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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

CHARACTERISTIC ARTICULATION IN BEETHOVEN'S PIANO MUSIC: A PERFORMER'S APPROACH.

BY

MICHAEL JOHN REDSHAW (C)

AN ESSAY

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTORATE OF MUSIC

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THE UNDERSIGNED CERTIFY THEY HAVE READ, AND RECOMMEND TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH FOR ACCEPTANCE, A THESIS ENTITLED CHARACTERISTIC ARTICULATION IN BEETHOVEN'S PIANO MUSIC: A PERFORMER'S APPROACH
SUBMITTED BY MICHAEL JOHN REDSHAW
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF MUSIC
IN PIANO PERFORMANCE.

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Date: Sept. 28, 1990

TO MY MOTHER AND BROTHER, AND IN LOVING MEMORY OF MY FATHER.

ABSTRACT

Even within the context of today's general understanding of appropriate late-eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century keyboard performance practice, articulation has differing connotations and the Introduction is therefore necessary to delimit the term as used within this essay.

Chapter One is an overview of general principles of articulation from mid-eighteenth to early-nineteenth centuries and is intended as a point of reference from which the present study of articulation in Beethoven's music can begin.

Chapter Two examines musical syntax in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries and focuses in particular on the music of Beethoven. Rhythmic groupings, accentuation, and the use of the short and long slur are examined.

Chapter Three investigates the attack and cessation of sounds created through various patterns of slurs and phrase markings, and the range of detached sounds in identical passages of string and keyboard writing. It is anticipated that such passages in string and keyboard music can be in agreement or different and an interpretation of this phenomena will be sought. Along

with this there is an attempt to draw some general conclusions of articulation and to relate them to the keyboard repertoire.

Chapter Four is an attempt to bring together all the various ideas on articulation. It presents comments on Beethoven's own performance style and how it differed from that of his predecessors. Special attention is given to the rhetorical aspect of his playing.

Chapter Five is a brief survey of Beethoven's fingerings as related to articulation.

Chapter Six discusses the historic instrument revival. It is considered in terms of performances of Beethoven's music on pianos of today and how performances on modern instruments can be transcribed without losing in spirit or "good taste".

Acknowledgements

I wish to acknowledge the unflagging support and encouragement given me by my supervisor, Helmut Brauss. His probing mind in relation to my thesis topic yielded much insight and guidance for me not only in researching the aspect of articulation but also in applying principles of my research directly to performance practice. Professor Brauss's wide-ranging experience as a concert pianist were reflected in my years of study with him as he enabled me to "open new doors" for myself in my piano playing.

I also wish to acknowledge the generous amount of time and help from Regula Qureshi and Christopher Lewis in the stylistic preparation of this essay. Their expertise in this special area was very much appreciated.

The Andrew Stewart Graduate prize enabled me to travel to Cornell University where there were various early pianos with which I could acquaint myself. As well, I spent some interesting hours with Malcolm Bilson discussing and playing works of Beethoven. All of this helped me to reach my final conclusion.

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Articulation has generally come to be interpreted today as the way in which a performer relates single notes and local groupings of notes to one another not only through the initiation, joining, and cessation of these but also through accentuation and dynamic shape. The local groups are then in turn structured into longer units which we call phrases, each having its own shape and accentuation. Through articulation a performer clarifies the direction and sense of the music in a way analogous to that provided by punctuation and accentuation in speech.

The interpretation by a performer of the symbols used by a composer to denote such clarification has been a constant subject of study, especially in the last fifty or so years as the interest in the revival of performance on period instruments has been steadily growing. This interest in its turn has caused today's artists to think in a more probing manner about the kind of performance that best serves the composer's intentions, whether the performance be on a modern instrument, an original historic instrument, or a replica of it.

This essay will deal with this issue in relation to

Beethoven's piano music, and will suggest one possible way in which today's pianists can approach the complex issue of articulation in that repertoire. The focus will not only be on the aspect of "localised" articulation (through joining, separating, and dynamic inflection of sounds) but also on the way in which the character of the music can be articulated through a declamatory style and rhetorical gestures within the longer line. Related to this will be discussions of musical syntax in Beethoven's time, and some comparisons of slurring and bowing marks in identical passages of Beethoven's music for piano and strings. Special attention will be given to the possible musical intentions conveyed by the markings and to their interpretation on the pianos of Beethoven's time and how a performance could be transcribed to the grand piano of today without losing in spirit or "good taste".

Where possible, facsimiles of the autographs have been used. In the absence of these, microfilms of first or early editions have been used to check against modern Urtext editions from which all the other works have had to be interpreted.

1. Perspectives of Articulation from the mid-eighteenth to the early nineteenth centuries.

By Beethoven's time, the notation of articulation had undergone much refinement. One of the problems related to the performance of Baroque music today is the absence of a clearly-defined performing tradition from that period. Part of the problem stems from a lack of printed symbols in the score. The tradition was clearly understood by performers of the day and there was no need to notate most of the performance directions. Some early classical-period music also suffers from a sparse use of signs and the performer has to supply appropriate articulation in accordance with the general customs of the eighteenth century. As the eighteenth century progressed to the nineteenth, so performance style turned more from one in which articulation derived from the contrast of *adagio* and *allegro* styles (predominantly legato and non-legato respectively)[1] to one which favoured a greater use of legato. This approach to slurring and staccato arose from the development of a new technique associated with playing the fortepiano and can be seen as a parallel associated with the development of the piano and its gradual acceptance over the harpsichord and clavichord.

On the title-page to his Inventions and Sinfonias, published in 1723, J. S. Bach wrote that: " . . . those who are keen to learn, are shown a clear method . . . to arrive at a Cantabile Style of playing."[2]

Although Bach was suggesting a sense of tonal nuance and natural phrasing on the clavichord, Türk, in 1789 was still describing the usual [*gewöhnliche*] way of playing the harpischord and fortepiano as

> For tones which are to be played in customary fashion (that is, neither detached nor slurred) the finger is lifted a little earlier from the key than is required by the duration of the note.[3]

Türk suggests that the note value be reduced by one-eighth to one-quarter of its value. Marpurg's description[4] agrees with Türk's, whereas C.P.E.Bach specifies that such tones are sounded for half their value.[5] It would seem that Haydn's and Mozart's playing on the fortepiano was influenced by the usual non-legato touch of the time. Czerny writes of Beethoven's comments after the latter had heard Mozart play:

> Mozart had become accustomed to a style of playing on the more commonly used harpsichord that was in no way suited to the fortepiano.[6]

Later in 1852, Czerny also remarked to Otto Jahn:

> Beethoven said . . . that he had heard Mozart play . . . [Mozart] had a delicate but choppy touch, which Beethoven at first found very strange, since he was accustomed to treat the pianoforte like an

organ.[7]

It was Milchmeyer who in 1797 was the first to attempt to describe in detail the use of touch appropriate to the pianoforte. His usual way of playing was legato, lifting the finger from one key when the next was played. However, he also described a "slurred" way of playing which required that "the fingers remain somewhat longer and on several notes."[8] This overlapping of notes which might be termed legatissimo was restricted to particular types of passages in the different ranges of the keyboard: e.g., left hand broken chord passages; notes above c^2.

Clementi was one of the earliest composers to conceive keyboard compositions completely in terms of the pianoforte, and the first to exploit the many facets of the new instrument. The English piano of his time, with a deeper key dip and thicker strings than found on those made in Vienna, had a much more sonorous tone and allowed Clementi to develop this broad, expressive style of playing, which was, to a large extent, dependent on a legato touch. In his treatise entitled Introduction to the Art of Playing on the Pianoforte (1801), Clementi writes

> The best general rule, is to keep down the keys of the instrument the FULL LENGTH of every note . . . N.B. when the composer leaves the LEGATO & STACCATO to the performer's taste; the best rule is, to adhere chiefly to the LEGATO; reserving the staccato to give SPIRIT occasionally to certain passages, and to set

off the HIGHER BEAUTIES of the LEGATO.[9]

It would seem that eighteenth-century manuals on playing the fortepiano made little differentiation between articulation principles for strings, winds, and keyboard. The following quotation is from George Simon Löhlein's *Clavier-Schule* (1765) and expresses this very view:

> In respect to expression the keyboard is not as complete as the stringed and wind instruments. Nevertheless the same notes can be performed in different ways, and one can imitate several kinds of bowing.[10]

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, the changing musical style and the emergence of the pianoforte as a unique instrument requiring a distinct technique to convey its own inherent means of expression brought with it treatises and tutors in which is emphasized, above all, a more legato and singing style of performance.

The articulatory style of the mid- to late-eighteenth century is also clearly expressed in manuals for other instruments, the two most celebrated treatises being Leopold Mozart's A Treatise on the Fundamental Principles of Violin Playing *(Versuch einer gründlichen Violinschule,* 1756) and Joachim Quantz's On Playing the Flute *(Versuch einer Anweisung die Flöte traversiere zu spielen,* 1752). Leopold Mozart wrote:

> how greatly the slurring and detaching distinguishes a melody. Therefore not only must the written and

> prescribed slurs be observed with the greatest exactitude but when, as in many a composition, nothing at all is indicated, the player must himself know how to apply the slurring and detaching tastefully and in the right place.[11]

He then says that the chapter on bowing serves to teach what kind of changes can be made in keeping with the character of the piece.

The set of melodic variation tables printed near the end of Quantz's treatise of 1752 is an extremely valuable guide to mid-eighteenth-century articulation because of the meticulously consistent and carefully worked-out slurring. Such slurrings can be applied to any instrument that has an early to mid-eighteenth-century solo repertoire. I draw the reader's attention to an article by Mary Rasmussen, in which Quantz's nine basic rules of articulation are set forth "in a manner clear enough that performers can memorize them easily."[12] As these "rules" bear some significance in later parts of this essay, they are quoted in brief here:

Rule 1: An appogiatura is always slurred to its note of resolution.

Rule 2: Melodic units encompassing a dotted note and its complement are slurred.

Rule 3: Wide skips are not slurred.

Rule 4: Two or more consecutive notes of equal value, (or of the same triad), occupying less than a whole beat, are slurred.

Rule 5: A neighbour-note pattern is slurred if it is an independent three-note motive, or if it occurs in notes of equal value, and occupies less than a whole beat.

Rule 6: Sharp rhythmic contrasts tend to be blunted by symmetrical, or nearly symmetrical, slurs.

Rule 7: In compound meters, compact melodic patterns in notes of equal value are slurred in groups of three.

Rule 8: Melodic patterns in simple syncopated rhythms are not slurred.

Rule 9: Short sequences or repetitions of melodic motives are slurred.

Melodic articulation in the mid-eighteenth century was basically straightforward and a well-trained performer could easily apply the principles outlined above.

Both Leopold Mozart and Quantz also refer to the use of dots and strokes in the overall articulation of a piece. Referring to string bowing, they agree that little strokes written above the notes indicate staccato and that dots above or below notes do not indicate detaching, but rather an articulated or attacked initiation of the sound by the bow, e.g., in a manner akin to spoken repetitions of the word "go". C.P.E. Bach writes that on the keyboard there is no difference between dots and strokes: both indicate notes which are to be detached.[13] However, all three writers describe a simultaneous use of the slur and dots. On a string instrument, all the notes under the slur are taken with one bow-stroke and stressed with a pressure

of the bow; on the keyboard, "the notes are played legato . . . but each tone is noticeably accented".[14] C.P.E. Bach does not refer to a slur with strokes, but both Mozart and Quantz write that notes so notated are to be played in a single bow, but separated from one another. Mozart and Quantz again agree that when a composer wishes notes to be played with a "strongly accented stroke and separated from each other"[15] he writes little strokes over or under the notes.

Referring to such markings in his Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments *(Versuch über die wahre Art das Clavier zu spielen,* 1753) C.P.E. Bach states that on the keyboard "attack and touch are the same thing. Everything depends upon their force and duration."[16] Any shortening of the note values in staccato is dependent upon (1) their notated length, that is, half, quarter, or eighth of a bar; (2) the tempo, fast or slow; and (3) the volume, forte or piano.[17] He then suggests that these notes are always held for less than half of their notated length, and are generally found in leaping passages and rapid tempos.

In this century Paul Mies has contributed an extensive examination of the use of the staccato dot and stroke in the music of Mozart. He also includes references

to Haydn and Beethoven in his discussion. His survey entitled *Die Artikulationszeichen Strich und Punkt bei Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart* (1958) observes that Mozart first learned to notate articulation precisely the way his father had prescribed in his *Violonschule*. That is, virtually all staccatos in the early autographs are strokes; dots only occur in combination with slurs as indication for portato. In Mozart's later years his apparent differentiation between dots and strokes resulted, according to Mies, from the development in Mozart's penmanship in a way that the handwriting of any individual changes from the stages in childhood to maturity. Mies demonstrated that the influence of the mechanical aspect of the writing (the *Schreibfaktor*) was responsible for variations in the staccatos. Mies also emphasized the crucial role of the musical character, rather than the shape of the staccato sign, as the determining factor in the selection of performance nuances.

The musical character also plays an important part with Beethoven's handwriting claims Mies. Examining the autograph of the third movement of Beethoven's Sonata Op 27, no. 2, one discovers in bars 91 - 93 that Beethoven's staccato signs become heavier and bigger at the *crescendo*.

This could suggest a graphic illustration of what Beethoven was hearing with his inner ear as he wrote the music.

The ambiguities of the use of the dot and stroke in classic period music has been given much attention and I direct the reader to further sources listed by Sandra Rosenblum and William S. Newman.[18]

Returning to eighteenth-century treatises and a further general observation of articualtion, Quantz warns that the performance should "be regulated by whether the tempo of the piece is very slow or very quick, and must not shorten the notes in the adagio as much as those in the *allegro*."[19] Türk writes of the "heavy" and "light" degrees of execution, which he said may be determined from the character and the purpose of a composition, from the designated tempo, from the meter, from the note values used, or from the manner in which the notes progress.[20] The "heavy" execution is described as playing each note emphatically and held right to the end of its prescribed duration. "Light" refers to a note being played with less firmness (emphasis) and with the finger lifted from the key somewhat earlier than the duration of the note prescribes. Therefore

> a Presto must be played more lightly than an allegro; this in turn must be played more lightly than an andante, etc. In general, the heaviest execution is called for by compositions in slow tempos.[21]

C.P.E. Bach also comments on the performer who "must try to capture the true content of a composition and express its appropriate affects. Composers . . . in preventing a garbled performance . . . add to the notes the usual signs and marks relative to execution."[22]

The preceding remarks concerning general articulation in the mid-eighteenth century are intended as points of reference for the present study. Beethoven was born in 1770 and was trained in the style of playing that had prevailed from the middle of the century. We know he had Czerny use C.P.E. Bach's treatise at his piano lessons, and at that time (about 1800) the "choppy and smartly detached playing was still in favour".[23] Beethoven found this style in no way suited to the pianoforte. Beethoven's playing antedated any turn-of-the-century tutors and was probably the result of his natural process of adapting to what sounded best on the new keyboard instrument.

The change in performance style from detached to more legato is an intrinsic part of Beethoven's language. It is my opinion that Beethoven did adapt naturally to the piano and that he ushered in a more appropriate technique

which was related to the development of the instrument itself.

NOTES

1. Refer to D. G. Türk, *School of Clavier Playing,* trans., intro., and notes by Raymond H. Haggh (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982), 347.

2. J. S. Bach, *Inventions and Sinfonias* BWV 772 - 801, ed., and annotated by Richard Jones (London: The Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, n.d.), 2.

3. D. G. Türk, *School of Clavier Playing,* 345.

4. F.W. Marpurg, *Anleitung zum Clavierspielen,* facs. of 2d ed. (New York: Broude, 1969), 29.

5. C.P.E. Bach, *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments,* trans. and ed. William J. Mitchell (New York: Norton, 1949), 157.

6. Carl Czerny, *On the Proper Performance of all Beethoven's Works for the Piano,* Czerny's "Reminiscences of Beethoven" and chapters II and III from Vol. IV of the "Complete Theoretical and Practical Piano Forte School op. 500". Facsimile, ed. Paul Badura-Skoda (Vienna: Universal, 1970), 5.

7. Cited by Sandra P. Rosenblum in *Performance Practices in Classic Piano Music* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1988), 24.

8. Cited by Sandra P. Rosenblum in her New Introduction to Muzio Clementi's, *Introduction to the Art of playing on the Pianoforte* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1974), X.

9. Muzio Clementi, *Introduction to the Art of Playing on the Pianoforte,* 8-9.

10. Cited by Sandra P. Rosenblum in *Performance Practices,* 174.

11. Leopold Mozart, *A Treatise on the Fundamental Principles of Violin Playing,* trans. E. Knocker (London: Oxford University Press, 1951), 220.

12. Mary Rasmussen, "Some Notes on the Articulations in the Melodic Variation Tables of Johann Joachim Quantz's *Versuch einer Anweisung die Flöte traversiere zu spielen* (Berlin 1752, Breslau 1789)." *Brass and Woodwind Quarterly* 1 (1966-67): 3-26.

13. C.P.E. Bach, *Essay,* 154.

14. Ibid., 156.

15. L. Mozart, *Treatise,* 47.

16. C.P.E. Bach, *Essay,* 154.

17. Ibid., 154.

18. See Sandra Rosenblum *Performance Practices,* 183-189 and William S. Newman *Beethoven on Beethoven,* 139-146.

19. Joachim Quantz, *On Playing the Flute.* 1752. Trans. and ed., Edward R. Reilly (London: Faber and Faber, 1966), 232.

20. D. G. Türk, *School of Clavier Playing,* 347-48.

21. Ibid., 348.

22. C.P.E. Bach, *Essay,* 153-54.

23. Carl Czerny, *On the Proper Performance,* 5.

2. Musical Syntax in Beethoven's Music and its effect on articulation.

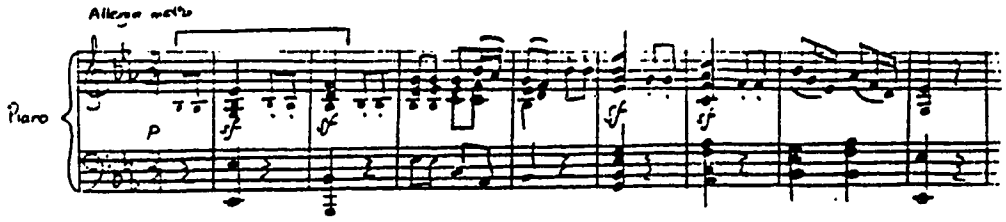
For the eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century musician, the incise[1] and the phrase were the tools with which they created linear and rhythmic shaping. Possibly because of its expressive influence, the incise received more attention from theorists of the time such as Mattheson, Riepel, Kirnberger, Koch, and Momigny, who had adopted the term from literary terminology in an attempt to link music and poetry more closely.

Starting with the poetic feet (iamb, trochee, dactyl, and anapaest[2]), theorists evolved a hierarchy of structural levels that continued with the incise (which ranked above one or more poetic feet at the minimal level and equated with either a clause or a comma), the phrase (a verse or a sentence), and the section (a stanza or paragraph). Inherent in the conception of every incise was a rise and fall (an arsis and thesis). The arsis and thesis pairing was also to be found in each next higher level. Within every arsis and every thesis at each next higher level was yet a further arsis-thesis pairing.[3]

The opening eight bars of the Rondo of Beethoven's Violin Sonata Op. 12. no. 3, provide us with a very clear

example of hierarchical structures mentioned above. Measures 1 - 2 constitute the first incise, or arsis (marked with a solid horizontal bracket) and cause the second incise, or thesis, in bars 3 - 4. At the higher level, bars 1 - 4 become a supra-incise which is in fact the supra-arsis of its complementary phrase (or supra-thesis) in bars 5 - 8. The strong-weak grouping of bars 1 - 2 (strong) to bars 3 - 4 (weak) is reiterated in the pairing of bars 5 - 6 and 7 - 8.

Ex. 1. Beethoven, Sonata Op. 12, no.3/iii, mm. 1 - 8.



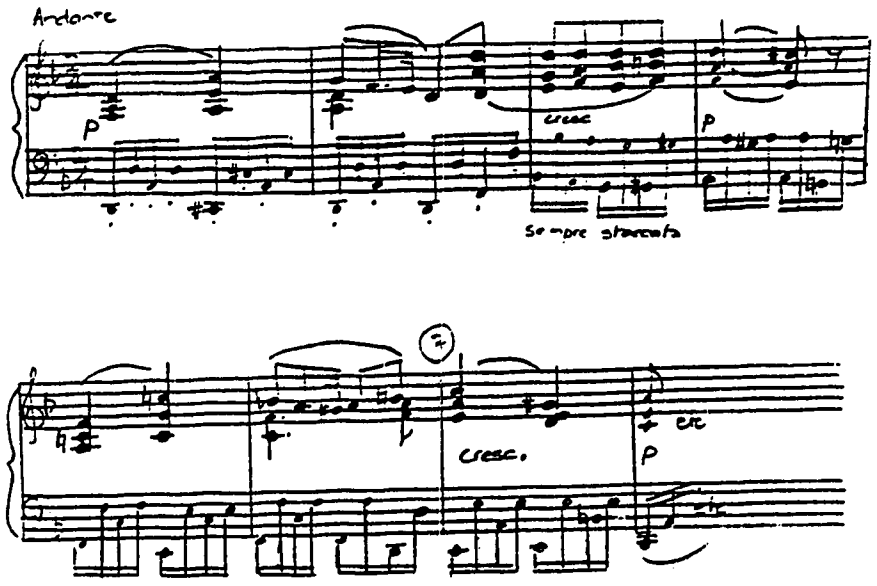
It was the Frenchman, Jérôme-Joseph de Momigny who, in his *Cours complet d'harmonie et de composition, d'après une théorie neuve et generale de la musique,* (Paris: 1808) discussed the expressive factors concerned with the internal arsis and thesis, or rise and fall, within each incise and phrase[4], relating these to the overall dynamic direction. Such dynamic direction gives rise in part to

expressive accentuation occurring on dissonant notes or those that prepare dissonant intervals, those that are chromatic or syncopated, those distinguished by their length or by their high or low pitch[5], and those that are first under a slur.[6] When there are no distinguishing expressive characteristics "an incise or a phrase reaches the peak of its rise and fall on its last strong beat before its final note" [or] "in a slow tempo, on the secondary strong beat before the final note".[7]

The opening eight bars of the *Andante* of the Sonata Op. 28 reveal the above rule in a clear way. Bars 1 - 2 are the incise with a stress falling on the first beat of bar 2. Its thesis, bars 3 - 4, rises to the first beat of bar 4 which, in a typically understated Beethovenian manner (use of the *subito p*) dynamically eclipses the peak of the first stress of bar 2. Bars 1 - 4 therefore form the first sub-phrase. However, the following sub-phrase (bars 5 - 8) leads dynamically onto the peak of the entire eight-bar phrase at bar 7, beat 1. This is not only the penultimate strong beat before the end of the phrase but also is supported by the six-four chord, and the new slur. The dynamic stress in bar 7 therefore overrides that of bar 4. The unbroken slur on the second half of beat 2, bar 6 (compared with the corresponding slur in bar 2) thus

creates a sustained drive through bar 6 to the six-four chord of bar 7.

Ex. 2. Beethoven, Sonata Op. 28/ii, mm. 1-8.

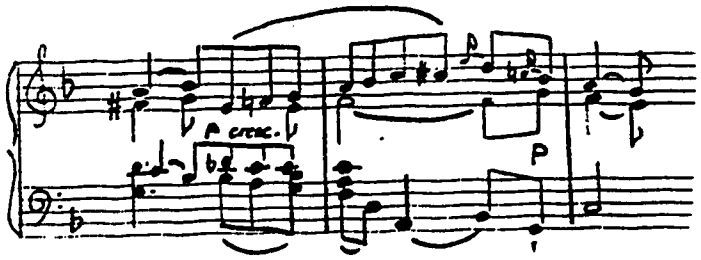


However, not all phrases are so readily and easily understood. The expected peak can be offset by tempo and pulse subdivision as well as by aspects of pitch, dissonance, a dynamic change or by longer phrase lengths.

By the beginning of the final quarter of the eighteenth century longer slurs were seeming to denote phrase members as well as the traditional indication of a legato touch. Mozart was more inclined than Haydn to use the slur in this way and slurs over one or two bars are

not uncommon. Example 3 shows the slurring in Mozart's Sonata K. 330, second movement, bars 10/11.

Ex. 3. Mozart, Sonata K. 330/ii, mm. 10 - 12.



Such slurs, which delineate phrase members and provide a point of rest, were discussed by Türk who stated that the first strong beat of a section of melody between "every greater or lesser point of rest" should receive

> an even more noticeable stress than an *ordinary* strong beat. Strictly speaking these notes should receive more or less emphasis depending on whether they start a larger or smaller part of the whole; that is, the first note after a full cadence must be more strongly marked than after a half cadence or merely after a phrase division [*Einschnitt*], and so on.[8]

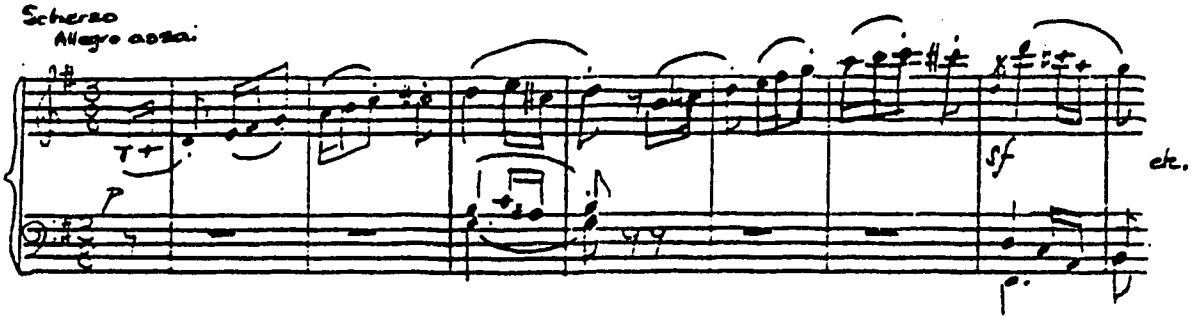
Sandra Rosenblum uses the term "phrase-rhythm" accents to describe those that mark the beginnings of phrase members, or periods.[9] Such accents, along with others kinds of accents, serve to delineate rhythmic groupings and clarify structure. The phrase-rhythm accents, though, take priority over the metrical. We therefore find that as with the hierarchical concept of

incises, there is also an hierarchy of accentuation in classical syntax. That is to say, the "phrase-rhythm" accents take precedence over the metrical while the expressive and agogic accents are above the other two.

The Shorter Slur and Accentuation

Slurs can alter the expected accentuation of the meter. Perhaps the most celebrated example of upsetting the expected metric stress in Beethoven's piano music occurs at the beginning of the third movement of Op. 14, no. 2:

Ex. 4. Beethoven, Sonata Op. 14/2/iii, mm 1-8.

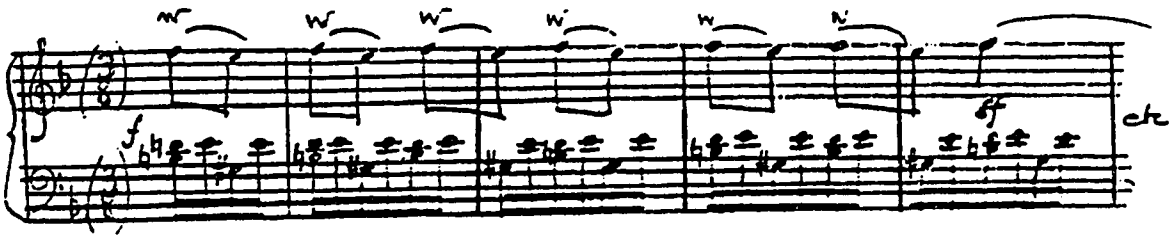


Here, the listener anticipates a duple meter in bars 1 - 2 but is hastily thrown into the triple meter in bars 3 - 4 only to be upset again in bars 4 - 6. The triple meter is emphatically restored with a *sf* in bar 7.

A further example of incise slurring upsetting the established metrical accent and creating cross-rhythms can

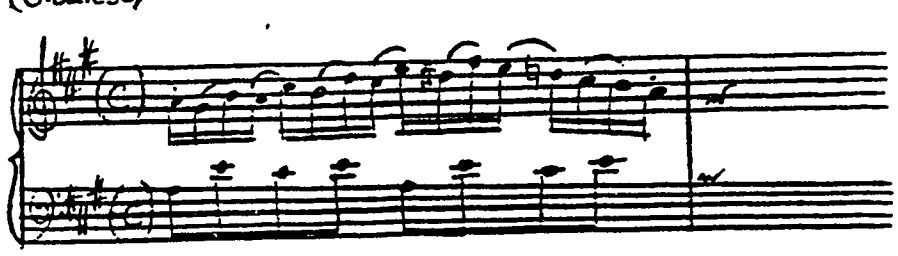
be seen in Beethoven's Sonata Op. 31, no. 2, third movement, bars 43 - 47 and again in 271-275:

Ex. 5. Beethoven, Sonata Op.31/2/iii, mm 43-47.



Here, both melody and harmony are shaped according to the altered rhythmic state of the moment. In his earlier works Beethoven frequently used the short incise slur to upset the metric accent in one hand while keeping a clear accentuation on the beat in the other hand. In the second of his three sonatas dedicated to Haydn, Beethoven employs this technique (which interestingly enough was one of which Haydn himself was very fond) whereby short slurs in the right hand contradict the regular beat of the LH notes (ex. 6).

Ex. 6. Beethoven, Sonata Op.2/2/iv, m.182.



The incise slur is probably the clearest indication of attack and release. In classical-period performance, realization of the incise slur and the non-legato touch are basic to fortepiano technique.

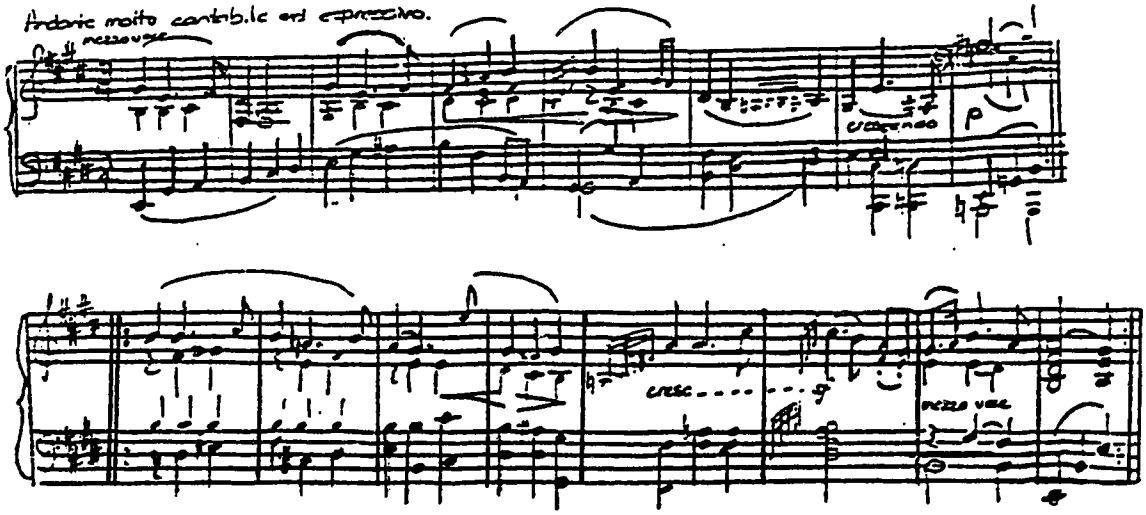
Accentuation, Rhythmic Groupings, and the Longer Slur.

Within a polyphonic texture accentuation and rhythmic groupings are also affected by the player's ability to shape individual lines dynamically for polyphonic clarity (rather than by simply joining or detaching as on the harpsichord). This was, and still is, a major challenge for the performer when playing a contrapuntal texture. Rhythmic groupings, phrase structures, and dynamic inflection are factors which must be considered along with Beethoven's original slurs when a performer is deciding upon articulation of certain passages. Often the player will find that it is not only theoretical knowledge that produces the "right" articulation, but also an internal feeling that he or she has for the implied stress and release of a slur, rhythmic group, expressive accent (occasionally accompanied by an agogic accent), and the longer slur. Further, all of these factors have to be

considered in relation to the character and tempo of the piece.

As an example I suggest that the slurring of the theme of the third movement of Op. 109 requires expressive (i.e., agogic) accentuation, rather than attack and release of the slurs as marked. We must always bear in mind that Beethoven was economical with his use of slurs and that they indicate not only what we should do but also what we should not do. In the example from Op. 109, the shorter slurs of the melody (often only one bar in length) show local shaping while the bass slurs show the harmonic direction and cadence points.

Ex. 7. Beethoven Sonata Op. 109/iii, mm. 1 - 16.



The slurs in the RH of bars 1, 3, and 5 avoid an accent on the second beat which, had they not been there, might have provided the performer with the idea to stress the longer note on that beat.

The two sections of the theme divide very regularly into two eight-bar phrases, each with two four-bar sub-phrases. The dynamic peak for the first phrase (bars 1 - 8) is reached at beat one of bar 5 and then descends gently to the end of bar 6. The sub-phrase which peaks at bar 8 is characteristically marked by Beethoven's use of a sudden *piano* and reinforced by a separate slur. Where slurring does not exist, either it is not necessary to add such markings because they relate to similar movement in other parts or possibly, for emphatic reasons, the unslurred notes need to be slightly separated in contrasted to the more legato notes.

A question which the performer may ask about this theme is, "Is the chromatic bass line in bars 7 to 10 meant to be slurred (as in the previous bars) or does the lack of slurs at this point suggest a greater aural awareness of the bass line?" I prefer to be aware not only of the bass line but also of the alto line in these bars and attempt to balance them tonally within an overall texture which still favours the soprano line. It is worth

noting that in bars 1 - 16 there are no LH slurs on either chromatically-moving notes or octaves, for this draws our attention to such places.

A performer must consider all the implications of the markings when making interpretative decisions. Neither Beethoven's markings nor rhythmic groupings necessarily need to be delineated audibly or in a selfconscious manner. It is often more appropriate to the character and tempo if the performer conveys agogic or dynamic emphasis rather than interrupting the flow of sound.

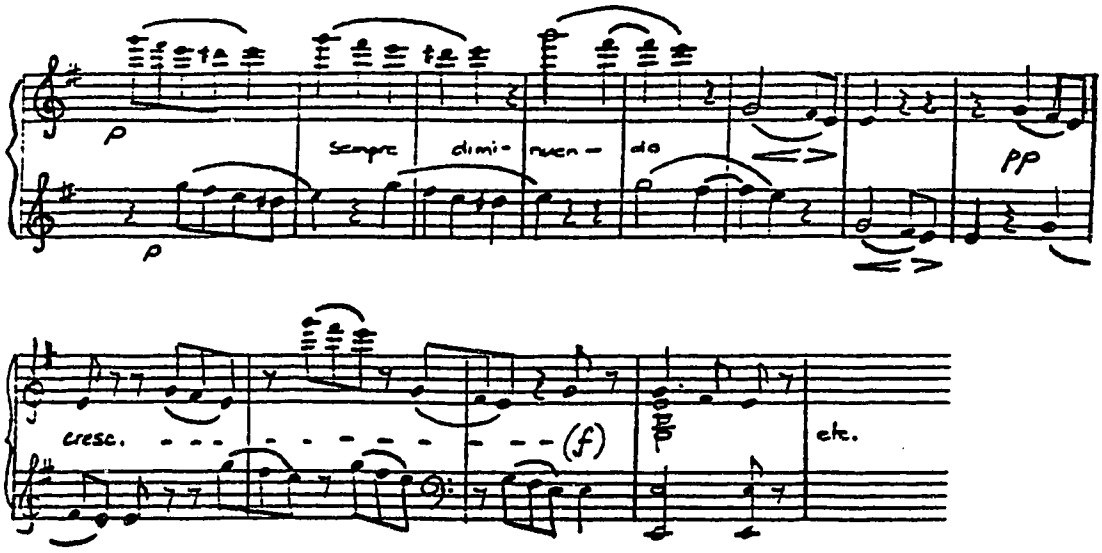
Beethoven's use of the longer slur

By way of introduction it is necessary to realize that Beethoven was concerned with the piano's development and that he not only ushered in a new technique of playing but also conceived his works with a more heightened impression of a broad legato style. He moved away from the more vertical approach of the shorter slur and more uniform metric accentuation of performance to one that was more expansive and capable of broader gestures. If Mozart's music was subject to more metric articulation (due to the original relationship between the bowing slur and the keyboard slur and the "Rule of the Down-Bow"[10]), then Beethoven's music avoids, as one writer once put it, "the

tyranny of the bar-line". Examples 4 - 6 above illustrate the way in which Beethoven would "sidestep" the anticipated metre. Another form of "sidestepping" is seen in his Sonata Op. 90, first movement, bars 133 - 144 (ex. 8) in which Beethoven extends the cadence of bars 135/136 a further eight bars. These bars, writes Czerny, "must be performed in time, and particularly distinct."[11] In this context Sandra Rosenblum writes:

> By sidestepping expected cadences and symmetries through melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic means, Beethoven often drew out his lines to unpredictable lengths. The longer slurs are, in part, external evidence of this increased breadth.[12]

Ex. 8. Beethoven, Sonata Op. 90/i, mm.133 - 144.



Beethoven expanded the use of the longer slur to include it (1) as a unifying device, (2) for structural

purposes, (3) in the development of the legato, cantabile style, (4) to outline broader, sweeping lines, (5) to combine touch and the use of the pedal in a way which Sandra Rosenblum calls an "illusory sense"[13] .

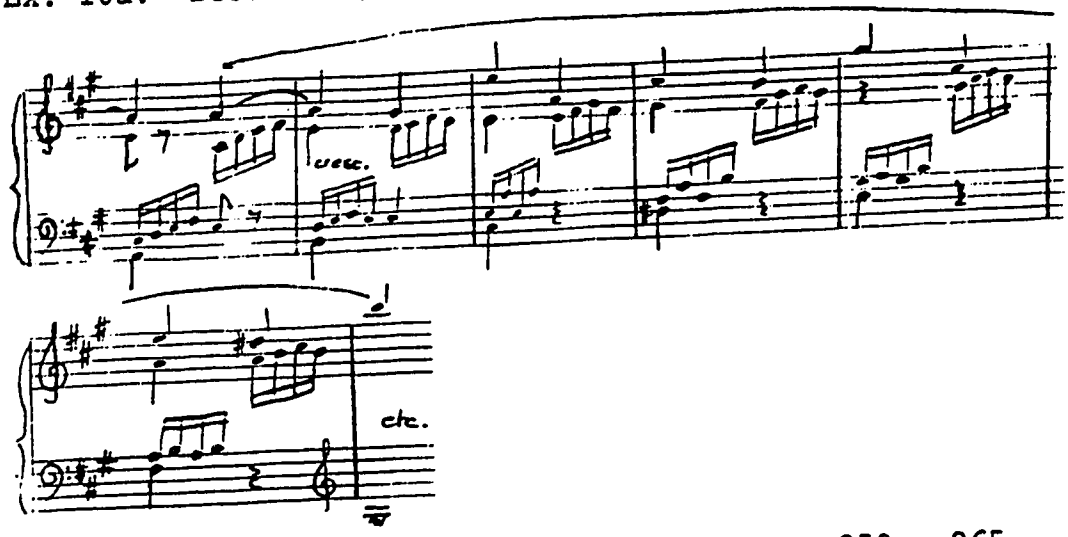
As a unifying device, the longer slur bound together a line of notes in a part other than the melodic voice, the latter usually being more highly articulated with shorter incise and/or metrical slurs. Examples of this include: Op. 10, no. 1/i/48 - 56 (as shown in example 9); Op. 28/i/11 - 20; Op. 78/ii/12 - 21.

Ex. 9. Beethoven, Sonata Op. 10, no. 1/i, mm.48 - 56.

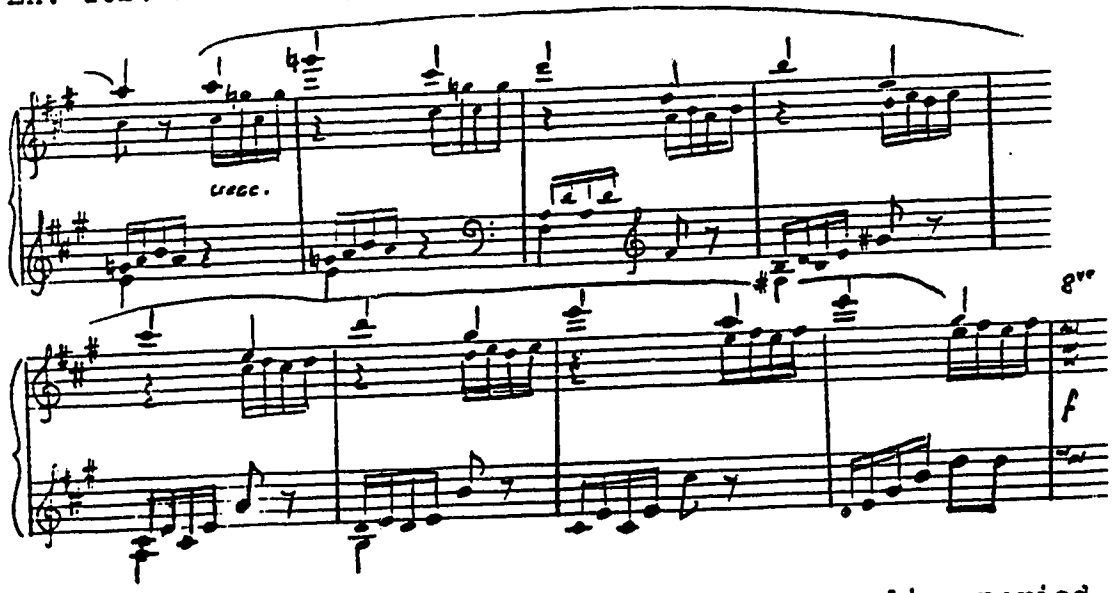
One example which demonstrates Beethoven's skill in using a longer slur as part of the structural development in order to contrast material is seen in Op. 101/iii/70 - 76. This motive is extended later in the same movement in bars 258 - 265 and in both instances could be seen as deriving from the initial motive with its characteristic intervals of down a third, up a fourth, down a fifth.

Whereas the opening motive is more active, the varied appearance in bars 70 - 76 (ex. 10a) and 258 - 265 (ex. 10b) is legato throughout.

Ex. 10a. Beethoven, Sonata Op. 101/iii, mm. 70 - 76.



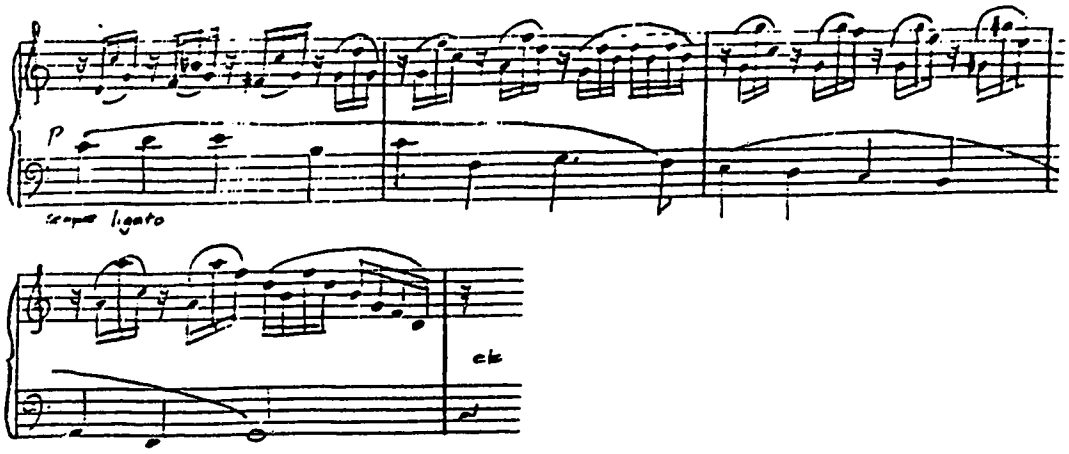
Ex. 10b. Beethoven, Sonata Op. 101/iii, mm. 258 - 265.



A further example in this category from an earlier period is seen in Op. 14, no. 2/ii/65ff. The LH is slurred and

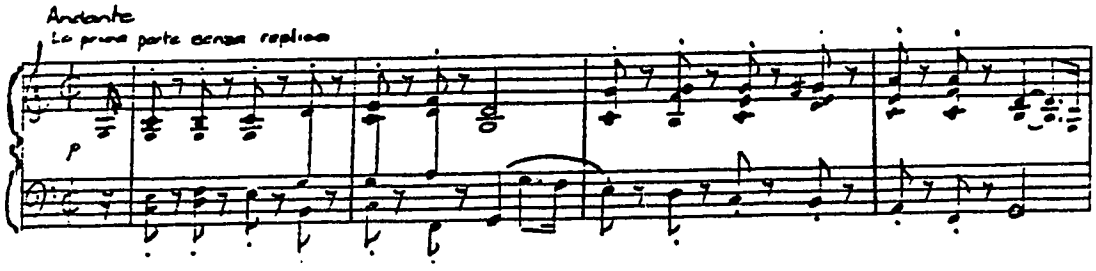
Beethoven adds *sempre ligato* to point out the contrast with the detached articulation of the previous variation.

Ex. 11a. Beethoven, Sonata Op. 14/2/ii, mm. 65 - 68.



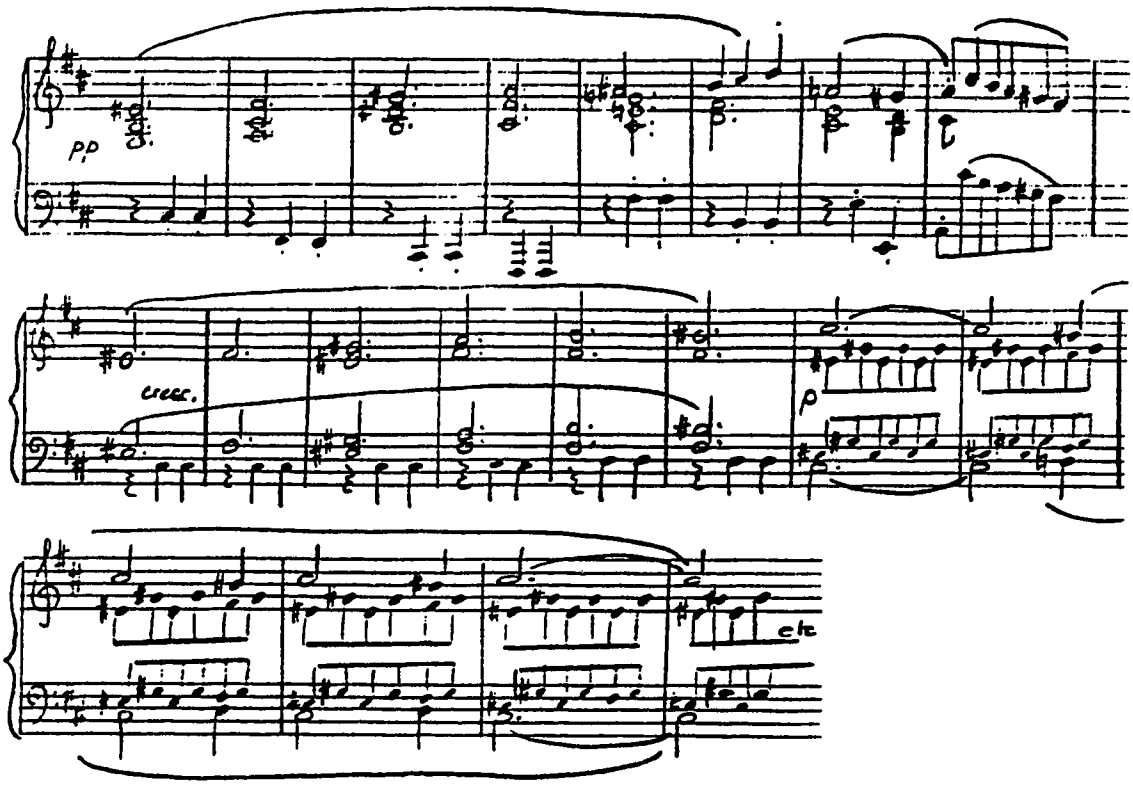
Whether or not the performer joins the end of each slur to the next is a moot point. Perhaps Beethoven's slurring of the original theme can be of help? For example, compare the bass in bars 2 - 3 (ex. 11b) with bars 66 - 67 where firstly the slur is over the barline and then it stops at the barline.

Ex. 11b. Beethoven, Sonata Op. 14/2/ii, mm. 1 - 4.



That some of the longer slurs equate with the phrase-lengths may have developed from Beethoven's conception of a more legato, cantabile style of playing. As an example, in the first movement of Op. 28, beginning at bar 71, the slurs coincide with the phrase-lengths but their main purpose is to signify a broader, more singing legato character at this point of the movement.

Ex. 12. Beethoven, Sonata Op. 28/i, mm. 63 - 82.

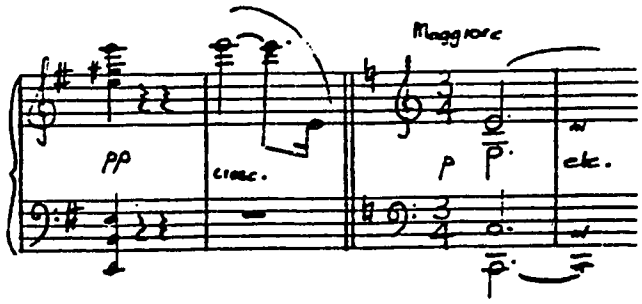


Such broader, sweeping legato passages signified with longer slurs which also seem to denote a particular aesthetic quality in the music occur in the development of

the first movement of Sonata Op. 53 (bars 113ff) and in Op. 110/ii/41 - 91. Although the texture is different in these examples, they both nevertheless convey a broader harmonic sweep over a long period.

Finally, longer slurs were used in a way that Sandra Rosenblum described as "illusory". Such longer slurs often covered leaps that were impossible to reach with a finger legato and therefore required the assistance of the pedal. An example occurs in the Sonata Op. 14, no 1, second movement, with the anacrusic opening to the Trio and Coda (bar 62).

Ex. 13. Beethoven, Sonata Op. 14/1/ii, mm. 61 - 63.



In the B flat minor section of the *Scherzo* of Op. 106, long slurs and pedal are indicated by Beethoven to create a special texture within a legato framework. Beethoven's *sempre legato* in the first movement of the Sonata Op. 109, bars 21 - 35, coming immediately after the slur carries the legato into the recapitulation with such

a sweep that the listener, and possibly even the performer, becomes unaware of the repeated notes and therefore the impossibility of creating a true legato.

Musical syntax clarifies structural levels in a musical performance. Articulation can join or separate groups of notes but the groups must be given dynamic direction within the overall sense of a phrase or longer section. Beethoven uses the longer slur more than any composer before him, indicating in part, a change of performance style not only as seen in his notation but also as witnessed by his playing.

NOTES

1. By "incise" is meant a segment within a larger unit. Kirnberger's articles in Sulzer's *Allgemeine Theorie der Schönen Künste* (1773), equates the incise with the German term *Einschnitt*, meaning one of two or more subphrases within any phrase. *Abschnitt*, according to Kirnberger, referred to the antecedent phrase (arsis) in a period or the half-cadence that ends the antecedent phrase.

2. iamb: 2 syllables, weak-strong;
trochee: 2 syllables, strong-weak;
dactyl: 3 syllables, strong-weak-weak;
anapaest: 3 syllables, weak-weak-strong.

3. The evolution of the incise in theoretical writings is given excellent coverage in William S. Newman's book *Beethoven on Beethoven*, Chapter 6.

4. Regarding Momigny's terminology for "phrase", see William S. Newman *Beethoven on Beethoven*, 173, footnote 19.

5. L. Mozart, *Fundamentals of Violin Playing*, 218-219, 221; Türk, *School of Clavier Playing*, 337.

6. Türk, *School of Clavier Playing*, 354-355.

7. William S. Newman, *Beethoven on Beethoven*, 185.

8. D. G. Türk, *School of Clavier Playing*, 336. The term "phrase division" is Raymond Haggh's (see Daniel Gottlob Türk, *School of Clavier Playing*, trans. and ed. Raymond Haggh [Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982], pp 506-511, n. 19, in which Haggh points out that *Einschnitt* could mean either a melodic segment, which he translates as "phrase member", or a point of rest, or break, in a melodic line, which he translates as "phrase division"). For a further discussion, see Jérôme-Joseph de Momigny, *Cours complet d'harmonie et de composition*, 3 vols. (Paris: de Momigny, 1808), II, 496-425; III, 157-160.

9. Sandra Rosenblum, *Performance Practices in Classic Piano Music*, 93.

10. David D. Boyden, *The History of Violin Playing from its origins to 1761* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), 157-163. The rule is associated with the violin family, in which the down-bow has more strength than the up-bow and is therefore closely related to accentuation. (With the viol family, the out-bow, which equates to the violin down-bow, was the weaker while the in-bow was the stronger.)

11. Carl Czerny, ed. Paul Badura-Skoda, *On the Proper Performance of all Beethoven's Works for the Piano*, Op. 500, vol. IV, 52.

12. Sandra Rosenblum, *Performance Practices*, 166.

13. Ibid., 169.

3. Articulation in identical passages of music for piano with other instruments.

The intent of this chapter is to examine possible relationships between keyboard articulation and bowing marks in Beethoven's string writing. It will seek to determine the extent to which such markings are applicable to the piano in parallel string and piano passages. Where differences of slurring and separation occur an explanation will be sought either to confirm the notated versions, or to show that they can in fact be the same musical idea in practice with differences in the markings (not the musical effect) that usually arise from the inherent nature of each medium.

One should always bear in mind that in string terms the end of a slur was often used to denote a change of bow direction. Shorter slurs grouped notes to allow for the metrical accentuation prevalent at the time. It may help us to remember that the metric accentuation in the classical period was normally on strong beats and, to a lesser extent, at the start of other beats or half beats that are subdivided.[1] This gave rise to the "Rule of the Down-Bow"[2] in which the start of the slur nearly always

coincided with the metric accent. The notating of such slurring was, to a large extent, literally taken over in keyboard writing. With the earlier type of convex bow which had less tension on the hair, a change of bow direction was slightly audible. Thus, even if the player kept the bow on the string, there was a minimal fresh attack as the hair took up the slack at the start of a note following a change of direction. To use a linguistic analogy, it approximated the kind of glottal stop made before the hard consonant in the word "forget".

Relating string bowings to keyboard performance

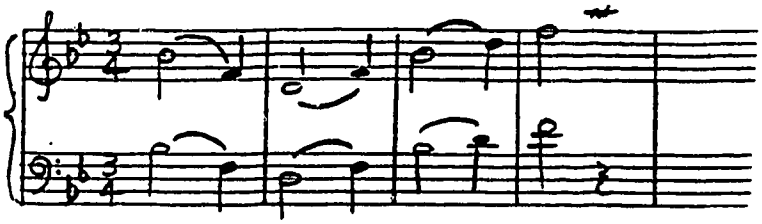
Given the special meaning of the slur for bowing, there is a need to approach the question of whether the legato should end every time a slur ends at the barline. Beethoven's use of the slur seems to continue the prevailing tradition of his time in signifying a legato touch. The custom of notating a legato with measure-length slurs was still being described in 1839 by Czerny:

> When, however, slurs are drawn over several notes, although the slurs are not continuous, but are broken into several lines, they are considered as forming but one, and no perceptible separation must take place . . . the last note of each bar [under a measure-length slur] must . . . be connected with the following one. Should the composer desire to make it detached, he must place a dot or dash over it.[3]

The following four examples (two from the Violin Sonatas and two from the Piano Concertos) briefly examine this aspect of notation.

The opening theme of the Sonata Op. 24 for Violin and Piano is written with one-bar slurs in both the violin and piano parts. The slurring is somewhat reminiscent of the opening bars in Mozart's Piano Sonata K. 570/i.

Ex. 14a. Mozart Sonata K. 570/i, mm. 1 - 4.



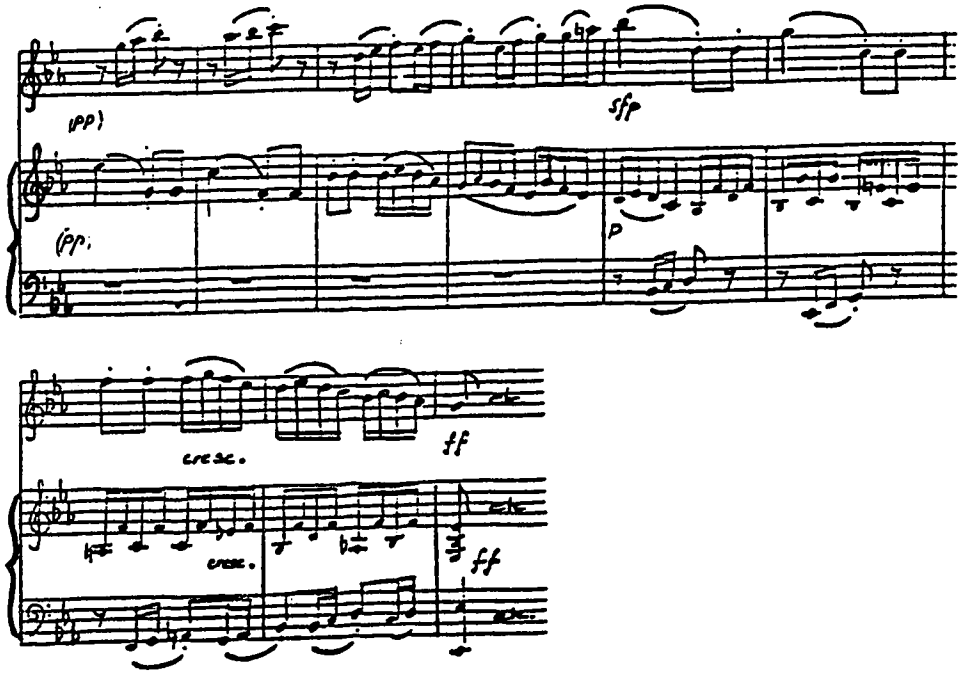
Ex. 14b. Beethoven, Sonata Op. 24/i, mm. 1 - 4.

Beethoven is clearly trying to convey a feeling of one rhythmic stress to a bar. In the piano part this can be achieved by a very gentle release of the arm weight

(possibly accompanied by a raising of the wrist) at the end of each slur followed by a return to the previous armweight (and maybe a slight lowering of the wrist) at the beginning of the next slur. This approximates the effect that a change of direction with an eighteenth-century bow would produce. In performance this prevents a "romantic" surging throughout the phrase and preserves a classical elegance and poise.

In the Violin Sonata, Op. 12, no. 3, third movement, the violin figuration of bars 226 - 230 is imitated in the LH piano part in bars 230 - 234. In both the violin and piano at bars 229 - 230 and 233 - 234, the final  figure is not joined over the barline.

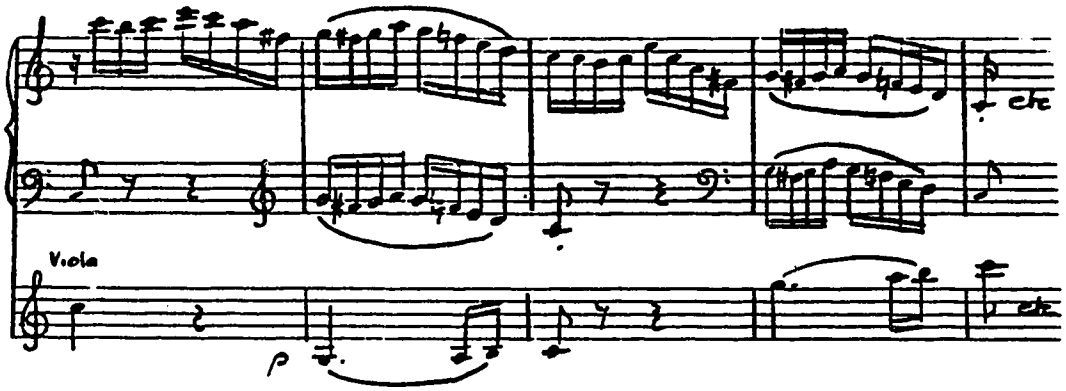
Ex. 15. Beethoven Sonata, Op. 12, no. 3/iii, mm. 226 - 234.



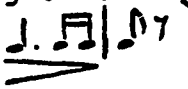
Should there be a break in the legato at these barlines? In this case the imitative idea must be given priority by consistent slurring. A combination of the rule of the downbow, the physical management of playing the *sf* in the violin part, the octave quarter-note in the piano, and the rhythmic poise achieved through not slurring over the barline causes me to favour a slight lifting and placing of the hand on the notes across the two barlines.

In the Concerto Op. 15/iii/46 - 50, the slurs of both orchestra and piano do not extend over the barline.

Ex. 16. Beethoven, Concerto. Op. 15/iii, mm. 46 - 50.

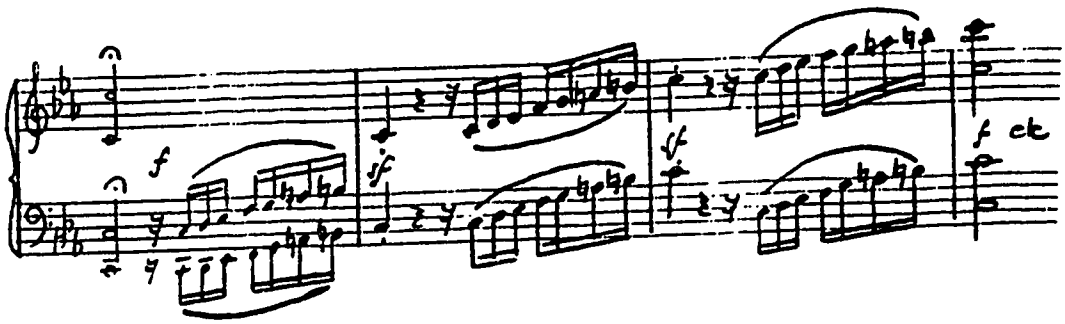


In my opinion, there is, however, no need to break at the barline where the slur ends, since the piano slur reflects the bowing slur of the string instruments, which in turn indicates a change of bow direction but not necessarily a

break in sound, and in any case, the musical idea moves on to the first sixteenth of the bar and then moves afresh from the second sixteenth in the even-numbered bars. The slur in the alternate bars of the piano implies a legato touch to contrast with the articulated finger action of unslurred bars. The legato bars in the piano create an homogeneous textural blend with the orchestral instruments. Beethoven's slurring of the  figure suggests the dynamic inflection  which can also assist in the creation of an elegant rhythmic poise.

A similar lift at the barline can occur in the Concerto, Op. 37/i, at the soloist's entry.

Ex. 17. Beethoven, Concerto Op. 37/i, mm. 111 - 114.



Whether or not a break is given in performance, there is still a need for precise timing on the first beats after the scalic flourish. The physical preparation for the *sf* is achieved through a slight raising of the wrist and then

a dropping of it on the *sf*. At the beginning of the development section there is even greater need for precision as the orchestra joins in on the *sf* notes.

Excessive breaks can not only tend to destroy the onward flow of the music but can also sound self-conscious. Often by simply making the end of a short slur dynamically lighter and following it with a slight stress at the beginning of the next slur, the musical intention is sufficiently conveyed. For the performer, the context of the music, its character, and prevailing performance practices of the time[4] dictate the extent, if any, of the break.

Specific functions of the slur in Beethoven's writing.

It would seem that Beethoven's slur functions in three ways; (1) to indicate rhythmic groupings of motives, as it had done in late Baroque and early Classical styles, (2) to characterize melodic shape and to support harmonic direction, and (3) to indicate longer legato lines and suggest phrase-lengths.

Slurs which indicate rhythmic groupings of motives.

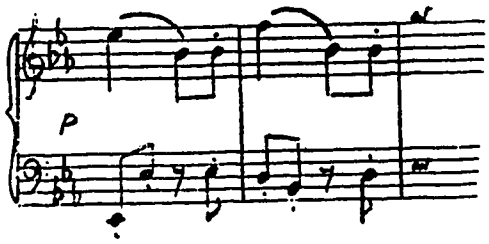
In the Violin Sonata Op. 12, no. 3/iii (see ex. 1, p. 16), note the use of the shorter slur in bars 3 and 4

(appogiaturas slurred to notes of resolution) and in bar 7 the slurring of notes of the same chord. It is interesting to observe the slightly different slurring that Beethoven gives this theme in bars 8 - 16 (violin part) as well as in other appearances later in the movement.

Ex. 18a. Beethoven, Sonata Op. 12/3/iii, mm. 8 - 16.

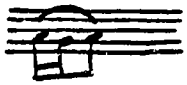
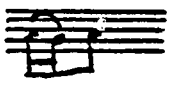
In bar 11, the violin has a slur over the entire second beat and that slurring is repeated in the piano in bars 89 and 165. A further change is seen in the piano part of bars 163/64 where the first eighth of beat two in the RH is slurred to the quarter note of beat one.

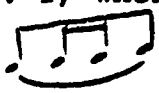
Ex. 18b. Beethoven, Sonata Op. 12, no. 3, mm. 163 - 164.

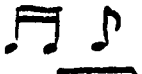


Note the lack of *sf* in these bars also. As is so often the case, the initial stress of an incise slur supports the

metrical stress. In this case, the slur in bars 163/64 indicates that the eighth note on the first half of beat two originates gently from the first beat giving it a different quality than its counterpart in bars 167/68.

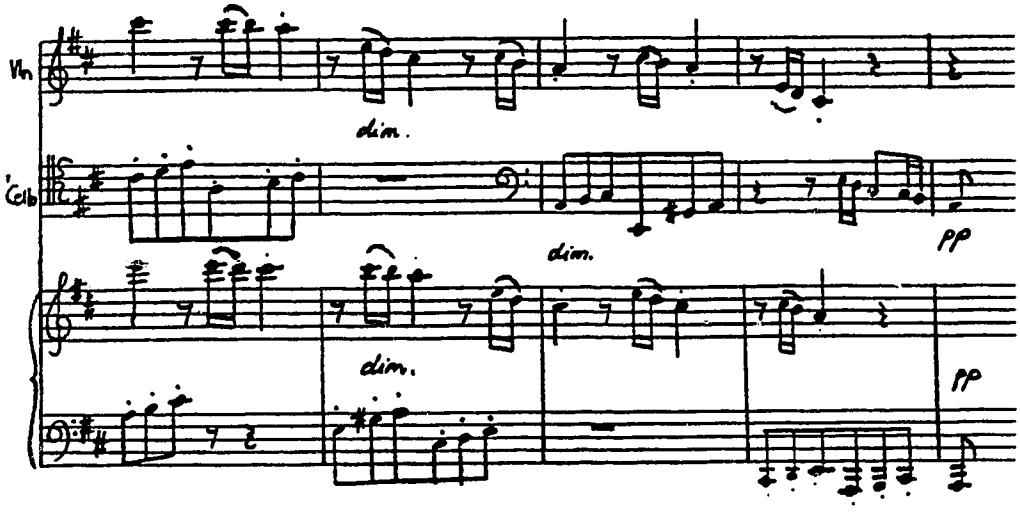
That where slurs begin and end was of the utmost importance to Beethoven is witnessed by his oft-quoted letter of August, 1825, to Carl Holz: "The slurs just as they now stand! It is not a matter of indifference whether you play  or  ."[5]

In the opening figuration of the third movement of the Piano Concerto, Op. 15 the slur extends only over the 16ths and the pianist should take great care to play it that way. When Beethoven wanted the slur to extend further than the 16ths he wrote it that way, as for example, in the opening figure of the third movement of the 'Cello Sonata, Op. 102, no. 1, where the 'cello and piano have the rhythmic unit  .

In the first movement of the Trio, Op. 70, no. 1, bars 128 - 144, the motive  is written with one slur in descending form thus:  , and as  in ascending form. Further, the first eighth note of the movement's opening idea  , slurred at first, in the development is given a detached articulation in the violin and piano RH while retaining its original slurring

in 'cello and piano LH. However, in bars 145 - 148 the figure is played in descending form as it had earlier appeared in ascending form.

Ex. 19. Beethoven, Op. 70, no. 1/i, mm. 145 - 148.



I consider that this form of the slurring highlights the quarter note (altered from an eighth in the ascending figure) and therefore emphasizes the hemiola rhythm of these bars in the piano RH and the parallel violin part. The dot above or below the quarter note could also be interpreted as emphasis on the temporarily-adjusted strong beat. The cadence which joins the development to the recapitulation does not allow for the tonic chord to be

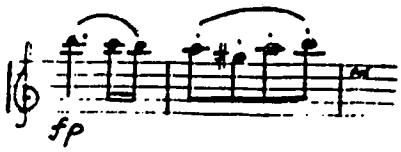
slurred over to the ensuing 16ths of the opening theme's return.

Slurs which characterize melodic shape
and show harmonic movement.

In the Violin Sonata Op. 12, no. 2/ii the slurring of piano RH moves across bars 5 - 6 whereas in bars 13 - 14, the violin slurring stops at the bar line.

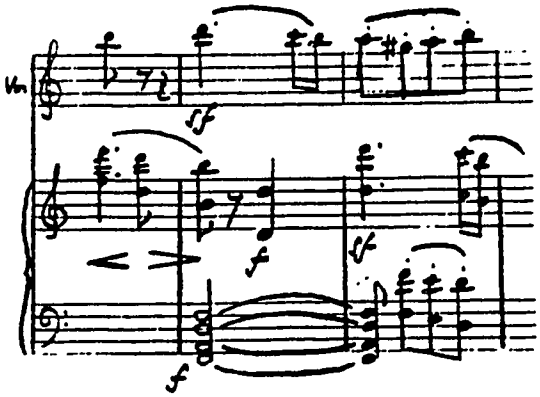
Ex. 20a. Beethoven, Sonata Op. 12, no. 2/ii, mm. 5 - 6.

Ex. 20b. Beethoven, Sonata, Op. 12, no. 2/ii, mm. 13 - 14.



Despite bowing marks, the violinist needs to notice the harmonization of only the last three eighths of bar 6 in the piano. The initial *a* of bar 6, although under the same bowing slur as the following three eighths, actually belongs to the proceeding d minor harmony as shown in bars 81 - 82 (example 21).

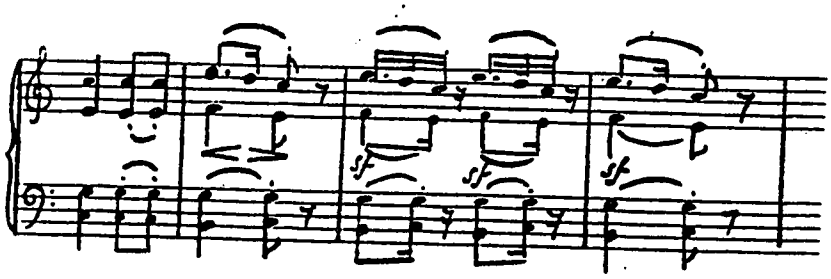
Ex. 21. Beethoven, Sonata Op. 12, no. 2/ii, mm. 81 - 82.



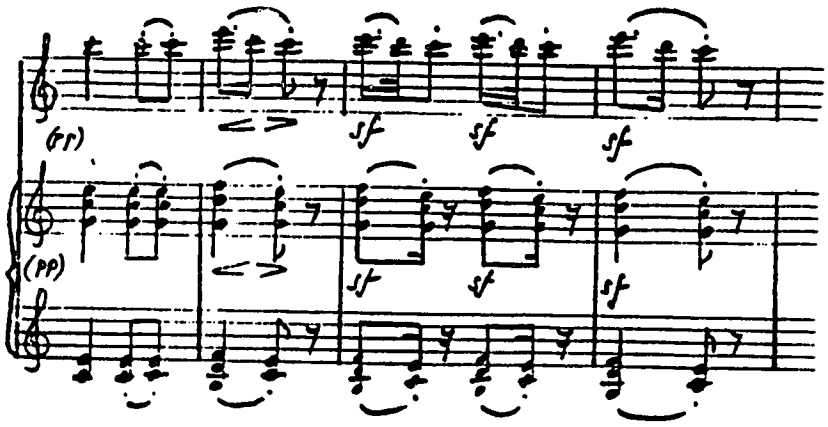
The violin slurring of all entries corresponding to that of mm. 13 - 14, is consistent throughout the movement in spite of differing dynamics and textures. It would seem to me that, after observing the differences in slurring of bars 5 - 6 compared to bars 13 - 14, the piano should follow the violin in bar 5 by joining the dotted quarter to the following sixteenths, but that the violin should follow the piano by not making a break in sound over the barline. Change of bow direction does not necessarily mean a break in sound and the player should have complete control of tone to produce an uninterrupted flow of sound when appropriate. One further observation in this movement concerns the slurring and bowing of bars 17 - 20 and 25 - 28. In these bars, the melodic line is given different slurring in each instrument at bars 19 and 27. I consider

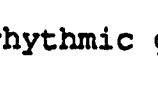
that the shorter slur in the violin part at bar 27 is a bowing direction and that the musical interpretation of the line at that bar can be identical to the melodic line in the piano part at bar 19.

Ex. 22a. Beethoven, Sonata Op. 12, no. 2/ii, mm. 17 - 20.



Ex. 22b. Beethoven, Sonata Op. 12, no. 2/ii, mm. 25 - 28.

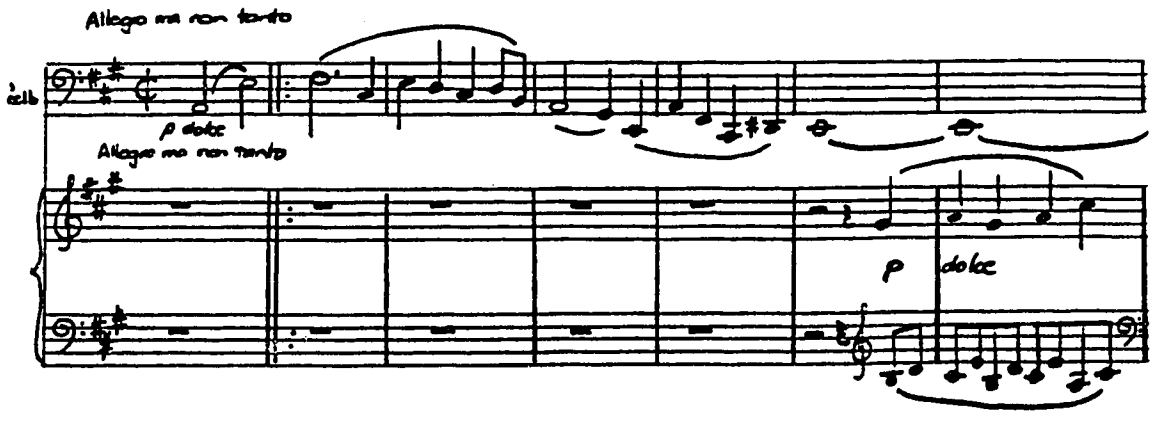


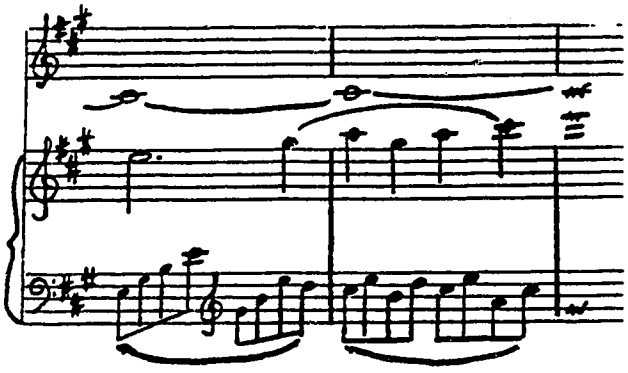
One interesting point of slurring in Op. 23/iii occurs in bars 43 - 49. While the violin slurring suggests movement onto beat 3 (a medium-strong beat), the rhythmic grouping  suggests a lighter first

beat until bar 49, where the slur does not extend over the barline, to reinforce the *sf* on the g#, 27  . This is clearly an intentional change in the articulation.

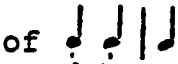
The dactyl meter of the opening movement of the 'Cello Sonata Op. 69 is articulated by the slurring in both 'cello and piano parts. In the 'cello there is a change of bow at bar 2, which creates an upbeat feeling to the opening *a*-*e* and subsequent emphasis on the first note of bar 2 thereby underlining the structural proportions of the following four plus four bars; in the piano part, bars 6 - 9, the RH slurs over the barline continue the upbeat motion but avoid the accentuation of a first beat in bars 7 and 9 (that is to say, the "tyranny of the barline") while the LH from bar 8 retains the normal metric flow.

Ex. 23. Beethoven, Sonata Op. 69/i, mm. 1 - 9.





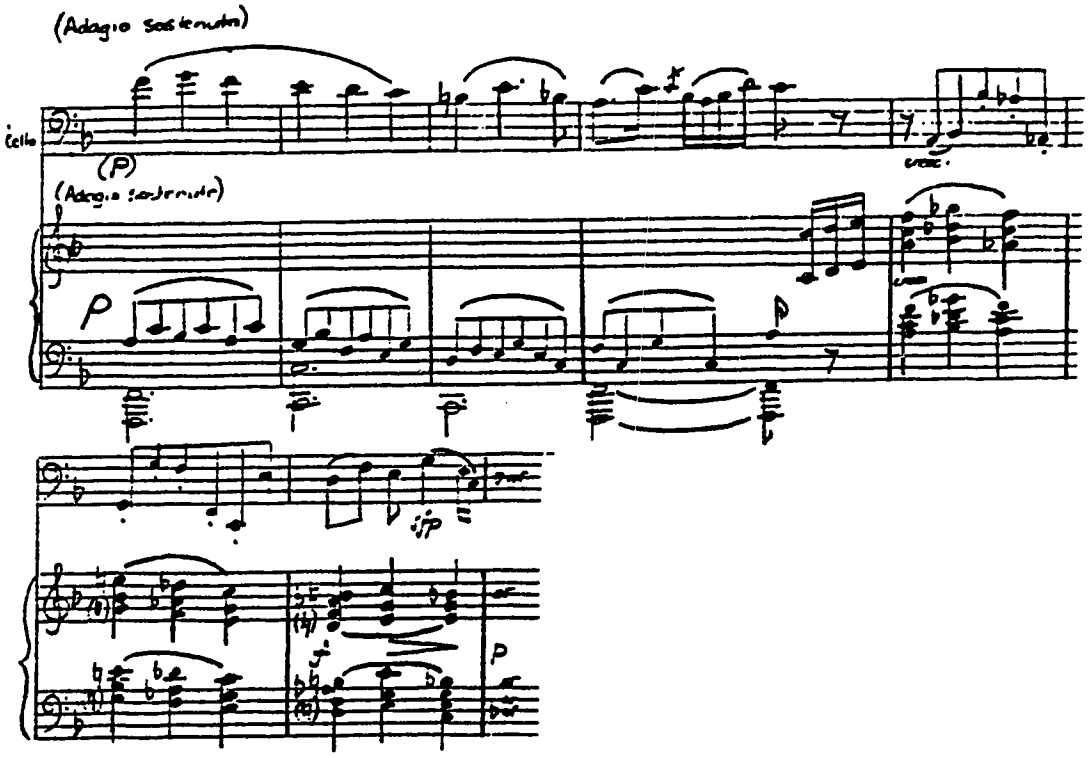
The articulation of a melody did not have to be played the same way on each repetition. Leopold Mozart had shown how a melody could be given differing characters simply through various bowings.[6]

In the second movement of the Sonata Op. 30 no. 2, we see how Beethoven alters the slurring of the two upbeat notes throughout. The initial equality of  is changed to  , not only in the piano at bar 20 but also in the violin at bar 28. In these instances, the piano LH is always slurred from beat 3 over the barline to the next third beat. However, in bar 28 the RH slurring is again different, and in bar 81 the violin slurring shows a dot and a slur over the two notes of beats 3 and 4. These markings are exactly as in the autograph,[7] and in such a situation the performer has to decide to what extent these differences are intentional. I hear a gentle crescendo through the opening two notes of the melody. Such dynamic direction not only fosters the *alla breve* metre but also allows for a similar treatment

in all the other entries of the same motive. The slurring, although appearing inconsistent in the music, should be interpreted in the same way for all the appearances of the initial theme.

That dynamics can possibly influence a change of slur lengths is obvious in the difference between comparable bars in the Sonata Op. 5, no. 1, first movement, for 'Cello and Piano, bars 7 - 9 and 11 - 13 respectively.

Ex. 24. Beethoven, Sonata Op. 5, no. 1/i, mm. 7 - 13.



In both parts, the slur is broken at the chromatic note, but there is a further break at the bar before the chromatic chord in the piano (bar 12). As well, there is a *crescendo* in the piano part, the tonal intensity of which is heightened through the written break in slurring. There need not necessarily be a break in the sound where the slur ends. The shorter slurs in the piano part signify the intensity which can be conveyed through more marked metric accentuation and emphasis on the coloured harmony within the line.

A comparison of the slurring of the piano RH in bars 41 and 43 shows how a similar rhythmic passage can be changed through accentuation. The impetus forward begins with the 16th-note *g* in bar 41 while the corresponding note *c* in bar 43 flows from the *sf* note. Again, these do not constitute breaks so much as a subconscious release of the pianist's arm weight. There need be no lifting of the fingers and hands from the keys and, furthermore, the hands need only the minimal amount of pressure to hold down a key.

Ex 25. Beethoven, Sonata Op. 5, no, 1/i, mm. 41-43.

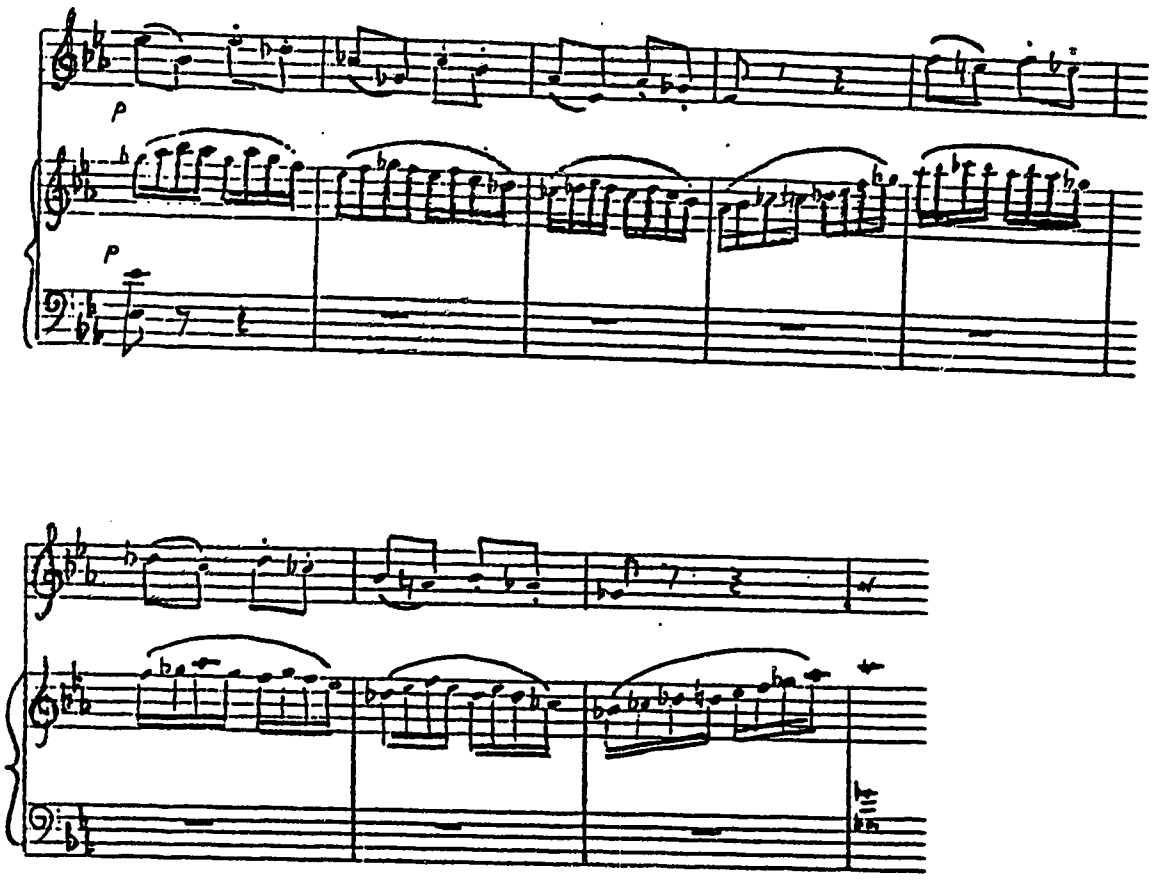
Slurs which indicate longer legato lines and suggest phrase-lengths.

Beethoven's use of the longer slur as relating specifically to his piano writing was discussed on pages 25 - 32. The following examples are taken from works in which the piano is part of an ensemble with other instruments.

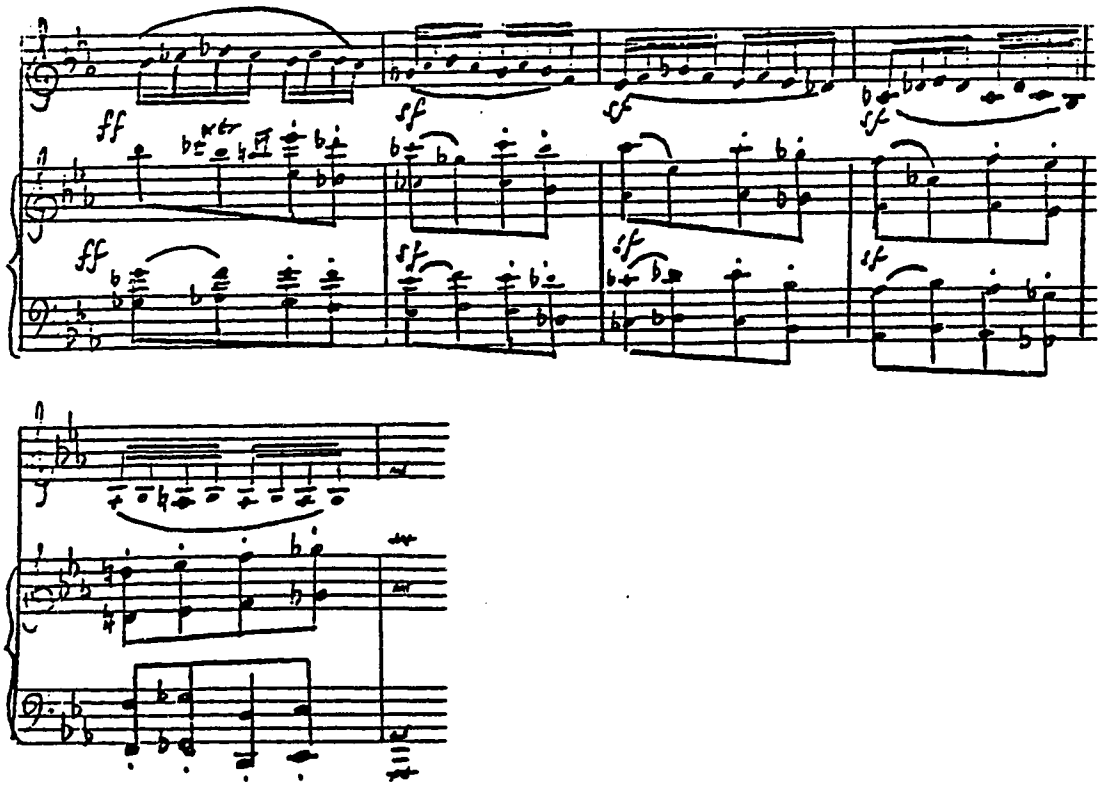
At bar 109 of the third movement of Sonata Op. 12, no. 3, begins a long legato slur in the piano part which is repeated at bars 131 - 138. Beethoven's intentions are obvious here: a long, uninterrupted flow of sounds without noticeable accentuation on first beats. Even in the *p* dynamic, more activity is suggested through the shorter one-bar slurring in the RH piano line in bars 139 - 146 (see ex. 26a). The violin reiterates this sequential figuration in bars 147 - 151 *fortissimo* with a *sf* on the

first sixteenth of each bar (see ex. 26b). There is no need for the pianist to make excessive breaks at the barlines. An impulse can be made on the downbeat by raising the wrist on the second h ach bar and allowing it to drop lightly on the ing of the bar. For the violinist, the *sf* is achie y a swifter and stronger down-bow.

Ex. 26a. Beethoven, Sonata Op. 12, no. 3/iii, mm. 139 - 146.



Ex. 26b. Beethoven, Sonata Op. 12, no. 3/iii, mm. 147 - 151.



Long, sustained legato lines are clearly conveyed in the piano part of the development in the first piano concerto (Op. 15). An unbroken RH slur is written against half-bar-long slurs in the LH, the latter suggesting a sense of pulsation but not accentuation. The same technique could be applied here as to bars 139 - 146 of Op. 12, no. 3/iii just discussed.

Inconsistencies of articulation markings: intentional or unintentional?

All writers on the subject of articulation in Beethoven's music have noted the inconsistencies which abound in his autographs. Sometimes it would appear that the varied articulation is intentional, as in the Sonata Op. 30, no. 2, discussed earlier in this chapter under "Slurring to characterize melodic shape."[8] Where the slurring of the piano part is different from that of the parallel passage in other instruments, it may well be that the musical effect is the same in all instances in performance. As William S. Newman writes:

> this sort of distinction [i.e., varied slurring for each instrument of the same musical line] serves further to confirm Beethoven's conception of a slur's function as being much more specific than a general indication that legato prevails.[9]

Such is the case with the second subjects of each of the first three piano concertos. In these passages, the performer should notice the short slurs in the bass clef. Stopping as they do at the barline or the half-bar does not suggest a break at the end of each, but rather the direction of the harmonic rhythm and the LH should therefore be played legato throughout the second subjects. However, dynamic nuances in the bass can sustain the

underlying pulsation and the shorter slurs can direct the player in this musical concept.

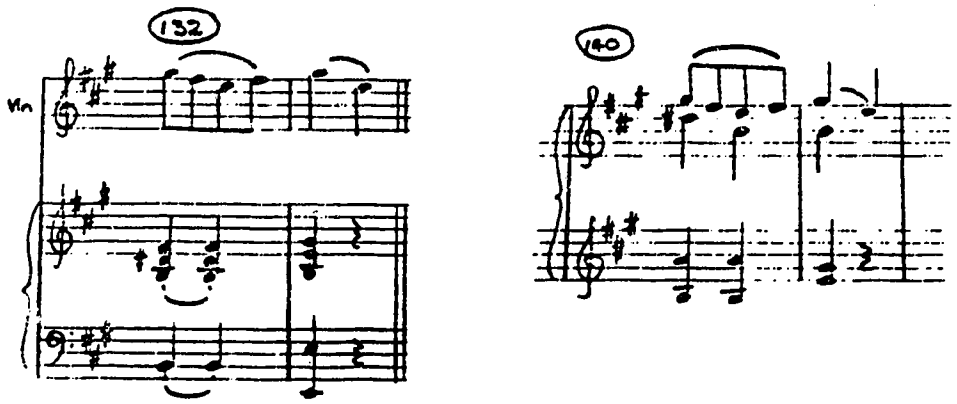
Other inconsistencies between identical passages in piano and other instruments appear to have arisen through haste in composition, the negligence of the publisher of the first edition, or quite simply through the difficulty of reading Beethoven's manuscript. While it is true that Beethoven was always complaining about the errors in these first editions and took great pains to correct them for the publisher (even though his efforts were quite often in vain), he was also capable of committing his own mistakes.

In the first movement of the Violin Sonata Op. 96, an interesting difference occurs in the autograph at bar 204 in the violin and piano LH. In the previous six bars, Beethoven had made identical changes to the articulation in the violin and piano. However, in bar 204, the final *g* of beat 1 in the LH is slurred onto the next eighth note, whereas above it in the violin part the final *g* of beat one is staccato. Inconsistencies such as this leave the decision-making process to the editor or the performer. In this instance, the 1965 Henle Edition opts for consistency, not only in both the violin and piano but also with identical figuration in previous bars.

(Unfortunately, there is no reference to the change in the edition's Critical Notes.)

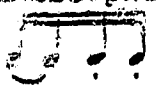
A question arises in the third movement of the Sonata Op. 47 for Violin and Piano where the quarter-note accompaniment at bar 140 is not marked mezzo-staccato, whereas in bars 132 and 144 of the piano part, the parallel accompanying chords are marked mezzo-staccato.

Ex. 27. Beethoven, Sonata Op. 47/iii, mm. 132, 140.



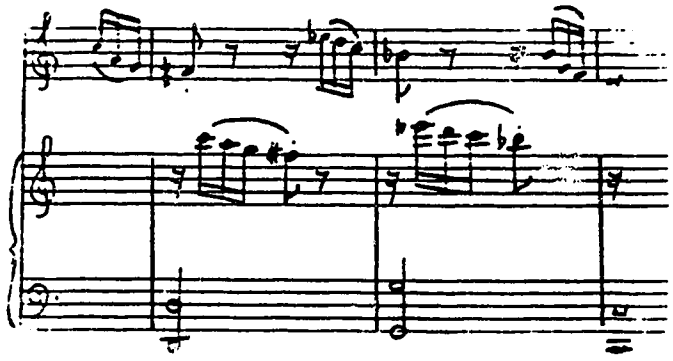
I would keep the accompaniment consistent and, therefore, in bar 140 play the LH and inner RH notes the same length as the entire chords of bars 132 (and 144) while keeping the legato melody intact.

Further inconsistencies occur in the third movement of the Sonata Op. 30, no. 3 where there is a slur over the written out inverted turn (bars 1, 3, 5 *et sim.*) in nearly all instances. Did Beethoven simply miss it out in bars 106 and 108 of the piano part? The performer has three

options in these bars: 1) to continue slurring the four notes of the first beat, or 2) to play as written, employing a highly-articulated finger action, or 3) to anticipate the violin figure of bars 110 and 112 and play  . This is a case of consistency versus variety in identical figuration. Here, the performer must decide which slurring to use.

One final example from the numerous ones that could also have been selected comes from the second movement of the Violin Sonata Op. 12, no. 2. In bars 48 - 52 we again encounter seemingly inconsistent slurring in the violin and piano. If the violin and piano RH lines are decorations of bar 11, then not only is the slurring consistent but also the dynamics of bar 11 support the meaning of the slur.

Ex. 28. Beethoven, Sonata Op. 12, no. 2/ii, mm. 11, 48 - 51.



There need be no break in the violin line over the barline in either case, and the dot on the final eighth in bars 48 - 52 simply requires a lifting and lightening of the sound.[10]

With Beethoven, more than any other classical composer, the short slur, which was often equated with string bowing and metric accentuation, begins to yield to broader, structural concepts. Today's performers must distinguish between the short slur over two or three notes (which usually requires the player to shorten and detach the last note under the slur) and the somewhat longer slur, which may or may not stop at a bar line, indicating legato.

While it is not easy to convey the detaching of the final note under a short slur on the modern piano, it is not, however, impossible to achieve. The amount of break is determined by (1) the tempo, (2) the dynamic level, and (3) the instrument's resonance and damping capability. Examples of this type of slur occur in places such as the opening theme of the third movement of the Piano Concerto, Op. 15, (previously cited in this chapter on page 42) and in the Concerto Op. 58, first movement, bars 123 - 125. Writing about the Op. 58 concerto, Czerny remarks about bars 123 - 125: "[they] must be played very

soft and light, but so that the second semiquaver . . . may be smartly detached."[11] That a performer must strive to achieve this effect in such passages is clearly evident.

Ex. 29. Beethoven, Piano Concerto, Op. 58/i, mm. 123 - 125.

The category of longer slurs which indicate legato can present the performer with some interpretative problems. Whether or not to break the sound when such slurs end at the barline (as they often do) must be left to the musical judgement of each player. In this respect it is important to realize that a string player can produce graceful slur endings and a fresh arrival on the note following the slur by grading bow pressure before the bow change whilst not interrupting the flow of sound. For the pianist, I would suggest the same employment of technique as mentioned on pages 36/37 in connection with the Sonata Op. 24. The application of this technical approach can produce a lighter but not a detached ending

to a slur and a fresh arrival at the start of the new slur. Quite often this is all that is required, especially in one-bar slurs. At other times, a small break after the final note of a slur can lend rhythmic poise and elegance to a line.

From the discussions presented in this chapter it would appear that the relating of violin bowing to keyboard slurs is minimal in the overall consideration of keyboard articulation. George Barth gives two reasons why he finds the association of keyboard slurring and violin bowing objectionable. I certainly agree with the two reasons he gives in the following passage:

> First, it seems a modern notion that disesteems bowing in much the same way the modern wind player often disesteems breathing. To look at bowing or breathing as relatively unmusical but "necessary" aspects of performance, as obstacles that prevent "lyrical sweep", is to ignore the heritage of rhetoric, which is based on articulation, on breath and the sound of human communication with its inflections and its silences. Second, having been told that slurs are merely indicators of a sort of unmusical drudgery, it is even more difficult to accept the idea that our greatest composers embraced them for use in their keyboard works when the keyboard, of all instruments, would find such a "breaking up" of a musical texture the least necessary.[12]

That localised articulation is present in all of Beethoven's music, and must be observed in a classical manner by the performer, is clearly evident. This articulation includes the short slur, the legato slur,

varying touches, and accentuation. However, important as localised slurring is in Beethoven's music, it is the rhetorical gestures within a longer line which articulate his music's character and spirit. George Barth, in the above quotation, makes reference to "the heritage of rhetoric, which is based on articulation . . . " and in the next chapter this aspect is given closer examination.

NOTES

1. D.G. Türk, *School of Clavier Playing*, 91.

2. see Chapter 2, note 10.

3. Carl Czerny, *Complete Theoretical and Practical Piano Forte School*, Op. 500. 3 vols., I/187.

4. I draw the reader's attention to the following sources for further information on this subject: D. G. Türk, *School of Clavier Playing*, 330-336; Sandra Rosenblum, *Performance Practices in Classic Piano Music*, 175-183.

5. Emily Anderson, ed. and trans., *The Letters of Beethoven*, 3 vols, (London: Macmillan, 1961), III, 361.

6. Leopold Mozart, *Treatise of Violin Playing*, 220.

7. according to G. Henle Edition, eds. Walther Lampe and Kurt Schaffer, (Munich, 1965), 147.

8. see p. 48.

9. William S. Newman, *Beethoven on Beethoven*, 129.

10. Helmut Brauss puts forward an opposite argument for these bars: "Since the staccato dot in the piano implies a slight emphasis the bowing could provide the same effect in the violin thus,  ".

11. Carl Czerny, *On the Proper Performance*, 99.

12. George Robert Barth, *The fortepianist as orator: Beethoven and the transformation of the declamatory style*, (D.M.A. dissertation, Cornell University, 1988), 120.

4. The rhetorical nature of Beethoven's playing.

In performance there are two levels of articulation to be considered: 1) localized articulation whereby single notes and local groupings of notes are related to one another through touch, dynamic inflection, and slurring, and 2) the articulation of the character of the music (i.e., spirit, affect) through a declamatory style and rhetorical gestures within the longer line. In music up to and including that of Haydn and Mozart, there is a stronger sense of the first level. Beethoven inherited this style but although he never completely abandoned the notation of the high-classical period in his manuscripts, he was less inclined to convey it in his own performances. From all accounts he played in a free, declamatory manner.

Schindler's ideas regarding Beethoven's performance in general were as follows:

> The poet writes his monologue or dialogue in a definite, continuous rhythm: but the orator, to ensure that his meaning will be comprehended, must make pauses and rests even at points where the poet would give no indication by any kind of punctuation. In music, the performer may use the same devices as the orator, and there as many ways of playing a single work as there are musicians to perform it.[1]

Earlier in the same chapter, Schindler wrote that "we may draw the indirect conclusion that as a whole

Beethoven's music is governed by the general standards of performance, but that in special instances it deviates from the normal pattern."[2] It would seem, therefore, that Beethoven united the old style with a new personal freedom in his playing: a freedom of the kind not previously exhibited by performers of the day. Reports of his playing are enlightening. Cherubini described it in one word: "rough." Cramer, although finding it unpolished, objected more to the inconsistent performances of a single composition - - one day it was played with great spirit and expression, the next day it was moody and muddled. Clementi's words to Schindler (which he reported in 1827) about Beethoven's playing were: "His playing was not polished, and was frequently impetuous, like himself, yet it was always full of spirit."[3]

However, it was from Clementi that Beethoven finally found, in vocal art, a key to instrumental performance. The annotations to the Cramer Etudes are attributed by Schindler to Beethoven, but come to us only in the former's handwriting. Although their authenticity is therefore questionable, they are supported somewhat by Beethoven's annotations in the "Rolland" Sketchbook (dating from summer or fall of 1823): "to create instrumental melodies according to syllablic meter [*auf*

Sylbenmasse instrumental Melodien (schaffen) machen]."[4] Schindler claims that Beethoven's metrical accentuation had more to do with length and intensity of certain notes in a prosodic way and that in adopting this oratorical approach Beethoven was influenced by Clementi, who

> as a self-taught singer, . . . attempted to carry over the prosody of the language and the rules of verbal and sung declamation into instrumental forms. Through this he arrived at the point where his playing itself became singing, and in certain works, where the representation of a particular state of soul was called for, as for example in his [Piano Sonata, Op. 50, no.3] *Didone abbandonata*, was shaped into understandable speech. Clementi showed me the indispensable necessity, for an expressive performance, of knowing with each melody which of the various verse meters, of which music makes use, whether the iambic, trochaic, etc., because of the shifting of the main accent and the caesura, of which one must take note also in the performance of instrumental music, above all in free performance.[5]

The use of agogic accentuation was the principal means by which clarity in declamation was achieved by Beethoven in his playing, and it acted as a syntactical marker in place of the numerous articulative markers in earlier classical music. That Beethoven used the traditional means of agogic accentuation is supported by Schindler's description:

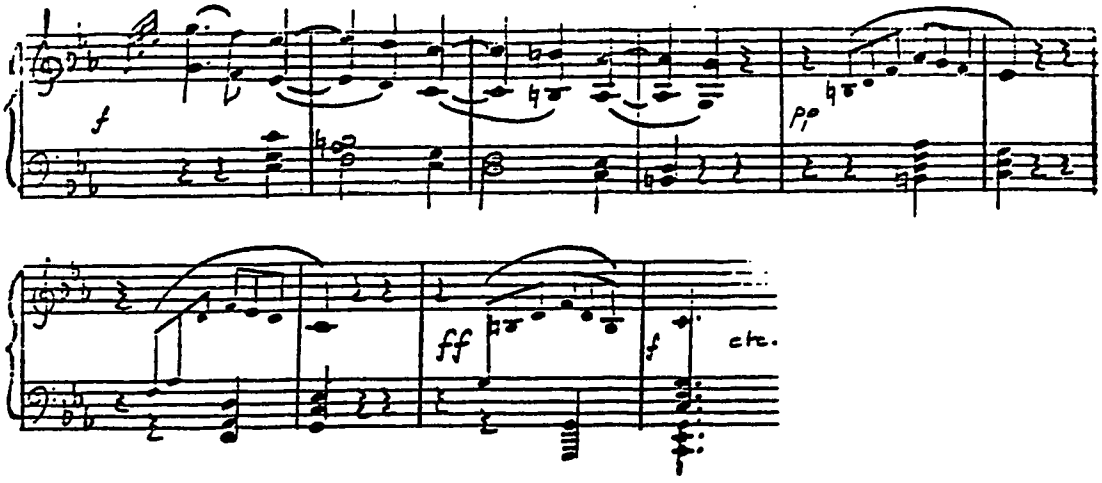
> As for Beethoven's particular style of accentuation, the author can speak partly from Beethoven's critical remarks on Czerny's playing and partly from the piano instruction that Beethoven gave to him directly. It was above all the rhythmic accent that he stressed most heavily and that he wanted others to stress. He

> treated the melodic (or grammatic, as it was generally called) accent, on the other hand, mostly according to the internal requirements. He would emphasize all retardations, especially that of the diminished seventh in *cantabile* sections, more than other pianists. His playing thus acquired a highly personal character, very different from the even, flat performances that never rise to tonal eloquence. In *cantilena* sections he adopted the methods of cultivated singers, doing neither too much nor too little. Sometimes he recommended putting appropriate words to a perplexing passage and singing it, or listening to a good violinist or wind player play it.[6]

"Rhythmic accent" is apparently equivalent to "oratorical" accent and "melodic accent" is associated with "grammatical" accent.

A further feature of Beethoven's playing was the use of the caesura and rhetorical pause as articulative markers. They can be defined as follows: a caesura is produced by the shortening of the last note of a phrase; a rhetorical pause is the lengthening of a note or rest. Again, this feature was adopted from Clementi. Schindler quotes the passage from the Sonata Op. 10, no. 1, first movement (bars 13 - 21) to illustrate the rhetorical pause, claiming that the quarter-note rests should be extended to about double length and the disconnected phrases violently flung out. The final chord of the cadence before the coda of the same movement (bar 94) can be shortened and a rest be effected in the manner of a caesura.

Ex. 30. Sonata Op. 10, no. 1/i, mm. 13 - 22.



In assessing Schindler's view of Beethoven's performance of this passage, one must remember that he was writing after the event and that he often appears to have distorted the truth in order to give his own ideas more credibility. Schindler's choice of this specific example, while not invalidating the general point of rhetorical rests, may or may not have been an appropriate choice. If Beethoven had wanted the quarter-note rests almost doubled in value then surely he could have written them as such. In my opinion a performer must not shorten the value of the rests but could extend them very slightly to heighten the dramatic nature of the music at that point. The preservation of a precise metrical underpinning can structurally unite bars 17 - 21 without necessarily losing

the rhetorical effect Beethoven would appear to have built in to the music itself through the use of the rests.

In the first movement of the *Pathétique* Sonata there are two caesuras, claims Schindler: one before the entrance of the secondary theme in E flat minor, the other at the end of this theme. He suggests that one think of a rest held over the barline so that the caesura will become noticeable and the effect of what follows will be emphasized.[7] However, he does say that the rhetorical pause is encountered more than the caesura in Beethoven's sonatas, and that they are generally there to separate the successive themes from one another. In Supplement M to his book *Beethoven as I Knew Him*, Schindler makes a further examination of the secondary theme of the *Pathétique*. Of interest is his description of how to play the subsidiary theme of the first movement. Note especially bars 75 and 79 where he marks a V to indicate "not merely a stronger accent but also a short pause on the note so marked, a pause not to be observed by the left-hand accompaniment, which moves along in strict rhythm to the last measure of the phrase."[8] This interpretation would seem to contradict all the editions I know in which the RH is slurred as in example 31b.

Ex. 31. Sonata Op. 13/i (Pathétique), m. 75
a> acc. to Schindler. b) acc. to other editions

If taken in classical values, example 34b would imply a lighter and probably shorter third beat. Such articulation seems contrary to that given by Schindler. As with Schindler's explanation about the Sonata Op. 10, no. 1, (see page 66), his remarks concerning this example should also be treated with a certain amount of circumspection. One explanation of Schindler's possibly excessive view of the A flat could be to interpret it in an aural sense which would link the the pitch of the A flat in bar 75 to that of the A flat in bar 76.

Another passage which seems to have differing connotations on paper and in performance occurs with the opening piano solo of the second movement of the Concerto Op. 37. Czerny claims that Beethoven "continued the pedal during the entire theme, which on the weak-sounding pianofortes of that day, did very well, especially when the shifting pedal was also employed. But now, as the instruments have acquired a much greater body of tone, we

should advise the damper pedal to be employed anew, at each important change of harmony; but in such a manner that *no cessation of the sound may be observed.*"[9] (italics mine.) Does this mean then that Beethoven did not observe the rests and the mezzo-staccatos? Through such use of pedal we find Beethoven anticipating nineteenth-century performance practice trends in which the rests were not observed literally as silences, but rather expressed time-space within the music. Czerny's remarks, seen in the light of the piano's development within his day, also serve to reinforce our thinking today in respect to the way in which we relate the increased sonority of the modern piano to our interpretation of Beethoven's markings.

However, the question is raised: "how faithfully do the markings in the music itself reflect Beethoven's own performance style?" Of course this question can have no definitive answer as we cannot hear the master playing his own compositions. What we do have, though, are the many comments by those who heard him play. Although the comments may have been written in a reflective manner and some time after the event, a common thread connects them all: even though Beethoven's playing was at times rough and impetuous, like the man himself, it nevertheless

embodied the spirit and character of the work's conception and brought to life the essence of the music in broad, rhetorical gestures.

Nowhere have I read of Beethoven playing in the Mozartean style. There is, on the other hand, ample evidence that Beethoven not only disliked that style but also, as the nineteenth century progressed, feared keyboard mechanics would supplant all spiritual truth in music. In a letter to Ferdinand Ries, dated July 16, 1823, Beethoven wrote:

> As for the *Allegro di Bravura* I must have a look at yours - - To be candid, I must confess that I am not partial to this type of composition, for it only encourages mechanical playing to an undue extent.[10]

According to Schindler, the Baroness Dorothea von Ertmann was one of the foremost pianists in the musical world of Vienna in the early nineteenth century and it would seem from Schindler's account that her playing of Beethoven's music was unequalled. No one had at that time better assimilated Beethoven's own style of playing than this lady. She knew how to make the whole work a motivated unity and seemed to have an inborn instinct for playing free tempo correctly.[11]

A. B. Marx writing in his book *Allgemeine Musiklehre*, states that:

> after technical skill, a perfect knowledge and observance of the notation, &c., is indispensable to correct performance. But for this object we hold susceptibility and perception of that which no writing can completely express, to be also necessary. The power, in short, is required, of exhibiting the full meaning, scope, and tendency of the whole work of art, and of all its parts, be they written down and determined, or must they derive their manifestations from our own sensations . . . all the separate features can have received their form and destination from the idea and object of the whole work only. . . . The perfect comprehension and exhibition of a work from this fundamental idea in all its parts is the object of artistic performance.[12]

He further says that to this end an artistic education is needed. Such education can be acquired in two ways: 1) by concerning oneself with the practical participation of music and the hearing of much good music. This produces a kind of instinctive perception arising from feelings which can be formed with the greatest uncertainty. Our self-knowledge urges us to the object of 2), which is to form a safe criterion of judgement upon the proper constitution of [illegible]. The proper object of the doctrine of performance is then "to awaken the consciousness of the spiritual contents of art and artistic works, or to direct its path aright."[13]

According to A. B. Marx, during the classical period objectivity weighed more heavily in performance than did subjectivity. The latter was more concerned with personal interpretation and individuality, and consisted

of mannerisms to a large extent. Objectivity was seen as the universal truth, giving substance and form within a true presentation of a work. Subjectivity fitted the moment and was more akin to the impressions of the music on the player. Nevertheless, for each individual there is a unique balance which should not allow objectivity to suppress subjectivity for the latter lends a work interest and warmth.[14] Schindler believes that everything he heard Beethoven play conformed entirely to this teaching and that Beethoven's playing was free of constraint in respect of the beat, for the spirit of his music required freedom.[15]

In Volume IV, Chapter Two of his *Proper Performance of All Beethoven's Works*, Czerny remarks about the works of Beethoven:

> Beethoven (particularly in his latter days) paid little attention to convenience of playing, regular fingering, and the like . . . The melody everywhere pervades the musical thought; all rapid passages and figures are only employed as a *means*, never as the *end*; and if (particularly in his earlier works) many passages are found which demand the so-called *brilliant* style of playing, this must never be rendered principal. He who should only display his agility of finger therein, would entirely miss the intellectual and aesthetic, and prove that he did not understand these works . . . His compositions must be performed differently from those of Mozart, Clementi, Hummel &c; but it is not easy to express by words, wherein this difference consists. Each reflecting player will gradually acquire a correct notion of this matter by an accurate study of his works.[16]

In Chapter One of this essay I referred to Turk's description of the "heavy" and "light" styles of playing (see page 11). Of the five determining factors, character would seem to me to be the most crucial, and what Turk is proposing is a basic correlation between character and articulation (i.e., style of performance). For Czerny the key to the proper manner of expression, or "execution", is to be found in the character of the work. It is my opinion that the character of a piece of music can be conveyed successfully on either pianos of Beethoven's time or to pianos of today. This aspect will be examined more closely in chapter six.

NOTES

1. Anton F. Schindler, *Beethoven as I Knew Him*, ed. Donald W. MacArdle, trans. Constance S. Jolly, (London: Faber and Faber, 1966), 401.

2. Ibid., 397.

3. Ibid., 413. It was in 1807 that Clementi heard Beethoven play various works in Vienna. We must remember though that by this time Beethoven was becoming increasingly deaf.

4. Sandra Rosenblum, *Performance Practices*, 100.

5. Kenneth Drake, *The Sonatas of Beethoven as He Played and Taught Them* (Cincinnati: Music Teachers National

Association, 1972), 106/107.

6. Schindler/MacArdle, *Beethoven*, 415.

7. Ibid., 420.

8. Ibid., 499.

9. Carl Czerny, *On the Proper Performance*, 97/98.

10. Anderson, *Letters*, III, (letter #1209), 1064.

11. Anton F. Schindler, *Beethoven As I Knew Him*, 209/210.

12. A. B. Marx, *German Musical Instruction*, trans. George Macibone, (Boston: O. Ditson Co., 185-), 97.

13. Ibid., 98.

14. This is a paraphrase from a quotation by an unknown writer, in Schindler's *Beethoven as I Knew Him*, 411/412.

15. Ibid., 412.

16. Carl Czerny, ed. Badura-Skoda, *On the Proper Performance*, Vol. IV, Chapter II, 22.

5. Beethoven's fingerings and their possible significance for articulation in his piano works

In 1791 Carl L. Junker wrote of Beethoven's playing:

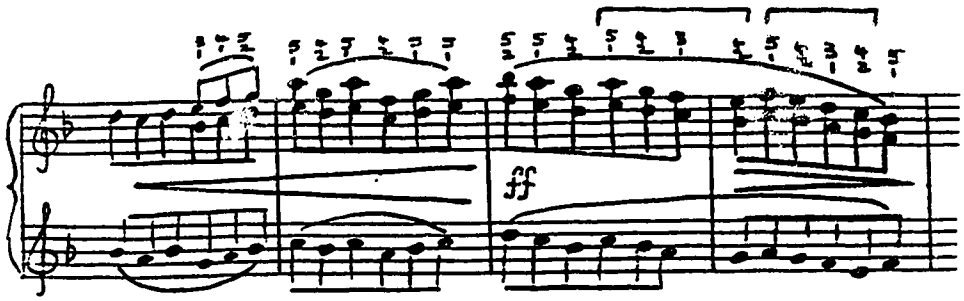
> His style of treating his instrument is so different from that usually adopted, that it impresses one with the idea, that by a path of his own discovery he has attained that height of excellence whereon he now stands.[1]

Beethoven's instrument was the piano and, as we have already seen, he adapted naturally to the playing of the instrument of his day by developing an "intimate sensitivity to the relationship between physical means and aural effect in specific regard to the piano".[2] The performer must be careful not to read too much into the fingerings which Beethoven, more extensively than any other classic master, marked in his scores. Nevertheless, the fingerings can provide some clues in the area of articulation: namely, touch, grouping of notes, and tonal balance. It is beyond the scope of this essay to provide any extensive views on the subject of Beethoven's fingerings but I would like to examine a few examples which are directly relevant.[3]

In the Sonata Op. 2, no. 1, the fingering of the Menuetto (Trio section) falls into all three of the

categories mentioned above. Example 32 shows the relevant bars with Beethoven's fingering:

Ex. 32. Sonata Op. 2, no. 1/iii, mm. 59 - 62.

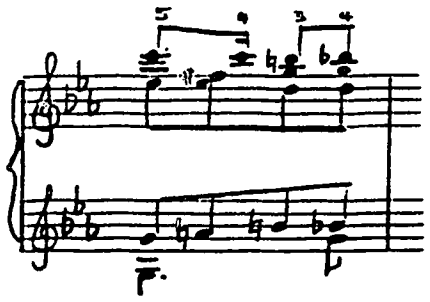


The first three fingered chords of the RH execute the legato and separate the group from bar 60 as suggested by the slurring. The decorative figuration around the *a* of the RH in bar 60 is conveyed through the fingering which, by not effecting a legato on the last two eighths of the bar, not only draws attention to the ascending melodic shape of bars 59 - 61 (*g-a-b flat*) but also allows more arm weight to be involved in the *crescendo*. The fingering also assists the performer in emphasizing the top line, which further contributes to the *crescendo*. At bar 61 only the inner RH notes are fingered legato, allowing continued use of the arm for the melodic upper tones. To effect the *diminuendo* both parts of the RH are fingered legato later in bar 61. The fingering pattern in bars 61 - 62 also

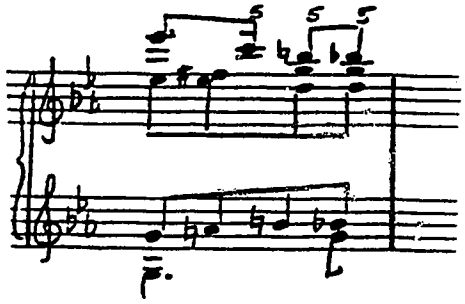
coincides with the sequentially repeated figure as shown by brackets in example 32.

A further instance of "armed" legato creating an *effect* rather than a physical connection of tones occurs in Op. 81a, first movement, bar 5. A more conventional fingering for this bar is given in ex. 33a; Beethoven's fingering is shown in ex. 33b. In the first of these examples, the "fingered" legato does create a literal joining of notes from one to the next, whereas Beethoven's fingering generates a more expressive legato best effected by greater arm weight.

Ex. 33a, Op. 81a/i, m. 5.

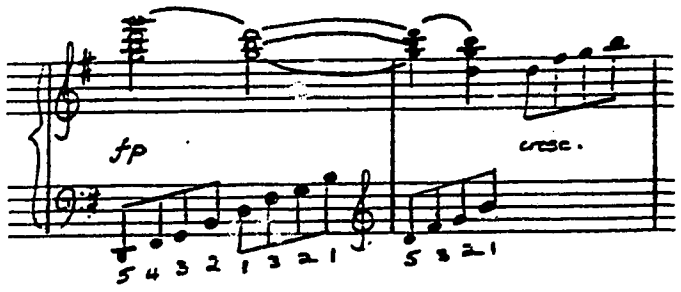


Ex. 33b, Op. 81a/i, m.5.



Insofar as fingerings relate to groupings, we have to consider them in terms of 1) physical groupings into hand positions, and 2) groupings into metric or melodic shapes. An example of the first kind occurs in Op. 106.

Ex. 34. Sonata Op. 106/i, mm. 96 - 97.



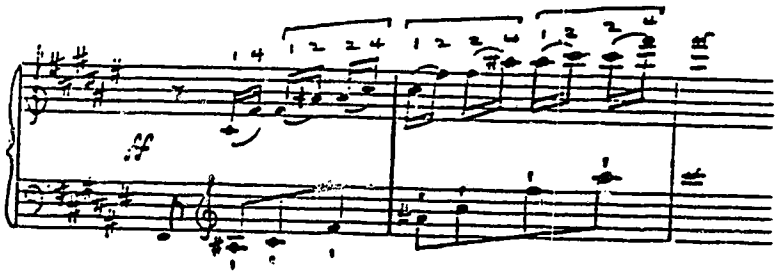
The crucial point in the fingering occurs at the beginning of bar 97 where Beethoven forces a shift of hand position in the LH. This shift marks the beginning of an eighth-note motion which moves from the LH to the RH in bar 97 and pushes forward to bar 100, where a transition to the closing section begins. Beethoven's irregular fingering of this passage highlights the larger structure and "thus directs the performer's attention to the inner compositional network by directing his physical gesture".[4]

In the *Arietta* of Op. 111, Beethoven's autograph reveals not only marked fingering bar 174 but also clear groupings of three notes, suggesting to the performer that this passage must be played in a clear, metric fashion and not in an ungrouped, unarticulated, quasi glissando

manner. It should also be noted that bar 173 is articulated by the melodic pattern itself.

The Op. 78 Sonata contains, in its second movement, fingering that is concerned with opposing metric and melodic groupings.

Ex. 35. Sonata Op. 78/ii, mm. 116 - 117.

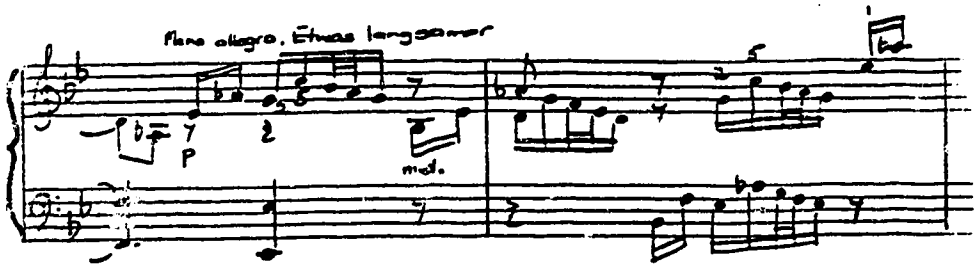


Beethoven's fingering favours the metric over the melodic by giving each beat a hand grouping. A fingering which favours the melodic grouping of one and one-half beats would clash with the meter and cause a lack of continuity which would destroy the desired drive to the climax at the end of the pattern.

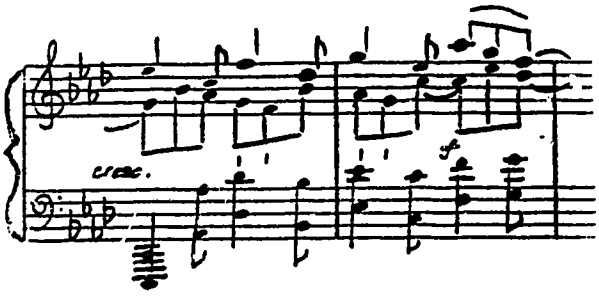
Finally, in the Sonata Op. 110 we find examples of Beethoven's fingering which would appear to be related to tonal balance. These all occur in the fugal section. In bars 168 - 169 of the last movement, Beethoven's fingering emphasizes that the fragmentation of the fugue subject within the stretto must be clearly voiced (ex. 36a). In bars 107 - 108 Beethoven draws attention to the inner

voice by requiring the use of the thumb where there is clearly no other fingering possible (ex. 36b). The fingering in bars 184 and 186 (ex. 36c) focuses on the two intervals of the ascending fourth: this interval being a germ cell in the work.[5]

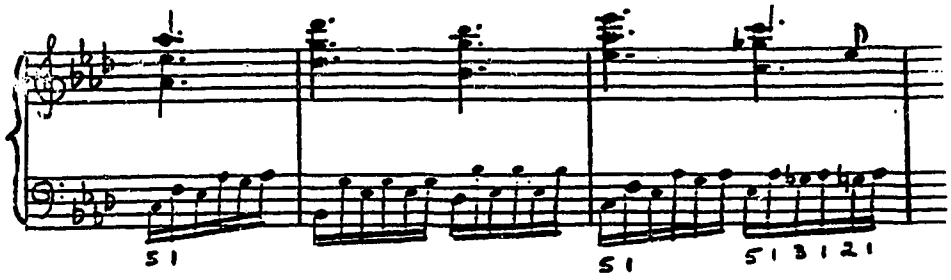
Ex. 36a. Sonata Op. 110, last movement, mm. 168/169.



Ex. 36b. Op. 110, last movement, bars 107/108.

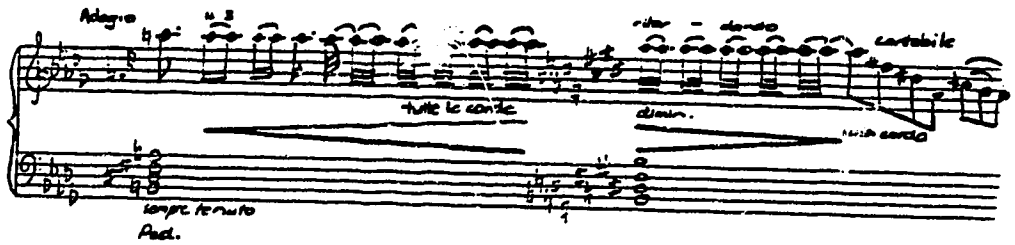


Ex. 36c. Op. 110, last movement, bars 184 - 186.



One further point of Beethoven's fingering as it relates to articulation is the change of fingers on two notes of the same pitch that are connected by a slur (which may or may not be separated from the next slur by a rest). In the piano works of Beethoven the two examples most often cited are Op. 106/iii/165, and Op. 110/iii/5 (and 125).

Ex. 37. Beethoven, Sonata Op. 110/iii, m. 5.



[illegible] occurrence is in the 'Cello Sonata Op. 69/ii/82-[illegible] (et *passim*). Tovey offers evidence that the second note is to be repeated, by citing the dash-over-dot that Cipriani Potter's edition places over each slur to insure the repetitions in Op. 28/i/135-41 (*et passim*). Neither the primary source nor the Potter edition specifies changes of fingers on these notes of Op. 28, but Tovey clearly associates those slurs with the fingered slurs in the later works.[6] My own conclusion is that these notes should be repeated and that, on today's piano, the

change of finger can be accomplished *in one continuous motion* through the double-escapement mechanism and the employment of a "half blow."[7] The hand can be rolled forward with the wrist rising and the fingers remaining very close to the key surface to achieve this motion. Without a change of finger, two separate motions are required.

The pianos that Beethoven knew did not have double-escapement mechanisms. On these pianos I have found that a second motion of the hand and fingers is required when playing repeated notes which employ a change of finger on the second note of each pair. With careful touch control on the fortepiano, it is possible to convey the whispered effect of the repeated note of each pair. The effect approximates that produced by enunciating the word "come" so that the inital consonant is clearly attacked (equating with the first note of a repeated pair) and the closing of the lips on the "m" sound parallels the second note of each musical pair. The musical effect produced on either a fortepiano or a modern piano is somewhat akin to an emotive sigh.

Bamberger's concluding remarks in her article reflect my thoughts about how a performer must use Beethoven's fingerings. The remarks further emphasize

intimate sensitivity to the relationship between physical and aural effects.

> But just as Beethoven *heard* through the gesture, through the feel of a particular passage, in much the same way his fingering must direct the hearing of others who perform his works. . . . Beethoven's fingering . . . is an inseparable part of the music itself.[8]

NOTES

1. Cited by Jeanne Bamberger in "The Musical Significance of Beethoven's Fingerings in the Piano Sonatas." *Music Forum* 4 (1976): 263.

2. Ibid., 269, note 41.

3. For further reading I suggest: William S. Newman, "Beethoven's Fingerings as Interpretive Clues", *Journal of Musicology*, 1 (1982): 171-97; Jeanne Bamberger, "The Musical Significance of Beethoven's Fingerings in the Piano Sonatas", *Music Forum* 4 (1976): 237-80.

4. Jeanne Bamberger, "Beethoven's Fingerings", 258.

5. For example, the rising fourths of the opening theme of the first movement and in the fugue subject. I acknowledge Dr William Kinderman for the interpretation of the fingering of this particular passage.

6. Donald Francis Tovey, (ed. with Harold Craxton), *Beethoven Sonatas for Pianoforte*, 3 vols. (London: Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, 1931), II/68; III/216.

7. The italicized words are William S. Newman's (in "Beethoven's Fingerings as Interpretive Clues", 188) and they reflect my opinion as well. The double-escapement action was patented by Sebastian Erard in 1821. It permitted a note to be repeated at once from a

point of partial release.

8. Jeanne Bamberger, "Beethoven's Fingerings", 270/71.

6. Present day performance practices: playing Beethoven on pianos of his time and on the piano of today.

"Unlike Wanda Landowska's pioneering of little-known music on the neglected harpsichord, the revival of the fortepiano seems likely to establish itself in a revitalizing of the traditional keyboard repertoire of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and even Schumann".[1] In fact, the early piano was for historical performance in the '80s what the harpsichord was for the '50s. It is very evident that in the last ten years the fortepiano has made incisive inroads into the world of performance and it would seem that it is here to stay. However, as interesting as this development is, I can never see keyboard music of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries being performed solely upon such instruments. The informed player of today needs to have both a critical mind and a technical command searching after historical truth, working with early pianos, having the technique to play these instruments and making the revelations stemming from such "an experience potent enough to challenge the existing tradition."[2] Armed with such knowledge a performer should be able to see the real issue concerning

the early piano not as one which attempts simply to recreate historical performance but one which seeks to capture the essential spirit and character of the music itself and become a "unique blend of old and new, a play of the contemporary creative sensibility upon the past".[3]

What then are the issues raised by performers in connection with period instrument performance as opposed to a piano of today? The main point of divergence would seem to be the tonal difference between the two pianos and the associated musical affects. On a Viennese fortepiano, leather-covered hammers produced a clearly-defined beginning of the sound to each note, while a faster decay of the tone and efficient dampers allowed for tonal clarity. The modern grand produces a much longer-lasting, resonant tone which, upon attack of each note, "blooms" slightly after the beginning of the sound. This quintessential difference affects articulation in its localised sense and is the very crux of the fortepianist's claim that eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century piano music cannot be faithfully recreated on today's pianos. Because of its swift action, rapid decay of tone, and efficient damping, the Viennese fortepiano, which Beethoven seemed to favour more than the English fortepiano throughout his life,[4] is capable of producing

clearly focused beginnings and precise closes on notes and slurs. On the piano of today the longer "blooming" of the sound makes it very difficult to articulate as effectively as on the fortepiano. Furthermore, accentuation on the modern piano compared to that on the early instrument, can present difficulties in interpretation. As Malcolm Bilson states: "the modern piano has no *sforzando* in the Beethovenian sense; it has only loud notes".[5] He quotes the Sonata in D, Op. 10, no. 3, second movement, mm. 23/24, where, he says "the diminuendo from *fortissimo* to *piano* in the amount of time prescribed by Beethoven, is the crucial dramatic event".[6] The piano of Beethoven's day could realize this effect beautifully, whereas all the listener hears on today's piano is a loud note followed by three soft ones.

Should we restrict performances of Beethoven's piano music to the instruments (originals or replicas) for which it was originally conceived? Malcolm Bilson claims that "the choice of instrument only becomes meaningful when the artist has something very specific to express . . . Musicians who do not [have something to express] are in no way better served by authentic instruments than standard modern ones."[7] It is "searching for an ever-better interpretation of the music [and one which is] even

closer to what the composer wanted [that will] bring all instruments into their proper place in concert halls and on recordings."[8] But what specifically is an "ever-better interpretation" which the performer has to express? The more I read about Beethoven's manner of performance the more I am convinced that he was primarily concerned with the spirit and character of the music and the quality of the instruments of his time rather than with the highly-articulated, "choppy" style of playing that existed in his youth. I am of the opinion that a performer can recreate the affects that Beethoven calls for, and thereby express something very specific, on either an early piano or a piano of today. I refer again to Joseph Kerman who wrote that "the real issue is not historical performance at all, but the nature of music."[9]

Beethoven paid much attention to the piano's development, and his remarks, written in a letter of 1796 to the piano manufacturer J. A. Streicher, expressed dissatisfaction with the usual manner of playing the instrument and the need to make it sing.

> There is no doubt that so far as the manner of playing it is concerned, the pianoforte is still the least studied and developed of all instruments; often one thinks that one is merely listening to a harp. And I am delighted, my dear fellow, that you are one of the few who realize and perceive that, provided one can feel the music, one can also make the

> pianoforte sing. I hope that the time will come when the harp and pianoforte will be treated as two entirely different instruments.[10]

Three years later, Carl Czerny, then ten years old, was taken by his father to play for Beethoven. Czerny was Beethoven's pupil for three years and the two remained life-long friends. In his 'Memoirs' (1852) Czerny wrote:

> Beethoven's playing of adagio and of legato in sustained style had almost a bewitching effect on everyone who heard it; so far as I know, it has yet to be excelled.[11]

Czerny's treatise, On the Proper Performance of all Beethoven's Works for the Piano *(Über den richtigen Vortrag der sämtlichen Beethoven'schen Klavierwerke,* pub. 1846), constantly refers to legato and legatissimo in Beethoven's piano music. Of the very first Sonata, Op. 2 no. 1, we read that "the *Adagio* must be played *cantabile* throughout . . . [and] a refined touch, a perfect *legato* . . . are especially effective".[12] In Op. 2, no. 2, the second movement "must be heightened by the strict *legato* of the chords."[13] In Op. 2, no. 3, "the [fourth] movement [must be] quick and sprightly. The middle subject (in F) to be played *legatissimo* and *cantabile,* and the melody in the upper part to be well brought out."[14]

In later works also, the same advice is given by Czerny: in the Sonata Op. 57, first movement, from bar 35,

"the octaves in the right hand, which form the melody, may appear as *legato* and *cantabile*, as if they were performed by two hands."[15] The theme of the second movement of Op. 57 must be "very *piano* and *legato*, strict and decided in time . . ."[16] (This is especially interesting as Beethoven did not mark in slurs or indicate "*legato*". However, in view of Czerny's remarks about Beethoven's legato playing and Beethoven's own comments about making the piano sing, I find it hard to imagine this theme played in anything but a legato fashion.) In Op. 110, 1st movement, "In the second part [bars 44 -55], the semiquaver movement of the bass [should be] very *legato* and expressive, whilst the right hand performs the theme *cantabile*."[17]

These examples, taken from among numerous similar ones in Czerny's treatise, show not only that throughout his entire life Beethoven was fully aware of the new instrument's capabilities for songfulness and *legato*, but also that such playing was applicable both to the slower movements and to the faster tempos.

In 1809, Reichardt reported the progress Streicher had made:

> Streicher . . . upon Beethoven's request - has given his instruments more resistance and elasticity so that the virtuoso who performs with strength and significance has power over the instrument for

> sustaining and supporting [the tone?] and more sensitive pressure and release [of the key?].[18]

It would seem from this and other letters that the piano never did come up to Beethoven's expectations. To be sure, knowing and playing the kinds of pianos he played does have some significance for the interpretation of his works, but once we understand the notation and have the technical skills to perform the music there is a danger that the spirit will be confined in the letter: *the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.*[19] The spirit rather than the particular instrument is reinforced by Beethoven's retort in reply to Schuppanzigh's complaint of a difficult violin passage: "Do you think I think of your wretched fiddle when I write my string music!"[20]

Now, to return to Bilson's remarks mentioned on page 88: surely what is worthwhile for today's pianist is the interpretation of the spirit and inner essence of the composition. I do not believe that Malcolm Bilson would claim Beethoven's music can be successfully played only on instruments of the kind Beethoven knew and played: what he is suggesting is that he has yet to hear a performer of today effectively interpret it on the modern piano.[21] Otherwise Bilson would be implying that today's performer on today's piano has nothing worthwhile to say.

I do think that the present music "business" has caused performers to become somewhat mechanically brilliant and because of this, we are guilty of missing the spirit of Beethoven's music. Increasing demand for perfection of notes and sound in recordings and for so-called impressive performances in competitions are the main advocates of this "business". Furthermore, Urtext editions, while conveying accuracy of notational aspects can cause performers not to look beyond the notation and therefore inhibit a deeper, musical conception of a work. This can lead to a performance of mechanical accuracy and brilliancy but one which lacks inner involvement and understanding of the spirit and character of a piece.

Czerny's views cited on page 73 of this essay suggest that there is a decided need for performers to reevaluate the inner meaning of Beethoven's notation. Reports of Beethoven's playing by his contemporaries can help a player of today form general conclusions about Beethoven's notation and performance style but we must remember that such accounts were often subjective and written some time after the event. The performer must be able to discover the essential "grain of truth" which is often hidden within such exaggerated statements. I refer the reader to page 66 of this essay where Schindler's

remarks are a good example of what I consider to be exaggeration. In other cases, the agreement of statements by different writers can reinforce particular aspects. At no time though should the remarks be taken "at face value". They can serve us best today in that they give us some general insight into the aesthetics of the time at which they were written.

The historical instrument revival of this century has caused performers to look more closely at the notation and to try and see what it embodies. The performer must be prepared to spend much time developing aural perceptions and sensitivity of finger control which can be gained through an acquaintance with the fortepianos of the late-eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-centuries.

Today's performers on the early piano have brought us closer to the kind of sound Beethoven and his audiences would have known. Although this is of interest historically, it is not always practical in today's large concert halls.[22] For the player who performs on the grand piano of today there can be a "curious blend of old and new" which successfully articulates the spirit and character of Beethoven's piano music.

It is the attention to details of localised articulation which stylizes a performance. Although the

fortepiano had superseded the harpsichord by around 1785, the technique for playing it had been a transposition of that for harpsichord. Furthermore, the notation of articulation for the fortepiano appears to have been derived initially from that for string and wind instruments. It was Beethoven who was largely responsible for advocating a more natural manner of playing the piano: a manner that was clearly very different from any other before him and which left its impression on so many listeners, some of whose comments were quoted in chapters four and six.

Even if we accept the fact that the articulatory aspect of slurring on the fortepiano originated from the notation of violin bowing, it does not mean that a performance on piano must be interpreted in string terms. Surely this would be erroneous and objectionable thinking as string instruments and the piano produce musical sounds in very different ways to each other. The discussion in chapter three relating string bowing to piano slurrring illustrated the need for the pianist to be more aware of tonal gradations at slur endings and of how to physically manage the beginning of a new slur. In most instances it seemed to be dynamic nuance and accentuation rather than

creating a break in the sound which achieved, to my mind, the right articulation of the slurs.

On today's piano the most obvious advantage is the prolonged sound of each note compared to the more rapid decay on the instrument of Beethoven's day. This advantage can be effectively used in the slower-moving *legato, cantabile* passages. However, the longer sound and slower development of tone on each note presents difficulties in faster-moving passages requiring shorter-slurred groupings. Such slurrings can be approximated with very careful tonal control and gradation but at best it can sound a self-conscious effort and appear somewhat clumsy on the heavier action of today's piano.

The texture of the fortepiano sound was naturally bound up with Beethoven's conception of a work. The "muddy" basses of today's pianos cannot convey any approximation to the clarity of bass on Beethoven's pianos. On a modern piano the player must either play the basses slightly detached and often with less intensity. Partly due to thicker bass strings, the powerfully-rich basses of today's pianos in many instances do not enhance the texture of Beethoven's piano works. (Consider the opening of the Sonata, Op. 53.) However, the brighter treble can assist in sustaining a clearer line and aiding

structural points such as trills, especially in the later piano sonatas with the extended upper range. One cannot help wondering if, by the time he was completely deaf, Beethoven actually perceived such clarity in his mind: the clarity that was evident throughout the entire range of his instrument and not restricted to the treble alone.

Finally, today's pianist must use the pedal with discretion especially when performing classic period music. We are told by Czerny that Beethoven used the pedal quite freely but we must heed Czerny's remark mentioned earlier in this essay on pages 69 and 70 in which he cautions the performer about the use of the pedal on instruments that had a "greater body of tone." Pedalling in such celebrated examples as Sonatas Op. 27, no. 2, first movement and Op. 53, third movement, need to be "translated" in terms of today's pianos. Malcolm Bilson remarked that "the modern piano has no *sforzando* in the Beethovenian sense; it only has loud notes" (see page 88). The fortepiano's more rapid decay of tone does suggest the *fp* marking convincingly. On the modern piano a *fp* can be simulated by releasing the damper pedal almost immediately after the hammers hit the strings and the sound is produced.

The modern piano, by its very nature requires a performer to "translate" Beethoven's notation in order to attempt a recreation of articulation as it would have sounded on pianos of Beethoven's time. To be sure, this requires great care and control, especially of tone, dynamics, and the use of the pedal, but it can be achieved by the pianist who is willing to take the time and care to develop such a technique as is required to interpret Beethoven's notation in a manner appropriate to Beethoven's intentions. If a performer has the sensitivity to convey Beethoven's markings as faithfully as we can discern in our present age, then the spirit of the music will be able to give its own life to the performance. In doing so, Beethoven's music will speak to us on the modern piano as directly as it did to Beethoven's audiences on the piano of his day.

NOTES

1. Malcolm Bilson, "The Viennese fortepiano of the late 18th century", *Early Music* (April 1980): 158.

2. Linda Nicholson, "Playing the Early Piano - The musician...needs...to develop not one technique but many", *Early Music* (February 1985): 52.

3. Joseph Kerman, *Contemplating Music*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1985), 200.

4. I draw the reader's attention to the article by William S. Newman on this subject entitled "Beethoven's Pianos versus His Piano Ideals", in the *Journal of the American Musicological Society* Vol. XXXIII (1970): 484-501.

5. Malcolm Bilson, "Beethoven and the Piano", *Clavier* (October 1983): 21.

6. Ibid.

7. Malcolm Bilson, "The Viennese Fortepiano of the late 18th Century", *Early Music* (April 1980): 161/162.

8. Ibid., 162.

9. Joseph Kerman, *Contemplating Music*, 202.

10. Emily Anderson, *The Letters of Beethoven*, 3 vols., I/25.

11. Czerny/Badura-Skoda, *On the Proper Performance*, IV, 16.

12. Ibid., 23.

13. Ibid., 25.

14. Ibid., 27.

15. Ibid., 49.

16. Ibid., 49.

17. Ibid., 56.

18. W. S. Newman, *Beethoven's Piano* versus *His Piano Ideals*," Journal of the American Musicological Society, Vol. XXXIII (1970): 498.

19. Corinthians II, Chap. 3, v. 6. Cited by A. B. Marx in *General Musical Instruction*, 94.

20. W. S. Newman, *Beethoven's Piano*, 501.

21. Refer to Malcolm Bilson's article "Beethoven and the Piano", 21.

22. Even Malcolm Bilson had to resort to amplification of the fortepiano at a concert in Los Angeles. See the article by Mari Kuwabara "Keyboard Artist's Quest for the 18th-century sound", *Symphony Magazine* (Dec. 1984): 85.

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