GRIEF, DENIAL AND RAGE:
A REVISIONIST VIEW OF BEETHOVEN'S *"MOONLIGHT" SONATA*

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This paper focuses on five common examples of editorial licence that find resonance in practically all performances and recordings of the Adagio sostenuto *of Beethoven's fourteenth piano sonata. The sixteen editions cited include those by Cappi (First Viennese Edition, 1802), Simrock (First German Edition, 1802), Czerny (1856), Liszt (1857), von Bülow (1871) and Schnabel (1935), and two Urtext editions published by Henle Verlag (1980 and 2013). The five examples of editorial licence are:*

1. *almost universal disregard of the* tempo alla breve *specification;*
2. *a traditional pianistic* cantabile *voicing for the two principal subjects contrary to the composer's explicit directives;*
3. *forcing the swells of the second subject to be expressed in the melodic line instead of in the accompaniment only;*
4. *shifting the climax of each swell in measures 28-31 of the development section;*
5. *re-distribution of the swells in measures 62-65 of the* coda*.*

Example 1 appeared implicitly in 1846 with Czerny's slow metronome marking and became explicit in Liszt's 1857 edition by replacement of the alla breve *sign with common time; either or both of these practices have been widely copied. Although modern Urtext editions contain none of the above distortions beyond one tiny instance in the* coda*, the highly influential editions by von Bülow and Schnabel incorporate all five of them, as do most extant recordings and contemporary performances.*

It is suggested that these five editorial distortions sit more comfortably with the popular image of this sonata influenced by association with romantic love and moonlight. Against this, adherence to the Autograph *renders more coherent an interpretation of the three movements of the sonata as a confidential confession to the keyboard of the composer's grief, denial and rage, respectively, on being confronted with tragedy. According to this interpretation, the opening* Adagio sostenuto *is inarticulate with grief, the concluding* Presto agitato *is inarticulate with rage, while the intervening dance-like* Allegretto *contrives the carefree flippancy of denial. The two well-recognised possible sources of the tragedy – unfulfilled love and encroaching deafness – are discussed in the light of two different approaches to rendering the music of the* Adagio*: distorted versus undistorted.*

1. INTRODUCTION

When the Australian Broadcasting Corporation's national classical music network, ABC Classic FM, asked its listeners in 2004, "What's the one piece of piano music you can't live without?", almost ten thousand people responded, placing Beethoven's *Sonata quasi una fantasia in C sharp minor, op.27 no.2* at the head of a list of a hundred favourites. Many of the listeners' comments broadcast during the survey suggested that the work's popularity derived particularly from the first movement – the *Adagio sostenuto* – and its romantic association with love and moonlight. As such a fondly nurtured image of this movement is consistent with the overwhelming consensus of performances either

presented in concert halls today or remaining extant through recordings over the past century, it might be judged courageous, even foolhardy, to suggest that Beethoven's intended tempo, voicing and dynamic shading for this *Adagio* might be very different from what are now customary. Nonetheless, this paper identifies five widely established examples of editorial licence, the remedy for which is suggested to open the door to a more unified interpretation of the three superficially disparate movements of this revered masterpiece. This interpretation regards the sonata as a coherent 'tone poem' dealing with three well-recognised responses to tragedy – grief, denial and rage – in the three respective movements. According to this view, the mood of the opening *Adagio sostenuto* is not mere sadness in the face of unfulfilled romance but is, rather, dumbstruck grief in the face of cruelly outrageous fortune. Reaching an understanding of this view is greatly assisted by removing the five main distortions of the first movement that have influenced generations of students, professional pianists and music lovers over the past two hundred years.

2. FIVE EDITORIAL DISTORTIONS IN THE FIRST MOVEMENT

As shown in Table 1, instances of at least one of the five major distortions of Beethoven's original directives for the *Adagio sostenuto* have appeared in most editions[1] from those first published in 1802 down to the present day, with the exception of modern Urtext editions (Wallner & Hansen 1980; Gertsch & Perahia 2013). These five editorial distortions are as follows:

Example (1) – almost universal disregard of the *alla breve tempo* specification;
Example (2) – a traditional pianistic *cantabile* voicing for the two principal subjects contrary to the composer's explicit directives;
Example (3) – forcing the swells of the second subject to be expressed in the melodic line instead of in the accompaniment only;
Example (4) – shifting the climax of each swell in measures 28-31 of the development section;
Example (5) – re-distribution of the swells in measures 62-65 of the *coda*.

Audio clips illustrating these five departures from Beethoven's *Autograph* have been posted for general access (Chapman 2014).

[1] The sixteen editions cited in Table 1 have been selected to illustrate the current discussion but they account for barely one tenth of the number of editions published; 133 editions were listed by Newman (1977) nearly four decades ago!

Table 1

Examples of editorial distortion in the *Adagio sostenuto* movement of Beethoven's *op. 27 no. 2*
Shaded cells and text indicate departures from Beethoven's *Autograph.* Audio clips illustrating these departures relative to the *Autograph* may be found at the URL given in the reference to Chapman (2014).

Example No.		**(1)**	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(4)**	**(5)**	
Editor; Publisher	**Year**	**Pulse MM ♩ =**	**1st Subject special *pp* sign unmodified**	**2nd Subject dynamic shaping**	**Climax of swell in measures 28-31**	**'Hairpin' placement in *coda***	
						Measures 62-63	**Measures 64-65**
Ludwig van Beethoven; *Autograph*	1801	*Alla breve*[+] -	E*: Yes[+], R*: Yes, C*: Yes	No	4th half-beat	Above treble	Below bass
First Viennese Edition; Gio. Cappi e Comp, Vienna	1802	*Alla breve* -	E: Yes, R: Yes, C: *pp* not aligned with LH G sharp as in *Autograph*	No	Inconsistent	Between staves	Below bass
First German Edition; N Simrock, Bonn	1802	*Alla breve* -	E: Yes, R: No special *pp* C: *pp* between staves	No	8th eighth-note; M29 > omitted	Between staves	Between staves
Carl Czerny; N Simrock, Bonn	ca. 1856	*Alla breve* 60	E: Yes, R: No special *pp* C: *pp* between staves	No	8th eighth-note; M29 > omitted	Between staves	Between staves
Franz Liszt; Ludwig Holle, Wolfenbüttel	1857	Common time -	E: Yes, R: Yes, C: *pp* between staves	No	Mostly 2nd beat (i.e., 3rd beat in common time)	Between staves	Between staves
Ignaz Moscheles ; Eduard Hallberger, Stuttgart	1860	Common time 60	E: Yes, R: Yes, C: *pp* between staves	No	2nd beat (i.e., 3rd beat in common time)	Between staves	Between staves
S Lebert & H von Bülow; J G Cotta, Stuttgart	1871	Common time 52	E: footnote instruction to emphasise the melody, R: melody marked *più marcato del principio.*, C: *pp* replaced with *una corda*; G# marked *marc.*	Yes – accent on C in measure 16 of exposition; accents on D in measures 52 and 54 of recapitulation, each preceded by a *crescendo* on the respective anacrusis.	2nd beat (i.e., 3rd beat in common time)	Between staves	Between staves
Giuseppe Buonamici; Augener, London	1903	Common time 54	E: melody marked *p* R: Yes C: *pp* between staves	Yes – *crescendo* on anacrusis	2nd beat (i.e., 3rd beat in common time)	Between staves	Between staves
Alexander Winterberger; G Bratfisch, Frankfurt	1908	*Alla breve* 63	E: Yes, R: Yes, C: *pp* not aligned with LH G sharp as in *Autograph*	No	2nd beat	Between staves	Between staves
L Köhler & A Ruthardt; C F Peters, Leipzig	1910	*Alla breve* -	E: Yes, R: Yes, C: *pp* between staves	No	2nd beat	Between staves	Between staves
A Casella; G Ricordi & C., Milan	1920	*Alla breve* 60	E: "*ma espress.*" added, R: No special *pp*, C: *pp* between staves	Yes – *crescendo* 'hairpin' on anacrusis above the treble staff followed by accent on first beat	2nd beat	Between staves	Between staves
M Pauer & CA Martienssen; C F Peters, Leipzig	1920 1927	*Alla breve* -	E: Yes, R: Yes, C: *pp* between staves	No	2nd beat	Between staves	Between staves
H Schenker; Universal Edition, Vienna / Dover Publications, New York	1921 / 1975	*Alla breve* -	E: Yes, R: Yes, C: *pp* below bass	No	2nd beat	Above treble	Below bass
Artur Schnabel; Edizioni Curci, Milan	1935	*Alla breve* 63	**See Schnabel Example 2 below	Yes – *crescendo* 'hairpin' on anacrusis above the treble staff; original 'hairpins' relocated below bass staff	2nd beat	Between staves	Between staves
B A Wallner & C Hansen (Urtext); Henle Verlag, Munich	1980	*Alla breve* -	E: Yes, R: Yes, C: *pp* below bass	No	4th half-beat	Above treble	Below bass
Kendall Taylor; Allans Publishing Limited, Melbourne	1987	*Alla breve* 52-54	E: General *diminuendo* sign added in measure 4; *'(cantabile)'* added alongside *pp* applied to opening theme at measure 5, R: Yes, C: *pp* below bass	Yes – *crescendo* on anacrusis in both exposition and recapitulation; *decrescendo* in succeeding measure in exposition only	2nd beat	Above treble	Below bass
N Gertsch & M Perahia (Urtext); Henle Verlag, Munich	2013	*Alla breve* -	E: Yes, R: Yes, C: *pp* not aligned with LH G sharp as in *Autograph*	No	4th half-beat	Above treble	Below bass

[+]Assumed from both First Editions.

*E: Exposition at measure 5, R: Recapitulation at measure 42, C: Coda at measure 60.

**Schnabel Example 2

E: Adds *diminuendo* 'hairpin' in preceding measure and *ppp* sign for preceding half-beat,
R: Adds *diminuendo* 'hairpin' at 1st beat and *ppp* at 2nd half-beat,
C: Adds *pp* above treble at 1st beat, *ppp* above treble at 2nd half-beat and "*dolcissimo*" to LH melody at 4th half-beat Schnabel also adds alongside the *pp* sign in the exposition the words "*dolcissimo, cantando, con intimissimo sentimento ma molto semplice, non patetico a sempre bene in tempo e misura*". At the equivalent point in the recapitulation he simply adds "*come prima*".

While some of the distortions listed in Table 1 might be attributed to editorial carelessness (e.g., Example 4 in the editions by Cappi, Simrock and Czerny[2]), the remainder are clearly deliberate alterations to Beethoven's original intentions. These alterations have been highly influential, as reinforced and perpetuated by two of the greatest pianists who ever lived – Franz Liszt in the 19th century and Artur Schnabel[3] in the 20th century. However, as noted by Newman (1972) in his essay on 'Liszt's interpreting of Beethoven's piano sonatas', the most widely disseminated influence of Liszt did not derive directly from his 1857 edition but, instead, came by proxy from the 1871 edition produced by his pupil Hans von Bülow in association with Sigmund Lebert and published in Stuttgart by Cotta (see Table 1). Newman (1972, pp. 203-206) writes at length on the close personal and professional relations between Liszt and von Bülow, noting the extent of influence on the latter's contribution to the 1871 Cotta edition and commenting that, "after Bülow's edition appeared, Liszt evidently preferred to use it with his students rather than his own edition"[4] (p.204). In this context it is instructive to quote Newman's final conclusion in full:

> Finally, if Liszt was the most significant interpreter of Beethoven's piano sonatas in romantic terms, Bülow must be regarded as the prime transmitter of Liszt's interpreting. And in Bülow's edition may be found the most specific clues to that interpreting, including even the special reverence for Beethoven, "the Master," in the footnotes. (Newman, 1972, p.209)

Thus, both Liszt and Schnabel must be credited with promulgating significant departures from Beethoven's *Autograph* as evidenced by inclusion of all five editorial distortions listed in Table 1 in the editions by Lebert & von Bülow (1871) and Schnabel (1935). Nonetheless, although Schnabel's influence was greatly reinforced by his worldwide fame in the 20th century, much of his input served to perpetuate the editorial changes already found in the Liszt-von Bülow pedagogy.

To assist the reader, the most frequently cited sources in the present discussion are listed as follows in the List of References: *Autograph* – Beethoven (1801); Cappi's first edition (Vienna) – Beethoven (1802a); Simrock's first edition (Bonn) – Beethoven

[2] The Czerny edition seems to be the original Simrock first edition with metronome, fingering and other markings added. Further modifications suggested by Czerny in 1846 may be found in Badura-Skoda (1970, pp.38-39).

[3] Artur Schnabel (1882-1951) was the first pianist to record all the Beethoven piano sonatas (completed in 1935). This, and his legendary public performances, resulted in his commanding universal respect among students, teachers and professional pianists throughout the educated world. A measure of the awe-struck adulation he enjoyed is the famous accolade accorded him by Harold C. Schonberg, music critic of *The New York Times*, who wrote, "To many of the last generation there was but one Beethoven pianist and his name was Artur Schnabel. ... as far as the public was concerned, Schnabel was the man who invented Beethoven" (Schonberg 1974, p. 425).

[4] Later editions attributed to Franz Liszt and published by Bosworth (London) contain other 'romantic' changes deriving from later editors, not directly from Liszt.

(1802b); Czerny's 1846 treatise – Badura-Skoda (1970); Simrock's Czerny edition (Bonn) – Czerny (1856); Holle's Liszt edition (Wolfenbüttel) – Liszt, F (1857); Cotta's von Bülow edition (Stuttgart) – Lebert & Bülow (1871); Edizioni Curci's Schnabel edition (Milan) – Schnabel (1935); Henle Verlag's Urtext editions (Munich) – Wallner & Hansen (1980) and Gertsch & Perahia (2013).

Let us now consider each of these editorial distortions in detail.

Example (1) – *Tempo alla breve*

Although the first page of Beethoven's *Autograph* of this sonata is missing, it is widely accepted that Beethoven used an *alla breve* time signature for the first movement, as evidenced by (a) Cappi's and Simrock's first editions, (b) modern Urtext editions (Wallner & Hansen 1980; Gertsch & Perahia 2013), and (c) all but four of the other twelve editions cited in Table 1.

For a piece of music to be performed and felt in accordance with a *tempo alla breve* directive, it is essential that there should be only two main beats per measure, not four. This requirement forces us to consider the psychological range of coherent sensation of pulse rates; that is, what are the slowest and quickest pulse rates that can be coherently sensed and felt as such? It is suggested here that an answer to that question has existed for around two hundred years in the widely used invention known as Maelzel's metronome. The traditional pulse range of this device has usually been from 40 beats per minute up to 208 beats per minute. In Beethoven's day, the range might have been even more restricted at the lower end, judging by an image of an 1815 model (Sadie, 1980, vol. 12, p. 223) which seems to go no lower than 50 beats per minute.

Thus, in considering the data recorded in the 'Pulse' column of Table 1, there is more to take into account than whether or not the respective editors *explicitly* countermanded Beethoven's *alla breve* directive by replacing it with a 'common time' directive. It is argued here that all eight of the metronome markings noted in Table 1 *implicitly* countermand the *alla breve* directive, even though only three of these instances use an explicit common time signature. To these eight should be added Czerny's 1846 suggestion of a pulse of 54 quarter-notes per minute, given in his illustrated essay 'On the proper performance of all Beethoven's works for the Piano solo' (Badura-Skoda 1970, p.38). These nine metrononome markings are expressed in quarter-note pulses per minute and range from 52 (von Bülow) to 63 (Winterberger and Schnabel), with a mean value of 58. In terms of *alla breve* equivalence, the markings correspond to half-note pulses per minute ranging from 26 to 31.5, with a mean value of 29. Such pulse

rates are not sustainable – the listener cannot help but subdivide such slow half-note pulses into quarter-note pulses. Perhaps recognition of this inescapable property of human auditory psychology led Liszt, von Bülow and others to conclude that Beethoven's original *alla breve* directive was no longer appropriate for the way the piece had come to be played thirty years after the composer's death; so they replaced it with a 'common time' directive that accorded with contemporaneous performance practice – a practice that has persisted unbroken to the present day. American musicologist Sarah Clemmens Waltz (2007, p. 4) lists first among the "well known" "general features of the 'Moonlight' Sonata's Adagio sostenuto movement: … the cut-time signature that gives the impression of 12/8". It must be noted that it is contemporary performance practice that "gives the impression" of slow compound quadruple time; Beethoven's directive is for slow simple duple time!

Although the *alla breve* directive has been almost entirely disregarded in performance and recordings, lip-service continues to be paid to it quite often. Thus, the late American critic, author and pianist Charles Rosen (2002, p. 156) writes, "In the nineteenth century, several editions misprinted the time signature of this movement as C, and it is often taken at too slow a pace. It is correctly in *alla breve*." Similar advice is expressed by Taub (2002, p. 124): "The alla breve time signature implies a pulse of two beats per measure, even within Beethoven's designation of Adagio sostenuto, which guards against the music's becoming lugubrious."

Moreover, the contemporary celebrity pianist, Andras Schiff, has published a lecture-recital on this sonata in which he draws attention to the importance of the *alla breve* directive and strikes a mocking attitude toward contemporary slow performances (Schiff 2006). However, it is the present author's opinion that in neither of Schiff's published renderings of the *Adagio sostenuto* – neither in the lecture-recital nor in his ECM recording of the following year (Schiff 2007, Track 9) – does he bring out the reduced emphasis on the second and fourth half-beats relative to the first and second beats that is required to help the listener feel two *Adagio* beats per measure rather than four *Andante* beats per measure. Both of these published performances by Schiff (2006; 2007) take the *Adagio sostenuto* at the same speed of roughly 33 half-note beats per minute;[5] as this is merely one standard metronome 'notch' higher than the quickest markings suggested by Winterberger and Schnabel shown in Table 1, it does not go far enough to break away from the traditional feeling of 'common time'. It is suggested that even a pulse rate of 33 per minute is not quite quick enough to project a true *alla breve*

[5] Quoted pulse rates from published recordings are averaged over measures 1-67 of the *Adagio sostenuto*.

pulse successfully, especially when not supported with consistent appropriate attention to the relative emphases of the half-beats. [6]

This all raises some questions:

a) Is it possible to play the *Adagio sostenuto* at a sufficiently quick tempo to sustain a credible feeling of *alla breve* that is also musically satisfactory?

b) If it is, then such a tempo must have been what Beethoven had in mind. What caused public and expert taste to shift in favour of a much slower tempo?

c) Did Liszt (1857), Moscheles (1860), von Bülow (1871) and Buonamici (1903) think that Beethoven had erred in specifying an inappropriate time signature and, thus, an inappropriate tempo?

d) Or did they think that Beethoven had simply made what would nowadays be called a 'typographical error' – that a slow tempo was always intended by Beethoven but he accidentally wrote down the two vertical slashes (one per stave) that convert common time to *tempo alla breve*?

It is suggested here that the answer to the first question is a definite 'yes', with a half-note pulse ranging around 37 per minute (Chapman 2004, Track 11) to 40 per minute (Chapman 2014). It is also suggested that the answer to at least one of the last two questions is 'yes', for reasons that are bound up with the answer to the second question and its relation to popular misconceptions dating from soon after Beethoven's death. Such misconceptions inclined people to imagine that the *Adagio sostenuto* is indeed a lovelorn expression of sadness in the face of unfulfilled romance; and this image requires a slow tempo with plenty of time available for the indulgence of romantic sighs – in short, it requires a complete disregard for Beethoven's *alla breve* directive.

[6] Schiff (2007, Track 5), in common with most pianists, also seems to ignore the *alla breve* directive for the opening of the first movement of Beethoven's *Sonata in E flat op. 27 no. 1*. In this instance he uses a half-note pulse rate of around 34 per minute averaged over measures 1-36 of the opening *Andante*, i.e., not significantly different from the pulse rate of 33 per minute chosen for his '*alla breve*' realisation of the C# minor sonata's *Adagio sostenuto*. The present author uses a half-note pulse rate of around 52 per minute for the *Andante* of *op. 27 no. 1* (Chapman 2009, Track 8). Liszt (1857), but not Lebert & von Bülow (1871), replaces the *alla breve* time signature with common time for this *Andante*.

A major intrusion of error about the associations of this sonata has been well documented by Solomon (1998, p. 211) concerning the significance of its dedicatee, the Countess Julie Guicciardi (1784–1856). When Beethoven's letter to the 'Immortal Beloved' was published in 1840, the composer's first biographer, Anton Schindler (1795–1864), incorrectly identified its addressee as the Countess. This view held sway for over thirty years until it was unequivocally confirmed to be wrong in the second volume of Thayer's *Ludwig van Beethovens Leben* in 1872 (Forbes, 1967, vol. 1, p.290). We are also indebted to Thayer (Forbes, 1967, vol. 1, p.291) for publishing the notes taken by Otto Jahn, recording his 1852 interview with the Countess Julie Gallenberg (née Guicciardi) which showed that the sonata's dedication to her was accidental and not originally intended, and that the sonata was certainly not composed with her in mind *as the dedicatee* (but this does not exclude other associations with the music); these facts are also discussed and reinforced by Steblin (2009). However, during the 45-year period between Beethoven's death and publication of the second volume of Thayer's biography, another misleading association was forced upon this sonata – one that was completely beyond the power of any biographer or archivist to remedy – the nickname *Moonlight*.

This nickname has been associated with the sonata since at least a few years after Beethoven's death, though its widely held attribution to Ludwig Rellstab[7] is somewhat confused and warrants clarification here in the light of the findings of Waltz (2007). The popularly received attribution to Rellstab rests unreliably on a single source – the well-known biography by Wilhelm von Lenz (1809–1883), first published in French (1852) under the title *Beethoven et ses trois styles*. Waltz (2007, p. 29) gives the full English translation of the relevant passage (Lenz, 1980 [1852], pp. 225-226) as:

> Rellstab compares this work to a boat, visiting, by moonlight, the wild places of the Vierwaldsee in Switzerland. The sobriquet of Moonlight-Sonata that, for twenty years, has been made to cry out to the connoisseur in Germany, has no other origin. This adagio is indeed rather a manner of death, the epitaph of Napoleon in music, *adagio sulla morte d'un eroe!*

This famous passage makes clear that Lenz (1980 [1852]) did not favour this nickname and it has left the impression that the association with moonlight derives from a casual observation of Rellstab a few years after Beethoven's death. However, Waltz (2007) has uncovered the fact that Rellstab's play *Theodor*, published in 1824, has the following passage concerning the sonata's *Adagio sostenuto* declaimed by a music critic (p. 33):

[7] Ludwig Rellstab (1799–1860) was a German music critic and poet, some of his poems being set by Schubert in his song cycle *Schwanengesang*.

> The lake reposes in the faint shimmer of the moon; the waves lap softly on the dark shore; gloomy wooded mountains rise up and cut off the holy region from the world; swans glide like spirits through the water with whispering rustles, and an Aeolian harp mysteriously sounds laments of yearning lonely love down from those ruins.

Therefore, as Waltz (2007) clearly shows, this romantic association with moonlight was deeply felt by Rellstab and sustained over at least twenty-five years, including those times when he was in contact with the composer. Nonetheless, Rellstab did not use the nickname at all for this sonata, but "called it the *Cis-moll Phantasie* in all his writings" (Waltz, 2007, p. 3, footnote 8). The present author rejects the romantic 'moonlit' interpretation of this sonata on musical and psychological grounds, not because of any supposed physical or temporal isolation between Beethoven and Rellstab or any supposed want of depth in Rellstab's feelings about moonlight.

So the decades leading up to the publication of slow metronome markings for the *Adagio sostenuto* in Czerny's 1846 treatise (Badura-Skoda 1970) and the important editions by Czerny (1856), Moscheles (1860) and Lebert & von Bülow (1871), as given in Table 1, saw the work's being firmly linked in the popular mind with the romantic image of moonlight and being incorrectly associated with the composer's 'Immortal Beloved'. Thayer's disproof of the latter association in 1872 came far too late to have any effect on the moonlight association and so this misleading image has survived to the present day, greatly reinforced and perpetuated by the manner of performance conditioned under the all-pervasive and consistent influences of Liszt/von Bülow and Schnabel, as will now be seen in relation to the remaining four examples of editorial distortion.

Example 2 – *Cantabile* vs *non-cantabile I*

The central argument regarding Examples 2 and 3 – *Cantabile* vs *non-cantabile I and II* – is that Beethoven has used the *pp* (*pianissimo*) sign in a highly specific manner that is possibly without precedent or subsequent parallel in the classical fortepiano or pianoforte repertoire, and certainly not anywhere else within the composer's own thirty-two piano sonatas: it is argued here that the composer intended that the *cantabile* treatment of the melodic line – the crowning achievement of the fortepiano and pianoforte relative to the harpsichord and organ – should *not* be used in this *Adagio sostenuto*. Rather, the instructions accord more with the view that this movement is a confidential confession of dumbstruck grief; the stuttering first subject (measures 5-9) is inarticulate with grief, while the plaintive cry of the second subject is even more crippled in its compass, comprising four notes, repeated, and seemingly unable to pull away from B (exposition, measures 15-19) or C sharp (recapitulation, measures 51-55).

Thus, while Beethoven gives an overal directive *sempre pp e senza sordino* at the outset of the movement (assumed from early editions and Urtext editions in the absence of the first page of the *Autograph*), he also marks the specific entry of the melody at measure 5 with its own *pp* sign immediately adjacent to the first melody note on the treble staff. This is done again in the recapitulation at measure 42 and yet again where the upper voice in the left hand takes the same melodic fragment in the *coda* (bass staff, measure 60). From the *Autograph*'s 'Recapitulation' and 'Coda' images[8] shown in Figure 1, note that Beethoven has placed the '*pp*' sign for the entrance of the main theme especially close to the first melody note (G#) in the upper voice of the right hand in measure 42 and similarly in the upper voice of the left hand in measure 60. He has also used much smaller handwriting in these instances relative to that used for the general '*pp*' indication at the beginning of measure 42, in accord with the highly specific application of *pianissimo* to the theme on all its appearances. These remarkable insertions of specific *pianissimo* signs suggest that Beethoven wanted a different approach from the usual, i.e., he wanted a non-*cantabile* tone more appropriate to a whispered confidence.

However, it can be seen from the examples in Figure 1 that editors over the years have all disregarded Beethoven's directives in this matter to some degree at least. It is instructive to examine the discrepancies in detail, beginning with the least divergent examples of Cappi and the modern Urtexts. Cappi's first edition and both of the modern Urtext editions (Wallner & Hansen 1980; Gertsch & Perahia 2013) fail to reproduce Beethoven's specific alignment of the *pp* sign with the *upper* left hand voice in measure 60. This suggests that, in common with the other more divergent editions shown in Figure 1, they did not allow for the possibility that Beethoven wanted this theme, on all its appearances, *not* to stand out from the general accompaniment in the manner that a normal *cantabile* style of execution would determine.[9]

[8] Some scans have been processed to remove line breaks. Also, in the interest of clarity, fingering and other unrelated markings have been removed from all the scans taken of printed editions.

[9] It should be noted that the new Urtext edition by Henle Verlag (Gertsch & Perahia, 2013) improves on the earlier Urtext by Wallner & Hansen (1980) by placing the special *pp* sign at measure 60 slightly higher than does the Cappi edition. However, it is still not specifically aligned with the melodic G sharp of the upper left-hand voice as notated by Beethoven in the *Autograph*.

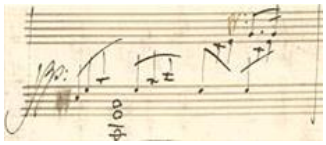
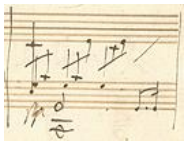
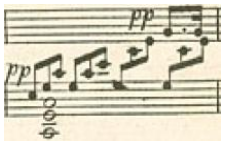
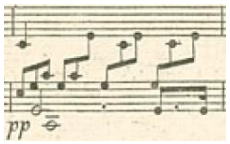
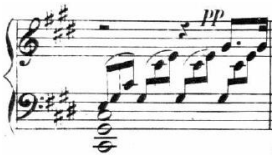
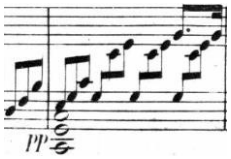
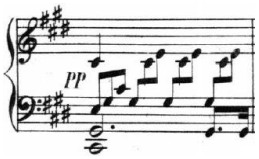
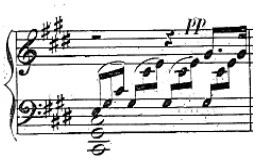
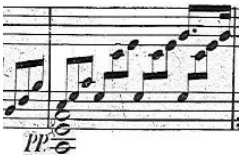
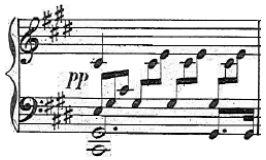
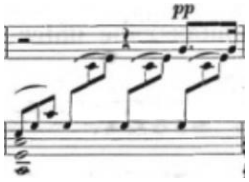
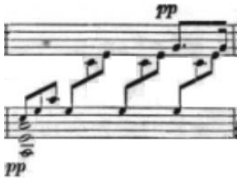
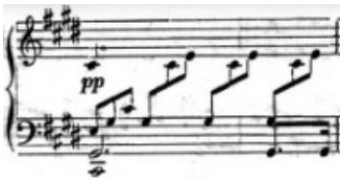
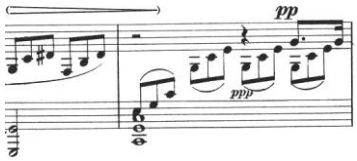
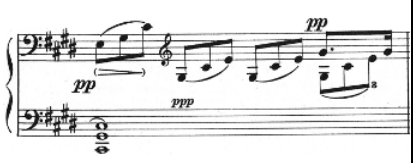
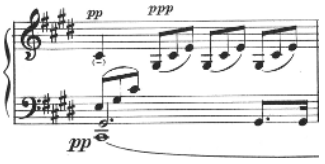
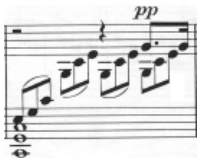
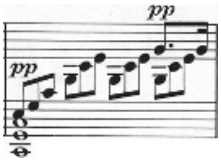
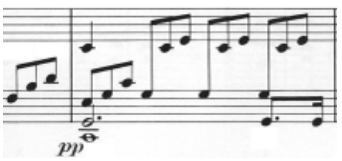
	Exposition Measure 5	**Recapitulation** Measure 42	**Coda** Measure 60
A	Missing		
Ca			
Si			
Cz			
L			
Sc			
H			

Figure 1
Images from the *Autograph* (**A**) and the editions by Cappi (**Ca**), Simrock (**Si**), Czerny (**Cz**), Liszt (**L**) and Schnabel (**Sc**), and Henle's Urtext (**H**) by Wallner & Hansen (1980).

Simrock's and Czerny's treatments are interesting because, not only do they move the *coda*'s special *pp* sign to a 'general' position between the staves in measure 60 (a change shared by six other editions listed in Table 1), but, along with Liszt, they also appear to be troubled by the perceived 'redundancy' of Beethoven's special *pp* sign, reproduced faithfully by Cappi and Henle, in the recapitulation's measure 42. Simrock and Czerny cope with the 'redundancy' by omitting the special *pp* sign entirely while

moving the 'general' *pp* sign from between the staves to a more 'squeezed in' position immediately below the bass staff at the end of the preceding measure. Liszt apparently solves the 'redundancy' issue by moving the 'general' *pp* sign to below the bass staff, so that the two signs appear as 'one for each hand' rather than as an indication that the melody should not be delivered in a *cantabile* style.

On the other hand, Schnabel adds *diminuendo* and *triple-piano* (*ppp*) signs to the general accompaniment immediately prior to the entry of the melody, suggesting the traditional *cantabile* rendition of the right-hand melody. As shown in the 'Example (2)' column of Table 1, this explicit countermanding of Beethoven's implicit 'non-*cantabile*' instructions had also been particularly exemplified before and after Schnabel (1935) by Lebert & von Bülow (1871) and Taylor (1987), respectively.

Example 3 – *Cantabile* vs *non-cantabile II*

The second subject comprises the repeated chromatic melodic fragment of measures 15-19 in the exposition and measures 51-55 in the recapitulation illustrated in Figure 2. In the *Autograph*, this passage is supported by a pair of *crescendo-diminuendo* 'hairpins' that are placed centrally in the accompaniment within the confines of a single measure and climaxing at the second beat for each of measures 16 and 18 (see Figure 2) and measures 52 and 54. As written, they cannot be intended to cause a 'swell' of tone in the melody, given that neither the fortepiano of Beethoven's time nor the modern pianoforte is an instrument capable of producing a *crescendo* within a sustained note. It is argued here that Beethoven intended that the fragility of the understated theme should be vulnerable to being overwhelmed by the swell in both hands of the accompaniment. This effect is undermined by Liszt (1857), Lebert & von Bülow (1871) and Schnabel (1935) in different ways. Liszt (1857) moves the swells to apply to the bass octaves only, which will make the melody much less vulnerable to being 'swallowed up' by any swell in the triplet accompaniment. Schnabel (1935) carries this further by also applying swells to the melody itself commencing half a beat earlier in the previous measure and climaxing on the first beat in the melody line. These changes introduced by Liszt and Schnabel are applied consistently to the second subject in both the exposition and recapitulation. Less consistent is von Bülow who applied swells to the second subject in the recapitulation only, supplemented by accents on the D naturals in measures 52 and 54, while applying no swells to the melody in measures 15-19 of the exposition but forcing a single accent on the C natural of measure 16 only. By forcing the swells or accents into the melodic line, von Bülow, Schnabel and their imitators have all directly countermanded the non-*cantabile* style that is consistent with the notation in the *Autograph*. There is an important difference in musical effect between these

renditions: the Liszt/von Bülow and Schnabel renditions are more attuned to a *cantabile* style while the *Autograph* and Urtext rendition is more attuned to the 'confidential' approach consistent with the non-*cantabile* interpretation detailed for Example 2.

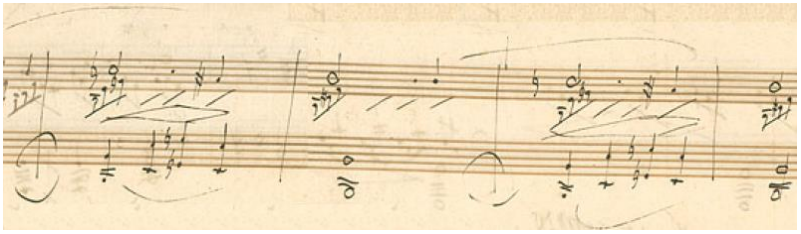
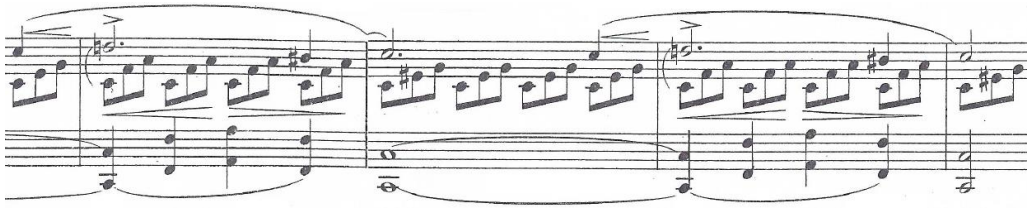
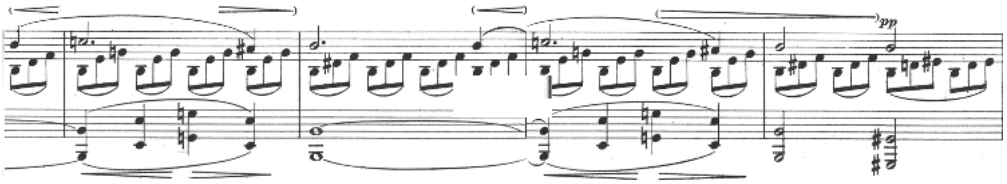
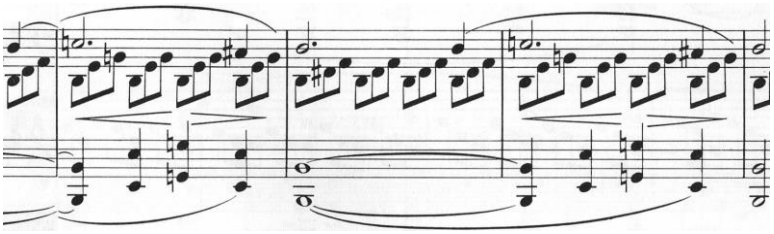
	Second Subject
A (E)	
L (E)	
vB (R)	
S (E)	
H (E)	

Figure 2
Images from the *Autograph* (**A**) and the editions by Liszt (**L**), von Bülow (**vB)** and Schnabel (**S**), and Henle's Urtext (**H**) by Wallner & Hansen (1980). E: Exposition measures 15-19; R: Recapitulation measures 51-55. See Table 1 for further description. Some images have been manipulated to remove line breaks.

Before passing on to the next example of editorial distortion, it is pertinent to consider why Beethoven chose to set aside, within this *Adagio*, the customary *cantabile* style of melodising and replace it with something more inwardly expressed, more inhibited, more confidential. The suggestion is that this whole sonata is a tightly integrated tone poem

in which Beethoven confesses to the keyboard his personal view of the responses to tragedy. In this interpretation, the three movements may be taken to represent three well-known responses: grief, denial and rage, respectively. Thus, the image of the *Adagio*'s being inarticulate with grief is entirely appropriate to the severely restricted melodic compass of the two principal subjects and to their whispered, non-*cantabile* declamation. The helpless fragility of the second subject is heightened by its being nearly overwhelmed by the swells given to the accompaniment both in the exposition and in the recapitulation. We shall see that this interpretation becomes reinforced as we now turn to consider the two remaining editorial distortions in this first movement.

Example 4 – The four consecutive pairs of 'hairpins' in the development section

The argument presented in this section is accidentally strengthened by the fact that, in the left page commencing at measure 27 in the *Autograph*, Beethoven rejected outright what he first wrote from measure 32 onwards. He did this by scratching out much of the music written in the treble staff for measures 32-36 and then erasing entirely what he had written on the right facing page, leaving intact his first attempt at measures 28-31 shown in row **A** of Figure 3. He then turned over a new leaf and began a second attempt commencing again at measure 27, this time continuing successfully beyond measure 31. The corresponding measures from the second attempt are shown in row **A** of Figure 3. The four 'swells' determined by the pairs of hairpins in these measures have two features maintained consistently throughout, both within and between the two attempts: they all commence at the second half-beat of each measure and they all climax at the fourth half-beat of each measure. Unfortunately, Beethoven's very clear wishes concerning these swells have been carelessly treated from the outset by Cappi, Simrock and Czerny, and then wilfully countermanded altogether in all of the remaining eleven non-Urtext editions listed in Table 1, by moving the position of climax forward from the fourth half-beat to the second beat. The 'loose' treatment of these swells shown in row **Cz** of Figure 3 is also exactly representative of Simrock's first edition. Although Liszt's placement of these swells is not altogether consistent or precise (see row **L** of Figure 3), von Bülow's placement is emphatically applied to the melodic quarter-notes, climaxing consistently at the 2nd beat (3rd beat of common time).

Just as for the previous examples of *cantabile* as compared to non-*cantabile* treatments of the first and second subjects, there is a significant difference in effect of the

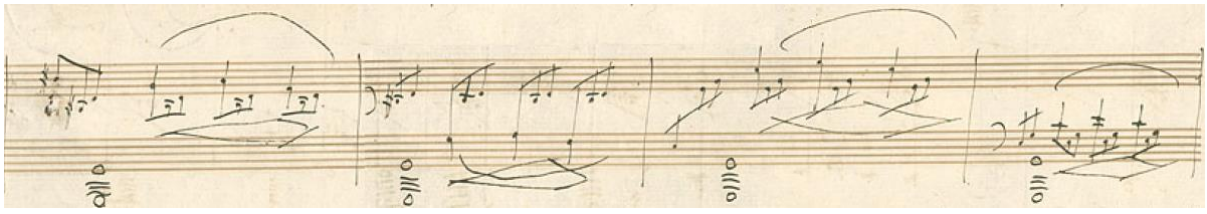
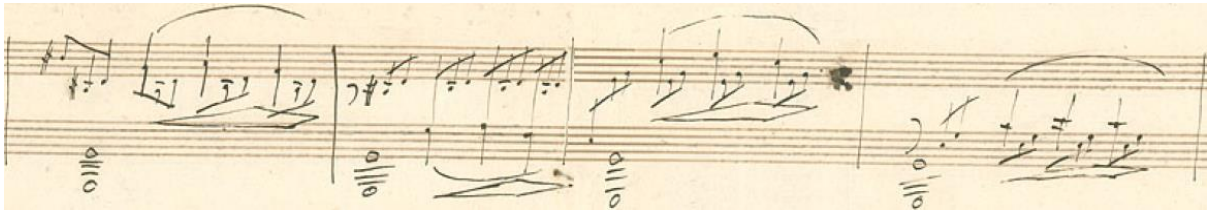
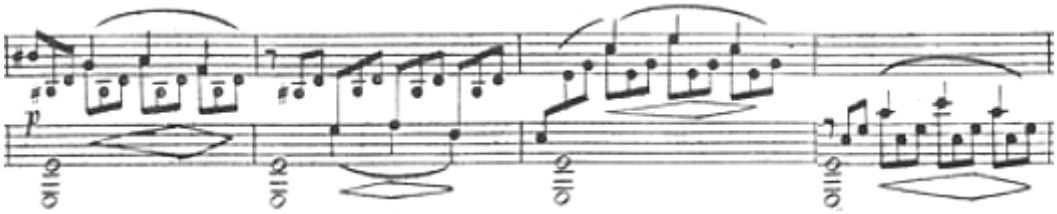
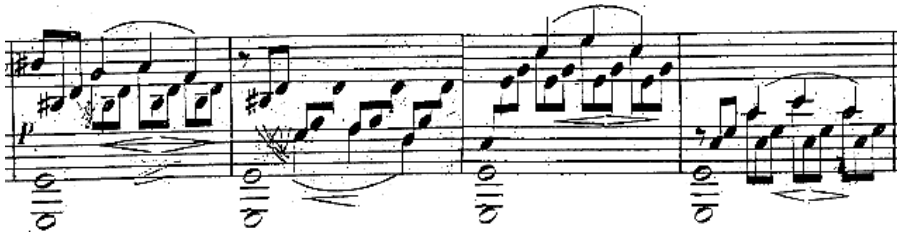
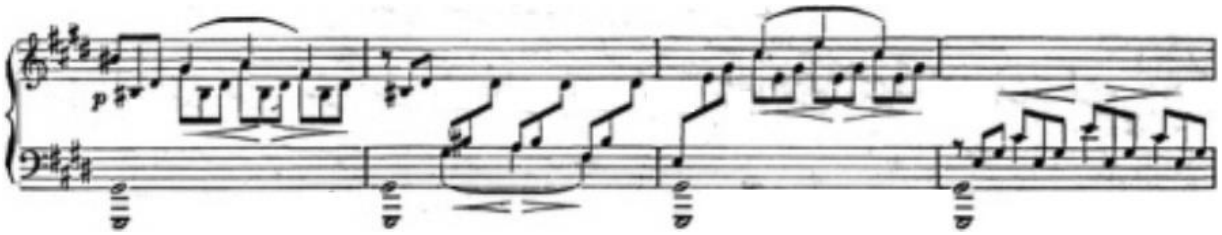
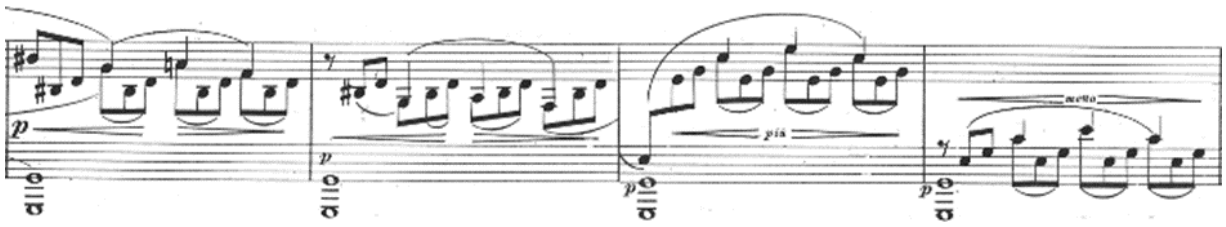
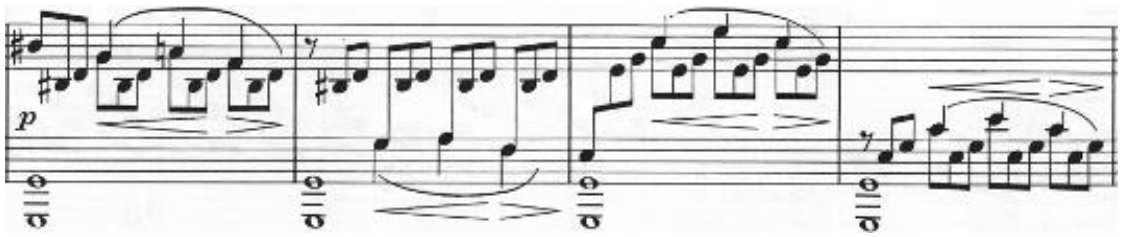
	Development Section Measures 28-31
A	
A	
Ca	
Cz	
L	
S	
H	

Figure 3

Images from the *Autograph* (**A**, **A**), editions by Cappi (**Ca**), Czerny (**Cz**), Liszt (**L**) and Schnabel (**S**), and Henle's Urtext (**H**, Wallner & Hansen 1980). Some images have been edited to remove line breaks.

placement of the climax of each swell in measures 28-31. Placement of the climax on the second beat is consistent with the feeling of lovelorn, romantic sighs, while Beethoven's placement of the climax on the fourth half-beat suggests something far more painful and acutely distressing.

As can be seen in Table 1, the Liszt/von Bülow/Schnabel placement of these climaxes has been widely copied. Moreover, judging by what one hears in contemporary concerts and recordings in this instance, Beethoven's wishes – as given in the *Autograph* and in modern Urtext editions (rows **A**, **A** and **H** of Figure 3) – seem to have become widely disregarded in performance.

Example 5 – Re-distribution of the swells in measures 62-65 of the *coda*

The argument presented in this section is again accidentally strengthened by a 'mistake' or 'change of mind' on Beethoven's part as he first wrote down measure 62 in the *Autograph*. An unedited image of the *Autograph*'s measures 61-65 is shown in Figure 4.

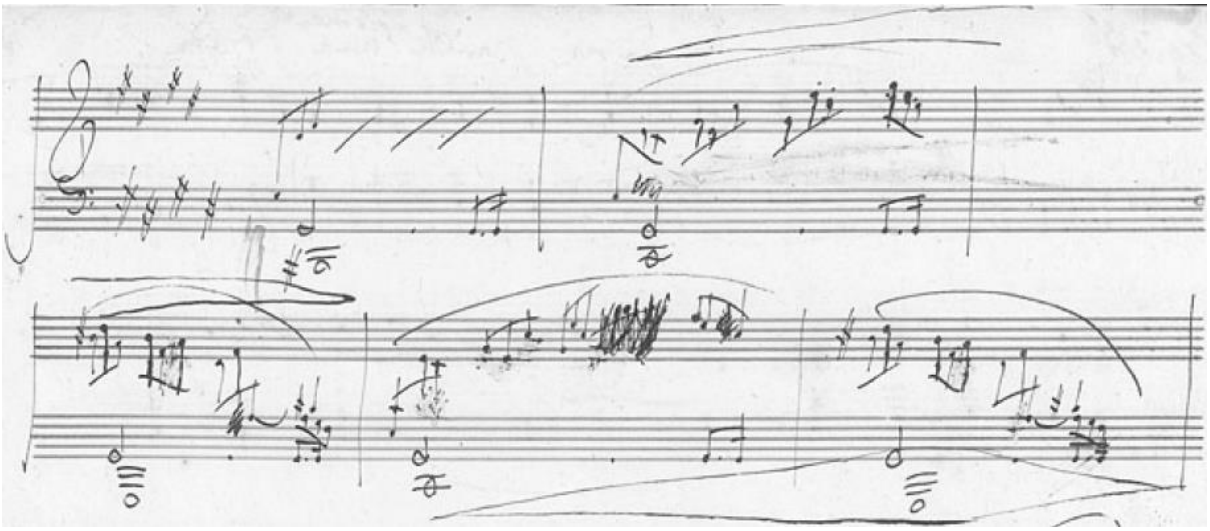


Figure 4
Autograph image of measures 61-65 from the *Adagio sostenuto* of Beethoven's *op. 27 no. 2*.

From this image we can see that Beethoven required that there be a swell of tone commencing at the first beat of measure 62, climaxing at the first beat of measure 63 and dying away by the end of the same measure; the whole two-measure passage is then repeated almost identically note for note, again with a swell in tone with the same general shape. However, there is an important difference; in measures 62-63 Beethoven wants the swell applied to the music for the right hand only, while in measures 64-65 he wants the swell applied to the music for the left hand only. We can be sure that this is no mere accident dictated by the amount of space available on the page for the 'hairpins'; on the contrary, Beethoven first 'mistakenly' placed the

crescendo 'hairpin' in measure 62 *between the staves* – to this day we can see that the composer deliberately erased this marking and positioned it high above the treble staff, complemented by the *decrescendo* 'hairpin' also above the treble staff in measure 63. The placing of the two 'hairpins' well below the bass staff in measures 64-65 is equally emphatic. Nonetheless, subsequent editors have either carelessly ignored these placements or have wilfully countermanded them (see Table 1); we cannot possibly guess as to which of the editors represented in Table 1 were simply negligent or ignorant of the difference that the placement of these 'hairpins' makes to the score, but we do have to wonder why Cappi, in preparing the first edition, failed to notice that he relocated the first of these four 'hairpins' precisely to the very place in measure 62 of the *Autograph* from which Beethoven had erased it!

Within the framework of the perspective suggested in this paper, we can regard measures 62-63 as continuing the intimate, confidential statement of the opening stuttering motive of the first subject, being overwhelmed by the treble accompaniment in the same manner as occurred for the second subject in both the exposition and recapitulation; only in the repeat statement of measures 64-65 does this stuttering theme assert itself, as if ready at last to break out and move on from the state of grief that has characterised this entire movement. Regardless of the interpretation, measures 64-65 afford the only instance in the entire movement where Beethoven's directions indicate a *cantabile* approach to the statement of this thematic fragment comprising stuttering G sharps.

3. THE COMBINED EFFECT OF THE FIVE EDITORIAL DISTORTIONS

If we accept that this sonata is a confidential confession to the keyboard of the composer's response to tragedy, then there are two main contenders for the identity of this tragedy at the time of composition: (a) the social taboos preventing Beethoven from marrying the contemporaneous object of his affection, Countess Julie Guicciardi, or (b) the certain knowledge of progressive and irreversible deafness – a 'secret' affliction that Beethoven had not been able to bring himself to confess to his Viennese associates at the time of composition of this sonata.

The present author inclines toward the latter identity, with claim to neither originality nor certainty. Such a possible interpretation must cross the mind of any pianist acquainted with the timing of Beethoven's awareness of encroaching deafness. A summary of this view is neatly, if somewhat diffidently, offered by Jones (1999, pp. 13-14) who, in dealing with the "assumption that aspects of a composer's life must inform his music", wrote:

> How far, though, can such parallels be drawn? … Perhaps the 'Moonlight' Sonata is not, after all, an expression of Beethoven's sorrow at losing Giulietta Guicciardi: the claim, though made often enough, has absolutely nothing to recommend it from a biographical perspective. A far more precious loss to Beethoven at that time was his hearing. Why are the dynamics of the sonata's first movement unprecedentedly suppressed to a constant piano or softer? Why does the melody emerge from, and resubmerge into, an under-articulated accompanimental continuum? Why is the movement centred on low sonorities, and the extreme treble reached only once, in a gesture of the utmost despair? Perhaps this is a representation of Beethoven's impaired auditory world, and – at the same time – a lament for his loss.

Thus, the non-*cantabile* style prescribed by Beethoven for both the first and second subjects of the *Adagio sostenuto* might serve the dual function of representing the 'hard-to-hear' experience of deafness as well as the concept of whispered confidentiality of expression. Similarly, the properly positioned swells in measures 28-31 of the development section may be more consistent with the stabbing, unrelenting emotional pain of an affliction that threatened his whole art and livelihood as a performing musician, rather than with lovelorn sighs over an impossible romance.

What is claimed in the present essay is that, for the past two centuries, the five editorial distortions identified here – and the associated *cantabile* style and slow tempo thereby influenced – all sit more comfortably with the popular associations with romantic love and moonlight, and also tend to undermine the psychological unity of the three movements.

4. 'MOONLIGHT' OR TRAGEDY?

The nickname 'Moonlight' has drawn a variety of responses from commentators over the years. In this century it has received a very strong defence from Waltz (2007) and, most recently, the accolade of inclusion in the title of the latest Urtext edition from Henle Verlag (Gertsch & Perahia 2013). On the other hand, the dismissive attitude of Lenz (1980 [1852]) has been mentioned above and finds resonance in the writing of Blom (1938, p. 108), thus:

> As for the title of 'Moonlight' Sonata, it was by no means the invention of Beethoven, who would at once have seen that it could not possibly fit the bright scherzo and the passionate finale. ... However, this designation is too palpably superficial for music-lovers to be warned nowadays not to use it; as a distinguishing nickname it may continue to serve a purpose, so long as it is not taken seriously.

Matthews (1967, p. 26) is less critical and writes: "Beethoven did not call it the *Moonlight*, but the title is appropriate enough for the first movement and there is no need to be snobbish about it."

It is one thing for musicologists to indulge the designation 'Moonlight' as a harmless nickname, but the interpreter of the music, whether performer or listener, is faced with a choice – whether to take the nickname seriously or not. It is argued here that most listeners default to accepting 'Moonlight' as an instructive nickname, influencing their response to the music, and that this default position is assisted by the five editorial distortions of the music of the *Adagio sostenuto* that inform almost all contemporary performances.

But the 'Moonlight' issue also impinges, somewhat unavoidably, on what is identified as the nature of the tragedy confessed by Beethoven in this sonata – was it the tragedy of hopeless love towards Countess Guicciardi or the tragedy of encroaching deafness? The former interpretation, while not necessarily *requiring* the association of moonlight, can accommodate it more readily than can the latter. While Jones (1999), quoted above, raises this question and appears to favour the explanation of deafness, the Guicciardi explanation has also had its champions. In particular, Behrend (1927, p. 74) seemed heavily influenced by the speculation that Julie Guicciardi was Beethoven's "Immortal Beloved" (still considered a possibility even half a century after the publication of Thayer's biography!) and wrote:

> If we turn now with this knowledge, fragmentary though it is, to the sonata itself, we shall understand it better, and its deep resigned pain, its turbulent passion, will speak to us more distinctly and impressively than ever. There cannot be any doubt that this music was conceived in deeply stirred hours in the life of the Master, and that it is the spontaneous expression of the pain of a newly inflicted wound, rather than the dwelling on the memories of it in the imagination.

Behrend (1927) expands on this theme over several more paragraphs and concludes (p. 78):

> Besides, the C sharp minor sonata had to close on the gloomy minor notes by which it is almost wholly dominated. Whether the rupture with the object of his adoration had occurred when he wrote his music about it, or whether he only suspected its near approach, the scorching pain at tearing himself away from her as from a fair hope, a lovely dream, was upon him.

5. ACHIEVING MUSICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL UNITY

There are two distinct issues at play here: (a) is there psychological unity between the three movements, and (b) is such unity assisted or undermined by the association of moonlit romance with the *Adagio sostenuto*?

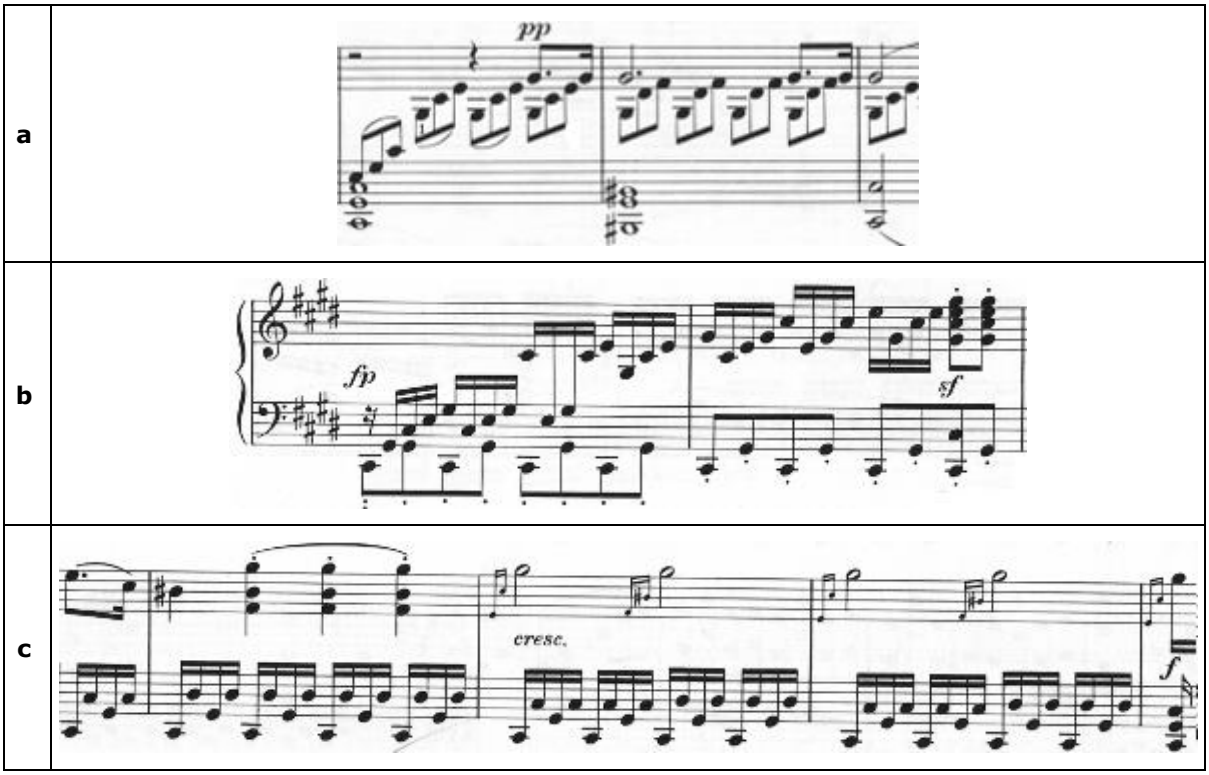


Figure 5

Images scanned from Henle's Urtext (Wallner & Hansen, 1980), showing thematic resonances of the 'stuttering' G sharps of the *Adagio sostenuto*'s 1st subject (**a** – measures 5-7) with the *Presto agitato*'s 'choking' G sharps of the 1st subject (**b** – measures 102-103) and 'soothing' G sharps of the *coda* (**c** – measures 192-196).

On the first issue, there are well recognised thematic resonances between the music of the two outer movements and, as we shall see, there are also arguable thematic links of these movements with the *Allegretto*. Regarding links between the first and third movements, Drake (1994, p. 115) notes ten parallels between the outer movements which "cannot be dismissed as coincidental". He finds that "the mood figure of the first movement breaks through all restraints and becomes an uncontrollable rage in the Presto, resembling a dramatic scene in which a crazed character wails and screams, speaking only a few intelligible sentences" (p. 116). In a similar vein, Jones, (1999, p.14) asks, "Why does the sonata's Presto agitato finale seem to cover the same ground as the first movement but with a prevailing mood of manic rage, rather than of melancholy?"

Some major thematic links between the two outer movements are illustrated in Figure 5, which shows the 'stuttering' G sharps of the *Adagio*'s first subject – inarticulate with grief (**a**) – and the 'choking' G sharps of the *Presto*'s first subject – inarticulate with rage (**b**). The *Presto*'s soft arpeggios, rising against an *ostinato* bass in *staccato* eighth-notes suggest a barely suppressed internal agitation that bursts out nonetheless in an explosive *sforzando*. Placement of the *sforzando* on only the first of the two repeated C sharp minor chords, with the repeated chord 'choked' back to *piano*, suggests an image of somebody choking with rage, bursting to give vent to expression but being unable to 'get the words out'.[10] This imagery is completely consistent with the words quoted above by both Drake (1994) and Jones (1999). On the other hand, the repeated G sharps shown in Figure 5 (**c**) suggest more of a calming or 'soothing' effect as the repeated quarter-notes yield to repeated half-notes. This 'soothing' motive appears in the *codetta* of both the exposition (D sharps) and recapitulation (G sharps) with a

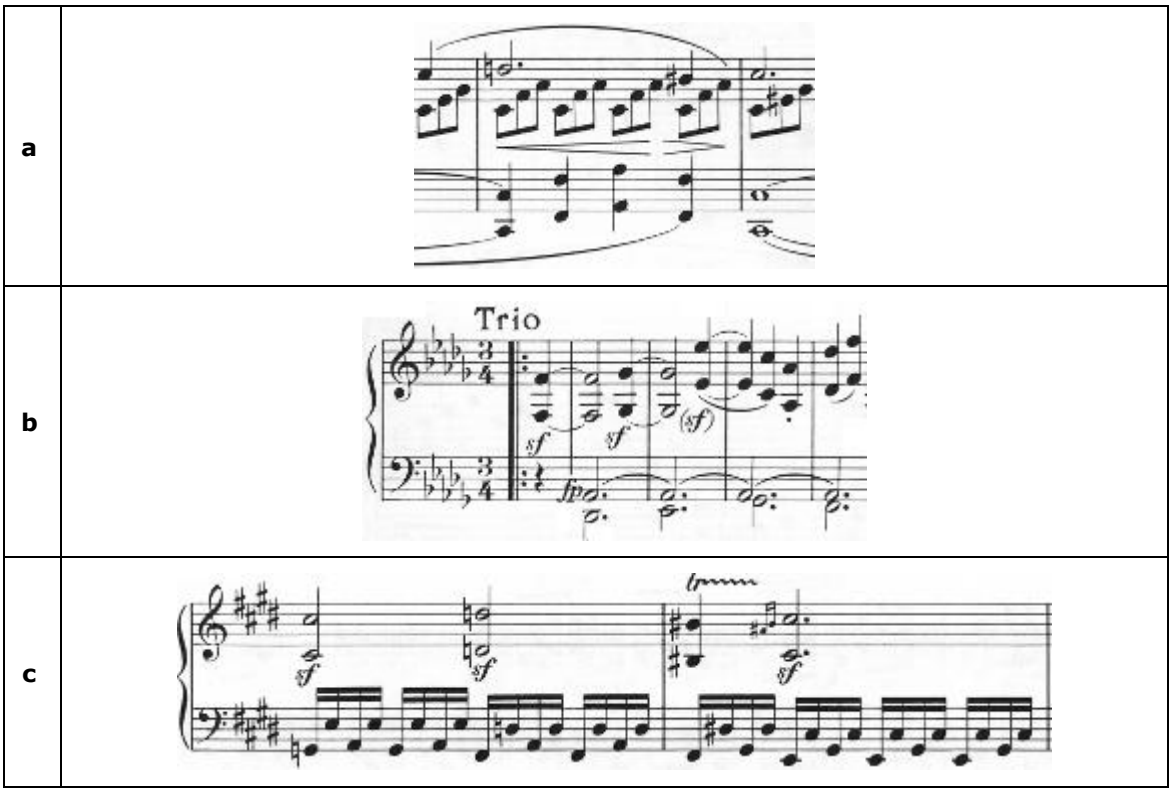


Figure 6

Images scanned from Henle's Urtext (Wallner & Hansen, 1980), showing thematic resonances between the 2nd subject of the *Adagio sostenuto* (**a** – measures 51-53) and fragments from the *Trio* of the *Allegretto* (**b** – measures 36-40) and the recapitulation of the *Presto agitato* (**c** – measures 126-127)

[10] This 'choking' imagery is undermined by Czerny's insertion of a *crescendo* directive in the second measure of the *Presto* and his replacement of the *sforzando* on the fourth beat with a *fortissimo* sign in his illustrated essay of 1846 *On the proper performance of all Beethoven's works for the Piano solo* (Badura-Skoda 1970, p.39). On the other hand, Schnabel reinforces Beethoven's original intention here by inserting '*non cresc.*' at measure two.

diminuendo directive reinforcing the 'soothing' effect. However, in the *coda* (G sharps) this passage is marked *crescendo* (row **c** of Figure 5) as the fury bursts through the 'soothing' motive to end the whole work in a gesture of defiant rage. Perhaps the recurring motif of repeated G sharps can even be felt in the repeated A-flats (the third one following an accented passing note) at the end of the *Allegretto* (measures 30, 32 and 34).

Figure 6 shows the well-recognised similarity between the whispered second subject of the *Adagio* (**a**) and a fragment from the second subject group of the *Presto* (**c**), together with the less well recognised similarity to the opening *Trio* theme from the *Allegretto* (**b**); this latter similarity becomes more obvious if the progression F – G flat – E flat – F is taken with the middle interval as a descent of a minor third rather than a leap of a major sixth. Another possible resonance, this time between the music of the second and third movements, is suggested in Figure 7, where the care-free opening 'dance' theme of the *Allegretto* is compared with the 'turmoil' of the swirling passage heard at the end of the first subject of the *Presto*.

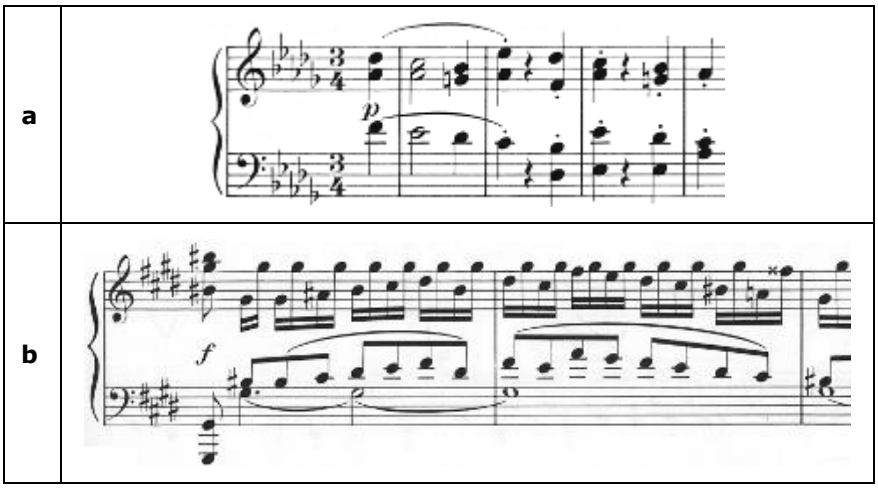


Figure 7
Images scanned from Henle's Urtext (Wallner & Hansen, 1980), showing thematic resonance between the main theme of the *Allegretto* (**a** – measures 1-4) and a fragment of 'turmoil' from the *Presto agitato* (**b** – measures 9-11).

Thus, there is no shortage of thematic 'unity' between the three movements of this sonata. However, there is very often a want of psychological unity between the movements if the prevailing imagery is moonlit romance, followed by a dainty little gig and concluding with rampant fury. Removal of the moonlit romance from this imagery allows the psychological integrity of the entire work to fall into place as portrayals of inarticulate grief (*Adagio sostenuto*), 'carefree' denial (*Allegretto*) and inarticulate rage

(*Presto agitato*). Moreover, we can also note the unrelenting image of 'flight' in the *Presto* – the music rushes about madly, barely pausing for rest before being driven onward again in breathless panic; it is as if the protagonist might hope to escape the tragedy by fleeing from it – another form of denial.

This idea of 'denial' for the *Allegretto* has also been suggested by Behrend (1927, p.77), who wrote:

> He cannot and does not wish to provoke any *Scherzo* mood here; the movement seems rather to be an unassuming, almost anxious attempt to awaken some confidence in a happier destiny, some little hope of interior harmony, but it is only short-lived and the attempt does not succeed.

5.1. Suggestion for performance

The psychological unity between the first two movements can be supported by musical unity if Beethoven's directive at the end of the *Adagio* – *Attacca subito il seguente* (Attack the following immediately) – is observed to the letter with no change in tempo. For example, if the *Adagio* is played at an *alla breve* pulse of around 40 half-note beats per minute, then its final 'paused' whole-note chord could be held for exactly three half-note beats, with the performer now counting 80 quarter-note beats per minute and terminating the sound of the last chord on exactly what would be the count of seven. This 'seventh' such quarter-note beat then becomes the dotted half-note downbeat for the opening anacrusis of the *Allegretto*, such that the silence between the two movements is merely two imaginary quarter-note rests placed *in tempo Allegretto* before the first chord of the second movement. The *Allegretto* can now be played exactly *l'istesso tempo* with a feeling of one beat per measure, i.e., the quarter-note beats of the *Allegretto* are identical in speed to the triplet eighth-notes of the *Adagio* (240 per minute). The *Allegretto* can then be felt in two-measure phrases, the pulse of each two-measure phrase being identical to the *alla breve* pulse of the preceding *Adagio*, 40 per minute.[11] The mood and sonority should be very light and dance-like, as if there were not a care in the world – i.e., the 'denial' between the 'grief' and the 'rage'. Similarly, the *Presto* can also be played *l'istesso tempo*, at a count of 40 measures per minute. But this unified approach to the whole sonata cannot be realised if *tempo alla breve* is ignored for the *Adagio sostenuto*.

The two issues raised earlier are thus answered: there *can* be psychological unity between the three movements – based on firm musical, thematic unity and a sense of

[11] Audio clips illustrating this linking of the *Adagio sostenuto* with the *Allegretto*, and the thematic fragments shown in Figures 5, 6 and 7 may be found at the URL given in the reference to Chapman (2014).

l'istesso tempo throughout – but this unity is undermined by the association with moonlit romance for the first movement that has led to the five editorial distortions, including the slower tempo.

6. WHAT TRAGEDY UNDERLIES THE COMPOSITION?

The issue as to whether the tragedy of this sonata derives from frustrated love or from encroaching deafness remains unresolved. Only Beethoven could answer that; any subjective judgment more than two hundred years after the event cannot possibly weigh the nature and intensity of Beethoven's feelings *at that time* towards the Countess and the impossibility of marriage with her. We might guess that deafness would have weighed more heavily or that, perhaps, *both* tragedies might have worked in synergy to give birth to the music of *Opus 27 No.2*, but it does not seem possible to exclude the Guicciardi explanation entirely on either psychological or musical grounds. All that is suggested here is that, even if the Guicciardi explanation were the whole story behind the genesis of this sonata, that should not necessarily require the association with 'moonlight' and the five editorial distortions with which history has unnecessarily burdened this work. On the other hand, the deafness explanation is self-sufficiently consistent with the musical significance of Beethoven's original directives concerning tempo and dynamics in the *Adagio sostenuto*. Moreover, reversion to these directives allows the psychological unity of the work to be expressed such that the well-recognised thematic links between the three movements are not dissolved by any emotional disparity between them.

7. COULD THERE BE A MORE INSTRUCTIVE NICKNAME?

This question is asked in order to assist with interpretation and understanding, rather than to serve any vainglorious attempt to overthrow established history.

Tragic? – or Grief, Denial and Rage?

These two suggestions are simply alternatives for a title that reflects the tragedy, of whatever nature, that few would doubt forms the inspiration for this sonata. The simple title *Tragic* is apt enough, while the tri-fold alternative has a precedent in the *'Les Adieux' Sonata op. 81a*.

Intimations of Deafness?

If this nickname indicated the true provenance of the sonata, then it would vindicate Beethoven's *Autograph* very strongly against the editorial changes that have occurred in the *Adagio sostenuto*. However, this suggested provenance can never be proven, no matter how well it fits the music of the *Autograph*.

Little Appassionata?

Given the intensity of feeling expressed in this sonata, especially in its violently impassioned *finale*, and given the similarities between this *finale* and that of the later *Appassionata Sonata* o*p. 57*, the nickname *Little Appassionata* is a reasonable contender. However, the passion of the earlier sonata is not 'little' by comparison with that of *op. 57*. On the contrary, *op. 27 no. 2* is literally inarticulate with passion. If the *finale* of the *Appassionata Sonata* may be characterised as defiance in the face of adversity (*Allegro ma non troppo*) then the *finale* of *op. 27 no. 2* borders on sheer panic (*Presto agitato*).

Inarticulate?

This carries a certain accuracy applied to the comparatively 'tuneless' outer movements of this sonata and it also contains a subtle suggestion of advice for performance of the *Adagio sostenuto* in strict accordance with the notation given in the *Autograph*.

Moonlight? – or ~~Moonlight~~?

The nickname 'Moonlight' has proven to be perfectly satisfactory for most people over much of the past two centuries and it also finds approval among some commentators, ranging from sympathetic indulgence (Matthews 1967) to strong defence (Waltz 2007), as noted above. Nonetheless, it is argued here that this nickname could be appropriate *only* to the *Adagio sostenuto*, and *only* if the five editorial distortions identified in this paper are applied to its rendition. In this restricted sense, 'Moonlight' is an overwhelmingly appropriate nickname in relation to almost all contemporary performances and extant recordings of the *Adagio sostenuto*. However, if the *Adagio* is rendered strictly according to Beethoven's directives in the *Autograph*, then this nickname becomes much less appropriate. Accordingly, the present author recommends the usage of '~~Moonlight~~' for recordings and public performances that adhere to Beethoven's original directives.

The clear dichotomy between 'Moonlight' and '~~Moonlight~~' suggests that Czerny, Liszt, von Bülow, Schnabel and their followers have created a new work out of Beethoven's original *Adagio sostenuto*, and it is this transformed version that has survived and come to be known and loved throughout the world. This would seem to be a remarkably early, enduring and perversely ironic example of a phenomenon which, in postmodern times, would come to be known as 'death of the author' (Barthes 1977)!

8. ISSUES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Apart from departures from the *Autograph* that might be attributed to carelessness in the first editions by Cappi and Simrock (Beethoven 1802a; 1802b), all the consistent manifestations of the five editorial distortions listed in Table 1, including the metronome markings incompatible with *tempo alla breve*, occurred well after Beethoven's death. However, there is yet another editorial distortion relative to the *Autograph* that has been consistently present in every edition known to the present author, including both first editions and both Urtext editions by Henle Verlag. This is the insertion of a '*p*' (*piano*) sign at the beginning of measure 28, preceded by the insertion of 'Decres.' (Beethoven 1802a), 'decres' (Beethoven 1802b) or 'decresc.' (Wallner & Hansen 1980; Gertsch & Perahia 2013) in measure 27.

Unfortunately, the *Autograph* is inconsistent on this matter, owing to Beethoven's having left two attempts at the passage commencing at measure 27 as discussed earlier in relation to Example 4. The first attempt at measure 27 has a '*p*' sign at its beginning while the second attempt has no such sign or any other indication. As shown in Figure 3, neither of the *Autograph*'s attempts at measure 28 contains the '*p*' sign that is plainly seen in the images from the five editions represented. It is not possible to interpret the absence of the '*p*' sign in the second attempt at measure 27, or to comment any further on the differences between Cappi's first edition (Beethoven, 1802a) and the *Autograph* at measures 26-27 without further information from any of Cappi's copies or corrected proofs that might have survived.

In the absence of such information, it might be guessed that the *decrescendo* indications inserted by Cappi, and thereafter adopted by subsequent editors, derived from corrections sanctioned by Beethoven. However, this issue is not as pertinent to the main thesis of this paper as are the five editorial distortions discussed above. If it were to turn out that Beethoven's first attempt at measure 27 in the *Autograph* is to be taken as the 'authentic' version, then the *crescendo* commencing at the second beat of measure 25 would be terminated by a *subito piano* at the first beat of measure 27, exactly as occurs for the '*crescendo* to *piano*' instances of measures 48-49 and measures 58-59.

9. CONCLUSION

This study has identified five important editorial distortions that have appeared in printed editions and public performances of the *Adagio sostenuto* of Beethoven's fourteenth piano sonata for most of the past two hundred years. These distortions are well suited to the popular association of this movement with romantic love and moonlight. Removal of these distortions by adhering strictly to the directives concerning tempo, dynamics

and voicing contained in the *Autograph* reveals the sonata as a more integrated whole, open to the interpretation of representing three responses to tragedy – grief, denial and rage – in its three respective movements.

Two contemporaneous candidates for the nature of this tragedy – unfulfilled romance or encroaching deafness – are considered. Deciding between these two possible provenances must remain forever speculative. However, if we ask ourselves, "Is there any single work from this period that might encapsulate the tragedy of Beethoven's deafness in musical terms, i.e., that forms a coherent 'tone poem' concerning the tragedy?", then there is no possible answer other than *Op.27 No.2.* And, if this answer is wrong (as well it might be, as a statement concerning the composer's conscious intentions), then we have to conclude that Beethoven left no such work at all from this time of acute turmoil, even though it is widely felt that his tragic 'character-building' circumstances coloured much of his output for the rest of his life.

Acknowledgments

I thank Venetia Somerset, Brian Ruck and Rosemary Cotter for kindly reading and commenting in helpful detail on an early draft of this paper. The scanned images are reproduced by kind permission of the Beethoven-Haus Bonn (*Autograph*, Figures 1-4), Edizioni Curci Srl (Schnabel, Figures 1-3) and Henle Verlag (1980 Urtext, Figures 1-7). Archival material has been sourced with the generous assistance of Dr Nicole Kämpken of the Beethoven-Haus Bonn Digital Archives, Jacqueline Waylen and Claudia De Salvo of the Monash University Library, Klaus-Peter Müller of the Landesbibliothek Oldenburg and Rosemary Cotter (personal copy). I am also grateful to Dr Michael Ladenburger, Chief of the Museum and Custodian of the Collections of the Beethoven-Haus Bonn, for helpful consultation on matters pertaining to Section 8, "Issues for further research".

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