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Crosscurrents of Performance Practice in Nineteenth-Century Editions of Beethoven's *Piano Sonata in E major, Opus 109*

Allison Star

Beethoven's Opus 109 piano sonata in E major is a masterful unfolding of dramatic and spiritual ideas, yet most editions of this abiding work of art limit full understanding of Beethoven's vision. Beethoven's innovative notational directions and tight organizational structure are marred in almost all modern editions by text and orthographic mistakes. These can be traced back to the first authorized edition, published by Maurice Schlesinger (Berlin, 1821), which contained, according to Beethoven, "very many serious errors".[1] A thorough study of Beethoven's autograph and sketches, as well as his errata lists and his correspondence with Schlesinger, reveals that the first edition is far from ideal. Many of Beethoven's corrections for Opus 109 have been lost, and the existing sources for this sonata are corrupt: in fact, between the two important sources for editors, the autograph and the first edition, there are over 600 variants. Problematic as the first edition was, the history of the text of this sonata during the second

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[1] Beethoven's Letter to Schlesinger, July 6, 1821, quoted in William Meredith's *Sources for Beethoven's Piano Sonata in E Major, Opus 109* (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1985): 137.

half of the nineteenth century becomes more complicated by the two different directions taken by nineteenth-century editors.

The corrupt first edition of Opus 109 established a pattern of editorial discord that surrounded the sonata for the rest of the century. It persists in the two traditions of nineteenth-century editions of Opus 109: critical editions prepared by scholars and pedagogical editions prepared by famous piano virtuosos. [2] These editions represent historical artefacts documenting two crosscurrents of performance practice. They also ultimately reflect a larger polarity in nineteenth-century Beethoven reception: scholarly editors interpreted Beethoven as a classical composer esteemed within the newly forming canon, while pedagogical editors interpreted Beethoven as an innovator, a composer of "Music for the Future."

The corrupt Schlesinger edition served as the source of choice for many of these editions. However, these two categories of editors, the scholar and the pedagogue, faced additional challenges to interpreting Beethoven's Opus 109 in the existence of pirated editions. The result– there are more variables in editions of Opus 109 than in any other Beethoven piano sonata. The dissonance between available scores was exacerbated by challenges of interpreting Beethoven's innovative language. Opus 109 is a paradigm of Beethoven's late style, and his orthographic directions match the innovative architecture and intense spirituality of Opus 109.

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[2] Refer to Appendix A, pp. 55-59, to determine which editor belonged to which editorial camp.

These include verbal directions in Italian and German, agogic changes, sudden extreme dynamics, complex and dramatic articulation, and an increased use of the pedal. In order to emerge in a manner that is true to Beethoven's intentions, an edition must involve the evaluation of these directions on all authentic sources. But in the nineteenth century, editors often failed to identify the correct authentic sources, and rarely consulted the autograph. The autograph of Opus 109 was for many years in the private collection of publisher Tobias Haslinger, and yet was never used as an editorial source by scholars, such as H. Büssmeyer. Instead, nineteenth-century editors used a variety of early printed sources, including pirated copies.

I. Critical editions

Enormous quantities of music were printed in the nineteenth century, reflecting a boom in middle class commerce and education. Towards the second half of the century, most of society focused increasingly on science and education as the new torch of hope and welfare; yet, as society valued scientific advancements for the betterment of mankind, music was generally valued for upholding standards of the past. In attempts to concretize the musical tradition into a form of text and artefact similar to the other arts, the new scholarly field of musicology established a priority to document, catalogue and edit complete editions. By producing a complete critical edition of Beethoven's piano sonatas, a scholar was recognized within the academy, he contributed to a series of national collections, and

he verified Beethoven's status as a classical composer in the newly founded musical canon.

The ideal of critical editions produced by scholars was to present a score that most closely represented the composer's intentions. Comparative studies reveal that nineteenth-century critical editions of Opus 109 generally fall into two subgroups. First there are those that presented clear copies of Schlesinger's first edition of Opus 109, such as editions prepared by C. Kohler (Berlin, 1869) and Carl Krebs (*Beethoven Gesamtausgabe*, 1898). This type of edition was generally free of editorial interpretation, and aimed to represent scores authorized by the composer. It also duplicated the problems of the Schlesinger edition. By the 1890s, the *Königlichen Akademie der Künste* in Berlin distinguished this particular type of edition as *Urtext*.

A second sub-group of scholarly editions of Opus 109 was claimed to be based on scholarly evaluation of authentic sources, with added editorial suggestions to clarify ambiguities. The principle of critical editing was to reach a balance between the composer's intent and the editor's judgement, with editorial alterations designated separately from the original source and explained within a critical apparatus, either a Preface or through added commentary.

Critical editions largely suited the conservative style of performance practice taught at many newly founded conservatories. One of the most influential was the Leipzig Conservatory, founded by Felix Mendelssohn in 1843. Mendelssohn employed a faculty of classically trained musicians: Ignaz Moscheles (piano), Ferdinand David (strings), and

Moritz Hauptman (composition). The Leipzig Conservatory became the model for a circle of affiliated schools employing faculty who revered Beethoven as part of the musical tradition: the Berlin Conservatory (1850); the Cologne Conservatory (1852) with Ferdinand Hiller as director; the *Berlin Hödsdule für Musik*, founded by violinist Joseph Joachim in 1869; and the Conservatory of Frankfurt, established in 1878 with Clara Schumann as head of the piano department.

These schools produced generations of classically trained musicians with distaste for the avant-garde and their "Music of the Future." Precise performances of Beethoven's intricately detailed scores, played at exceedingly fast tempos, became the ultimate test of a player's worth. It was the performer's duty to follow Beethoven's directions down to the finest detail to present a correct and fair interpretation. Conservatory pianists turned to scholarly-prepared critical editions as the most reliable source. However, critical analysis reveals that many of these nineteenth-century editions contain unacknowledged alterations to the score.

Editions in this category include: Moscheles (1858), Büssmeyer (1880), Damm (1890), and the edition of Carl Reinecke (1886). Most of these editions involve orthographic omissions that refine Beethoven's dramatic changes of tempo, articulation and dynamics. To further obscure Beethoven's original intentions, some editions contain errors in notation. The edition of Carl Reinecke illustrates this type of critical edition. His edition (1886), produced especially for use at the Leipzig Conservatory, lacks any critical commentary to explain his many

omissions, refinements and textual errors. This edition is suitable for the conservative style of performance practice advocated at the Leipzig Conservatory that involved a light touch, light use of pedal and metronomic precision. In the first movement of Opus 109, Reinecke's editorial objective appears to draw similarities between the two opposing themes of *Vivace* and *Adagio*. In the Andante theme of the third movement, a classical approach to pulse is illustrated through Reinecke's phrasing and style of ornamentation. His edition is still in print by Breitkopf & Härtel in Leipzig, and has been issued as an *Urtext* by Kalmus of New York since 1968.

Scholars preparing critical editions of Beethoven's Opus 109 often did not follow the editorial ideals they claimed for their editions. Instead, most of these editions reflect an editor's own societal influences and cultural biases, which effected the interpretation of Opus 109 as a classical composition by a classical composer. Silent changes without any critical commentary illustrate that many of these editions tip the balance of authority to that of the editor. As Alan Tyson has documented, many unacknowledged changes in some of these editions were incorporated into the *Neue Beethoven Ausgabe*.[3] It is also important to realize that most of these nineteenth-century critical editions are still in use today: including the editions of Moscheles, Zimmerman, Büssmeyer, Pauer, Damm as well as Reinecke.

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[3] Alan Tyson, *The Authentic English Editions of Beethoven* (New York, 1983): 22.

II. Pedagogical/ Interpretive

A second category of nineteenth-century editions of Opus 109 was labelled pedagogical. In the nineteenth century, the term pedagogical was used interchangeably with the term interpretive to describe keyboard editions that contain added performance directions.[1]

In the nineteenth-century, the editorial principle of pedagogical editing was first to understand the work's overall construction and conception, based on stylistic and historical knowledge of the composer and his place in history. Based on this information, the pedagogical editor would then interpret solutions to problems of technique and aesthetics.

Most pedagogical editions were produced by famous piano virtuosos associated with the New German School in Weimar, informally established by Franz Liszt. The New German School emphasized modern repertoire and catholic taste. Liszt advocated artists as leaders for world-improvement, and mentored the individuality of each student as a poet-musician. A range of individual approaches to Opus 109 is illustrated in the Complete Editions of Franz Liszt (1886), Hans von Bülow (1876), Sigmund Lebert (1877), Karl Klindworth (1884), Ernst Pauer (1885), Eugene d'Albert (1902) and Carl Lamond (1923). These editions transmit an oral tradition of each editor's individual style and provide insights gained from working with Liszt.

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[1] I prefer the term pedagogical because of their instructive nature and because many editions were published with the term *pedägogische Ausgabe* on the title page.

Pedagogical editions have only begun to be valued by scholars, such as Georg Feder (*Musikphildogie*, 1987). Feder places value on these editions as historical artefacts that document virtuosic performance practice. Previously, scholars accused Weimar's pedagogical editions of making the score virtually unrecognizable by overriding the composer's intent in favour of imposing one's own personality on the score.

On the contrary, evaluation of nineteenth-century pedagogical editions reveals a remarkably scholarly approach to editing Beethoven. Interpretive additions are clearly indicated through any combination of apparatus that includes bold type, separate staves, numbering and lettering footnoted systems, and an explanatory Preface, Appendix or commentary on the page.

Ironically, one of the best editions of Opus 109 is by Franz Liszt, yet unfortunately this edition is out of print. Liszt began to edit the Beethoven sonatas in the 1840s, and published them individually from 1857 to1861. His Complete Edition, published years later in 1886, illustrates a modern approach to critical editing: additions are clearly marked and discussed in an added Appendix, while the original source remains intact, and high consideration is given to facilitating technique to communicate the poetry of the sonata. Additions include an increase to the use of the pedal, slurs to outline the *grande ligne*, and alterations to bar lines, which correspond to suggestions made by modern sketch researchers William Meredith and Nicolas Marston. Liszt's edition is aimed at an advanced performer, in contrast to the

heavily narrated edition of his son-in-law, Hans von Bülow.

Bülow's edition (1897) has a continuous narrative dialogue directed at a student expected to fall into common technical traps. His goal is to direct the student through technical difficulties considered within the style of Beethoven's poetic language. His editorial suggestions appear clearly separate from the primary source, explained in both lengthy footnotes on the page and a substantial Preface. An increased use of the pedal, dramatic dynamics, agogic inflections and poetic citations, are indicated on the score like medieval gloss around what Lisztians called "The New Testament". Bülow states he has consulted several sources and has corrected the erroneous notation and voicing of the "new Leipzig edition" (*Reinecke).* Bülow stresses that every note in Beethoven is gold, and should therefore be studied with "painstaking accuracy" as a means to understand Beethoven's message.

Bülow's editorial approach to Opus 109 may compare to the previously mentioned editorial examples of Reinecke. In the opening of the first movement, Bülow indicates numerous detailed directions on the score along with editorial commentary culminating in an editorial objective that appears to celebrate the differences between the opening *Vivace* and *Adagio* themes, which correlates with Bülow's orchestral approach to performance practice. Bülow's editorial stress placed emphasis on long phrases, cantabile expression, dramatic dynamics and orchestral voicing.

The value of pedagogical editions as historical documents of reception history and performance

practice has just begun to be recognized by scholars. Unfortunately, most nineteenth-century pedagogical editions are out of print, except for those virtuosos who went to America, including Bülow and d'Albert.

Editing Beethoven's music can never be fully objective. Authoritative decisions must be made at every stage of the editorial process: whether editing from Beethoven's autographs or first editions, problems of detail exist, not all of which can be answered definitively. Donald Tovey stated that where Beethoven's art lacks tidiness, an editor will find amongst Beethoven's discrepancies "innumerable opportunities of learning...what would never have entered into his own editorial mind."[5] Critical editions should offer a score as true to Beethoven's original as possible. Changes should be explained either in a separate appendix, a preface, or through commentary on the page. Most nineteenth-century critical editions of Beethoven's piano sonatas that are still in print require a critical response to the silent interpretive changes. On the other hand, most nineteenth-century pedagogical editions are out of print, though they present a range of often valuable interpretive insights.

Nineteenth-century scholars and virtuosos fulfilled an editorial ideal in two different ways, each influenced by their own cultural biases that reveal divided attitudes towards how Beethoven fit into society – as part of tradition, or as an innovator. Both types of editions are equally valuable as historical documents of culture, society and reception history.

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[5] Donald Tovey, *The Complete Beethoven Piano Sonatas, Preface* (London, 1931) 5.

The two schools of editing have influenced modern editing: editors today combine research and evaluation of primary documents with a consideration of performance practice and knowledge of the composer's style and his place in history. Yet, while both types of editions of Opus 109 have validity, it is the pedagogical editions that aim to metaphorically express the ephemeral nature and aesthetics of Beethoven's style using commentary addressed to a specific audience. This editorial goal also underlies that of modern musicology: to support a form of culturally sensitive critical analysis aimed at making music accessible to both listener and performer who seek to reach an interpretive vision in the spirit and character of Beethoven.

Appendix A

Nineteenth-Century Editions of Beethoven's *Piano Sonata, Opus 109*

Authentic Edition (Beethoven's authorized first edition)

- Adolph Schlesinger, publisher, Berlin, 1821. Inaugural edition accompanied by a list of errata. Dedicated to Maximiliana von Brentano (daughter of the supposed Immortal Beloved). Equal rights of publication sold to Artaria & Co., and Steiner & Co. (Vienna).

Pirated Editions (no editor)

- Johann Cappi (Berlin, 1822): exact copy of Schlesinger's edition (Berlin, 1821).
- Moritz Schlesinger (Paris, 1822): used corrupted printing plates of his father.
- Sigmund Lebert (Berlin, 1877): original source unknown.

Facsimile editions

- Erwin Ratz (Vienna, 1908). Facsimile of Beethoven's autograph with Preface by Ratz. Reprinted with Preface by O. Jonas (New York: Robert Owen Lehman Foundation, 1965).
- William Kinderman (Indiana: University of Indiana Press, 2003). *Artaria 195: Beethoven's sketchbook for the Missa Solemnis and Opus 109.*

Critical Editions (editorial revisions)

Subgroup A: *Urtext* scores (little editorial intervention)

- C. Köhler (Berlin, 1869): Original source unknown; changes strokes to staccatos and adds fingering. No critical commentary. Reprint 1953, New York: G. Schirmer.
- Carl Krebs (Berlin, 1898). Used authorized sonatas from the *Beethoven Gesamtausgabe*, collected in the 1860s. Krebs was one of the first to consult Beethoven's autographs for many sonatas, but used Schlesinger's edition for Opus 109. Considered the best edition of Opus 109 until Heinrich Schenker consulted the autograph for his edition (Vienna, 1913). Krebs's edition was distinguished as *Urtext*, a term officially recognized by the *Königlichen Akademie der Künste* (Berlin) in the 1890s.
- Arthur Forte (Boston: Arthur Schmidt, 1917). *Urtext*. In print.
- Carl Martiessen (Frankfurt: C.F. Peters, 1948). *Urtext* based on corrupted inaugural edition.
- B.A. Wallner (Munich: G. Henle Verlag, 1952). *Urtext* .In print.
- Leo Weiner (Budapest: Editio Musica, 1959). *Urtext*. In print.

Subgroup B: "Critical" Editions (editorial interpretation)

- Muzio Clementi (London: Clementi & Co., 1826): Claimed to present authorized editions, yet reinterprets orthographic directions. His source for Opus 109 was a pirated edition, although he gained authorization from Beethoven for his editions of both the Opus 110 and Opus 111 sonatas.
- Ignaz Moscheles (London: Cramer & Co., 1839). Reprinted by Hallberger in 1858. Highly altered score to accommodate early pianos. Asserted he used printing plates of Carl Czerny's edition (Vienna: Haslinger, 1828). His 1858 edition uses the same faster tempos suggested in Czerny's revised edition of 1850. Did not take opportunity to use Beethoven's autograph. No critical commentary. Dedicates the Complete Edition to Maxe Brentano, not just Opus 109. Many orthographic alterations were accepted into *Neue Beethoven Ausgabe*.
- Henry Litolff (Braunschweig, 1860): scholarly approach; original source unknown. Alters orthographic directions including bar lines, pedal directions and dynamics; omits German directions. No critical commentary. Praised by Leipzig Conservatory member Moscheles and Paris Conservatory scholars Zimmerman and Fétis. Out of print.
- Agnes Zimmerman (London and New York: Novello, Ewer & Co., 1873). Original source unknown. Principle of editing honestly discussed in Preface, while specific changes unclear and reflective of Liszt's interpretation. Still in print.
- H. Büssmeyer (Berlin, Paris, 1880): jointly published by Carl Haslinger (Berlin) and Moritz Schlesinger (Paris). Original source is probably inaugural edition; turned down opportunity to use

autograph. Alters many orthographic directions without critical commentary. Still in print.

- Ernst Pauer (London, 1885). Scholarly approach with brief Preface, original source unknown. Probably for use at Royal College of Music, London. Beautifully bound. Basis for edition by G. Buonamici (London: Augener, 1903).
- Gustav Damm (Leipzig, 1890): pseudonym for scholar Theodor Steingräber. Many orthographic refinements and omissions. No critical commentary. Out of print.
- Carl Reinecke (Leipzig & Brussels, 1886). Still in print by Breitkopf & Härtel. Original source unknown. Many incorrect notes and orthographic directions. No critical commentary. Prepared especially for use at the Leipzig Conservatory. Reprinted as an *Urtext* by Kalmus (New York) since 1968.

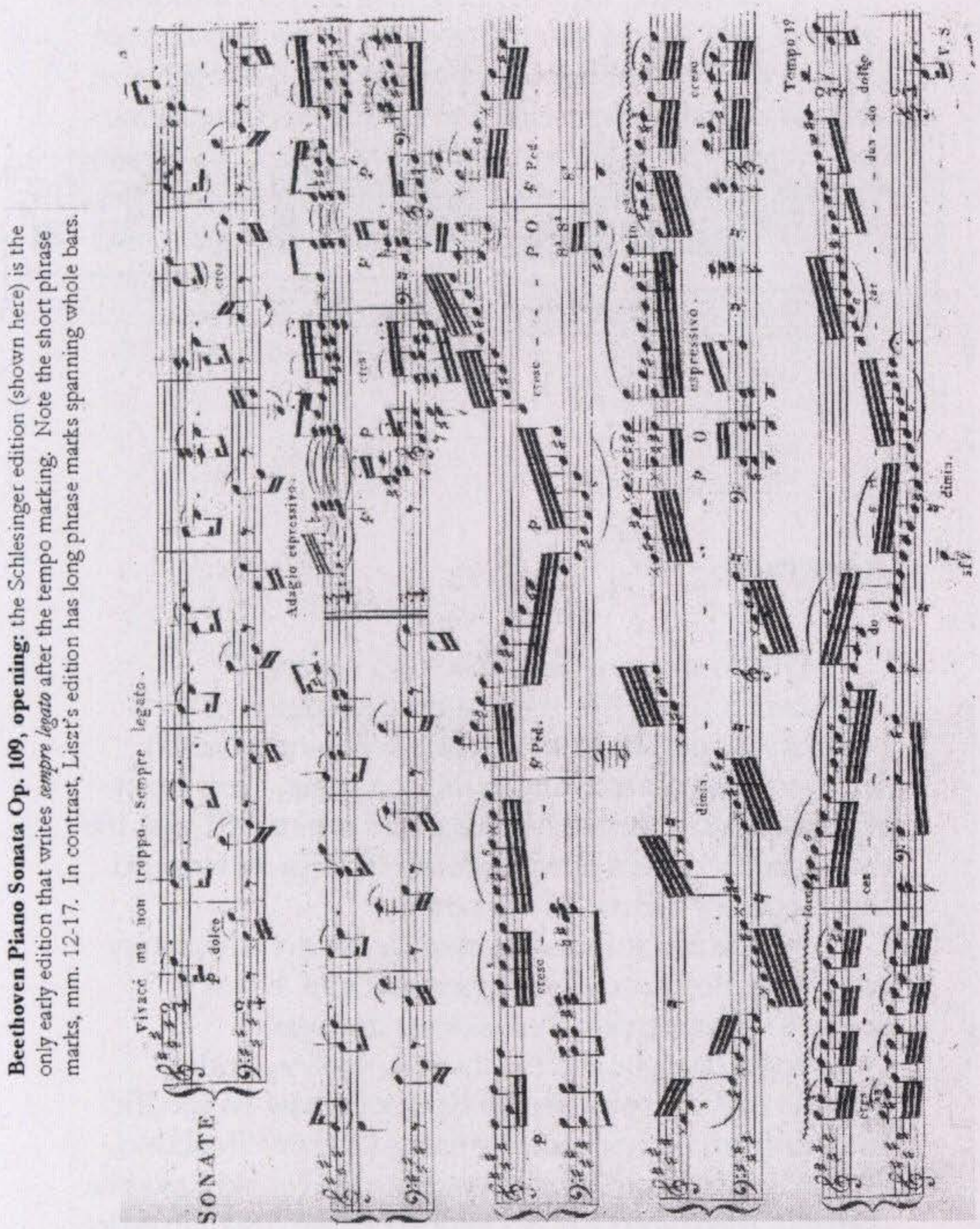
Pedagogical Editions (instructive and interpretive editing)

- Franz Liszt (Vienna, 1886): Interpretive suggestions kept clearly separate from the score; alterations thoroughly indicated through critical apparatus. Many insights match suggestions of modern sketch researchers. Fluent approach to technical problems. Aimed at advanced performer. Edition organizes sonatas in order of difficulty, with Opus 109 the most difficult, followed by Opus 106. One of the best editions unfortunately out of print.
- Hans von Bülow (Stuttgart, 1872, 1880; New York, 1897, reprint 1903). First edition co-edited with Sigmund Lebert to Op. 53, with added fingerings suggested by Immanuel Faisst, Ignaz Lachner and Franz Liszt. Schirmer reprint (1897) includes

translations and an added Preface by Theodor Baker. Preface discusses elements of Beethoven's style, and suggests sonatas in order of difficulty with Opus 106 as the most difficult, followed by Opus 109. Highly instructive and constant over-the-shoulder narrative demands an intelligent conception of "the great Master" Beethoven's message as a means to solve technical problems. Suggestions clearly separate in Preface and footnotes on the page. Dedicated to Liszt. Still in print.

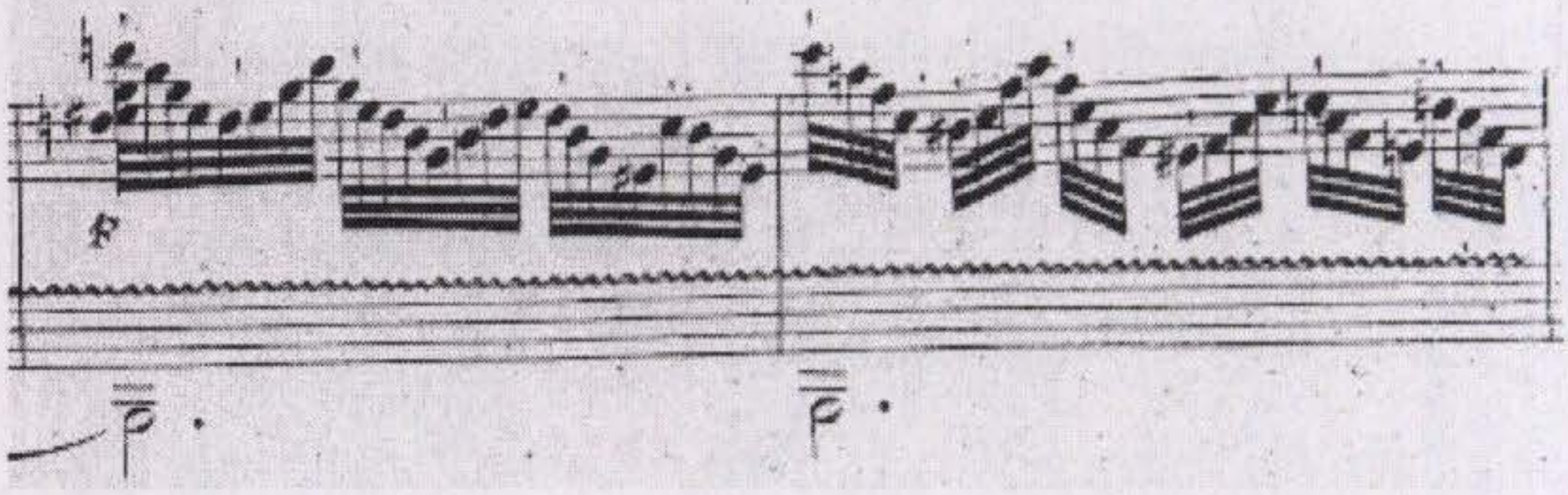
- Sigmund Lebert (Stuttgart, 1877). Scholarly approach with Preface and footnotes; practical fingerings for students. Out of print.
- Karl Klindworth (Berlin, London and New York, 1884). Instruction appears separate in smaller print above the score. Borrows many directions from Bülow. Very difficult fingering. Out of print.
- Eugene d'Albert (Leipzig, 1902; New York, 1915). Many directions from Bülow's edition; poetic inspiration states Beethoven's Opus 109 is spoken "in words, not in pictures...full of consolation and peace". Preface and critical commentary explain general orthographic alterations. Still in print by C. Fischer of New York.
- Carl Lamond (Leipzig, 1923). Scholarly style of Klindworth; yet relies on the edition of Liszt for orthographic directions. Preface and critical commentary explain the highly emotional and dramatic approach.

Appendix B



Beethoven Piano Sonata Op. 109, opening: the Schlesinger edition (shown here) is the only early edition that writes *sempre legato* after the tempo marking. Note the short phrase marks, mm. 12-17. In contrast, Liszt's edition has long phrase marks spanning whole bars.

Variation 6, mm. 16-17: the Schlesinger edition of 1821 (shown here) uses strokes at this point while other editions, such as the Reineke of 1886 use dots.



Abstract

Due to the complex publication history of Beethoven's Opus 109, the first printed edition of the piano sonata published by Maurice Schlesinger (Berlin, 1821) contained, according to the composer, "very many serious errors." The controversial first edition of Opus 109 established a pattern of editorial discord that surrounded this sonata for the rest of the century.

This article examines specific nineteenth-century editions of Beethoven's piano sonata Opus 109 as prepared by two types of musicians: the piano virtuoso/ pedagogue and the theorist/ analyst. Critical analyses of these two editorial types will draw on specific editions from both schools by Franz Liszt (Wolfenbüttel, 1857-61), Hans von Bülow (Stuttgart, 1872), Carl Reinecke (Leipzig, 1886) and Gustav Damm (Leipzig, 1890) in order to illustrate the marked divide in the reception of Beethoven's innovative ideas. These editions represent two

often-conflicting interpretations of *Werktreue*, and thus become repositories for crosscurrents of nineteenth-century performance practice. Moreover, these interpretative traditions reflect a larger polarity in nineteenth-century Beethoven reception: his dual identity as a classical composer esteemed within the newly forming canon, and as an innovator with a view to the future of the piano. Ultimately, a thorough study of Beethoven's autograph, errata, letters and sketches reveals that there is not one "ideal" edition that matches Beethoven's intended vision.