

The Westerby–Meredith Hypothesis: The History of the *Eroica* Variations and Daniel Steibelt's Fortepiano Quintet, Opus 28, no. 2

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I. Introduction: Ferdinand Ries' Version of the Duels between Daniel Steibelt and Beethoven in 1800

"Op. 35: on this composition hangs a story," began Herbert Westerby in his 1931 discussion of the *Eroica* Variations.¹ The tale itself is an oft-told one in the canon of Beethoven anecdotes, but Westerby gave it an apparently new twist. Here is his version:

Steibelt—a favourite composer of the period, but now almost forgotten except for some studies of his—met Beethoven in Vienna, and a friendly competition ensuing, Steibelt improvised on a theme already treated by Beethoven. The latter, incited by friends, reached out for Steibelt's quartet which had been performed, picked out the bass part of the opening theme, and then improvised so artistic and wonderful a composition that poor Steibelt, quite vanquished, vanished from sight and never sought Beethoven's presence again. The improvised composition forms the basis of these Variations, Op. 35.

The new twist is Westerby's seemingly factual assertion that Beethoven's improvisations on Steibelt's bass—that is, the cello part—were the origins of Opus 35.

Before critiquing Westerby in detail, it is necessary to turn to the original version of this colorful anecdote, which dates from 1837 and appeared in print the following year. It is found in Ferdinand Ries' portion (Part II) of the earliest and sometimes reliable documentary biography of Beethoven, *Biographische Notizen über Ludwig van Beethoven von Dr. F.G. Wegeler und Ferdinand Ries*:

When the immensely famous Steibelt came from Paris to Vienna, several of Beethoven's friends were worried lest he should cast a shadow on Beethoven's reputation. Steibelt did not visit him; they met for the first time one evening in the house of Count Fries, where Beethoven gave his new trio in B flat major for piano, clarinet, and cello (Opus 11) in its initial performance. This work offers the pianist no opportunity to display his virtuosity. Steibelt listened with a certain condescension, paid Beethoven a few compliments, and felt confident of his own superiority.—He played a quintet of his own composition, improvised, and produced a great effect with his *tremulandos*, which were something quite new then. Beethoven could not be persuaded to play again. A week later there was another concert at Count Fries. Steibelt again played a quintet with much success, but more important (one could sense this) he had prepared a brilliant improvisation, choosing the identical theme on which the variations in Beethoven's trio were written. This outraged Beethoven's admirers as well as Beethoven himself. It was now his turn to improvise at the piano.

He seated himself in his usual, I might say unmannerly, fashion at the instrument, almost as if he had been pushed. He had picked up the cello part of Steibelt's quintet on his way to the piano, and pacing it upside down on the music rack (intentionally?), he hammered out a theme from the first few bars with one finger.—Insulted and irritated as he was, he improvised in such a manner that Steibelt left the room before Beethoven had finished, never wanted to meet him again, and even made it a condition that Beethoven not be invited when his own company was desired.²

Ries' version, rich in specifics, gives the impression of a first-hand observation even though it contains two significant errors: Steibelt had actually come from Prague, not directly from Paris, and the date of the premiere of Beethoven's Trio, Opus 11, was 1798. The first edition was published by Mollo in October of that same year in a set of four parts: clarinet or violin (the violin part, according to Czerny, arranged by Beethoven himself), cello, and fortepiano. The theme in the last movement of Beethoven's trio, which Steibelt took up as a call to arms, was taken from Joseph Weigl's comic opera *Lamor marinaro* (*The Sailor's Love*), where it appeared as the final *Allegretto* from the Terzett no. 12, "Pria ch'io l'impegno" ("Before I Begin Work, I Must Have Something to Eat"). The Viennese premiere of Weigl's opera had been given on October 15, 1797, in the Wiener Hoftheater as *Der Korsar oder Die Liebe unter den Seelenten* (*The Pirate, or Love Among the Sailors*).³

The catchy theme turned out to be quite popular as the basis for variation sets. Friedrich Wilhelm Berner (1780-1827), Joseph Leopold Eybler (1765-1846), Abbé Joseph Gelinek (1758-1825),⁴ Johann Nepomuk Hummel (1778-1837), and Joseph Wölfl (1773-1812) all composed sets on this theme. (Coincidentally, Beethoven had trounced Gelinek in another famous duel soon after Beethoven's arrival in Vienna, but had met his match in Wölfl on several occasions at Count Wetzlar's home in 1799.)⁵ Another somewhat famous set of variations was composed after 1828 by Paganini, who used the tune in a "Sonata con Variazioni" for violin with orchestral accompaniment.

The two errors in Ries' story may be explained by an important fact: though he appears to be relating an event he himself observed, Ries (1784-1838) did not come to Vienna until early 1803 when he was eighteen, as Jos van der Zanden has convincingly argued in a recent article from 2004.⁶ And if Ries was not in Vienna at the time of the incident, he must have been passing it on as received from a second party who had either been present him- or herself or who had heard it recounted third-hand. The fact that Ries was not present also casts doubt on such statements as "one could sense" that Steibelt had prepared his improvisation in advance. Thus, our only account of the story comes down to us from a biased individual (a friend and student of Beethoven) who was not present and who wrote it down as received from a second- or third-hand source for the first time almost four decades after the events.

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II. Ignaz Schuppanzigh's Reference Reference in 1825 to the Duels

Confirmation of the fact that Steibelt and Beethoven dueled is found in a conversation book entry from September 9, 1825, written by Beethoven's nephew Karl to his uncle: "Schuppanzigh is telling the story of what a triumph you celebrated over Steipelt" ("Schuppanzigh erzählt, welchen / Triumph du über Steipelt / gefeyert hast").⁷ The sentence occurs in an extended and fascinating conversation between Beethoven, Maurice Schlesinger, nephew Karl, Ignaz Schuppanzigh, and an unknown visitor. Peter Clive has suggested that Sir George Smart "may have been" the unknown visitor,⁸ since he was present that day at a private performance of the String Quartet in A Minor, Opus 132, at the hotel Zum wilden Mann. Schuppanzigh played the violin at that performance for a "numerous assembly of professors" (in Smart's words).⁹

The entry immediately preceding the Steibelt reference, which was written by the unknown visitor, strongly suggests that the improvisation duels were the catalysts for the mention of Steibelt's name: "my greatest wish on this earth is still to hear you improvise once sometimes, my earthly god" ("mein grösster Wunsch / auf dieser Welt ist / noch Sie mein irdischer / Gott bald einmahl / <bald> fantasiren zu / hören").¹⁰ If Smart was indeed the unknown visitor, his "greatest wish" was soon fulfilled two days later after a dinner following the second performance of the quartet. According to Smart's diary, "after dinner he was coaxed to play extempore, observing in French to me, 'Upon what subject shall I play?' Meanwhile he was touching the instrument thus:



to which I answered, 'Upon that.' On which then he played for about twenty minutes in a most extraordinary manner, sometimes very *fortissimo*, but full of genius."¹¹

Though there is no documentation that I am aware of that supports the hypothesis, it is possible that Schuppanzigh himself may have been present and may have performed at the Steibelt encounters in Count von Fries' palace in 1800: from 1794-99 Schuppanzigh played violin in a quartet that performed in Prince Karl Lichnowsky's residence, and he and Beethoven performed together in 1797 and 1798 at Jahn's concert hall.¹² (It would even have been possible for him to have performed the violin part of the Clarinet Trio with Beethoven at the first Steibelt encounter at Count Fries if the alternate first edition for violin, cello, and fortepiano were performed.)

III. Beethoven's Opus 11 and Steibelt's "Improvisation" on the Same Theme

The melody set to the text "Pria ch'io l'impegno" ("Before I Begin Work, I Must Have Something to Eat"), as it appears in Beethoven's version, features insistently repeated *sforzando* off-beat accents on the second beats of eight of the sixteen measures of the theme, rather square phrasing (4+4+2+2+4), and a repetitive AABBA structure, all of which combine to create a droll, if not outright campy, effect that well suits the comic text. (Gelinek's version of the theme has no accents and an AABABBA form.) Beethoven's set includes nine variations. Verifying the details of Ries' account, only the running sixteenths of the first variation for solo fortepiano give the performer any opportunity for virtuosic display and—at an *Allegretto* tempo—little at that. Rather, Beethoven's set is an appealing display of well constructed variations: variation 2 features a canon between the fortepiano and clarinet; variation 3 is a *con fuoco* offering with octaves in the left hand; no. 4 is an intensely dreary ironic *minore* variation built

of the 1-3-5-^b6-five melodic contour that denotes outgoing feeling of pain and anguish;¹³ no. 5 features running parallel octaves, *fortissimo*, in the fortepiano; no. 6 is light-hearted, emphasizing triplets and appoggiaturas; no. 7 is another *minore* variation but now in march *topos* with *sfz* and *fp* accents when not *fortissimo*; no. 8 is a major-mode triplet variation, *dolce*; and the set concludes with a two-part variation in which the first part features octaves in both hands and an early example of the Beethoven trill that leads to a rollicking 6/8 conclusion. Weigl's comic theme receives a more sophisticated, though not showy, treatment than it might be thought to warrant. In point of fact, Gelinek's set for solo fortepiano on the same theme—which also uses running sixteenths in the first variation, right- and left-hand octaves, canon, two *minore* variations, and a march variation—is much more *brillante* than Beethoven's.

According to Ries, Steibelt reacted to Beethoven's trio at his first meeting with "a certain condescension, paid Beethoven a few compliments, and felt confident of his own superiority." He was confident enough to appear the next week with a prepared set of variations on the same tune. (Improvisations were commonly based on variation techniques during the Classical period.) From accounts of Steibelt's playing and his published sets of variations, we can piece together what sort of "improvisations" Steibelt had prepared with some certainty.

We may begin with the fact that Ries described them as "brillante." Though this adjective is indeed a cognate for the English word brilliant, its deeper German meaning and usage can be explored with the help of two dictionaries from the first decade of the nineteenth century. One of the most famous music dictionaries of the Classical period, Heinrich Christoph Koch's 1807 *Kurzgefasstes Handwörterbuch der Musik für praktische Tonkünstler und für Dilettanten (Concise Dictionary of Music for Professional Musicians and Dilettantes)*, defines "brillante" as "schimmernd oder hervorstechend."¹⁴ "Schimmernd," according to the 1802 *Neues Hand-Wörterbuch der Deutschen Sprache für die Engländer und der Englischen Sprache für die Deutschen (A New Dictionary of the German Language for Englishmen and of the English Language for the Germans)*, is defined as "glittering, glittering, shining, bright"; "hervorstechend" as coming from the verb to mean "to light, to shine, to give Light; to appear, to shine forth; to domineer, to be predominate."¹⁵ Thus, Ries' "brillante" suggests—based on these definitions from the same decade as the incident—that Steibelt's variations were not only glittering and bright but also "outshone" those in Beethoven's set.¹⁶

Indeed, Steibelt was renowned for his playing in quick movements (described as accurate and great), his use of the pedals (thought by some to be exaggerated, but see below for the context of this judgment), and by a very showy *tremolando* played with either one or both hands. In Ries' account, he noted that on the first meeting of the two virtuosos, Steibelt



Engraving of Steibelt from the title page of his *Etude pour le Piano-Forte, Opus 78* (Paris: Dufaut et Dubois, 1823) from the collection of the Ira F. Brilliant Center for Beethoven Studies

The Westerby–Meredith Hypothesis

CONTINUED

had “produced a great effect” with his tremolandos, “which were something quite new then.” Steibelt’s critics, a decidedly partisan crowd, charged that the real purpose of the *tremolando* was to cover a weak left hand. It is difficult to assess the sound of these *tremolando* passages today, because they were composed specifically for the English fortepianos of the 1790s, which Steibelt preferred to the Austrian fortepiano; a report from February 1800 on the Dresden stop of the tour contains the statement that “he only plays English fortepianos.”¹⁷ Because of the vast differences in sonorities, action, size, and pedals, a modern Steinway is too percussive and resonant to recreate the intended effect. Even on an English fortepiano, however, the *tremolando*, which required the pedals, fatigued the ear of one Dresden critic in 1800, who opined that the effect was well worth listening to: once!¹⁸ Given the importance of the *tremolando* to Steibelt’s success and the necessity for having the right pedals, he may have even toured with an English fortepiano; unfortunately, all that we know about the “very expensive” English fortepiano he played in Dresden is that it belonged to the English

ambassador. We do not know if or what kind of English fortepiano Steibelt may have brought along on his 1799–1800 virtuoso tour.

In order to gain some appreciation for Steibelt’s creative prowess and originality in the face of the general wretched opinion of his music that prevails today, it is instructive to examine some of the variations in one of his best sets, the “Deux Airs Russe.”¹⁹ It consists of ten variations and a fantasy in D Minor on the Ukrainian song “Schöne Minka ich muss scheiden” (“I Must Leave Pretty Minka”) and a closing second part, *Vivace* and in D Major, on “Ich bin ein kleine Zigeunerin” (“I am a Little Gypsy Woman/Girl”). The combination of melodies allowed Steibelt to dispel the gloom of D Minor with bright D Major at the conclusion.

“Schöne Minka” had become very popular in 1808 after the poet Christoph August Tiedge (1752–1841) made a free translation of the original text as a dialogue between the Cossack Ollis and the maiden Minka. The subject of the poem—a favorite theme of Romanticism—is the separation of the lovers and the suffering, weeping, and pain they will endure.²⁰ According to a notice from 1830, “there was a time when one heard ‘Schöne Minka’ whistled, hummed, and muttered on every street corner.”²¹

Steibelt’s set of variations was published by Bureau de Musique de C.F. Peters in 1814.²² Other well-known composers who wrote variations

The image shows a page of a musical score for Steibelt's "Schöne Minka" variations. The page is numbered "2" in the top left corner. It features three systems of music. The first system is labeled "INTRODUZIO. NE." and "Adagio con espressione." It begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and includes a *cres.* marking. The second system is labeled "No. I." and "Andante non troppo." It starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic and includes a *f* dynamic marking. The third system is labeled "Var. I. Un poco Allegretto." and begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The page number "1211" is visible at the bottom center.

Example 2: The introduction, theme, and beginning of Steibelt’s “Schöne Minka” variations (p. 2 of the Peters edition in the collection of the Ira F. Brilliant Center for Beethoven Studies)

on the set include Ferdinand Ries ("Neun Variationen über ein russisches Lied für Pianoforte," A Minor, Opus 33, no. 2, published by Simrock in Bonn, 1810),²³ Carl Maria von Weber (*Air Russe varié pour le Pianoforte*, Opus 40, 1815²⁴); Beethoven (23 *Liedern verschiedener Völker*, WoO 158, no. 16,²⁵ and in the Variations on "Schöne Minka" for flute and fortepiano, Opus 107, no. 7, 1817-18²⁶); and J.N. Hummel (*Adagio, Variationen, und Rondo über ein russisches Thema* for flute, cello, and fortepiano, Opus 78, 1818/19²⁷). By 1824, A.B. Marx could opine that the song was known by everyone and had been the subject of a hundred variation sets.²⁸ The song retains its popularity today among accordion players in a passionate arrangement with an introduction and virtuosic set of variations that can be heard on YouTube.²⁹ Not somber at all is the über-exuberant version released by the Leningrad Cowboys as "A Cossack was Riding Beyond the Duna" in 1993.³⁰ The low point of its reception history surely occurs on the YouTube webpage of the Adelaide Balalaikas and Singers' 2010 performance, where the song is described as an "Ukrainian earworm."³¹ Pathos, however, rather than exuberance characterizes the variation sets from the early nineteenth century.

As can be seen in Example 2, Steibelt launches his set with a probing eight-measure introduction that leads the basic motive of the song sequen-

tially through D Minor, G Minor, and C Minor before interrupting the sequences with all three diminished-seventh chords. A sinister progression of ascending chromatic harmonies climaxes on the rising minor third of the motive. The bundling of minor-key sequences, diminished-seventh chords, and chromaticism, all of which prepare the listener for the song's painfulness, is both inventive and dramatic.

Several of the variations are equally imaginative. In his presentation of the theme itself, Steibelt places the song in the treble, *piano*, and writes a sharp staccato eighth in the bass followed by a descending motive (6, 5, 3, 1) that evokes both incoming painful emotion and anguish.³² The first variation, at a slightly quicker tempo, is semi-canonic in nature and clever. Variations 4 and 5 (see Example 3) explore the lovers' agitation; the bass of no. 5 recalls Steibelt's lamenting descending motive from the bass of the theme, here reappearing syncopated and disjunct. After a *Con spirito* minor variation and a D Major *Scherzando* variation (nos. 6 and 7), Steibelt returns to the minor mode in no. 8 (see Example 4) with a variation built on descending sixteenth-note sigh motives (A to D) in the right hand above rising minor third passages in the left. Variation 9, *Allegretto risoluto*, transforms the descending fifths of no. 8 with octave passages in both hands; no. 10, *Adagio*, again uses the incoming painful

The image shows a page of a musical score for two variations, labeled 'Var. 4.' and 'Var. 5.'. The music is written for piano, with a treble and bass clef. The tempo is marked 'Agitato.' at the beginning. The score includes various dynamic markings such as 'm.d.', 'f', 'p', and 'mf'. The notation is dense, with many sixteenth and thirty-second notes, and some chromatic passages. The page number '-1211' is visible at the bottom center of the score.

Example 3: Variations 4 and 5 of Steibelt's "Schöne Minka" Variations (p. 4 of the Peters edition in the collection of the Ira F. Brilliant Center for Beethoven Studies)

The Westerby–Meredith Hypothesis

CONTINUED

motive (extended to C-sharp) from the bass of the theme (see Example 5). The final treatment of the theme occurs in the following fantasia, where the famed Steibelt *tremolando* initially rides above the theme, which is placed low in the bass (see Example 6). All told, Steibelt's set shows organic continuity across the variations, inventiveness in varying the character of each variation, harmonic expressivity, and opportunities for brilliance. Though there is not time here to compare it in detail to Beethoven's set of variations on "Schöne Minka" for flute and fortepiano, Steibelt's set is more interesting, organic, brilliant, and creative. Indeed, several of the sets by other composers are also superior.

There is, of course, no way to know what kind of variations Steibelt performed at his second encounter with Beethoven, but in his account Ries wrote that "one could sense" that they were prepared—that is, Steibelt took the challenge seriously—and that they were brilliant. Whatever their exact nature, Beethoven, "outraged, insulted, and irritated," decided to prove himself superior by taking clearly absurd material—upside down music—and demonstrating what real improvisation was.

IV. Dating Ries' Anecdote and Identifying the Quintet

Ries' story has been widely circulated and oft repeated in biographies, but Westerby's account is the only one I am aware of that suggests Beethoven's improvisations that day were the origins of the *Eroica* Variations. Perhaps Westerby's story did not gain more currency because his account contains its own omissions and inaccuracies. He mentioned only one meeting of the two virtuosos, stated that Beethoven improvised from the bass part of the opening theme of a quartet, not a quintet, and neglected to mention the spicy but telling detail that Beethoven, according to Ries, turned the cello part upside down. Is it possible, then, that the story is correct regarding the origins of the *Eroica* Variations?

To answer the question, we need to date Steibelt and Beethoven's encounters accurately. The matches must have occurred between October 1799 and May 1800 during Steibelt's concert tour to the cities of Hamburg, Berlin, Dresden, Prague, and Vienna. At the end of February or March 1800, he gave a concert in Prague that earned him hundreds of gold ducats. According to the fortepianist and composer Vaclav Jan Tomášek (1774–1850), "having finished his speculation, he went to Vienna, his purse filled with ducats, where he was knocked in the head by the pianist Beethoven."³³ (I will return to Tomášek's account below.)

6

Minore.

Var. 8

cres. f

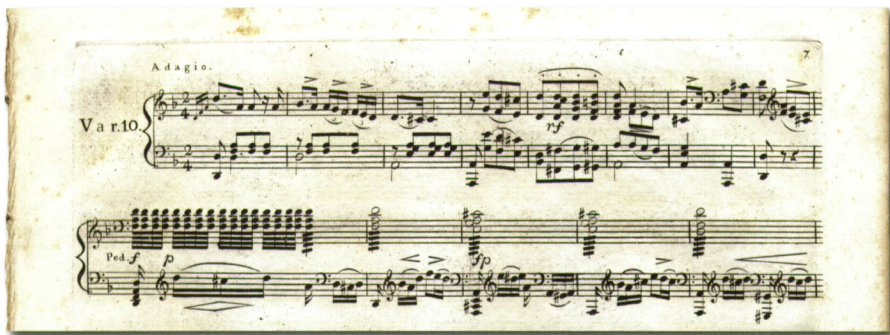
Allegretto risoluto.

Var. 9

I. II.

1241

Example 4: Variations 8 and 9 of Steibelt's "Schöne Minka" Variations (p. 6 of the Peters edition in the collection of the Ira F. Brilliant Center for Beethoven Studies)



Example 5: Beginning of Variation 10 of Steibelt's "Schöne Minka" Variations (p. 7 of the Peters edition in the collection of the Ira F. Brilliant Center for Beethoven Studies)

Given a date of March or April 1800, then, we need to look among Steibelt's works for fortepiano quartets and quintets published or composed prior to that date. Of his 110 works with opus numbers and "countless unnumbered works," the only published candidates from the 1790s are the two quintets for fortepiano and strings, Opus 28. The first edition of these quintets, dedicated to none other than the King of Prussia, was published by Imbault in Paris in 1797; the title page announces them as *Three Quintets*, although prints of only nos. 1 and 2 survive today.³⁴ That same year the London publishers Longman & Broderip issued a parallel first edition of Opus 28, no. 2, as "Op. 31." The two fortepiano quintets published as Opus 28 in Paris are, in fact, the only fortepiano quintets in the list of all of Steibelt's works prepared by Mee.³⁵

Fortuitously for my search, I first came across Westerby's assertion while I was teaching part-time at the University of California, Berkeley, in addition to my position at SJSU, in 1986-87. Berkeley has one of the finest music libraries in the United States, and as a faculty member I was allowed to check out rare scores as part of a project to photocopy all of their rare Beethoven scores for the Center's collection. The library also owns Imbault's first edition of the Quintets, Opus 28, nos. 1-2, that I was able to study.³⁶

In addition to studying the Steibelt works in the Berkeley library, I began to collect printings of Steibelt's works for the Beethoven Center to enable scholars to have a deeper understanding of his music from

as broad a perspective as possible. Initially, Steibelt printings from the 1790s-1810s could be purchased for as little as \$25; my interest seemed to have quite unintentionally started a run on the Steibelt market, which has had the unfortunate result of significantly higher prices for his music. (A list of his works in the Center can be found on its website; divided by genre. It includes information about which works contain printed or handwritten fingerings; ornate title pages; the kind of printed pedal markings and the length of the pedal markings.) Along the way, the Center was able to purchase its own copy of the first edition of the Quintets, Opus 28, from 1797, and an English reprint of the second quintet (as Opus 31).

My research with the score of the second quintet of Opus 28 in 1987 revealed a promising candidate that collaborated Westerby's version on two counts. My initial search through the violoncello part, however, was a failure. Recreating the scene in my imagination, I pictured Beethoven stalking up to the cello's music stand, grabbing the cello part as it lay still open at the *end* of the second movement, and carrying it to the fortepiano. The last two staves of music on the last page, however, when flipped upside down, are not convincing to me, even though motion by fifths plays a prominent role (see Example 7).³⁷

Then it occurred to me that Beethoven may have seized the cello part, strode to the fortepiano, opened the part from the *beginning* of the first movement and dramatically turned the part upside down, which would



Example 6: Fantasia of Steibelt's "Schöne Minka" Variations (p. 8 of the Peters edition in the collection of the Ira F. Brilliant Center for Beethoven Studies)

The Westerby–Meredith Hypothesis

CONTINUED

mean that the music at the bottom of the first page would now be upside-down (see Example 8). Immediately I saw that the single most striking feature of Beethoven's bass theme—the repeated eighths (see Example 9)—is found at the beginning of the second staff and that the opening gesture of the first staff is motion by fifths. Just to be sure, I decided to check the cello part of the first quintet; Example 10a-b contains the upside down beginning of the first and last pages. Neither passage in Example 10a-b works. The English parallel first edition of the second quartet does not work either (see Example 10c); because the music was engraved separately, what I view as the most essential features are missing. If the Westerby–Meredith theory is correct, Steibelt and his performers must have been playing from the French first edition, which, with its elaborately decorated title page bearing the coat of arms of the King of Prussia and the fortepiano part also containing the first violin part above the fortepiano part, is a much more impressive score. One may also conclude that Opus 28, no. 1, was the quintet performed at the first meeting at Count von Fries' palace.

V. Testing Steibelt's Opus 28, no. 2, against Beethoven's Bass Theme in Opus 35

Though there may never be a way to prove whether Steibelt's Opus 28, no. 2, was indeed Beethoven's launching point at Count Fries in 1800, the upside-down theme can be tested against the characteristics of Beethoven's bass in the *Eroica* Variations. What features might be needed in a Steibelt upside-down example to hypothesize a convincing connection to Beethoven's bass theme in the *Eroica* Variations? The following seven criteria would be of varying degrees of relevance and interest. In my opinion, the most important is no. 1, because the *fortissimo* "banged" eighth notes are the most startling and unique feature of the bass of the theme of the *Eroica* Variations. The others are not as critical but do increase the number of points of connection.

1) The Steibelt example would need to have three repeated eighth notes at or near the beginning of the second eight-measure phrase (Steibelt has two sets of three repeated eighth notes at the beginning of the second seven-measure phrase/Beethoven has one set, but *fortissimo*, in m. 10 of the bass theme);

2) The Steibelt example would most likely begin soft, have a loud dynamic marking on the repeated eighth notes, and end softly (Steibelt has a *piano* under the beginning measure, a *forte* on the second set of repeated eighth notes, and a *fortissimo* at the end/Beethoven begins *pianissimo*, has a *fortissimo* at the repeated eighth notes, and ends *pianissimo*);

3) The Steibelt example would probably be in a simple rather than a compound meter (Steibelt is in common time/Beethoven is in 2/4);

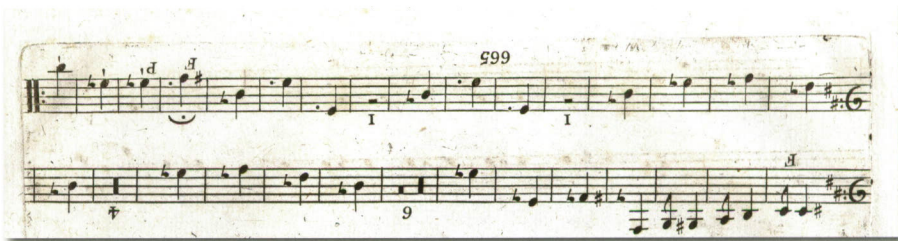
4) The Steibelt example might have something approximating a sixteen-measure theme (Steibelt has an 8+7 phrase construction/Beethoven's is 8+8);

5) The Steibelt example would probably include motion by fifths and/or octaves in the first four measures (Steibelt has motion by fifths and octaves in the first seven measures/Beethoven has motion by fifths and octaves in the first four measures of the bass theme);

6) The Steibelt example might have eighth-note motion in measures 5-8 and also might have leading tone or half-step motion as part of the cadence (Steibelt has eighth notes in m. 5 and could have half-step cadences in mm. 6-7/Beethoven has eighth notes in m. 7 of the bass theme and a half-step half cadence from m. 7-8);

7) The Steibelt example might have cadential motion, preferably by a fifth, near the end of the second phrase (if the upside down theme is read in C Major, the Steibelt theme has half-step cadential motion at the end of the second phrase/Beethoven ends with an open descending fifth cadence).

Thus, if Steibelt's upside-down bass theme is graded according to these seven possible criteria, it matches the seven fairly closely, especially if we take into account certain aspects of what is known about Beethoven's improvisations. Beethoven's counterpoint teacher Johann Schenk reported on an improvisation, most probably from 1793, in this manner: "Having struck a few chords and tossed off a few figures as if they were of no significance, the creative genius gradually unveiled his profoundly psychological pictures. My ear was continually charmed by the beauty of the many and various motives which he wove with wonderful clarity and loveliness into each other" (italics mine).³⁸ In 1821 Sir John Russell documented a similar beginning from insignificance: "At first he only struck now and then a few hurried and interrupted notes, as if afraid of being detected in a crime; but gradually he forgot everything else, and ran on during half an hour in a fantasy, in a style extremely varied, and marked, above all, by the most abrupt transitions."³⁹ But perhaps the most significant anecdote for our purposes is the story of Beethoven's improvisations in 1808 or 1810 when Pleyel came to Vienna with his most recent string quartets, which were performed in the Lobkowitz palace before, once again, "a large and illustrious audience." Carl



Example 7: The bottom two staves of the last page of the cello part of Steibelt's Quintet, Opus 28, no. 2 (from the Imbault edition in the collection of the Ira F. Brilliant Center for Beethoven Studies)

599

STEIBELT. Quintet II

Allo Maestoso

2

Example 8: The opening page of the cello part of Steibelt's Quintet, Opus 28, no. 2 (p. 2 of the Imbault edition in the collection of the Ira F. Brilliant Center for Beethoven Studies)



Example 9: The bass of the theme from Beethoven's *Eroica* Variations (from the Clementi & Banger edition from 1813 in the collection of the Ira F. Brilliant Center for Beethoven Studies)

The Westerby–Meredith Hypothesis

CONTINUED

Czerny, Beethoven's pupil, is the narrator: "As usual, he had to be coaxed for an interminably long time, and finally the ladies almost dragged him to the piano. Angry, he seized the 2nd violin part of Pleyel's quartet from the music stand, where it was still lying open, threw it down on the music rack of the piano, and began to improvise. He had never been heard to improvise more brilliantly, more originally or more phenomenally than on that evening. And throughout the whole improvisation the quite insignificant notes on the opened page of the 2nd violin part were present in the middle parts, like a connecting thread, or a *cantus firmus* [pre-existing melody], whilst he built upon them the boldest melodies and harmonies in the most brilliant concert style. Pleyel was so amazed that he kissed Beethoven's hands."⁴⁰ Though this improvisation ended in hand-kissing rather than Pleyel quitting the palace, it is striking for the similarity of details to the second Steibelt encounter. Beethoven did not improvise because he wished to, he was angry, he grabbed a less interesting part of a chamber music work on the way to the fortepiano, he turned what he found there into both accompaniment and melody, and he used the material as a *cantus firmus*, which suggests that contrapuntal improvisation was involved. All that is missing is the insult of turning the part upside-down.

VI. Beethoven's Four-fold Use of the Bass Theme (Late 1800 through October 1802)

Westerby's observation that "The improvised composition forms the basis of these Variations, Op. 35," is actually somewhat misleading for, as is well known, the bass of the theme of the *Eroica* Variations was used by the composer on four different occasions:

1) The Finale (no. 16) of the ballet *The Creatures of Prometheus*, Opus 43 (the entire ballet composed from the end of 1800 through the beginning of 1801).⁴¹

Sketches for the ballet appear in the Landsberg 7 Sketchbook on folios 37-66 and 71-84. Sketches for no. 16 in particular occur on pp. 130, 131, 138; 139, 143, 151, 157.⁴² The ballet was premiered on March 28, 1801; according to Douglas Johnson, Alan Tyson, and Robert Winter, Landsberg 7 was used from "late summer or fall of 1800" until March about 1801.⁴³

2) No. 7 of the Twelve Contredances for Orchestra, WoO 14 (recomposed winter of 1801/02)

The history of the sketches for WoO 14 is complex. Sketches for nos. 3, 4, 8, and 12 are found on three pages from ca. 1791/92 of the Kafka Miscellany (pp. 50, 154, 126); sketches for nos. 7 and 11 appear on pp. 139 and 143 of Landsberg 7 embedded in the sketches for the ballet; and sketches for nos. 2, 9, and 10 appear on fols. 9r and 10r in the Kessler Sketchbook. In the critical report to his edition, Shin Augustinus Kojima argued that (1) the existing sketches for no. 7 are found in the middle of the sketches for the finale of the ballet; (2) there is no evidence that no. 7 existed as an independent contredance before the early part of 1801, and (3) that Beethoven most probably incorporated no. 7 (and no. 11) as beloved themes from the ballet when he assembled the set of contredances.⁴⁴

3) *Eroica* Variations, Opus 35 (composed summer/autumn 1802)

Sketches for the variations appear at the end of the Kessler Sketchbook (fols. 82v-88v, 89r-v) and in the following Wielhorsky Sketchbook (pp. 12-14, 22-43). Johnson, Tyson, and Winter argue that the sketches at the end of the Kessler Sketchbook date from "possibly as early as June or as late as August 1802"⁴⁵; the beginning of the sketches in Wielhorsky "must belong to the second half of 1802."⁴⁶ (The autograph of the variations is dated 1802.)

4) Finale to the *Eroica* Symphony (composed in 1802-04, with the majority of work from May/June through October 1803)

Sketches for the *Eroica* occur on pp. 44-45 of the Wielhorsky Sketchbook (described as "early ideas"⁴⁷) and pp. 4-91 (with gaps) of the Landsberg 6 Sketchbook. The vast majority of the sketches, those in Landsberg 6, date from "ca. June 1803" to October of that year; Ries wrote to Simrock on October 22, 1803, telling him that Beethoven had recently played the symphony for him [on the fortepiano] and that it was magnificent.⁴⁸



Example 10:
 a: The first two staves of the first page of the cello part of the Quintet, Opus 28, no. 1 (Imbault edition);
 b: the first two staves of the last page of the cello part of the Quintet, Opus 28, no. 1 (Imbault edition);
 c: the first two staves of the first page of the cello part of the Quintet, Opus 28, no. 2
 (in the English reprint edition in the collection of the Ira F. Brilliant Center for Beethoven Studies)

Given Beethoven's near obsession with gleaming the most he could out of the bass and the newly minted melody, it would be more accurate to reword Westerby: Beethoven's improvisations on Steibelt's theme proved to be the origin of the opening theme and its bass of the finale of the ballet *The Creatures of Prometheus*, which was recycled in the seventh Contredance of WoO 14, extensively developed for the fortepiano in the *Eroica* Variations, and received orchestral treatment in the *Eroica* Symphony.

Musicologists have long noted that the *Eroica* Symphony is not only about Napoleon but also about Beethoven himself as a musical conqueror. By virtue of the theme's use in the ballet, the *Eroica* is also connected to Prometheus, the creator of mankind who stole fire from Mount Olympus to share with mankind. If Westerby's theory is correct, we may have to complicate the *Eroica* by adding another colorful figure, Steibelt, to its compositional history. Certainly, Beethoven's "triumph over Steipelt" became one public demonstration of the composer's own "heroism."

VII. Why was Beethoven So Outraged at Count von Fries' Salon?

The two encounters between Steibelt and Beethoven warrant a deeper exploration than they have received in the literature, especially if we wish to understand the importance of the encounters for Beethoven's financial support from the aristocracy, his reputation as an improviser, and possible influences on his music. It is particularly helpful to set aside the word "charlatan," frequently used to define Steibelt's character, if the complexity of the interactions between the two composers is to be understood. Four aspects deserve our consideration, three of which focus on Steibelt's worthiness as a rival.

(1) Steibelt was a strikingly successful rival to Beethoven as a successful musical entrepreneur and touring virtuoso in several ways that Beethoven was not. Support for this conclusion comes, in part, from the composer and fortepianist Vaclav Jan Tomásek (1774-1850), who included in his memoirs

The Westerby–Meredith Hypothesis

CONTINUED

from the 1840s a decidedly partisan but nonetheless valuable first-hand account of Steibelt's financial success in Prague in 1800:

Steibelt came to Prague by chance, *and carried away gold and laurels* [italics mine]. It was in the spring, while the nobility were still in town and, with the backing of the then Countess Kuronsky, it was not too difficult to sell more than 300 tickets at a gold ducat each. With so many subscribers he did not consider it necessary to arrange a public concert. . . . As with all concerts at this time, the only performance was scheduled for 7 p.m., but the artist, enveloped in a veil of self-conceit, felt like taking his time. When the noble audience, more used to being waited on than to waiting itself, had exhausted (in French!) all its expressions of exasperation, and the orchestral players were preparing to go home empty-handed, the long-awaited virtuoso arrived—an hour after the appointed time. He arrived breathless, took his bow and gave the signal for the overture. He began the concert with his E Major concerto, “The Storm,” one of his most successful works, which he played accurately and brilliantly to the satisfaction of the audience. The second item, which he performed equally well, was his quartet for piano accompanied by violin, viola and cello. This is undoubtedly his most valuable piece, in fact, in comparison with his other compositions, it arouses the suspicion that he is not the actual author of it. It has never appeared in print, which strengthens the feeling. At the end of the concert he improvised on the well-known theme from Martin y Soler's *Cosa rara*, “Pace caro mio sposo,” in a manner quite unworthy of an artist. He did nothing other than repeat the C major vibrando theme a few times while running up and down the piano keys with his right hand, and the “improvisation” was over within a few minutes. This so-called “Fantasy,” a splendid example of inartistic piano-playing, together with a few character flaws in him, startled the nobility to such an extent that they doubted his identity and he was later taken for an adventurer posing as Steibelt. So ended a concert that was, in many respects, extraordinary, and one which was, for the time, very expensive.⁴⁹

Tomášek included a brief technical description of Steibelt's playing in his anecdote that helps explain his popularity with the satisfied Prague public: “As a pianist his touch was tender yet strong, with excellent right-hand technique. He performed passagework with the greatest clarity and refinement, although he had very slow trills.” Tomášek also critiqued Steibelt's left-hand technique in a statement that has received far too much weight in the scholarly literature: “His left hand, however, was in complete technical disparity from his right . . . it banged away rather awkwardly and often weakened the effect of the right hand playing. He obviously had no idea about the art of improvisation.”

Tomášek's brief account of Steibelt's technical weaknesses, which is quoted in almost every study of the composer, has somehow become embedded in discussions of his playing—and particularly of his great success with the public. However, as John Henry Mee wrote in the first edition of the Grove dictionary, “But after making all deductions of this sort, the broad fact remains that Steibelt's playing was thoroughly striking and original, and that he possessed in a very eminent degree the invaluable power of carrying his audience with him. Whatever censure critics might be disposed to pass after the performance was over, the aplomb and spirit of his playing fascinated them at the time, and when he was in a good mood he would interest his listeners for hours together.”⁵⁰

Tomášek's bias was partly based on the fact that Steibelt, apparently, refused to speak German:

Steibelt came from Berlin, but his long stay in Paris had erased any trace of the German in him. He could not even speak, or perhaps did not want to speak, the German language. His works contain no hint of the Germanic. Everything reminds one of French perfume—even his titles are like the amusing inscriptions on French products.

Leaving aside Tomášek's derisive quips about French perfume and inscriptions, his pique about Steibelt's refusal to speak German indicates that he missed the intention of the virtuoso in this regard. Simply put, the act of speaking French was an assertion of class privilege and association with the greatest qualities of eighteenth-century French life. As Marc Fumaroli notes in his *When the World Spoke French*, speaking French was “an initiation into the exceptional fashion of being free and natural with others and with oneself. It was altogether different from communicating. It was entering ‘into company.’”⁵¹ Frederick the Great (1712–86), the Francophile King of Prussia—Steibelt was born in its capital, Berlin—was famous for only speaking German to horses and their stable boys. (Frederick was the uncle of Prince Friedrich Wilhelm II, who was Steibelt's first patron and who sent him to study with the renowned composer and teacher Johann Kimberger.) Steibelt's refusal to speak German, then, was part of his plan to assert himself not as the typical servant-musician of the day but as a free artist worthy of respect. (Tomášek, it might be noted, was also a touch annoyed with the Prague nobility when they “exhausted (in French!) all its expressions of exasperation” as they awaited Steibelt [my emphasis].) French was also, as anyone who purchased music knew, the standard language of title pages of music published even in German-speaking lands; it was the language of “culture” in its broadest sense.

Finally, Tomášek also seems to have been aggrieved with the manner in which Steibelt and his wife Catharine supplemented their earnings as independent musicians.⁵² Tomaschek's disdain was so great that he even defamed Steibelt and his wife (a forerapistian herself), stating that she was not his wife and that Steibelt had lied about that fact to the Prague nobility:

When Steibelt found that his musical activities did not suit the Prague nobility he took it out on them in another way. With him he had an English girl, whom he passed off as his wife. She had mastered the tambourine and sometimes accompanied him with it; for the purpose he had written a few short rondos for tambourine and piano. The new coupling of such different instruments charmed the noble audience so much that they could not take their eyes off the beautiful hands of the English girl. Among the ladies the desire to learn the instrument grew so great that Steibelt's “friend” happily consented to give tuition. The course lasted twelve lessons, at twelve gold ducats a course, with a further twelve ducats for a tambourine. Steibelt was thus able to stay in Prague several weeks, and he sold nearly a whole cartload of tambourines. On completing this speculation he departed for Vienna with his pockets full of gold, but there he found himself quite eclipsed as a pianist by Beethoven and abruptly returned to Paris.

Leaving aside Tomášek's antagonisms, he ended up documenting the elements of Steibelt's financial and artistic success in Prague as an entrepreneur: Steibelt earned the astonishing sum of 300 gold ducats at a single concert; his wife supplemented that income herself by selling tambourines and giving lessons for twenty-four gold ducats a person. Though Tomášek, in his disdain, claims that she sold a “whole cartload of tambourines,” let's assume that she sold just twelve—more of a trunk's worth than a wagon—and gave lessons to twelve young women. That would have resulted in income of 288 gold ducats before removing the costs of the tambourines. Combining the income from the concert and the tambourines, the Steibelts would have jointly earned 588 gold ducats, which was equivalent to 1,296 CM florins or 1,489 BZ florins in 1800. To put this into perspective, Beethoven's annual rent for the Pasqualati apartment was 500 BZ florins a year; thus, the Steibelts earned from their Prague stay the equivalent of enough money



Hand-colored engraving of Count von Fries' palace in 1812 from Maria Geissler's *Ansichten-Sammlung der Berühmtesten Palläste Gebäude und der Schönsten Gegenden von und um Wien* (from the collection of the Ira F. Brilliant Center for Beethoven Studies)

for three years rent in a nice apartment in the musical capital of Europe. A modern equivalent of their one-city earnings can be approximated in the following manner. The Pasqualati apartment had two large rooms, a kitchen, and an entryway room; a one-bedroom apartment on the upper west side of Manhattan today runs from \$2,500-4,000, making the Steibels' Prague income worth approximately \$90,000-144,000. Little wonder that Tomášek gushed about the financial success of the Prague stay, and this was but one stop on the Steibels' tour.

Another proof of Steibels' entrepreneurial success is found on the title pages of several editions of his music. Two categories of title pages exist for the engraved music of the Classical period: those containing title pages of text, sometimes containing curlicue-line decorations, and those with elaborately decorated title pages featuring flowers, scene, animals, putti, and people. The second category involved greater up-front expenses for the publisher, since an artist was involved, and such title pages were reserved for music that promised to generate the greatest profit. In the Beethoven Center's collection, the Steibel works with such titles pages include the *Douze Bacchanales* for Fortepiano with Tambourin (woman playing tambourine); two editions of the famous Third Concerto with the storm finale (one features Orpheus, the other a shipwreck scene); *Le Bouquet* (bouquet of flowers); the famous *étude pour le Piano-Forté* (portrait of Steibel with putti); Three [Two] Fortepiano and String Quintets dedicated to the King of Prussia, Opus 28 (incredibly elaborate coat of arms of the King of Prussia

made up of twenty-five panels); *Deux Sonates et la Coquette* (lyre with roses, garlands); Grand Sonata for Madame Bonaparte (female angel playing trumpet); Three Sonatas for Violin and Fortepiano, Fortepiano Trio, and Fortepiano Alone (Orpheus playing to several animals); Six Sonatas for Fortepiano and Violin or Flute (?); and the Grand Sonata for Fortepiano and Violin "performed at Mr. Salomon's benefit" (Orpheus and animals based on the Three Sonatas above). Though several are quite elaborate, the most significant are those portraying Orpheus, the ancient Greek musician who was able to charm all living things with his music, and his lyre. Clearly the images are meant to link the classical Orpheus with Steibel, his modern counterpart. Besides advertising the charming nature of the music that follows the illustrations, each illustrated title page is evidence both of the publisher's confidence and Steibel's entrepreneurial success.

(2) More threatening to Beethoven than Steibel's success as entrepreneur, however, was his success with the aristocracy. Although Ries wrote that "several of Beethoven's friends were worried lest he should cast a shadow on Beethoven's reputation," there was something much more serious at stake: Beethoven's financial support from the aristocracy. The popular belief that Beethoven was the first composer in the history of music to make a living as an independent artist is, unfortunately, inaccurate. From his arrival in Vienna in 1792 through his death in 1827, Beethoven was only able to maintain his middle-class lifestyle through the generous financial support of patrons. Particularly important in this regard was Prince Karl Lichnowsky,

The Westerby–Meredith Hypothesis

CONTINUED

one of Beethoven's most generous patrons. Soon after the composer's arrival in Vienna, Lichnowsky offered Beethoven a place to live as his guest—not servant; sponsored first performances of the Fortepiano Trios, Opus 1, in late 1793 or early 1794; purchased twenty (!) copies of the first edition of the trios, which were dedicated to the prince, to supplement Beethoven's income; received the dedications of the Variations, WoO 69, in 1795 and of the *Sonata pathétique* in 1799; and, beginning in 1800 (the year of the Steibelt encounters), gave Beethoven an annuity of 600 florins with no official responsibilities (the annuity was paid at least through 1806). The significance of this sum becomes even more apparent when compared to the average annual budget for a *middle-class* bachelor in Vienna in 1804: 967 florins.⁵³ Given this history of support, it seems improbable that Lichnowsky would have diminished his support for Beethoven if Steibelt had been widely recognized as the superior artist; nonetheless, given the location of the duels, there was much at stake.

The setting of the duels was the luxurious palace of Count Moritz von Fries (1777–1837), an industrialist and banker who came to be regarded as the richest man in Austria in the early nineteenth century. The palace, which contained over 300 important paintings, over 100,000 engravings, a famous sculpture collection, and a library of over 16,000 books, was famous as a location for concerts and parties. The extravagant *Festsaal* on the second floor served as the location for larger concerts and parties, the hall's windows looking directly out on the Imperial Palace across the street.⁵⁴ Fries' extravagance was eventually responsible for his downfall, and the palace was sold in 1824, becoming the Pallavicini Palace in the 1840s. It still stands at 5 Josefsplatz, directly across from the library of the Imperial Palace, though its original neo-classically decorated interior rooms were redecorated with semi-Baroque excess in the second half of the nineteenth century.

Unfortunately, neither Ries nor any other writer gave much detail on the audience of the two concerts, mentioning only the count, the two artists, and "Beethoven's admirers." But surely there must have been other members of the music-loving aristocracy present, especially on the second encounter, since word must have spread that Steibelt had "produced a great effect." The contest, then, was played out in the palace of the handsome twenty-three-year-old Count von Fries, one of Austria's richest men (by inheritance), across from the Imperial Palace, to an audience of music-loving aristocracy, not all of whom were among Beethoven's admirers. A defeat on this occasion had the potential to derail Beethoven's fame, at least temporarily, and with it his support.

As we know, the opposite occurred—at the second meeting it was Beethoven who "eclipsed" Steibelt—and the victory had immediate financial benefits. In the months following the duel, Count von Fries probably commissioned the two Sonatas for Violin and Fortepiano, Opuses 23 and 24 (Opus 23 was composed in the summer of 1800).⁵⁵ He also purchased the rights for a six-month private use of the String Quintet, Opus 29, at some point in 1800. (Beethoven wrote to the publisher Hoffmeister on December 15, 1800, indicating that he could have a string quintet sometime in the near future.)⁵⁶ Fries received the dedications of these three works, written in the year after the duel, as well as that of the Seventh Symphony (published in 1816). The duels thus had the direct effect of increasing the financial support Beethoven was receiving from the aristocracy. Ironically, Fries was rewarded for his support by being dragged into Beethoven's dishonest dealings with the publishers Breitkopf & Härtel and Artaria over the quintet, dealings that resulted in court actions against Beethoven that he lost. Steibelt was not the only composer to deal with publishers in unethical ways.

(3) Though his music has a history of being ridiculed, Steibelt was also a worthy rival as a composer, at least by the standards of the 1790s. Consider

the review of his first performance in London in 1798: "STEIBELT, a German, played a Concerto on the Piano Forte, in a very masterly and original style. His music also was marked by an original, romantic, and impressive character."⁵⁷ At the second London concert of 1798 (March 19), Steibelt launched the work that would make him a household name in England and parts of the continent, the Third Concerto in E Major, which contains "a Rondo pastoral, in which is introduced the Imitation of a Storm."⁵⁸ In his nine-page entry on Steibelt in the first edition of Grove's *A Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, John Henry Mee concludes, "Whatever may be thought of the merits of this work now, its popularity at the beginning of the [nineteenth] century was enormous, and far exceeded that accorded to any other of Steibelt's compositions. It is not too much to say that it was played in every drawing room in England; indeed the notorious 'Battle of Prague' alone could compete with it in popular favor."⁵⁹ As shown by its publication history, the work was perhaps equally popular on the continent.

Mee's article on Steibelt contains, in fact, one of the most even-handed discussions of the strengths and weaknesses of Steibelt's style to date. He begins the article by noting that Steibelt was "a musician now almost entirely forgotten, but in his own day so celebrated as a pianoforte player and composer that many regarded him as the rival of Beethoven."⁶⁰ Because Steibelt's negatives have been rehearsed so often, it makes sense to focus briefly on Mee's articulation of two of Steibelt's strengths:

Several of Steibelt's works from the 1790s through the 1820s show great ingenuity and originality in orchestration: the writing for orchestra in his opera *Roméo et Juliette* is skillful and novel for giving all the instruments important roles, especially the trombones; similarly, the strings and fortépiano share importance in the fortépiano quintets of Opus 28; the cellos are divided into three parts in the Sixth Fortépiano Concerto (as Mee points out, long before Rossini divided them into more than two parts in the *Guillaume Tell Overture*); the instrumentation of the first movement of the Eighth Concerto (composed in 1820) was singled out as "quite exceptionally beautiful" ("ganz vorzüglich schön") by the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* after a performance by the gifted fortépianist Charles Neate and the London Philharmonic on March 25, 1822;⁶¹ in the finale of the same concerto, Steibelt added a chorus to the orchestra with the opening text "The terrors fierce of war now yield their hoarse alarm" to create what was described as an "extraordinary effect" at the same concert ("von ausnehmender Wirkung").

Many works contain remarkable tonal and harmonic motion that demonstrates "a freedom unknown before him."⁶² In the Sonata for Fortépiano and Violin in E Minor, Opus 32, the second subject is in E-flat Major, and Steibelt even changes the key signature for fifty-six measures. In the first Sonata for Fortépiano in E-flat Major, the development section focuses on G-flat Major and F-sharp Minor (both times with key signature changes); in the second sonata, in E Major, the development moves to G Minor, again employing a key signature change. In the Fantasia for Madame Moreau in B-flat Major, Steibelt moves through B Major and Minor to C Major for the majority of the work. Mee concludes that, "in his use of keys he shows the workings of an original mind."⁶³

Several of these "original mind" traits are also found in the Quintet in D Major, Opus 28, no. 2, which, according to the Westerby–Meredith hypothesis, was performed at the second duel. The quintet is a two-movement work with a sonata-form first movement and a rondo for the finale. Though there are no sections with long key changes, Steibelt explores third-key relationships in some depth and as a unifying element. F Major appears not only in a Neapolitan relationship on the way to the dominant second subject, but also as a disruptive tonal element in the closing section of the exposition, where it is effectively combined with what we think of as the "Beethoven Fifth motive" (see Example 11). Perhaps not coincidentally, these repeated notes were exactly what Beethoven saw on the second staff when he turned the cello part upside down.⁶⁴ Heading down a third from



Example 11: The “Beethoven Fifth motive” in the first movement of Steibelt’s Quintet in D Major, Opus 28, no. 2, first movement, exposition (from the Imbault edition in the collection of the Ira F. Brilliant Center for Beethoven Studies)

D Major, Steibelt explores both B Minor and B-flat Major in the dramatic development section, which at eight pages in the Imbault edition is as long as the exposition. In the recapitulation, the disruptive section returns in B-flat Major.

The second movement, *Presto*, is equally innovative in three ways. First is the direction for the use of the pedals in combination with Steibelt’s famous *tremolando* (“Use the two pedals together, the damper and the lute, and you will have the sound of a harp”). Second is a virtuosic cadenza featuring double trills that closes the final return of the A theme of the rondo (the last two systems of which can be seen in Example 12). The third is the *Prestissimo* coda, which not only jumpstarts the heart in the same manner as its use in Beethoven’s “Appassionata” Sonata, but also features extensive use of B-flat Major and the “Beethoven Fifth motive” explored in the first movement. The motive, now in the 3/8 time of the second movement, begins on the downbeats of the measures (see Example 13), similar to its transformation in the third movement of Beethoven’s Fifth.

Ries wrote that on both occasions Steibelt performed a fortepiano quintet “with much success.” If Opus 28, no. 2, was indeed performed at

the second meeting, it is easy to see why it met with such favor—and why Beethoven had to take Steibelt so seriously.

(4) Finally, Steibelt was a worthy rival for Beethoven for his groundbreaking exploration and development of the use of the pedals, which indeed may have been demonstrated at the second concert both in the quintet and in Steibelt’s improvisations on “Pria ch’io l’impegno.” His contributions to this critical aspect of fortepiano playing had already been noted in 1797 in J.P. Milchmeyer’s *Der wahre Art des Pianoforte zu spielen* (*The True Art of Fortepiano Playing*): “Composers and teachers ignored [the pedals], and regarded them as unnecessary, until finally the great talent of Herr Steibelt ... developed all these mutations carefully, demonstrating the effect of each one and defined its function.”⁶⁵ In fact, according to the scholar David Rowland, “Steibelt appears to have been the first composer to include pedal markings in his printed music, in the Pot-pourri no. 6, published in 1792/3, and in *Mélanges d’airs et chansons*, op. 10 (c1793).”⁶⁶ Steibelt’s music was so associated with pedal markings that by 1820 J.H. Rieger could assert in his fortepiano treatise that “Steibelt is the only author whose pieces have been composed expressly for the use of the pedals ... many people have imitated Steibelt’s manner.”⁶⁷



Example 12: Double trills in the second movement of Steibelt’s Quintet in D Major, Opus 28, no. 2 (from the Imbault edition in the collection of the Ira F. Brilliant Center for Beethoven Studies)



Example 13: Return of the “Beethoven Fifth motive” in 3/8 in the second movement of Steibelt’s Quintet in D Major, Opus 28, no. 2 (from the Imbault edition in the collection of the Ira F. Brilliant Center for Beethoven Studies)

The Westerby–Meredith Hypothesis

CONTINUED

As surprising as it seems to us today, use of the pedals was initially regarded with deep suspicion in German-speaking countries. Milchmeyer was enthusiastic about them but wrote in 1797 that “they were seldom used by performers, and consequently resembled a fine book collection that nobody wants to read.”⁶⁸ A hotly negative review of Milchmeyer from 1798 in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* pans the use of the pedals and concludes, “We Germans would rather stick by our Stein instruments, on which one can do everything without stops.”⁶⁹ Steibelt referred to this lingering distaste in his own treatise of 1809:

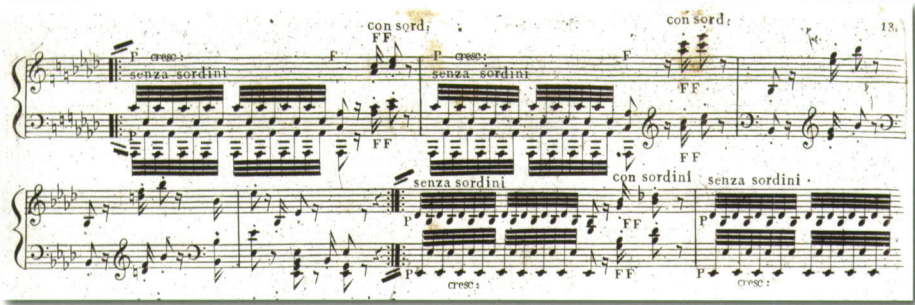
A sure art of striking the keys and bending the fingers, a truly characteristic use of the registers (mutations of the tone by means of the pedal) otherwise little used and of which I was the first to demonstrate the advantages, gave the instrument a quite different expression. To begin with, this use of the registers was decried as charlatanism, and students disliked them; but those who outlawed them are overcoming their prejudice, while at the same time many of them do not yet know how to use these registers skillfully.⁷⁰

Given the interdependence between some of Steibelt’s music and the pedal markings, it is hardly surprising that many editions of his fortepiano music from the 1790s contain explicit explanations of the signs for up to three pedals (dampers, lute, and swell). In a fascinating article in *Early Music*, David Rowland carefully analyzes the use of the pedals in the sixth *potpourri* and underscores the use of the damper pedal that lasts for many measures or even pages: “Such extended markings are common in music

written around the turn of the century (for example, the first movement of Beethoven’s ‘Moonlight’ Sonata, op. 27 no. 2) ...”⁷¹ Rowland also notes that Steibelt’s “Sonatas op. 27 and Quintets op. 28 were probably the first pieces for grand piano with pedaling indications.”⁷²

In a profound way, Steibelt’s development of pedaling and the resulting exploration of the color world of the fortepiano made him a worthy rival of Beethoven during these encounters. It is even possible that Beethoven learned first-hand from observing Steibelt that he too should begin to indicate pedal markings in his music. The first Beethoven sonata to include pedal markings, Opus 26, was composed in 1801, the year after these encounters. Remarkably, the first time they appear in the sonata is in the third movement, the “Funeral March on a Hero’s Death,” at the first appearance of *tremolando* passages (see Example 14). Unlike Steibelt, however, Beethoven knew that one can indeed have too much of a good thing and rationed his tremolos with care. In the “Moonlight” Sonata, Opus 27, no. 2—also composed in 1801—Beethoven takes full expressive advantage of the extended use of removing the dampers (*senza sordini*) pages, a technique that had been pioneered by his rival.

In fact, Beethoven’s willingness to adopt and transform some of Steibelt’s ideas has been pointed out by several musicologists. Owen Jander argues that, “Beethoven recognized that the charlatan Steibelt occasionally arrived at certain inspirations which had distinct artistic possibilities. A few of Steibelt’s more interesting ideas indeed find echoes in certain Beethoven compositions.” Jander compares the “Tempest” Sonata to Steibelt’s most famous work (*Louise*) and his famous tremolos; the slow movement of Beethoven’s String Quartet in F Major, Opus 18, no. 1 to Steibelt’s 1793 opera *Romeo et Juliet*; and the Choral Fantasy to Steibelt’s invention of the *fantaisie en forme de scène*.⁷³ Richard Kramer, examining the sketches for the coda of the quartet’s slow movement, notes that he is indebted to Jander’s theory that Steibelt’s opera was the direct inspiration for the



Example 14: The first pedal indications in Beethoven's Sonata in A-flat Major, Opus 26 (Cappi reprint edition of ca. 1806 from the collection of the Ira F. Brilliant Center for Beethoven Studies)

inscriptions in the coda sketches from the summer of 1799 (less than a year before the famous duels).⁷⁴ In Sandra Soderlund's valuable history of keyboard technique, she concludes, "The imaginative pianistic textures that [Steibelt] used in his music influenced other composers for the piano. Even Beethoven was not above using some of his ideas."⁷⁵ The famous climactic trills of the Sonatas, Opuses 109 and 111, for example, develop ideas found in the remarkable closing number (25) of Steibelt's *Étude*, in which a trill moves between the soprano and alto voices of a four-voice texture (see Example 15). Beethoven's examples are more sublime, to be sure, but both composers explore the expressive possibilities of the trill in inner or outer fingers of the hand in combination with melodies and/or accompaniment in the other fingers.

VIII. Summary and Conclusions

It will probably never be possible to prove without a doubt the connections between Beethoven's improvisations in Count von Fries' palace in the spring of 1800, Steibelt's second quintet of Opus 28, and the opening of the *Eroica* Variations. The theory that Steibelt's upside-down cello part was the inspiration for the narrative of the opening of the *Eroica* Variations is bolstered, however, by an examination of the form and counterpoint of the beginning—an end—of the work.

- 1) Beethoven begins the *Eroica* Variations with a *fortissimo* E-flat chord (Ries: "He seated himself in his usual, I might say unmannerly, fashion at the instrument, almost as if he had been pushed").
- 2) The bass of the theme is then presented (Ries: "He had picked up the cello part of Steibelt's quintet on his way to the piano, and pacing it upside down on the music rack (intentionally?), he hammered out a theme from the first few bars with one finger").
- 3) Three contrapuntal variations follow (*a due, a tre, a quattro*).
- 4) The treble theme finally appears and is varied—often virtuosically—fifteen times, ending with a *finale alla fuga* (Ries: "Insulted and irritated as he was, he improvised in such a manner that Steibelt left the room before Beethoven had finished...").

Beethoven's decision to introduce counterpoint both in the opening three variations and in the finale may even be an inverted ironic reference to Steibelt. Counterpoint is one aspect of musical composition that involves serious study and intellect—in every sense, it is a demonstration of the *gelehrter Stil* (learned style) that is the very opposite of the kind of special effects that had made Steibelt both famous and wealthy: *tremolandos* and innovative use of the pedals.⁷⁶ Donald Francis Tovey's poetic description of the appearance of the same "Bass" and "Tune" in the *Eroica* Symphony captures the spirit the counterpoint plays in the narrative:



Example 15: trill exercises in Steibelt's *Étude* (from the collection of the Ira F. Brilliant Center for Beethoven Studies)

The Westerby–Meredith Hypothesis

CONTINUED

... the Bass is solemnly given by the strings, pizzicato, and echoed by the wind. Its first part happens to make a grotesque but presentable theme ... But the second part is quite absurd, and we can almost see Beethoven laughing at our mystified faces as it digs us in the ribs. However the whole Bass proceeds to put on clothes of a respectable contrapuntal cut; and by the time we are almost ready to believe its pretensions, the Tune comes sailing over it in full radiance and we think no more of the Bass, though it faithfully performs its duty as such. The vision of dry bones is accomplished.⁷⁷

Though the tremolando-laden, French-speaking touring virtuoso may appear to be as far removed as possible from the composer who had been praised by his teacher Christian Gottlob Neefe in 1783 for mastering all the preludes and fugues of the *Well-Tempered Clavier* of J.S. Bach, Steibelt was—as I argue above—a substantive rival in 1800: he was a more successful entrepreneur than Beethoven (both in earning large sums of money as well as spending them recklessly); he had become famous for creating special new sounds and techniques on the fortepiano; he had established himself as the equal of the nobility; his operas, concertos, and chamber music were recognized for exploring new orchestration techniques; and he experimented widely, even wildly, with tonality in proto-Romantic ways. Outraged, insulted, and irritated at the second meeting, Beethoven responded rudely to Steibelt's improvisations with the musical equivalent of a slap in the face. By seizing one of the least interesting parts of a quintet and turning it upside down, Beethoven set out to prove that great music could be improvised from nonsense. The performance was, however, not intended for Steibelt but the nobility and Beethoven's supporters in the salon; it didn't matter if Steibelt left. Indeed, Beethoven, by demonstrating his own "devilish" expertise in improvisation, immediately won over a new patron—Count von Fries, the wealthiest patron of the arts in Austria, who commissioned or was involved in three new compositions in the coming year and received the dedication of the Seventh Symphony.

That the names of Steibelt and Beethoven might be uttered in the same sentence without a condescending smile is, in a sense, one goal of this essay, for he was also a worthy rival to Beethoven by the standards and tastes of the day. Little more than a month after Steibelt's death in St. Petersburg on September 20, 1823, the famous Leipzig-based *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* rushed a two-column obituary into print in their October 29 issue. The article notes that he had distinguished himself with his "excellent musical talent" as a child and was, "as is known," an excellent keyboard player and "much beloved composer": "his performance was most distinguished in bravura-pieces of all kinds, which he performed with much power, precision, clarity, and elegance. ... His compositions for the keyboard alone, particularly those of his middle years, found, on account of their vivacity, pleasing qualities, and comprehensibility, and also because the majority of them make only moderate claims on the skills of the player and are entirely suited for the instrument, a widespread, extremely numerous public, for the most part in France but also in Germany and England."⁷⁸

The obituary closes with one significant error: "While St. may not have broken new paths for music or extended its borders, he nevertheless pursued its cultivation diligently through existing paths, granting access to countless amateurs while advancing not a few excellent students along them, and giving joy to very many through his own best work."⁷⁹ As recent scholarly literature demonstrates, Steibelt's new paths included (1) the development of printed indications for the use of pedals for the fortepiano in the 1790s and first decade of the 1800s and (2) the exploration of new timbres that could be created coordinating the pedals with *tremolandos* and *tremolando*-type effects.

Beethoven, of course, is the inventor, however, whom we associate with "New Paths." Such exploration was Beethoven's explicit strategy in the *Eroica* Variations and its companion set, Opus 34. To their future publisher he wrote that both were composed "in quite a new manner" ("ganz neue Manier"). The new path of the *Eroica* Variations, however, begins with a hidden reference, a narrative cipher, to his encounters with his rival Daniel Steibelt.



Engraving of the royal coat of arms of the King of Prussia on the title page of the Imbault edition of Steibelt's Quintet, Opus 28, no. 2 (from the collection of the Ira F. Brilliant Center for Beethoven Studies)

Notes

- 1 Herbert Westerby, *Beethoven and His Piano Works (Sonatas, Concertos, Variations, Etc.): Descriptive and Analytic Aid to Their Understanding & Rendering* (London: William Reeves, 1931), 51–52.
- 2 (Coblenz: Bädeker, 1838), 81. Second edition by Alfred Chr. Kalischer (Berlin and Leipzig: Schuster & Loeffler, 1906). An English translation was prepared by Timothy Noonan as *Beethoven Remembered* (Arlington, VA: Great Ocean Publishers, 1987). The version used here is from Noonan, 70–71.
- 3 Georg Kinsky and Hans Halm, *Das Werk Beethovens* (Munich: G. Henle, 1955), 25.
- 4 Gelinek's variations for solo harpsichord or fortepiano is available for free download from the IMSLP website. The work was published in 1798 by Artaria in Vienna. The set consists of twelve accomplished variations with a coda in which the theme is reprised *un poco piu Allegro*.
- 5 *Thayer's Life of Beethoven*, ed. Eliot Forbes, rev. ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967), 139 on Gelinek; on Wölfl, see 204–07 (hereafter: Thayer-Forbes). After being bested, Gelinek told Czerny's father that Beethoven "is no man; he's a devil. He will play me and all of us to death. And how he improvises!" (There is a chronology problem with Czerny's anecdote: Gelinek is reported as saying that he had been asked to measure himself against a young fortepianist "who has just arrived," but Czerny's father, Wenzel Czerny, did not settle permanently in Vienna until ca. 1795. It is possible he met Gelinek during a visit to Vienna in 1793 or 1794.) Wölfl's playing was, according to Ignaz von Seyfried, "trained in the school of Mozart, was always equable; never superficial but always clear and thus more accessible to the multitude." Seyfried colorfully described Beethoven's improvisations as being in "the mysterious Sanscrit language whose hieroglyphs can be read only by the initiated."
- 6 Jos van der Zanden, "Ferdinand Ries in Vienna: New Perspectives on the *Notizen*," *Beethoven Journal* 19 (2004): 58–59.

- 7 Ludwig van Beethovens *Konversationshefte*, ed. Karl-Heinz Köhler, Gita Herre, and Günter Brosche, 11 vols. (Leipzig: VEB Deutscher Verlag für Musik, 1981): 8:126. This is the only mention of Steibel listed in the indexes to this edition of the conversation books, but it should be noted that several volumes still lack name indexes so it is possible that he is mentioned or referred to elsewhere.
- 8 Peter Clive, *Beethoven and His World: A Biographical Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 350.
- 9 Thayer-Forbes, 961.
- 10 *Konversationshefte*, 8:126.
- 11 Thayer-Forbes, 963.
- 12 Clive, *Beethoven and His World*, 329.
- 13 Deryck Cooke, *The Language of Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1959), 122, 146.
- 14 (Leipzig: Johann Friedrich Hartknoch), 63.
- 15 (Halle: Renger, 1802), 1149, 743. Glister is an archaic form of our modern "glitter."
- 16 It is rare movement heading today. Steibel not infrequently began fast movements with the Italian description "Allegro brillante"; this marking may be found in the first movement of the Third Fortepiano Concerto, the beginning of 18th Pot-Pouri, first movement of the first of the *Deux Sonates et la Coquette*, and the first movement of the first of the Three Sonatas for Fortepiano and Violin, Opus 35, listed in the appendix.
- 17 John Henry Mee wrote, "... he conceived a decided predilection for the English fortepianos, always using them in preference to any others." See John Henry Mee, "Daniel Steibel," in *A Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. George Grove, 4 vols., 1st ed. (London: Macmillan & Co., 1879-89), 3:701. Mee may well have based this assertion on the sentence quoted, which comes from the report on musical life in Dresden in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 2 (February 26, 1800), col. 399.
- 18 *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 2 (February 26, 1800), col. 399. The critic was not, it must be noted, a fan of the English style of fortepiano building. He went to some pains in this review to praise the full bell-like tone of the Stein fortepianos over the bright but hard-edged tone of the English instruments.
- 19 "Schöne Minka" is based on the Ukrainian song "Es ritt ein Kosak."
- 20 The text of Tiedge's poem is found on several websites, including "The Lied, Art Song, and Choral Texts Archive": http://www.rcmusic.org/lieder/get_text.html?TextId=26649. For an English translation, see Gretchen Rowe Clements' "Situating Schubert: Early Nineteenth-Century Flute Culture and the "Trockne Blumen" Variations, D. 802," Ph.D. dissertation, State University of New York, 1987, 217-18.
- 21 *Allgemeine musikalischer Anzeiger* 2 (March 27, 1830), 50; as cited in Clements' "Situating Schubert," 216. Clements writes about Hummel's set on pp. 216-34.
- 22 According to Whistling's *Handbuch der musikalischen Literatur* (1828) 2:769, the set was also published by André in Offenbach and Janet et Cotellet in Paris.
- 23 See the works list in the website of the Ferdinand Ries Gesellschaft: http://www.ferdinand-ries.de/einzelstuecke_pianoforte_solo.html
- 24 <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J1llsqSvMKY>. The pianist is Alexander Paley. The theme begins at 1:23 after an introduction.
- 25 <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oFQLQPukjFA>
- 26 <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NbVd8RkBHDg>
- 27 <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gSM-0WVOdnY>. The theme starts at 3:33.
- 28 A.B. Marx, *Berliner allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 1 (1824): 362.
- 29 <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UxKjQEO-ilg>
- 30 A recording is available on Youtube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ya17rkVEj7Y>.
- 31 <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oaHWInzLKRE>
- 32 Cooke, *The Language of Music*, 133, 146-47. The motive is a combination of the (5)-6-5 minor shape and the "descending 5-(4)-3-(2)-1" minor shape. Cooke calls his examples of shapes "basic terms of musical vocabulary."
- 33 Gottfried Müller, *Daniel Steibel: sein Leben und seine Klavierwerke* (Strasbourg: Heitz, 1933, repr. 1973), 34-36.
- 34 In 1988, before the internet came online for the public, the Center attempted to locate a copy of no. 3 at the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, the most likely home of any copy since the edition was published in Paris originally and because the antiquarian materials of French libraries were consolidated in the BN. François Lesure replied, "Hélas, nous avons Steibel op. 28 no 1 et 2, mais non le 3. Désolant!" Recent searches on the internet have failed to locate a copy.
- 35 The dating of the French edition comes from the plate number (665), which occurs in the ruin of plate numbers from 1797. See Anik Devriès and François Lesure, *Dictionnaire des éditeurs de musique français* (Geneva: Éditions Minkoff, 1979), 1:5. Longman & Broderip registered their edition at Stationer's Hall on August 21, 1797. See *Music Entries at Stationer's Hall 1710-1818*, comp. Michael Kassler (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2004), 342. The title page of the English edition contains the notation "as performed at the OPERA CONCERT"; one of Steibel's first concerts in London after his arrival prior to January 2, 1797, occurred on May 15, 1797. This concert was described as an "opera concert" at the time, and included Steibel's first two fortepiano concertos. It is not known, however, if this is the opera concert at which the quintet was performed. See Müller, *Daniel Steibel*, 28. The watermark on the Beethoven Center's copy of the Longman & Broderip edition is "M 1798." The only fortepiano quartet in Mee's list is Opus 51 (A Major).
- 36 The Berkeley print has a label for the Parisian publisher B. Pollet pasted over the name of the original publisher, Imbault. The title page, plate numbers, and plates are the same.
- 37 In 2005 and 2006 I worked with the music director and conductor of the San Francisco Symphony, Michael Tilson Thomas, and his staff on the DVD and website *Keeping Score, Revolutions in Music: Beethoven's Eroica*. As part of the project, I discussed the Westerby-Meredith theory and shared an early version of this paper with Maestro Tilson Thomas, who believes that the last page is indeed the correct page and the origin of Beethoven's improvisation. On the DVD (2006) he illustrates his idea with a modern music example that presents the last seventeen measures of the cello part of the second movement. Turning the example upside-down, he plays new (upside down) measures 5-9 of the first line transposed to E-flat Major (5-1-1-5) that closely resemble the 1-5-5-1 with which Beethoven begins the bass theme. While motion by fifths is indeed one significant clue, as I mention below, the page from the end of the movement does not contain the single most striking feature of the *Eroica* Variations bass: the weird (and somewhat rude) repeated eighths.
- 38 *Beethoven: Impressions by His Contemporaries*, ed. O.G. Sonneck (New York: Schirmer, 1926), 15. The incident is misdated as 1792 here. This example, as well as the following, are cited in my "Beethoven's Creativity: Improvisations," *The Beethoven Newsletter* 1, no. 2 (1986): 25-28.
- 39 *Impressions*, 115-16. The original account appears in his *A Tour in Germany...* (Edinburgh: 1828).
- 40 Carl Czerny, *On the Proper Performance of All Beethoven's Works for the Piano*, ed. Paul Badura-Skoda (Vienna: Universal, 1970), 15.
- 41 I would like to thank Dr. Julia Ronge of the Beethoven-Haus for checking my dates against those which will appear in the forthcoming edition of Kinsky-Halm.
- 42 *Ein Notierungsbuch von Beethoven aus dem Besitze der Preussischen Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin*, ed. Karl Lothar Mikulicz (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1927), 28-29. Mikulicz gives a very detailed staff-by-staff inventory of the sketches according to pages instead of folios.
- 43 Douglas Johnson, Alan Tyson, and Robert Winter, *The Beethoven Sketchbooks* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 106-11.

The Westerby–Meredith Hypothesis

CONTINUED

- 44 Shin Augustinus Kojima, *Kritischer Bericht to Gratulationsmuenest und Tänze für Orchester, Beethoven Werke*, Abteilung II, Band 3 (Munich: G. Henle, 1980), 15–19; these conclusions on 19.
- 45 *Ibid.*, 128.
- 46 *Ibid.*, 133.
- 47 *Ibid.*, 134.
- 48 *Ibid.*, 140.
- 49 Adrienne Simpson, Sandra Horsfall, and Václav Jan Tomásek, “A Czech Composer Views His Contemporaries: Extracts from the Memoirs of Tomásek,” *The Musical Times* 115, no. 1574 (Apr. 1974): 287–88.
- 50 Mee, “Daniel Steibelt,” 3:703.
- 51 Marc Fumaroli, *When the World Spoke French*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: New York Review Books, 2011), xxx. Fumaroli almost makes the point that “The greatest friends of our language, who were frequently the warmest partisans of the Enlightenment, did not separate it from the education of which it was the vector, from the literature on which it had been won, and from an entire art of living civilly—that is, happily—to which the communication systems that sufficed for most of their compatriots did not lead” (pp. xxix–xxx).
- 52 Catharine’s maiden name may have been Dale. According to the Erik-Amburger-Datenbank von Ausländer im vorrevolutionären Russland website, a Catharine Dale born in London died in Moscow on November 28, 1825. She is listed there as married to Steibelt and later to Ignace Nicolas Jean Roux.
- 53 Julia Moore, “Beethoven and Musical Economics,” Ph.D. dissertation, University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign, 1987, 131–32. The figure comes from Johann Peztl’s guidebook *Neue Skizze von Wien* (Vienna: Josef Vinzenz Degen, 1805), vol. 1:161.
- 54 A “3D Tour” of the Festsaal can be found on the palace’s website: <http://www.palais-pallavicini.at/>. The neo-Classical interior designs of the rooms were replaced with neo-Baroque extravagance in the second half of the nineteenth century, so the rooms do not resemble their original appearance during Beethoven’s lifetime.
- 55 *The Beethoven Sketchbooks*, 97.
- 56 *The Letters of Beethoven*, trans. and ed. Emily Anderson, 3 vols. (London: Macmillan, 1961), Anderson letter no. 41, 1:42.
- 57 *True Briton*, February 20, 1798, as quoted in Thomas Milligan’s valuable *The Concerto and London’s Musical Culture in the Late Eighteenth Century* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1983), 58. Milligan suggests that the word romantic most likely meant “characterized or marked by, invested or environed with, romance or imaginative appeal” (from the *Oxford English Dictionary*; see p. 215).
- 58 From the title page to the edition published by Clementi in 1805.
- 59 Mee, 3:701.
- 60 Mee, 3:699. Mee’s biographical errors are corrected in Müller’s *Daniel Steibelt*.
- 61 *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 24, no. 25 (June 19, 1822): col. 410. The reviewer praised Neate for his accomplished and clear playing, but added that he played in such a frightfully cold manner that even the heavenly flame of a Mozart would freeze under his hands.
- 62 Mee, 3:705.
- 63 Mee, 3:704–05.
- 64 Since what we think of as the “Beethoven Fifth motive” was in widespread use during the Classical period, I am not suggesting any influence or direct connection to Beethoven’s Fifth. The quintet, does, however, contain striking examples of the motive’s transformations.
- 65 Milchmeyer, 58, as quoted in David Rowland’s invaluable *A History of Pianoforte Pedalling* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 35.
- 66 Rowland, “Early Pianoforte Pedalling: The Evidence of the Earliest Printed Markings,” *Early Music* 13, no. 1 (1985): 5–6.
- 67 J.H. Rieger, *Méthode analytique pour l’étude du piano-forté* (Paris: J. Frey, 1820), 284, as quoted in Rowland’s *History*.
- 68 Milchmeyer, 58, as quoted in Rowland’s “Early Pianoforte Pedalling.”
- 69 *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 1 (November 28, 1798): col. 136, as quoted in Rowland, “Early Pianoforte Pedalling,” 15.
- 70 Steibelt, *Méthode de piano* (Paris: Janet et C., and Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1809), 2, as quoted in Rowland, *History*, 37.
- 71 Rowland, “Early Pianoforte Pedalling.”
- 72 *Ibid.*
- 73 Owen Jander, “Genius in the Arena of Charlatanry,” *Musica franca: Essays in Honor of Frank D’Accone*, ed. Irene Alm, Alyson McLamore, and Colleen Reardon (Stuyvesant NY: Pendragon, 1996), 593.
- 74 Richard Kramer, *Unfinished Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 173, 182.
- 75 Sandra Soderlund, *How Did They Play? How Did They Teach? A History of Keyboard Technique* (Chapel Hill: Hinshaw Music, 2006), 221.
- 76 As evidence of Steibelt’s knowledge of learned style, however, no. 22 of Steibelt’s Étude explores the use of canon in octaves for both hands. No. 3, in A Major, is an enchanting piece that prefigures, as Mee pointed out, Mendelssohn’s *Songs without Words*.
- 77 Donald Francis Tovey, *Symphonies*, vol. 1 of *Essays in Musical Analysis* (London: Oxford University Press, 1935), 33. Tovey also argued that “The finale is in a form which was unique when it appeared, and has remained unique ever since. This has given rise to a widespread notion that it is formless or incoherent. It is neither; and its life, which is its form, does not depend on a label” (pp. 32–33).
- 78 *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 25, no. 44 (October 29, 1823): cols. 725–27. There was somewhat of a conflict of interest, since the AmZ was published by Breitkopf & Härtel, who also published a significant number of Steibelt’s works.
- 79 *Ibid.*, col. 726–27. I would like to thank Robin Wallace for his assistance with this translation.

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Hand-colored engraving of a beautiful young woman playing the tambourine from the title page of Steibelt's *Douze Bacchanales* published by Erard in Paris in 1802 (from the collection of the Ira F. Brilliant Center for Beethoven Studies)