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THE SHAKESPEARE CONNECTION: BEETHOVEN'S STRING QUARTET OP. 18 NO. 1 AND THE VIENNA *HAUSTHEATER*

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ABSTRACT

The 'Amenda anecdote' from 1856 associates the second movement of Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 18 No. 1 (Adagio affettuoso ed appassionato) with the vault scene of Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet. *Sketchbook jottings by Beethoven from 1799, in French, confirm that such a link really existed. The question of what incited him to represent in his music elements of Shakepeare has not been settled to any satisfaction. It seems unlikely that Beethoven read a French version of the play. Nor can a public theatrical or operatic staging have been the stimulus, for the original vault scene was not allowed to be performed by the authorities. This study approaches the Shakespeare connection from the perspective of a cultural practice that has received limited attention in the literature, that of Viennese* Haustheater. *A performance of the vault scene in this context, it is argued, informed Beethoven's quartet movement. The most crucial piece of evidence are the memoirs of Caroline Pichler, which mention a tableau given at her parents' house at the end of eighteenth century. One of the claims of the study is that Beethoven's Shakespeare connection was a one-time digression from normal practice, and that it is thus hazardous to draw this particular event into a wider hermeneutic debate.*

I

In 1856 an anecdote was published about the gestation of the second movement of Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 18 No. 1, in 1799. It was a story about Karl Amenda, who had been present at the time. Amenda reported that while composing the movement Beethoven had drawn inspiration from Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*.

This was a delicate topic in 1856. Only two years earlier, Eduard Hanslick had launched an assault on romantic viewpoints, attacking music's capacity to express 'feelings' or 'meaning'. With his manifesto *Vom Musikalisch-Schönen* he aimed to dismiss all extramusical sources, and he embraced the motto 'since we don't know them, they don't exist for the work' ('wir kennen sie nicht, sie sind daher für das Werk nicht existirend').[1] This elicited hot debate between opposing camps. Some Beethoven commentators denounced Hanslick's views as a 'grandiose mistake' ('kolossaler Irrthum').[2] Amenda's story thus appeared

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1 Eduard Hanslick, *Vom Musikalisch-Schönen: Ein Beitrag zur Revision der Aesthetik der Tonkunst* (Leipzig: Rudolph Weigel, 1854), 44.

2 Ernst von Elterlein, *Beethoven's Clavier-Sonaten* (Leipzig: Heinrich Matthes, 1856), 26–27. Elterlein regarded Hanslick's ideas as 'fundamentally invalidated' ('gründlich wiederlegt'). He reiterated his views in *Beethoven's Symphonien nach ihrem idealen Gehalt* (Dresden: Adolph Brauer, 1858), 2–3. The romantic position that Beethoven's music was more than 'mere sound' ('ein blosses Klingen') and contained 'certain images and a particular content' ('bestimmte Vorstellungen und einen nähere[n] Inhalt') had already been defended by C. T. Seiffert in 'Beethoven's Sonaten', *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* (7 June 1843), 419, and by Theodor Uhlig in 'Ueber den dichterischen Gehalt Beethoven'scher Tonwerke', *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 36 (1852), 131–133, 143–146 and 163–166.

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at a time when discussions were in full swing. It could be harnessed by the romantics as a powerful weapon, for what it suggested was an unequivocal 'We know it, so it exists for the work'.

The anecdote was contained in the brochure *Musikalische Effectmittel und Tonmalerei* by the musical aficionado Ferdinand Johann Wiedemann, who had squeezed it into a footnote:

> Ein Freund Beethovens, der jetzt verstorbene Probst A[menda] in Kurland, erzählte mir eine hieher gehörige Anekdote. Als Beethoven sein bekanntes Streichquartett in F-dur componirt hatte, spielte er dem Freunde das herrliche Adagio (D-moll 9/8 Tact) vor, und fragte ihn darauf, was er sich dabei gedacht habe. Es hat mir, war die Antwort, den Abschied zweier Liebenden geschildert. – Wohl, entgegnete Beethoven, ich habe mir dabei die Scene im Grabgewölbe aus Romeo und Julia gedacht.[3]
>
> A friend of Beethoven's, the now deceased chaplain A[menda] in Courland, told me an anecdote that belongs here. After Beethoven had composed his well-known String Quartet in F major, he played for his friend the marvellous Adagio (D minor, 9/8 time) and subsequently asked him what thoughts had come to his mind. For me, was his answer, it portrayed the parting of two lovers. Well, Beethoven replied, I thought of the vault scene in *Romeo and Juliet*.

Wiedemann was wedded to the idea that sensations (*Empfindungen*) evoked by high-quality music could activate in the listener a strain of thinking (*Gedankenreihe*) by which it was possible, through a process of deduction, to establish concepts (*Vorstellungen*) that had once been envisaged by the composer. Immanuel Kant had been wrong, he argued, in denying music the capacity to denote intelligible aesthetic ideas, concepts or narratives (as he had done in his *Kritik der Urteilskraft*).[4] Music was more than mere aesthetic structure or mood-painting: it was possible for the listener to find in it allusions and hidden texts, and it was duly possible, through experience, to translate musical features into expressive equivalents, and these into concrete concepts. To make his case Wiedemann resorted to the anecdote, for Amenda had given perfect voice to his theory: he had identified 'content' in music, which could therefore be regarded as 'tone-painting' (*Tonmalerei* – the term used in the title of his booklet). By correlating sentiments correctly, Amenda had demonstrated that it was possible to deduce the 'images' that had inspired Beethoven.

Wiedemann's story made its way into the Beethoven literature in 1860, through Wilhelm von Lenz.[5] It was absent from the biographies of Marx (1858) and Nohl (1867),[6] but Thayer disseminated it through the second volume of his biography (1872), although he himself diplomatically abstained from commenting on it.[7] Soon after, Gustav Nottebohm discovered in the sketchbook now called Grasnick 2 important evidence in support of the anecdote, acknowledging the credibility of Amenda in his *Zweite Beethoveniana* (published posthumously in 1887).[8] Owing to Nottebohm's support, the anecdote became common knowledge. No commentator called it into question, although some bypassed or marginalized it, on account of either carelessness,

3 Ferdinand Johann Wiedemann, *Musikalische Effectmittel und Tonmalerei* (Doprat: Laakmann, 1856), 21. All translations in this article are mine unless stated otherwise.

4 Wiedemann, *Musikalische Effectmittel*, 20.

5 Wilhelm von Lenz, *Beethoven: Eine Kunststudie*, five volumes, volume 4 (Hamburg: Hoffmann & Campe, 1860), 17.

6 Adolf Bernhard Marx, *Ludwig van Beethoven: Leben und Schaffen*, two volumes (Leipzig: Gebrüder Reinecke, 1858). Ludwig Nohl, *Beethoven's Leben*, three volumes, volume 2 (Leipzig: Verlag von Ambr. Abel, 1867). Nohl described the Adagio from Op. 18 No. 1 as one of the first examples of Beethoven expressing 'sorrow' ('Leid'): volume 2, 96. In the 1909 edition of Nohl by Paul Sakolowski (in which the original was tampered with; see Alfred Kalischer, 'Bücher', *Die Musik* (1902), 1109) the anecdote was specified in a footnote (volume 1, 290). Strikingly, it was not mentioned by Nohl in his account of Amenda in *Beethoven, Liszt, Wagner: Ein Bild der Kunstbewegung unseres Jahrhunderts* (Vienna: Wilhelm Braumüller, 1874), 89–95.

7 Alexander Wheelock Thayer, *Ludwig van Beethoven's Leben*, three volumes, volume 2 (Berlin: W. Weber, 1872), 114.

8 Gustav Nottebohm, *Zweite Beethoveniana*, ed. Eusebius Mandyczewski (Leipzig: Peters, 1887), 485. At the time of his original *Zweite Beethoveniana* (Leipzig: Verlag J. Rieter-Biedermann, 1872) he had not yet known Grasnick 1 and 2. It

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ignorance or unease. In his study of the string quartets, Theodor Helm (1885) did not mention it. Nor did Hugo Riemann (1910).[9] Paul Bekker (1922) refrained from using it in his chapter on the 'poetic idea', where it would have suited him well; where he did mention it, he added a wavering 'true or not', reluctant to draw conclusions.[10] Paul Mies (1925) did not feel very comfortable with it and could hardly hide his embarrassment.[11] The general feeling, though, was that the facts could not be glossed over or disregarded, and Beethoven reception conceded that at least one movement of the composer's most autonomous of genres, the string quartet, had been informed by a literary source, a Shakespeare play.

Today, this feeling still holds. The Amenda anecdote is acknowledged as being of a fundamentally different nature from other recollections about extramusical associations in Beethoven's music. Anton Schindler's remarks about 'poetic ideas' have been exposed as largely ficticious.[12] Carl Czerny's claim that Beethoven was inspired to his most beautiful works 'by visions and pictures drawn from literature or from his own active imagination' ('durch . . . aus der Lektüre oder aus der eignen regen Fantasie geschöpfte Visionen und Bilder') was rendered unconvincing by implausible allusions to galloping horses, birdsong and ghosts from the underworld.[13] Ferdinand Ries's statement that Beethoven often had a 'particular subject' ('bestimmten Gegenstand') in mind when composing was immediately followed by the relativistic parenthetical remark that he also 'ridiculed and scorned pictorial music'.[14] Charles Neate's recollection of Beethoven enunciating 'I have always a picture in my mind when I am composing, and work up to it' involved a conversation about the Pastoral Symphony, which gives a context to the quotation.[15] Similarly, Johann Sporschil's account that Beethoven was often excited by 'a glorious deed, a poem, a recently read tragedy, or in other cases by a major historical event like the heroic death of Nelson or the fall of Napoleon, or an agreeable or sublime nature scene' ('eine glänzende That, ein Gedicht, eine Tragödie, die er eben las, bald ein grosses heroisches Ereigniss, wie der Heldentod Nelson's, der Sturz Napoleon's, bald eine freundliche oder erhabene Naturscene') may have been prompted by programmatic works (the 'Eroica', the Pastoral, *Egmont*, *Der glorreiche Augenblick*, *Wellington's Sieg* and songs).[16] When Karl Holz commented in a conversation book, 'I always ask myself when listening to this [instrumental music by Mozart]: what is it supposed to portray?' ('Ich frage mich immer selber, wenn ich so etwas höre, was soll das vorstellen?'), he probably had in mind the moods depicted in Beethoven's passionate late string quartets, not something mimetic or narrative.[17]

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was Hugo Riemann who incorporated the Nottebohm/Mandyczewski observations into his edition of Thayer's *Ludwig van Beethovens Leben*, five volumes, volume 2 (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1922), 187–188.

9 Theodor Helm, *Beethoven's Streichquartette* (Leipzig: E. W. Fritsch, 1885); Hugo Riemann, *Beethoven's Streichquartette* (Berlin: Schlesinger'sche Buch- und Musikhandlung, 1910).

10 Paul Bekker, *Beethoven* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1922), 474.

11 Paul Mies, *Die Bedeutung der Skizzen Beethovens zur Erkenntnis seines Stiles* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1925), 151: 'In the end, the poetic idea cannot have been very significant for the composer, for he suppressed the least allusion to it' ('die poetische Idee musste doch im Endurteil nicht sehr wesentlich für den Komponisten sein, dass er jede Andeutung unterdrückte'). See below for the influence of this assessment over later scholarship.

12 Anton Schindler, *Biographie von Ludwig van Beethoven*, two volumes (Münster: Aschendorff, 1860), volume 2, 212–222.

13 Carl Czerny, *Über den richtigen Vortrag der sämtlichen Beethoven'schen Klavierwerke*, ed. Paul Badura-Skoda (Vienna: Universal Edition, 1963), 54, and *Die Kunst des Vortrages der ältern und neuen Claviercompositionen oder Die Fortschritte bis zur neuesten Zeit – Supplement (oder 4ther Theil) zur grossen Pianoforte-Schule* (Vienna: Diabelli, 1839), 62. See also *Beethoven aus der Sicht seiner Zeitgenossen in Tagebüchern, Briefen, Gedichten und Erinnerungen*, ed. Klaus Martin Kopitz and Rainer Cadenbach, two volumes (Munich: Henle, 2009; hereafter KC), 226 and 243.

14 Franz Wegeler and Ferdinand Ries, *Biographische Notizen über Ludwig van Beethoven* (Koblenz: Rädeker, 1838; hereafter WR), 77–78.

15 KC, 615.

16 KC, 940.

17 *Ludwig van Beethovens Konversationshefte*, ed. Karl-Heinz Köhler, eleven volumes, volume 8 (Leipzig: Deutscher Verlag für Musik, 1981), 268.

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None of these contemporary sources, it seems, has enough potential fundamentally to challenge the (Hanslickian) position that Beethoven's sonata-form-governed instrumental compositions are in principle autonomous aesthetic structures – interactions of melody, harmony, rhythm and sonority.[18] The Amenda anecdote, however, is a different case: not only does it explicitly reveal what had inspired Beethoven, it also passes the test of external verification, on account of the sketchbook jottings. Consequently, it opens a hermeneutic window and affords glimpses into Beethoven's musical imagination, which was plainly sparked by elements of *Romeo and Juliet*. At the same time, this raises several issues. An intriguing question is whether this was an isolated case, a one-time flirtation with the extramusical in a genre standing so high in the aesthetic hierarchy, or whether there were perhaps other forays into this terrain that are now resistant to verification. It would also be interesting to know whether this extramusical aspect related to discussions in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* about 'content' and 'meaning' in learned genres: the desperate cry 'Sonate, que me veux-tu?' by those who felt alienated by abstract substance was much in the air.[19] But above all there is the conundrum of Beethoven's choice of Shakespeare. What, or who, may have prompted or triggered him to relate a sequence of sonic events in a string quartet to dramatic episodes from *Romeo and Juliet*? This article will primarily address the latter issue.[20] It aims to examine Amenda's anecdote in an effort to adduce and appraise a common-sense explanation for Beethoven's artistic choices.

II

During much of 1798–1799 Beethoven was on friendly terms with Karl Amenda, who had studied theology and music in Courland. Arriving from Lausanne, he spent one and a half years in Vienna, where he was engaged by Prince Lobkowitz, and by Mozart's widow Constanze as a tutor for her two sons. According to oral family tradition, contact with Beethoven was made at an evening session for string quartets where Amenda played the violin, probably at Lobkowitz's.[21] This led to mutual visits of the two friends, who developed a sincere affection for each other. Contact was on a daily basis. They even made plans for a concert tour to Italy, but this was cancelled because Amenda had to return home unexpectedly, owing to family matters.[22]

18 Here is not the place to expound on modern and postmodern paradigms pointing to 'emotional journeys', 'psychological narratives' (within or beyond the musical organization), 'contextual processes' and other hermeneutic viewpoints (for a recent discussion see James William Sobaskie, 'The "Problem" of Schubert's String Quintet', *Nineteenth-Century Music Review* 2/1 (2005), 57–92, especially 57–60). Rather, the classic formalist/hermeneutic dichotomy is addressed as a historical phenomenon.

19 It was not so much the musical repertory that was responsible for changes in the reception of instrumental music, but transformations in contemporary philosophy. In the aesthetics of post-Kantian idealism the genre was elevated from 'meaningless play' to a signifier of the realm of the infinite: see Mark Evan Bonds, 'Idealism and the Aesthetics of Instrumental Music at the Turn of the Nineteenth Century', *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 50/2–3 (1997), 387–420. On 'Sonate, que me veux tu?' see the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* (14 November 1798), 109, (25 June and 12 November 1800), 682 and 120, and (4 March 1801), 398.

20 The topic has also been investigated by Steven M. Whiting in 'Beethoven Translating Shakespeare: Dramatic Models for the Slow Movement of the String Quartet Op. 18, No. 1', in *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 71/3 (2018), 795–838. Whiting offered the suggestion that Beethoven could have been inspired by a metrical rendering of Shakespeare's vault scene by August Wilhelm Schlegel, published in 1796 in German. This proposal runs into difficulties, though, since it does not help account for the French entries in Beethoven's sketchbook (see below). Moreover, Schlegel's translation was not the only one circulating: on 7 January 1797 the Dollischen Buchhandlung am Stephansplatz offered 'Romeo und Julie. Trauerspiel in 5 Aufzügen nach Shakespear. 8. [1]796 17 kr.' (*Wiener Zeitung*, 61).

21 KC, 10.

22 Peter Clive, *Beethoven and His World: A Biographical Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 5–6. Amenda left because he felt the need to assist a disabled brother with twelve children. About the return trip he recollected that he arrived by boat in Riga on 31 October 1799; see *Ludwig van Beethoven: Briefwechsel Gesamtausgabe*, ed. Sieghard Brandenburg (Munich: Henle, 1996–1998; hereafter BGA), No. 43, note 1, and KC, 8. A few months later, on

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He left Vienna for good shortly after 25 June 1799, on which day he received from Beethoven a dedication copy (instrumental parts written by three copyists) of the String Quartet Op. 18 No. 1, as a farewell present.[23]

It must have been shortly before that date that Beethoven sat down at the piano to play for Amenda the second movement (Adagio affettuoso ed appassionato) of his quartet. This was the occasion of the anecdote: Beethoven's intimation, after having finished playing, that *Romeo and Juliet* had inspired him. Back in Courland, Amenda (who died in 1836) passed on his recollection to Wiedemann, who documented it in his 1856 footnote. Given the double transmission, and the extended time frame between actual event and ultimate documentation, it stands to reason that a margin of error should be allowed for with regard to Beethoven's exact formulation. Even so, it is remarkable that he asked Amenda 'what thoughts had come to his mind' ('was er sich dabei gedacht habe'), implying that he expected the music to have conjured up 'thoughts' or 'ideas', thus provoking in the listener an act of interpretation. To be sure, the riveting climaxes in the movement's closing section gave ample reason for that, with ruminating phrases verging on narrative explicitness, suggestions of direct communication through operatic tremolandos, shocked and pensive silences, heartfelt cries and a two-and-a-half-octave vertiginous drop (as in the Marcia funèbre of the 'Eroica') described by Joseph Kerman as 'almost hysterical'.[24] Such expressiveness invited comment, and for Amenda it portrayed 'the parting of two lovers' ('den Abschied zweier Liebenden'). He perceived a loving couple saying goodbye, with attendant sentiments – sadness, pain, despair, melancholy. (Wiedemann will have perceived down-to-earth 'content' as well, perhaps a goodbye kiss, a valedictory embrace or the act of taking leave.)

It is not difficult to imagine what led Amenda to this response. On 25 June he would receive from Beethoven his copy of Op. 18 No. 1. He left the city probably the day after, knowing that he would never return to Vienna and would never see his friend again.[25] It was thus a goodbye for ever. If Beethoven

26 February 1800, the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* wrote: 'A short time ago, Mr. Amenda, son of a Kurland pastor, has returned home from his seven-year musical travels, and his excellent playing on the violin, his enjoyable compositions and his general sociability show that he knows how to amuse people. With powerful bow strokes, skilful passagework etc. he particularly excels in the Adagio, and he gains much applause from the audience' ('Vor Kurzem ist Herr Amenda, der Sohn eines Pastors aus Kurland, von seinen siebenjährigen musikalischen Reisen zurückgekehrt, und zeigt durch sein ganz vortreffliches Violinspiel, durch angenehme Kompositionen, und durch allgemeine Humanität, dass er zu reisen verstanden habe. Bey vieler Kraft seines Bogens, Fertigkeit in Passagen etc. zeichnet er sich noch ganz vorzüglich im Adagio aus, und findet reichen Beyfall beym Publikum') (395).

23 At that time only this preliminary 'Amenda version' of the quartet existed, which was later rejected. It was entitled 'Quartetto Nro II' and was thus planned as the second of the Op. 18 set. Later (BGA, No. 67), Beethoven insisted that Amenda should not show this copy to others, for he had substantially improved the work. This letter was first published in *Signale für die Musikalische Welt* (1852), 33–34, when the 'Amenda version' had not yet been made public; see Alexander Wheelock Thayer, *Chronologisches Verzeichniss der Werke Ludwig van Beethoven's* (Berlin: Ferdinand Schneider, 1865), 37.

24 Joseph Kerman, *The Beethoven Quartets* (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), 36–42. Writing in a Toveyian vein, Kerman was critical about the 'raw exterior emotion' and the 'melodramatic gestures' in the music; he argued that Beethoven 'was overestimating his potential for tragedy'.

25 Brandenburg alleged that the departure was delayed (BGA, No. 44, note 1). On 24 June, however, one day before Beethoven's present, Constanze Mozart wrote a commendatory letter for Amenda, who was on the verge of travelling to Prague together with a friend who played the guitar. There they gave a concert, and Amenda wrote details of this on the back of an undated letter he had received from Beethoven. Evidently, much time was taken for the return trip, and there is no convincing reason for doubting an arrival in Prague on 26 June. See Ludwig Nohl, 'Zur Biographie Beethoven's', *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 39 (1872), 46, 55 and 66. In Petersburg, Nohl had a meeting with descendants of Amenda, whose recollections seem trustworthy. New in Nohl's account (which must have eluded Brandenburg and Clive) was that Amenda, before coming to Vienna, had studied at the university in Bonn, where he may have heard about Beethoven's reputation. In fact, this may have incited him to seek contact with Beethoven in Vienna; their meeting may thus not have been coincidental. Also noteworthy are Nohl's remarks that Beethoven and Amenda regularly gave concerts in Vienna, and that the latter possessed a visiting card of his friend with the text 'Louis van Beethoven'.

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performed the Adagio shortly before 25 June, which seems plausible, the parting was imminent at that time, which would mean that both friends would have been in a melancholy mood. Beethoven was to lose a comrade to whom he had entrusted his deepest thoughts and feelings, and who had been, by his own admission, one of only two people in the world in whom he had fully confided.[26] Amenda, on his part, was obliged to take leave from someone whom 'I would have liked to devote my entire life to' ('hätte ich mein ganzes Leben widmen mögen'), as he wrote to Andreas Streicher.[27] He frequently alluded to his 'love' ('Liebe') for Beethoven and he had no compunction about addressing his friend with 'beloved one' ('Geliebter').[28] The German 'Liebenden' was not limited to standard love affairs, but involved various kinds of intimate friendship. Amenda, then, may have experienced in the sorrowful Adagio of Op. 18 No. 1 the atmosphere of apprehension and grief that he associated with his forthcoming farewell, the 'parting of two lovers'. This was esoteric: the music resonated with his personal feelings, and only he (and Beethoven) could understand the actual association. The circumstances of the moment provided 'the affective backdrop against which any emotions aroused by the music will be superimposed as phasic perturbations'.[29] There was thus a plausible cognitive-psychological explanation for Amenda's answer.[30]

Whereas this verbal commentary was determined by thoughts and feelings conditioned by expectations, Beethoven's perspective was of quite another nature, as may be inferred from his astonishing reply about extrinsic motivation: 'Well, I thought of the vault scene in *Romeo and Juliet*' ('Wohl, ich habe mir dabei die Szene im Grabgewölbe aus Romeo und Julia gedacht').[31] He intimated that his thoughts had been with the concluding scene from Shakespeare's play. Was it Beethoven's intention here to point out that with 'parting of two lovers' Amenda was close to the mark? Or did he mean to correct him? The sticking-point here, it seems, is the linguistic context of the word 'wohl', which is difficult to translate because it sounds like archaic German (in the sense of 'wohlan'). Of course, given the insecure transmission one should not be over-scrupulous about the word, but that does not alter the fact that 'good!' or 'right' are tendentious misrenderings.[32] Nor can the suggestion be accepted that Amenda's answer 'delighted Beethoven'.[33] A dictionary is of no help here, and it seems best to ignore the word altogether in translations, or to employ a neutral term.[34] While it is true that Amenda will have related his story to Wiedemann because his assessment was

26 BGA, No. 186; admittedly, no names are given.

27 KC, 7–8 (15 January 1806).

28 KC, 8; BGA, No. 51. To be sure, this had nothing to do with same-sex desire.

29 Penetrating observations concerning this can be found in Adam Ockelford, 'Relating Musical Structure and Content to Aesthetic Response: A Model and Analysis of Beethoven's Piano Sonata Op. 110', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 130/1 (2005), 74–118, particularly 91.

30 As Edward T. Cone formulated the matter in *The Composer's Voice* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), 166: 'We subconsciously ascribe to the music a content based on the correspondence between musical gestures and their patterns on the one hand, and isomorphically analagous experiences, inner and outer, on the other.' He reiterated this view in 'Schubert's Promissory Note: An Exercise in Musical Hermeneutics', *19th-Century Music* 5/3 (1982), 239.

31 The word 'dabei' seems to imply 'while composing', but because it does not resist interpretation it was left untranslated. Incidentally, Beethoven's manner of speech here was conspicuously similar to what Ries reported about the 'Eroica', that Beethoven thought of Bonaparte while composing it: 'Bei dieser Symphonie hatte er sich Buonaparte gedacht' (WR, 77).

32 'Good!' (the dubious exclamation mark included) can be found in *Thayer's Life of Beethoven*, ed. Elliot Forbes (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), 261; Philip Radcliffe, *Beethoven's String Quartets* (London: Hutchington, 1965), 24; and in Myron Schwager, 'Beethoven's Programs: What is Provable?', *The Beethoven Newsletter* (Winter 1989), 49. 'Right' can be found in Whiting, 'Beethoven Translating Shakespeare', 795.

33 Barry Cooper, *Beethoven* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 81.

34 'Wohl' was left untranslated in Richard Kramer, *Unfinished Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 173, and Lewis Lockwood, *Beethoven: The Music and the Life* (New York: Norton, 2003), 165. For another problematic translation of 'wohl' see Marie-Elisabeth Tellenbach, *Beethoven und seine "Unsterbliche Geliebte" Josephine Brunsvik* (Zurich: Atlantis, 1983), 249.

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comparable to that of Beethoven (why otherwise invoke it at all?), the inference that there existed a correlation between the 'parting of two lovers' and *Romeo and Juliet* seems tenuous at best.[35]

As already noted, jottings in the sketchbook Grasnick 2 have been found that corroborate Beethoven's utterance. Following sketches for the first movement on the final pages of Grasnick 1, Beethoven continued with those for the Adagio in Grasnick 2, a movement which, according to sketch experts, was begun by February or March 1799.[36] For present purposes it suffices to give the four verbal Shakespeare clues entered underneath the sketches: 'il prend le tombeau' (he comes to the tomb), 'desespoir' (despair), 'il se tue' (he kills himself), and 'les derniers soupirs' (the last sighs).[37] These are unequivocally predicated on *Romeo and Juliet*, for all relate to the state of frenzied despair and to the sinister mood that overhangs the closing vault scene. The 'desespoir' tags rapidly ascending demisemiquaver motives succeeded by achingly tense rests and a cadential ending (bars 102–104, Amenda version);[38] this shows at least seven reworkings in Grasnick 2. Romeo seems to kill himself at a high *sforzato* f^3 (*fortissimo* in the final version), followed by a plunge onto a C♯ two and a half octaves lower – the dynamics suddenly tuned down here to *piano* (bar 105 in the Amenda version). The 'derniers soupirs' are associated with a succession of sigh motives, reworked in the sketchbook but in the end omitted.

These clear signposts of the vault scene suggest that it was in the coda of the Adagio that Beethoven chose to reflect elements from *Romeo and Juliet*, more or less comparable with the birdsong in the Pastoral's second movement, the anthropomorphic 'sobbing' in the Marcia of the 'Eroica' and the dying breath of Coriolanus. Nothing indicates that programmatic features determined the structure of the movement, although some commentators have claimed this on the premise that the main themes designate Romeo's mental anguish and Juliet's beauty respectively.[39] References to the deep pathos of the tearjerking vault scene were restricted by Beethoven to the closing bars of the Adagio. But what may have kindled the idea to do this?

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35 A connection was also suggested in Whiting, 'Beethoven Translating Shakespeare', 821.

36 A convincing layout of the genesis of the Op. 18 quartets may be found in Richard Kramer's doctoral dissertation, 'The Sketches for Beethoven's Violin Sonatas, Opus 30: History, Transcription, Analysis', two volumes (Princeton University, 1973), volume 1, 115–137. Grasnick 1 and 2 were originally a single volume when Beethoven was using them. See *The Beethoven Sketchbooks: History, Reconstruction, Inventory*, ed. Alan Tyson and others (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985), 85. No sketches for the second movement in Grasnick 1 were found by Erna Szabo, 'Ein Skizzenbuch Beethovens aus den Jahren 1798–99: Übertragung und Untersuchung' (PhD dissertation, Universität Bonn, 1951), but Donald Tobias Greenfield identified some tentative ones on the final pages of the sketchbook in 'Sketch Studies for Three Movements of Beethoven's String Quartets, Opus 18#1 and 2' (PhD dissertation, Princeton University, 1983), 80–82. Erica Buurman found precursors for the opening theme of the movement in Landsberg 7, on pages dated mid-1798, in 'Beethoven's Compositional Approach to Multi-Movement Structures in His Instrumental Works' (PhD dissertation, University of Manchester, 2013), 70–72.

37 Wilhelm Virneisel, *Beethoven: Ein Skizzenbuch zu Streichquartetten aus Op. 18*, two volumes (Bonn: Beethovenhaus, 1974), volume 1, 46–47, and volume 2, 8–9. The final phrase is often presented in the literature as 'sou[s]pirs', but 'soupirs' was common language in Beethoven's time: see the article 'Le dernier Soupir' in the *Journal des Luxus und der Moden* 20 (1805), 334.

38 *Beethoven Werke*, series 6, volume 3, *Streichquartette 1*, ed. Paul Mies (Munich: Henle, 1962), 133–138.

39 This was first promoted by Arnold Schering in *Beethoven in neuer Deutung* (Leipzig: C. F. Kahnt, 1934), 16, and it was elaborated by Bernd Edelmann in 'Die poetische Idee des Adagio von Beethovens Quartett op. 18,1', in *Festschrift Rudolph Bockhold zum 60. Geburtstag*, ed. Norbert Dubowy and Sören Meyer-Eller (Pfaffenhofen: Ludwig, 1992), 247–267. The latter argued that the sigh motives are at the heart of the first theme, an idea endorsed by Lewis Lockwood: 'essential in the movement is the expressive conflict of these two basic musical ideas' (*The Music and the Life*, 165). Lockwood even suggested a connection between Juliet and Beethoven's piano pupil Julia Guicciardi ('Reshaping the Genre: Beethoven's Piano Sonatas from Op. 22 to Op. 28 (1799–1801)', *Israel Studies in Musicology* 6 (1996), 13), but there are no indications of a romance in 1799 – if one existed at all. Whiting rightly dismissed a 'program that governs the whole sonata structure' in 'Beethoven Translating Shakespeare', 803.

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III

Shakespeare was much in vogue in Germany by the end of the eighteenth century, including within the domain of music.[40] As has been extensively demonstrated, impulses came from translations, primarily those by Christoph Martin Wieland and Johann Joachim Eschenburg. The English poet was read, staged and discussed, and theatrical performances were frequently provided with incidental music, for which the term 'analoge Musik' was coined.[41]

Information on what Beethoven knew of Shakespeare is scarce.[42] Some contemporaries claimed that he was one of the composer's favourite poets (Louis de Trémont, an English visitor in 1825, and Anton Schindler, the latter no doubt exaggerating when he claimed that Beethoven knew his plays 'as thoroughly as his own scores').[43] This notwithstanding, the engagement remains somewhat obscure. Primary sources (letters, conversation books, *Tagebuch* (a sort of diary)) provide only a few references, certainly compared to those concerning Schiller and Goethe, or Greco-Roman authors. Indeed, it is not easy to picture Beethoven lost in admiration for Shakespeare's characteristic inner-life mysteries, double meanings, hidden agendas, concealed purposes and psychological entanglements – although he may have liked the writer's robust humour. Up to 1800 the picture of Beethoven's interest is blurred, although the 1790s saw a respectable amount of activity in Vienna with regard to Shakespeare. Emanuel Schikaneder played a successful (although popularized) *Hamlet* in his Freyhaustheater, and he also organized stagings of *Othello*, *King Lear*, *Macbeth* and *Romeo and Juliet*, sometimes graced with music.[44] On 5 March 1796 *Macbeth* proved a sensation. Schikaneder effectively brought into the limelight Shakespeare's blending of the ostensibly incommensurable, the tragic and the comic. Alternation within single scenes of the dramatic with strokes of hilarity, and, vice versa, the humorous with the moving and upsetting, was at the time compared to the style of Mozart, who in his mature works had done pretty much the same. The quick succession of whimsical contrasts was labelled 'romantic' in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, which hailed Shakespeare and Mozart as the two great romantics who had both excelled with trend-breaking masterpieces.[45] This might have triggered Beethoven's interest, certainly at a time when he was immersed in the string quartet.[46]

Another incentive to engage in Shakespeare was the publication of Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* (1796), an educational novel widely consumed by sophisticated youngsters in the late nineties. Goethe

40 Dieter Martin, 'Deutsche Shakespeare-Opern um 1800' (2005), *Goethezeitportal* www.goethezeitportal.de/db/wiss/epoche/martin_shakespeare_opern.pdf (15 May 2020).

41 For an overview see Ursula Kramer, 'Herausforderung Shakespeare: "Analoge" Musik für das Schauspiel an deutschsprachigen Bühnen zwischen 1778 und 1825', *Die Musikforschung* 55 (2002), 129–144.

42 Most, but not all, was collected in Donald MacArdle, 'Shakespeare and Beethoven', *The Musical Times* 105 (April 1964), 260–261.

43 KC, 1005, 167, and Anton Schindler, *Biographie von Ludwig van Beethoven* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1840), 266. A few years earlier, Schindler had claimed that while composing the Ninth Symphony Beethoven had 'devoted nearly all his remaining free time to Shakespeare'; see Anton Schindler, 'Etwas über Beethovens 7. Sinfonie in A dur', in *Bäuerle's Theater Zeitung* (= *Wiener allgemeine Theaterzeitung*) (5 April 1831), 5. Needless to say, this should be taken with a grain of salt.

44 Egon Komorzynski, 'Grillparzers Klavierlehrer Johann Mederitsch, genannt Gallus (1752–1835)', in *Jahrbuch der Grillparzer-Gesellschaft* series 3 volume 3 (1960), 67.

45 See *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* (4 March 1801), 392, note 2, (8 July 1801), 683, (24 March 1802), 421–425, (15 September 1802), 830, and (27 July 1803), 722. This 'romanticism' was later associated with Beethoven, whose abrupt juxtapositions and disruptions were labelled 'Bizarrerie'. In the issue of 8 June 1814 the *AMZ* commented: 'Perhaps the orginality of his [Beethoven's] most perfect compositions can only be compared with the originality of Shakespeare. In his works the most profound humour and the most tender, romantic feelings have entirely merged' ('Vielleicht ist die Originalität seiner *vollendetsten* Werke nur mit der Originalität Shakespeare's zu vergleichen. Die tiefste Humor und das zarteste, romantische Gefühl sind in denselben völlig eins geworden') (395).

46 Beethoven analysed Mozartean models and copied out Mozart's String Quartet K387; see Kramer, *Violin Sonatas*, volume 1, 455.

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suggested in this that Shakespeare could supply vital spiritual sustenance to artists, irrespective of the field in which they were active. The book was the talk of the town for a number of years, and it is inconceivable that Beethoven and Amenda disregarded it.[47] About the same time (1797), August Wilhelm Schlegel published an essay on *Romeo and Juliet* in the much discussed periodical *Die Horen*, edited by Friedrich Schiller. Schlegel also translated the play, and he included it in the first volume of his *Shakspeare's* [*sic*] *Dramatische Werke*.[48] Beethoven seems to have known this series; at least, he recommended it to Therese Malfatti in 1810.[49] The edition he had in his possession, though, was not Schlegel's but Johann Joachim Eschenburg's prose translation, published as *William Shakespear's Schauspiele* (1775–1783, revised 1798–1805). Some of the volumes were in his estate when he died, and these included *Romeo and Juliet*.[50]

As regards music, Beethoven was familiar with at least three operas informed by the story. Georg Benda's *Romeo und Julie* (1776, in German) had been performed regularly in Bonn, with Beethoven in the orchestra.[51] Daniel Steibelt's *Roméo et Juliette* (in French) was premiered in 1793 in Paris. And *Giulietta e Romeo* by Niccolò Zingarelli (1796, in Italian) was performed in Vienna from 1797 onward.[52] None of these operas, though, had a bearing on the Shakespeare jottings in Grasnick 2, and Owen Jander was mistaken when he surmised that these had been taken from Steibelt's libretto.[53] Benda's and Steibelt's librettos were only expurgated versions of Shakespeare's original, in the sense that the vault scene had been altered into a happy end.[54] Censorship forbade dramatic deaths on stage, particularly if these involved suicides, and ever since 1777 the ending of *Romeo and Juliet* had been adjusted in such a way that, for the sake of 'public morality', it did not end with death.[55] A Viennese theatrical adaptation by Franz Heufeld in 1802, for

47 On 17 December 1796 *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* was offered for sale by bookseller Carl Schaumburg und Compagnie in Vienna (*Wiener Zeitung*, page 3630). On 1 September 1802 the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* (785–787) stressed its significance for a good understanding of both Shakespeare and Shakespeare-related music.

48 August Wilhelm Schlegel, 'Ueber Shakspeares Romeo und Julia', *Die Horen* (1797), Stück 6, 18–48; Schlegel, *Shakspeare's Dramatische Werke*, volume 1 (Berlin: Johann Friedrich Unger, 1797). In the issue dated 4 January 1817 the *Zeitung für die elegante Welt* discussed a theatrical adaptation of Schlegel's text by Josef Schreyvogel (127–128).

49 BGA, No. 442.

50 In his *Nachlass* were four volumes: Nos 9 (1779, with *Romeo and Juliet*), 10 (1778), 3 (1783) and 4 (1804). They were embezzled by Anton Schindler; see Eveline Bartlitz, *Die Beethoven-Sammlung in der Musikabteilung der Deutschen Staatsbibliothek* (Berlin: Deutsche Staatsbibliothek, 1970), 210–211. A fifth Shakespeare item (from 1825), comprising *Der Sturm* (*The Tempest*) (Bartlitz, *Beethoven-Sammlung*, 216–217), may have been smuggled in by Schindler in order to substantiate claims about the Piano Sonatas Opp. 31 No. 2 and 57. On Beethoven's underlining and markings in *Romeo and Juliet* see Karl-Heinz Köhler, 'Beethovens literarische Kontakte: Ein Beitrag zum Weltbild des Komponisten', in *Bericht über den internationalen Beethoven-Kongress, 10.–12. Dezember 1970 in Berlin*, ed. Heinz Alfred Brockhaus and Konrad Niemann (Berlin: Verlag neue Musik Berlin, 1971), 487. For details about Eschenburg's translation see Whiting, 'Beethoven Translating Shakespeare', 810–812.

51 Rudolf Pečman, 'Ludwig van Beethoven und Jiří Antonín Benda', in *Bericht über den internationalen Beethoven-Kongress*, ed. Brockhaus and Niemann, 454. Whiting ('Beethoven Translating Shakespeare', 815) provides a review from the *Gazette de Bonn* (10 November 1789).

52 See the review of the premiere, on 7 April 1797, of the 'grosse Opera seria in drey Aufzügen, betitelt: Romeo e Giulie' (*Wiener Zeitung*, 12 April 1797). For a later, more extended review see *Zeitung für die elegante Welt* (2 June 1804), 528. It was still being staged in 1817; see *Zeitschrift für die elegante Welt* (12 August 1817), 1264. In 1810 Beethoven accompanied the singer Antonie Adamberger in a 'well-known' recitative and rondo, 'Ombra adorata aspetta', from this opera (see KC, 3).

53 Owen Jander, 'Genius in the Arena of Charlatanry', in *Musica franca: Essays in Honor of Franc D'Accone*, ed. Irene Alm and others (Stuyvesant: Pendragon, 1997), 593, note 17.

54 On the ending of Zingarelli's libretto see Whiting, 'Beethoven Translating Shakespeare', 817–821.

55 See Norbert Bachleitner, *Die literarische Zensur in Österreich von 1751 bis 1848* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2017), 251: 'Practically all Shakespeare plays had to be trimmed in order to be viable for performance on an Austrian stage' ('Fast alle Stücke Shakespeares mussten mit der Schere bearbeitet werden, wenn man sie auf einer österreichischen

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example, ended cheerfully.[56] In 1816, when the original scene was reinstated in an adaptation by Josef Schreyvogel, there were still theatre-goers 'for whom the accumulation of tragic effects in the final act were too heavy' ('denen die Accumulation der tragischen Effecte im letzten Aufzuge zu heftig ward').[57] Since Beethoven's Grasnick 2 entries relate exclusively to Romeo's impending doom as related in the vault scene, his attendence at an operatic or theatrical performance does not account for their employment.

Nor is it a viable explanatory strategy to invoke Beethoven's *reading* of the play. His jottings were in French, and it is hardly conceivable that he lavished time on delving into an edition in this language. A German version would have been difficult enough for him, and, as mentioned, his personal copy was the Eschenburg edition (though theoretically he may have acquired this after 1799).[58] It has been sufficiently demonstrated that Beethoven's proficiency in French was limited. The dictionary he possessed was *Nouvelle Grammaire à l'usage des Dames et des autres personnes qui ne savent pas de Latin* (Berlin: Haude und Spener, 1782) – which was of a very basic level.[59] It is not in itself strange to observe that he sometimes ruminated in French in his sketchbooks: he grew up in a frenchified region, and French words may have lodged themselves in his mind. In Grasnick 2, after a passage in the minor mode, he noted 'et après cela le majeur' (and following that, the major mode),[60] and on the back page of a manuscript containing a copy of Mozart's String Quartet K387 (from *c*1800) he jotted, 'Je ferais mettre en partie tous mon qu[ar]tett tri[o]s etc.'. (I want to put into full score all my quartets, trios etc.)[61] If this was a soliloquy, French must have been ingrained in his mind.

The Shakespeare entries, however, are of quite another kind. These cannot have resulted from mere 'thinking in French'. They were not meant to be set to music, nor were they of Beethoven's invention, for they seem to describe events. What comes closest here are stage directions that derived from some third party.

IV

In Vienna, French was common in aristocratic circles and in upwardly aspiring middle-class surroundings. The language was important for upholding class distinction and status, and from about 1798 it gradually permeated the *Wiener Zeitung*. A person's proficiency in this field reflected his or her sophistication or

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Bühne aufführen wollte'). No adverse effects on public morality were allowed, and stories about brigands, robbers, pirates, licentious adventurers or secret associations were forbidden, as well as glorifications of the terms 'freedom' and 'equality'. Nor were assaults on religion, the church or the clergy allowed (470–477).

56 Carl Glossy, 'Zur Geschichte der Theater Wiens I', *Jahrbuch der Grillparzer-Gesellschaft* 25 (1915), 278.

57 *Josef Schreyvogels Tagebücher*, ed. Carl Glossy, two volumes (Berlin: Verlag der Gesellschaft für Theatergeschichte, 1903), volume 2, 456–457.

58 On 3 December 1794 the Eschenburg edition was offered for sale in the *Wiener Zeitung* (page 3465): 'Shakespears (Wilhelm) Schauspiele, von J. J. Eschenburg a[us] d[em] Englisch[en] übersetzt, 20 Bände, 8. Mannheim 1780, ganz neu braun steif rückwärts mit Titel gebund[en] 12 fl'. On 28 April 1798 (*Wiener Zeitung*, page 1,288) the Dollischen Buchhandlung offered a 'Mannheim 1783' edition consisting of twenty-two volumes. Shortly afterwards the firm announced a further new edition, of which the first volume was offered on 4 July 1798 (*Wiener Zeitung*, page 2,003).

59 Beate Angelika Kraus, 'Beethoven liest international', in *Beethoven liest*, ed. Bernhard R. Appel and Julia Ronge (Bonn: Beethoven-Haus, 2016), 92–99.

60 This is shown in facsimile in Virneisel, *Beethoven: Ein Skizzenbuch*, volume 2, 8. Similarly, sketches for the *Prometheus* ballet (1800–1801) have the expressions 'les trois graces', 'les enfans pleurent' and 'Promethe mort'; see Karl Lothar Mikulicz, *Ein Notierungsbuch von Beethoven* (Hildesheim: Olms, 1972), 65–67, 77, 83, 99, 101 and others, and the evaluation of these entries by Egon Voss in 'Schwierigkeiten im Umgang mit dem Ballett 'Die Geschöpfe des Prometheus' von Salvatore Viganò und Ludwig van Beethoven', *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft* 53/1 (1996), 29–30.

61 Richard Kramer, '"Das Organische der Fuge": On the Autograph of Beethoven's String Quartet in F major, Opus 59, No. 1', in *The String Quartets of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven*, ed. Christoph Wolff (Cambridge, MA: Isham Library, 1980), 231.

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Bildung.[62] To remain close to Beethoven, the language was, for instance, used by the Brunsvik sisters Therese and Josephine, whom Beethoven first met in May 1799. These young ladies were of German-Hungarian birth, but they corresponded in a high-society French – except when a word or an expression was not immediately within their grasp.[63] Around 1800 French was often employed for dedications and titles.[64] Beethoven contributed to the convention with his *Pathétique* Sonata, Op. 13 (1799). Moreover, he frenchified his name to 'Louis' on his visiting card.[65]

As is well known, Beethoven often frequented high-society salons. His economic situation depended largely on performing, improvising, commissions from well-to-do houses and the teaching of young aristocratic ladies. From his early Vienna years on, he was on a good footing with the households of Lichnowsky, Browne, Lobkowitz, Rasumovsky, Esterházy, Fries and Swieten. If it is assumed for a moment that the French Shakespeare entries in Grasnick 2 were in any way related to these venues or surroundings, the question arises as to what role Shakespeare played in these upper echelons of society. A possible answer brings into focus a phenomenon that has been largely disregarded at least in the Beethoven literature, but that may nevertheless have had a substantial impact biographically and musically: that of Viennese *Haustheater* (in the plural). These involved private or semi-public performances of scenes from classical theatre, in the form of declamations, dialogues, mime or ordinary theatrical performance, staged for a select group of invitees with relatively modest props and brightened up with 'tableaux' and music. A tableau could be a painting or an assembly of 'living statues' ('lebendige Bilder').[66] Productions of this kind enjoyed a considerable vogue in Vienna, as may be inferred from a panoply of sources.

Most popular were *Hauskomödien*, comic plays. Organizers of these were under police surveillance, for government authorities suspected that the frivolity could undermine public morals. As early as 1793 the Minister of Police, Count Pergen, pronounced an official ban, which was renewed by Emperor Franz personally via directives dated 1 January 1798 and 19 October 1801.[67] This had little effect, though, for *Haustheater* became ever more popular, so much so that they threatened to impair the revenues of official public theatres (the Theater an der Wien, Burgtheater and Kärntnertortheater, and the suburban Josephstadt and Leopoldstadt theatres).[68] This induced the directory of the two court theatres to file a complaint with the *Polizeioberdirektion*, the head of police, urging the authorities to impose an outright ban on all private

62 See the report by Karl Gottlieb Freudenberg in KC, 277, who noted that command of French was perceived as a *Bildunsgradmesser* (yardstick of sophistication).

63 Some of their letters can be found in Rita Steblin, '"A dear, enchanting girl who loves me and whom I love": New Facts about Beethoven's Beloved Piano Pupil Julie Guicciardi', *Bonner Beethoven-Studien* (2010), 89–152, and Steblin, 'Franz Xaver Kleinheinz, "A very talented pianist who measures up to Beethoven": New Documents from the Brunsvik Family', *Bonner Beethoven-Studien* (2016), 107–174. That both Brunsvik sisters read French literature can be inferred from BGA, No. 219.

64 After a while, the use of French elicited discontent. When Ferdinand Ries dedicated his Piano Sonatas Op. 1 to Beethoven in 1806, the reviewer in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* was displeased by the 'worn-out and by now shallow French expressions, [which are] too often used for even trite productions' ('abgebrauchter, u. durch öftern Gebrauch beym Gleichgüligsten, trivial gewordener, französischer Redensarten'); *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* (4 March 1807), 362–365.

65 He was already using 'Louis' in 1795; see Zoltan Falvy, 'Beethovens Beziehungen zu Ungarn: Zur Auffindung von zwei unbekannten Briefen des Meisters', *Musica* 9 (1956), 125. 'Louis' was also used by Therese Brunsvik during their meetings in 1799; see Marie Lipsius ('La Mara'), *Beethovens Unsterbliche Geliebte: Das Geheimnis der Gräfin Brunsvik und ihre Memoiren* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1909), 64. See also note 25.

66 For a survey of the various manifestations of *Haustheater* see Birgit Joos, *Lebende Bilder: Körperliche Nachahmung von Kunstwerken in der Goethezeit* (Berlin: Reimer, 1999).

67 Carl Glossy, 'Zur Geschichte I', 1–2 and 272–273. See also Bachleitner, *Die literarische Zensur*, 244.

68 According to Tia DeNora (*Beethoven and the Construction of Genius: Musical Politics in Vienna, 1792–1803* (Berkeley: University of Califonria Press, 1995), 53), something similar happened with musical concerts: 'the lively salon life of the 1790s did hinder the growth of a public musical life in Vienna'.

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productions (1811). The police were reluctant to carry this out, but took action when unlawful competition threatened:

> Die Polizeioberdirektion kann sich . . . aktenmässig ausweisen, dass sie alle Bittsteller, die um die Erlaubnis, Privattheater geben zu dürfen, eingekommen sind, abgewiesen und dort, wo Parteien solche eigenmächtig unternahmen, sogleich eingestellt habe, sobald sie davon Kenntnis erhielt, und man muss bemerken, dass die Deklamation oder Tableaux, welche dermalen die modernen häuslichen Unterhaltungen der Jugend sind, nicht für theatralische Unterhaltungen ansehen und einstellen zu müssen glaubt, weil man dadurch zu sehr das Privatvergnügen stören, und das Publikum sich durch eine derlei Beschränkung, besonders bei den bestehenden hohen Theaterpreisen, zu sehr beschwert finden würde.[69]

> The head of police . . . has records proving that it has denied all requests for private performances and that it has immediately intervened where they were organized without authority. It should further be kept in mind that declamations or tableaux, which nowadays constitute a trendy domestic pastime for young people, are not regarded by the police as genuine theatrical performances requiring to be terminated, since this would be too much of an intrusion into private enjoyment and the public would sense that as too harsh a restriction, in particular in view of current theatre entrance fees.

Private theatrical performances continued to flourish, so much so that a few years later, at the time of the Congress of Vienna (1814), new complaints were filed. It was now decided by the police that all locations were to be secretly ('im stillen') observed and participants individually screened, 'in particular, those performing at the house of Baron Spielmann' ('insbesondere sei über das Haustheater des Barons Spielmann und die mitwirkenden Dilettanten stille Erhebung zu machen').[70]

Ignaz von Spielmann's mansion in the Bäckerstrasse was thus under surveillance. But there were many more locations where private performances could be enjoyed. These were organized by such figures as the Countesses Hatzfield and Wrbna,[71] by Franz Anton Schrämbl at his house at Mariahilf, by Karl Zichy-Vásonykeö at the Auersperg Palace, by Joseph Anton Paradis at the Schottenhof and by Franz Sales von Greiner, father of the writer Caroline Pichler-von Greiner.[72] Staying a bit closer to Beethoven, there were productions at the dwelling of Count Joseph Deym, who married Josephine Brunsvik on 29 July 1799; Beethoven gave her piano lessons and was a 'regular guest' there twice a week. Josephine's sister, Therese, recalled that at Deym's residence 'now and again tableaux were given' ('Man gab zuweilen Tableaux').[73] Beethoven was also a guest at the villa of the banker Moritz von Fries, to whom he dedicated several works (the violin sonatas Opp. 23 and 24 and the String Quintet Op. 29); it was at Fries's mansion on the Josephplatz that Beethoven gained his famous triumph over Daniel Steibelt during the latter's visit to Vienna in 1800. Fries had organized *Haustheater* over a long period of time, from 1795 at the latest, for in the *Wiener Theater Almanach* from that year, edited by Josef von Sonnleithner, his choice of plays was lauded. The *Almanach* also mentioned that at Fries's villa these stagings were in French, and that they were frequently accompanied with music: 'One gives comical plays and little operas in French, and they

69 Glossy, 'Zur Geschichte I', 143. On *Haustheater* productions outside Vienna see Glossy, 'Zur Geschichte I', 304. For a debate about the pros and cons of *Haustheater* see W. Hebenstreit, 'Sind Privat- oder Liebhaber-Bühnen zu dulden?', in *Wiener-Moden-Zeitung und Zeitschrift für Kunst, schöne Literatur und Theater* (14 and 18 September 1816), 473–478 and 481–486.

70 Glossy, 'Zur Geschichte I', 169–170.

71 *Jahrbuch der Tonkunst von Wien und Prag* (Prague: Im von SchönfeldischenVerlag, 1796), 25; Rita Steblin, *Beethoven in the Diaries of Johann Nepomuk Chotek* (Bonn: Beethoven-Haus, 2013), 173.

72 See Edith Koll, 'Beitrag zur Geschichte der Wiener Haustheater im 18. Jahrhundert', in *Neue Forschungsergebnisse aus der Wiener Stadt- und Landesbibliothek*, ed. Franz Patzer (Vienna: Jugend & Volk, 1979), 180.

73 KC, 161.

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are performed excellently. On the stage curtain one finds the modest motto *Gayeté et Indulgence*' ('Man giebt Französische Lustspiele und Operetten, welche vortrefflich aufgeführt werden. Auf der Courtine sieht man das bescheidene Motto: *Gayeté et Indulgence*').[74] The reputation of the Fries *Haustheater* spread rapidly, and culture-minded visitors to Vienna rarely missed the opportunity to attend them. On 17 March 1809 Johann Friedrich Reichardt recorded:

> Bei dem Grafen von Friese habe ich gestern einen ganzen erfreulichen Tage genossen. Nachdem ich den Mittag wie gewöhnlich *en famille* da zugebracht, versammelte sich zum Abend eine grosse ansehnliche gemischte Gesellschaft, um die dort sehr wohl veranstalteten und zubereiteten Attitüden der Madame Händel zu sehen, die wir auch letzt, bei einer ähnlichen Veranstaltung auf dem Haustheater des Fürsten Lobkowitz bewunderten, wo sehr viel grosse und schöne Welt zu der interessanten Kunsttalent versammelt war, und Madame Händel nach ihren schönen mannichfachen Attitüden und Tableaus, uns einige Monologe aus Schillerschen Trauerspielen vortrefflich deklamirte.[75]
>
> Yesterday I spent a whole happy day with Count Fries. After having spent the afternoon as usual *en famille*, a large mixed party assembled in the evening to witness the well-organized performance of Madame Händel, whom we have also admired recently at a comparable *Haustheater* event at Prince Lobkowitz's, where many important people and high society joined the remarkable creative talents, and Madame Händel, following her play-acting and tableaux, gave outstanding declamations for us from tragedies by Schiller.

This account has quite a bit to offer. It certifies that there were acts and declamations on private stages with tableaux; the repertory comprised classical works; the audience consisted of Vienna's high society ('schöne Welt'); and the happenings were organized not only by Fries but also by Lobkowitz (who, it may be recalled, was Amenda's employer). Reichardt's report is consistent with a review that had appeared somewhat earlier in the *Journal des Luxus und der Moden*, about tableaux given at the palaces of Lichtenstein, Lobkowitz and Count Zamoiský, where 'French theatre plays' had been performed 'by dilettants of the nobility'. One of these dilettants was Lobkowitz himself, who had a part in scenes from the opera *Camilla*.[76]

Scenery and props for these domestic productions incorporated 'tableaux', which were literally painted screens that captured salient moments of the spectacle that was presented on stage. These could also consist of silent and frozen actors and actresses ('lebendige Bilder') or dancers. A ballet was to all intents and purposes a 'series of tableaux'.[77] Over time, the designations *Tableaux* and *Haustheater* became interchangeable, both referring to a loose combination of painting, mime, declamation, graphic arts, music and dance.[78] Tableaux were especially appreciated by the younger generation, as the police report of 1811 specified. They were regarded as beneficial to their education and 'extremely advantageous for the improvement of presentational skills' ('für die Jugend, zur Bildung des Vortrages, äusserst nützlich').[79] A salon's respectability

74 *Wiener Theater Almanach für das Jahr 1795* (Vienna: Camesina, 1795), 8.

75 Johann Friedrich Reichardt, *Vertraute Briefe geschrieben auf einer Reise nach Wien und den Oesterreichischen Staaten zu Ende des Jahres 1808 und zu Anfang 1809*, two volumes (Amsterdam: Kunst- und Industrie-Comptoir, 1810), volume 2, 41. For more on the tableaux of Madame Händel see 'Ueber die mimischen Darstellungen der Madam Hendel in Leipzig', in *Zeitschrift für die elegante Welt* (1810), 329–333 and 353–355.

76 *Journal des Luxus und der Moden* 23 (1808), 450. It is also consistent with French *Haustheater* performances organized by Ludwig Starhemberg in London, in 1798–1799 for Austrian guests (one of whom was Ferdinand Waldstein); see Josef Heer, 'Der Graf von Waldstein und sein Verhältnis zu Beethoven' (PhD dissertation, Rheinische Friedrich Wilhelm Universität Bonn, *c*1933), 22.

77 Carl Glossy, 'Zur Geschichte der Theater Wiens II (1821 bis 1830)', *Jahrbuch der Grillparzer-Gesellschaft* (1920), 80.

78 Over the years, 'tableau' was also used to denote a fully fledged theatrical play; see, for instance, *Der Sammler* 12 (1820), 16.

79 Glossy, 'Zur Geschichte I', 142.

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was measured by the degree of care lavished on the organization of a tableau, and even an element of competitiveness crept in: 'Much loved, both at court and by the high nobility, were the tableaux, which reflected the vitality with which the hostess was able to outstrip other distinguished parties' ('Sehr beliebt waren, wie bei Hofe und beim Hochadel, die lebenden Bilder, und es entspricht dem Wesen der Hauswirtin, dass sie die Veranstaltungen der ersten Gesellschaften zu überbieten hatte').[80]

The Beethoven literature has not had much to say about *Haustheater*.[81] Sparing references to it are buried in citations or recollections by contemporaries, such as the one by Therese Brunsvik mentioned above. This would imply that such performances were of limited concern to Beethoven, but given their immense popularity it is inconceivable that he was ignorant of the practices in the salons he visited so frequently – the more so because it was not seldom that music was involved. It may be expected that once in a while he was in the audience, and he may even have participated in productions. Owing to a lack of documentation, frustratingly little is known about this: *Haustheater* hardly left theatre bills, public announcements, reviews or financial settlements in the form of invoices or receipts. All that survived were occasional references by participants.

Beethoven's knowledge of, and perhaps involvement in, tableaux organized in the official theatres is somewhat better documented. On 12 February 1812, for example, when Carl Czerny performed the Fifth Piano Concerto in the Kärtnertortheater, there were three 'lebende Bilder' on stage.[82] Shortly after, on 29 March 1812, the same theatre presented a tableau of Shakespeare's *Coriolanus*, in front of which declamations were held taken from the play, and this was spiced up with a performance of Beethoven's *Coriolan* Overture.[83] On 23 February 1814 the music for *Leonore Prohaska* was also given in front of a tableau, with declamation by the actress Antonie Adamberger of a poem written by Caroline Pichler.[84] In November of that year, tableaux ('Gemählde mit lebenden Figuren') combined with operatic scenes from a comic play, in French, were performed in the Redoutensaal.[85] In 1815 *Der Sammler* reviewed a concert

80 Ludwig Böck, 'Die Gesellschaft', in *Ein Wiener Beethoven Buch*, ed. Alfred Orel (Vienna: Gerlach und Wiedling, *c*1921), 50–51.

81 The phenomenon of the tableau was briefly discussed by Richard Will in *The Characteristic Symphony in the Age of Haydn and Beethoven* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 52, where it was noted that 'later eigtheenth- and early nineteenth-century tableaux vivants and "attitudes" sought . . . to suggest the action of an entire (usually classical) story by representing an evocative moment, sometimes with music'. The phenomenon was traced back by him to Denis Diderot in mid-eighteenth-century France. Nancy November argues that a tableau consisted of 'simple plots . . . in which action should take second place to a more static and expansive working out of the characters' psychological depths': 'Instrumental Arias or Sonic Tableaux: "Voice" in Haydn's String Quartets Opp. 9 and 17', *Music & Letters* 89/3 (2008), 351.

82 Johann Nepomuk Chotek recorded the contents of this 'Concert und 3 Tableaux'; see Steblin, *Chotek*, 170–172. The discerning Max Unger raised awareness of this event in 'Nova Beethoveniana', *Die Musik* (1912/1913), 216.

83 Steblin, *Chotek*, 179–180. See also the magazine *Thalia: Ein Abendblatt, den Freunden der dramatischen Musen geweiht* (11 April 1812), 119–120: 'The concert was opened with the well-known overture Coriolan by Mr van Beethoven. This was followed by the tableau: Coriolan after Shakespeare by Hamilton, arranged by Mr. Tremel' ('Den Anfang machte die bekannte Ouvertüre aus Coriolan, von Hern. van Beethoven. Darauf folgte das Gemählde: Coriolan, nach Shakespeare von Hamilton, angeordnet von Hrn. Tremel'). It has never been ascertained what motivated Beethoven to compose his *Coriolan* overture (in 1807), and no particulars about a commission or payment have survived. Collin's play was revived on 24 April 1807 (it had been premiered as early as 24 November 1802 with music from Mozart's *Idomeneo*), but by then the overture had already been performed at Lobkowitz's (and evidently as well at Lichnowsky's; see *Morgenblatt für gebildete Stände* (8 April 1807), 336). Irrespective of Beethoven's ultimate wording, 'composed for the tragedy of Collin' (BGA, Nos 277 and 278; 26 April 1807), it is possible that the original incentive was a *Haustheater* about the Roman general organized by Lobkowitz.

84 Matthew Head, 'Beethoven Heroine: A Female Allegory of Music and Authorship in *Egmont*', *19th-Century Music* 30/2 (2006), 109.

85 *Journal für Literatur, Kunst, Luxus und Mode* 20 (1815), 38–43. One of the noblemen taking part in this production was Ferdinand Waldstein.

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with seven tableaux, all illustrated with music.[86] In March 1816 the Kärtnerthortheater stage presented three 'mimetic performances, together with tableaux' ('mimische Vorstellungen, nebst Tableaux') with music by Gyrowetz,[87] and in May of that year, twelve 'mimetic-pictorial representations of various sentiments' ('mimisch-plastische Darstellungen verschiedener Gemüthsbewegungen') were performed, all supported by music.[88] In February 1820 a concert was organized that consisted of 'Tonstücke', 'Poesien' and 'Tableaux' (music, poetry and tableaux).[89] Needless to say, the genre also flourished outside Vienna. In Dresden, in April 1817, a company of singers, instrumentalists, actors and declamators participated at a 'Deklamatorium' featuring a Madame Schirmer.[90] The tableau (a scene from Goethe's *Tasso*) was opened with Beethoven's overture *Die Geschöpfe des Prometheus*.

These examples of public productions very probably reflect to some degree the tableaux undertaken privately, and there can be little doubt that music played a role in those as well – although it is likely that more modest ensembles would have been employed.[91] One obvious choice would be the string quartet, which was the most cherished instrumental combination in aristocratic surroundings. Indeed, in 1816 the salon of Clam-Gallas in Prague utilized 'splendid quartet music' ('eine vortreffliche Quartett-musik') as *Zwischenaktmusik* for summoning up feelings in the listener during a production of a tableau of Schiller's *Maria Stuart*.[92] Combing through contemporary magazines and journals may reveal information about comparable initiatives.

V

If it was customary in upper-class circles to organize private theatrical performances of classical plays, in French, this begs the question whether perhaps Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, or at least its dramatic final scene, formed part of the repertory. By a stroke of good luck, information has survived about the shape and the set-up of one particular *Haustheater* production, which may cast light on the issue. It was arranged by the above-mentioned Franz Sales von Greiner, who kept a 'second-society salon'.[93] Details of what he organized were recorded by his daughter, Caroline Pichler, whose lively memoirs about Vienna's cultural life from around the turn of the century were published posthumously in 1844.[94]

Caroline's parents were in the habit of hosting the culture-minded Viennese, including writers, musicians, philosophers, playwrights, painters, poets and actors. *Haustheater* performances were part of their carefully devised programmes aimed at entertaining these guests, in a variety of pursuits. Caroline specified customs and routine, relating what the visitors of the salon could expect. In a paragraph in her memoirs dealing with 1791 she described the costly tableaux that were ordered by her parents, as well as the costumes (such as masks, helmets and spears for historical plays), the props and the techniques used for lighting.[95] About the repertory she noted that it was not so much complete plays that were performed, but rather selected

86 *Der Sammler* 7 (1815), 80.

87 *Schreyvogels Tagebücher*, ed. Glossy, volume 2, 442.

88 *Der Sammler* 8 (1816), 220; *Schreyvogels Tagebücher*, ed. Glossy, volume 2, 443–444.

89 *Der Sammler* 12 (1820), 91.

90 *Zeitschrift für die elegante Welt* (10 April 1817), 566–568.

91 Franz Schubert's contribution to private *Haustheater* was documented by Otto Biba; see 'Schubert's Position in Viennese Musical Life', *19th-Century Music* 3/2 (1979), 112.

92 *Der Sammler* 8 (1816), 192.

93 The term, designating 'middle-class', is taken from DeNora, *Construction of Genius*, 167.

94 Caroline Pichler, *Denkwürdigkeiten aus meinem Leben*, two volumes (Munich: Müller, 1914). In the *Jahrbuch der Tonkunst von Wien und Prag*, 19, young Caroline was adduced as 'one of the most prominent female pianists of Vienna' ('Sie ist eine der ersten Klavierspielerinnen Wiens'). She had personal contact with Mozart, Haydn, Paisiello, Cherubini and Schubert, and heard Beethoven play at concerts (but never met him).

95 Pichler, *Denkwürdigkeiten*, volume 1, 150–151. Offered for sale in the *Wiener Zeitung* of 30 October 1802 (page 3,899) was 'a complete set of *Haustheater* props and all that belongs to it, still very new' ('eine ganze Haustheater-Einrichtung, mit allen Zugehörungen, noch ganz neu').

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dramatic scenes from them, those liable to capture the imagination of the audience.[96] She singled out one example that had made an unforgettable impression on her as a young girl, so much so that she could still envisage its particulars late in life:

> Besonders erinnere ich mich einer sehr gelungene Vorstellung: Julie im Sarge im verfinsterten Grabgewölbe, die in dem Augenblicke erwacht, wo die Türe sich öffnet, Männer mit Fackeln über Stufen herabsteigen und sie und den toten Romeo finden.[97]
>
> If anything, I remember one performance that was very successful: Juliet in the tomb in a semi-darkened vault, awakening at the very moment when the door opens and men with torches descend the stairs, finding her there, together with the departed Romeo.

This reveals that the final scene from Shakespeare's fifth act, which was banned from public theatres by the authorities, was featured privately at Greiner's salon. It was evidently a sort of forbidden fruit. One can imagine the audience's excitement about Romeo having taken poison in despair about his beloved's assumed death, whereafter Juliet, awakened, decides to join him by stabbing herself. This was nowhere to be witnessed. Caroline Pichler's enthusiasm for the gripping drama, then, would never wane. Following in the footsteps of her parents, she programmed the very scene herself when she organized *Haustheater* in her own salon in the Alservorstadt. About a performance in 1817 she recollected:

> Nie werde ich vergessen, wie sie die Julie in "Romeo und Julie" spielte, besonders die Szene, in der sie den Schlaftrunk nehmen soll, und wo die innerste Natur sich vor dem Gedanken des Giftes und Todes entsetzt.[98]
>
> I will never forget how she [an actress] played Juliet in 'Romeo and Juliet', particularly the scene in which she must take the sleeping potion, and when her inner being was shivering at the thought of poison and death.

It would be reasonable to conjecture that such undertakings were not restricted to the Pichler salon. In view of its magnetic appeal, Pichler's dearest lady friends Fanny Arnstein, Cäcilia Eskeles, Eleonore Flies and Elisabeth Matt would no doubt have taken the scene on board as well.[99] Sparse information exists about the salons of Deym, Fries, Lobkowitz and others frequented by Beethoven, but one might not be far wrong in assuming that *Romeo and Juliet*'s popularity extended in these directions as well, the more so since every one of its productions would have been a challenging project for stage designers and tableau painters: already in the case of Steibelt's *Romeo und Julie*, in 1793, a reviewer had singled out the admirable effect of the 'beautiful decorations, particularly of the burial scene of Juliet in the third act' ('schöne Dekorationen, zumal das Grabmal der Julie im dritten Akt').[100] The balcony and vault scenes were established topoi in the visual arts.

To sum up, the following facts present themselves. Amenda stayed in Vienna from late spring 1798 to summer 1799, a period that coincided with the gestation of Beethoven's quartets Op. 18 Nos 3, 1 and 2 – in that order. He was employed by Prince Lobkowitz, who had commissioned these works. Both friends were regular guests in aristocratic salons, where they gave concerts. Amenda also played first violin in a string quartet, and he was particularly famed for his renderings of Adagios.[101] When he left Vienna, in late June 1799, he received a copy of the second quartet (now Op. 18 No. 1) with Beethoven's parting remark that it was 'a

96 In France, the ideal tableau consisted of an 'easily comprehended series of distinctive scenes': Will, *Characteristic Symphony*, 52.

97 Pichler, *Denkwürdigkeiten*, volume 1, 151.

98 Pichler, *Denkwürdigkeiten*, volume 2, 146.

99 Pichler, *Denkwürdigkeiten*, volume 1, xiii–xiv.

100 *Berlinische musikalische Zeitung* (1793), 151.

101 KC, 10.

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small token of our friendship; whenever you play it, think of the days we spent together' ('ein kleines Denckmal unserer Freundschaft, so oft du dir es vorspielst, erinnere dich unserer durchlebten Tage').[102] This work included an expressive Adagio, composed in early 1799, that involved allusions to Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* – as borne out by jottings in French in a sketchbook and by Amenda's later recollections. The palace of Lobkowitz was the venue of *Haustheater*, private or semi-public stagings in French of classical plays. By a fortuitous coincidence an eyewitness report of such a Shakespeare tableau has survived: Caroline Pichler gave testimony that the vault scene was for her one of the absolute highlights of the genre.

Does this constellation of facts warrant the assumption that Beethoven's entries in Grasnick 2 were precipitated by his attendance of a *Haustheater* performance of Shakespeare's scene? It is true that evidence is not conclusive, but the cumulative weight of clues pointing in that direction makes it a possibility too strong to be ignored. If some time in early 1799 Beethoven witnessed a tableau in an aristocratic surrounding (probably not at Pichler's, for Caroline would have proudly mentioned it),[103] this occasion may have been the key factor in the emergence of the coda of the Adagio affettuoso, and it would make logical sense of his question posed to Amenda, 'what thoughts had come to his mind': Beethoven was possibly asking whether his friend recognized elements of the tableau they had enjoyed some time earlier, in the hope – perhaps also in the expectation – of a response that acknowledged their shared experience. It is tempting to go even a step further, by imagining the scenario that the Adagio was specifically composed for a *Haustheater* production, which would solve the mystery conclusively and persuasively. No facts can be advanced for substantiating such a scenario, but the possibility should not be fully ruled out. After all, string-quartet music was destined to be performed in private surroundings, and, as adumbrated above, it was sometimes employed for tableaux. As a contributing factor, it can be added that Lobkowitz maintained his own ensemble and was thus well equipped should he want to spice up theatrical stagings.[104] But, of course, Beethoven may also have played his Adagio on the piano, as he did for Amenda.

Then again, Grasnick 2 gives no hint of a separate gestation for the Adagio. Sketches addressing it were entered after Beethoven had finished the exposition of the first movement, which was, in the words of Donald Greenfield, 'an appropriate time for him to relax his concentration and think ahead briefly to the rest of the quartet'.[105] The sketches occupy pages 4 to 20 and are interspersed with those for other

102 *Ludwig van Beethoven: Thematisch-bibliographisches Werkverzeichnis*, ed. Kurt Dorfmüller, Norbert Gertsch, Julia Ronge, Gertraut Haberkamp and Georg Kinsky, two volumes (Munich: Henle, 2014), volume 1, 100.

103 Pichler only recollected about Beethoven that she had 'heard him play', without further detail (*Denkwürdigkeiten*, volume 2, 151). Wilhelm Virneisel was led to speculate that she met him in her salon in 1804, together with the poet Karl Streckfuss: 'Aus Beethovens Skizzenbüchern', in *Colloquium Amicorum Schmidt-Görg*, ed. Siegfried Kross and Hans Schmidt (Bonn: Beethoven-Haus, 1967), 432–433. However, this must remain conjectural.

104 Remarkably, Beethoven was openly invited to write music to Shakespeare plays some years later: 'If only the greatest of romantic composers, L. v. Beethoven, would enrich us with a musical Shakespeare gallery! . . . How would these specimens of supreme poetry be illuminated, and their effect increased, by means of introductory overtures in full-scale Shakespearian vein, and entr'actes accompanying our feelings, preparing us for what lies in store. . . . With what majestic power, for example, would a Beethoven overture offer us glimpses at the dark realm of *Macbeth*! How would his music blend into one divine wreath [the concepts of] love and grief, death and transfiguration in *Romeo and Juliet*!' ('Möchte uns doch dagegen der grösste Romantiker der Tonkunst, L. v. Beethoven, mit einer musikalischen Shakespeare-Galerie bereichern! . . . Wie erleichtert und vermehrt würde nun aber die Wirkung dieser Werke der höchsten Poesie, wenn Ouverturen, ganz in Sh'.s Geist gedacht, sie eröffneten, in Zwischen-Akten unsern Gefühlen begegneten, und für das Kommende sie vorbereiteteten. . . . Mit welcher gigantischer Kraft würde uns Beethoven z. B. in einer Ouverture zum *Macbeth* in die Tiefen des Reiches der Finsternis hinab schauen lassen! wie würde er in einer Composition zu *Romeo u. Julie* Liebe und Schmerz, Tod und Verklärung, zu einem himmlischen Kranze verschlingen!'); *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* (8 December 1813), 806. This gives pointed expression to the similarities of style perceived between Shakespeare and Beethoven at the time.

105 Greenfield, *Sketch Studies*, 216. Such a procedure may have been of a structural nature. At least, something similar has been observed about the opening movement of the Ninth Symphony: 'The composer appears to be reviewing plans for

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movements. The Shakespeare jottings are on pages 8 and 9, where Beethoven directed his concentration to the final bars of the coda. The sketches still await a line-by-line critical investigation in the manner executed by Greenfield almost half a century ago (he confined himself to the first and fourth movements of the quartet). Mysteries still surround the sketches. Those on pages 9 and 17 feature the 'sospire' motives that in the end were not used. Unclear is why Beethoven discarded them, after he had put so much effort into them as a basic conception, pivotal to what he endeavoured to convey programmatically. Uncanny sketches on page 8 reinforce the mystery, for these entail a ruminating Adagio featuring a chromatic phrase laced with cello tremolos and a sinister dialogue between violin and cello, again with tremolos (staves 3–10). Their function remains unclear, but they seem to bespeak something programmatic, and the explicitness is redolent of the 'analogous music' of the *Egmont* entr'actes.[106]

In the absence of unassailable evidence, the perspective on the Amenda anecdote advanced here is submitted to scrutiny with a degree of trepidation, for it is of a provisional nature. It may be premature to call it a game-changer, but at least the scenario allows for a fresh glimpse at the material, calling a halt to peering into the complete unkown. The phenomenon of the Vienna *Haustheater* may yield a common-sense solution for otherwise inexplicable observations.

VI

If the Adagio was indeed bound up with a *Haustheater* performance, with the proviso that this stimulated Beethoven's interpretative flights, one of the provocative corollaries is that for Beethoven the string quartet was not a sacrosanct genre immune to down-to-earth approaches. While genre assuredly determined and controlled idiom and musical language, which were tailored to expectations and performance requirements, there were evidently no boundaries with regard to 'inspiration'. What stimulated the imagination in Op. 18 No. 1 (dungeon, poison, last sighs) was essentially not very much different from features that inspired the chronologically close *Prometheus* music (chase, storm, sleep, sadness, joy, surprise, threat, anger, murder). What is more, programmatic aspects also infiltrated the symphony: on a sketch leaf roughly contemporary with Op. 18 Beethoven toyed with the idea of a 'symphony with an Adagio in which doubt is expressed' ('Sinfonie mit einem adagio worin der Zweifel ausgedrückt ist'). According to this stray entry, a preconceived 'concept' could be a starting-point for this noble genre as well.[107]

At the turn of the century, discussions about the extramusical in instrumental music were very much alive. By and large, the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* wrote pejoratively about what was called *Musikmalerei*,[108] but over time its position became somewhat more differentiated and nuanced. In 1813 the journal made an

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the symphonic whole before refocusing on the first movement exposition. Possibly a short pause in the sketching precipitated this momentary stepping back to assess wider concerns'; Jenny L. Kallick, 'A Study of the Advanced Sketches and Full Score Autograph for the First Movement of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, Opus 125' (PhD dissertation, Yale University, 1987), 45. John K. Knowles makes similar remarks about the first movement of the Seventh Symphony in 'The Sketches for the First Movement of Beethoven's Seventh Symphony' (PhD dissertation, Brandeis University, 1984), 430 and 435.

106 Ludwig Nohl found a leaf dating from 1799 with the first eight bars of the violin part of the finale of Op. 18 No. 1 (together with a lengthy sketch for the song 'Neue Liebe, neues Leben'), which includes, in a foreign hand, the cryptic inscription: 'The final section of his recent Septet as a motto for the text' ('Der Schluss von seinem letzten Septuor als Motto für den Text'). Perhaps this 'text' was a reference to a *Haustheater* performance, for which the finale of the recently composed septet was used. See Max Unger, 'Neue Liebe, neues Leben: Die Urschrift und die Geschichte eines Goethe-Beethoven-Liedes', *Zeitschrift für Musik* 103 (1936), 1062.

107 Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Aut. 28, fol. 46r; see Hans-Günther Klein, *Ludwig van Beethoven: Autographe und Abschriften Katalog* (Berlin: Merseburger, 1975), 106. For a dating of the leaf see Douglas Porter Johnson, *Beethoven's Early Sketches in the 'Fischhof Miscellany'* (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1977), 343–345.

108 See, for example, the review of *Phantasieen über die Kunst* by Ludwig Tieck, *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* (3 March 1800), 401–407.

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effort to separate autonomous ('selbstständige') instrumental works from those that pursued heteronomous strategies ('an Zwecke gebunden'), avoiding the term 'programmatic'.[109] As hinted at at the opening of this article, early nineteenth-century reception no longer accepted 'mere sound' in Beethoven, until Eduard Hanslick ruffled a few feathers in 1854. Alexander Wheelock Thayer, in an outcry against Adolf Bernhard Marx, felt challenged to make value judgments on the two categories, stressing that 'mere musical painting . . . Beethoven could and did dispatch with extreme rapidity, but works of a different order, for which he could take his own time, and which were to be the expression of the grand feelings of his own great heart, – the composition of these was no light holiday-task'.[110] Thayer was ill-disposed towards 'mere painting', which he could not identify with serious music. It was anathema to him that this was used in a string quartet, and this may explain his reluctance to discuss the Amenda anecdote in his 1872 biography, although he did mention it. Much literature has followed in Thayer's footsteps, particularly with regard to the Shakespeare connection. To single out a few examples: William Henry Hadow (1926) pursued the idea that 'it is dangerous to lay any emphasis on statements such as this. Even when they are seriously made – and Beethoven was not always serious – they convey no more than a very general hint of very limited application.'[111] Joseph Kerman (1966) contended that *Romeo and Juliet* had been little more than 'a sort of externalization or excuse'.[112] And Lewis Lockwood (2003), taking a cue from Mies, attempted to purge the hermetic, esoteric string quartet from unwanted associations as well, by claiming that Beethoven, 'not wanting to be literal, destroyed all traces of any . . . program in the finished work. . . . what evidence he left exists only by chance in the sketches, which he never expected the world to know'.[113] Tellingly, when Bathia Churgin (2008) compiled a list of 'Programmatic Works and Movements', in an effort to provide a summary of the current consensus, she plainly omitted both *Die Geschöpfe des Prometheus* and the Op. 18 No. 1 Adagio.[114]

Downplaying Beethoven's negotiations with *Romeo and Juliet* is a rearguard action. It is adopting an idealist stance and amounts to denying knowledge, intention and responsibility on Beethoven's part. Even if it were true that he wilfully 'destroyed traces' (which suggests an aggressive form of self-correction), and that he did not anticipate that posterity would study his sketches (which is a matter of contention),[115] this still does

109 *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* (11 August 1813), 526–527.

110 Alexander Wheelock Thayer, 'Review and Literary Notices' (of Marx's *Ludwig van Beethoven: Leben und Schaffen* (1859)), in *Atlantic Monthly* 6 (1860), 364–369 and 502.

111 William Henry Hadow, *Beethoven's Op. 18 Quartets* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1926), 16.

112 Kerman, *The Beethoven Quartets*, 41.

113 Lockwood, *The Music and the Life*, 165.

114 Bathia Churgin, *Transcendent Mastery: Studies in the Music of Beethoven* (New York: Pendragon, 2008), 335. Curiously, she included the 'melancholic' Op. 18 No. 6 in her list, which shows the danger of driving artificial wedges into the oeuvre for the sake of categorization. This tends to blur, for example, Beethoven's remarkable flexibility with regard to format: the WoO 74 piano variations call for the performance of a song as the theme, the Piano Sonata Op. 81a invites singing or reciting 'Le-be-wohl', and had Wegeler followed Beethoven's wishes (WR, 48), the Piano Sonata Op. 26 would now have carried a text.

115 Lockwood's assumption reminds one of Alexander Pushkin's phrase 'An artist should ruthlessly destroy his manuscipts after publication, lest they mislead academic mediocrities into thinking that it is possible to unravel mysteries of genius by studying canceled readings' (cited from Kallick, 'Ninth Symphony', 8). As for the salvation of sketches, while one reason was clearly to go back at them – as Beethoven himself articulated in 1812, 'One of the many ideas that cannot be used on the spot may be worth saving up' (Max Unger, 'From Beethoven's Workshop', *The Musical Quarterly* 24/3 (1938), 325) – many were of little practical use, and one wonders if he perhaps wanted them to become objects of systematic public scrutiny. Post-Kantian idealism dominated, and during moments of introspection Beethoven may have reflected upon the labyrinth of his own mind and on his capacity to conjure up such worlds of imagery that it made criticism resort to metaphorical excess. Already in 1809, prior to E. T. A. Hoffmann's famous text on the Fifth Symphony, the *Journal des Luxus und der Moden* had noted that Beethoven's symphonies 'are about a higher world of wonder and spirituality, which magically unfolds itself before the inner senses of the enraptured listener, confronting him with a full panoply of heterogenous imagery and sensations' ('So viel ist wohl gewiss, das in Beethoven's Sinfonien eine höhere Wunder- und Geisterwelt liegt, die sich vor dem innern Sinn des entzückten

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not explain away the main point, which is extramusical inspiration. Resistance to ascribing Beethoven's intent to the use of the programmatic in Op. 18 No. 1 has understandably made much of the lack of references in the finished work. But the argument may backfire: if he deliberately concealed inspiration, he may theoretically have done so on other occasions as well. Resistance may thus have the opposite effect: it may lead to a proliferation of interpretation, fuelling the hermeneutic industry.

It seems best to stick to the facts. If the emphatic musical effects in the quartet's Adagio were indeed spawned by poetic impulses of a *Haustheater* production of *Romeo and Juliet*, it may reasonably be assumed that this was a particular and individual case, with no fundamental repercussions for the rest of Beethoven's oeuvre. Nothing suggests any kind of pattern that stretches to other instrumental works (apart from the other individual cases mentioned above). While it is no longer a viable strategy to marginalize the Shakespeare jottings, it is at the same time hazardous to draw them into a wider hermeneutic debate by extrapolating interpretative impulses to other works on the grounds of stylistic similarities.[116] With meagre or no confirming data, an alignment of the Adagio with works of a comparable expression brings with it the danger of making claims that go beyond what evidence supports. It is true that 'We know it, so it exists for the work', but the Shakespeare connection was historically contingent and may be classified as a one-time digression from normal practice.

Zuhörers zauberisch schön entfaltet, und ihm eine Fülle der mannichfaltigsten Bilder und Empfindungen zuführt') (April 1809, 243).

116 As advocated by William Kinderman in 'Transformational Processes in Beethoven's Op. 18 Quartets', in *The String Quartets of Beethoven*, ed. William Kinderman (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006), 25.

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