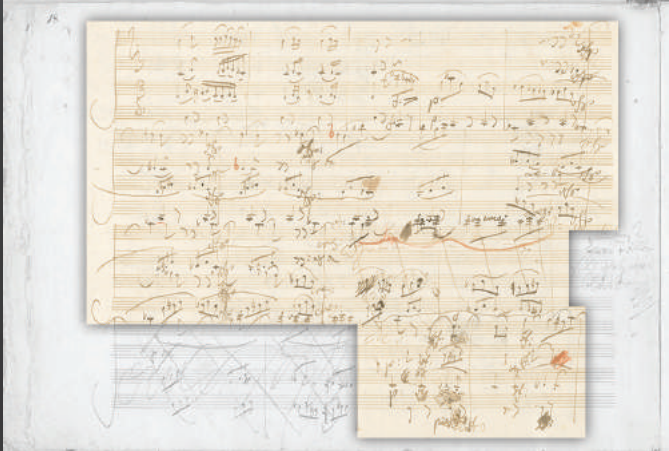# Beethovens Werkstatt
Genetic Textual Criticism and the Digital Edition

A Beethoven autograph music manuscript can be perceived literally doubly: as a compositional *product* in the work itself, and as a compositional *process* distinguishable through traces of the composer's method of working. The created product is a *music text* written in various semiotic systems (music symbols, numerals, abbreviations, verbal language, etc.) and in various formats (linear draft, short score, score, single parts, etc.). These vary in significance, showing the spatial configuration of both validated versus invalidated text (i.e., before revision and / or deletion). Through his organization of, clarification in, and comments on the music text, the composer also provides in various writing media a calculatedly *explicit* metatext that while not itself music text includes memoranda devices (e.g., marginal X's, *NB = nota bene*, etc.) and orientation directives (e.g., *vi-de*, various kinds of reference to interpolated bars).

Music texts and metatexts function as communications, hence use conventional signs to be read also by posterity. Beyond these, *metascriptural inferences* such as variable inks, irregular topographical inscriptions, etc., give information about the relative chronology of individual notations, thus the work process. But information from writing traces not based on conventional signs is evidence that must be interpreted. The creative process of the work's *text-in-progress* is typically not limited to just a single manuscript, but involves successive manuscripts up to the printed edition (sketch → working manuscript → copy → print).

Genetic textual criticism also reconstructs this temporal creative process. Upon observation the text's progression can be traced using *digital-edition* options based on Edirom Online – both as visualization through retouching and / or other methods of facsimile manipulation, and as formalized capture of micro-chronological relations in the Music Encoding Initiative (*MEI*) data format.

L. van Beethoven: *String Quartet* op. 59 Nr. 3, II. Movement, *Andante con moto quasi Allegretto*, T. 23 – 37 (Beethoven-Haus, Bonn; BH 62)
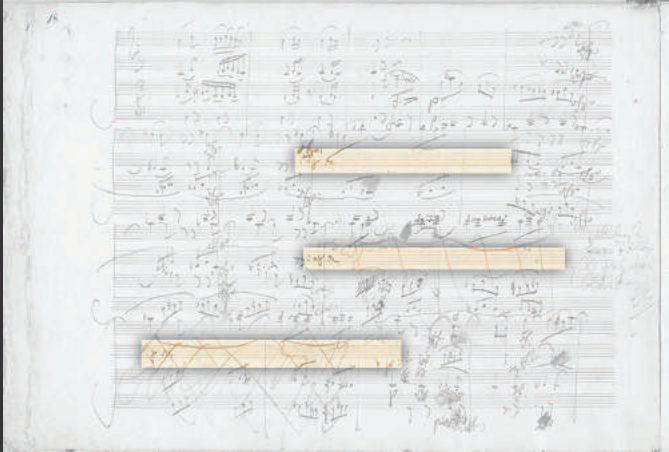
Composition as Product:
(Musical Text and Metatext)

valid music text

invalid music text
(upper right area restored later)

virtual music text

music-text clarification
pitch-letter text support

cancellation (deletion)
orientation directives

Composition as Process:
(Metascriptural Inferences, Examples)

• validated / invalidated text configuration
• performance sign displacement
• variable ink intensity
• exceptional bar expansion
• double cancellation

Digital Edition

Through linking two new, reciprocally-correlated research approaches, *genetic textual criticism* and *digital edition*, the highly-complex dynamics of compositional process in the Beethoven œuvre, offering a rich source heritage as ideal prerequisite for investigation, is to be innovatively researched, documented, and reproduced in exemplary digital editions. The projected multi-perspective focus becomes a central musicological research topic for gaining a differentiated picture of the text-in-progress, making it medially visible and reflecting it critically. Significant insights are anticipated for evaluating the entire compositional history and aesthetics of the 19th and 20th century crucially founded on Beethoven.

Through the two research approaches, the project also cooperatively links two specialized institutions, can hence be viewed as contributing to fundamental musicological research and as developing basic concepts and solutions within the interface of musicology and applied information science.

The Project *Beethovens Werkstatt*

Module 1: Presentation of Variants in Beethoven's Works for Symphony, Chamber Music, and Voice

The goal is to develop solution models for systematizing, digital coding, and presenting or conveying genetic variants in these Beethoven genres.

Module 2: Beethoven as Arranger of His Own Works

Synoptic editions of Beethoven's works, both his original versions and his own arrangements, are to be linked for making the arrangement stages clearly visible through appropriate forms of coding and presentation. The topic works especially well through the versions' limited variability and close mutual reference as the point of departure for attempts to present arrangement processes digitally.

Module 3: In Search of the Work Text: Original Editions, Variant Prints and Beethoven's Corrigenda Lists

Thematized are the specific forms of textual development during and after submitting a work for publication. Systematizing, grouping, and organizing the chronological genetic stages together with the printed heritage of variant original editions and (differing) issues means developing an appropriate collating tool, but also investigating in the printed variants the extent of authorized recognizable corrections and /or conceptual changes.

Module 4: Sketchbook Edition

Investigated here is a central topic of workshop documents: Beethoven's sketchbooks. Incipits can be recognized; singled out are also progressively more complex composing steps transferable into a dynamic text presentation and relatable to other compositional documents and completed *opera*. Made visible innovatively in the process are structural and genetic nexuses of Beethoven's working methods.

Module 5: Combining Edition Concepts in One Edition: Three Model Editions of the Diabelli Variations, op. 120.

Created is an integrated digital edition of this central Beethoven composition, demonstrating the power of various editorial work-ups through a complete genetic textual edition correlated to the conventional edited forms of the autograph score in work and source editions. Brought together with this and expanded are the approaches developed in the foregoing modules.