

Climbing towards the Summit of Knowledge:

Heinrich Neuhaus's Interpretation of Beethoven

Hacia la cumbre del conocimiento:

Heinrich Neuhaus y su interpretación de Beethoven

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Throughout his life the Russian pianist and Professor of the Moscow Conservatory –Heinrich Neuhaus – was consumed by an insatiable thirst for knowledge. For Neuhaus the pinnacle of all knowledge was encapsulated in the music of Beethoven. According to Neuhaus this attribute made the interpretation of Beethoven's music a necessary but unattainable feat for conservatoire-level students, as well as the ultimate touchstone for a professional pianist.

This article will look at what Neuhaus understood to be defined as knowledge and how this relates to emotion. The definition derived from this discussion will provide a territory and language to explore the specific qualities of knowledge and emotion which Neuhaus identified to be the major forces at the center of Beethoven's Piano Sonata in A-flat major Opus 110, and how they affect Neuhaus's decisions as a pianist-interpreter.

A lo largo de su vida, el pianista ruso y profesor del Conservatorio de Moscú, Heinrich Neuhaus, estuvo consumido por una sed insaciable de conocimiento. Para Neuhaus, la cumbre de todo conocimiento estaba sintetizada en la música de Beethoven. Según Neuhaus este atributo hizo que la interpretación de la música de Beethoven fuese una hazaña necesaria pero inalcanzable para estudiantes de conservatorio, así como la piedra de toque final para un pianista profesional.

Este artículo analizará lo que Neuhaus entendía como definición de conocimiento y cómo esto se relaciona con la emoción. La definición que deriva de esta discusión proporcionará un territorio y un lenguaje para explorar las cualidades específicas del conocimiento y la emoción que Neuhaus identificaba como las fuerzas principales en el centro de la Sonata para Piano en La bemol Mayor Opus 110 de Beethoven, y cómo afectan a las decisiones de Neuhaus como pianista-intérprete.



Keywords: Heinrich Neuhaus, Beethoven, interpretation, emotion, philosophy.

Palabras clave: Heinrich Neuhaus, Beethoven, interpretación, emoción, filosofía.



'Art is life.'¹ With these simple words Heinrich Neuhaus (Kirovograd, 12 April 1888 – Moscow, 10 October 1964), the famous Russian pianist and Professor of the Moscow Conservatory, summarized the core of his understanding of what it meant to be an interpreter. Neuhaus said:

Everything that we do or think [...] whether it is the purchase of potatoes in the market or the study of philosophy) – [...] possesses emotional overtones [...] and constantly lives in the human a soul, [and is therefore part of] *the kingdom of music*.²

Neuhaus's statement however, is not without controversy for it explicitly argues that everything that is experienced, from the most mundane to the profound, becomes *emotional-knowledge*. As described by Neuhaus in his book, *About the Art of Piano Playing* (1958/61): 'To a [pianist], *all* that is knowable is musical'.

Conversely, Ferruccio Busoni, who Neuhaus considered to be the most important thinker and aesthete of twentieth-century pianism, maintained that life and art must occupy two separate spheres. Busoni wrote that:

Music [should be] absolute, distilled, and never under a mask of figures and ideas which are borrowed from other spheres [such as] personal feelings and metaphysics.³

Despite Busoni's objection to equating life and art, he did share Neuhaus's insatiable thirst for knowledge. Both pianists spoke of the importance of a broad education and culture as being necessary for an artist, and indeed both pianists were seen by their colleagues as erudite intellectuals. Thus, while Neuhaus and Busoni

¹ All translations from Russian sources are by the author of this research.

НЕЙГАУЗ, Г. Г. "К чему я стремился как музыкант (К столетию Московской консерватории)". Я. Мильштейн, И. (составитель) Г. Г. Нейгауз. *Размышления, воспоминания, дневники. Избранные статьи. Письма к родителям. 2 изд.* Москва, "Советский Композитор", 1983.

[NEUHAUS, Heinrich. "My aims as a musician" (For the centenary of the Moscow Conservatory)]. Y. Milstein (ed.) *H. G. Neuhaus. Thoughts, Reminiscences, Diaries. Selected Articles. Letters to his Parents. 2nd edition* (Moscow, 1983)], pp. 81-82.

² НЕЙГАУЗ, Г. Г. *Об искусстве фортепианной игры*, 1958/61, Москва, "Классика-XXI", 1999.

[NEUHAUS, Heinrich. *On the Art of Piano Playing*, 198/61 Moscow, 1999], p. 41.

³ BUSONI, Ferruccio. *The Essence of Music and other papers* translated from the German by Rosamond Ley. London, Salisbury Square, 1957. [Originally: *Von der Einheit der Musik and Wessen und Einheit der Musik*, 1907], p. 22.



agreed that experience was vital for an interpreter, they understood the role and meaning of experience in different ways.

Busoni saw experience as rational. To him, experience was like a selectively permeable membrane that separated art from life, and kept feeling within bounds. Busoni considered that an entire performance should not be created from 'feeling': 'It is wrong to dissipate feeling on what is unimportant'.⁴ Experience, culture and knowledge were therefore the antipodes to feeling and emotion that could maintain order and balance.

As already indicated, knowledge and culture *were* emotional to Neuhaus – he talks of their ability to be *felt*:

Culture [...] is a *conceivable whole* that can not only be understood, but also felt, in other words emotionally experienced.⁵

When this aesthetic belief, central to Russian (as opposed to Soviet) Realism, is considered in parallel with a peculiarity of the Russian tongue, the ability to consciously economize or negate the amount of 'feeling' in an 'experience', as Busoni suggested, becomes a practical impossibility. The Russian language has evolved in a way that the word 'feeling', *чувство*, (and 'to feel', *чувствовать*) is strongly related in definition and connotation to 'experience', *переживание*, and the verb 'to experience', *переживать*.⁶ The ramifications of such a linguistic practice are quite stark when applied to the context of interpretation and the arts, not to mention its impact on metaphysical considerations. Yet, this aspect has never been considered in

⁴ BUSONI, Ferruccio. *The Essence of Music and other papers*, p. 179.

⁵ H. G. Neuhaus. *Thoughts, Reminiscences, Diaries. Selected Articles. Letters to his Parents*. Y. Milstein (ed.). 2nd edition, Moscow, 1983, p. 233

⁶ *Словарь русского языка С. И. Ожегова*. See 8th Revised Edition (1970) [*Ozhegov's Dictionary of Russian Language*]:

Чувство: 1. The ability feel/sense [*ощущать*], feel/have [*испытывать*], perceive external stimuli.

Чувствовать: 1. To have-felt [*испытывать*] some kind of feeling [*чувство*].

2. To be able to perceive, understand.

Переживание : The soul's state [*душевное состояние*] that expresses/manifests itself in the manner of strong feeling-sensations, impressions having-being-felt [*испытываемых*] by someone.

Переживать: 1. See *пережить* (1. Live to the end of something. 2. To have-felt [*испытать*] in life).

2. To worry, to lose peace in connection to something/one, suffer because of something/one.'



terms of the effect it has on Neuhaus's aesthetic understanding of what it means to be an interpreter. Whereas the English definition allows one to gather and process experience independently of feeling, the Russian allows neither experience to be independent of feeling nor feeling to be totally independent of rational experience.

Although these issues affected Neuhaus's approach to interpretation across the entirety of his repertoire, their relevance is particularly focused in his approach to Beethoven. It was with the music of Beethoven that Neuhaus habitually defined, and indeed defended, his own pianistic abilities throughout his life. Already, in his youth Neuhaus turned to the works of Beethoven as a rite of passage:

When I was eighteen years old I learnt Beethoven's *Hammerklavier* Sonata in six days.

I have played [Opus 111] ever since I first learnt it at the age of twelve.⁷

Once he became an established and recognized musician, Neuhaus regularly reflected on his success as an interpreter by the audience's reaction to his performances of Beethoven:

[W]hen the public, and even other musicians, come to the green-room and begin to say [things like] what a wonderful composer Beethoven is – as if they had heard him for the first time – that makes me really happy. [...] I get such a sense of satisfaction if the Adagio from the *Hammerklavier* makes the public listen intently.⁸

Whilst Neuhaus did not play or record a Beethoven-cycle, his letters to his parents show that as a student he had studied all of Beethoven's sonatas as a matter of principle (those for cello and violin in addition to the piano sonatas) and was even dismayed that this practice was not widespread amongst his peers. According to his own admission, Neuhaus considered several of the Beethoven piano sonatas to be his 'lifelong companions' and 'loves of the soul'.⁹ Bearing in mind that Neuhaus was remembered within his own lifetime largely for his natural affinity for the music of

⁷ Neuhaus's conversation with B. Teplov and A. Vitsinsky, 6/12/1944 in Г. Г. Нейгауз. Доклады и выступления. Беседы и семинары. Открытые уроки. Воспоминания. А. Ф. Хитрук (составитель). Москва, «Дека», 2008. [H. G. Neuhaus. [Presentations and Appearances. Conversations and Seminars. Open Lessons. Reminiscences. A. HITRUK (ed.), Moscow, 2008], p. 97 and p. 101 respectively.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 107.

⁹ Neuhaus's conversation with B. Teplov and A. Vitsinsky, 6/12/1944 documented in *Ibid.*, p. 101.



Fryderyk Chopin, Johannes Brahms and Alexander Scriabin, it is significant that he revealed one of his favorite recital programs to be:

[As in Sverdlovsk in c. 1943] to play five Beethoven sonatas in one evening: *Pathétique*, *Moonlight*, *Aurora*, *Appassionata* and the last one (Opus 111).¹⁰

Deriving from his pianistic practice, Neuhaus's written and spoken work was heavily underpinned by his own critical investigations of Beethoven's music and persona. In addition to his famous article dedicated specifically to the work of Beethoven, 'О последних сонатах Бетховена' ['About the Last Beethoven Sonatas'], initially printed in *Советская музыка* [*Soviet Music*] 1963 n° 4, Neuhaus continually referred to Beethoven in his other writings.¹¹ In choosing topics for a series of 'open lessons' in 1937 and 1938 for the Institute of Advance Studies for Musicians-Pedagogues of Peripheral Schools [Институт повышения квалификации музыкантов-педагогов периферийных учебных заведений], Neuhaus elected to use all his visits to look at Beethoven's piano sonatas: n° 7 in D major Opus 10 n° 3, n° 11 in B-flat major Opus 22, n° 31 in A-flat major Opus 110, n° 12 in A-flat major Opus 26 and n° 28 in A major Opus 101. A further transcript shows that Neuhaus also used an invitation in 1945 to give a seminar-presentation at the Glinka Museum of Musical Culture [Музей музыкальной культуры имени Глинки] to explore Beethoven's Sonata No. 21 in C major Opus 53 *Waldstein*.

Ever since his childhood, to Neuhaus, Beethoven was 'a deep thinker' whose works were philosophical:¹²

When I was fifteen I felt really sorry that Beethoven did not 'process' his music into philosophy as I thought that his philosophy would have been better than Kant's or Hegel's – deeper, more truthful and more human.¹³

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 100

The *Aurora* [Аврора] Sonata is the title by which the Sonata No. 21 in C major Opus 53 (*Waldstein*) is commonly referred to in Russian.

The idea of Neuhaus being closely associated with Chopin, Scriabin and Brahms is clearly illustrated in Neuhaus's biographical "portrait" by the musicologist David Rabinovich (*Портреты пианистов* [*Portraits of Pianists*] first printed in 1962). The link with these three particular composers is highlighted in the numerous anthologies that were written upon Neuhaus's death as part of the recollections and tributes.

¹¹ Neuhaus's *About the Last Beethoven Sonatas* has been subsequently reprinted in several anthologies (see bibliography).

¹² НЕЙГАУЗ, Г. Г. 'Бетховен'. Г. Г. Нейгауз. Доклады и выступления...

[NEUHAUS, Heinrich. 'Beethoven' in H. G. Neuhaus. *Presentations and Appearances...*], p. 14.



Neuhaus's view of Beethoven as the summit of philosophical knowledge should not be oversimplified as representing rationality over, or instead of, feeling. It must be remembered that Neuhaus's whole view of art hinged on the idea that everything artistic was knowable only because it had been felt. Neuhaus's unified understanding of experience as both intellectual and emotional however was tested by Beethoven – particularly by the later works such as the Piano Sonata Opus 110.

Discussing Beethoven's late works, particularly Opus 106 and Opus 110 – which Neuhaus insisted was 'For me, the closest music of a philosophical nature', he said:¹⁴

Perhaps I have not felt with such strength with any other great composer that perfection of form that is dictated by the perfection of the truth of the psychological process that lies at the heart of the given work and expressed in it.¹⁵

Neuhaus's view of the perfection in the 'psychological process' of Beethoven's late works is atypical. For instance, Theodore Adorno considered that the 'psychological approach fails' in relation to these works.¹⁶ Adorno concluded that in the late piano works:

[Beethoven] no longer draws together the landscape, now deserted and alienated, into an image. [...] The fragmented landscape is objective, while the light in which alone it glows is subjective. He does not bring about their harmonious synthesis. As a dissociative force he tears them apart in time, perhaps in order to preserve them for the eternal.¹⁷

Neuhaus was inclined to attribute the fragmented nature of Beethoven's late works to an ever more focused ability to capture the essence of the soul's different 'states':

Beethoven is true to his soul – he, as a composer, observes the psychological truth, he simply uses sounds to create this truth.¹⁸

¹³ NEUHAUS, Heinrich. *About the Art of Piano Playing*, p. 19.

¹⁴ Neuhaus's conversation with B. Teplov and A. Vitsinsky, 6/12/1944 in *H. G. Neuhaus. Presentations and Appearances...*, p. 104.

¹⁵ NEUHAUS, Heinrich. 'Autopsychography'. *H. G. Neuhaus. Thoughts, Reminiscences, Diaries...*, p. 61.

¹⁶ ADORNO, Theodor. 'Moments musicaux' (1934) in ADORNO, Theodor. *Beethoven. The Philosophy of Music. Fragments and Texts edited by Rolf Tiedemann*, translated by Edmund Jephcott. Polity Press, 1998, p. 125.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 126.

¹⁸ NEUHAUS, Heinrich. 'Autopsychography'. *H. G. Neuhaus. Thoughts, Reminiscences, Diaries...*, p. 64.



All music, it must be remembered, was seen by Neuhaus as a documentation of experience [переживание] and therefore spiritually autobiographic, or to borrow Neuhaus's own term 'autopsychographic' [автопсихографическое]. To Neuhaus's mind philosophy was the way to reconcile such contradictions as emotion and intellect, structure and spontaneity, mankind's will and fate. Because Neuhaus explored conflict in the sphere of philosophy through dialectic, rather than dichotomy, the apparently 'fragmented landscape' identified by Adorno, was in fact for Neuhaus a rich source of personal complexities which he believed reflected Beethoven's own soul.

Neuhaus's believed that the 'truth' of Beethoven's 'psychological' expression of the human soul in his late works, such as Opus 110, made him a thoroughly subjective, and thus ultimately Romantic composer. Neuhaus considered that Beethoven's deafness was one of the most important and decisive factors that proved that Beethoven, possibly more than any other composer, was forced to create a style of pianistic writing that came 'out of his spirit [...] and strength of feeling'.¹⁹

In his analysis Neuhaus maintained that having suffered deafness, Beethoven only access to sound was through emotional feeling, but that this emotion was rationalized into his scores:

The reason why late-Beethoven is particularly difficult for the pianist lies not only in that in these works his artistic spirit transcended to nearly inaccessible heights, but also, as everyone agrees, in that they were written by a completely deaf person. The real sound as experienced by the senses, and accessible to any musician, was for him in his past – he could only *remember*, and how bitter was this remembrance – we have some idea from his *Heiligenstadt Testament*.²⁰

In speaking about the 'bitterness' of Beethoven's remembrances in the wake of his deafness Neuhaus finds a way of highlighting and embracing the subjectivity that he attributes to be a central feature of Beethoven's artistic output:

With Beethoven, for example, there are pages and pages of such heavy grief and sorrow that it cannot be found even in the Romantics.²¹

¹⁹ NEUHAUS, Heinrich. *H. G. Neuhaus. Thoughts, Reminiscences, Diaries...*, p. 60.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 58 (Neuhaus's emphasis).

²¹ From a conversation with pedagogues on 9/12/1938 in HITRUK, A. (ed.) *H. G. Neuhaus. Presentations and Appearances. Conversations and Seminars. Open Lessons. Reminiscences* (Moscow, 2008)p. 112



In viewing Beethoven as a subjectively Romantic philosopher, Neuhaus joins the legacy of Russian musicians whose critical articles he valued highly including Tchaikovsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, Anton Rubinstein, Alexander Serov and Stasov.²² Neuhaus's vision of Beethoven as a Romantic philosopher is not simply a musicological remark. In much the same way that it can be said that Beethoven left his mark in the orchestral works of Rimsky-Korsakov or Anton Rubinstein, such a vision of Beethoven leaves its mark on Neuhaus's actual performances of the composer's works. Let us now move on to consider how the intellectual and emotional 'experience' of Beethoven's soul, as understood by Neuhaus, left its distinct mark on his interpretation.

The pianistic implications arising from Neuhaus's interpretation of Opus 110

As an interpreter who based his interpretations on the emotional realism of a psychological process, in the manner described by Konstantin Stanislavsky, Neuhaus would have found Opus 110 a significant challenge, as to his mind it contained the ultimate psychological test for the interpreter – the fugue. Through contending with Beethoven's fugue as an interpreter, Neuhaus felt as though he needed to justify the 'fugue' as 'real music' – music that came from the living soul of an artist. Neuhaus said that the fugue was not simply an 'intellectual construction', which would thereby imply it being 'antimusical'. Neuhaus blamed the 'intellectual view' of a fugue to have caused many great musicians such as Alexander Glazunov to overlook the fugue as a potent musical form which could express life at the limits of being. Neuhaus blamed the indifference which Glazunov bestowed upon the 'fugue' to his inability to understand that it expressed, in instances such as Opus 110, a 'shattering spiritual energy' [сокрушительная духовная энергия].²³ Desperately defending the validity of the fugue as a form capable of expression, Neuhaus points to 'the "Romantic" Chopin who [explained] to Delacroix that philosophical thought could be expressed in music'.²⁴ The task of psychologically justifying a fugue, regarded as the most intellectual and rational

²² 'These [musicians] I name as amongst the most valuable in our musicology': NEUHAUS, Heinrich. *About the Art of Piano Playing*, p. 222.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 16.



musical form, directly after some of the most emotional music imaginable ('an abyss of sorrow' in the *Arioso dolente* in Opus 110) led Neuhaus to consider the sonata as 'ein Prüfstein für Pianisten' ['a touchstone for pianists'].²⁵

Figure 1. Third movement from Beethoven's Piano Sonata No. 31 in A-flat major Opus 110. Bars 7 – 16²⁶

The *Arioso dolente* from Opus 110 was to his mind a cry from the soul – and not just any soul, but a soul which had been cut off from the outside world through Beethoven's deafness, a soul which now existed in an entirely subjective, or to use Neuhaus's term, 'super-conscious' inner-world. Just as philosophically Neuhaus considered the 'superconsciousness' of the soul that arises from silencing the outer world – solitude – to be a Romantic Hegelian-occurrence, pianistically Neuhaus's recording of the *Adagio* reflects this.²⁷ Thus, there are common traits to be observed

²⁵ NEUHAUS, Heinrich. 'Autopsychography'. *H. G. Neuhaus. Thoughts, Reminiscences, Diaries*, p. 58.

²⁶ Transcription of all the examples by [Ana López](#).

²⁷ 'Classical Records' Catalogue number CR-099: *The Art of Henry Neuhaus. Beethoven Sonatas no. 14*



here with Neuhaus's recordings of Schumann, Chopin, Brahms and Rachmaninov: complex half-peddalling to create swells of harmonic colour, and the expressive separation of hands (where Neuhaus allows the right hand to enter audibly behind the left hand (shown in the red boxes, bars 9¹, 10³, 13¹ and 15² in Figure 1) to emphasis the large intervalic distances in the melody.

In addition, Neuhaus alludes to the introspection of the soul literally through his manipulation of the interpreted tempo away from the 'absolute' tempo. Firstly, there is the inflexion of tempo away from the 'absolute' in response to the harmonic micro-occurrences (understood by Neuhaus as 'intonation' [интонация] within *rubato*). This typifies the playing of Neuhaus and the majority of his colleagues of the time. Also, however Neuhaus draws attention to tempo in a broader sense. By playing the first seven bars of the third movement [which preceed the *Arioso dolente*] on the 'fast edge' of his core *Adagio* tempo, Neuhaus gives the impression of needing to narrate, of a need to live on. By contrast, Neuhaus takes the *Arioso dolente* on the 'back edge' of the tempo that only moves forward to the 'front edge' once in bars 13 to 14 with the rising melody in *crescendo* – one last reaching out before resigning back into its solitude.

As an interpreter Neuhaus could not envisage the soul's return to life at the end of the *Arioso dolente* – the sorrow had been too pure, too profound:

The soul [душа] now *does not feel anything*, emotions are frozen, they have been bound by an icy cold. What is left of life? Nothing except the cold mind, the ability to *think*.²⁸

A cold mind however cannot feel. This proposition then undermines, if not negates, Neuhaus's concept of art. With the soul being no more, Neuhaus would have had to concede that there can be no further 'narrative' in Opus 110. In order to resolve the situation, Neuhaus re-defines 'thought' so that it is no longer an antipode to 'feeling' and 'experience' but rather 'philosophical thinking which is the musical

"Moonlight", no. 17, 24, 30, 31 released 2008. Recorded c. 1950s. Track 14.

²⁸ НЕЙГАУЗ, Г. Г. 'О Последних сонатах Бетховена'. *Вопросы фортепианного исполнительства. Выпуск второй*. М. Г. Соколов, (составитель). Москва, «Музыка», 1968. [NEUHAUS, Heinrich. 'About the Last Sonatas of Beethoven' in *Questions of Piano Interpretation. Issue 2*, M. Sokolov (ed.). Moscow, 1968], p. 16.



incarnation of Descartes's *cogito ergo sum*'.²⁹ This indicates that Neuhaus understood philosophy as a combination of intellect and emotion, and so philosophical-thought defined experience – the experience not of the soul, but of the *spirit*. Neuhaus accordingly seats this 'thought' outside the 'soul' and instead, in the 'spirit'. Thus, in Opus 110:

Only the spirit [дух] survives in these heights over which extends a starlight blanket [through the] exceptional cold...

The expression of these kinds of states of the *spirit* in music are characteristic of the fugue, [suited it] like no other musical form.³⁰

Despite a certain overlap in meanings between 'spirit' [дух] and 'soul' [душа], Neuhaus is consistently careful in his work with regards to which of the two words he uses.³¹ In his presentation of 'soul' and 'spirit' as different elements, it is important to note that Neuhaus does not seek to present them as a dialectic of the emotional and the rational. In the aftermath of the *Arioso dolente* the spirit does not bring 'back to life' through rational thought, but because the spirit is the 'immaterial, immortal being' of a person.³² 'Inner moral strength' and 'psychological ability (consciousness, thought) that compels into action, activity' are attributes of the 'spirit'. The 'soul' is understood to be 'the inner, psychological world of a person, his consciousness' and 'particular features of a [person's] character'. Whereas the *Oxford English Dictionary* defines 'spirit' as the 'seat of emotions and character', the Russian definition makes no mention of emotion, rather consciousness, in either 'spirit' or 'soul', and considers character to be a part of the 'soul'.

Therefore, the expression of the individual, the 'soul' [душа] can be understood to be subdued or crushed. Proverbially, in the Russian language it is possible to exclaim: 'don't tear my soul!' [не рви мне душу!]. Man's 'psychological world', his 'consciousness' can be restored through the 'strength' and 'psychological ability' of the

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 16 (Neuhaus's emphasis).

³¹ In the translations presented in this thesis the differentiation between дух and душа has been carefully observed. Where required, texts have been translated 'of the soul/the soul's' instead of the more customary 'spiritual' etc. to preserve Neuhaus's distinctions.

³² 8th Revised Edition (1970) *Словарь русского языка С. И. Ожегова [Ozhegov's Dictionary of Russian Language]*.



'spirit' [dʏx]. The juxtaposition that Neuhaus makes, between 'soul' and 'spirit' is one of an *inner world* and the *process* which made it. The 'spirit' understood as the *process* that builds the inner world, and thus is the re-building force of a destroyed inner world, revealed in its purest musical form of fugue, led Neuhaus to declare:

[In the transition into the] fugue I feel as if I am *present during an act of birth* (in art): I am consumed by a feeling of joy, wonder and 'holy awe', and an almost terror about what is taking place before my eyes.³³

Fuga
Allegro ma non troppo

Figure 2. Opus 110. Bars 26² – 53

Neuhaus's interpretation of the fugue reflects the regaining of life, 'the finding of *the way out into life*, the return [to life] after the last glimmer of hope has all but died'.³⁴ Neuhaus begins the theme of the fugue tentatively, very much on the 'back-edge' of the tempo. The first sounding of the fugal subject itself moves slightly towards

³³ NEUHAUS, Heinrich. 'Autopsychography'. *H. G. Neuhaus. Thoughts, Reminiscences...*, p. 64.

³⁴ NEUHAUS, Heinrich. 'About the last sonatas of Beethoven' in *Questions of Piano Interpretation Issue 2...*, p. 15.



the 'front-edge' as it approaches bar 28² and 29¹. This 'micro' tempo-inclination foreshadows the larger movement of tempo from its cautious 'back-edge' to its gradual shift forwards by the trill and subsequent *forte* in bar 45.

Following the relapse into the soul's sickness, the restatement of the *Arioso dolente* (bar 116), the inversion of the fugue, from bar 136², is for Neuhaus the spirit's ultimate attempt to bring back to life:

Thought strengthens, and the [theme] becomes more complex finally achieving its fastest possible statement (diminution). It seems that the blood begins to flow through the capillaries.³⁵

Neuhaus's interpretation of the inverted fugal subject is determined, with the tempo reflecting this. Unlike the previous treatment of the fugal material, Neuhaus is much less inclined to allow the tempo to sit on the 'back-edge' as he aims to take the remaining part of the movement, the restoration to health and life, in one affirming sweep.

The juxtaposition of 'soul' and 'spirit' – as presented in Opus 110 – was important to Neuhaus as a manifestation of the two apparent opposites that were seminal to his understanding of human (super-)consciousness, symbolized to Neuhaus by the figure of Beethoven. It is this Hegelian synthesis that is the most defining feature that runs as a thread through the heart of Neuhaus's interpretation of late Beethoven – and in his view, to engage with it was to be admitted to the heights of all knowledge. In striving to see Beethoven as the ultimate Romantic philosopher, Neuhaus found a way of reflecting his *own* philosophical self.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 18.



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