed of a tendency in Beethoven's later sonatas, notably Op. 53 and 57: the tonic, presented in the first bar, is quickly reinterpreted as the subdominant of the dominant; the main key is stated after a 'complicated paraphrase' (*umständliche Umschreibung*) which goes through cadences on the dominant and the subdominant. This zigzagging is well represented by the double meaning of E minor in bar 8 ('parallel key' of G major and 'subdominant parallel' of D major in Riemann's terminology) and the following transposition of the 11-bar unit, which takes the same route, F major being the subdominant of C major, which is the subdominant of the main key, G major.

The pattern of the harmonic progression provides Riemann with a guideline to understand phrase construction. In our case, it is possible to set aside the descending figure of the beginning without compromising the harmonic logic; the bracketing of bars 1-3 makes an eight-bar structure tangible for the basis of the principal theme. This observation encourages Riemann to formulate a rather daring hypothesis: the beginning corresponds syntactically to a closing, therefore the hypermetrical values of these three bars are to be labeled as 6, 7 and 8. Riemann is aware of the introductory function of this figure, which he defines as a 'curtain' (*Vorhang*), but at same time, he does not overlook the meaning that this motive has for the entire movement. Especially, the syncopic anticipation of a tone followed by the tonic chord on the strong beat of the bar is so close to his idea of *Urtypus* that he sees it as a germ triggering organic growth. The hypothesis of the opening figure having a double-meaning (as both a 'curtain' and a closing gesture) has repercussions on the segments that follow. They manifest a retarding tendency so that all the functional reinterpretations of chords (bars 8, 19 and 22) correspond to a lengthening of the thematic structure: in bars 8 and 19 the reiteration of the metric units 6-8; in bar 22 the downgrading of the barycenter of the antecedent by adding four bars – Riemann represents the last procedure with the symbol (8=4a). Structurally, the theme closes in bar 26, but the retarding tendency determines a further statement of the perfect cadence, which requires four additional bars. In this way, Riemann explains the copious extension of the principal theme and its articulations as a progressive consequence of the tendency already immanent in the very first motion of the musical material.

28 An extensive discussion of this passage and many other features of the triptych is to be found in Scott Burnham, *Reading between the Lines: Hugo Riemann and Beethoven's Op. 31 Piano Sonatas*, in *The Oxford Handbook of Neo-Riemannian Music Theories*, ed. by Edward Gollin and Alexander Rehding, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2011, pp. 440-461.

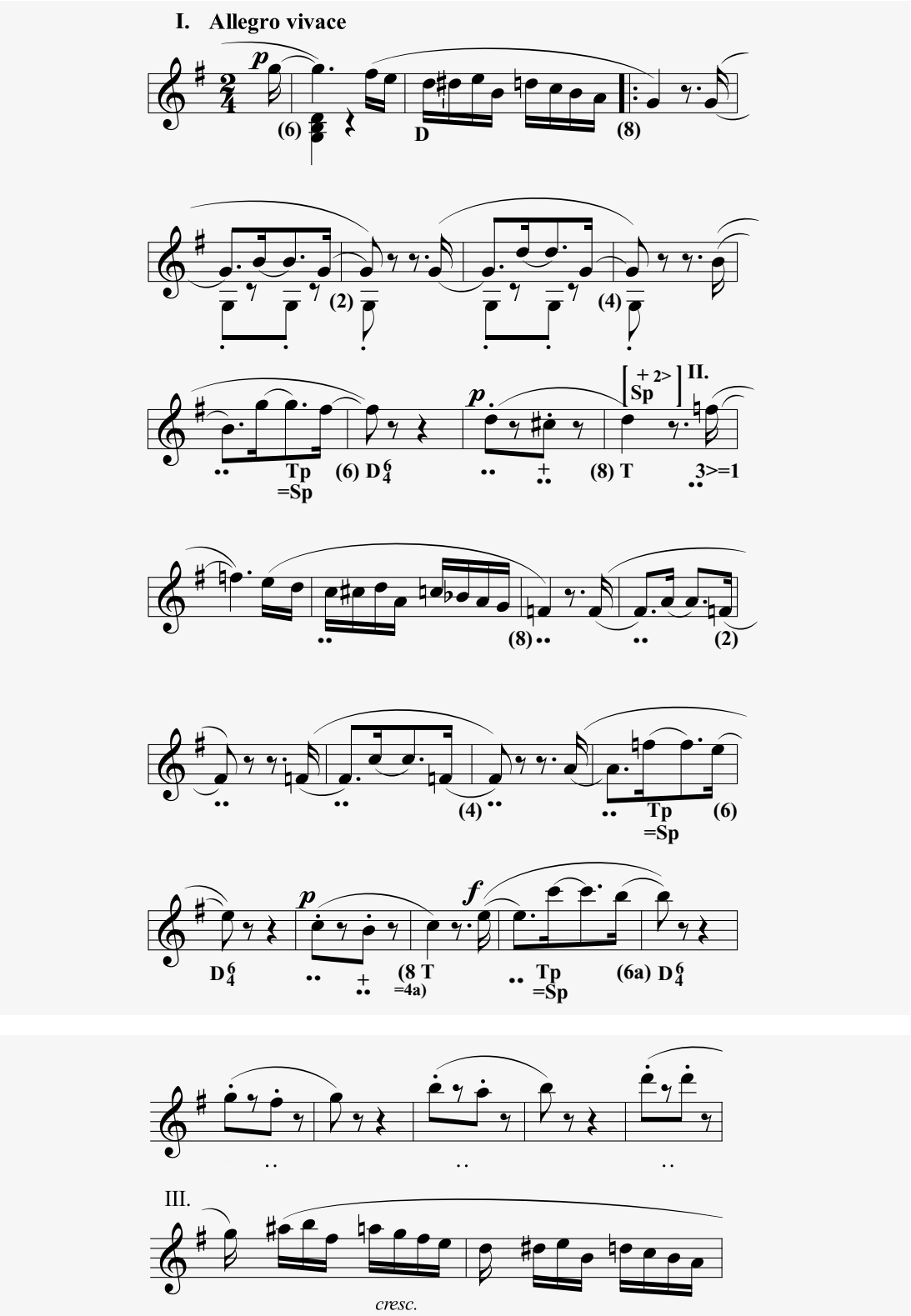


Figure 3: Hugo Riemann's analysis of bars 1-32 of Op. 31 No. 1

Let us now consider some controversial issues regarding the principal theme of the Eb major sonata. For August Reissmann motive 'a' (labeled as in Figure 2) is the central element of the construction; its fundamental role is signalized by its immediate repetition so that the subsequent bars can be interpreted merely as chordal progressions to the cadence of bar 8. The whole complex, which Reissmann defines as 'period', is repeated with a redistribution of the components in changing registers. The section beginning in bar 18 demonstrates the achieved predominance of the motive 'a'. Although the dominant is already reached in bar 31, Beethoven prolongs the tension through digressions involving minor chords, so that the secondary theme will appear in a spontaneous and lively way.[29]

Alfred Richter classifies the same theme into a typology of the exposition, which he characterized by the following articulation:

Hauptsatz	Überleitung	Nebensatz	Überleitung/ Zwischensatz	Seitensatz
Principal theme	Transition	Intermission	Transition/episode	Secondary theme

The closing of the principal theme is marked with perfect cadences at both its first appearance (bars 1-8) and its repetition (bars 10-17).

Schoenberg and his pupils do not seem to have dedicated any special attention to this movement. However, we can glean something from the particular construction of themes that Webern dubbed as 'periods with sentence-like components'.[30] The examples, which he illustrated in his lectures on musical form, are all taken from internal movements of the sonata cycle, whose themes frequently require a larger space. Webern's argument is guided by the assumption that 16-bar periods may need some internal articulation to avoid a simple juxtaposition of motives or phrases. There is nothing to prevent us from applying the same approach to the sentence, when it is conceived as a wide-ranging process; in this perspective, the Richter's considerations may be understood as an attempt to find a justification for such an extensive structure. The dialectic of the two principles – the dynamic of the sentence and the static of the period – would now appear on a higher level: how to maintain the drive inherent to the sentence in a thematic structure which has to be clearly articulated (through repetitions and consolidations) and, at the same time, keep an internal unity despite the unusual extension. These considerations may suggest that it is possible to build a large sentence with the first half arranged periodically. In our

29 Cfr. Reissmann, *Lehrbuch der musikalischen Komposition*, 2, pp. 353-354.

30 Anton Webern, *Über musikalische Formen. Aus den Vortragsmitschriften von Ludwig Zenk, Siegfried Oehlgiesser, Rudolf Schopf und Erna Apostel*, ed. by Neil Boynton, Schott, Mainz, 2001, pp. 253-263.

case, it would look like this:

	Antecedent	Connecting segment	Consequent	Liquidation
Bars	8	2	8	8+8
Motives	**a a b b' c**		**a a b b' c**	**a a** + reductions
Harmony	II^{5}_{6} – $V^{6\,5}_{4\,3}$–I		Same harmonies	V–I^{7}–IV–V^{7}_{9}–I…–II^{7}–V

The 'liquidating' work in the second half is manifested not only by the harmonic acceleration (one or two chords per bar), but also by the reduction of the extracted motive 'a'. The hypothesis that such a conception was circulating among Schoenberg's students and supporters finds further support in the brief comments that Ratz devoted to the principal themes of the first and second sonatas.[31] Ratz observes that here, as later in the sonatas Op. 53 and 57, the 'sentence-like construction' experiences a significant change, as the '"stable" principle' in the repetition is abandoned in favor of a sequence which belongs to the means of 'loose' formation. This tendency becomes evident in the 'improvisatory, introductory' slant of the first 20 bars of the D minor sonata; the 'stormy' idea, which provides its nickname, is manifested not by melodic and rhythmic *topoi* but rather by the structure, the 'phase shifting' involving the characters and the formal functions' of the sections of the exposition.[32]

In an article, which appears to be an offshoot of the analysis of the first movement of the D minor sonata published in his Beethoven monograph. Dahlhaus discussed the processual construction of the principal theme of the E flat major sonata, bringing into play the principles of development and abstraction.[33] Development affects concrete aspects of the motivic setting, while abstraction refers to the manipulation of more general features whose consequences for listening are not immediate. According to Dahlhaus, the combination of these two principles can be grasped in different sections of the exposition, constituting an embryonic form of developing variation. This intuition is partially obscured by Dahlhaus's assumption that the closure of the principal theme coincides with the perfect cadence of bar 17, so that the following bars should be interpreted as the first part of the transition. The superimposition of motive 'a' and chromatic motion (bars 18-21, tenor voice) ratifies their relationship, an impression which seems to be

31 Ratz, *Einführung in die musikalische Formenlehre*, pp. 154-155.

32 In his *Beethovens 'zwei Prinzipe'*, p. 50, Schmitz employed the same attribute 'improvisatory' for this section.

33 Cfr. Carl Dahlhaus, 'Entwicklung und Abstraktion', *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft*, 43/2, 1986, pp. 91-108.

reinforced by the syntactic order: motive – repetition – chromatic motion of the bass line (here as tenor and in descending direction). Thus, Dahlhaus perceives a link between 'theme' and 'transition' which is more profound than its surface would suggest. However, his argument acquires more appeal if we consider the above-mentioned hypothesis of an extended sentence. Development is a technique employed in the liquidation, mostly in small dimensions and over a limited range; but here the development includes a reduced variant of motive 'a' (bars 22-23) and thus has the chance to unfold in a larger way.

When we reconsider Dahlhaus' observations in the perspective of an extended sentence, the 'contrasting derivation' of the secondary theme may appear more congruous. Indeed the combination of motivic content and abstracted principle hides the overall continuity of the thematic process: the main pitches of the bass in bars 46-52 design an ascending chromatic line from D to G; the dyads in sixteenth notes of bars 48-49 present a transposed inversion of the upper voice of bars 20-21 (they appear in the same metric position, the third bar of the four-bar unit); and finally a *Gang* connects the secondary theme with its repetition (bars 53-56), similarly to the way the principal theme did in bars 8-9. From the first movement of Op. 10 No. 1 onward, Beethoven sought to make the recapitulation not simply a replica of the exposition but a section that gives new information about the identity of the themes. Indeed, the structure 16+16 bars, which underlies the principal theme of the E flat major sonata, is revealed in the recapitulation. Only the last bar of the section of bars 33-45 survived and the final segment of the liquidation is used as a bridge to the secondary theme: the two thematic segments flow into each other without friction.

Towards new conceptions of the recapitulation

A student of composition under Alban Berg, Theodor W. Adorno perceived, in such an understanding of recapitulation, an ideological moment divergent from the prevailing approach to Beethoven's music. In his *Introduction on the Sociology of Music*, Adorno compared this with the final chapter of Hegel's *Phenomenology of the Spirit*, which he considered to be a simple restatement of the identity of non-identity. Beethoven did not renounce the 'affirmative gesture', which traditionally characterizes the recapitulations, but, in adhering to this model, he had to counteract the objective tendency of his compositional technique with the power of an 'authoritarian *It is so*'.[34] Further discussion of this crucial aspect can be found in a conference on musical form that Adorno held in 1965 at the Darmstadt Summer Courses of New Music. I quote this passage at some length, in order to show the wide-ranging perspective the study of musical form can attain

34 Cfr. Theodor Adorno, *Introduction to the Sociology of Music*, trans. by E.B. Ashton, Seabury Press, New York, 1976, p. 210.

when its philosophical background is evidenced. Adorno's argument also helps us to reflect on the circular relationship of philosophy and music theory, which already emerged in Marx's references to 'rational laws':

> The weak point of an autonomous form arising purely from the matter itself, stripped of every borrowing, was the recapitulation. With the recapitulation, a deeply time-alien, spatially symmetrical, architectonic element enters into the temporal flow of music. There is a latent problem with the recapitulation as early as Beethoven. The fact that he did not abandon the recapitulation cannot be explained by any respect for custom which he, the subjectively dynamic critic of all musical ontology, might have felt. He registered its functional connection with tonality, which still maintained its primacy in his works and which he may be said to have composed out. [...] He may well have had a premonition that once the language of music and musical form diverge it is no easy task to force them back into unity. In order to realize the individual impulses he preserved the idiom as a restriction of freedom, in this respect revealing a profound affinity with Hegelian idealism. As in Hegel, the problem left marks on his procedures. Beethoven's recapitulations always need legitimation within the free unfolding of time, which is thematic in the strictest sense. The entry of the same [material] following a dynamic which forces its way beyond repetitions must for its part also be driven by its opposite pole, namely a dynamic of its own. This explains why the great developmental sections of what are in spirit symphonic movements in Beethoven are almost always designed with an eye to the turning points, the critical moments where the recapitulations begin. Because the recapitulation is no longer possible, it becomes a *tour de force*, the point.[35]

Adorno sees in Beethoven's recapitulations the coexistence of two contrary urges:

1. to restate a beginning which, according to his aesthetics of permanent 'becoming', cannot appear again in the function of a closure;
2. to keep the dynamics of 'thematic labor' awake in a recapitulation which is at the same time a continuation.

The clash of these two inclinations produces what Adorno defines as a 'tour de force', a new kind of psychological labor, of suffering in the achievement of the goal. From 1937 to 1948, in the lectures on musical form that he held at the University of Southern California and UCLA, Schoenberg did not delve into this tension of principles; however, he mentioned that the '"adventures" of the themes during the elaboration [Schoenberg means the development section of the sonata form], and the functional changes due to their placement in the form, nearly always require modifications'.[36] Among the examples following from this consideration, the comment on the first movement of the sonata Op. 10 No.1 stands out for its complexity. Between the two world wars, the problematic role of the recapitulation became

---

35 Theodor W. Adorno, 'Form in the New Music', *Music Analysis*, 27/2-3, 2008, pp. 201-216 (the passage quoted is in pp. 204-205). I have modified several passages in this quotation, after comparing it with the original German text (in *Gesammelte Schriften 16*, ed. by Rolf Tiedemann, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main, 1982, p. 612) in order to eliminate some ambiguities and make Adorno's argument more clear.

36 Schoenberg, *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*, ed. by Gerald Strang and Leonard Stein, Faber & Faber, London / Boston, 1967, pp. 209-210.

more tangible thanks to a growing interest of musicologists in the instrumental works of the romantic composers. This also induced some changes in the interpretation of Beethoven. Karl Blessinger dwells on the difference between the classic and romantic approaches: in the first, the recapitulation belongs to the strategy of setting 'resting points' (*Ruhepunkte*) and its particular challenge is to release the tension in the exposition; this task already requires some adjustments.[37] On the other hand, romantic composers tend to introduce real structural modifications, mostly shortenings, which produce an imbalance coherent with their drive towards the 'dissolution of form'.[38] Rudolf von Tobel observes the same dualism in the dissertation he wrote under the guidance of Ernst Kurth; he considers the recapitulation to be an essential component of the 'architectonic-symmetric tripartition' which characterizes the classical sonata form.[39] Its opposite is guided by the principle of dynamism which is present in Beethoven mostly in the conception of the development, as preparation for the stirring entrance of the recapitulation; already here, the aesthetic attitude imposes specific technical solutions; the recapitulation is conceived as an 'intensification' (*Steigerung*).[40]

One of the structural changes which makes the recapitulation different from the exposition is a change in the proportions of the components. Marx noticed such an attitude already in the G major sonata.[41] Beethoven's goal here seems to be the intensification of the secondary theme, thus reversing the weight previously attributed to the two thematic units. Two procedures are used to attain this about-face: the contraction of the principal theme and the expansion of the secondary theme. The principal theme is reduced to 15 bars (bars 194-208): Beethoven restates the first 11 bars of the exposition and attaches to it the cadential prolongation following the repetition (bars 23-26, bars 205-208). Now, it is presented in its basic format:

Bars	194–204 (=1–11)	205–208 (=23–26)	209–218 (=57–65)
Motives	a–b–b'–b"–c	b–c	b–c–c–c
	THEME		TRANSITION
Harmony	G maj: I–II$^{7}_{\sharp 3}$–V	II–I–V–I	II–III$^{3\sharp}$ E maj: V–IV$_{\sharp}$–IV–V–I

37 Karl Blessinger, *Grundzüge der musikalischen Formenlehre*, Engelhorn, Stuttgart, 1926, pp. 177-178.
38 *Ibid.*, pp. 220-223.
39 Rudolf von Tobel, *Die Formenwelt der klassischen Instrumentalmusik*, Haupt, Bern / Leipzig, 1935, pp. 141-147.
40 *Ibid.*, pp. 255-256.
41 Cfr. Marx, *Die Lehre von der musikalischen Komposition* 3, pp. 299-300.

The transition refers to the segment of bars 57-65, emphasizing the entry of the secondary theme even more strongly. It follows the paths of the exposition but appears first in E major and E minor; the repetition in G major also remains in this key in its second half (bars 242-246), and the modulations of the following segments adopt the same pattern as in the exposition, reinterpreting VII/7 as V7. The adjustments in the recapitulation have two consequences: 1. the periodic approach to the theme, with internal modulation and final perfect cadence (bar 30), is abandoned; the theme appears open and flows into the modulation to the secondary theme, i.e. it incorporates the transition; 2. the double articulation of the transition (first with the flow of sixteenth notes, then with a return of the set of motives a-b-c) is also eliminated. Thus, the entire first section appears in reduced dimensions, while the secondary theme comes strongly into the foreground, a change which Beethoven strengthens with the double presentation of the secondary theme in the recapitulation (in E major/E minor and G major). These material alterations reflect a different attitude towards the contrasting relationship between the two thematic units: not only are the structures of both themes changed in the recapitulation, but also the way in which they relate to each other is transformed.

Different views on the other movements of the sonata cycle

In his lectures on musical form, Webern illustrated the dialectic of norm and deviation by analyzing the Scherzo-Allegretto vivace of the E flat major sonata.[42] Here the ambiguity regards several levels: the structure of the principal theme, the existence of a secondary theme, the function of the central section, the form of the whole movement. Webern's comments are focused on the first of these problems. He insists on the small ternary form, although bar 29 suggests a repetition of the b section. The core of this theme is a period (4+4+ 1 bar 'Echo'). Accordingly, the task of the b section is to create contrast and fulfill modulation. The a' section restates the entire period. The partial return of the b section (bar 29) is converted into a transition. The cadence on F major seems to signal the beginning of the subordinate theme, but this poses additional problems.

The repetition of the middle section of the theme escapes the standard arrangement of the ternary song, a deviation for which Webern finds an explanation in the overall dynamic of the form:

> The *abnormities* [*Abnormitäten*] do not relate to a chimera but to general laws. Every *rule* has *exceptions*. Schoenberg said 'You should understand the rule so that also the exceptions are contained in it'. If the first part is loose, staying on the dominant, then the second part should compensate for it and produce more stability. *Counterbalancing legality*. These are not *rules* but eternal laws.[43]

42 Cfr. Webern, *Über musikalische Formen*, pp. 281-283.
43 *Ibid.*, p. 282.

We can apply Webern's reasoning to the entire movement. Here the term 'Scherzo' does not refer to the form but rather to the mood. This explains why the following movement is a Minuetto, a prototype of the scherzo form; the dialectic approach to musical form excludes the possibility that two adjacent movements may have recurrence to the same model.[44] Moreover, the form of this movement belongs to neither of the two types of slow movements that Webern and Ratz copiously illustrated.[45] Finally, although the Allegretto vivace includes a developmental section, the piece does not present a new version of the sonata form that was already used in the first movement; it is a hybrid form, but not in the sense of today's theories of musical form.[46] Its formation responds to the need to create a contrast in character and structure despite the fact that the tempo remains fast; thus, the 'hybrid' construction is understandable only in the specific context of this movement as part of this particular sonata. The spectral presence of the secondary theme is a further sign of the idiosyncratic construction of this movement.

Contrast is a key word for a dialectically conceived *Formenlehre*. It regards many levels of the sonata cycle, from the micro- to the macro-dimension. Arnold Schmitz illustrated the 'contrasting derivation' in his analysis of the D minor sonata. One possible way to implement this procedure would be to graft a segment of the principal theme into the new context of the secondary theme. This happens in bar 4 of the first sonata and in bar 3 of the third sonata of Op. 31: the function of a given figure is transformed once it is moved into a subsequent structure.

The three sonatas Op. 31 have attracted the attention of theorists also on account of their second movements. It is important to consider – as Webern explained in his lectures on form – that slow movements are not episodes which may draw on formal models usually employed in the other movements; rather, they establish a relationship with the first movement, adopting the same mental pattern of 'primary/secondary', 'stable/loose', 'dynamic/static' that we observe as regulating the relationships between the larger sections of the first movement. For Webern, the Adagio is 'the space of the secondary thoughts'.[47]

Illustrating the options for slow movements, Ludwig Bussler noticed parallel features in the two triptychs Op. 10 and Op. 31.[48] In his analysis of the Adagio

---

44 On the relationship between 'content' and 'form' in each movement of a sonata and the logic of succession of its movements cfr. Marx, *Die Lehre von der musikalischen Komposition* 3, pp. 324-327.

45 Cfr. Webern, *Über musikalische Formen*, pp. 325-348; and Ratz, *Einführung in die musikalische Formenlehre*, pp. 35-36.

46 Cfr. William Caplin, *Classical Form. A Theory of Formal Functions for the Instrumental Music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1998, pp. 59-70.

47 Webern, *Über musikalische Formen*, p. 325. On the slow movements of Beethoven's sonatas cf. Gianmario Borio, 'La forma dei movimenti lenti nelle sonate di Beethoven: una ricognizione critica della trattatistica', in *Tra ragione e pazzia. Saggi di esegesi, storiografia e drammaturgia musicale in onore di Fabrizio Della Seta*, ed. by Federica Rovelli, Claudio Vellutini and Cecilia Panti, ETS, Pisa, 2021, pp. 167-183.

48 Cfr. Ludwig Bussler, *Musikalische Formenlehre in 33 Aufgaben*, Lüderitz, Berlin, 1878, pp. 198-199.

of the D minor sonata, Ratz states that the growth of complexity in the theme can be explained by referring either to its melodic-harmonic elements or to its motivic-syntactic components. At first glance, bars 4-5 seem to be an answer to bars 2-3 (I-V / V-I); this would suggest an iambic pace, which is indeed a recurrent feature of this movement. For the 'functional *Formenlehre*', to which Ratz aspired, the repetition of the figure confirms its syntactic meaning. This addresses Ratz towards the model of the sentence '(2 x 2) + 4'; thus, he understands the entire thematic unit as 'a 16-bar period with the antecedent in sentence form'.[49] It should be remembered that the consequent of a period is generally a repetition of the antecedent, precise at the beginning (first phrase) and more diffused towards the end. However, the situation here is different: Beethoven builds a new two-bar phrase, using a rhythmic variant of the motive of bar 2, which then becomes the basis for a sequence. While there is no doubt that the antecedent ends on the second beat of bar 8 (cadence on the dominant), Ratz asserts that the thematic unit closes in bar 16 and that the tonic chord at the beginning of the next bar is the beginning of the transition.[50] This understanding is based on the continuity of the bass line in bars 17-18. It is surprising that Ratz did not examine the content of the consequent in more detail, for example highlighting the fact that – In coincidence with or thanks to the motivic transformation – the consequent assumes an iambic pace, a turn that is confirmed by the resolution of the 7/9 chords in bars 14-16.

Beethoven's intention seems to be oriented to a new kind of relation between metric regularity and irregularity, a step which could meet the requirement of controlling the rhythm on a broad scale through interventions in the material itself. In other words, it is possible that Beethoven was aiming to let the iambic inflection, which subsequently gets the run of the whole temporal flow, gradually emerge. In any case, the result is the insertion of moments of instability in a thematic structure of the periodic type, i.e. an inconvenience for what Schoenberg and his pupils would describe as 'stable formation'.[51]

Schoenberg, Webern and Ratz agreed upon the form of the Adagio of the D minor sonata, classifying it as type ABABCoda (with the coda drawing back to the thematic material of A), i.e., a binary form in slow tempo. Accordingly, the B section (bars 31-38) exhibits thematic weight and an independent structure, although the melodic line is clearly derived from the first phrase of A. Bussler labels the B section as a 'binary period of the third form' [zweiteilige Periode dritter Form].[52] Webern calls it simply a period 'in a very stable formation, like a principal theme'.[53]

---

49 Ratz, *Einführung in die musikalische Formenlehre*, pp. 152-154; similarly in Webern, *Über musikalische Formen*, pp. 344-345.

50 Webern explains the irregular path as a hypermetrical structure 8+9.

51 Cfr. Arnold Schoenberg, *The Musical Idea and the Logic, Technique, and Art of Its Presentation*, ed. by Patricia Carpenter and Severine, Neff, Columbia University Press, New York, 1995, pp. 176-178.

52 Ludwig Bussler, *Musikalische Formenlehre in 33 Aufgaben*, Berlin, 1878 (4. Edition 1908), p. 199.

53 Webern, *Über musikalische Formen*, p. 345.

In this respect, it has a certain harmonic autonomy, which is shown by the (not perfect) cadence in F major in bars 37-38. Consequently, in the recapitulation (bars 73-79), the secondary theme appears transposed to B flat major, the main key of the piece. If we compare the second with the first movement, bearing in mind the considerations of the Viennese theorists, we can fully understand Beethoven's choice of binary form: it is more stable and articulated than ABA form (the other alternative for slow movements), and this stability fulfills the need to compensate for the irregular setting of the syntactic units of the first movement.[54]

For Webern and Ratz, the slow movement of the G major sonata, Adagio grazioso, is in ternary form (ABA).[55] This option may again be motivated by the features of the first movement; as we saw above, its form is irregular but not so unbalanced as in the second sonata. Regarding the theme of the second movement, Webern observes the same structure of a 16-bar period with the antecedent in sentence form; this is the first segment of a ternary form: a (16) – b (10) – a' (8). In bar 35, the transition begins in the parallel key (C minor). The regular rhythmic subdivision of the 9/8 (in three dotted quarter notes) is taken from bar 5. The B section has a little thematic weight: its motivic profile is unspecific and the harmony modulates in thirds (A flat major, F minor, C minor). This is reflected in the irregular hypermetric structure, which Ratz describes with the formula: (1x4) + (2x1) +2 [= 12 bars]. Thus the bars 53-64 correspond to the retransition. An alternative reading – which I do not like – is to understand it as a new sentence: a 4-bar phrase, its repetition, and 4 bars of liquidation. Indeed, Ratz uses the term 'development' (*Entwicklung*) for the segment beginning in bar 51, but this would suggest that here we do have a real secondary theme.

The triptych Op. 31 attracted attention also on account of its finales. Marx discusses at length the last movement – Rondo, Allegretto – of the first sonata as an eloquent example of a mixture of rondo and sonata form.[56] The outline of the movement shows a strong affinity to what he dubbed the 'fifth type of rondo': the principal and secondary themes are grouped in a single main section, then a new secondary section follows, and finally the third part is the recapitulation of the first including both the principal and secondary themes. Accordingly, the secondary theme (bars 42-53) is contrasting in construction and key (in the dominant, D major). The codetta, beginning in bar 54, is used as a dominant pedal for the return of the A section (bar 67), thus suggesting a large ternary form ABA. However, the principal theme experiences a modification, turning to the parallel key G minor (bar 53, the 17th bar). From bar 87, Beethoven works with a counterpoint of the two motives constituting the antecedent of the principal theme.

---

54 Cfr. the comment on the entry of the B section, which he dubbed as 'secondary theme', in Theodor W. Adorno, *Beethoven. A Philosophy of Music*, ed. by Rolf Tiedemann, trans. by Edmund Jephcott, Polity Press, Cambridge 1998, pp. 185-186.

55 Cfr. Webern, *Über musikalische Formen*, pp. 342-344, and Ratz, *Einführung in die musikalische Formenlehre*, pp. 150-153.

56 Cfr. Marx, *Die Lehre von der musikalischen Komposition* 3, pp. 308-310.

In bar 98, after reaching E flat major, a new segment begins to alternate with the previous one. Jadassohn also dwells on this passage. He observes that we cannot speak in terms of '*Alternativsatz*', because the bass line E flat–F–G reproduces the second motive of the principal theme (bar 1) in a different metric position.[57] This builds an eight-bar 'double period' [*Doppelperiode*], which is repeated three times. Instead, Marx underlines the affinity of this section with the 'second part of the sonata form', the development.[58] Webern and Schoenberg make conjectures about the structure of the principal theme, making two different hypotheses. Schoenberg maintains that its referent is a 'small ternary form', the dominant and the tonic pedals representing a reverse relationship from the usual one, but he fails to explain how the middle section should create a contrast with the A section.[59] Webern instead tends towards a binary song: A (8-bars period) – B (new idea) – repetition of both. Schoenberg also describes other sections of this movement, especially the 'developing middle section', which he sees beginning in bar 82 and moving through an arch-like modulation: G minor (83), C minor (91), E flat major (98), C minor (106), G minor (121).[60]

Special thanks to Richard Carr for his help in formulating the English version of this article.

57 Jadassohn, *Die Formen in den Werken der Tonkunst*, p. 71.
58 Cfr. Marx, *Die Lehre von der musikalischen Komposition* 3, p. 309.
59 Cfr. Schoenberg, *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*, p. 121.
60 *Ibid.*, pp. 197-198.

The First Movement of Op. 31 No. 1 and the Idea of Anticipation

Giorgio Sanguinetti

The first movement of Op. 31 No. 1 has often been characterized as humorous and comic: Lewis Lockwood, commenting on the sonata's beginning, wrote that 'The first opens with a comically disruptive exchange between disparate scraps of materials'.[1] For Adolf Bernhard Marx this sonata represents

> one of the happiest moments in Beethoven's life [...] the entire first movement is pervaded by a mood, the representation of which seems to require no advice [...] the lightness and happy mood of the first movement is manifest in the shortness of the phrases, in the half playful, half dreamy stops and pauses.[2]

Claudia Maurer Zenck has further expanded upon the humorous nature of the piece in an essay exploring several accounts of the 'humorous' genre by contemporary authors, such as Friedrich August Weber, Carl Friedrich Michaelis and others.[3] There is no point in denying the 'humorous' aspects in Op. 31 No. 1, especially when 'humorous' is not used synonymously with 'jocular' or 'amusing', but rather to signify 'departure from the conventional'. According to Michaelis, 'humorous music is sometimes comical and naive, sometimes serious and sublime', and its departure from the conventional is expressed through 'the reversal of figures, the unusual form of the beginning, the transitions, or the endings'.[4]

---

1 Lewis Lockwood, *Beethoven: The Music and the Life*, W. W. Norton, New York, 2003, p. 137.

2 Adolf Bernhard Marx, *Introduction to the Interpretation of the Beethoven Piano Works*, Clayton F. Summy, Chicago, 1984, p. 120.

3 Claudia Maurer Zenck, '"Mannichfaltige Abweichungen von der gewöhnlischen Sonate-Form": Beethoven's "Piano Solo" Op. 31 No. 1 and the Challenge of Communication', in *Communication in Eighteenth-Century Music*, ed. by Danuta Mirka and Kofi Agawu, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2008, pp. 53-79.

4 *Ibid.*, p. 58.

I argue that Op. 31 No. 1 is not humorous in a 'low' sense, as if it were a joke, or a parody of a sonata – that would be highly unusual for the first composition of a group of three, at least in Beethoven's works. All other first numbers of his cycles of three compositions – piano trios Op. 1, piano sonatas Op. 2 and 10, string trios Op. 9, violin sonatas Op. 12 and 30, the *Razumovsky* quartets Op. 59 - have a serious, almost learned character. Op. 31 No. 1 would be the first, and only case of a first number with the character of a scherzo. In fact, the first edition by Nägeli contained only the first two sonatas, the third having been published later – possibly in November – together with a faulty reissue of the *Pathétique*. In Beethoven's output, when two compositions are published together under the same opus number, the compositions tend to be shorter, and the character of the first work is usually less formal than that of a first work in a group of three – as in the two cello sonatas Op. 5, the piano sonatas Op. 14, 27, and 49. However, there is little doubt that Beethoven intended the sonatas in Op. 31 to be three: the place of the G major sonata as, so to say, the keynote in the tryptic seems to have never been questioned.

Many writers have based their comments on the G major sonata on the famous note published in the 'Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung' on August 1803 by Nägeli, in which the publisher announced the publication of the *Répertoire des Clavicenistes*, where the sonatas Op. 31 first appeared:

> First of all, the series is about piano solos in the grand style, of great scope, with many departures from the usual sonata-form [Abweichungen von der gewöhnlichen Sonaten-Form]. These works should be distinguished by their detail, abundance of ideas, and fullness of texture. Contrapuntal phrases must be interwoven with piano displays of florid extravagance. Whoever is not an accomplished piano virtuoso will hardly be able to achieve anything noteworthy here.[5]

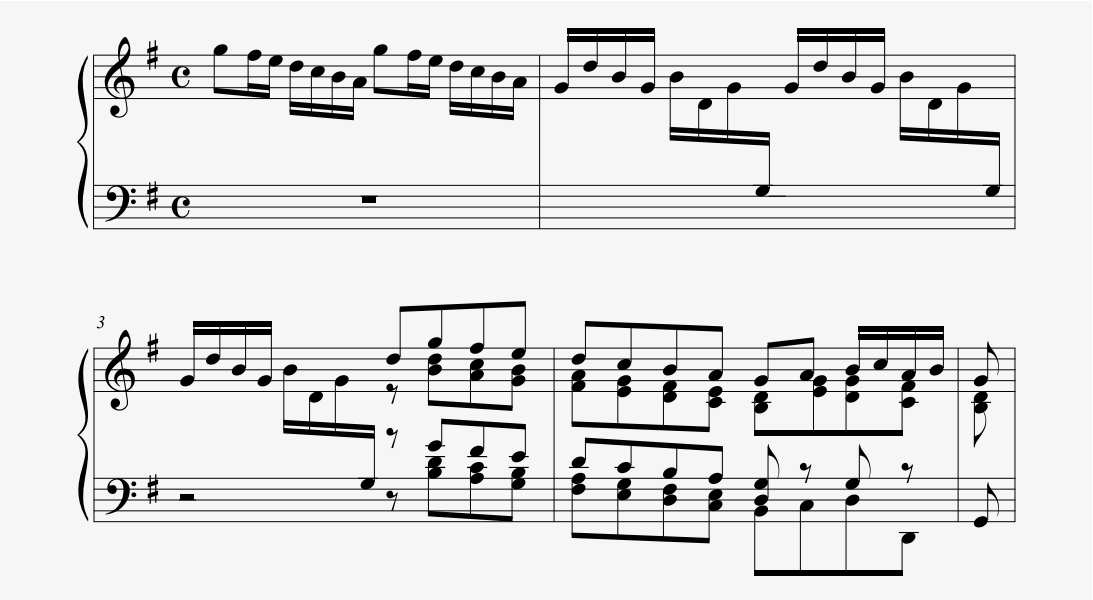
No doubt Nägeli's project matches some of the characteristics of Op. 31 as a whole, such as 'abundance of ideas', 'fullness of texture', 'piano display of florid extravagance'. I would be cautious with the part that has been most commented upon, namely the 'many departures from the usual sonata-form'. As far as I know, this is the first mention ever of something called 'sonata-form' (*Sonaten-Form*), almost thirty years before the 'official' birth of this term in the writings of Adolf Bernhard Marx. Clearly, the name must have circulated informally a number of years prior, otherwise Nägeli would not have used the adjective 'gewöhnlich' – curiously, the same adjective used by Abramo Basevi when he first mentioned the 'solita forma de' duetti' in 1859. However, we cannot be sure that by 'sonata-form' Nägeli meant the same formal construct, and the same rules and conventions that we are accustomed to after two centuries of *Formenlehre*. We know for sure that Nägeli was concerned about the regular grouping of bars in four-bar units (*Vierer*) and, by extension, in metrical issues in general, because in his edition of Op. 31

5 *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, August 1803, 'Intelligenz-Blatt' N. XXIII; the translation is drawn from Zenck, 'Mannichfaltige Abweichungen', p. 55.

No. 1 he famously added a missing four-bar unit at the end of the first movement.

The main theme (bb. 1–30)

Hans-Joachim Hinrichsen characterizes the opening theme as follows: 'In the beginning of Op. 31 there is a paradox. The G major sonata opens with a three-bar cadential formula, which resembles more the conclusions rather than the opening of a phrase'.[6] That there is something paradoxical in this beginning is undeniable, but the lack of any harmonic motion, in particular the absence of the dominant, makes it difficult to consider this a cadential formula. More likely this beginning – we might call it a 'motto' – represents an improvisational opening gambit: a scale in the beginning of a fantasia-like piece helps to establish the key, as in the opening of J.S. Bach's G major toccata for harpsichord, BWV 916 (Example 1):



Example 1: J.S. Bach, G major toccata for harpsichord BWV 916, bb. 1-5

The opening of a prelude, or fantasia-like composition with a descending scale was standard procedure, and Bach (among many other composers) used it extensively, as in the prelude of the C major cello suite, BWV 1009, or the organ prelude in G major with a composite figuration of scales and arpeggios. Beethoven himself made use of descending scales at the start of improvisatory works, such as the Fantasia Op. 77. However, this opening (not closing!) gesture

6 Hans-Joachim Hinrichsen, *Beethoven. Die Klaviersonaten*, Bärenreiter, Kassel, 2013, p. 202.

is somehow destabilized by a detour of the right hand that, having reached the D, moves to the upper neighbor E through a D sharp and a B (which confirms that the implied harmony throughout the bar is still G major), before returning to D natural on the second half of bar 2. This detour has profound implications for the continuation of the movement, and more specifically for the choice of keys in which the subordinate theme will occur.

A striking feature of the first theme is that the right hand enters a sixteenth before the left. This unusual characteristic has been considered by Claudia Maurer Zinck and Robert Hatten a token of the humorous style of this sonata, as if it were a parody of the manner of bad piano playing. As Claudia Maurer Zenck puts it, 'it is far less about a true upbeat than about revealing the inability of the hands to play together, their asynchronicity, which either parodies the less than luminous brilliance of contemporary piano virtuosi or their custom of beginning figures such as runs or arpeggios with a short appoggiatura'[7], and Hatten: 'The syncopations may whimsically suggest a performer who is unable to play both hands simultaneously'.[8] This interpretation fits well into the comic idea of this sonata, but there is a problem: playing the right hand before the left is something very unusual, because chords are usually arpeggiated from the bass up and not the other way around. As Charles Rosen pointed out, 'the anomaly is making the right hand precede the left. Playing with the two hands out of phase but with the left hand slightly before the right is an established technique of keyboard style from at least the eighteenth century'.[9]

Whether it is comic or not, the anticipation of the right hand has a crucial role in defining the thematic content, and even the form, of the first movement: not only does it characterize the main theme where anticipations are literally everywhere, but also the subordinate theme, where the syncopation is the result of an anticipation, rather than a delay, of the second note of the rhythmic figure quarter-half-quarter, and of the extended 'standing on the dominant' at the end of the development (bars 170-192). The idea of anticipation is, in my opinion, the most pervasive motivic element in the first movement of Op. 31 No. 1. Wilhelm von Lenz, among others, completely disregarded the 'humorous' interpretation endorsed by Czerny and suggested an alternative reading. He wrote that 'this allegro is abrupt, blunt, spasmodic and difficult at first: it is a race in the rough mountain paths. A wild, anxious song dominates the furious runs in sixteenth notes.[10]

This is not the first time, nor the last, that Beethoven used anticipations in a

---

7 Zenck, *Mannichfaltige Abweichungen*, p. 62.

8 Robert Hatten, *Beethovens Italian Tropes: Modes of Stylistic Appropriation*, *Beethoven Forum*, 13/1, 2006, pp.1-27: 16.

9 Charles Rosen, *Beethoven's Piano Sonatas: A Short Companion*, Yale University Press, New Haven / London, 2002, p. 164.

10 Wilhelm von Lenz, *Beethoven et ses trois styles*, Legouix, Paris, 1909, pp. 217-218: 'cet allegro est brusque, bourru, saccadé et de difficile abord: c'est une course dans les rudes chemins des montagnes. Un chant sauvage, inquiet, domine les furibondes coulées de double croches'.

piano sonata. Anticipation is a distinctive feature in the Trio of the Allegretto in the *Moonlight* Sonata (Op. 27 No. 2), and in the main theme of Op. 90, first movement (bars 8-15). The character of these two anticipations is entirely different: the trio of Op. 27 No. 2 is humorous in the 'low' sense, a parody of a peasant music according to the eighteenth-century conventions, while the anticipations in Op. 90 give the theme a feeling of longing and desire. In the case of Op. 31 No. 1, I think that the anticipations, together with the sixteenth runs, bestow this music with a feeling of urgency and impatience, rather than some awkward or perverse humour, as in Von Lenz's 'course dans le rudes chemins', and the 'chant sauvage'. It is almost as if the right hand couldn't wait to express itself, undermining, so to say, the entrance of the left hand.

The anticipation is pervasive on the surface of the music, but it also influences the metrical structure at a deeper level. In the first movement of Op. 31 No. 1 the short notated meter, 2/4, and the lively tempo (Allegro vivace) both call for a metrical perception of groups of bars, rather than of single bars. This perception is called 'hypermeter', after Rothstein (1989), but something similar was known in eighteenth century music theory: Heinrich Christoph Koch (1749-1816) wrote that 'not only the most common, but also [...] the most useful and most pleasing for our feelings are those basic phrases which are completed in the fourth measure of simple meters and which one thus [...] calls four-measure units (*Vierer*).[11] Koch mentions a four-bar *phrase* and thus the *Vierer* is different from the modern hypermeter because, according to Rothstein, a phrase is something distinct from hypermetrical organization. For Rothstein,

> It is the emphasis on tonal structure that [...] is crucial to a clear understanding of the notion of phrase in tonal music. In other words, a phrase should be understood as, among other things, a directed motion in time from one tonal entity to another; these entities may be harmonies, melodic tones (in any voice or voices), or some combination of the two. *If there is no tonal motion, there is no phrase.*[12]

Clearly, phrases may coincide with hypermeters, as they usually do in standard tight-knit themes such as the sentence or the period; in this case, however, they do not, since there is no harmonic motion from bar 1 to bar 8 of the main theme, but there is a clear four-bar hypermeter (we might use Koch's term *'Vierer'*), the perception of which is enhanced by the short duration of the bars in 2/4 meter, and by the lively tempo (Allegro vivace). The perception of hypermeter is influenced by contextual factors, such as sudden changes in texture and accents: in this case, a major change occurs at the onset of the chords after the right-hand sixteenth-note

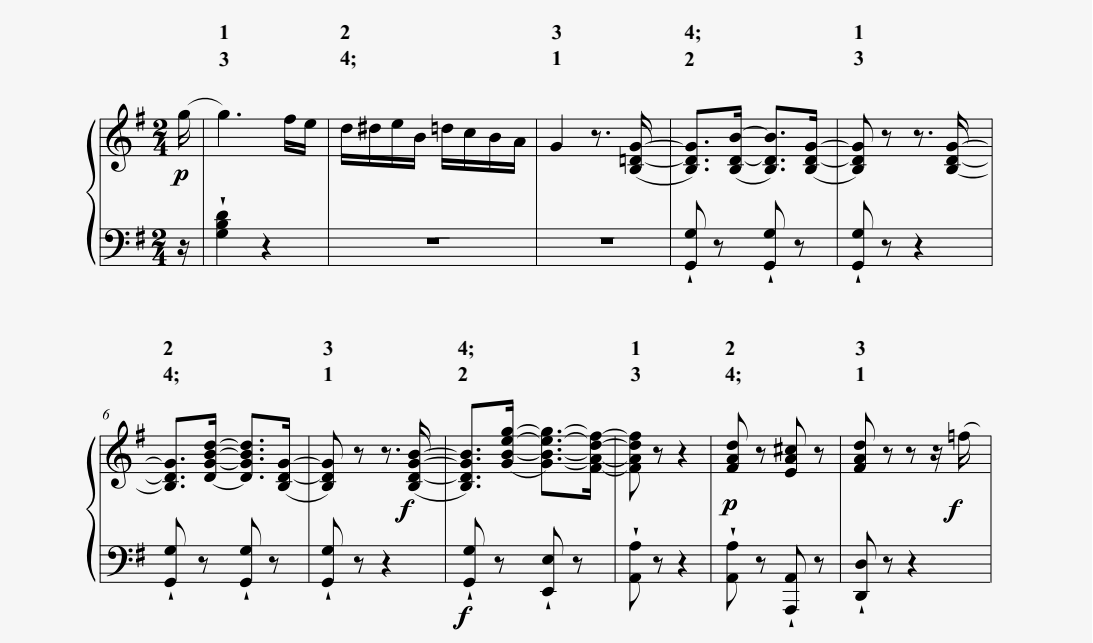
---

11 H. Ch. Koch, *Versuch II*, p. 366. Something similar to hypermeter was known in the Schoenbergian circle as 'Taktgruppe'. See: Hans Swarowsky, 'Taktgruppenanalyse', in Id., *Wahrung der Gestalt. Schriften über Werk und Wiedergabe, Stil und Interpretation in der Musik*, ed. by Manfred Huss, Universal Edition, Wien, 1979, pp. 29-37. (I am indebted to Gianmario Borio for signalling me this work).

12 William Rothstein, *Phrase Rhythm in Tonal Music*, Schirmer, New York, 1989, p. 51.

runs in the first three bars. The downbeat of bar 3 represents the end of the run, and the beginning of the second part (bars 3-11) of this unusual eleven bar-phrase – the main theme as a whole may be heard as a 30-bar compound period with a 11-bar antecedent, a 11-bar consequent (bars 11-22) and an 8-bar post-cadential extension. Consequently, bar 3 may be heard as a hypermetrical downbeat, and counted as 1 in a four-bar hypermeter, and the preceding three bars heard as an extended upbeat, with bar 1 counted as 2 of the first, incomplete *Vierer* (Example 1). An alternative reading is also possible: in this case, the *Vierer* begins on bar 1, and bar 3 is counted as 3: the only problem with this reading is that bar 3, an obvious point of articulation, falls on a weak bar of the *Vierer*. On the other hand, one might argue that bar 1 sounds stronger than bar 3 because of the difference of weight between the left-hand chord in bar 1 and the single note in bar 3. Later on, we shall see that Beethoven resolves this ambiguity at the onset of the recapitulation.

Neither of the two readings adequately explains the onset of the consequent, however. With bars 11-14 we hear the same situation as the antecedent, albeit one whole tone lower, and tend to interpret them metrically as we did with the antecedent. But hearing bar 11 as the third bar of a *Vierer* is impossible if we want to keep the regularity of the four bars hypermeter, and the same holds true if we use the alternative reading. In the first case, we are forced to count: 3-4; 1-2-3-4; 1-2-3-4: 1-(2)-3!-4, and skip the second bar of the third *Vierer*, and if we choose the second reading: 1-2-3-4; 1-2-3-4; 1-2-3-(4) 1!, and skip the fourth bar of the third *Vierer*. Example 2 shows both readings.



Example 2: two alternative readings of bars 1–11 of Op. 31 No. 1

The effect is the perception that the regularity of the *Vierer* is disrupted by the consequent entering one bar too soon, a disruption that is underscored by the *forte* in contrast with the *piano* of the similar passage in the antecedent. I would argue that, the anticipated arrival of the consequent is a manifestation, on a higher level, of the same idea of anticipation that is first apparent in the beginning of the movement, and then throughout the main theme.

The main theme: tonal ambiguity

The beginning of Op. 31 No. 1, is also a paradox in terms of tonality. The first seven bars are anchored on the triad of G major, and the key signature confirms that G major is indeed the key of the sonata. However, in bar 8 a cadential progression moves to a perfect authentic cadence in D major, and the G major is now perceived as IV of D. Even more confusing is the consequent on ♭VII, that leads to a PAC on C major (bars 21-22): only in bars 23-30 the key of G major is stabilized. Carl Schachter commented upon this aspect as follows:

> Listening to and understanding these themes is complicated by a harmonic ambiguity inherent in their structure. I consider the harmonic framework of the first section [of the theme] – bars 1-11 of the sonata in G major [...] as I to V/V and to V. However, it is also possible to hear the same chord progression as IV-V-I in the key of the dominant; and the second section of the theme, for the same reason, which I read as ♭II to V/V and subsequently to V, may legitimately be heard as IV-V-I of the subdominant.[13]

Schachter does not entirely dispute this reading, but deems it as potentially misleading since it does not consider the larger context of the theme, which clearly expresses G major as the tonic. However, the paradox remains: after seven bars of unspoiled G major, there is still the doubt on the tonal interpretation of this sonority.[14]

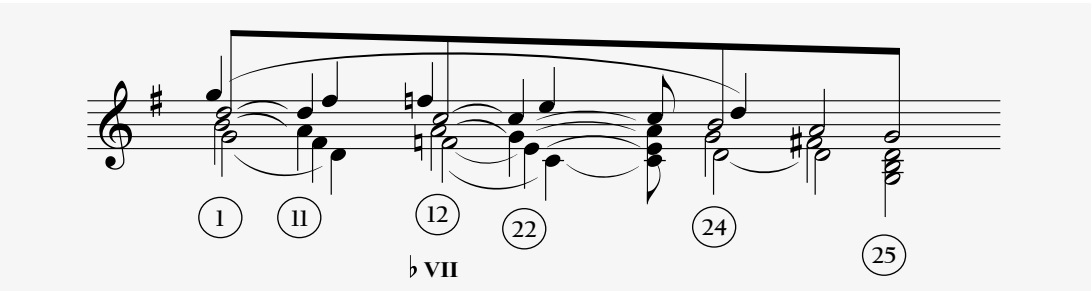
Of course the most discussed aspect of the main theme is the choice of launching the consequent on the subtonic ♭VII. In the above mentioned paper, Carl Schachter draws a comparison between the tonal plans of the first movements of Op. 31 No. 1 and the *Waldstein* Sonata Op. 53, showing an impressive similarity between the two sonatas. In particular, he points out that in both sonatas the lowered VII degree (F natural in Op. 31 No. 1, B flat in Op. 53) is a step towards

---

13 Carl Schachter, 'La reconciliación de opuestos: elementos cromáticos en los dos primeros movimientos de las sonatas para piano Op. 31 núm. 1 y Op. 53 de Beethoven', *Quodlibet: revista de especialización musical*, 6, 1996, pp. 47-59: 52.

14 The first movement of the piano sonata in E minor, Op. 90, presents a comparable tonal ambiguity in the first eight bars of the main theme. The sonata begins with the tonic triad, E minor, but on the second bar moves to D major and the D in the bass moves stepwise to G: the same happens in bars 5-8 a third higher. Although there is no formal authentic cadence here, the tonal motion clearly imply VI-V-I in G major followed by VI-V-I in B minor.

the raised VII (the leading tone) in the chord of the dominant, and describes this unusual circumstance as 'the reconciliation of the opposites'. A foreground graph of the first 25 bars of the first movement, Example 3 here reproduces Schachter's Example 3. The F natural arises from a (partially) chromatic descending fourth linear progression G-F sharp-F natural-E-D that is superimposed with the structural upper voice, indicated in the graph by the white notes D-C-B-A-G.



Example 3: foreground graph of bars 1-25 (from Schachter)

Beneath their diatonic appearance, both sonatas, Op. 31 No. 1 and Op. 53, are thoroughly chromatic, something that has a deep influence on the tonal structure of the whole movement. In Op. 31 No. 1 the chromatic element is first introduced in bar 1 when the D moving to E becomes D sharp, then again with the opposition between F and F sharp.

The transition

Where does the transition open? The first and most obvious onset is after the PAC in bar 30, a situation that matches precisely the one described by William Caplin concerning 'two-part transitions':

> The process of tonal destabilization sometimes takes place in two distinct stages, thus yielding a *two-part transition*. Following a main theme ending with a perfect authentic cadence, the first part of the transition leads to a half cadence (or dominant arrival) in the home key, just as in a single non modulating transition; the second part then modulates to the subordinate key.[15]

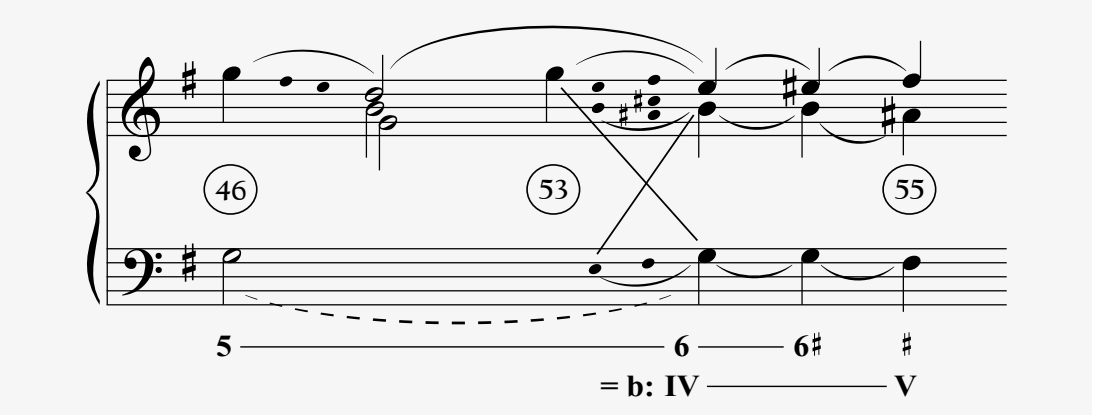
A different opinion is expressed by Hans-Joachim Hinrichsen, who considers the passage from bar 30 to bar 45 as a 'necessary counterweight' to the flatward direction of the second part of the main theme, and therefore a 'continuation' of the main theme, and by Charles Rosen who hears this passage as a conclusion of the main theme 'which combines the functions of concerto virtuosity and an or-

15 William Caplin, *Classical Form. A Theory of Formal Functions for the Instrumental Music of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1998, p. 135.

chestral tutti'.[16] A post-cadential extension of the main theme, as Hinrichsen suggests, is certainly possible, so is hearing this passage as the first, non modulating section of a two-part transition. What makes things disconcerting is that after this passage the main theme returns, and in the home key of G major, which makes the supposed first part of a transition, whose aim should be to destabilize the home key before venturing to a new one, pointless. Therefore, it is probably correct to accept the onset of the transition with the return of the main theme in bar 46.

With only 20 bars, this transition is one of the shortest in Beethoven's piano sonata, but not the shortest: that of Op. 10 No. 2, first movement, is only six bars long, and begins with the repetition of the main theme, as in Op 31 No. 1, but without the long dominant coda of the later composition. Its structure cannot be discussed unless we mention another striking feature of this sonata allegro: the subordinate theme in the key of the mediant (B major/minor) rather than in the key of the dominant (V).

In his analysis Carl Schachter shows how the transition modulates to the mediant (see Example 3): 'After the fermata Beethoven comes back to restate the initial idea, but at the moment when a chord of E minor should lead to the dominant of D, then he replaces this last chord with a F sharp major, a first clue that we are moving towards B major'.[17] This change of direction is accomplished through a voice exchange (indicated in Example 3 with the crossing lines) and the chromatic motion E-E sharp-F sharp in the upper voice. But the E sharp that produces the crucial (for the motion to the dominant) augmented sixth chord is nothing but the F natural in bar 12. The whimsical transposition to the subtonic of the consequent finds here its *raison d'être*.



Example 4: foreground graph of the transition (from Schachter, Example 4)

16 Hinrichsen, Beethoven. *Die Klaviersonaten*, p. 203; Rosen, *Beethoven's Piano Sonatas*, p. 166.
17 Schachter, 'La reconciliatión de opuestos', p. 53.

The subordinate theme

There is general agreement about the meaning of this theme. Czerny wrote that 'the middle subject (in B major) must be performed softly and facetiously, but well marked'.[18] For Rosen, 'a theme of popular dance character in this key lasts in the major for only 8 bars, and it is transferred to the minor mode and the left hand'.[19] And Zenck:

> A two-bar trill ensues, which serves to increase the tension of the new tonality and the subsidiary subject. It flows into a clumsy theme in B major forming two simple *Vierer* – but in 2/4 time! The left hand has a typical dance bass, striking the deepest bass note at the beginning of the bar and chord in the middle register afterwards.[20]

I venture to suggest a different interpretation of this theme, based on the same idea that led Robert Hatten to write about 'appropriation of Italian operatic style' concerning this sonata. I hear the syncopated rhythm, and the accompaniment, as a 'trope' consisting of a dance rhythm expressing a feeling of strong emotion and anxiety, an operatic gesture present in late eighteenth century Italian opera, exemplified by two passages in Mozart's *Don Giovanni* and *Così fan tutte*: *Don Giovanni*, Atto primo, n. 2, Duetto Donna Anna–Don Ottavio *Fuggi, crudele fuggi* bars 186 segg. *Vammi ondeggiando il cor* and *Così fan tutte*, Atto primo, No. 4 Duetto Fiordiligi e Dorabella, Allegro da bar 71 *Se questo mio core mai cangia desio*.[21]

In both cases the keyword is 'core' (heart): the syncopation mimics the irregular beating of a heart overcome by strong emotions. The first eight bars of the theme are in major mode and resolved by a PAC in the subordinate key of B major; after that, the theme moves to the left hand in minor, and launches into an ascending and descending sequential motion until it reaches another PAC in B minor. Afterwards, the syncopated melody moves to the right hand in a slightly shortened version (without the first four bars) and repeats what was previously the bass sequence in the upper voice, which forces the left hand to find a new, different bass. Example 4 shows both sequential motions identifying the *partimento* patterns. After the structural closure of the exposition, with the PAC in bar 98, the major and minor versions of the subordinate theme are brought into close proximity.

---

18 Czerny, *On the Proper Performance of all Beethoven's Works for the Piano*, p. 52.

19 Rosen, *Beethoven's Piano Sonatas*, cit., p. 166.

20 Zenck, 'Mannichfaltige Abweichungen', p. 65.

21 A trope is a 'interpretative synthesis of [...] otherwise contradictory topics that are juxtaposed in a single functional location or rhetorical moment', Hatten, *Beethovens Italian Tropes*, pp. 2-3.

The development

The development follows what Erwin Ratz (and after him, William Caplin) called the 'Grundschema' of classical development sections, namely 'Einleitung – Kern – Verweilen auf der Dominante' (pre-core, core, standing on the dominant).[22] In this essential scheme, however, many things are uncommon. First of all, the pre-core begins with the home key (G major), suggesting a third repetition of the exposition. Secondly, the pre-core has none of the relaxed, hesitant character that is usually attributed to this subsection of the development. Rather, after the first motto of the main theme (bars 111-114), what sounds like the continuation of the main theme reveals itself to be a tight unit of eight bars with a model that resembles a core. This impression is further strengthened by an exact repetition of the same model a fifth below, then a third (shortened) repetition going yet another fifth below, a standard choice for the sequential motion of a core. The harmonic motion through the descending circle of fifths G-C-F-B flat, and the tight-knit model repeated in sequence clearly suggest a core, rather than a pre-core. But a core shouldn't appear immediately after the repeat sign: it should appear later. And, in fact, the real core arrives in bar 134, again with an eight-bar model and two sequential transpositions connected directly with the standing on the dominant. Clearly, the harmonic progression underlying the core cannot be the same as the first, 'pseudo' core: Beethoven chooses a sequence by the ascending chromatic motion B flat-B-C-C sharp-D, a progression that is not, so to say, one of the first choices for a core. In the premature appearance of the core, I hear another manifestation of the same idea of anticipation, an expression of the feeling of urgency that occurs throughout the first movement of Op. 31 No. 1.

The literal anticipation, with its characteristic rhythm, returns as a second part of the standing on the dominant. This extraordinary passage first establishes three strong *Vierer*, stressing the first bar of a group of four through a low D marked forte in bars 170, 174, 178, then destabilizes the *Vierer* by means of a high E flat (the minor ninth of the dominant harmony) instead of the low D, which arrives one bar later. These two bars are repeated three times, suggesting a six-bar grouping; when the D bass in bar 188 is repeated, Beethoven gives the impression that this note has been reinstated on its original position as the first bar of a group. At this point, one is inclined to count 1 on bar 188, starting a new *Vierer*; however, the original *Vierer* still remains in the memory as in a 'shadow meter'.[23] So we have two conflicting hypermeters: one perceives the disruption of the regularity and counts '6' on bar 187; the other, the 'shadow' one, continues the *Vierer* in spite of the conflicting metrical signals. The rarefaction of the events from bar 187 to bar 193 further blurs the perception of the hypermeter,

22 Erwin Ratz, *Einführung in die musikalische Formenlehre*, p. 33; Caplin, *Classical Form*, pp. 141-155.

23 The concept of 'shadow meter' has been coined by Frank Samarotto, 'Strange Dimensions: Regularity and Irregularity in Deep Levels of Rhythmic Reduction', in *Schenker Studies 2*, ed. by Carl Schachter and Hedi Siegel, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1999, pp. 222-238: 235.

until Beethoven, with a bold gesture, asserts the hypermetrical downbeat in bar 194, replacing the chord *piano* at the beginning of the exposition with a G played *fortissimo* in the lowest register or his piano. This G, in turn, retrospectively clarifies the dilemma that we faced in the first measures of the movement: should we consider the first bar as 1 or as 3? Beethoven gives his answer here: it is a 1! And this, in turn, explains why he chooses to replace the *piano* chord in bar 1 with the *fortissimo* octave in bar 194.

In the bars immediately preceding the onset of the recapitulation (bars 178-188) I understand the conflict between the E flat (the minor ninth of the dominant harmony) and D (the bass of the same harmony) in bars 178-188 – the highest and the lowest note in the passage – as the most remote embodiment of the same D-D sharp conflict present in the very beginning of the movement, one in which the D sharp is enharmonically spelled as E flat, and is therefore included in the dominant harmony; at the same time, this D/E flat conflation is an harbinger of the upcoming, original D-D sharp in the recapitulation.[24]

Recapitulation, the missing *Vierer* and the empty bar

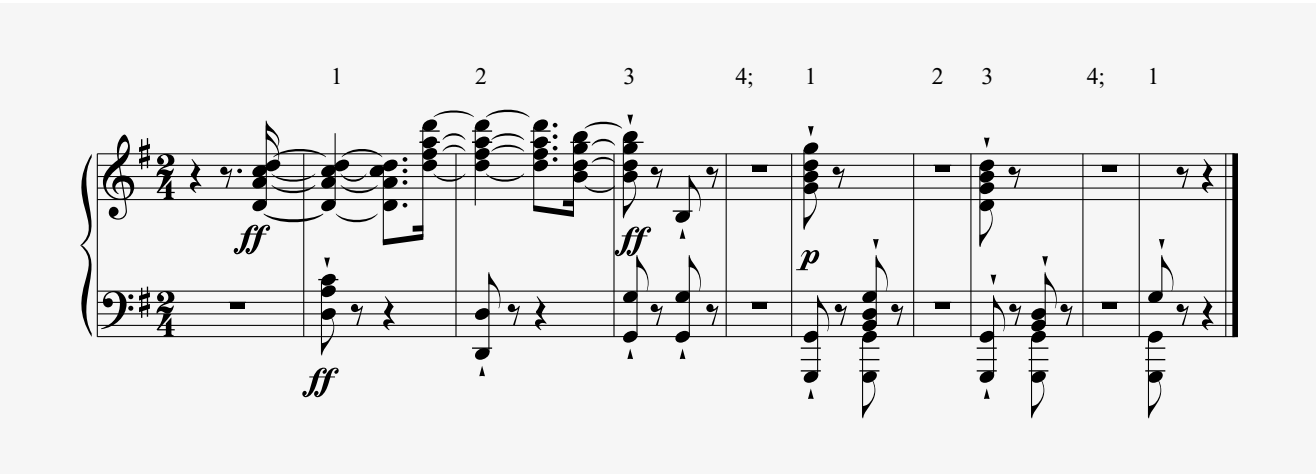
After the sensational bass G in bar 194, the recapitulation is somehow normalized with respect to the exposition. The consequent on flat VII has been taken out: consequently, the main theme has lost any resemblance with a period, and is merged with the transition. The subordinate theme is set in the lower major mediant (E major, VI), symmetrical to the upper mediant (B major, III) of the exposition. Already in its third repetition, the theme modulates to G major, reaching the normative home key. The real surprises occur in the coda, from bar 280 onwards. First of all, the coda begins with the motto of the main theme. The motto signals the onset of most sections of the sonata: main theme, transition, reconduction, development, recapitulation, and coda. In the coda, the motto is followed directly by the sixteenth runs that were missing from the main theme in the recapitulation, and leads to a passage similar to the second standing on the dominant at the end of the development. This is where Nägeli adds the four 'missing' bars that, according to Ferdinand Ries, drove Beethoven to be furious. Nägeli's addition is important because it confirms a norm that Beethoven had deliberately infringed upon. It tells us that a listener, or player, in the early nineteenth century would also expect to hear four groupings of four-bar hypermeters (*Vierer*): so they would have found the first phrase in the coda, with three *Vierer* unsettling. This is the norm, but the feeling of this first movement is that of

24 On the idea that some recapitulations might be anticipated by 'harbingers' see Giorgio Sanguinetti, 'Laborious Homecomings: the "Ongoing Recapitulation" from Clementi to Brahms', in *Formal Functions in Perspective, Essays on Musical Form from Haydn to Adorno*, ed. by Steven Vande Moortele, Julie Pedneault-Deslauriers e Nathan Martin, University of Rochester Press, Rochester (NY), 2015, pp. 315-342.

restlessness; so Beethoven skips the normative second *Vierer* and jumps directly to the third, creating an asymmetrical grouping.

Premature ending

The last *Vierer* is incomplete, because only its first subdivision (*Einschnitt*) is present; however, we might hear it as a counterpart to the second reading of the beginning, with the first two bars as the second *Einschnitt* (3, 4) of an incomplete *Vierer*. So Beethoven seems to reinstate the doubt that was dissipated with the fortissimo G in bar 187. In any case, bar 324 should indeed be considered 1; so why the empty bar at the end? Most likely, the reason is that the last sounding bar repeats the same rhythmic succession heard since the beginning of this movement: two chords, the first syncopated and the second on the weak beat, followed by an (almost) empty bar, creating a two-bar model. However, the sensation of a premature (anticipated?) ending remains, and it would be dissipated by a recomposition such as that shown in Example 5.



Example 5: recomposition of the conclusion

A performer's perspective

The idea that the analyst is someone that tells performers how to play music is fortunately no longer accepted practice. I have to admit that some of the ideas I developed for this paper were triggered by Davide Cabassi's performance of this sonata, issued by Decca records in 2021 (CD 4856517). In his rendition, Cabassi emphasizes the syncopation of the subordinate theme through a bold tempo making the anticipation of the second note audible in such a convincing way as to make me think of this whole movement differently, propelling me to develop my own way of thinking about the performance of this music. As in a hermeneutic circle, the inter-

pretation moves from the performance to the analysis and back to the performance again. The following remarks about performance derive from my reading of this movement, which is not exhaustive (I have taken into account only some aspects of this sonata) nor does it claim to be endowed by any 'scientific' truth. However, I think that my reading is substantiated by the empirical evidence of the score, read through what I see as appropriate theoretical approaches. In other words, this is how I play Op. 31 No. 1; I am sharing what motivates my performative choices, but I have no ambition of persuading other pianists to do the same.

Concerning the general approach to this sonata movement, it should be clear that I tend to favor a character of restlessness, of urgency, rather than a comic or humoristic one. The humorous (according to the definition given by Carl Friedrich Michaelis) is more a 'departure from the conventional' than some parodistic exaggeration.

In the first issue of how to deal with the hypermetrical ambiguity in the beginning, taking the reading from 1 would spoil the effect of the *fortissimo* in the recapitulation: I therefore would choose either the second reading (from 3) or, better, find a way not to choose between the two conflicting hypermetrical readings just yet.

The performance of the beginning of the main theme is further complicated by its tonal ambiguity. Should we play the G major chord as a tonic (stable) or as a subdominant leading to the PAC in D major? We know that it is indeed the tonic, but some of the doubt at this point in the theme – coupled with the doubt about the hypermeter – gives this beginning an unsettling quality.

In the descending run of the motto the chromatic element D-D sharp-E (B)-D natural should be shaped intentionally, not incidentally as a mere filling-in of the sixteenths, because this tiny idea will have many consequences in the remainder of the exposition. Connecting the F natural in the consequent (bar 12) to the E sharp in bar 56 is a little bit beyond the possibility of the average pianist, but playing the chromatic passage E-E sharp-F sharp (bars 55-56) in a way reminiscent of the D-D sharp-E in bar 2 is certainly possible, and helps clarifying the relevance of chromaticism in this apparently very diatonic movement.

I reckon that playing the subordinate theme with an agitato character is very much a personal choice: the operatic 'cuore' gesture is troped with a dance, and choosing to emphasize one topic or the other depends on the performer's inclinations. However, after having realized the significance of the anticipation throughout this movement, I tend to play this theme in an agitato style.

In the development, I think the harmonic reversal of the pre-core and core harmonic progressions should be emphasized. In particular, the long-range ascending chromatic progression in the bass of the core, B flat-B natural-C-C sharp-D (bars 134-150) should be clearly articulated, giving this passage a powerful upward surge.

At the end of the development, the uncertainty about the four-bar grouping that becomes apparent after bar 182 should increase in the following bars and lead to a complete standoff after bar 188, but without the slightest ritardando (the ritardando is already in the score); the *fortissimo* at the onset of the recapit-

ulation should hit the listener with its brute force.

In the coda the pianist should be aware that there is something missing: this 'something' is the four-bar unit (the *Vierer*) that Nägeli added, according to convention, in his edition. What Nägeli clearly missed is that Beethoven sought to anticipate the next *Vierer*, making the music skip one group entirely: perhaps an almost imperceptible hesitation before the syncopated chord in bar 299 might be appropriate. The audience should hear that the movement ends with an empty, silent bar. The pianist therefore should 'play' this bar in some way, perhaps by raising their hands a few centimeters above the keyboard and lowering them again after the double line.

The Genesis of the Three Piano Sonatas Op. 31: First Ideas, Early Conceptions and, in Particular, the Sketches for the *Tempest* Sonata

Martina Sichardt

Beethoven's Sketches

From May to October 1802, that is, for almost half a year, Beethoven retreated to the small village of Heiligenstadt near Vienna for health reasons. The two sketchbooks he used there, the Kessler sketchbook and the Wielhorski, chronicle the work of this summer. They document the genesis of the Piano Variations Op. 34 and Op. 35 and the *Tempest* Sonata Op. 31 no. 2 up to the first ideas for the *Eroica* – that is to say, the genesis of the works that are associated with the 'new way' above all others.[1] These two sketchbooks not only allow us to witness the genesis of these works – rather they offer us a deeper insight into the creative process of composing in general and are thus highly valued as unique documents of Beethoven's work. But this was not always the case.

When Beethoven's estate was auctioned off on November 5, 1827, the auction catalog included the lot 'handwritten notes and notebooks' (*eigenhändige Notirungen und Notirbücher*),[2] consisting of sketchbooks as well as single sheets that contained sketches and drafts from the early Bonn period up to his death. Their significance unable to be assessed, these items were packed into 51 bundles. Everything was sold during the auction; the interest in these sketch manuscripts, however, was less related to their compositional content; rather, they

1 Beethoven himself speaks to Breitkopf and Härtel of the 'completely new manner' (*ganz neue Manier*) of the two variation works (letter 18.10.1802), Czerny passes on Beethoven's statement of a 'different way' (*anderen Weg*) to Krumpholz, TDR, vol. 2, p. 362. Regarding 'neuer Weg' see Carl Dahlhaus, *Ludwig van Beethoven und seine Zeit*, Laaber-Verlag, Laaber, 1988: second edition, pp. 207-222.

2 Cfr. Ludwig van Beethoven, *Keßlersches Skizzenbuch. Vollständiges Faksimile des Autographs, mit einem Nachwort und einem Register von Sieghard Brandenburg* (vol. 5, part 2), Beethovenhaus, Bonn, 1976, Nachwort S. I; for the following see *ibid.*

served as relics, as mementos of the great master, and became part of the musical souvenir trade. Individual pages were separated from the sketchbooks and given away or exchanged among collectors; some sheets were even cut up. As a result, Beethoven's sketch manuscripts were unimaginably torn apart and scattered all over the world. The Sauer sketchbook, for example, which was listed as bundle 17 in the auction catalog and which contained, among other things, sketches for the *Moonlight* Sonata, was completely torn apart into individual sheets and then sold: these single sheets are today dispersed among libraries and collections all over the world. This fragmentation was halted when people became aware of the value of these manuscripts in the second half of the nineteenth century. Some large private collections of sketches were given to public libraries at that time and thus saved from further dispersion. For today's research on sketches, therefore, a basis had first to be established: the original state of the sketchbooks had to be reconstructed before any further research like genesis studies and sketch analysis. This was done in 1985 by the musicologists Douglas Johnson, Alan Tyson and Robert Winter. They also reconstructed the original state of the dispersed Sauer sketchbook, sheets of which are now scattered all over the world: from Stanford to Berlin, from Oslo to Bologna.[3] The only sketchbook that has survived both completely and in its original state is just the Kessler sketchbook, which contains the above-mentioned works of the 'new way'. It is also – not least for this reason – the first sketchbook that was published in excerpts: transcribed and provided with explanations by Gustav Nottebohm, who thus became a pioneer of sketch research (*Ein Skizzenbuch von Beethoven*, Leipzig, 1865).

Beethoven kept his sketches until the end of his life: thus, a total of 70 sketchbooks have survived, in addition to sketches on single sheets and leaves, totaling several thousand pages.[4] Beethoven in the midst of vast quantities of written sheets: this is how one imagined the composer in the nineteenth century (Example 1).

In terms of the sketch manuscripts, a distinction is made between different kinds of sketch material: there are the desk sketchbooks for use at home at the desk, which Beethoven used since 1798, and the pocket sketchbooks (these are folded sheets for when he was out for a walk). These he used only since 1815. Before 1798, he sketched on loose sheets; and for the late string quartets, we have score sketches on loose sheets.[5]

---

3 Cfr. JTW, p. 120-123.

4 Barry Cooper, *Das Beethoven-Kompendium. Sein Leben, seine Musik, übersetzt aus dem Englischen von Christian Berktold*, Droemer Knaur, München, 1992, p. 217ff.

5 *Ibid.*

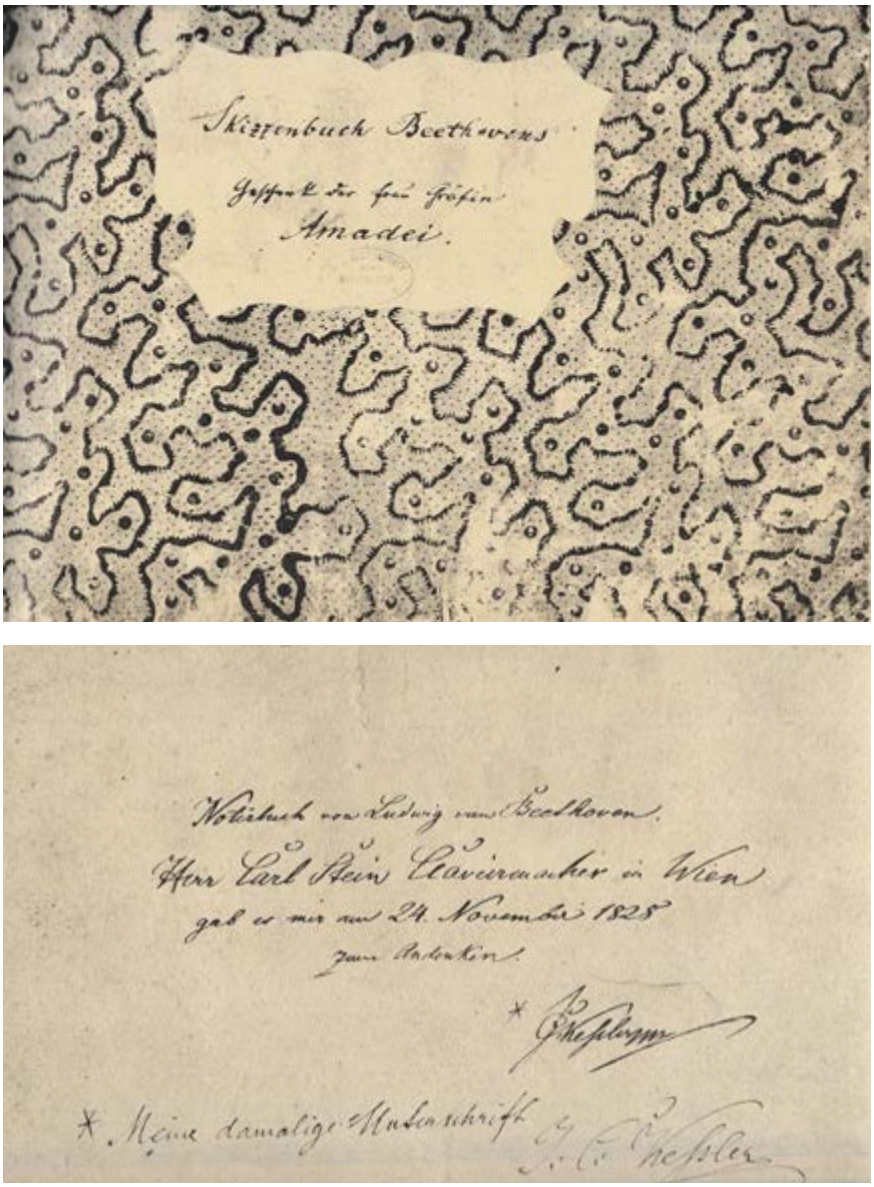
Example 1: Beethoven in his study (Carl Schlösser, 1885)[6]

Returning to the Kessler sketchbook (a desk sketchbook),[7] its history is told by the entries of its owners. The Viennese piano maker Carl Andreas Stein (1797-1863) acquired it – presumably as lot 35 – at the estate auction and gave it already one year later to Joseph Christoph Kessler (1800-1872), a pianist and composer of etudes, variations and bagatelles, who lived in Vienna at that time (see entry on the inside of the front cover). In 1859, Thayer examined this sketchbook for the first time for his Beethoven biography – the first major Beethoven biography by the way – and then six years later, Nottebohm examined the Kessler sketchbook for his publication of it. After Kessler's death in 1872, the sketchbook was sold, probably to Count Amadei, a section councilor in the Vienna Foreign Ministry

6 Cfr. JTW, p. 5.

7 For the following see Brandenburg, *Keßlersches Skizzenbuch* (vol. 5, part 2), Nachwort, p. III.

and a music lover, amateur composer, and student of Nottebohm; after his death it was then given, as a gift from his mother, to the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde in Vienna (see front cover, Example 2), where it still lives today (GdM, A34).



Example 2: Kessler sketchbook, front cover and front cover inside

The Wielhorski sketchbook, which was used after the Kessler sketchbook, made its way to Russia; it was named after its presumably second owner, Prince Wielhorski, who lived in St. Petersburg. He was a chamberlain at the tsar's court, who had taken cello lessons from Romberg in Vienna, and he was the owner of an extensive music library as well as an instrument collection in St. Petersburg. Later the Wielhorski sketchbook was temporarily in the possession of the composer

Taneyev, who wanted to publish an edition of it;[8] today it is in the Glinka Museum in Moscow (CMMC, F. 155, No. 1).

Beethoven used the Kessler sketchbook from about December 1801 to July 1802; then from about the fall of 1802 he used the Wielhorski sketchbook.[9] The 96 folios (or 192 pages) of the Kessler sketchbook were thus filled up in the middle of his holiday in Heiligenstadt. At the beginning of the sketchbook, there are sketches for Ländler and contredanses, for the Second Symphony and for bagatelles; these are followed by detailed drafts for the three violin sonatas Op. 30; on f. 82v, the sketches for the *Eroica* Variations Op. 35 and for the Piano Variations Op. 34 begin.

On the last pages, f. 91v to f. 96v, there are drafts for the complete course of the first and second movements of the G major Sonata Op. 31 No. 1, the sonata which was composed as the first of the three sonatas Op. 31.[10] Indicating that, at this point, Beethoven actually began to fulfill the commission of piano sonatas (which he had received from the Zurich publisher Hans Georg Nägeli around the end of May, 1802). He thus interrupted the work that he had begun on Op. 34 and Op. 35. The subsequent Wielhorski sketchbook begins with the composition of the E flat major Sonata Op. 31 No. 3 (pages 1-11); thereafter, it follows the continuation of the work on the Piano Variations Op. 34 and Op. 35 that had been interrupted for Op. 31 (they were completed on October 18, 1802, thus immediately after the Heiligenstadt Testament).[11]

Since, on one hand, there are only few sketches for the third movement of the G major sonata, for the second and third movements of the *Tempest* Sonata and none for the third movement of the E flat major sonata, and since, on the other hand, one can see from the surviving sketches how extensively Beethoven worked on the other movements before writing a final version, it can be assumed that, between the Kessler sketchbook and the Wielhorski sketchbook, Beethoven sketched on single sheets that have all been lost.[12]

Let us now turn to a more detailed examination of sketches. First, here is an overview of the main types of sketches:[13]

- Concept sketches: i.e. short ideas, beginnings of movements, etc.

---

8 JTW, p. 130.

9 JTW, p. 124 resp. 133.

10 Table of contents of the sketchbook see Brandenburg, *Keßlersches Skizzenbuch* (vol. 5, part 2), Nachwort, pp. VI-X.

11 JTW, p. 134.

12 JTW, p. 133.

13 The following according to Barry Cooper, *Beethoven and the Creative Process*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1990, pp. 104-107. Cooper recurs to terms previously used by Tyson, Rifkin und Lockwood ('concept sketch', 'continuity draft').

- Synopsis sketches:[14] i.e. notations planning the course for a whole movement without much elaboration (sometimes even written down verbally); also concept sketches and/or synopsis sketches for the overall disposition of a work, found especially for the late quartets. Drafts of this kind before 1800 are rare, but they became more frequent in the period from 1800-1804, at the time of the 'new way'.
- Continuity drafts: a later stage of composition. Here the main voice of the movement is more or less completely written down.

We will now deal with the sketches in detail: first with the preliminary stages prior to composition of the sonatas, then with sketches and drafts in the context of all three sonatas Op. 31 (concept sketches), and finally in particular with the surviving sketches in the context of the *Tempest* Sonata (synopsis sketches and concept sketches).

We cannot follow the compositional process any further here – from the continuity drafts to the autograph to the first edition. Continuity drafts exist for the first and second movements of the G major sonata as well as for the first, second and fourth movements of the E flat major sonata; they are already close to the final version (concerning harmony, themes, length, etc.).[15] The changes and corrections in the autograph (and eventually in the engraver's copy) could show us the continuation of the compositional process: but the autograph of the sonatas is lost, as well as the engraver's copy of the first edition at Nägeli in Zurich 1803 (which could have been either the autograph itself or a fair copy of it or a copy by a copyist corrected by Beethoven).[16]

Preliminary stages: sketches for a 'Sonata seconda'

The compositional elaboration of the three sonatas Op. 31 begins, as mentioned, on the last pages of the Kessler sketchbook: on f. 91v we find themes, formal cornerstones and the beginning of a continuity draft of the first movement of the G major sonata. On the following pages, this draft is continued, followed by a telescoped draft of the second movement as well as beginnings of further movements.

So at this point, Beethoven had begun to actually compose the sonatas commissioned by Nägeli. Two pages later (f. 93r), in the midst of these notations of the G

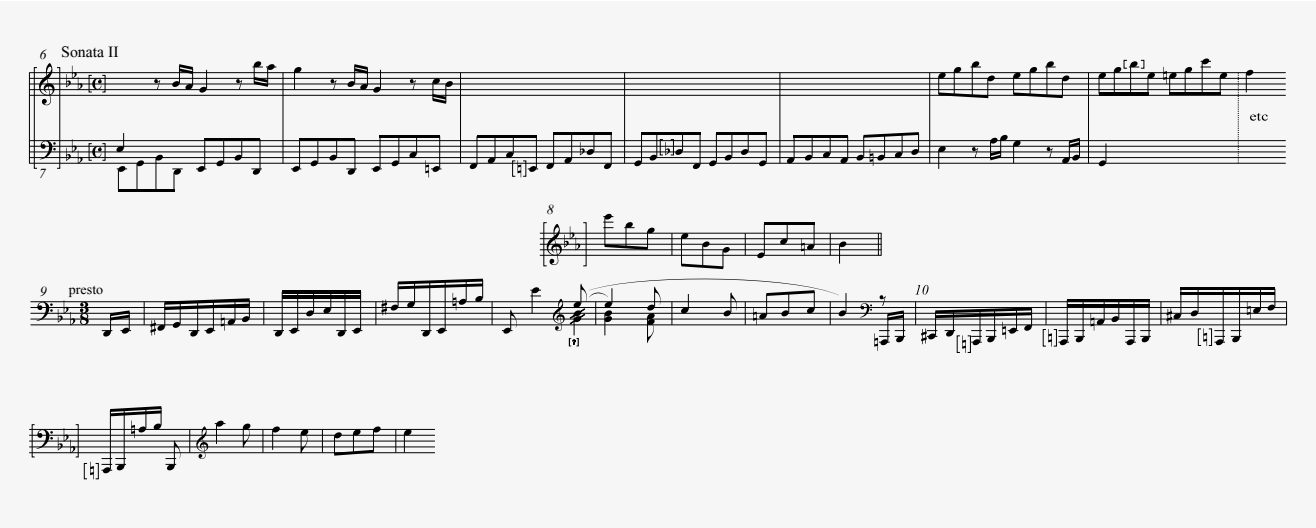
---

14 This definition according to Cooper, *Beethoven*, p. 106f. There are other (commonly used) terms for this type of sketch, such as 'telescoped draft' or 'multi-movement plan' (regarding a synopsis of a complete work).

15 For closer examination see Timothy Jones, *The "Moonlight" and Other Sonatas, Op. 27 and 31*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1999, pp. 24-34 and Richard Kramer, *"Sonate, que me veux-tu?". Opus 30, Opus 31, and the Anxieties of Genre*, in *The Beethoven Violin Sonatas. History, Criticism, Performance*, ed. by Lewis Lockwood, Mark Kroll, University of Illinois Press, Urbana and Chicago, 2004, pp. 55-57.

16 For the sources and their evaluation see Frank Buchstein und Hans Schmidt, *Klaviersonaten II. Kritischer Bericht* (Beethoven Werke VII/3), Henle, München, 2016, pp. 29-38.

major sonata, we find two movement beginnings, marked ‘Sonata II’. Thus, even before the completion of the first sonata, ideas for a second sonata are written down (Example 3):



Example 3: Kessler sketchbook f. 93r, transcription[17]

The second movement beginning (Presto) partly overwrites the theme of the last movement of the G major sonata notated below it, so the Presto-beginning was probably notated after the overall disposition of the first sonata.

We see the beginnings of two fast movements in E flat major, perhaps a first movement and a final movement. The accompanying figures of both show similarity to those of the final movement of the E flat major sonata, the third sonata, and the key also matches. Interestingly, the elaboration on the third sonata then begins with the final movement.

The last pages of the Kessler sketchbook (f. 93v to f. 96v) are almost completely used for continuity drafts of the first and second movements of the G major sonata. In between there are two more entries labeled ‘Sonata 2’ resp. ‘Sonat[a] 2da’: On f. 95r/95v we find the draft of a sonata exposition in A minor (Example 5), then on the next page (f. 95v) another movement beginning, again in E flat major (Example 4). Did Beethoven now want to place an A minor sonata at the second position? And then, changing his mind again, after all one in E flat major? Well, from the placement on f. 95v, we can deduce that the new movement beginning in E flat major was notated first, and then the exposition in A minor: because the continuation of the A minor draft was notated below the beginning in E flat major, and that means that the space above it was no longer free, it was filled with the E

17 Ludwig van Beethoven, *Keßlersches Skizzenbuch, Übertragung von Sieghard Brandenburg* (vol. 5, part 1), Beethovenhaus, Bonn, 1978, p. 197.

flat major sketch. In summary: first there was the notation in E flat major, second the one in A minor.

The movement beginning in E flat major (Example 4) is in three-four time, thus has minuet character – much like the beginning of the first movement of the later E flat major sonata. But there is nothing here of the exceptional beginning of the E flat major sonata: a *sixte ajoutée* chord leading into a sixth chord with fermata – like a progression leading to a cadenza in an instrumental concerto.[18] This unique beginning of a sonata movement violated all conventions in Beethoven's time – Beethoven's contemporaries could only excuse this sonata beginning as one of his bizarrenesses: '[...] Beethoven, an inexhaustible source of ingenious singularities, yet begins a keyboard sonata in E flat major with the minor seventh chord on the second scale degree'[19].

The beginning of an A minor sonata (Example 5), on the other hand, shows clear similarities to a finished sonata from Op. 31: the arpeggiated accompaniment pattern, the sixth leap upwards of the melody, the repetition of the motive, and in general the *agitato* character – these are all elements of the last movement of the *Tempest* Sonata, which was then in fact to become the second sonata.[20]

And yet another notation, entitled 'Sonata 2da', is found in the Kessler sketchbook, though much earlier in the book, on f. 65v (see Example 16 and 17). We can clearly see that this is a draft of the entire first movement of the *Tempest* Sonata – the sonata that later became the second sonata of the cycle. But this draft was noted in the middle of the sketchbook, far before the first sketches for the 1st sonata – was it also written first? That this is not the case is clearly proven by the inscription 'Sonata 2da'. Like the other sketches for a second sonata, this sketch was also written during the work on the first and second movement of the G major sonata. It was the last draft with the inscription 'Sonata 2da' – the draft that was then further elaborated and actually became part of the second sonata of the cycle. However, it was written down in the middle of the sketchbook: that is, because there was still a free space, a blank page.[21] One must keep in mind that Beethoven was in the countryside, in Heiligenstadt, and it was likely difficult to obtain a new sketchbook quickly. Before Beethoven began the next sketchbook, the Wielhorski sketchbook, he apparently used single sheets for composing – after he had written in all the free spaces in the Kessler sketchbook. These single sheets are all lost – and with them the elaboration of the final movement of the G major sonata and almost all of the *Tempest* Sonata.

---

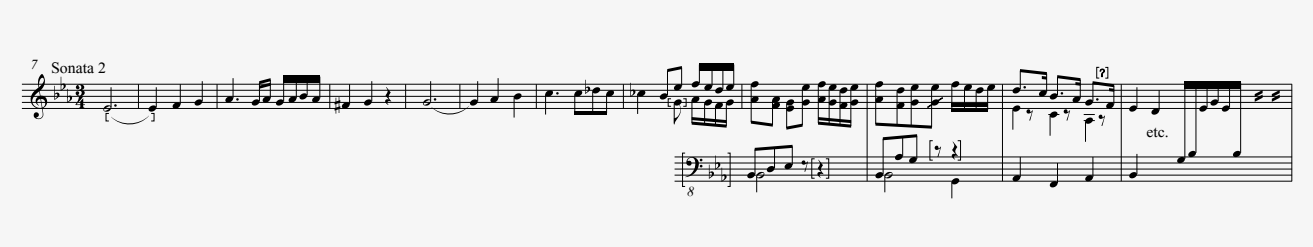
18 Richard Kramer shows how the beginnings of the three sonatas Op. 31 leave the conventions that still apply to the violin sonatas Op. 30; see Kramer, *Opus 30*, pp. 49-53, and Schmalfeldt and Borio in this volume.

19 '[...] der an genialen Sonderbarkeiten unerschöpfliche Beethoven [beginnt] eine Klaviersonate aus Es-dur mit der weichen Septimenharmonie der zweiten Tonstufe', as wrote Gottfried Weber in 1818, see quote in Richard Kramer, *Opus 30*, p. 59.

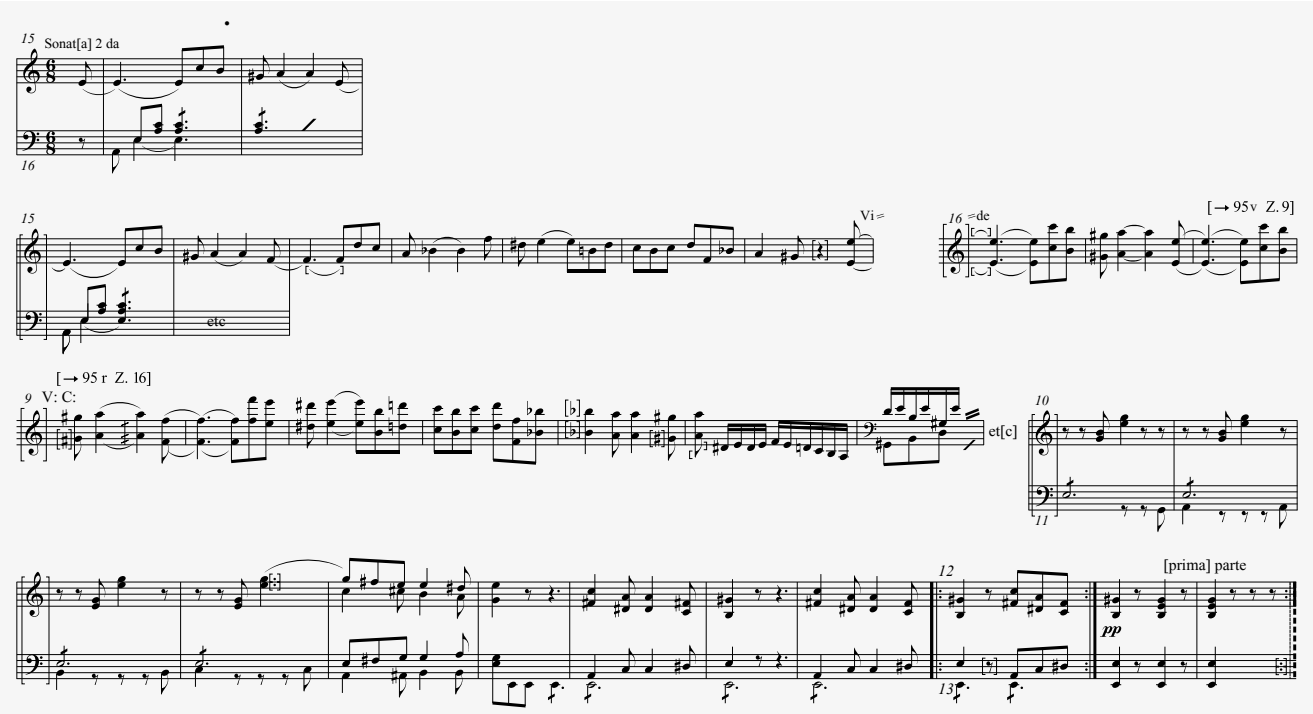
20 For these sketches in E flat major and A minor see Cooper, *Beethoven*, p. 185f. and Barry Cooper, *The Creation of Beethoven's 35 Piano Sonatas*, Routledge, London/New York, 2017, pp. 104-106.

21 Cfr. Cooper, *Beethoven*, p. 186; this is general consensus.

This observation – the draft noted in the middle of the book was written down much later – has far-reaching methodological consequences. Quite obviously, the entries in the Kessler sketchbook – which has been preserved so wonderfully intact – were not written in chronological order: the order of entries in the sketchbook does not correspond to the chronology of the entries. So we cannot automatically deduce a chronology from the order of the sketches in the book. This makes the reconstruction of the creative process, of the genesis of sketched compositions a great deal more difficult. In other words: drafts and sketches for the three sonatas could be scattered anywhere in the whole sketchbook, so we have to look at all drafts and sketches for piano in the sketchbook, and not only at sketches for piano.



Example 4: Kessler sketchbook f. 95v, transcription[22]

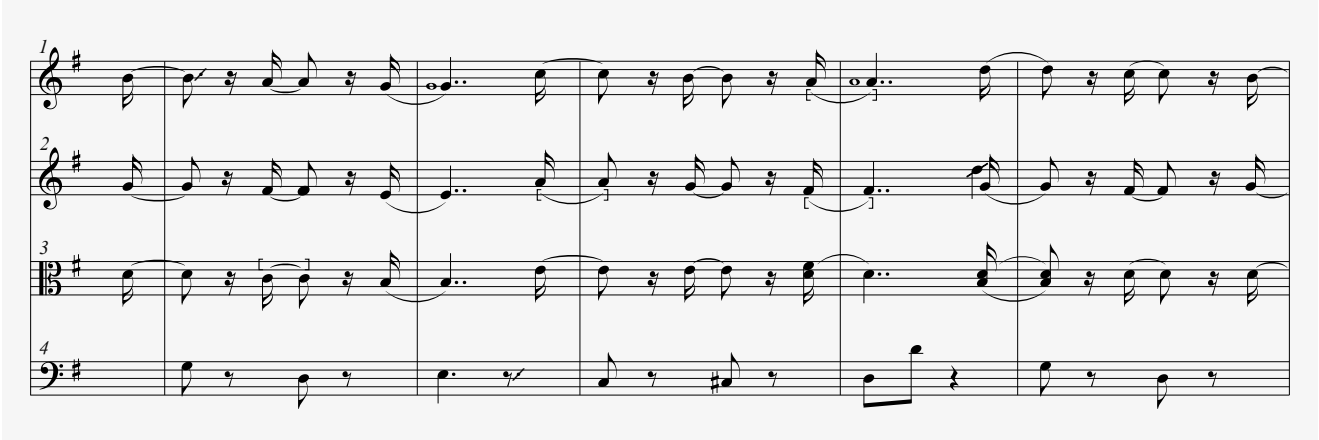


Example 5: Kessler sketchbook f. 95r/95v, transcription[23]

22 Brandenburg, *Übertragung* (vol. 5, part 1), p. 203.
23 *Ibid.*, p. 202f.

Further sketches and drafts in the context of the three sonatas Op. 31

Only a few pages before the elaboration of the first movement of the G major sonata (starting from f. 91v), and shortly before the end of the sketches for the Piano Variations Op. 35, which extend over many pages (from f. 82), we find a short movement beginning for string quartet: it employs syncopation, which makes the first theme of the first movement of the G major sonata so unique (Example 6).



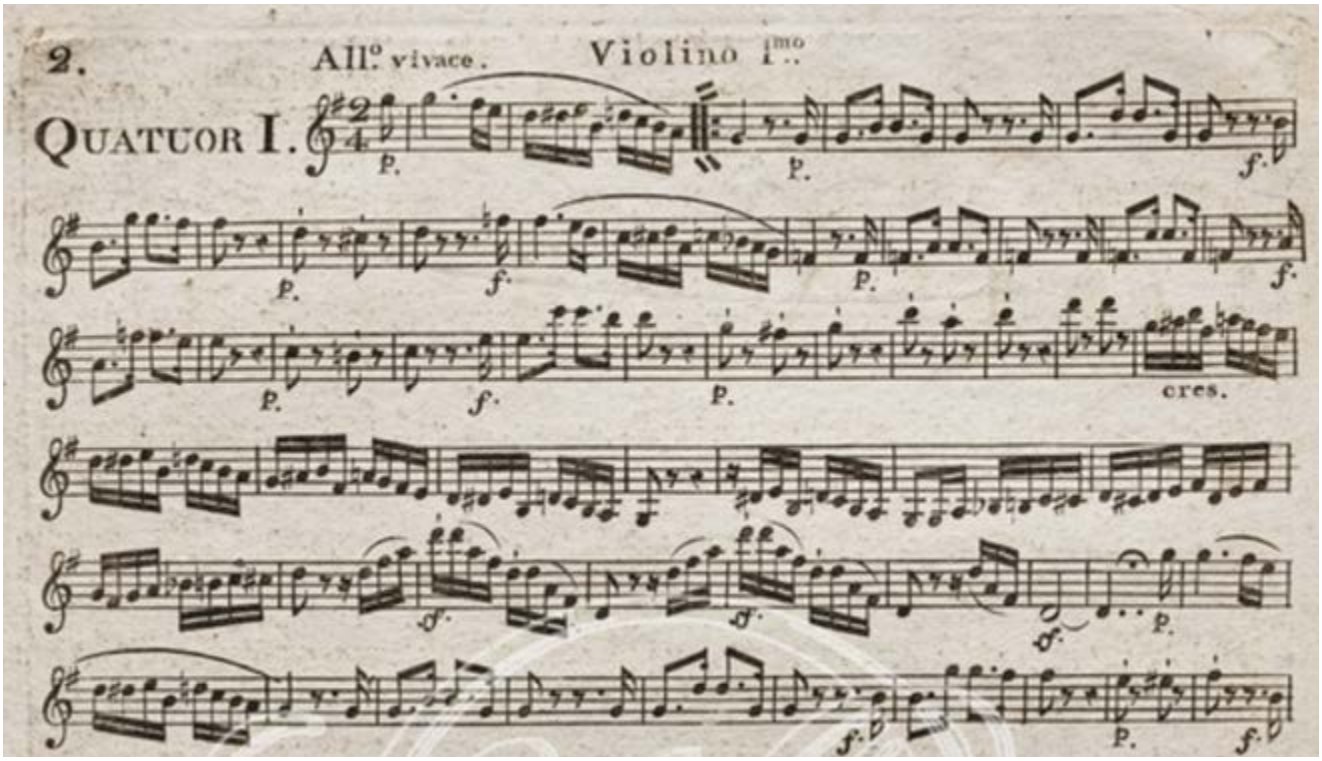
Example 6: Kessler sketchbook f. 88r, transcription[24]

This beginning is also at least very unconventional. This can be seen from the two anonymous contemporary arrangements of the G major sonata for String Quartet: in both arrangements, the exceptional syncopation has been 'normalized' into an upbeat and thus altered to comply with convention (Example 7).

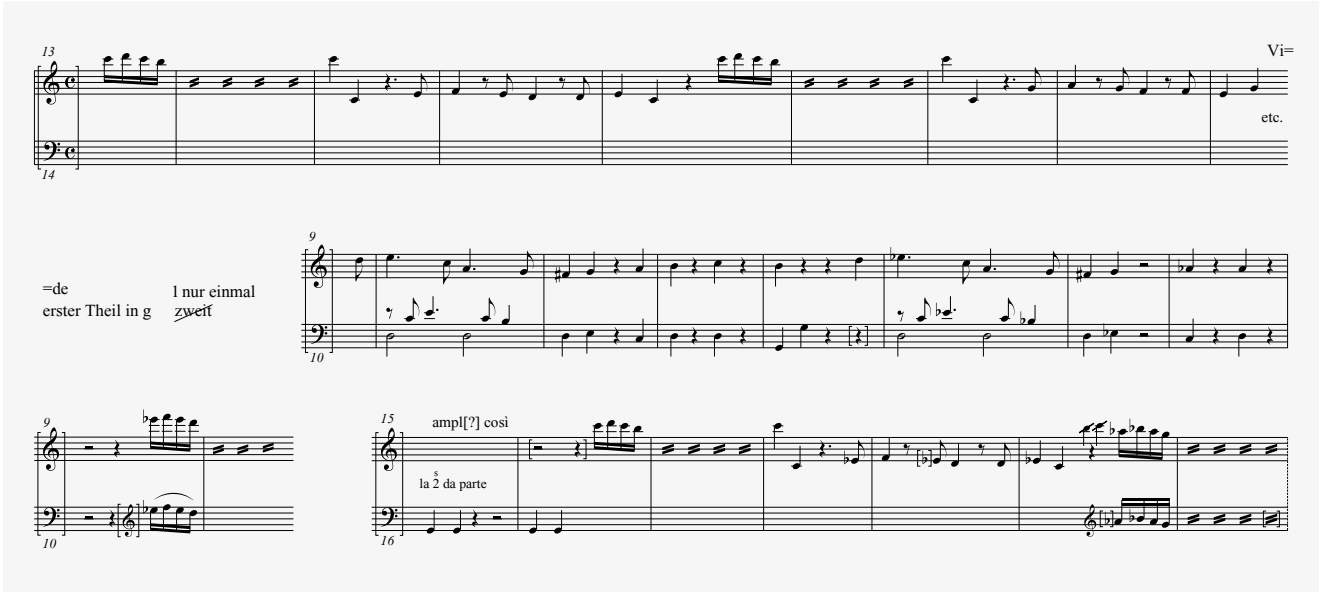
This sketch (Example 6) obviously contains the first idea for the later first sonata, surrounded by drafts of the *Eroica* Variations Op. 35. Below this idea – thus notated afterwards – there are further sketches for the Piano variations, also on the following page; we also find the thematic idea for the Piano variations Op. 34 with a verbally notated conception of this work. Then, the work on the two variation works, which are so extraordinary for their genre, breaks off, and Beethoven concentrates on the requested piano sonatas. Two drafts of piano sonatas follow (f. 89v, f. 90v), one in C major and one in D minor, before on f. 91v, as mentioned, the compositional elaboration of the first two movements of the G major sonata begins.

The sketch in C major (f. 89v, Example 8) shows the beginning of a sonata movement with a fairly conventional main theme; the exposition is to end in G major (as usual) and not to be repeated; in further sketches, the transition into the development is notated, and a modulating section in the development.

24 *Ibid.*, p. 187.



Example 7: arrangement of the piano sonata Op. 31 No. 1 for string quartet, Simrock 560[25]

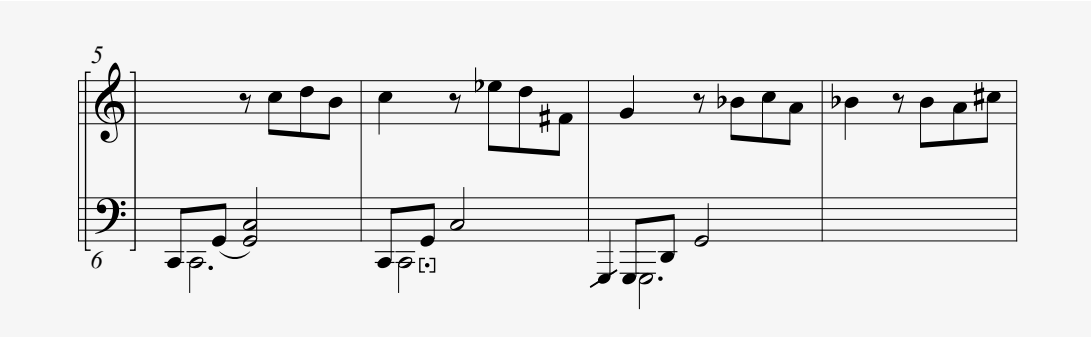


Example 8: Kessler sketchbook f. 89v, transcription[26]

25 Cfr. website Beethovenhaus Bonn, https://www.beethoven.de/de/media/view/5173194898014208/scan/1, last accessed on 3 March 2023.

26 Brandenburg, *Übertragung* (vol. 5, part 1), p. 190.

Another sketch in C major, thus perhaps belonging to the same sonata, is found in the middle of the first drafts for the first movement of the G major sonata (f. 91v, Example 9). It shows obvious similarities in the accompanying figures to the final movement of the *Tempest* Sonata.



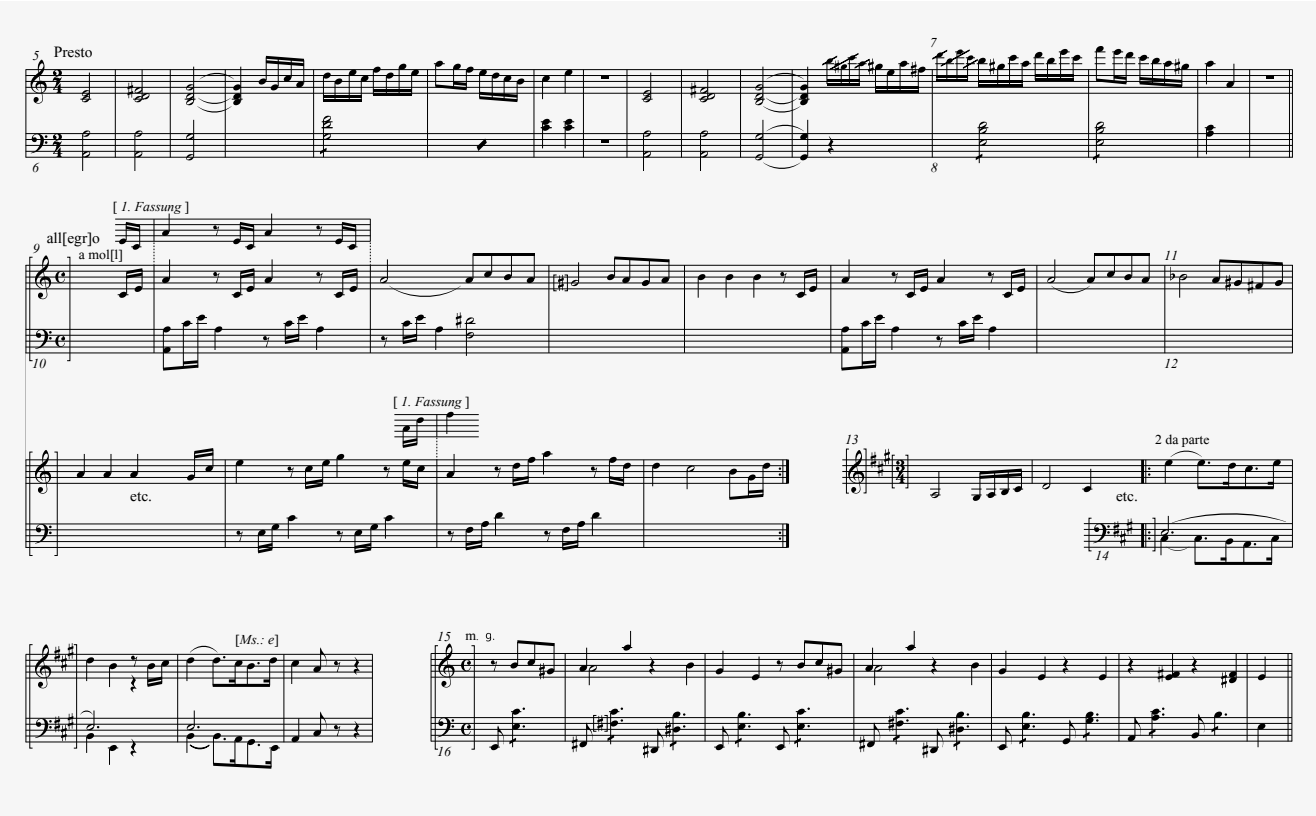
Example 9: Kessler sketchbook f. 91v, transcription[27]

On the page between the C major draft and the beginning of the composition of the G major Sonata, there is a draft of a sonata in D minor (f. 90v, Example 14a and 14b), i.e. in the key of the later *Tempest* Sonata. We will examine this in more detail later (Example 14a and 14b).

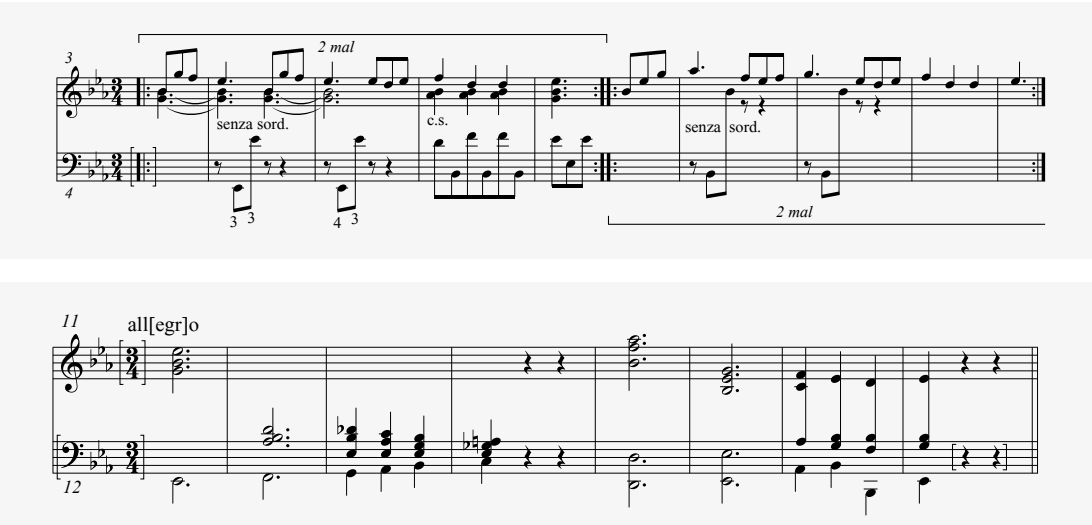
Finally, at the very beginning of the sketchbook (on f. 3r, Example 10), there is another draft of a piano sonata in A minor, now in several movements; again this draft was presumably notated later in an empty space.[28] One sees the beginnings of two fast movements (Presto: perhaps as the final movement, Allegro: perhaps as the first movement); the arpeggiated accompaniment pattern resembles the one in the third movement of the *Tempest* Sonata (like the other A minor sonata draft). Further down, the '*Mittelgedanke*' (middle idea, i.e. the second theme) for this movement is notated, as well as the beginning of a minuet in A major (similar to Op. 59/3, there in C major). A slow movement is missing.

There are two other sketches that show motivic similarity to the later sonatas (Example 11a and 11b). However, both are not part of the context of sonata compositions, but of the context of bagatelles (see sketches for Op. 33 in the Kessler sketchbook): short pieces, waltzes and other dance compositions that were notated primarily in the first part of the sketchbook. These dance pieces are mostly in two parts, consisting of two 8-bar-sections.

27 *Ibid.*, p. 193. See also Cooper, *Beethoven*, p. 185.
28 Cooper, *Beethoven*, p. 179, and Cooper, *Piano Sonatas*, p. 105f.



Example 10: Kessler sketchbook f. 3r, transcription[29]



Example 11a, 11b: Kessler sketchbook f. 68r and f. 3v, transcription[30]
f. 68r: cfr. Op. 31 No. 2, third movement; f. 3v: cfr. Op. 31 No. 3, Trio (change of register in melody)

29 Brandenburg, *Übertragung* (vol. 5, part 1), p. 38f.
30 *Ibid.*, p. 148 resp. 39.

The first steps of the genesis of the three piano sonatas Op. 31 can thus be reconstructed as follows: Beethoven notes down the thematic idea for the 1st movement of the G major sonata (not for piano, however!), followed by drafts for a piano sonata in C major and D minor, the latter with few motivic similarities to the later *Tempest* Sonata. Then he begins to work out the G major idea for the later piano sonata in G major Op. 31 No. 1. During the composition of the first and third movements of the G major sonata, he jots down ideas for what he calls a '2nd Sonata': drafts in E flat major (which go into the final movement of the later third sonata, the E flat major sonata Op. 31 No. 3), then drafts in A minor that show motivic similarity to the last movement of the *Tempest* Sonata Op. 31 No. 2, and finally he writes down the draft of the first movement of the later second sonata in D minor, the *Tempest* Sonata, on an empty space many pages before (f. 65v).

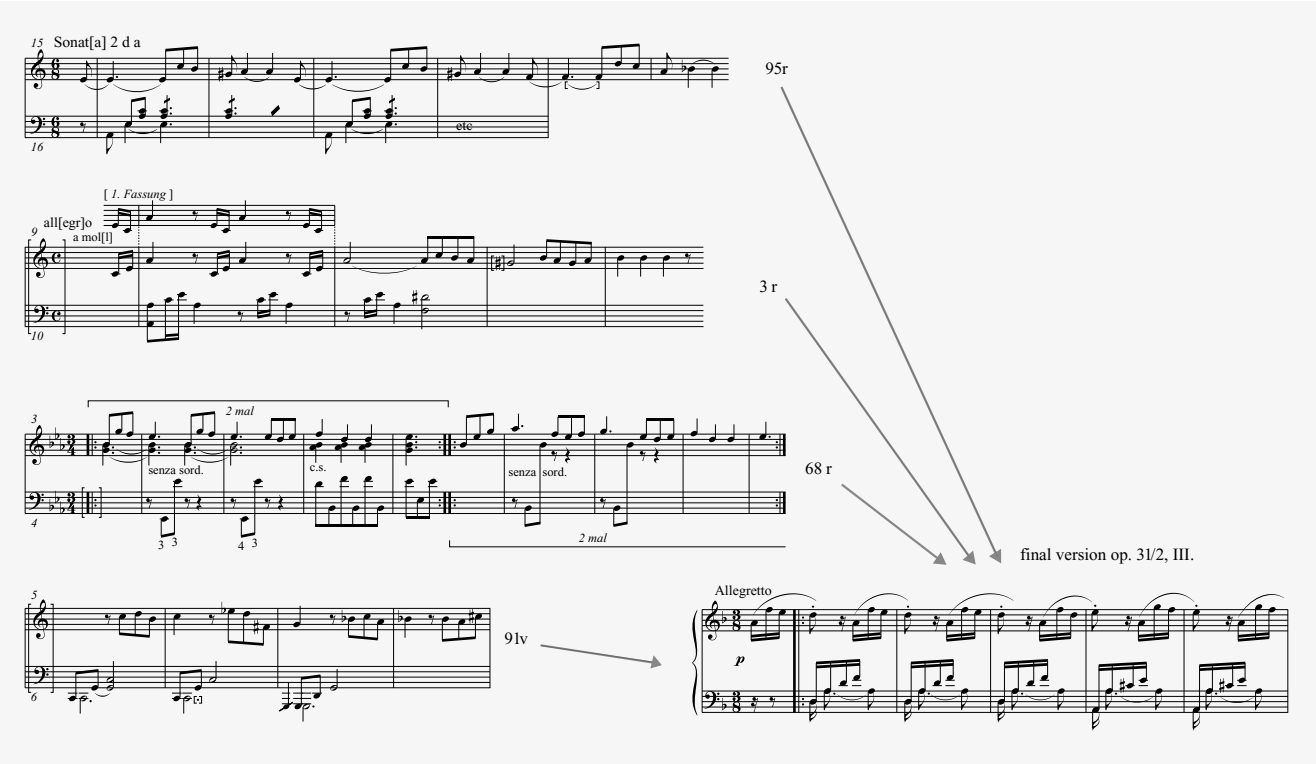
Through sketches we can thus gain an idea of the sequence of the individual steps of the genesis. But beyond that, we have also learned something about Beethoven's creative process of composing itself, about the convoluted paths of his 'thinking in music' within the preliminary stages of composing, of elaborating ideas.

If we ask ourselves about the relationship of these notated ideas to the later works, we find that almost all parameters of an idea can be changed in the finished work, as we have just observed for the ideas of the 3rd movement of the *Tempest* Sonata (Example 12):

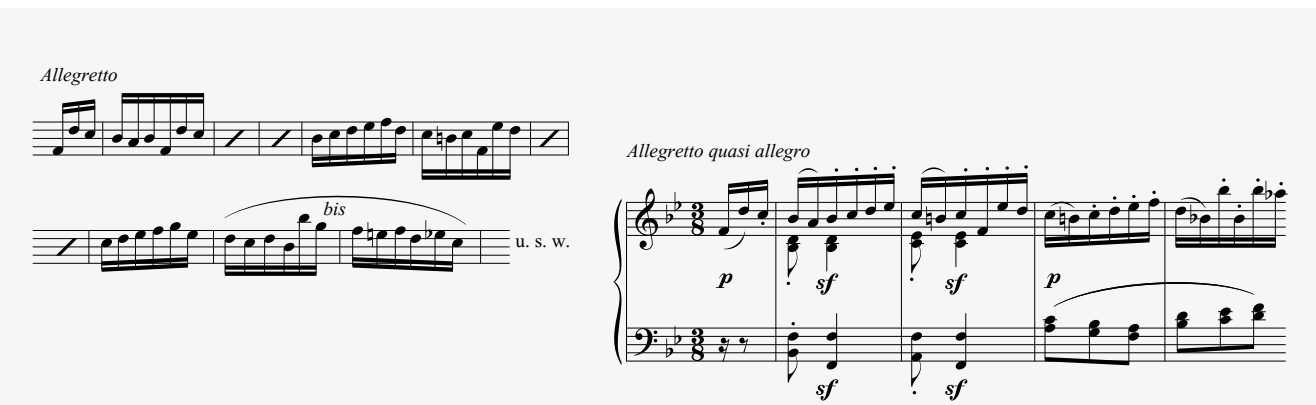
- f. 88r: change of instrumentation (string quartet instead of piano), cfr. Example 6.
- f. 3r and f. 95r: change of key and time signature (A minor instead of D minor, 6/8 or 4/4 instead of 3/8)
- f. 68r: change of mode, key, time signature and character resp. genre (major instead of minor, E flat major instead of D minor, 3/4 instead of 3/8, waltz instead of *agitato*)
- f. 91v: change of mode, key and time signature (C major instead of D minor, 3/4 instead of 3/8)

All these ideas for the final movement of the *Tempest* Sonata are not notated on the same page one after another, i.e. as one 'working session' in the compositional process – on the contrary: they are scattered throughout the sketchbook, i.e. they were written at different times. We do not see Beethoven developing an idea in a kind of logical, organical process. This insight has again methodological consequences: if we look for sketches in the Kessler sketchbook in connection with the sonatas Op. 31, we cannot limit ourselves to piano sketches in the keys of the finished sonatas. In fact, these could potentially be sketches in all keys, all time signatures, all instrumentations and all characters! And we must not even limit ourselves to this sketchbook: another idea, which, in my view, also belongs in the context of the third movement of the *Tempest* Sonata, can be found among the sketches for the final movement of the String Quartet Op. 18 No. 6

(*La Malinconia*) – sketches which were written down at least two years before those in the Kessler sketchbook (Example 13).



Example 12: concept sketches in the context of the beginning of Op. 31 No. 2, third movement



Example 13: sketch and final version for String quartet Op. 18 No. 6, fourth movement (1798-1800)[31]

31 Gustav Nottebohm, *Zweite Beethoveniana. Nachgelassene Aufsätze*, C.F. Peters, Leipzig, 1887, p. 61f.

The final version of the theme in Op. 18 No. 6 lacks the fourfold motive repetitions in the sketch that (beyond the identity of the opening motive) relate to the theme of the third movement of the *Tempest* Sonata (Example 13). The similarity between the themes of these two movements, in their final version, was also suggested by Rudolf Kolisch – without knowledge of this sketch, but only on the basis of their congruence in tempo and character. In this case, the sketch can prove that (Kolisch's) analysis was right.[32]

This sketch for the string quartet movement was notated at least two years before the composition of the final movement of the *Tempest* Sonata; so this idea was already that old. There are other examples demonstrating that Beethoven took up and used ideas which he had written down years before (e.g., the idea in the sketches for the Ninth Symphony that he later used in the String Quartet Op. 132). An extreme example of this kind can be found just in the present Kessler sketchbook: in the middle of the sketches for the Violin Sonata Op. 30 No. 1 (1802) we find – in a different key – the melody of the first theme of the late Piano Sonata Op. 111, which was composed twenty years later.[33]

So we learn from the sketchbooks something about the wandering of melodies and about their metamorphoses – but we remain in the dark about the step that finally created the theme of the last movement of the *Tempest* Sonata, out of the many ideas written down over years – the theme in D minor in 3/8 time with agitato character – this step remains unknown. There yet remains an inexplicable residue of the free-associative creative process – which Mauricio Kagel captured so adorably in the music room sequence of his film *Ludwig van* (Germany 1970). In this sequence one sees Beethoven's music room, in which all the furniture, all the objects are completely covered with (sheet) music from his compositions; after an initial silence, dedicated only to the contemplation of the room, here and there single tones are heard, then sequences of tones; these condense, until gradually the cosmos of tones and turns, from which the master formed ever new creations throughout his life, fills the room. Thematic ideas swirl around, surrounded by accompanying voices and passagework of other works. With Kagel, you find yourself in the composing brain of Beethoven.

Gustav Nottebohm, the pioneer of sketch research (which he began, as mentioned, with a publication on the Kessler sketchbook in 1865), has already reflected on the limits of sketch research:

---

32 Kolisch classifies both movement characters as '3/8 Allegretto quasi Allegro' and states 'a small inconsistency' in the tempo signature Allegretto of the third movement of the *Tempest* Sonata. Even this small inconsistency is missing in the sketch for the quartet movement, which is also titled Allegretto there. See Rudolf Kolisch, *Tempo und Charakter in Beethovens Musik* [1943], ed. by Heinz-Klaus Metzger and Rainer Riehn (Musik-Konzepte Heft 76/77), München, edition text + kritik, 1992, p. 36.

33 Brandenburg, Keßlersches Skizzenbuch (vol. 5, part 2), fol. 37v. This was already pointed out by Nottebohm (*Ein Skizzenbuch von Beethoven, beschrieben und in Auszügen dargestellt von Gustav Nottebohm*, Breitkopf und Härtel, Leipzig, [1865], p. 19f. und p. 41).

> For us, this kind of creation has something enigmatic about it [...] In these sketchbooks, the demon has housed. But the demon has escaped. The spirit that dictated a work does not appear in the sketches. The sketches do not reveal the law that guided Beethoven in his creative process. They cannot give any imagination of the idea, which only appears in the work of art itself. They cannot show the entire process of creation, but only individual, disjointed steps of it. What is called the organic progress of a work of art is far removed from the sketches.[34]

Sketches and drafts in the context of the *Tempest* Sonata

Both the beginning of the finished G major sonata and the beginning of the finished E flat major sonata are highly unconventional or rather break with conventions.[35] The middle sonata, the *Tempest* Sonata, does so to an even greater degree: its opening with a sixth chord of the dominant is more reminiscent of a recitative, of the opening up of a new scenery in the opera,[36] than of the beginning of a piano sonata. What follows is also quite different from the other two sonatas: it is full of stylized genre conventions from opera:

- recitative-like beginning,
- the following Allegro like a *recitativo accompagnato*,
- the D minor theme from m. 21 like a storm music from the opera[37] (i.e. ascending or descending broken triads, tremolo),
- a recitative without words in the recapitulation, in a mystically blurred sound (*senza sordino*), a sound like in a resonating vault – enigmatic, extraordinary,
- all this presented like a fantasy (changes of tempo and character, fermatas, recitatives)

How different is this sonata – in comparison to the other two sonatas, and even more in comparison to the rejected C major sonata draft. The overall disposition of the sonata – its 'course of ideas' (*Ideengang*), its narrative sequence – begins with this highly dramatic D minor movement full of (topics of) subjective suffering; this is followed by an Adagio in B flat major, which has the character of a slow solemn procession (from bar 18 on: stylized timpani rolls, brass chorale); this is

---

34 'Für uns hat nun diese Art des Schaffens etwas Räthselhaftes [...] In diesen Skizzenbüchern hat der Dämon gehaust. Der Dämon aber ist entwichen. Der Geist, der ein Werk dictirte, erscheint nicht in den Skizzen. Die Skizzen offenbaren nicht das Gesetz, von dem sich Beethoven beim Schaffen leiten liess. Von der Idee, die nur im Kunstwerk selbst zur Erscheinung kommt, können sie keine Vorstellung geben. Nicht den ganzen Process des Schaffens, sondern nur einzelne, unzusammenhängende Vorgänge daraus können sie vor Augen legen. Was man organische Entwicklung eines Kunstwerks nennt, liegt den Skizzen fern.' Nottebohm, *Zweite Beethoveniana*, p. VIIIf.

35 Cfr. fn. 18 and 19.

36 Cfr. Richard Kramer, *Unfinished Music*, Oxford University Press, Oxford / New York, 2008, p. 193.

37 Owen Jander, 'Genius in the Arena of Charlatanry: the First Movement of Beethoven's Tempest Sonata in Cultural Context', in *Musica franca: essays in honour of Frank A. D'Accone*, ed. by Irene Alm, Alyson McLamore, Colleen Reardon, Pendragon Press, Stuyvesant, NY, 1996, pp. 585-630.

followed again by a *perpetuum mobile*-like final movement with *agitato* character, a movement full of inescapable, hardly ever interrupted motoric – the sonata thus closes in resignation. The left-hand figures that characterize this final movement had already been in Beethoven's mind for some time, as we have seen. The sequence of the three movements thus precisely represents the constellation of suffering, sublimity and resignation, which as the psychic disposition pervades the Heiligenstadt testament Beethoven wrote down at the end of that summer.

For the *Tempest* Sonata there are two telescoped drafts (f. 90v, f. 65v) as well as some ideas (concept sketches) for further movements (f. 66r[38]). Everything else is lost. We will now examine these three pages of the sketchbook in more detail.

First draft on f. 90v

Let's start with the telescoped draft on f. 90v (Example 14a and 14b). It is placed, as already described, between the sonata draft in C major (f. 89v) and the beginning of the composition of the first movement of the G major sonata, the later first sonata (f. 91v). It was definitely written before the other draft in D minor on f. 65v, which is marked 'Sonata 2da' and thus dates from later plans of the sonata triad.[39] This page of the sketchbook allows us to witness the moment when Beethoven interrupts the composition of the projected Piano Variations Op. 34 (the first notation for this can be found on f. 88v) and instead turns to the composition of piano sonatas, and thus to the fulfillment of Nägeli's commission: at the top of f. 90v, the (slightly different) beginning of the later sixth variation in F major from Op. 34 is notated, in 6/8 time with a chordal accompaniment figure in the left hand; the same accompaniment figure is found in a movement beginning of the D minor draft at the bottom of the same page (system 13/14 and 15/16), also in 6/8 time.[40]

Now we turn to the draft. The entries 'm.g.' (*Mittelgedanke*), 'erster theil in B' and '2da parte colla repetizione e la prima senza' suggest the plan for a sonata movement. The first theme is 'storm music': ascending broken triads with tremolo accompaniment, and thus has similarities to the later *Tempest* Sonata. The second theme ('m.g.') is in B flat major and has a *cantabile* and thus contrasting character; the exposition should end in B flat major ('*schlu*[*ß*]'). The development ('2da parte') begins in D minor and is to continue 'in a moll'; behind it there is free space. This is followed by another 'storm music' on the pedal point A, with much free space behind it as well. In the second half of the accolade, a half-close cadence into the

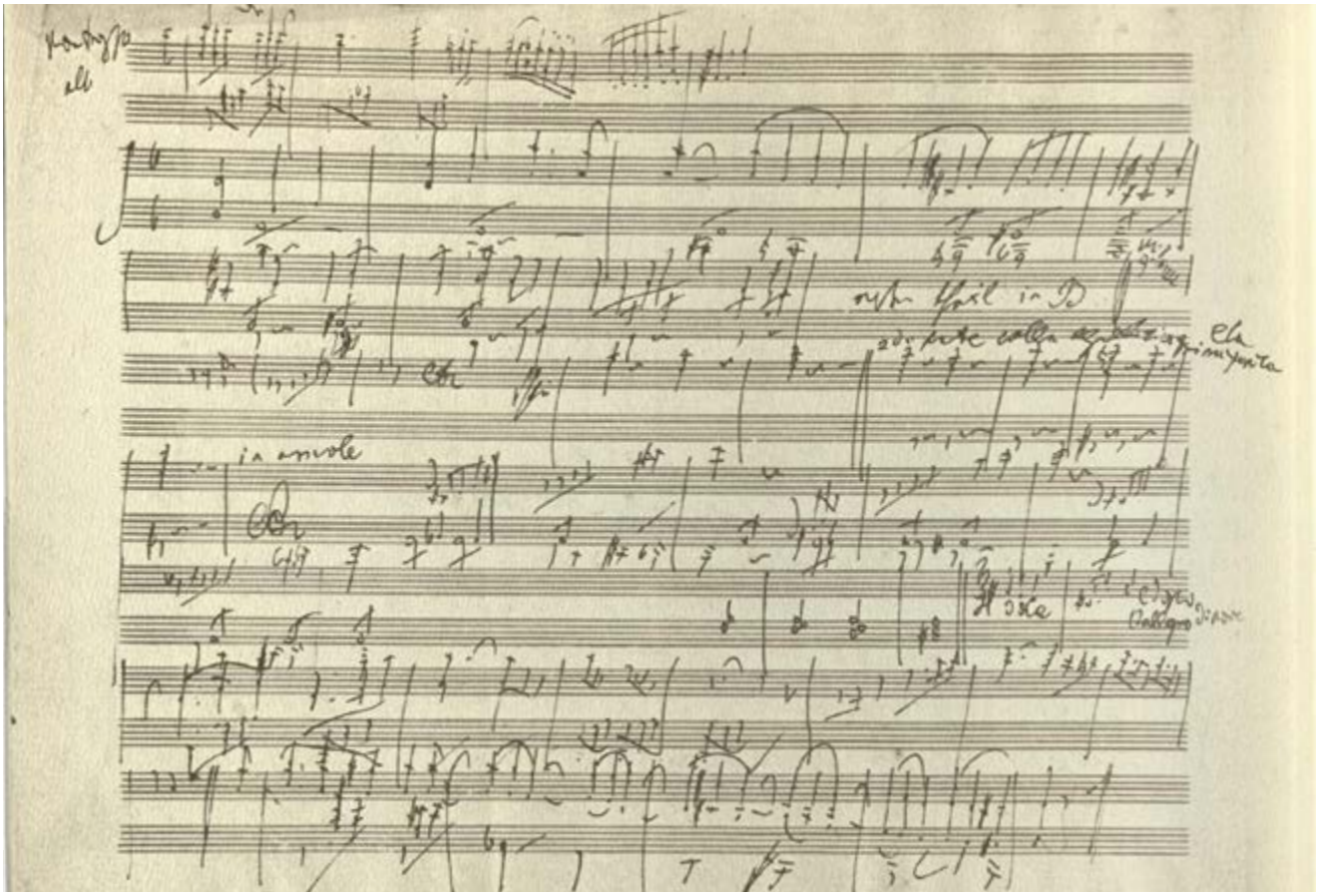
38 Brandenburg does not yet list these sketches as belonging to the *Tempest* Sonata.

39 Cfr. fn. 21.

40 The melody of the 6/8 entry in D minor can also be traced back to an idea that had already been notated earlier (cfr. Cooper, *Beethoven*, p. 184): it is taken from the sketch for the Bagatelle Op. 119 No. 5 in C minor that was notated in the same sketchbook (f. 59r) – the D minor theme in 6/8 at the foot of page f. 90v is thus a *mixtum compositum*.

dominant A is notated, followed by a new part in D major in a different time signature (3/4), thus in contrasting character (*dolce*). It transforms the D minor motive F-E-D-C sharp into D major (F sharp-E-D-C sharp); this is followed by the entry: 'e dopo l'allegro di novo' ('and then the Allegro again'). The last two accolades are filled by the aforementioned movement beginning in D minor in 6/8 time.

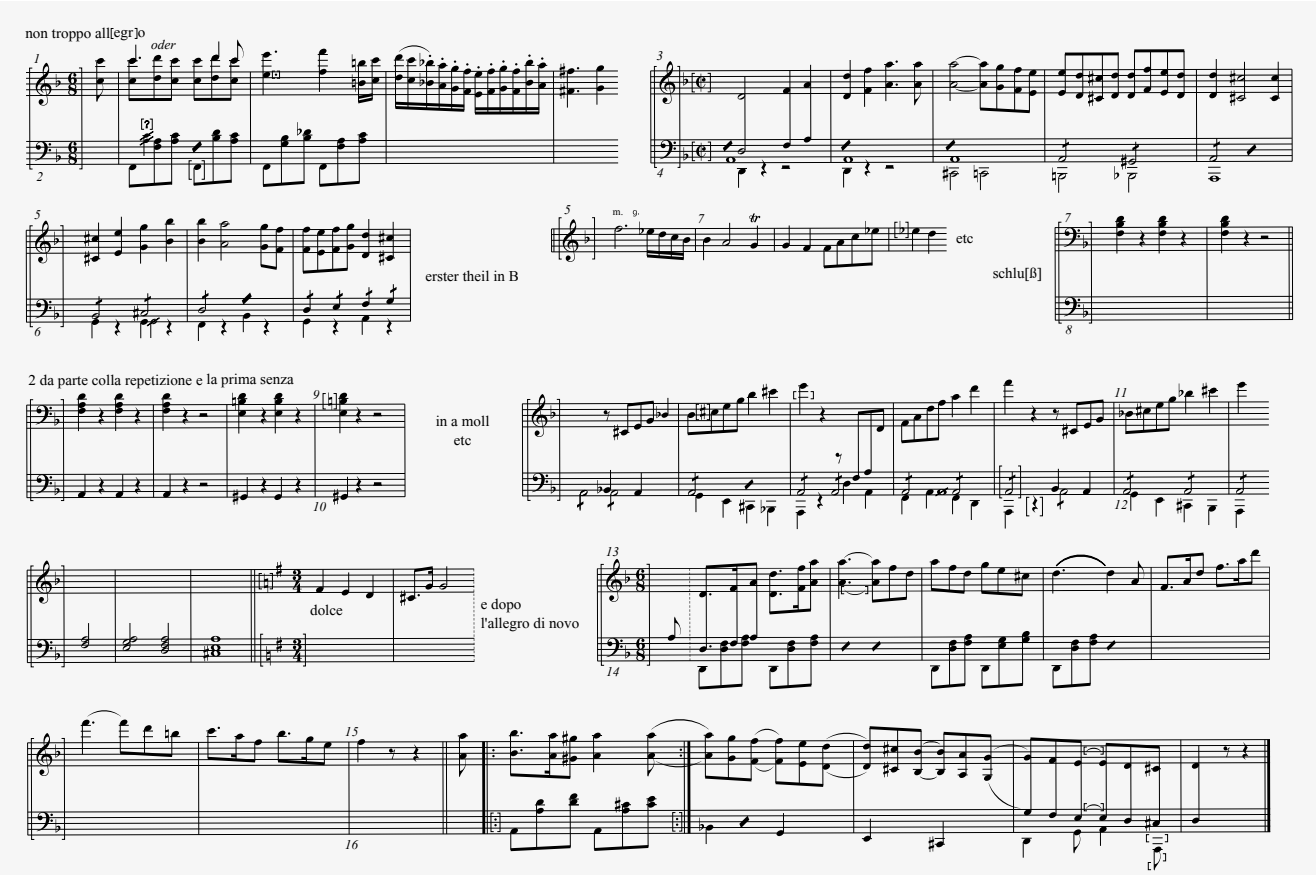
The setting of the sonata movement drafted here shows some innovations: the key of the secondary theme is moved not to the dominant but to the mediant – Beethoven had already tried this out shortly before in the first movement of the String Quintet Op. 29[41] (and was to introduce it for the first time in a piano sonata shortly thereafter in the G major Sonata from Op. 31). The end of the exposition in the mediant instead of dominant breaks with convention. Finally, the repetition of the second part – i.e. development and recapitulation – is already unusual at this time and generally rare in Beethoven.[42]



Example 14a: f. 90v, facsimile (see fn. 43)

41 Hans-Joachim Hinrichsen, *Beethoven. Die Klaviersonaten*, Kassel, u.a. 2019, p. 204; Cooper, *Beethoven*, p. 183.

42 This convention was already unusual: the repetition of development and recapitulation in the third movement of the *Appassionata* Op. 57 is a peculiarity. See Hinrichsen, *Klaviersonaten*, p. 266f.; Cooper, *Beethoven*, p. 183f.



Example 14b: f. 90v, transcription[43]

The draft as a whole raises some questions: at which point in the form should the D major passage appear? Was Beethoven imagining a short interpolation or – perhaps in the sense of a fantasia – the (*attacca*) beginning of a new movement resp. section? Where should the recapitulation begin – before or after the D major passage? And how should we understand the formal relationship with the following movement beginning in 6/8 time?

Barry Cooper interprets the D major passage as recapitulation and the 6/8 entry as a coda, all within a single sonata movement.[44] Richard Kramer[45] rejects the (not very plausible) explanation of the D major passage as recapitulation and interprets it as an interpolation; he describes the *dolce* melody in 3/4 as having a 'courtly'[46] character and supports his hypothesis with a constructed continuation and harmonization of the melody.

43 Brandenburg, *Keßlersches Skizzenbuch* (vol. 5, part 2) and Brandenburg, *Übertragung* (vol. 5, part 1), p. 191f.

44 Cooper, *Beethoven*, p. 187, p. 184f.; Cooper, *Piano Sonatas*, p. 106.

45 Kramer, *Unfinished Music*, pp. 187-193. As far as I can see, no one except Cooper has commented on the formal position of the following 6/8 sketch.

46 *Ibid.*, p. 190.

In my view, Cooper's interpretation of the 6/8 entry as a coda is problematic: it would mean that in this movement there is a change from 4/4 (1st theme) to 3/4 (D major passage), then back to 4/4 ('e dopo l'allegro di novo'), and then to 6/8 (coda); the indicated repetition of development and recapitulation adds two additional meter changes. Above all, however, the 6/8 entry – while unmistakably related to the first theme – does not seem to be a coda theme which condenses and accelerates the main theme (as Cooper's reference to the third movement of the third Piano Concerto suggests);[47] on the contrary, it is more broadly conceived than the first theme, and also has no stretta character. Furthermore, it has a harmonic structure that differs from the first theme. Lastly, it introduces a new motive: the turning motive A-B flat-A-G sharp-A, which will then play an important role in the completed sonata.

From my point of view there are several possibilities for the formal conception that Beethoven envisioned for this draft:

a. This draft could be understood as a sonata cycle with fantasy elements, in further development of the fantasy sonatas Op. 27: sonata exposition Allegro in D minor – development (system 7/8, 9/10, 11/12) – recapitulation – repetition of development and recapitulation – *attacca* transition D minor to second movement D major in 3/4 – *attacca* third movement Allegro D minor in 6/8 (by referring 'e dopo l'allegro di novo' to the 6/8 entry). However, there is a weighty argument against this interpretation: on f. 66r, the beginnings of other movements for this draft are found (see p. 96ff below).

The following possibilities offer a more plausible reconstruction of the concept that might have underpinned the draft:

b. The D major passage is an episodic interpolation within the development;[48] it is followed by the continuation of the development in Allegro 4/4 or directly by the recapitulation; the 6/8 theme below is an idea for a new movement, the final movement of the sonata.
c. The D major passage is an episodic interpolation in the coda of the sonata movement; this would mean that the quiet chords preceding it over F-E-D-C sharp lead into the coda after the end of the recapitulation, and thus do not belong to the development. In this scenario, too, the following 6/8 theme functions as a new movement, the final movement of a sonata cycle.

In both cases (b and c), I do not relate the entry 'e dopo l'allegro di novo' to the 6/8 Allegro notated below, but to the intended continuation of the 4/4 Allegro.

---

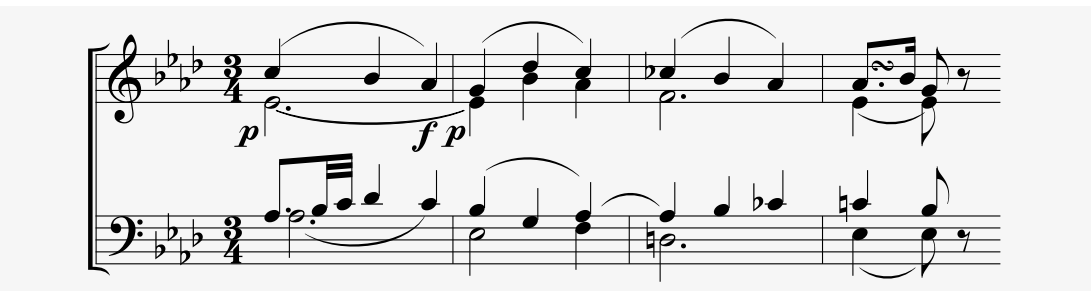
47 Cooper, *Beethoven*, p. 184.

48 The four-note motive F-E-D-C sharp also appears near the end of the development in the second draft (f. 65v) and in the final version of the movement (bars 134-137).

This interpretation is possible, because this entry is at the end of the line and is not placed directly before the 6/8 entry in D minor.

The preceding considerations have shown that the D major passage probably cannot be the beginning of a more or less elaborated new movement, but must be thought of as an episodic interpolation (not too long)[49] – as a moment of pause, as a brief 'ray of light' in the otherwise 'stormy' movement, in which the preceding four-note D minor motive (which is derived from m. 4 of the first theme) is transformed into major, thus acquiring a different character. In the interpretation c), this 'ray of hope' would appear only once (in the coda) and would not fall into the repetition of the second part.

Given the dramaturgy of the envisaged movement as reconstructed above, Richard Kramer's assumption that the melodic beginning in D major is to be understood as 'courtly' in character (perhaps in the manner of a minuet?) seems unconvincing; the continuation of the melody that he hypothetically suggests seems too banal in the context of the draft, and not fitting as a contrast to the passionate, stormy setting.[50] Kramer then associates the D major interpolation of the draft with another famous D major passage: with the theme in the first movement of Haydn's *Farewell* Symphony, newly introduced in the development, which had the same structural function as the D major interpolation of the draft.[51] I would like to offer another speculative association: the two-bar D major melody reminds me of the beginning of Mozart's Andante in A flat major 3/4 in his *Phantasie für eine Orgelwalze* KV 608 (Example 15):



Example 15: Mozart, *Phantasie für eine Orgelwalze* KV 608, beginning of the *Andante*

It is the major middle section of the *Trauermusik auf Laudon*, surrounded by two Allegro sections in F minor. Mozart had written this piece for a music machine,

49 See also Kramer, cfr. fn. 45.
50 Kramer, *Unfinished Music*, pp. 190, 193.
51 *Ibid.*, p. 201ff.

a Flötenuhr in the art gallery of the 'Hofstatuarius Müller'.[52] In 1791, Müller had a mausoleum built in honor of Field Marshal Gideon Ernst Freiherr von Laudon, who had died in 1790. Initially, the mausoleum contained a glass coffin with a wax figure of the deceased. In 1795 the mausoleum was redesigned,[53] the glass coffin was removed and the space gave way to an 'Elysium': the representation of Laudon in intimate conversation with the also deceased Emperor Joseph II; the background was a white marble temple with blue columns and gilded capitals.[54] There, Mozart's funeral music was played daily on the hour from the music machine.[55] A kind of multimedia event – in which one may safely understand the A flat major Andante from Mozart's funeral music as a musical symbolization of the 'Elysium'. At least, this is how Ignaz Ritter von Seyfried heard it, who in a letter described the 'lovely, so extremely tender Adagio in A flat major' as a 'song of spheres', which elicited 'tears of longing for heaven.'[56] And the reviewer of the 'Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung' called it '[...] an andante that deserves to be called himmlisch [heavenly] in every respect'.[57] The assumption that the D major melody of the draft on f. 90v echoes the beginning of this Mozartian Andante is, of course, highly speculative – but not entirely impossible: for the Hofstatuarius Müller was none other than Count Deym, a friend with whom Beethoven had been in close contact since 1799, giving house concerts at his home and teaching his wife Josephine Deym (one of the candidates of the 'Immortal Beloved').[58] From Count Deym, Beethoven furthermore received a copy of Mozart's Fantasy KV. 608, intended as a model for further 'Flötenuhr' compositions by Beethoven for

52 Contemporary reports say that KV 608 was played in the Deymsches Kabinett, see *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, 25 September 1799, Sp. 876: 'Diese Fantasie ist das in Wien bekannte Orgelstück für 2 Claviere, welches Mozart für die Spieluhr in dem vortrefflichen Müllerschen Kunstkabinet daselbst gesezt hat' [This Fantasie is the organ piece for 2 pianos known in Vienna, which Mozart composed for the music box in the excellent Müllersches Kunstkabinet]. Before KV 608, Mozart had already written *Adagio and Allegro* KV 594 as funeral music for Laudon; however, KV 594 proved to be technically problematic for the 'Flötenuhr'. KV 608 was then adapted to the technical conditions. Cfr. Gabriele Hatwagner, *Die Lust an der Illusion – über den Reiz der „Scheinkunstsammlung" des Grafen Deym, der sich Müller nannte*, Vienna, Diplomarbeit Universität Wien, 2008, p. 99f. Presumably, besides Mozart's fantasy, other compositions were also heard, cfr. Helmut Kowar, 'P. Primitivus Niemecz (1750–1806): seine „musikalischen Spieluhren und Maschinen"', in *Das mechanische Musikinstrument,* 38/115, 2012, 7-13, here p. 8.

53 Hatwagner, *Scheinkunstsammlung*, p. 100.

54 *Ibid*., p. 81.

55 *Ibid*., pp. 98, 100.

56 Seyfried's letter of 18 January 1813 (quoted after Kowar, *Spieluhren*, p. 8): '[...] Noch erinnere ich mich aus meinen Jugendjahren lebhaft des Eindrucks, den die wiederholte, oft wiederholte Anhörung dieses genialen Producktes unvertilgbar meinem Gedächtnisse einprägte. Tausend verschiedenartige Empfindungen erwekt das, fast möchte ich sagen, furchtbar wilde Allegro, mit seinem künstlich eingearbeitetem Fugenthema. Bey der erschütternden Ausweichung nach fis moll erstarrt der Zuhörer, und wähnt, den Boden unter sich erbeben zu fühlen. Sphärengesang ist das liebliche, so äusserst zarte *Adagio* in As dur; es entlockt Thränen, wohlthätige Thränen der Sehnsucht nach oben. Zurück in das unruhige menschliche Leben schleudert das wiederholt eintretende Allegro. [...]'.

57 *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, 25 September 1799, Sp. 878.

58 Hatwagner, *Scheinkunstsammlung*, pp. 51-54.

Deym's Kunst-Kabinett after WoO 33a,[59] in addition, Beethoven himself made a copy of the work, parts of which have been preserved.[60] The Mozart piece was heard by one and all in Vienna, at least until the end of the 1790s.[61] Regardless of whether one wants to assume an allusion of the D major theme to Mozart's A flat major Andante or not: at least Mozart's Andante is able to give an idea of the character and the harmonization of the dolce melody in 3/4 time as a 'spheric' major contrast, as a 'ray of hope' in a passionately 'stormy' minor movement.

Second draft on f. 65v

The second draft belonging to the later *Tempest* Sonata is found in the middle of the Kessler sketchbook (f. 65v, Example 16). This is titled 'Sonata 2da' and, as already described, was written during the composition of the G major sonata. The draft shows a telescoped draft of the first movement that is far removed from the first draft on f. 90v, but is close to the completed first movement of the *Tempest* Sonata.

What is there from the finished first movement?

- The idea of the recitative-like sixth chord with the two contrasting tempos Adagio/Allegro,
- the main theme with the ascending broken triads,
- the instrumental recitative in the recapitulation,
- the unusual sound of the beginning: *senza sordino*.

Thus we can recognize a dramaturgy with a 'mystic' opening, 'storm music' and 'answering' recitative in the recapitulation.

What is missing in the draft compared to the finished first movement?

- The turn in measure 6 is missing – and thus everything that is derived from it: the 'answer' to the main theme in the exposition measures 21-28 as well as in the development measures 100-105; the A minor theme[62] measures 55-68 as well as

---

59 Beethoven also composed, probably in 1799, some pieces for mechanical musical instruments from Deym's *Kunstkabinett* (WoO 33a, perhaps also WoO 33b).

60 A fragment of Beethoven's autograph copy with numerous annotations was sold at Stargardt in 1958 and at Sotheby's London in 2001.

61 Cfr. the report in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* of 25.9.1799, see above fn. 52; the art gallery was not dissolved until 1819. I would like to thank the archive of the Beethoven-Haus Bonn for the references.

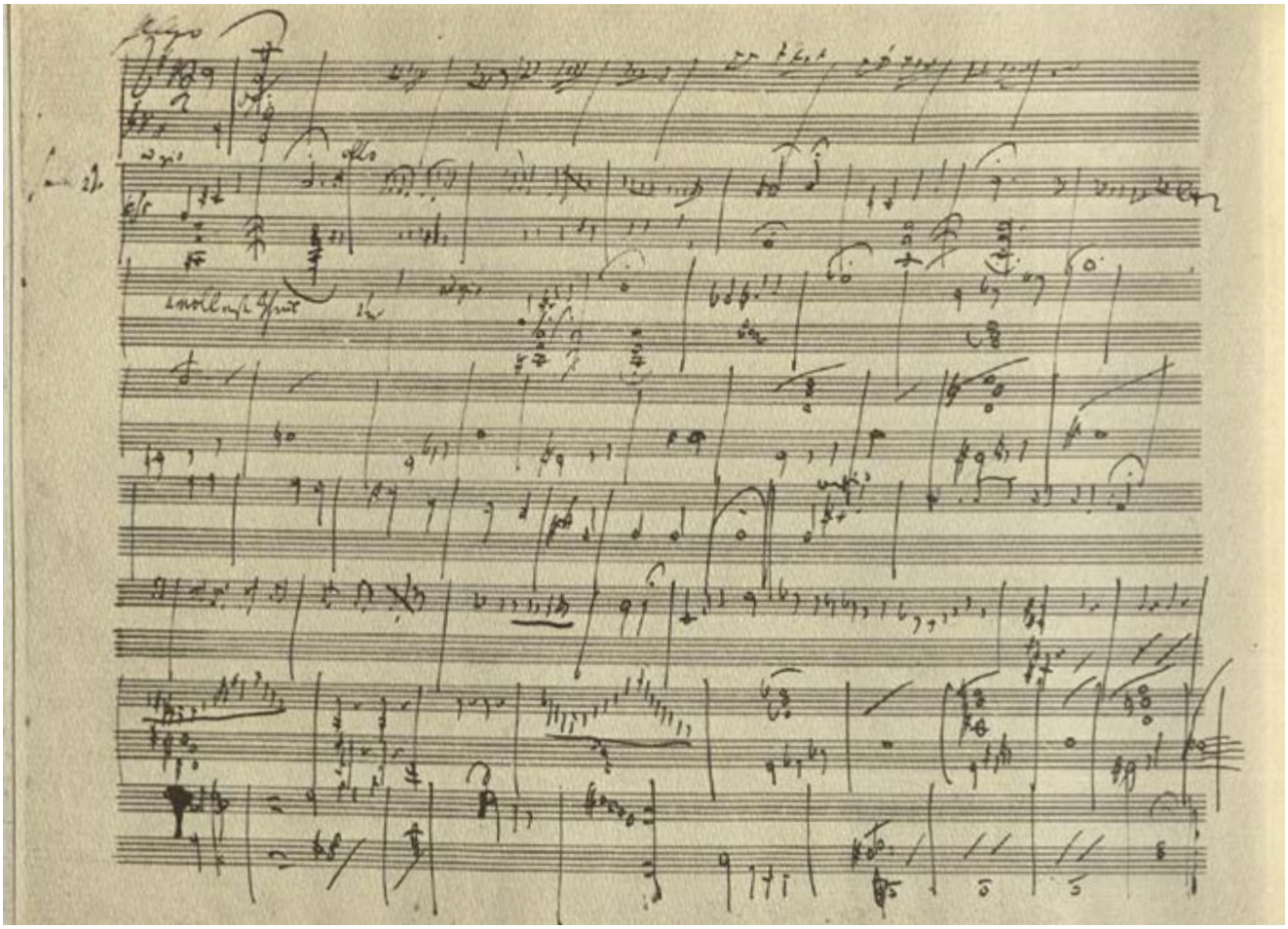
62 For discussion of the 2nd subject(s) in this movement see Steven Vande Moortele, 'The first Movement of Beethoven's *Tempest* Sonata and the Tradition of Twentieth-Century "Formenlehre"', in *Beethoven's* Tempest *Sonata: Perspectives of Analysis and Performance*, ed. by Pieter Bergé, Peeters *Publisher*, Leuven, 2009, pp. 306ff.; Janet Schmalfeldt, *In the Process of Becoming: Analytical and Philosophical Perspectives on Form in Early Nineteenth-century Music*, Oxford Univ. Press, New York, 2011; the discussion is continued in *Music Theory online* 16/2 (2010).

the corresponding measures in the recapitulation (185-198), i.e. entire thematic sections and thus significant parts of the completed movement; finally, the accompanying figure of the A minor theme measures 41-51 and measures 171-181.

- The second theme in measures 41ff. of the final version is missing, as well as the corresponding part in the recapitulation; thus, a cantabile second theme is missing entirely. From the exposition, only the thematic contrast of the first theme is notated.

What is different from the finished first movement?

- The draft ends in D major, with the coda transforming D minor to D major in a *morendo* ending. The dramaturgy of the second draft thus differs from that of the first draft as well as from that of the finished movement. Furthermore, the main theme with the broken triads is heard again in the recapitulation – it no longer appears there in the finished movement.



Example 16: f. 65v facs. (transcription see Example 17)[63]

63 Brandenburg, *Keßlersches Skizzenbuch* (vol. 5, part 2).

So far, we have compared the second draft (f. 65v) with the final version of the movement. Comparing the second draft (f. 65v) with the first draft (f. 90v) yields different observations: almost everything has changed in the second draft, only the main theme remains (although the broken triads have now been restricted to the octave range). Beethoven has conceived a new, completely different movement.

Unlike the continuity drafts, which mostly fix the course of a movement or a section by writing down the upper voice, and unlike the concept sketches, which fix a melodic idea, harmonic progressions are written down in this draft: the bass voice is carried out (as a motive, which, however, is no more than a rhythmicized broken triad); above it, the harmonic filling is written down, mostly without figuration. The only cantabile upper voices, the only melodies are the two (not harmonized) recitatives. Both the development and the recapitulation show no treatment or even confrontation of the main theme and a secondary theme, but only a harmonic progression based on the main theme. The notated passages are also conspicuously free from syntactic constraints.

These observations direct us to a specific context repeatedly assigned to the first movement of the finished *Tempest* Sonata: that it contains 'improvisatory' elements, which are nevertheless integrated into a sonata form (so the view holds).[64] Already, in the two sonatas 'quasi una fantasia' Op. 27, Beethoven intermingles the genres sonata and fantasia, visible through the *attacca* connection of the movements and through tempo and meter changes. Here, Beethoven is part of a movement since about 1800 that progressively blurs the boundaries between sonata and fantasy, until they become interchangeable a few decades later.[65] Thus, on the one hand, an anonymous author wrote in 1813, in the 'Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung': '[...] what we have received in the last decade under the title *Phantasie*, is, almost without exception, only a freer kind of sonata',[66] and on the other hand, Gerber wrote in 1817: 'In such a way we hear and play nothing but fantasias. Our sonatas are fantasias, our overtures are fantasias and even our symphonies [...]'.[67] Elements of fantasy can be recognized in the first movement of the finished *Tempest* Sonata in the tempo changes, in the bold harmonies, even in the recitatives, which could be traced back to the older Free Fantasy. But not only the boundaries between sonata and fantasy, also the boundaries between fantasized and composed fantasy are blurred, as recent

64 I warmly thank Gesine Schröder for advice and detailed discussion of the following.

65 Michael Lehner, *"Und nun sehe man, was hieraus gemacht werden kann." Carl Czernys "Anleitung zum Fantasieren" als implizite Harmonie- und Formenlehre*, in *Das flüchtige Werk. Pianistische Improvisation der Beethoven-Zeit*, ed. by Michael Lehner, Nathalie Meidhof, Leonardo Miucci, Edition Argus, Schliengen, 2019, p. 87. Stephan Zirwes, *Formale Dispositionen in den komponierten Fantasien zur Zeit Beethovens*, in *ibid.*, pp. 183, 189.

66 '[...] was wir im letzten Jahrzehend unter dem Titel "Phantasie" bekommen haben, ist doch, fast ohne Ausnahme, nur eine freyere Art der Sonate'. Quoted after Zirwes, *Formale Dispositionen*, p. 189.

67 Quoted after Angela Carone, *Formal Elements of Instrumental Improvisation: Evidence from Written Documentation, 1770-1840*, in *Musical Improvisation und Open Forms in the Age of Beethoven*, ed. by Gianmario Borio, Angela Carone, Routledge, Abingdon, 2018, p. 16.

research has shown. The distinction between composed elements in an improvised fantasy and improvised elements in a composed fantasy is almost impossible to distinguish, even for contemporaries.[68] Improvised fantasies could be so perfect that contemporaries occasionally suspected that the fantasy had not been 'extemporized' but composed in advance.[69] Dana Gooley (referring to the galant style) speaks of the same 'basic skill set', which underlies improvisation and composition and shows the closest relationship between the two.[70] The compositional tools of the fantasized fantasies and the composed fantasies are similar. Various models, learned patterns and trained formulas were available: Fantasizing was the free combination of learned and practiced models and formulas.[71] This ranges from the *partimento* tradition to the variation of themes in all genres to large-scale formal procedures, found in instructions for fantasizing of the later eighteenth century up to Czerny's *Systematische Anleitung zum Fantasieren* Op. 200 (1829). In most improvisation treatises (which were mostly harmony treatises until the beginning of the nineteenth century) there are two types of exercises: Bass models (like the rule of the octave, sequences etc.), then exercises for the figuration of these harmonic progressions.[72] The continuation of the rule of the octave can still be found in Czerny. In this new understanding, improvisation is an 'extremely demanding, yet learnable skill: "composing in the moment"'.[73] Thus, if one wants to speak of the 'improvisatory' nature of the first movement of the *Tempest* Sonata, one must refer equally to elements of the composed as well as the fantasized fantasy.[74]

The draft f. 65v, in my view, goes beyond formal features of a fantasy, in that it actually fixes in place elements from the practice of fantasizing. The entire course notated here recalls the practice of preluding in a narrower sense: rambling harmonic progressions without an overlying melody, recitatives.[75] Preluding, one could say pointedly, the A major sixth chord at the beginning of the draft is led to

---

68 Lehner, *Czerny*, p. 81, 87f. (referring to Czerny); Angela Carone, *Formal Elements*, pp. 11-15. Recent Research on this Topic: Dana Gooley, *Fantasies of Improvisation. Free Playing in Nineteenth-Century Music*, Oxford Univ. Press, New York, 2018; Borio, Carone (Ed.), *Musical Improvisation*; Lehner, Meidhof, Miucci (Ed.), *Das flüchtige Werk*; as well as the 'rediscovery' of the *partimento* method in the last 20 years or so.

69 Carone, *Formal Elements*, p. 12f.

70 Dana Gooley, *Free Playing*, p. 17f. (referring to the galant style).

71 Lehner, *Czerny*, p. 81.

72 Jan Philipp Sprick, *Musical form in Improvisation Treatises in the Age of Beethoven*, in Borio, Carone (Ed.), *Musical Improvisation*, p. 21.

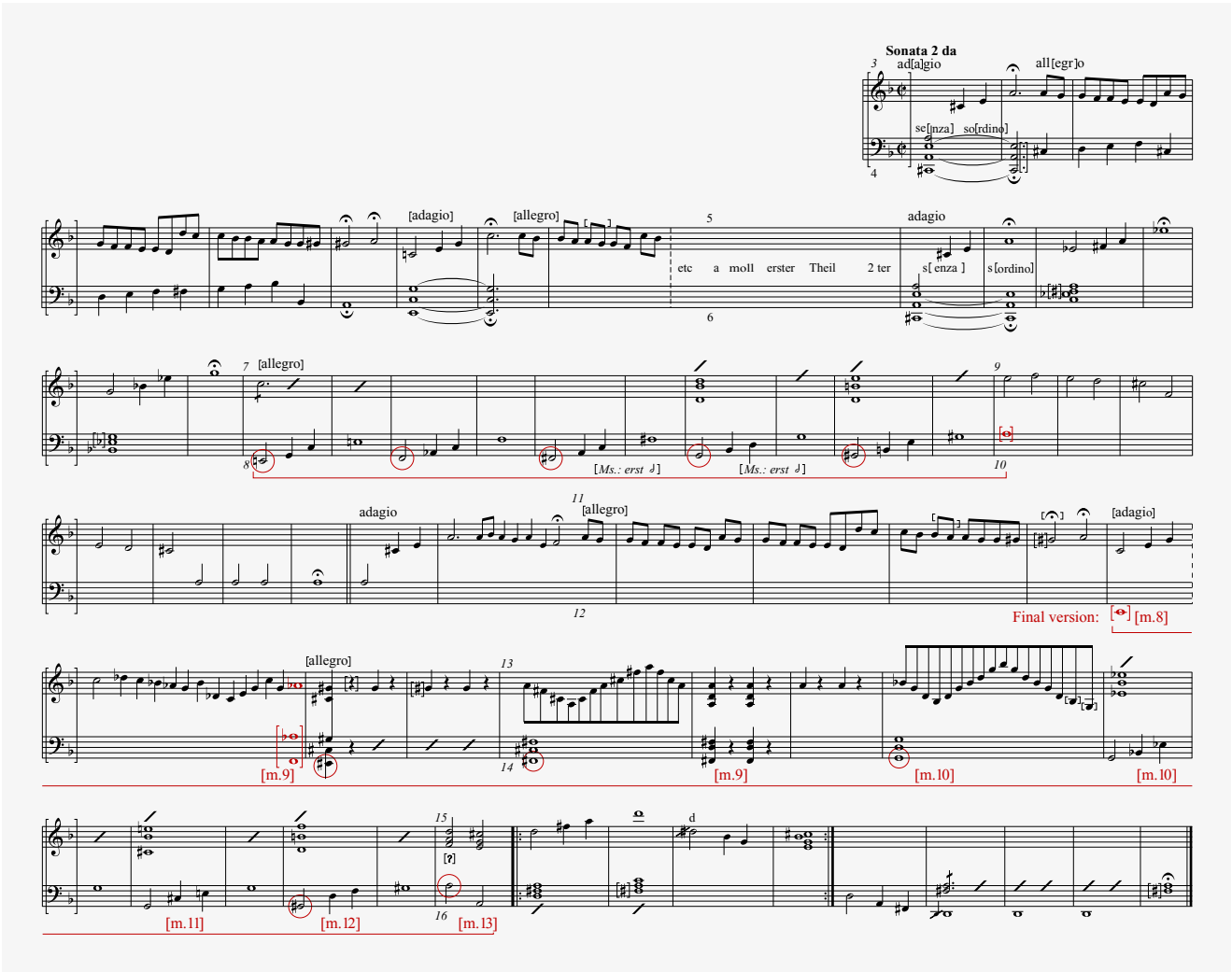
73 Lehner, *Czerny*, p. 97.

74 Kramer and Kinderman already criticized a too simple opposition of composition and improvisation: rather, here it had been composed in such a way that it sounded like an improvisation (Kramer, *Unfinished Music*, p. 196, 200f.; William Kinderman, *Improvisation in Beethoven's Creative Process*, in *Musical Improvisation: Art, Education, and Society*, ed. by Gabriel Solis, Bruno Nettl, University of Illinois Press, Urbana, 2009, p. 307f.).

75 The recitatives are notated without bar lines in f. 65v and lean more clearly than the final version on the typical melodic phrases of a recitative; in the finished movement, however, they are notated with bar lines.

the final chord D major. This course is integrated into a sonata movement.

A closer look at the harmonic progressions of the draft f. 65v confirms this impression (Example 17). The progression in the development shows a Monte sequence, on a chromatically ascending bass line from E to [A]. The second progression, in the recapitulation of the draft, is also over a chromatically ascending bass line from E to A.



Example 17: f. 65v, transcription.[76] Therein my analytical entries (red): harmonic progression in the development section and recapitulation

The second progression can be interpreted as a chromatized Monte sequence or as a Monte sequence with a chromatic interpolation followed by two diminished chords. The interpolation results from resolving the C major sixth chord

76 Brandenburg, *Übertragung* (vol. 5, part 1), p. 143f.

into C sharp major sixth chord as a false end (G sharp instead of A flat); in the final version, the C major sixth chord is resolved to F minor (A flat in measure 158 enharmonic changed to G sharp in the following measure). This second progression corresponds (omitting F major and the interpolation) to the progression of measures 8-13 in the final version (harmonic reduction see Example 18).

The draft does not have a Monte sequence at the place of the later measures 8ff. but only a simple transposition of measure 3-4 to F major. The twofold departure of the bass progressions on E is a consequence of the direct connection to the C major sixth chord of the second Adagio.

The model of the first 9 measures is a different sequence, both in the draft and in the final version [*Parallelismus*]: A-D (measures 1-3), C–F (measures 7-9).

As late as 1849, Kalkbrenner describes the Monte sequence as excellently suited for preluding – in a harmony theory that, as is so often the case, is at the same time a prelude school. Joseph Zimmermann (teacher at the Paris Conservatory) still mourns the *partimento* tradition in 1840, which he values as a 'good preparatory school for preluding'.[77] Preluding as the simplest kind of fantasizing served as foreplay before the performance of a composition, also for connecting compositions in different keys, though, originally, it served the pragmatic use of warming up fingers or trying out an instrument. The harmonic structure can be described as extended and figurated cadence; for extensions, the harmonization of scale sections is especially useful.[78] This structure is also found, but only in the final version of the movement (measures 21-30 and 99ff.); in measures 99-118, the rule of the octave underlies measures 99-110, then follows the Monte sequence measures 111-118. Finally, the bass scale of measures 21-41 of the final version could be described as a sixth chord chain of the old rule of the octave. In the *Praktische Präludirschule* by Carl Gottlieb Hering (1812-1814), the entire *Tempest* Sonata is even printed as an example (without any further explanation).[79]

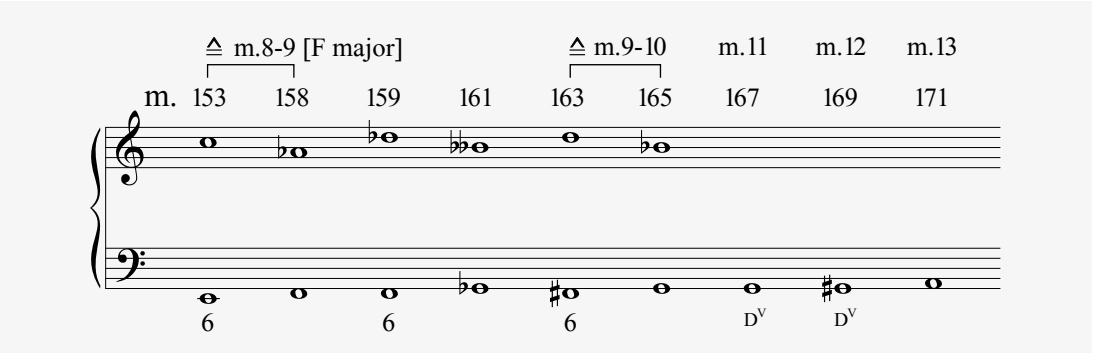
Therefore, the second draft (f. 65v) reveals elements from the practice of fantasizing in its simplest form: the prelude. By comparing this draft with the final version, however, we can observe how Beethoven elaborates this draft (Example 18). The Monte version in the recapitulation of the draft, without the chromatized interpolation, was moved into the exposition (measures 8ff.); thus, the simple repetition of measures 3-6 was replaced by a modulating and thus more dramatic sequence. In the recapitulation, the progression of the draft remained, except for the harmonization of the bass note G as an E flat major sixth chord. The chromatization of the Monte sequence occurs as a result of the resolving of C major sixth chord to F minor instead of F major as before.

---

77 Cfr. Claudio Bacciagaluppi, *Die Kunst des Präludierens*, in *Zwischen schöpferischer Individualität und künstlerischer Selbstverleugnung. Zur musikalischen Aufführungspraxis im 19. Jahrhundert*, ed. by Claudio Bacciagaluppi, Roman Brotbeck, Anselm Gerhard, Edition Argus, Schliengen, 2009, pp. 174-177.

78 Cfr. C.Ph.E. Bach, see *ibid.,* p. 174f.

79 *Praktische Präludirschule* vol. 2, p. 35, cfr. Sprick, *Improvisation Treatises*, p. 22f.



Example 18: Harmonic reduction of measures 153-171 (and resp. 8-13) in the final version

The harmonic progression remains as in the draft – however, it is no longer carried by the thematic broken triads, but it now appears in a different motivic garb: chord strokes alternating with rests. Richard Kramer[80] called this passage 'this riddling music at m. 159', referring to ' the ominous, muffled chords beginning at measure 159', which are 'indeed mysterious in origin'. Kramer relates the progression C sharp major-sixth chord–F sharp minor in measures 159-162 to the beginning of the development (measures 97-99): according to Kramer, the progression C sharp–F sharp minor had appeared earlier, but as a 6/4 chord over C sharp, omitting the dominant over C sharp.[81] On the basis of the analysis presented here, the passage seems less mysterious: harmonically, it is part of a harmonic progression already heard in the exposition, but in a new motivic shape. The reason for the change in the motivic setting of the progression is obvious: in the final version the triadic motive already dominates large parts of the exposition and development and is therefore replaced here. Thus this 'riddling music' becomes seemingly new and unknown, and at the same time coherent and fitting within the movement.

Since the Monte sequence appears in the final version in exposition and recapitulation, Beethoven partially replaced it in the development with a harmonization of a scale section according to the rule of the octave (measures 99-110), which is then followed by the Monte sequence (measures 111-118).

In contrast to the first draft (f. 90v), the second draft reveals a dramaturgy of rambling and searching alternating with moments of pause (recitatives) – fury (storm motifs) alternating with lament (recitatives). A music of inner conflict, highest subjectivity; a monologue understood as 'inner dialogue' (*inneren Dialog*), as 'inner struggle' (*inneren Kampf*).[82] Laurenz Lütteken has shown the '*Monologische als Denkform*' in the 'free fantasy' of Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, the 'monologue' as an 'inner struggle' in the solitude of soliloquy.

80 Kramer, *Unfinished Music*, p. 194.
81 *Ibid.*, pp. 194-200, esp. p. 198.
82 Laurenz Lütteken, *Das Monologische als Denkform in der Musik zwischen 1760 und 1785*, Tübingen, 1998, pp. 261-278.

The elements of the 'inner struggle' and the preluding in the draft f. 65v are preserved in the final version, but in a different weighting: in the final version of the movement, Beethoven has contrasted the monolithic preluding of the second draft with a counterweight of second themes (measure 41ff., measure 55ff.), developed above all from the turn (which is not yet present in the draft) as well as from the motive of measure 3ff. Through the turning figure, the newly added sections are consciously interconnected, an 'organic' coherence is created. Such interconnectedness is equally found on the level of the large form: the motive of the broken ascending triad becomes the arpeggiated chord that opens the first and second movements. And the fact that for the third movement Beethoven chooses the idea that appears in the Kessler sketchbook so often and in ever new shapes (see above, p. 80) is probably no coincidence: with it, the ascending triadic arpeggiation opens and permeates this movement as well.

Further movement beginnings on f. 66r

Another page of the Kessler sketchbook shows references to the two drafts in D minor just discussed. It is the page opposite the second draft (f. 65v), f. 66r (Example 19a and 19b). A number of movement beginnings can be seen. Based on their placement in the sketchbook, these have been assigned to the second draft, which is close to the *Tempest* Sonata. I would argue however, that it makes more sense to assign these beginnings to the earlier draft (f. 90v).[83]

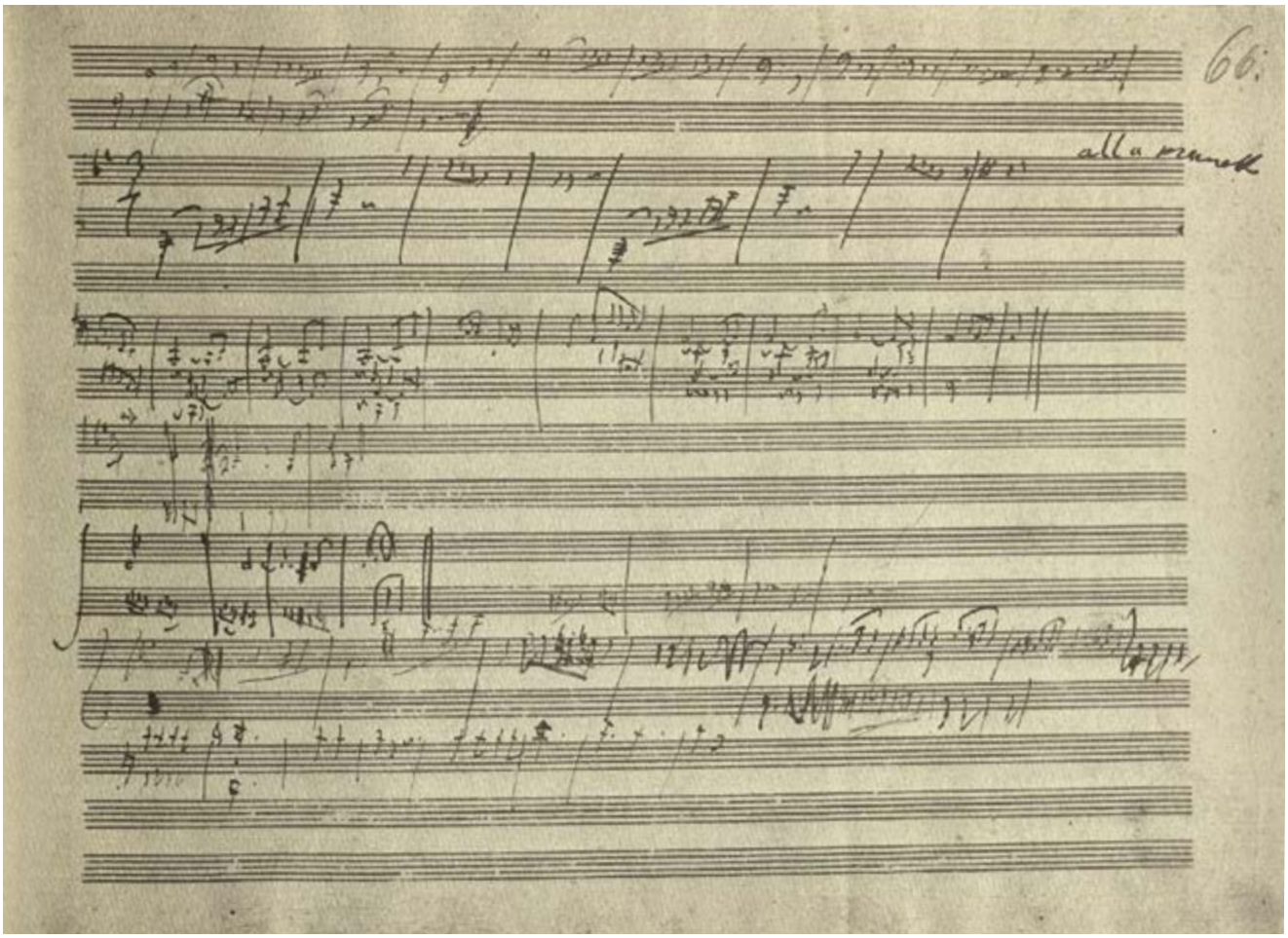
First, an overview of the entries: at the top, there is a movement beginning in B flat major in 3/4 time, marked '*alla menuetto*' (i.e., not: minuet, but: like a minuet); below that is a second beginning of a movement in 3/4 time, now in D major, which could indeed be a minuet. The latter would fit tonally into a D minor sonata; a minuet in B flat major in a D minor sonata, however, would be very unusual. The beginning of the B flat major movement '*alla menuetto*' could also be in the place of the slow movement[84] – just like the later slow movement of the *Tempest* Sonata, which is also in 3/4 time. This is followed by a short entry for an Adagio in B flat major and two sketches with scale work in D minor, probably intended for a fast final movement (which would then replace the 6/8 final movement on f. 90v). Last is a movement beginning in B flat major in 6/8 time, which bears clear resemblance to the later slow movement of the *Tempest* Sonata. Kinderman sees in it the replacement for the '*alla menuetto*' in B flat major.[85]

---

83 Different in Cooper, *Piano Sonatas*, p. 107.

84 Cooper, *Beethoven*, p. 191f.; William Kinderman, on the contrary, sees in the movement beginning a minuet *Beethoven at Heiligenstadt in 1802: Deconstruction, Integration, and Creativity*, in *The New Beethoven: Evolution, Analysis, Interpretation*, ed. by Jeremy Yudkin, University of Rochester Press, Rochester, 2020, p.152ff.).

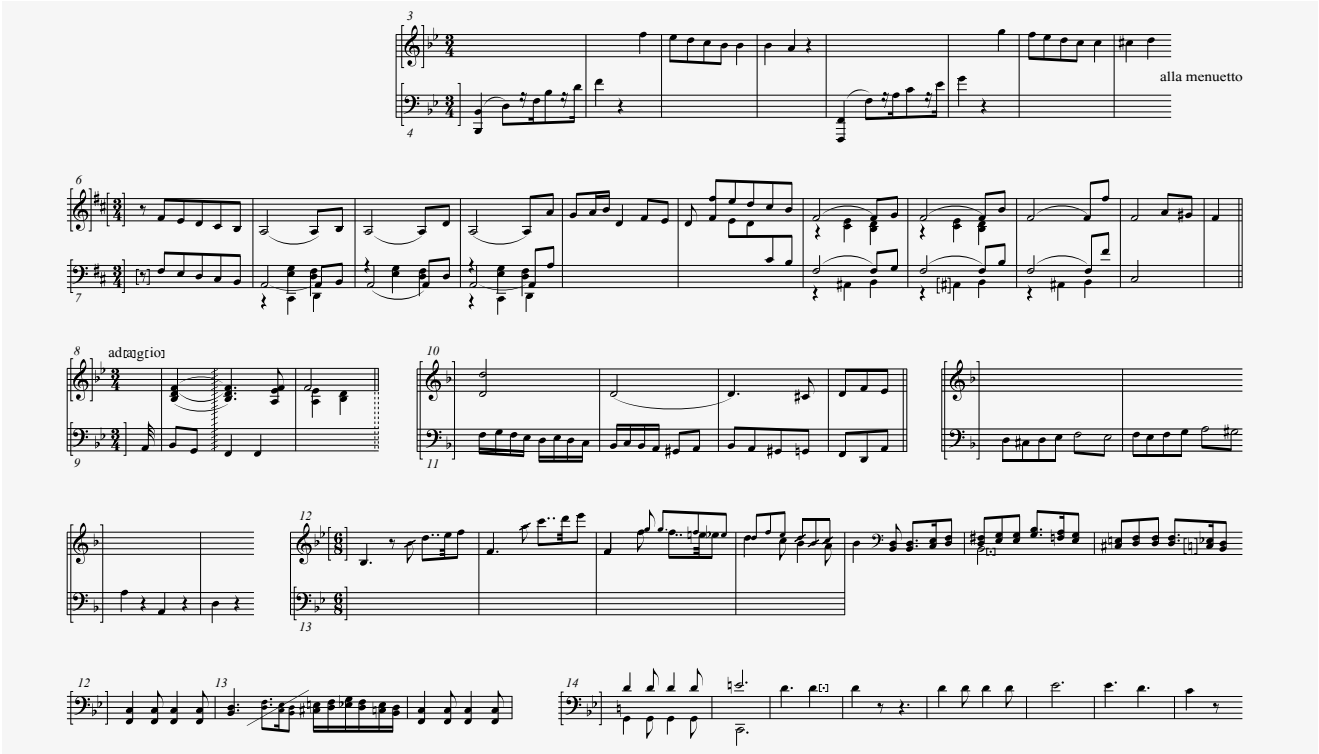
85 Kinderman, *Beethoven at Heiligenstadt*, p. 154f.



Example 19a: f. 66r, facsimile (cfr. fn. 86)

It is clear that these are alternatives for different movements: in a D minor sonata, both the minuet and slow movement would hardly be in B flat major at the same time; therefore, '*alla menuetto*' and Adagio are to be understood as alternatives. The third alternative of a slow movement is the movement beginning in B flat major 6/8 (system 12/13, 14), which was actually included in the final version of the *Tempest* Sonata. If the '*alla menuetto*' movement were indeed a minuet, the D major beginning would be an alternative to it.

The result is the conception of a four-movement sonata cycle: first movement with 'storm theme' in D minor, second movement in B flat major (3/4 or possibly 6/8), third movement minuet in D major, fourth movement Allegro in D minor – the key relationships of the Ninth Symphony composed 20 years later (albeit in a different dramaturgy). In the finished *Tempest* Sonata, the slow movement remained in B flat major, while the minuet was omitted. A minuet would hardly have fit into the aforementioned '*Ideengang*' of the finished *Tempest* Sonata (suffering – sublimity – resignation).



Example 19b: f. 66r, transcription[86]

Let us now consider which of the two drafts these movement beginnings belong to. First, the earlier draft (f. 90v) shows the same key constellation as the movement beginnings: D minor (final movement), B flat major (second theme), D major (episodic interpolation). Furthermore, the movement beginning '*alla menuetto*' shows the ascending broken triad, which indeed characterizes the first theme of both drafts; but only in the earlier draft does the ascent extend exactly as it does here (f. 66r), to the fifth above the octave. The scale descent in the '*alla menuetto*' is similar to that of the second theme in the first draft and is also in B flat major.[87] Even the minuet beginning in D major has such a scale descent – and further resembles the beginning of the D major interpolation of the first draft. However, the 6/8 beginning of the finished second movement also has the scale descent in B flat major which we notice in the first draft. This movement beginning thus belongs to both drafts, so to speak. Finally, common features of both drafts (f. 90v, f. 65v) can be found in the broken triads of the main theme as well as in the melodic descent F-E-D-C sharp, in both drafts at the end of the development.

It is in this way that both drafts and the beginnings of other movements notated on f. 66r belong to the context of the later *Tempest* Sonata. There are references

86 Brandenburg, *Keßlersches Skizzenbuch* (vol. 5, part 2) and Brandenburg, *Übertragung* (vol. 5, part 1), p. 144f.

87 Similarly Cooper, *Beethoven*, p. 192.

between the two drafts themselves, as well as references of the beginnings of the following movements to the earlier draft, as well as to the final version of the sonata. At what point in time did Beethoven leave the first draft and write down the new conception of the second draft? The notation of the second telescoped draft of the first movement - and thus the moment of reconceptualization – presumably took place sometime during the notation of the ideas for the subsequent movements on f. 66r. The transition from the earlier to the later draft in the course of notating the beginnings of the movements on f. 66r is also visually apparent: these differ in the style of the writing on the page, and were thus probably not written in a single sitting.[88]

What is remarkable about the drafts of the first movement of the *Tempest* Sonata is that the three versions of this movement differ fundamentally with respect to the dramaturgy of the overall course, the narrative sequence. In the first draft there is a minor movement with second theme in major and an interpolated 'spheric' major episode; in the second draft there is a minor movement with major coda; in the finished first movement, there is a minor movement without any major parts (without a major secondary theme, without a major episode). However, these fundamental differences in the dramaturgy of the overall sequence also prove how consciously Beethoven dealt with the conceptual design. Looking at the finished sonata as a whole, it seems that the idea of a solemn slow movement in major (B flat major 6/8 on f. 66r) meant that Beethoven chose to deprive the first movement of a major section, a major ending, or even a contrasting cantabile secondary theme.

88 The sketches on this page are possibly also written with different writing materials; unfortunately an autopsy was not possible. The Adagio and the beginning of the 6/8 movement were probably written down at another time (later?), perhaps after the second draft on f. 65v.

Performing Beethoven's 'New Path' Sonatas Op. 31: A Brief History of Their Interpretation in Selected Recordings

Hans-Joachim Hinrichsen

Musical interpretation matters, but it matters in a particular way. The influence that practical performance has on the ideas that audiences have about composers is enormous – although it is also true that the practical performance, the sounding, is in turn bound to the efforts of verbal analysis of the musical text. Carl Dahlhaus has pointed out half, but only half, of this connection in a beautiful formulation: 'One hears under the influence of the terminology through which one learned to express musical facts'.[1] It must not be forgotten, however, that it is exactly the same the other way around. There is no need to say anything more about the hermeneutic cycle that results from this.

Rather, on the following pages, I seek to explain that the objective character of the musical work is precarious. This is because the original of the work is not simply tangible like an object of the real world (for example, it is also not identical with the composer's autograph, unlike, for example, in the case of a painting by Dürer or by Monet). Nelson Goodman considers music to be among the 'allographic' arts, while painting, on the other hand, is among the 'autographic' arts.[2] A Beethoven sonata is not real (in the tangible sense), but it is also not unreal. As the phenomenologist Roman Ingarden remarked, it is an 'intentional' object.[3] Since the musical work exists neither in solely written notation, nor merely in its sounding during performance, nor exclusively in the consciousness of the listener, it is necessary to account for this complex ontology by interweaving the history of composition, interpretation, and mentality. The analysis of interpretations, as they are numerous on recordings

1 Carl Dahlhaus, *Klassische und romantische Musikästhetik*, Laaber, Lilienthal, 1988, p. 282.

2 Nelson Goodman, *Languages of Art. An Approach to the Theory of Symbols*, Hackett, Indianapolis/Cambridge, 1976, p. 113.

3 Roman Ingarden, *Untersuchungen zur Ontologie der Kunst. Musikwerk – Bild – Architektur – Film*, Niemeyer Verlag, Tübingen, 1962, § 6.

today, can be quite appealing in itself. But if this material situation were the *conditio sine qua non* for historical interpretation research, then it could only begin with the turn of the twentieth century. In my investigations of the nineteenth century, I have shown that this is an unnecessary limitation, being that sound carriers actually convey a falsely seductive suggestion through their supposed facticity. The radical question of the possibility of interpretive history must turn on whether the phenomena we call 'interpretation' are at all capable of history in the sense that they can be recollected into a coherent process.[4] It is not a matter of following up a history of the great composers with a heroic history of the great interpreters. No matter how meticulously individual sound recordings, the 'facts' of the history of interpretation, can be analyzed they do not speak as long as they remain isolated, factual islands. They are of interest only as nodes in the discursive network of self-statements, declarations of intent, hypotheses, value judgments, critiques, clichés, and testimonies of reception of all kinds – through which they can be verified or contradicted. Neither the analysis of the musical text nor that of the sound recording reveals by itself anything about the truth and the function of the work. Analysis – of the musical text as well as of the sound recording – never reaches the work itself, 'but always its categorical representation in the circle of notated text and sounding realization, and thus of practical and theoretical interpretation'.[5] But the judgement on the sonic interpretation depends in turn on the exegesis of the work (textual interpretation). One never gets out of this circle.

When I will address the topic of interpretation on the following pages I am aware of the fact that I must avoid two extreme and incompatible positions, the first of which is Hans Georg Gadamer's renowned theory of 'non-distinction'.[6] This means that you are not able to tell the difference between the work itself and its various performances, a position which of course renders practical interpretation rather irrelevant for any understanding of the work. The other one is Theodor W. Adorno's celebrated conception of 'Interpretationsanalyse' that may be translated as 'interpretational analysis' (which means analysis of the text in order to convey a right or true practical performance) and his conviction that something like the definitive truth of performance exists.[7]

---

4 Cfr. Hans-Joachim Hinrichsen, 'Kann Interpretation eine Geschichte haben? Überlegungen zu einer Historik der Interpretationsforschung', in Heinz von Loesch, Stefan Weinzierl, *Gemessene Interpretation. Computergestützte Aufführungsanalyse im Kreuzverhör der Disziplinen*, vol. 4, Klang und Begriff, Schott, Mainz, 2011, pp. 27-37.

5 Hans-Joachim Hinrichsen, 'Musikwissenschaft: Musik – Interpretation – Wissenschaft', *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft,* 57, 2000, pp. 78-90, cfr. particularly pp. 89 and 86.

6 Cfr. Hans Georg Gadamer, *Wahrheit und Methode. Grundzüge einer philosophischen Hermeneutik*, Mohr, Tübingen, 1965, p. 111.

7 Theodor W. Adorno, *Der getreue Korrepetitor. Lehrschriften zur musikalischen Praxis* [1963], including a chapter on 'Interpretationsanalysen neuer Musik', in Id., *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. by Rolf Tiedemann, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt a. Main, 1970-1986, vol. 15, pp. 249-368. In recent times the Adornian term 'Interpretationsanalyse' has turned out to be ambiguous, since it may also mean the analysis of a given (e.g. recorded) interpretation: cfr. *Musikalische Interpretation*, ed. by Hermann Danuser, Laaber, Lilienthal, 1992 (Neues Handbuch der Musikwissenschaft, 11), pp. 301-310.

I would argue that neither the phenomenon of 'the work itself' nor a definite and indisputable 'truth of performance' exists.

In the history of piano music, Beethoven's piano sonatas mark a significantly new epoch, a caesura of remarkable effectiveness. Nobody doubts this up to the present day, including Beethoven's first contemporaries who knew they were experiencing something completely new. For all composers to write piano sonatas after Beethoven, his respective *œuvre* formed an immense challenge. And this holds true for performance practice as well. It is no coincidence that especially Beethoven's piano sonatas have spurred a special kind of textbook, which belongs to the field of what in German is called 'Vortragslehre'. No other *œuvre* of the 19th century has been devoted to such an abundance of corresponding treatises. This begins with the unpublished notes of Beethoven's student Carl Czerny[8] and is continued by the important and influential monograph *Anleitung zum Vortrag Beethovenscher Klavierwerke* (*Instructions for the Performance of Beethoven's Piano Works*) by the Beethoven biographer Adolf Bernhard Marx.[9] Both were written by Beethoven's contemporaries and thus can claim to have a certain authenticity on their side, as problematic as this term may be. Other treatises followed in the 19th century, among them Hans von Bülow's famous annotated edition of Beethoven's piano works[10] and the small book by the pianist and composer Carl Reinecke.[11] In the 20th century, numerous renowned pianists (among them Edwin Fischer and Andor Foldes) maintained the habit of publicly writing about performing Beethoven, and numerous Beethoven editions with detailed notes on performance and interpretation proliferated after the great model of Bülow. Undoubtedly, it would be appealing to subject all these writings to a comparative study and to extract from their instructions directives for an appropriate understanding of playing Beethoven.

However, I have elected not to refer to this literature here, choosing instead to confine myself to the sonic evidence of recorded music. Except in a few cases (Bülow, see below), I will not go into them in detail, because that would open up a completely different topic than the one I intend to focus on here. Only occasionally do I quote Marx, whom Bülow already counted among the most important inspirations of his own celebrated edition. Marx is important for the history of the interpretation of Beethoven, insofar as he, in his Beethoven biography (1859), prominently develops the thesis that with Beethoven, music becomes for the first time as an art of ideas; whereas before, it had always been only purely playing with tones.

---

8 Carl Czerny, *Über den richtigen Vortrag der sämtlichen Beethoven'schen Klavierwerke* [...], ed. by Paul Badura-Skoda, Wien, 1963.

9 Adolf Bernhard Marx, *Anleitung zum Vortrag Beethovenscher Klavierwerke* [1863], Berlin, 1912.

10 Hans von Bülow (ed.), *Beethoven's / Werke für Pianoforte Solo / von Op. 53 an / in / kritischer und instructiver Ausgabe / mit erläuternden Anmerkungen / für Lehrende und Lernende / von / Dr. Hans von Bülow* [vols. 4 and 5 of the 'Gesamtausgabe' ed. by Sigmund Lebert], Cotta, Stuttgart, VN. 23 and 35, 1872.

11 Carl Reinecke, *Die Beethoven'schen Clavier-Sonaten. Briefe an eine Freundin*, Leipzig, 1894.

Thus, in his *Anleitung zum Vortrag Beethovenscher Klavierwerke*, he states:

> The peculiarity of Beethoven's content lies above all in the fact that it is only in his works that instrumental music, namely piano music, has gained ideality, has become an expression of definite, and indeed ideal, content, whereas up to that time (counting a few exceptions in Bach) it had only been a charming play with tone figures or echoes of fleeting and indeterminate moods.[12]

This is a clear indication of the seriousness at stake here: Beethoven's music is, it seems, a matter of life and death – and this is exactly true for its appropriate performance.

While Beethoven's piano sonata *œuvre* as a whole signifies innovation in the course of history, there are several quantum leaps within his corpus as well. This is not surprising, for Beethoven's compositional technique generally follows the agenda of constant innovation, an issue which was observed by his contemporaries in real time. But it is hard to define in which areas these innovations would take place, and where they were to be discerned. Doubtless, the last five sonatas (Op. 101 to 111) mean something new in comparison with earlier works, and even within the group of these five sonatas the last three (Op. 109, 110 and 111) form their own group. It took a long time before they were staged in public concerts. It was Franz Liszt who played the *Hammerklavier* Sonata for the first time in public (1836), and this remained a singular act for a long time. Clara Schumann occasionally played the A major sonata Op. 101, and it was not until the 1880s that Hans von Bülow performed the last five sonatas in one single recital. This caused mixed reactions: many critics considered this a bit much, and even Eduard Hanslick coined it a drastic kill-or-cure remedy. Not least thanks to these magnificent Beethoven recitals Bülow became one of the most influential Beethoven performers of his age.

In this article I do not deal with the last five sonatas but want to take a closer look at the three works of Op. 31, which are being appreciated as innovations in a quite similar way. It is known that, around 1803, Beethoven allegedly voiced his dissatisfaction with his previous output, intending to take a new path, or walk a 'new way', ['einen neuen Weg'] from now on.[13] At least this is what his student Carl Czerny reported some thirty years later after having heard about it from a former friend of Beethoven's. Czerny was convinced that the first few works that could be attributed to this 'new way' were the three sonatas Op. 31. Since then, many Beethoven scholars have repeated this opinion, confirming it, and thus the question of how new they really are is subject to constant discussion. So, is Czerny really right?

When looking through contemporary reviews, the picture looks quite differ-

12 Marx, *Anleitung zum Vortrag Beethovenscher Klavierwerke*, p. 8.

13 *Beethoven aus der Sicht seiner Zeitgenossen in Tagebüchern, Briefen, Gedichten und Erinnerungen,* ed. by Klaus Martin Kopitz and Rainer Cadenbach, 2 vols., Henle, München, 2009, vol. 1, p. 228: 'Ich bin mit meinen bisherigen Arbeiten nicht zufrieden. Von nun an will ich einen neuen Weg betreten'.

ent. There is only one review of Opus 31 from this time (in the *Zeitschrift für die elegante Welt*), written in 1803 by Johann Gottlieb Spazier, and published immediately after the edition by Hans Georg Nägeli in Zürich, who printed the first two sonatas in the same year. The third one in E flat major was to follow only in 1804. It is a remarkable issue of this rather short review that it labels the first sonata (in G major) as the more original one, and at the end of the short article both sonatas seem to be 'bizarre in some respects' (*mitunter bizarr*).[14] This attribute, 'bizarre', makes its career as a stock formula for Beethoven's music: already the very first review of a Beethoven sonata, an anonymous article on Op. 10 in the first issue of the Leipzig *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* (1798), incriminates Beethoven's inclination 'to muddle up his thoughts in an undomesticated way and to combine them in a rather bizarre manner'.[15] Both reviews, the one on Op. 10 and the other one on Op. 31, correspondingly highlight two features: originality on the one hand, bizarreness on the other. Interestingly, the first review of Op. 31 does not emphasize the D minor sonata, as was typical at the time, but the first one in G major. Half a century later, Adolf Bernhard Marx still calls the G major sonata 'one of the happiest moments in Beethoven's career' (einen der glücklichsten Momente in Beethovens Laufbahn).[16] Apparently, the distribution of popularity has changed since then.

For this there is a telling clue: when, in the 1880s, great rivals in piano playing, Anton Rubinstein and Hans von Bülow, included Beethoven in their piano recitals, they did so with a subtle difference. In 1885, Rubinstein launched a programmatic innovation: stretched over seven recitals, he presented an overview of three centuries of piano music, beginning with early Baroque and ending with music of the current era.[17] He dedicated a whole evening to Beethoven, playing all of eight sonatas. One of them belonged to Op. 31, actually the D minor sonata. The other ones were: *Moonlight*, *Waldstein*, *Appassionata*, then Op. 90, and last but not least, three of the last ones: Op. 101, 109 and 111. This may be considered a reasonable seismograph of the sonata's popularity; it has not heavily changed since then. But note that Rubinstein's intention was a didactical one: it was about the representation of history. In Bülow's recitals we face all three sonatas, albeit never together, but only one of them at a time. And there were characteristic differences with respect to Rubinstein's recitals: No. 1 in G major (considered the most original one by the contemporary reviewer) does not emerge until the late 1880s and only twice; No. 2 in D minor 25 times, still not much but considerably more; No. 3 (in

14 *Ludwig van Beethoven. Die Werke im Spiegel seiner Zeit. Gesammelte Konzertberichte und Rezensionen bis 1830*, ed. by Stefan Kunze, Laaber, 1987, p. 30.

15 *Ibid.*, p. 16. Translation by the author of this article. The original wording reads as follows: 'Gedanken wild aufeinander zu häufen und sie mitunter vermittelst einer etwas bizarren Manier [...] zu gruppieren'.

16 Marx, *Anleitung zum Vortrag Beethovenscher Klavierwerke*, p. 121.

17 Cfr. Anton Rubinstein, *Erinnerungen aus fünfzig Jahren. 1839–1889*, german translation by Eduard Kretschmann, Leipzig, 1893, p. 111-114.

E flat major), however, was performed nearly 100 times, almost as much as the *Appassionata* which was one of the most frequently performed sonatas in Bülow's recitals. It is possible that Bülow designed his Beethoven repertory a bit against the grain, or against his competitor. In his late piano lessons at the Frankfurt Raff conservatory, he used to suggest to his pupils to not always play the sonatas Rubinstein was playing.[18]

It is known that Bülow prepared a celebrated Beethoven edition in 1872. His own edition started with the *Waldstein* Sonata Op. 53. But some of the earlier sonatas were being published in later Bülow editions: the *Pathétique*, the funeral march sonata Op. 26, the *Moonlight*, and eventually the third sonata from Op. 31, the E flat major, and therefore: the most frequently performed one in his own recitals.

I very deliberately talked this much about Bülow, because he is important for our present topic, particularly due to his Beethoven edition. Maybe it is a pity that this edition starts right after Op. 31, but this should not bother us for the moment. And Bülow also edited at least one of the Op. 31 sonatas some years later. It is a trademark of his edition to be strewn with footnotes like a scientific or scholarly work. In a way, it is a scholarly work: Bülow is speaking as the Beethoven expert of his time. Indeed, he speaks as an artist, as a seasoned performer. It is this feature of the edition which makes it so interesting for us as we seek to explore by what traits Bülow's Beethoven performances were so innovative, so groundbreakingly new that Hugo Riemann later on confessed to be a 'pupil of Bülow's'. It was Bülow who conveyed insights into Beethoven's musical texture which made Riemann the Beethoven specialist he later was considered to be.

So I can postpone the difficult question: what is properly new in Beethoven's Op. 31 sonatas? in favour of the question, what may be a new challenge in performing these sonatas? And here we can follow the traces laid out by Bülow, for at the very beginning of his edition he discovers a topic which is undoubtedly relevant for Op. 31 as well. Our attention is directed to a particular Beethovenian nuance, whose execution became Bülow's trademark of performing Beethoven after having discovered it – either ardently applauded by his contemporaries or passionately criticized. I mean the characteristic *subito piano*, abruptly following a constantly increasing *crescendo* without any mitigation. Facing the first appearance of this *subito piano* in bar 23 of the *Waldstein* Sonata, Bülow writes:[19]

> The entrance of the *piano*, contrary to the opinion of some performers, should by no means be brought about (technically facilitated) through the interpolation of a *decrescendo* in the last quarter-note of the preceding measure. The expressional nuance: *cresc. – p*, with all its conceivable gradations,

18 José Vianna da Motta, *Nachtrag zu Studien bei Hans von Bülow (von Theodor Pfeiffer)*, Berlin / Leipzig, 1896, p. 5 (refers to a piano lesson at the Frankfurt Raff-conservatory, 9 May 1887).

19 Bülow (ed.), *Beethoven's / Werke für Pianoforte*, vol. 1, p. 4: 'Der Eintritt des „piano" darf keineswegs, wie einige Praktiker vermeinen, durch Einschaltung eines "decresc." [...] vermittelt (technisch erleichtert) werden. Die Vortragsnuance „cresc. p" mit allen ihren erdenklichen Abstufungen ist dem Styl des Meisters so wesentlich eigenthümlich, dass eine willkürliche oder lückenhafte Ausführung derselben geradezu als ein grober Verstoss gegen den Beethovenschen Geist zu bezeichnen ist'.

> is so essentially peculiar to the Master's style, that an arbitrary or defective execution of it has to be considered absolutely as a gross offence against the Beethoven spirit. Yet, as inasmuch as an artistic execution of it requires not only a perfect mastery of the fingers, but also the capacity developed into skill to restrain (while conscious of a strongly felt presentiment of what follows) the natural impulse of the musical feeling, which, especially at a *crescendo* of longer duration, urges us to a close by means of a *forte*) this point is recommended to the 'thinking' player as a quite special study. The Editor will frequently revert to this point [...].

Following Bülow, who may be considered the very discoverer of this Beethovenian 'maniera', Hugo Riemann gave the *subito piano* its nickname as 'Beethoven'sches Effekt-Piano',[20] and Theodor W. Adorno called it a 'dynamic deceptive cadence' (dynamischer Trugschluss).[21] While Riemann's term does not seem very appropriate, for Beethoven does not deal with mere 'effects', Adorno's more technical and neutral description is pretty useful. It is not easy to say what Beethoven intended by this manner, with its consequences for dynamics and phrasing, and it may be subjected to long discussions. Our main concern is not its meaning, but the question, whether and how distinctly it should be executed. Bülow is the first one to warn us of any mitigating transition which makes the effect disappear. But, it is not the *Waldstein* Sonata to employ this effect for the first time, we find it already within Op. 31. This leads us to the core of our topic. In the first sonata (No. 1, G major), Beethoven displays the *subito piano* at the end of the exposition. As a performer one is confronted with two extreme solutions: either downplay the effect or exaggerate it. Here you can listen to an example that I consider to be a very smart and elegant solution:

1. Andreas Staier:

„Ein neuer Weg" / 'A new path', Harmonia mundi, HMM 902327.28 (2020), CD 1, Track 1, 0:00–1:43

Of course, this is a tongue-in-cheek reverence for the leader of our Beethoven workshop, but I honestly consider his solution convincing and very smart. I will not dwell on Andreas Staier's beautiful interpretation of Op. 31, preferring to focus the following discourse on examples played at the modern piano. In addition, I must confine myself to only a few selected fields or problematic topics, one from each of the three sonatas.

The question on whether a perceptible phenomenon as the history of the performance of Beethovenian works exists is relevant for historians. Would different generations play Beethoven sonatas in an audibly different way? Or

20 Hugo Riemann, *Musikalische Dynamik und Agogik. Lehrbuch der musikalischen Phrasirung auf Grund einer Revision der Lehre von der musikalischen Metrik und Rhythmik*, Hamburg / St. Petersburg, 1884, p. 180.

21 Theodor W. Adorno, *Beethoven. Philosophie der Musik*, ed. by Rolf Tiedemann, Frankfurt, 1993 (Nachgelassene Schriften I/1), p. 88.

are there differences between pianists from different national or cultural backgrounds? First, I would like to discuss a representative of this opinion. Nearly 50 years ago a book came to light in Germany which quickly gained a certain regard: *Beethovens 32 Klaviersonaten und ihre Interpreten* by the renowned music critic Joachim Kaiser. Kaiser dedicated this book to his fellow students at Göttingen, Carl Dahlhaus and Rudolf Stephan ('*Carl Dahlhaus und Rudolf Stephan, den Freunden aus alten Göttinger Tagen*'). Since these dedicatees were enormously influential for my generation conducting their studies in Berlin, consequentially Kaiser's book was (and continues to be) of some relevance for me. Its basic idea seems to be very fascinating (although nowadays you would conduct similar considerations in quite a different way). When it comes to Op. 31, in the course of Kaiser's book, the author dares to utter a uniquely distinct assertion not seen anywhere else in this book: yes, there is something like a palpable succession of different generations, and there are good reasons to claim this. Just have a look at the difference between Arthur Schnabel (in the 1930s) and Friedrich Gulda (some 30 years after). Let alone the *subito piano* at the end of the exposition the proper performance problem lies in the beginning: in the tricky syncopated rhythm of its first sound. As Kaiser writes:

> Arthur Schnabel is careful not to soften the rhythmic wit of this first movement but to force it: to make it seem capricious, surprising, nervously excited. He always gives a heavy accent only to the syncopated advanced semiquaver, not the regular one. With Schnabel, the rhythmic backbone of the movements bends – depending on how fierce the chords, modulations, and mimicked echo effects become.[22]

So let's listen to Arthur Schnabel's performance from 1935 (5 and 6 November 1935):

2. Arthur Schnabel:

The Complete Beethoven Sonatas, The International Music Company AG, TIM 205214-303 vol. 3, CD 1, Track 8, 0:00–1:30

Schnabel emphasizes only the upbeat note. But we should also note that he compresses the D major arpeggios at the beginning of the transition as if they were arpeggiated chords and not rising and falling lines. So they gain a particular weight as a harmonic position of its own right. It can be easily understood that D major is exhausted and cannot be employed as the second key area any

22 Joachim Kaiser, *Beethovens 32 Klaviersonaten und ihre Interpreten*, Reclam, Stuttgart, 1979, p. 292: 'Arthur Schnabel bemüht sich, den rhythmischen Witz dieses Kopfsatzes nicht etwa aufzuweichen, sondern zu forcieren: ihn kapriziös, überraschend, nervös-erregt erscheinen zu lassen. Er gibt immer nur dem synkopisch vorgezogenen Sechzehntel einen heftigen Akzent, nicht der regelmäßigen Eins. Bei Schnabel biegt sich das rhythmische Rückgrat des Satzes – je nachdem, wie heftig die Akkorde, die Modulationen und nachempfundenen Echo-Wirkungen werden'.

longer. But this is another topic, I will return to it later on.

When it comes to Friedrich Gulda as an immediate example of comparison, Kaiser says:

> Gulda's interpretation, recorded in the 1960s, seems like a late correction and refutation of all those liberties that Schnabel took in 1935. Schnabel's brilliant exuberance is replaced by a rather harsh brilliance in Gulda's case – as in the case of numerous pianists from Schnabel's grandchildren's generation, such as Zechlin, Brendel, Glenn Gould and even Barenboim: this is how artists play who already absorbed Stravinsky's unyielding neoclassicism, Prokofieff's luxurious brutality and Bartók's Barbaro motoricism with their mother's milk.[23]

Of course, Kaiser is aware of Theodor W. Adorno's celebrated assertion that any interpretation which deserves to be labeled appropriate has to be designed from the perspective of the most advanced position of contemporary composition. Now, let's listen to Gulda (as recorded in 1968), who was not only a great Mozart and Beethoven performer but a gifted jazz pianist as well:

3. Friedrich Gulda:

Gulda spielt Beethoven, © Amadeo 1968, © Decca 1971/73, Universal Classics & Jazz 2005, Universal 4768761, CD 5, Track 5, 0:00–1:31

Comparing Schnabel and Gulda, you may believe in the existence of a historical development via the generations. In my opinion, however, it is not that simple – despite Adorno's dictum. We discern further problems and solutions by expanding the perspective from the temporal aspect into a geographical one. Besides all their differences, Schnabel and Gulda have in common that they treat the tempo very uniformly (Gulda a little more consistently than Schnabel), we realize a problem which is slightly covered by Schnabel's nearly imperceptible agogical shifts: the secondary theme could be executed in a significantly slower pace, as known from the performance tradition of classical works. You will find this in Emil Gilels who, on the other hand, ignores the dynamic prescriptions at the end of the exposition. Op. 31 No. 1 is the first Beethoven piano sonata to state the secondary theme in the mediant.[24] This mediant breaks into the sonic

23 *Ibid.*, p. 293: 'Guldas in den sechziger Jahren eingespielte Interpretation wirkt wie eine späte Korrrektur und Widerlegung aller jener Freiheiten, die Schnabel sich 1935 nahm. An die Stelle von Schnabels glänzendem Übermut tritt bei Gulda – wie überhaupt bei zahlreichen Pianisten aus Schnabels Enkel-Generation, also bei Zechlin, Brendel, bei Glenn Gould und sogar bei Barenboim – ein eher harter Glanz: so spielen Künstler, die bereits mit der Muttermilche Strawinskys unnachgiebigen Neoklassizismus, Prokofieffs luxuriöse Brutalität und Bartóks Barbaro-Motorik in sich aufgenommen haben'.

24 On the mediant as a secondary tonality in sonata form cfr. Charles Rosen, who calls it 'substitue for the dominant' (Charles Rosen, *Sonata Forms. Revised Edition*, Norton, New York / London, 1988, p. 354).

landscape in a very convincing way after the dominant (D major) has been deliberately exhausted by the exploding chords at the end of the introduction of the first theme (played by Schnabel nearly as chords and not as arpeggiated figurations, as seen above). Since this theme changes between B major and B minor, one could argue that it clearly deserves to be slowed down, which would remind us of a character of meditation and thoughtfulness. Thus it is clear that sonata form can be fundamentally shaped, clarified, highlighted and emphasized by mere interpretative decisions.

4. Emil Gilels:

Beethoven Op. 31, No. 1, Live Recording 1976, Brilliant Classics, 92132, CD 3, Track 8, 0:00–1:45

If Kaiser is right, then Schnabel – as a child of late Romanticism – uses the licence for smaller rhythmic liberties, while Gulda – as a child of *Neue Sachlichkeit* – treats the piece with relentless precision and motorized energy. But when you listen to Gilels, you may wonder: is there something like a Russian school of performance? A school which is not at all scared of shifts of tempo or of lyrical emphasis? This question, too, cannot be answered on such a narrow basis, of course, apart from the fact that one could discuss the legitimacy of Gilels' view. But, after all, in a collection of essays, based on a project of the Staatliches Institut für Musikforschung (SIM) in Berlin, there is an explicit reference to a 'Russian school of musical interpretation' (cfr. the book's telling title):[25] for example, in the *Appassionata*, a measurable systematic slowing down of the secondary theme can be detected early on among Russian interpreters.

If the history of musical interpretation is really articulated by a succession of the generations, it may be discernible by looking at the performance of the finale of the second work of Op. 31, the D minor sonata. The history, if there is such a thing, is a history of continuous acceleration. This acceleration is something that Adolf Bernhard Marx had already warned about because he saw the danger – apparently in vain:

> Finally, be expressly warned against hasty timing of the finale. Players often make it into a Viennese waltz or an etude. However, it is nothing of the sort, but a very sensible movement, fragrant with desire, and excited to the point of fermenting the feeling and the waves of sound, but absolutely of inner movement, like the entire sonata, far from any superficial overhaste.[26]

This movement, although profoundly passionate, is one of Beethoven's characteristic *perpetuum mobiles*, and so the obvious thing to do would be to play it

25 *Russische Schule der musikalischen Interpretation*, ed. by Heinz von Loesch and Linde Großmann, Schott, Mainz, 2015 (Klang und Begriff, vol. 5).

26 Marx, *Anleitung zum Vortrag Beethovenscher Klavierwerke*, p. 127.

rapidly and full of motorical energy (mislead by its popular, but not very senseful title *Tempest*, and ignoring Marx's caveat).

This is what a young performer does whose position is at the peak of our history of generations, Igor Levit:

5. Igor Levit:

Beethoven Complete Piano Sonatas, SONY 2013/19, Sony 19075843182, CD 5, Track 6, 0:00–1:06

But this is by no means a new discovery. Listen, for instance, to a live performance of this movement by Mariya Yudina, a fellow student of Shostakovich at the Leningrad conservatory, which was recorded as early as 1954 and has rather even more drive (and is, thus, some seconds shorter):

6. Mariya Yudina:

Russian Compact Disc 2005, RCD / Aquarius AQVR 249-2, CD 1, Track 7, 0:00–0:57

Maybe there is no such phenomenon like a 'Russian school', nor does it seem very useful to compare male and female approaches. But another issue is more important here. You can clearly hear, especially in this frantic tempo, the problem exposed by Beethoven: how will this restless movement ever be able to close in a convincing way? One can even say that this sonata raises the two extreme passages of a work in a reflective manner to the object of reflection. It begins with an opening, slowly arpeggiated sixth chord that would normally be followed by a recitative. In fact, such a recitative does come, but only in the middle of the movement. The finale, on the other hand, ponders the problem of closure. It can be solved, because Beethoven actually prepared the solution at the beginning: you can see in the musical text at two points of the continuous racing a small 'hole', a small gap (measures 23 and 27) – and if you turn the pages from here up to the very end you will see that, exactly at this point, the hole gets bigger and bigger until the context breaks (measures 277-284). In German the word '*Sollbruchstelle*' exists for such a phenomenon (a tiny and almost invisible crack or split within the texture which is designed for having the whole thing break apart later on), and this point is showing up already in the beginning of the movement. Yet in most cases you don't hear it. The only performance I know of that is aware of this issue is Alfred Brendel's recording from 1972. Indeed, here you may hear, the little crack or 'hole' in the aforementioned measures performed with a kind of courageous exaggeration (later it will turn out to be the point of no return):

7. Alfred Brendel:

Beethoven, © Decca, Universal Classics & Jazz 2010, Universal 4804003, CD 8, Track 10, 0:00–1:17

There are many other performers who conceive the movement more lyrically (what, for instance, does 'Allegretto' really mean, regarding the tempo?), but their versions do not consider the problem of bringing this movement to a really plausible ending. I must skip many other problems with this beginning, such as how to play the chord arpeggios, how to treat the pedal in order to have the sound rich and colorful, and so on. As always in Beethoven, issues of sound are in the same way issues of structure.

In the literature we often find the three Op. 31 sonatas described as 'humorous', or sometimes as 'ironic' as well. Many commentators try to prove this statement by citing the interior movements of Op. 31 No. 3 (E flat major). The scherzo, according to their reasoning, would not be a real scherzo, but a sophisticated parody of this type; and the minuet, completely out of fashion by this time, would mean nothing else than an ironic stylization. But in reality this minuetto is one of several Beethoven minuets to follow: the most famous ones are in the Eighth Symphony and at the conclusion of the Diabelli variations. It is hard to believe that all those movements were simply meant as ironic recollections of the 18th century type of court dance music. Rather they are cleverly stylized samples of musical self-reflection on the one hand, full of sentiment and nostalgia on the other. Note the *subito piano* (which Hans von Bülow made us aware of) at bar 7, or the pathetic accents on the c flat in bars 9 and 11. But what does this mean for the performer? Is it sufficient to play these movements in an objective way, with the expectation that they speak for themselves? Listen to Igor Levit's very elegant and fluent, yet nearly neutral rendering:

8. Igor Levit:

Beethoven Complete Piano Sonatas, SONY 2013/19, Sony 19075843182, CD 5, Track 9, 0:00–0:30

While most pianists play the minuet Op. 31 No. 3 as neutral as possible, without any expression, Claudio Arrau's daring performance (recorded in 1988) emphasizes the pathetical accents and the fluid beauty of the melody, especially in the inner voices. He treats the movement as a really touching slow movement, as a treasure at the very core of the work, with all its beauty (and in a tempo, which gives time to expressively highlight the *subito piano* in the transition from measure 6 to 7):

9. Claudio Arrau:

Beethoven Piano Sonatas, © Philips Classics Productions 1990, Philips 426297-2, Track 3, 0:00–0:46

All this raises questions about this movement's character. Hans von Bülow, in his late edition of Op. 31 No. 3, suggested that the three sonatas should be considered neither humourous nor pathetic. He argues that it is a peculiarity of Beethoven to combine both issues in order to create a completely new musical mood or tone. In the first movement, he claims, 'the humorous element should continually peep through the pathetic',[27] and on behalf of the menuetto movement he states:

> The slow Minuet stands here in the place of the Andante or Adagio [...]; it takes the place indeed of the specially lyric movement of the deepest and tenderest pathos. The player should avail himself of this opportunity to the utmost, without falling into mere sentimentality, and should cultivate a legato cantabile in each individual part.[28]

One could possibly say: like Claudio Arrau.

As an example which tries to combine both versions, I propose to listen to the movement's performance by Paul Lewis, a pupil of Alfred Brendel's:

10. Paul Lewis:

Beethoven Complete Piano Sonatas, Harmonia mundi 2009, HMX 2901902.11, CD 1, Track 9, 0:00–0:38

It is a characteristic issue of Lewis' playing to give the music its time for singing. So he takes even the notoriously virtuoso finale of the third sonata pretty slowly. Why does he do so? Just to allow the secondary theme to unfold its lyrical charm. The movement does not really expose two different themes; rather it is what Hepokoski and Darcy labeled a mono-motivic continuous exposition.[29] But in Lewis' performance the ending of the exposition is not only in the eventual arrival at the dominant, but it becomes a broad and singing secondary melody thanks to the slowness of his tempo:

---

27 Hans von Bülow (ed.), *Klassische Klavierwerke / aus / Hans von Bülow's Concertprogrammen /* [...] *Revidirt und mit genauen Fingersatz- und / Vortragsbezeichnungen herausgegeben / von / Hans von Bülow,* III. Band; here Nr. 15: *L. v. Beethoven: Sonate. Op. 31. N. 3. Es dur*; München, Aibl, VN 2393, p. 47.

28 *Ibid.*, p. 60.

29 James Hepokoski, Warren Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory. Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late-Eighteenth-Century Sonata*, Oxford University Press, Oxford / New York, 2006, p. 51-64.

11. Paul Lewis:

Beethoven Complete Piano Sonatas, Harmonia mundi 2009, HMX 2901902.11, CD 1, Track 10, 0:00–0:59

This leads us back to Arthur Schnabel, with whom we started. Schnabel recorded the sonata in 1932, and still today, it is one of the fastest takes of this movement:

12. Arthur Schnabel:

The Complete Beethoven Sonatas, The International Music Company AG, TIM 205214-303 vol. 3, CD 2, Track 7, 0:00–0:44

In a similar way, this movement was recently played in a similarly rapid way by Levit, who was born more than a hundred years after Schnabel. So, regarding simply tempo issues, there is no real history nor linear development over time, but rather a progression in circles and waves. To get beyond the mere diagnosis of perpetuating cycles, circles or waves, one must have the courage to interpret the interpretations in turn, for example with an ambitious philosophical approach. In this sense, Tobias Janz, comparing the complete recordings of András Schiff (whom I have not considered here, although he would have been deserving) and Igor Levit – as representatives of two different generations – recently ascribed the label 'commitment to humanism' to the former, while imputing to the latter a closeness to the thinking of a modern posthuman metaphysics.[30] This is risky, however, and goes far beyond what empirical interpretive research can responsibly accomplish.

What are we able to conclude after this journey through some 90 years of performance history? We cannot trace the outline of an unanimously linear or progressive history which may be written as a succession of generations. But, as a matter of fact, that's not what Kaiser really intended to show in his ground-breaking book on Beethoven's piano sonatas and their performers. Rather he, as a listener, pursued the idea of converting good performers into competent guides of the Beethoven universe. This is exactly what we should adopt as our own task. But, in our context as well, it is a task that is practically feasible only by limitation and concentration: let the performers shed light on selected and particular problems so that we gain novel insights into what is new and exciting in Beethoven's Op. 31 sonatas (in addition the performers of these sonatas might also gain new insights by Beethoven scholarship, thus creating a virtual circle). Given the long history of recorded music and the huge amount of available archives, this task may be a never-ending story.

30 Tobias Janz, 'Antworten auf den Humanismus. Beethoveninterpretationen von Igor Levit und András Schiff', in *Musik & Ästhetik*, 24/96, 2020, p. 101-105.

Conversation with Andreas Staier

Giacomo Franchi

This interview with Andreas Staier presents some of the most relevant issues in the interpretation and performance of Beethoven's piano sonatas, as emerged during his workshop. Several historical and mechanical aspects of the fortepiano were discussed, including its sonic features and the way the different pedals were used, with specific reference to passages from Beethoven's sonatas Op. 31. For instance, the use of the right pedal in the re-transition of the first movement of sonata No. 1, and at the beginning of the third movement of sonata No. 2 were addressed. Moreover, the problem of tempo in Beethoven's music was dealt with by relating what may have been personal choices to examples from historical evidence. In conclusion, the role of the fortepiano in today's reception of Beethoven's sonatas is analysed, while highlighting how the use of both the piano and the fortepiano contributes to preserving and renewing this repertoire.

During his career Beethoven had the opportunity to play different instruments, such as the English Broadwood and the French Érard pianos. Could the differences between these instruments and the Viennese ones have influenced his compositional style? In your opinion, which type of fortepiano is best suited for performing Beethoven's repertoire?

First of all, it is essential to consider that Beethoven lived precisely during the period in which the development of the piano was fastest. Consequently, when he was young, he played both the harpsichord and the early fortepianos, which had a five octave compass, one and a half octaves less than the compass required for his late sonatas. The rapid development of piano instruments during that time can be compared to the evolution of computers today. In the piano, this evolution is evident in the relationship between the gradual enlargement of the instrument's compass and the expansion of its sonic characteristics, and through the features of contemporary compositions. Moreover, different countries adopted different

technical approaches to piano making. The difference between the south German and Viennese instruments and French and English instruments is very noticeable.

The relationship between Beethoven and English pianos, particularly the Broadwood, is multifaceted. Indeed, he had the possibility to play a Broadwood piano late in his life, in 1818, after his hearing had deteriorated, which inevitably affected his judgment. However, Beethoven received an Érard piano in 1803; and since there are many technical and sound similarities between English and French pianos, a connection can be drawn. Beethoven didn't like the Érard piano and requested some modifications which, however, did not meet his demands. As a result, he set aside the instrument without playing it so much. In addition, the Érard piano was gifted to Beethoven directly from the manufacturer probably for marketing and advertising, which is why we have to take these accounts carefully before we draw any conclusions. We can reasonably assume that Beethoven's favourite instruments were Viennese pianos, especially Nannette Streicher's. Indeed, he praised her instruments and he knew her personally. In conclusion, a Viennese piano is likely the best choice for performing Beethoven's repertoire.

One of the most obvious differences between the piano and the fortepiano is the number of pedals and the different acoustic effects that they can produce. When Beethoven composed his Op. 31 what kind of pedals were used? Were pedals with particular sound effects still used?

Speaking about the Turkish register, in few *divertimenti* by composers such as Daniel Steibelt, which depicted military battles or naval battles, like the *Battle of Trafalgar*, the Turkish pedal is prescribed to produce the effect of cannons explosions. In other more serious genres, the Turkish register is never mentioned but all the other pedals are employed. Between the eighteenth and nineteenth century, Viennese pianos especially had a large number of pedals, ranging from four to seven: the *Moderator*, the double *Moderator*, the *una corda*, the bassoon, the modern left and right pedal, and a pedal for percussion. The latter is more effective when used in conjunction with the right pedal to produce more echo. Indications about the use of these different pedals are rare in Beethoven's scores. These represent extraordinary cases that do not exclude the use of pedals in other situations, and can be considered as examples to be replicated under the same or similar conditions. What is mentioned occasionally in Beethoven's scores is the use of the right pedal in places where he wanted special effects, such as blending different harmonies without changing pedals. Some examples can be found in the Finale of the *Waldstein* Sonata, in the slow movement of the Piano Concerto in C minor, and in the first movement of the *Moonlight* Sonata, which is a highly discussed case. In Beethoven's compositions, such as the "Moonlight" Sonata, the indication *senza sordini* refers to the modern right pedal which at that time was a knee lever. However, this prescription should not be confused with some later ones, for example the mark *con sordino* by Schubert, which actually refers to the *Moderator* pedal. Moreover, in four hands compositions, such as Schubert's *Divertissement à la hongroise*, the presence of two pianists allows for greater freedom in the use of

pedals. Despite their rareness, these marks and indications bear witness of the sonic richness of the instruments in Beethoven's time. For example, in the Adagio Sostenuto of Op. 106, measures 1 and 27, Beethoven's marks of *una corda mezza voce* and *tutte le corde* show that some Viennese fortepianos, such as the ones by Joseph Brodmann, had an *una corda* pedal, an effect that modern pianos cannot produce. This is fundamental because the difference in sound between *una corda* and *tre corde* is much more perceivable than the difference between *due corde* and *tre corde*. However, not all manufacturers were able to produce instruments with this sound effect. For instance, both Conrad Graf, the most important Viennese piano manufacturer, and Nannette Streicher didn't build pianos with *una corda*. The context of Viennese piano manufacturing and the diversity of its products are multifaceted. When considering Beethoven specifically, there are reasons to suppose that his few pedal indications represent only the tip of the iceberg, providing an incomplete account of how he actually used the pedals. We can only make a few assumptions but we will never know the full story with precision.

Let's talk about the use of the right pedal in specific sections of Beethoven's Op. 31, such as the re-transition in the first movement of sonata No. 1, the recitativo *in the first movement in sonata No. 2, and the first measures of the third movement of sonata No. 2.*

Is it possible, as Charles Rosen suggested, to use the right pedal at measure 170, as the re-transition of the sonata No. 1 first movement begins, without changing it until the beginning of the recapitulation?

A fundamental assumption is that the presence of *staccato* dots does not exclude the use of the right pedal. At the turn of the nineteenth century, *staccato* dots in piano music are similar to a double bass *pizzicato* effect in the symphonic repertoire: the note is at the same time short due to the *pizzicato* and long due to the instrument's wide resonance. Consequently, in Beethoven's first movement of sonata Op. 31 No. 1, from measure 170 to at least measure 182, it is possible to reproduce this particular *pizzicato* and echo effect. On instruments from Beethoven's time like the one by Mathias Jakesch owned by the Fondazione Giorgio Cini in Venice, a full pedal can be easily employed; whereas on a modern piano a half pedal is better in order to let a little *staccato* effect shine throughout the passage. With regard to the subsequent measures the answer is probably more difficult. From measure 182 until the recapitulation, a contrast exists between *staccato* and non-*staccato* notes in the left hand. Consequently, to preserve this distinction, a pedal which accentuates these two effects is probably more effective: no pedal on short notes, while everything else could be played with pedal.

In the recitativo *of the first movement of sonata No. 2 is it a long pedal or a changed pedal more effective?*

In this example there is no doubt that a long pedal is the correct choice. Indeed, the passage cannot become excessively dissonant because there are no long

bass notes, which are typically the greatest source of dissonance in similar cases. Moreover, the use of a long pedal here allows for contrast with the subsequent Allegro, which requires a *secco* execution.

In the first measures of the third movement of sonata No. 2, is the accompaniment helpful in determining how to use the pedal?

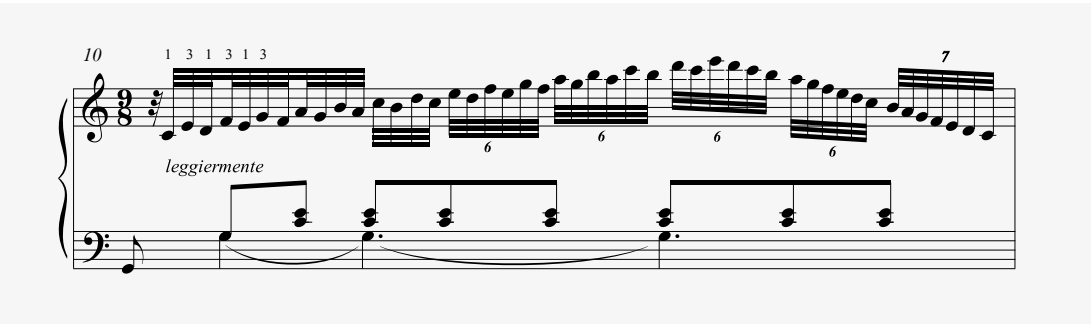
In Carl Czerny's *Pianoforte-Schule* Op. 500 there is an entire chapter dedicated to the performance of Beethoven's compositions. Although this treatise was published long after Beethoven's death, when the playing style and taste had evolved, some of its contents and prescriptions may still be considered reliable. Czerny writes about this beginning that the pedal has to be held throughout the first three measures because the left-hand harmony does not change, and then it should be changed when A major appears, when D minor appears and so on. Consequently, the particularly slurred writing of the left hand could have different meanings, such as the possibility of a slight accent on the second sixteenth note, which is also suggested by Czerny's distinctive jumping fingering. Another possible interpretation is that the slur indicates to keep as many notes of the arpeggio as possible, which is, of course, very difficult at certain points. Nevertheless, the answer could be very simple: especially on instruments of Beethoven's period, it makes sense to hold the pedal for as long as the harmony lasts.

In your experience as a teacher, what do you think about young pianists' use of the right pedal, and also in general about the use of the pedal in Beethoven's compositions played on the modern piano?

In my experience as a teacher there, is very little awareness of what the right pedal can actually do. What is commonly heard is a kind of predictable pedalling, used mostly in moderation but never excessively. As a result, differences between composers, compositions and even between different styles and periods are diminished. On the one hand, some movements in Beethoven's works, such as the first movement of the first sonata Op. 31, are generally finger-played and consequently the right pedal is not strictly necessary. On the other hand, there are movements, such as the Allegretto of the second sonata op. 31, in which the use of the pedal is fundamental for a fluent interpretation. Nevertheless, modern pianists often apply more or less the same way of pedalling technique to everything, and as a consequence the music appears less colourful and more uniform. An important part of my teaching is dedicated to encouraging students to develop a conscious use of pedalling and to establish useful guidelines when nothing is indicated in the score.

Fingering marks are extremely rare in Beethoven's scores. For example, at measure 10 of the second movement of sonata Op. 31 No. 1 (Example 1) there is a particular fingering (1-3-1-3...) specified: is it important to respect it for a correct articulation?

Yes, of course. In this particular example Beethoven, was careful to avoid the articulation of notes in groups of four produced by traditional fingering 1-3-2-4-1-3-2-4. Instead, the fingering 1-3-1-3 allows for the articulation to be divided into pairs. Like pedal markings, Beethoven provided fingerings only on exceptional occasions. For instance, in other similar passages of the same movement, he does not need to give fingering because the passage implies a traditional one. In musical notation, composers have to write the exceptions to spell them out, while typical cases do not require special explanations.



Example 1: Beethoven, Op. 31 No. 1, ii, bar 10

Are there any differences in tempo when performing works on a fortepiano versus a modern piano? There are two examples where it is possible to discuss the speed of execution: the Adagio of Sonata Op. 31 No. 1 and the third movement of the same sonata.

The choice of tempo is completely independent from the type of instrument being played. There is no reason to believe that a pianist would play the same piece faster or slower depending on the instrument which he or she has available. Indeed, the choice of tempo depends exclusively on the interpretation of a specific composition. The beginning of the Adagio in sonata No. 1 has the pulse in dotted quarter notes rather than in quavers. Moreover, the *Grazioso* indication hints that, although this is a slow movement, it should not lose its fundamental character: if the piece becomes too slow, it is difficult to achieve the *Grazioso* effect. Czerny's metronome marks show that, as the nineteenth century progressed, slow movements got slower. In his Op. 500 Czerny suggests 116 bpm for the quavers in this movement even though for a previous edition by Simrock he had marked 126 bpm. This is a noticeable difference and it happens in quite a number of Beethoven's slow movements. Around 1830, people started to especially play the Andante movements more slowly than before, failing to consider that the Andante in the eighteenth century was played neither slow nor fast but something in between. As regards speed, from the middle of the nineteenth century the Andante was no longer a moderately paced movement, but a kind of slow movement. Nevertheless, after playing Beethoven's Adagio of the sonata No. 1 at all the different speeds marked by Czerny, there is no doubt that the correct pulse is the one based

on the dotted quarter notes. There are other movements where it is very difficult to say where the pulse is, but in this case there are no doubts.

The third movement of the same sonata is an Allegretto. Czerny gives the metronome mark of 100 bpm on one occasion, while in his Op. 500 he suggests 96 bpm. Unlike the previous example, here there is little difference in Czerny's indications and generally the tempo of this movement tends to be rather fast, perhaps to the detriment of the lyrical character of the refrain. In conclusion it is very important to consider that tempo is mainly a personal choice which is primarily based on an analysis of the score, but it is also determined by contingent and unpredictable elements. Being excessively bound to metronome indications, although they are reliable, often raises more questions than answers.

In his Anleitung zum Spiel Beethovenscher Klavierwerke*, Adolf Bernhard Marx deals with both the musical form and the pianistic interpretation. As regards sonata Op. 31 No. 1 he claims that the execution must be bright and light and also the tempo somehow. Talking about the ending of the same movement, the passage from measures 300 to 311 should not be played in a weighty way, as it often happens to be heard. Marx complained on several occasions about the way pianists of his time played some passages or parts of these sonatas. For instance, about the last movement of the second sonata he states that it is commonly played too fast, like a waltz or a study. Do you think these concerns are still reliable? Can these kinds of suggestions still be useful today?*

The introductory section dedicated to the first sonata is very generic and it aims to illustrate the character of the movement. Specifically, the freedom of execution to which Marx refers does not concern the possibility to vary the treatment of tempo or *rubato*. Regarding the ending of the movement his words should not be interpreted as a criticism to contemporary pianists but rather as a suggestion addressed to an audience of non-professional musicians. However, when Marx refers to the last movement of the second sonata, his judgment is more critical. Apparently, there was a tendency to perform this movement at a fast tempo despite Beethoven's indication that it is Allegretto. Of course, although Beethoven and Marx belong to different but still close generations, a text of this type can still be considered at least partially reliable and useful for a contemporary performer today.

Pianists, and musicians in general, have the responsibility to communicate the formal articulation of a composition. What do you think about the relationship between the first theme and the transition of the exposition of the first movement of sonata Op. 31 No. 2?

This is a very complex issue because in a way the secret of this particular sonata movement is actually that Beethoven deceives the listener: what sounds like an introduction can only later be reinterpreted as the main theme. Following this logic of reinterpretation, the transition could be easily played with the spirit of a principal theme in order to support this deception of the listener. Only later should the listener be able to understand that he or she has been deceived by

realising that what previously seemed like an introduction was actually the main theme. However, the problem is multifaceted, because, if you suppose that the listener is ideal in the sense of Adorno and thus does not forget anything, some decisions have to be drawn in the repeat. Indeed, the second time, when the exposition is repeated, one can decide whether to reveal the deception or continue it until the recapitulation. However, don't ask me how to obtain this result because the question could be discussed for months without finding one definite answer.

Is it important today to continue playing Beethoven's keyboard music on ancient or reconstructed instruments? Does the modern piano somehow misrepresent the idea we have of Beethoven's music today?

To answer the first question: yes, of course. However, the answer to the second question is not so simple. A drastic change exists in playing the harpsichord repertoire especially on the modern piano, such as works by François Couperin or Jean-Philippe Rameau. However, answering subjectively, I never had the feeling, neither playing nor listening to other people, that Beethoven's music sounds drastically different from one instrument to another. Of course there are reasons why I personally choose to play this kind of music on the fortepiano, and one of the most important is the acoustic effects provided by the pedals. Indeed, on a modern piano the pedal must be changed with precision every time the harmony changes. This effect of combining sounds, the result of which is quite confusing on a modern piano, allows a greater variety of nuances on the fortepiano. However, does this aspect, or any other make a black and white difference? No, I wouldn't think so. Nowadays some musicians exist who believe, for instance, that Bach's keyboard compositions should be played exclusively on the harpsichord. However, we have to always keep in mind that without playing this repertoire on the modern piano we could not fully understand all the nineteenth century keyboard music inspired by Bach, from Mendelssohn to Brahms. I'm not a radical thinker about the use of ancient or reconstructed instruments.

Notes on contributors

Gianmario Borio is professor of Musicology at the University of Pavia and director of the Institute of Music at the Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice. In 1999 he was awarded the Dent Medal by the Royal Musical Association and in 2021 with the 'Happy New Ears' price for publications in new music by the Hans and Gertrud Zender Foundation. In 2013 he was Distinguished Visiting Professor at The Italian Academy for Advanced Studies in America. Since 2013 he is member of the Academia Europaea, since 2016 corresponding member of the American Musicological Society, and since 2019 corresponding fellow of the British Academy. He is the director of the book series *Musical Cultures of the Twentieth Century* (Routledge) and the on line-journal *Archival Notes*. His publications deal with several aspects of twentieth-century's music (theory and aesthetics, political context, audiovisual experience) as well as with the history of musical concepts and the theory of musical form.

Giacomo Franchi obtained a Ph.D. in Musicology in 2022 from the University of Pavia after graduating with honors in Musicology from the University of Rome 'Tor Vergata' and in Piano from the Conservatory of Rome 'Santa Cecilia'. He collaborated with the Roma Tre University, LUISS Guido Carli University and the Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia. His studies and publications focus on classical form and the piano repertoire of the nineteenth century. He is currently a secondary Italian school music teacher.

Hans-Joachim Hinrichsen is Professor of Musicology at the University of Zurich since 1999 and Professor Emeritus since 2018. He is a corresponding member of the Austrian Academy of Sciences and a member of the Advisory Board of the Beethoven House Bonn, as well as acting as co-editor of the journals *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft* and *Wagnerspectrum*. His central research interests include music history of the eighteenth to twentieth centuries, interpretation and reception history, and the history of music aesthetics. His most recent book publications include *Franz Schubert* (C. H. Beck, 2011, 3rd edition 2019), *Beethoven: Die Klaviersonaten* (Bärenreiter, 2013), *Bruckners Sinfonien: Ein musikalischer Werkführer* (C. H. Beck, 2016) and *Ludwig van Beethoven: Musik für eine neue Zeit* (Bärenreiter and J. B. Metzler, 2019, 2nd edn 2020). With Stefan Keym he has additionally

edited *Dur versus Moll: Zur Geschichte der Semantik eines musikalischen Elementarkontrasts* (Böhlau, 2020) and he is co-editor of the series *Schubert: Perspektiven – Studien* (Franz Steiner Verlag).

Giorgio Sanguinetti has been professor of music theory at the University of Rome Tor Vergata. His research interests include the history of Italian theory from 18th to 20th century, Schenkerian theory, analysis and performance, form in 18th century music, and opera analysis. As a pianist he performed as soloist and in chamber groups. He taught seminars and classes in several universities in Europe and North America. In winter semester 2012 he was visiting professor at the McGill University in Montreal (Canada). In 2013 his book *The Art of Partimento. History, Theory and Practice* (Oxford University Press 2012) won the Wallace Berry Award. He published (in Italian) the first volume of a series on Beethoven's piano sonatas edited by the Italian Musicological Society and the Beethoven-Haus in Bonn: *Le sonate per pianoforte di Beethoven: genere, forma, espressione* (Beethoven's Piano Sonatas: Genre, Form, and Expression, LIM, 2020). His book *The Craft of Partimento: a Textbook* is scheduled to appear in October 2024.

Janet Schmalfeldt has taught at McGill University and at Yale; she joined the Music Department at Tufts University in 1995, where she is now Professor Emerita. In recent years she has offered graduate courses as a visiting professor in the music departments at the University of Chicago, Harvard, Boston University, and the University of Pavia, in Cremona. She is the author of a book on Alban Berg's opera *Wozzeck* and has published widely on eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century music. Her book *In the Process of Becoming: Analytic and Philosophical Perspectives on Form in Early Nineteenth-Century Music* received a 2012 ASCAP Deems Taylor Award and the 2012 Wallace Berry Award from the Society for Music Theory.

Martina Sichardt studied music education, musicology, music theory, and classical philology in Mainz, Vienna and Berlin. 1987 PhD with Rudolf Stephan (Free University of Berlin) on *Die Entstehung der Zwölftonmethode Arnold Schönbergs* (The Origins of Arnold Schoenberg's Twelve-Tone Music), 2008 completion of her habilitation thesis *Entwurf einer narratologischen Beethoven-Analytik* (Draft of a narratologic analysis of Beethoven's music). Study and research stays in the USA, Krakow and Vienna. Between 1978 and 1980 violinist in the orchestra of the Hessisches Staatstheater Wiesbaden. 1987–2008 full time editor for the Arnold Schoenberg Complete Edition (Berlin), 2008–2023 Professor of Musicology at the Hochschule für Musik und Theater 'Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy' Leipzig. 2016 Saxon Teaching Prize. 2022 Elected to the structural commission 'Art History, Literature and Musicology' at the Saxon Academy of Sciences and Humanities in Leipzig. Main areas of research: Second Viennese School, Beethoven, sources of the compositional process, gender studies.

Andreas Staier has dedicated his artistic career to the study of historic keyboard instruments. He has been performing as soloist in many of the most prestigious concert venues worldwide, and collaborated with a large number of prominent colleagues, as well in orchestral as in chamber music formations. A large number of recordings, by now surely more than 50, bears witness of the wide range of his repertoire. His special focus, and love, is dedicated to three composers whose works have accompanied him for many years by now: William Byrd, Johann Sebastian Bach and Franz Schubert. In the last years, his interest has also been in composition. An opus of six pieces for harpsichord – *Anklänge...* – has been published in January 2023.