

## Compiling Scarlatti: the Münster volumes in the Santini collection

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*Several of the major manuscript collections of Scarlatti sonatas are 'fair copies' bound in several volumes. One of the principal aims of the Texting Scarlatti project is to delve behind their smooth, consistent surface to understand the rich hinterland and complex processes by which these collections were put together. In this article on the Münster volumes in the Santini collection, Jasper van der Klis shows how careful inspection of the physical copies can reveal so much more than working from even the best digitised versions.*

After the Venice and Parma collections, the most important extant manuscript witnesses of Scarlatti's keyboard music are the five volumes in the Santini collection.<sup>1</sup> In his 1970 dissertation, Sheveloff stated that what we call Münster 1-5 was the work of nine copyists: M1 to M9.<sup>2</sup> In *Sounding Board* issue 4 (May 2011), Anthony Hart summarised his findings on the role of Monsignor Antonino Reggio regarding the Münster volumes.<sup>3</sup> During cataloguing work it had been noticed that the handwriting in compositions by Antonino Reggio matched that of Sheveloff's M2: the person responsible for Münster 4 and a large part of Münster 5.<sup>4</sup> This was a valuable discovery made even more valuable by the knowledge that Reggio had died in Rome in 1780.<sup>5</sup>

Sheveloff 1970 <sup>6</sup>	Shelfmark	Texting Scarlatti
MÜNSTER I	SANT Hs 3966	Münster 1
MÜNSTER II	SANT Hs 3965	Münster 2
MÜNSTER III	SANT Hs 3968	Münster 3
MÜNSTER IV	SANT Hs 3967	Münster 4
MÜNSTER V	SANT Hs 3964	Münster 5

*Table 1. Sigla used by Sheveloff in his 1970 dissertation, their corresponding shelfmarks, and the version we have adopted in our project (also used in this article)*

In his 2011 article in *Early Music*, Hart states that the identity of the main copyist of the Münster volumes, M1, is 'still a mystery: it would appear that this scribe was not a professional copyist.

<sup>1</sup> Diözesanbibliothek Münster, Germany; D-MÜs SANT Hs 3964-8. One is able to consult high-quality digitisations (including Münster 1, 3, and 4) of some of the material in the Santini collection on the website of the Diözesanbibliothek: <<https://www.dioezesanbibliothek-muenster.de/dioezesanbibliothek-muenster/santini-sammlung/digitalisate/gesamtansicht/>>. Accessed 26 May 2025. While the Vienna A-G and Q volumes contain more pieces in total, volumes A-F are a direct copy of the Münster volumes made by Fortunato Santini and a close associate.

<sup>2</sup> Joel Leonard Sheveloff, 'The Keyboard Music of Domenico Scarlatti: A Re-Evaluation of the Present State of Knowledge in the Light of the Sources', unpublished PhD dissertation, Brandeis University (1970), 5, 53-69.

<sup>3</sup> Anthony Hart, 'New Findings on the possible origins of the Scarlatti sonatas in Münster: the role of Antonino Reggio'. *Sounding Board* Issue No. 4 (May 2011): 12-14. This article is an overview of two articles published earlier in 2011 in *Early Music* 39:1 (February 2011): 57-64, and *Studi musicali* 2:1 (2011): 49-66.

<sup>4</sup> Hart, 'New Findings', 12.

<sup>5</sup> Anthony Hart, 'Forgotten Sicilian composer's music comes home to Sicily after 270 years'. Online newspaper article, *Times of Sicily*, 30 September 2016. <<https://www.timesofsicily.com/forgotten-sicilian-composers-music-comes-home-sicily-270-years/>>. Accessed 24 May 2025.

<sup>6</sup> Sheveloff, *Keyboard Music of Domenico Scarlatti*, 53-69.

There are many errors and it appears that his volumes were copied in haste'.<sup>7</sup> On the other hand, Chris Hail was convinced that M1 was Scarlatti himself.<sup>8</sup> My work on these volumes and their copyists over the last two years has led to the (disappointing) conclusion that both of these assumptions are incorrect – M1 was a professional copyist who was very likely based in Rome at the time that he copied the Münster volumes, and he produced copies until at least 1781.<sup>9</sup> On top of that, as will be shown below, he clearly had a close relationship with Monsignor Antonino Reggio.

As I found out during my visit to the *Diözesanbibliothek* in January 2025, the compilation process was messier and more involved than has been assumed to date. Certain physical aspects of the volumes have, to my knowledge, never been discussed in print before, yet are instrumental to the actual sequence of events.



Figure 1. From top to bottom: spine of Münster 2; comparison of handwriting on the spine with the title page of Münster 4; Sonata I in Münster 2 and title page of Münster 1; title page of Antonino Reggio's *Sonate per Cembalo / Opera terza* (SANT Hs 3391)

The original bindings of the first four Münster volumes all feature Reggio's handwriting on the spine: '*Scarlatti / Sonate per / Cembalo*'. This provides us with a terminus ante quem of 1780. The

<sup>7</sup> Anthony Hart, 'New findings on the possible copyists and owners of the Scarlatti sonata manuscripts in Münster: the role of Antonino Reggio', *Early Music* Vol. 39, No. 1 (February 2011): 57-64 (57).

<sup>8</sup> Chris Hail, *Card games and Collections* files: 'If I am right that Scarlatti himself is the musical scribe of M3, 2 & 1...'; 'The explanation that makes the most sense (to me) is that Scarlatti himself is the scribe of both Bologna 1 [FF 232] and Münster volumes 1 to 3'.

<<https://web.archive.org/web/20141204100310/http://www.chrishail.net/>>. Accessed 25 May 2025.

<sup>9</sup> This is based on evidence from watermarks, repertoire copied, and other metadata. To be covered in more detail in future articles, as well as my July 2025 paper for the 21<sup>st</sup> Biennial International Conference on Baroque Music in Birmingham as part of our 'Texting Scarlatti' round table: 'Copying Scarlatti: the provenance of the Santini collection'.

handwriting on the spine of the fifth volume, which has a different binding, does not appear to be that of Reggio; still, based on the original sonata numbering in the volume, it is apparent that Reggio was the owner as well as compiler of all five volumes.

The first four volumes today contain 90, 60, 70, and 70 sonatas respectively. Earlier researchers such as Sheveloff already noticed that Münster 1 actually consists of 'two volumes of fifty and forty respectively; the original numbers of the last forty pieces stand side by side with the newer ones'.<sup>10</sup> Like volume 1, Münster 2 and 3 were also separate gatherings at first, which can be deduced from the presence of intermediate title pages in both volumes: after sonata 26 (K260) in volume 2 and after sonata 32 (K299) in volume 3.<sup>11</sup> What has apparently gone unnoticed all these years is that in the margins of these title pages Reggio added the total number of sonatas in each part before they were bound together:

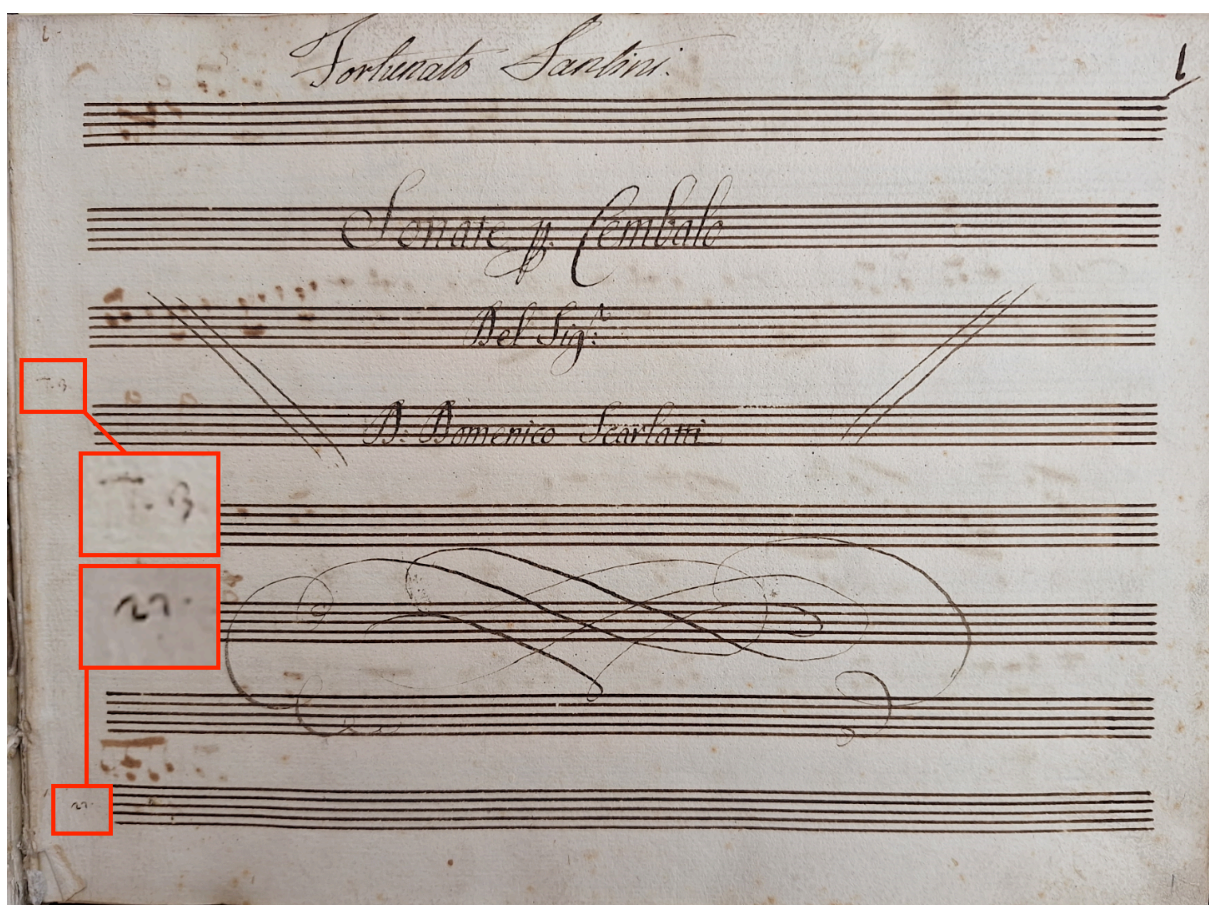


Figure 2. First title page of volume 2. Reggio's numbering in the left margin: T.3 / 27  
(= T[omo] 3, 27 [Sonate])

<sup>10</sup> Sheveloff, *Keyboard Music of Domenico Scarlatti*, 53.

<sup>11</sup> Sheveloff, *Keyboard Music of Domenico Scarlatti*, 56-60.

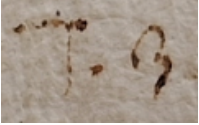
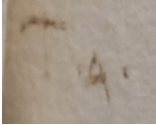
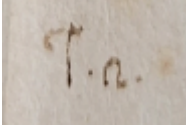
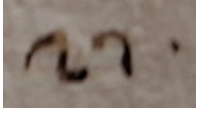

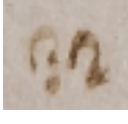

Vol. 2, first title page	second title page	Vol. 3, first title page	second title page
		(no T[omo] number - presumed T1)	
			

Table 2. Margin markings by Reggio on intermediate title pages

What is immediately apparent from the number of sonatas provided by Reggio on the title pages (see Table 2 above) is that they do not add up to the total number of sonatas in the current volumes: Münster 2 should have 61 instead of 60 sonatas, and Münster 3 should have 66 instead of 70 sonatas. Based on the T[omo] numbering of the separate parts of Münster 2 and 3, volume 3 likely predates volume 2. The original quire numbering (in the hand of the main copyist, M1) was also corrected by Reggio in the second parts of these volumes to reflect their new order (see Figure 3 below). This raises two questions: firstly, where did the missing sonata in volume 2 go; and secondly, where did the extra sonatas in volume 3 come from?



Figure 3. Quire number 13 of volume 2 with its old numbering (6, partly cut off) crossed out

In quire 6 of Münster 2, I noticed that the verso of the last page of sonata 22 (K241) and the recto of the first page of sonata 23 (K256) are stuck together. Examination with a light sheet revealed the presence of handwriting on these pages.



Figure 4. Detail of Münster 2: the final page of sonata 22 and the first page of sonata 23 are stuck together<sup>12</sup>

Through the use of image editing software, I established that these pages actually contain sonata K231, which also appears as sonata 70 in Münster 3. This is striking, as there are no duplications elsewhere in the Münster volumes. In both cases it was copied by the same copyist (M1). It appears that the middle folio, which contains pages 2 and 3 of the now hidden sonata, was excised at some point: as far as I can tell, only material from the first and last pages of this sonata is visible.

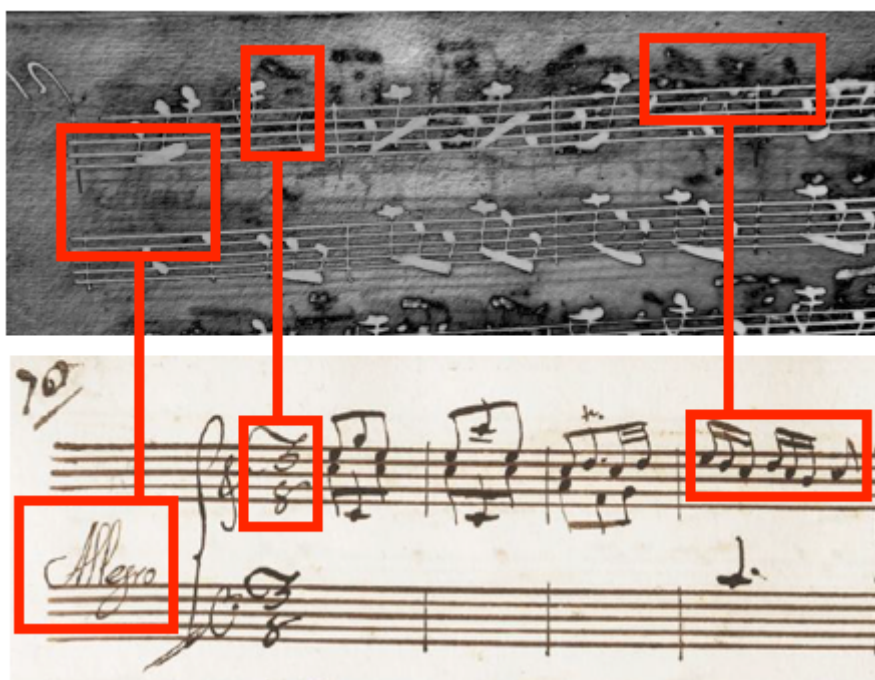


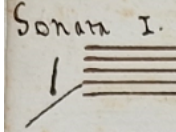
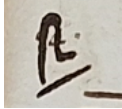
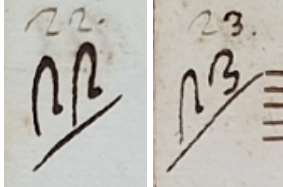
Figure 5. Top: a computer-edited photograph of the hidden pages in Münster 2. One can make out the tempo marking *Allegro*, the time signature 3/8 as well as the first four bars. Bottom: the same sonata, number 70 in Münster 3

<sup>12</sup> A later hand accidentally pencilled in the first part of the foliation: this folio should have been 48, but actually the foliation continues from 48 on the second page of sonata 23.



Figure 6. Top: a computer-edited photograph of the hidden pages in Münster 2 showing the bottom of page 1 of K231. Bottom: the exact same bars in Münster 3

Additionally, there is something curious about the original sonata numbering by Reggio. While sonatas 1-22 show no signs of correction (a different hand has duplicated Reggio's numbering), all sonata numbers following 22 are corrected in several ways as the following table demonstrates:

Current order in Münster 2	Image example and description
Sonata 1	 <p>The only sonata to be marked 'Sonata' followed by a Roman number.</p>
Sonata 2	 <p>The original number '2' in Reggio's hand has been replaced by a larger 2 in a different hand.</p>
Sonatas 22/23	 <p>While number 22 is untouched, the ink of the number '3' in '23' is slightly darker than the '2' suggesting a correction, likely from an earlier '24'. This is the first sonata following the excised K231 (the original 23).</p>

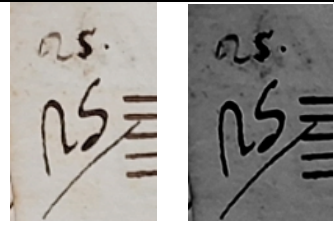
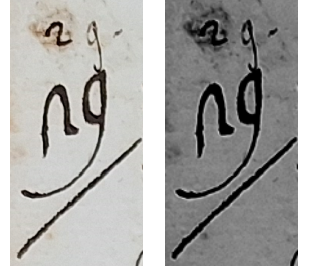
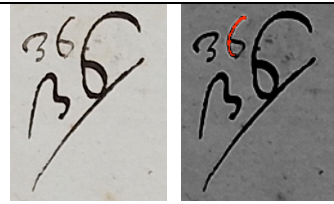
Sonata 25	 <p>The ink for the original '6' of '26' is still visible (darker figure for clarity).</p>
Sonata 29	 <p>The number '2' here has replaced a '3' which has been scraped away, while the stem of the '9' is drawn on top of the original '0'.</p>
Sonata 36	 <p>The original '7' of 37 is here incorporated into the '6' (the added curve highlighted).</p>

Table 3. Corrected sonata numberings in Münster 2

It is evident that Reggio was aiming for anthologies with multiples of ten sonatas. Münster 3 originally consisted of only 66 sonatas, with sonatas 67-69 being later additions. Sonatas 67-69 are copied mostly on an inserted quire: the only quire in Münster 1-3 to have ten staves per page instead of eight. He just needed that final piece, and he could kill two birds with one stone by moving K231 from one volume to the other.

The sequence thus appears to be as follows:

1. Reggio commissions M1 to copy out the sonatas now in Münster 3, one gathering at a time. The exemplars he provides to M1 are mostly unknown. Our detailed variant analysis suggests that M1 copied from high-quality witnesses which were remarkably similar to the Parma volumes; however, as a whole it is impossible that Münster came directly from Parma. As far as we know these models are now lost. M1 produces two gatherings of 8 quires (Tomo 1: Sonatas 1-32; Tomo 2: Sonatas 33-66).
2. Reggio then commissions M1 to copy out Münster 2, again one gathering at a time. M1 produces two further gatherings: one of 7 quires (T3: Sonatas 1-27) and one of 9 quires (T4: Sonatas 28-61).

3. Reggio decides to combine these four gatherings into two volumes, but at some point while organising the sonatas he realises he is able to compile volumes consisting of very neat multiples of 10. Unfortunately, at this point he has already numbered the sonatas in volume 2 (1 to 61), which will need correcting.
4. Before getting the volumes (re-)bound, he asks M1 to copy out four more sonatas for what is now volume 3. One of these is a new copy of K231 taken from volume 2: K231 was in an odd spot, sandwiched between two pairs of sonatas (K240-1 and K256-7). The other three sonatas came from the printed edition *Libro de XII Sonatas Modernas para Clavicordio* (Johnson 1752), of which Reggio must have recently obtained a copy.<sup>13</sup> Though these sonatas appear in Parma, the Münster copies contain variants which are only found in Johnson 1752. These four sonatas are added to volume 3 as sonatas 67-70.
5. At this point Reggio corrects all of the sonata numbers in volume 2 from 24-61 to 23-60 and asks M1 to create the indices for both volumes: 60 pieces in volume 2, and 70 pieces in volume 3.

As is shown, the compilation process of even a seemingly coherent set of volumes such as Münster was actually surprisingly complicated. And that is before considering volume 5, which is even more complex: it is a compilation of the work of eight different copyists of highly varied quality.<sup>14</sup> It appears to me that this volume may have been a work in progress at the time of Reggio's death, or he may have abandoned the work altogether after the completion of his own five volumes of keyboard works in 1774.<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless, aspects of it may prove to be important to the provenance of the collection as a whole, and further research may lead to the necessary breakthrough clues.

The index of Münster 5 is in a later hand which is possibly that of the intermediate collector who owned the volumes after Reggio's death and before Santini acquired them.<sup>16</sup> Establishing the identity of this person could help us understand more about the transmission of the Münster volumes, as Santini was just three years old when Reggio died. This intermediate collector clearly

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<sup>13</sup> Besides the variant analysis clearly pointing to Johnson 1752 as the model for sonatas 67-69 (K55, 44, 53) there is a very strong piece of circumstantial evidence which supports this hypothesis. A manuscript copy of the indices to the five Münster volumes survives as the final quire of B-Bc 15136, a collection of seven keyboard pieces (one of which is K30) in the Conservatoire royal de Bruxelles, Belgium. The indices of the five volumes are followed by an index to a 'Libro VI / Stampato in Londra': the 12 sonatas found in Johnson 1752. This manuscript copy, in the hand of Fortunato Santini, was likely prepared for a collector or publisher interested in the contents of the Münster volumes. It is not known what happened to Reggio's (later Santini's) copy of Johnson 1752, as it is not present in the collection of the Diözesanbibliothek in Münster.

<sup>14</sup> In the opening paragraph, I mentioned that Sheveloff noted that nine copyists were responsible for volume 5. Based on handwriting analysis I have found that M2 and M7 are in fact the same person (Antonino Reggio).

<sup>15</sup> This date can be found on the title page of *Opera Quinta di XXIV. Sonatine. / A[nn]o 1774 / Originale di Ant.<sup>o</sup> Reggio* (SANT Hs 3388).

<sup>16</sup> A very similar hand appears in the index to a collection of *30 Arias*; many of the arias were copied by Reggio (SANT Hs 180). Having consulted this collection in person, I believe the information on RISM for this collection, which states that Reggio supplied the index, to be incorrect. The numbering appears to be identical to that which appears throughout the Münster volumes, specifically the numbers that duplicate or override Reggio's own, as illustrated in Table 3. <<https://rism.online/sources/451002288>>. Accessed 26 May 2025.

had little knowledge of the form of the Scarlatti sonata, as some of the sonata incipits are not included in the index to volume 5. They were considered to be part of multi-movement works, despite Reggio's original numbering clearly showing they were not.<sup>17</sup>

The index also states that there are 59 sonatas in this volume, whereas at the time of his death Reggio had included, as expected, yet another multiple of ten sonatas for this volume: 70 to be precise. To get to this total, Reggio resorted to his usual tricks, and stuck both K32 and K33b (an incomplete fragment of the version without introduction) to the title page of the following quire to be able to get to this round number.<sup>18</sup>

The presence of these sonatas was unknown until very recently. This is evident from the fact that the microfilm from which Sheveloff worked cannot have included these sonatas: he neither mentions their presence nor that of the title page they were stuck to.<sup>19</sup> The Münster librarians have since separated these pages. It is hard for us to imagine why someone would choose to hide these sonatas, but perhaps Reggio had other plans for them.

Due to damage to the page it is no longer possible to read the number originally assigned to K32, but K33b was clearly numbered 57. After obscuring these two sonatas, to get to 70 Reggio had to adjust the numbering of the later sonatas down by 2.

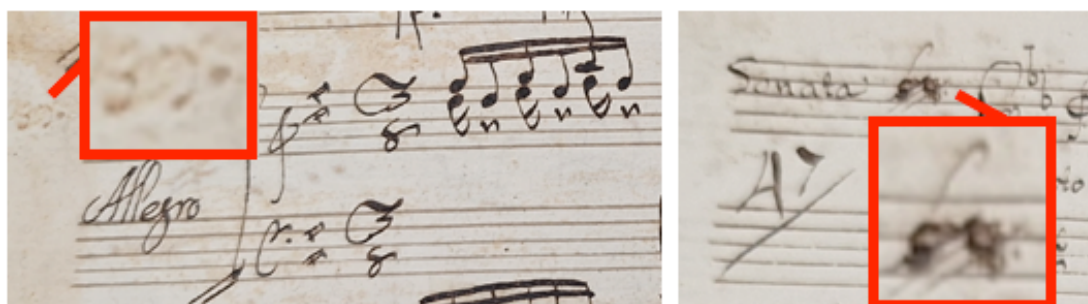


Figure 7. An example of the original numbering in Münster 5: K33b is sonata 57, while K16 is sonata 60 in original numbering, 58 in corrected numbering, and 47 in today's numbering

As is evident, Reggio and M1 clearly had a solid professional relationship. The presence of a large number of additions and changes to the Münster copies shows at once Reggio's deep knowledge of Scarlatti's keyboard works as well as evidence of contemporary performance practice. While consulting the five volumes of works for keyboard by Reggio, one encounters many aspects of notation that are clearly inspired by Scarlatti. Of course, the 72 sonatas are original works, and we

<sup>17</sup> Incidentally, there were actually ten sonatas in the now missing quire(s) of Münster 5, and not seven as Sheveloff reports in his dissertation (Sheveloff, *Keyboard Music of Domenico Scarlatti*, 63). This is apparent from Reggio's original numbering: we jump from sonata 14 (K265) to sonata 24 (K177).

<sup>18</sup> It is highly likely that the final folio of this quire (containing the rest of K33b) was also excised. Again, both pieces had been copied by M1, likely from Roseingrave's edition (1739) or a copy of that edition.

<sup>19</sup> As part of our work on the Texting Scarlatti project, in December 2023 Barry Ife and I examined the contents of the microfilms belonging to Sheveloff in the Mugar Memorial Library (Boston University). Unfortunately, none of the 11 boxes of film we received contained any of the Münster volumes; still, we believe it is safe to assume that Sheveloff would not have missed these two pages.

can confidently attribute almost all of the work to Reggio himself – except, it seems, a part of the tempo marking in Reggio’s seventh sonata in E-flat major, which was expanded by M1.

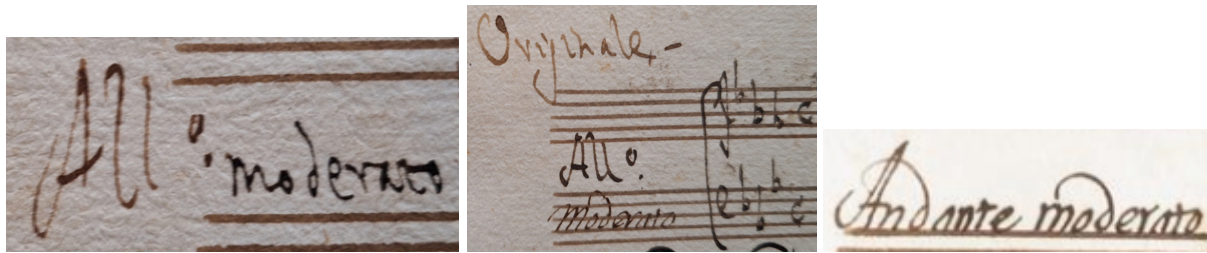


Figure 8. Left: Reggio’s *Sonata sesta*, with ‘moderato’ added later (*Opera seconda*, SANT Hs 3390).  
Centre: Reggio’s *Sonata settima* (*Opera prima*, SANT Hs 3389).  
Right: tempo marking for Scarlatti’s *Sonata K466* copied by M1 (Münster 1)

The examination of the Münster volumes reveals a compilation process far more complex than previously understood. The first four Münster volumes look deceptively neat and coherent: to get to this point we can assume that Reggio spent a lot of time organising the material and acquiring new sonatas for his collection. His many alterations and additions to the musical text, are valuable evidence of musical practice around 1765. On top of that, his association with the professional copyist M1 was far more collaborative than what we might expect.

The Münster volumes are thus not only some of the most important extant witnesses of Domenico Scarlatti’s keyboard sonatas, but also great examples of eighteenth-century collecting and performance practices. Understanding the complexity of the compilation process may help us to appreciate these copies even more when we sit down to play from them.