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052167347X - Music Analysis in the Nineteenth Century, Volume II: Hermeneutic Approaches

Edited by Ian Bent

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In this second volume of music analyses, Ian Bent provides a further selection of newly translated writings of nineteenth-century music critics and theorists, including composers such as Wagner, Schumann and Berlioz, and critics such as A. B. Marx and E. T. A. Hoffmann. Where Volume I, on Fugue, Form and Style, presented nineteen analyses of a technical nature, all the writing here involves a metaphorical style of verbalised description, some pure examples and some hybrid forms mixed with technical analysis. The music analysed is amongst the best-known in the repertoire: Wagner writes on Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, E. T. A. Hoffmann on the Fifth, Schumann writes on Berlioz, and Berlioz on Meyerbeer. Professor Bent presents each analysis with its own detailed introduction and each is amplified by supporting information in footnotes.

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Volume II Hermeneutic Approaches

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Ian Bent

Columbia University, New York



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**In memory of Peter le Huray,
who lived to see this volume in typescript**

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Preface to volumes I and II

‘Never confuse analysis with mere description!’, Hans Keller used waggishly to say, chastising unfortunate speakers at conferences. To Keller, most so-called ‘criticism’ and ‘analysis’ was an amalgam of the descriptive and the metaphorical: ‘The descriptive is senseless, the metaphorical usually nonsense.’ Most analytical writings boiled down to ‘mere tautological descriptions’. Not even Tovey was beyond reproach: ‘his “analyses” are misnomers’, Keller remarked; they were in his view ‘faultless descriptions’ with ‘occasional flashes of profound analytical insight’; otherwise they contained ‘much eminently professional tautology’.¹ More recently, V. Kofi Agawu has taken one analyst to task for failing to observe ‘the distinction between description and analysis, between a critical, necessarily impressionistic commentary and a rigorous interpretative exercise . . .’²

With censure such as this, what justification is there for entitling the contents of these two volumes ‘Music *Analysis* in the Nineteenth Century’? There are in fact two justifications, one intentional, the other actual.

First, it is upon ‘analysis’ that most of the authors represented in these volumes considered they were engaged. Thus, analysing is what Berlioz thought he was doing when he wrote about Beethoven’s nine symphonies in 1838 (‘Nous allons essayer l’analyse des symphonies de ce grand maître’), and when he reviewed the first performance of Meyerbeer’s *Les Huguenots* on 6 March 1836, and later its score. ‘Analysis’ is what Momigny set out to do with the first movement of Mozart’s D minor string quartet (‘Analyse du beau Quatuor en ré mineur du célèbre Mozart’) and Haydn’s ‘Drumroll’ Symphony; it is what Reicha sought to do with harmonic, melodic and contrapuntal models in all three of his major treatises; what Fétis claimed to have done with the late string quartets of Beethoven, and what von Lenz promised his readers in his treatment of Beethoven’s sonatas for piano. Basevi claimed to have ‘analysed’ the operas of Verdi in 1859 (he called the process ‘critica analitica’), and Beethoven’s string quartets Op. 18 in 1874 (‘analisi dei sei quartetti’). So too did Sechter in his examination of Mozart’s ‘Jupiter’ Finale in 1843 (‘Analyse der Mozartschen Instrumentalfuge’), Dehn in his studies of three fugues from Bach’s *Well-tempered Clavier* in 1858 (‘zu analysiren und in Betracht ihres Baues kritisch zu beleuchten’³), Lobe in 1850 and Helm

1 Quoted from Hans Keller, ‘K.503: The Unity of Contrasting Themes and Movements – I’, *Music Review*, 17 (1956), 48–9; these views, always trenchantly put, are widespread in his writings.

2 *Music Analysis*, 7 (1988), 99; review of W. Frisch, *Brahms and the Principle of Developing Variation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

3 ‘to analyse and illuminate critically in regard to their construction’: the editor (Foreword) reporting Dehn’s intentions before he died.

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in 1885 in their studies of works by Beethoven, and Kretzschmar in his ‘analytische Bestrebungen’.⁴

Nor was this corporate expression of purpose limited to cognate forms of the Greek word *Analysis*. A multitude of terms existed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries by means of which those who subjected musical fabrics, configurations, structures and styles to close scrutiny might designate what they were doing: in French, *décomposer*, *dégager*, *expliquer*; in German, *auffassen*, *betrachten*, *beurteilen*, *entdecken*, *enträthseln*, *erklären*, *erläutern*, *phrasieren*, *zergliedern*, *zerlegen* – to mention only a few. Each of these terms had its own special implication, each formed part of a terminological network, each belonged to a particular array of time and space. The principal terms will be discussed at strategic points in the introductions and editorial material below.

Most of the writers represented in the present volumes characterize their work in some such terms. Surprisingly, A. B. Marx is an exception. His minutely detailed descriptions of musical formations, in his manual of composition as well as his volumes on Beethoven’s works, are couched in synthetic rather than analytic terms – they are phrased constructively rather than deconstructively. (Where he used the German term *Analyse*, it was in reference to the work of others not himself, specifically that of Berlioz and Ulibishev.⁵) His case demonstrates that the absence of such defining terms by no means necessarily signals absence of analytical material. Nor does it for that matter imply a desire to avoid self-characterization. In the case of E. T. A. Hoffmann, for example, whose descriptions are at times highly detailed and technical, it reflects perhaps a mastery of language and a lack of self-consciousness about what he is doing.

None of this would, of course, have mollified Hans Keller, who saw the confusion as lying not in the realm of public perception, but in the mind of each deluded would-be analyst. But to return for a moment to Berlioz: when, confronted by ‘bold and imposing’ effects in the Act V trio of *Les Huguenots*, Berlioz pleads for ‘time to reflect on my impressions’, who are we to disparage his intention, which is ‘to *analyze* them and *discover their causes*’ (my italics)? To be sure, he was not seeking ‘the latent elements of the unity of manifest contrasts’ (Keller), or ‘a precise formulation of norms of dimensional behaviour against which we can evaluate [the composer’s] practice’ (Kofi Agawu). But he *was* seeking, from an examination of Meyerbeer’s complex deployment of forces in the massacre scene of this trio (three soloists and two separate on-stage choruses, with markedly conflicting gestural and emotional characters and contrasting musical styles, orchestra in the pit and brass chorus outside the auditorium) and from study of Meyerbeer’s treatment of tonality here (minor key, but with the sixth degree frequently and obdurately raised), to determine precisely how the terrifying and blood-curdling effect that he

4 ‘analytical endeavours’: ‘Anregungen zur Förderung musikalischer Hermeneutik [I]’, *Jahrbuch der Musikbibliothek Peters für 1902*, 9 (1903), 47; later issued in *Gesammelte Aufsätze aus den Jahrbüchern der Musikbibliothek Peters* (Leipzig: Peters, 1911; reprint edn *ibid*, 1973), p. 168. The first part of this article is translated in Bujić, 114–20.

5 Seemingly without disparagement (*Ludwig van Beethoven: Leben und Schaffen* (Berlin: Otto Janke, 1859), vol. 1, p. 295 note). More likely, *Analyse* alludes to their being written in French. Marx occasionally used *zergliedern* and *Zergliederung* for what he himself did.

had observed came about. To take apart, and uncover the prime causes – is that not a type of analytical procedure?

This, then, is the second justification for the entitling of the present volumes: that, irrespective of the name given to them, there were in the nineteenth century species of activity that meet the general criteria of the present day for analysis. Dunsby and Whittall say something of this latter sort in the following statement, while qualifying it with respect to purpose:⁶

The kind of analysis we would nowadays recognize as ‘technical’ has been in practice for more than two centuries. Yet it came to be regarded as a discipline apart from compositional theory only at the turn of this century. Around this time, the relationship between traditional analysis and compositional theory ceased to be significantly reflexive.

Their first sentence, however, invokes technicality, and therefore makes a slightly different point from my own. Were we still in the 1960s or 1970s, then our two statements would perhaps be saying the same thing (intentionally or not); but in the world of the 1990s I believe they no longer do this. I shall return to this in a moment.

Consider the latter two sentences of the above quotation. Taken on their own terms, the thesis that they embody is factually disprovable: the analysis of J. S. Bach’s *The Art of Fugue* in vol. 1, Analysis 3, dating from 1841 and as rigorous and technical as anything presented here, arose in the context not of compositional theory but of historical textuality. It formed the critical commentary to the *Art of Fugue* volume of a collected edition of Bach’s keyboard works. Far from being prescriptive, it was an abstract engagement in contrapuntal process – written, as it was, by Moritz Hauptmann, one of the principal theorists of the century but a writer of ‘pure’ theory rather than compositionally instructional theory. Then again, the analysis of leitmotifs in *Tristan and Isolde* by Karl Mayrberger (vol. 1, Analysis 13), dating from 1881 and highly technical, was a contribution not to a composition manual but to a journal intended for amateur devotees of Wagner’s music dramas, a contribution that was then turned into a small monograph indicatively titled *The Harmonic Style of Richard Wagner*.

Not that the above disproof invalidates Dunsby’s and Whittall’s argument. The bulk of technical analysis in the nineteenth century probably did indeed reside within compositional theory. The analyses given in volume 1 by Reicha, Sechter, Czerny and Lobe certainly did; and those by Vogler, Dehn and Riemann in volume 1 and Marx in the present volume can be seen as outgrowths of composition manuals already written or edited by those authors. The effect of my disproof is perhaps no more than to set back earlier in time the moment at which the ‘reflexivity’ between analysis and theory began to break down. Indeed, the continuation of Dunsby’s and Whittall’s statement invites this very suggestion:

Analysis became the technical or systematic study, either of the kind of familiar tonal style few composers felt to be current any longer, or of new music that the wider public found profoundly hard to understand, and the challenges of which seemed to focus on the question of whether tonal comprehensibility was present at all.

6 J. Dunsby and A. Whittall, *Music Analysis in Theory and Practice* (London: Faber, 1988), p. 62.

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Hauptmann's analysis of *The Art of Fugue* perfectly exemplifies the former, itself an early manifestation of the Bach revival and its author a figure later associated with that movement; and Mayrberger's exemplifies the latter, since it was one of the earliest attempts to tackle the apparent incomprehensibility of Wagner's harmonic idiom, and its author was hailed as the seer who would unlock the technical mysteries of that idiom.

How far back might that moment of break-down then be set? Noting that Gottfried Weber's analysis of the opening of Mozart's 'Dissonance' Quartet (vol. 1, Analysis 10) was probably submitted first to his own journal, *Caecilia*, and only subsequently incorporated into the third edition of his composition manual, at least as early as 1830.

But is not this chronological exercise ultimately futile? Perhaps we should address a deeper issue, namely: whether a theorist, when executing an analysis within the environment of a manual of compositional theory, might not temporarily operate as *analyst* rather than as *instructor* – might not, that is, abandon the educational mode of thought for one that is entirely analytical. Given the peculiarly absorbing, compelling, even obsessive nature of musical analysis, is it not possible that he might become drawn into the exhilarations, fascinations and frustrations of the purely analytical process, and forget the educational purpose that he was serving? Would we wish to assert that analysis became fascinating only in the twentieth century? – the question seems somehow absurd! The purpose of this long excursion is only to ask whether technical analysis might psychologically have been analysis *per se* long before it could be said to have cut any umbilical cord previously connecting it to compositional theory.

Dunsby's and Whittall's invocation of the 'technical', to which we can now at last return, was prefatory to a discussion of the work of Donald Francis Tovey (1875–1940). As they say, Tovey brought a modest technical element to his writings on music; nevertheless, he wrote for the musically untrained reader, for the music lover who hated jargon, for what he liked to think of as the 'naïve listener'. Tovey himself, though we tend to overlook the fact nowadays, was heir to a tradition – as were Schoenberg and Schenker to other traditions –: in his case, a tradition of writings for the nineteenth-century musical amateur. This is the unremarked obverse of Dunsby's and Whittall's technical tradition: a body of writings that was almost coeval with Romantic music criticism, and which was from the beginning completely independent of compositional theory. This 'elucidatory' tradition, as I have loosely styled it, sought to explain music in terms of content rather than of sonic fabric. It was Peter Kivy who in 1980 acknowledged the disesteem into which content-based music analysis has fallen in the twentieth century by virtue of its congenital subjectivity, and set himself the challenge of showing:⁷

that a humanistic musical analysis could be reconstituted and made respectable once again in the form of the familiar emotive characterization of music – but only if two things were established: first, how it makes sense to apply expressive predicates to music (which answers the charge of unintelligibility); and, second, what the public, intersubjective criteria of application are (which answers the charge of subjectivity).

7 P. Kivy, *The Corded Shell: Reflections on Musical Expression* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), p. 132, also pp. 9–11.

Since that time, others, some of them building on, or influenced by, Joseph Kerman's appeals from the mid-1960s on for a higher form of criticism,⁸ have sought to envisage such a 'humanistic' – in contrast to quasi-scientific – mode of analysis. Fred Everett Maus has propounded a type of analysis in which the distinctions between 'structural' and 'emotive', between 'technical' and 'non-technical', are lost; using a dramatic model, he interprets music in terms of 'actions' and 'agents'. The music's structure becomes a 'plot', and the analysis 'narrates' (in the fullest sense of that word) that plot.⁹ Marion Guck has for some time been engaged in a systematic investigation of metaphor in analytic discourse about music with a view to locating new modes of description.¹⁰ No longer will a statement such as the following (from Analysis 4 below) be greeted with universal scorn or discomfort:

The movement begins with strident augmented sixths, like a sudden cry of anguish from the terrified soul. Passagework now follows, which, like some foaming mountain stream, plunges wildly into the chasm below, growls and grumbles in the depths, until at last a figure, tossing back and forth – the first principal theme – breaks away from the whirlpool, eddies up and down, then spouts up roaring in uncontrolled passion, undeterred by the wailing parallel thirds which themselves are dragged into the maelstrom.

These words, a mixture of technicality ('augmented sixths', 'passagework', and the like), simile ('like a sudden cry . . .'), metaphor ('plunges wildly into the chasm below') and partial personification ('roaring in uncontrolled passion'), map the motions of natural phenomena and the human psyche on to the motions of the music in an effort to exteriorize the interior life of that music. The words are by Ernst von Elterlein, a minor mid-nineteenth-century writer on music. Written in 1856, they depict the opening of the Finale of Beethoven's 'Appassionata' Sonata.

A significant group of thinkers is nowadays prepared to acknowledge that figurative writing containing these categories of language usage has a legitimate place in analytical discourse. Such vividly naturalistic images as the above, in such profusion, seem quintessentially Romantic, recalling (to take English examples) the paintings of John Martin or the poetry of Wordsworth and Tennyson (albeit in a debased and only semi-literary form). The 1990s have their own world of images upon which to draw for analytical purposes. The present volumes appear perhaps not inopportunistly, displaying as they do a broad range of analytical types from the last century: technically theoretical, compositionally instructive, musicologically historical and metaphorically experiential.

- 8 J. Kerman, 'A Profile for American Musicology', *JAMS*, 18 (1965), 61–9; *Musicology* (London: Fontana/Collins, 1985), also published as *Contemplating Music* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985), chap. 3 and *passim*.
- 9 F. E. Maus, 'Music as Drama', *Music Theory Spectrum*, 10 (1988), 56–73. Maus's approach is informed by the work of Edward T. Cone, *The Composer's Voice* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), and by recent literary theory and narratology, notably by T. Todorov, *Introduction to Poetics* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1981). The term 'plot' was first imported into musical discourse from historian Paul Veyne by Jean-Jacques Nattiez in 'The Concepts of Plot and Seriation Process in Music Analysis', *Music Analysis*, 4 (1985), 107–18.
- 10 M. A. Guck, e.g. 'Rehabilitating the Incurable', in 'Cognitive Communication' about Music, ed. F. E. Maus and M. A. Guck (Princeton: Princeton University Press, forthcoming); see Guck's notes 19 and 23 for a survey of recent analyses by Cone, Lewin and Treitler that use figurative language, and by Newcomb that uses emotive descriptions. Tangentially, see remarks in my own 'History of Music Theory: Margin or Center?', *Theoria*, 6 (1993), 1–21.

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These two volumes differ from others already published in the series *Cambridge Readings in the Literature of Music* not only in their concern with specifically musical rather than aesthetic, social and philosophical issues (something that they share only with vol. II of *Greek Musical Writings*), but also, and most particularly, in the concern of each of the passages presented here with a single piece of music or repertory of pieces. In almost every case, the integrity of the piece or repertory under discussion demanded entire and uncut discussion. The only exceptions are Hans von Wolzogen's thematic guide to Wagner's *Parsifal* (Analysis 6 below), the sheer length of which demanded selection of an excerpt, Lobe's discussion of Beethoven's Quartet Op. 18 no. 2 (vol. I, Analysis 12), which necessitated the excision of much interwoven educational material, and one or two cases in which I have omitted an author's general introduction or a non-analytical interpolation, where these were not essential to the complete discourse.

The result is a pair of volumes with fewer and for the most part longer excerpts than in other volumes of the series. In two cases, what is presented is an entire monograph; in others, an entire chapter or section of a book. Only in the cases of the discussions of Beethoven's three periods by Fétis and Ulibishev (vol. I, Analyses 16b and 16d) have I excerpted brief passages in the manner of previous volumes. The two volumes in a sense serve as companions to two earlier ones: *Music and Aesthetics in the Eighteenth and Early-Nineteenth Centuries* by le Huray and Day, which was constructed around the concept of Romanticism, and *Music in European Thought 1851–1912* by Bujić, which delineated a number of themes and issues. In turn, those two volumes provide a wonderful aesthetic backdrop to the present ones that I urge the reader to explore. The four volumes can be viewed together as a subset of the series.

Every effort has been made to provide high-quality texts. Where several primary texts exist, I have usually taken the earliest, consulting first editions if possible and reporting notable differences wherever I also had access to later ones. Where two significantly divergent texts exist, I have again usually adopted the earlier, as in the case of Schumann's analysis of Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique* (Analysis 10 below), where I have presented the original article from the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* of 1835 rather than Schumann's own curtailed text in his collected works of 1854, and the case of Fétis's discussion of the three periods of Beethoven's music, where preservation of the interchange between Fétis and Ulibishev dictated my presenting the first edition of the *Biographie universelle*. I have taken a later reading only for a good reason, as in the case of Gottfried Weber's discussion of Mozart's 'Dissonance' Quartet and Mayrberger's of Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde* (vol. I, Analyses 10 and 13), where the second version in each case significantly expands the first. Of von Elterlein I had no choice but to take a later edition, since the first was not accessible to me.

Of the analyses presented in volumes I–II, five originally incorporated the entire text of the music under discussion. In two of those cases, the music is nowadays readily available to non-specialist readers, and has not been included: the first movement of Haydn's 'Drumroll' Symphony (Analysis 8 in the present volume), and the Finale of Mozart's 'Jupiter' Symphony (vol. I, Analysis 4); information supplied by

the analyst on the score has been incorporated editorially into the analytical text. In the three remaining cases, the music was supplied in the Appendix to volume I: (a) the fugue from Handel's Harpsichord Suite No. 6 in F# minor; (b) the Prelude No. 8 in D minor from Vogler's *Thirty-two Preludes for Organ and Fortepiano*; and (c) the Andante for Wind Quintet by Reicha (vol. I, Analyses 1, 7 and 9).

It is the translator's duty to be faithful to the original-language text throughout. A literal rendering, however, can produce a translated text that is lifeless. At worst, it can lead to a linguistic no-man's land devoid of idiom, character or rhetoric, in which the reader has to infer the original in order to understand the translation. I have sought to catch the spirit of the original as well as its narrow meaning, and at the same time to make my renderings vivid, immediate and enjoyable. I have used footnotes and square-bracketed original words to signal liberties taken, and to alert the reader to the presence of terminological problems. I have also interpolated page numbers so as to facilitate reference to the original.

While never attempting to produce counterfeit Victorian prose, I have tried to avoid anachronistic twentieth-century terms and expressions. The volume in this series edited by Bojan Bujic was criticized by one reviewer for failing to use contemporary translations where they exist.¹¹ I take the contrary view. Many nineteenth-century translations of music theory were without literary merit; they were frequently guilty of excessive literalness (the use of 'clang-tone' for the German *Klangton* is a notorious example); moreover, they used technical terms that were current in their own day but now mean little or nothing. Consider the opening of John Bishop's translation of the essay by Weber (vol. I, Analysis 10):

[Bishop:] It now remains for me to fulfil the promise made at the end of §225 . . . , of presenting an analysis of the texture of the transitions, as well as of the modulatory course and other peculiarities, in the Introduction of Mozart's violin-quartett in C . . .

[Bent:] All that remains for me at the close of this volume is to discharge the duty that I gave myself at the end of §225 . . . of undertaking an analysis of the intricate web of passing-notes, and at the same time of the tonal scheme and other unusual features of the Introduction to the String Quartet in C by Mozart . . .

For a start, Bishop omits a phrase (*am Schlusse dieses Bandes*). Secondly, by translating *modulatorisch* as 'modulatory' he shows his insensitivity to the distinction between *Ausweichung* and *Modulation*, the former being the term for what in English meant, and means, 'modulation' (for 1832, my 'tonal scheme' for *modulatorischer Gang* is admittedly a shade modern, but it conveys the sense of a difficult phrase more accurately). Thirdly, Bishop's use of 'transition' (which is nowadays a structural-tonal term) for *Durchgang* places a veil between the modern reader and the original German text, as do to a lesser degree the now antiquated term 'violin-quartett', and the archaic usage of 'peculiarities'. It is for these reasons that I also rejected the nineteenth-century translations of Reicha's main treatises, Riemann's *Katechismus der Fugen-Komposition*, Wagner's programme for the Ninth

11 Leon Botstein, in *19th-Century Music*, 13 (1989/90), 168–78: 'By retranslating Hanslick and Wagner, we might gain in clarity from a philosophical or revisionist historical point of view. But by abandoning Cohen and Ellis, we would lose the opportunity to use the historical surfaces of semantics and language to illuminate the nature of perceived meanings in the past and to lay bare the historical distance of texts' (p. 174).

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Symphony of Beethoven, von Elterlein's *Beethoven's Clavier-Sonaten*, Spitta's Bach volume and von Wolzogen's thematic guide to *Parsifal*. Contemporaneous translations are not a satisfactory means by which to get to know nineteenth-century theoretical works; consider only how badly served has Moritz Hauptmann been with W. E. Heathcote's translation of his *Die Natur der Harmonik und Metrik*,¹² and the adverse effect that that unusable text has had on the understanding of Hauptmann's important theories in the English-speaking world.

There are only four exceptions to my rule of independent translation: the analysis by Czerny, for which the German original was unavailable to me, leaving the text by Merrick and Bishop as my only resort; that by E. T. A. Hoffmann, a translation of which by Martyn Clarke for Cambridge University Press was already underway, where to duplicate this would have been perverse (I greatly appreciate the licence he and his editor David Charlton gave me to make slight modifications to their finished text in the interests of consistency with the rest of my two volumes); and the two analyses in Italian, for which my linguistic abilities were wholly inadequate. I am grateful to Walter Grauberg and Jonathan Shiff for supplying such excellent translations of these, and also for allowing me ultimate control of the text.

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¹² (Leipzig: B&H, 1853; Eng. trans., London: Sonnenschein, 1884, 2/1893).

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Abbreviations

<i>AmZ</i>	<i>Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung</i> (Leipzig)
B&H	Breitkopf und Härtel
Bujić	Bojan Bujić: <i>Music in European Thought 1851–1912</i> (Cambridge: CUP, 1988)
<i>HwMT</i>	<i>Handwörterbuch der musikalischen Terminologie</i> , ed. H. H. Eggebrecht and others (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1972–)
JAMS	<i>Journal of the American Musicological Society</i>
JMT	<i>Journal of Music Theory</i>
le Huray/Day	Peter le Huray and James Day: <i>Music and Aesthetics in the Eighteenth and Early-Nineteenth Centuries</i> (Cambridge: CUP, 1981)
MGG	<i>Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart</i> , ed. F. Blume (Kassel and Basel: Bärenreiter, 1949–69)
NGDM	<i>The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians</i> , ed. S. Sadie (London: Macmillan, 1980)
NZM	<i>Neue Zeitschrift für Musik</i>
OED	<i>Oxford English Dictionary</i> , 12 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933)
64 ²	the second beat of b. 64
³ 17	the third beat of the bar preceding b. 17