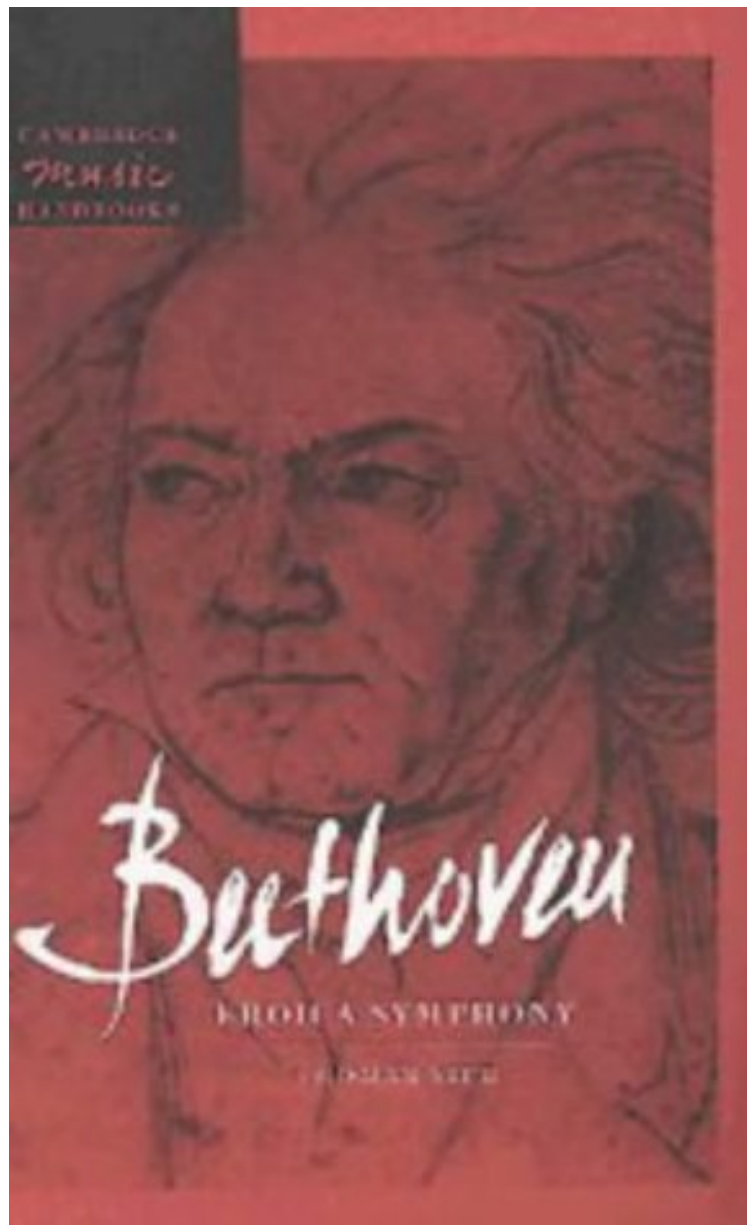


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## Beethoven: Eroica Symphony (Cambridge Music Handbooks)

*Thomas Sipe*

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**Thomas Sipe : Beethoven: Eroica Symphony (Cambridge Music Handbooks)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Beethoven: Eroica Symphony (Cambridge Music Handbooks):

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By A Customer  
This is the most in-depth book on the Eroica I have found. It goes into great detail about not only the symphony itself, but also with all political and influential histories surrounding the great symphony and its composer. A must for anyone studying The Eroica

Beethoven's Third Symphony, originally entitled "Bonaparte", now bears the title "Eroica" ("Heroic"). Napoleon promised an Enlightened Europe but ultimately Beethoven was disillusioned by him. This handbook treats the politics, aesthetics, reception, and musical meaning of this decisive work, which, because of its unique design, powerfully expanded the potential of symphonic expression. Beethoven's ideals, derived largely from the writings of Friedrich Schiller and clearly perceived already by the composer's contemporaries, are readily apparent in the music.

.com The admirable Cambridge Music Handbooks series now offers more than 40 titles, each devoted to a single piece of music and each by a different author. Among the wide range of works represented (from Monteverdi's Vespers to the Beatles) is an especially fine volume on Berg's Violin Concerto. The task for the Eroica must have been especially daunting, but Thomas Sipe offers a notably thorough consideration of the symphony in the space of about a hundred pages. Readers might do well to concentrate on the last chapter ("Interpretation"), which lays out a convincing reading of each movement of the Eroica. Among the many ideas touched on is Sipe's provocative theory that Beethoven is able "to delineate form not with periodic regularity but with overpowering syntactic necessity." Focus in the earlier chapters on historical background to the French Revolution leads to considerations of the relationship between Beethoven and Napoleon, to whom the symphony was originally dedicated, and of political utopianism. Sipe incorporates this into his larger theme of heroism, with particular emphasis on the classical figures of Prometheus and Hector. An earlier chapter ("Reception") summarizes two interpretations of the Eroica by M. Miel (on the Homeric model) and Richard Wagner (an idealized vision of redemption through love). Sipe also offers well-chosen examples showing the gradual shift in musical analysis from programmatic considerations to the more objective, almost scientific style we are used to today. Readers will benefit from having scores (easily available from Dover) on hand to consult. --William R. Braun "Sipe's admirable contribution...is unique in offering `little by way of specific analytic remarks'(p. ix). This volume offers a great deal: valuable historical background, reception history, aesthetic theory, and a close reading of the `Eroica'. In addition, it provides a rich compendium of `Eroica'-related materials. The author is to be congratulated for focusing renewed attention on the interpretive value of understanding Beethoven's intense interest in classical literature, particularly Homer, and in aesthetic theory, particularly Schiller. No doubt Sipe's contribution will encourage others to pursue this important area of inquiry." Jenny Kallick, Notes