

# THE CHOPIN REVIEW

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REVIEWS

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## MAGDALENA OLIFERKO-STORCK

*L'Œuvre de Frédéric Chopin:*  
*Manuscrits - Partitions annotées -*  
*Bibliographies et Catalogue d'une collection*  
*d'éditions anciennes*  
Bertrand Jaeger

Bern, Peter Lang (Publications de la Société Suisse de Musicologie, Série II - Vol. 60), 2020.  
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The catalogue *L'Œuvre de Frédéric Chopin: Manuscrits - Partitions annotées - Bibliographies et Catalogue d'une collection d'éditions anciennes* by Bertrand Jaeger (Bern, 2020) is a publication by an erudite Swiss Egyptologist and archaeologist who has dedicated most of his career to these fields. His interest in musicology, and in particular Chopin research, may be due to the fact that he also studied piano and musicology under the direction of the outstanding pioneer of Chopin studies Ludwik Bronarski. The idea of this catalogue is to combine into a single compendium information about a variety of Chopin sources, embracing manuscripts, first editions and

bibliographies. Inevitably, a volume of 904 pages, including illustrations, indexes and bibliography, cannot possibly encompass in a comprehensive manner such a vast spectrum of topics, and can only offer partial coverage.

In the introduction, Jaeger emphasises that the seminal two-volume catalogue by Krystyna Kobylańska, *Rękopisy utworów Chopina / Manuscripts of Chopin's Works* (1977), along with its German version *F. Chopin. Thematisch-bibliographisches Werkverzeichnis* (1979), has not been updated over the past 40 years; similarly, *Katalog dzieł Fryderyka Chopina / A Catalogue of the Works of Frederick Chopin* by Józef M. Chomiński and Teresa D. Turło (1990) and *Bibliografia chopinowska / A Chopin Bibliography* by Kornel Michałowski (1969) have not been systematically updated since 2001. However, this is not strictly true. Since 2005, a group of the most outstanding living Chopin scholars, under the direction of John Rink, have been working on *The Virtual Chopin* – a pioneering project to digitise all Chopin sources, under the auspices of the University of Cambridge. Thanks to this, it has become possible not only to review all handwritten sources of works by Chopin, but also to register all the variants in Chopin texts in various sources on a 'bar by bar' basis.<sup>1</sup> The same applies to the first editions, catalogued in detail in the flagship work *Annotated Catalogue of Chopin's First Editions* (2010), edited by John Rink and Christophe Grabowski, along with its online version.<sup>2</sup> This catalogue is the most valuable existing guide to the first editions of the works by Chopin and, even in terms of volume, is an unsurpassed counterweight to Jaeger's work. One strand that clearly needed updating is Chopin bibliography. Explaining why he undertook to cover the entirety of the source tradition by himself, Jaeger also draws attention to

1 <https://www.cam.ac.uk/research/features/the-virtual-chopin>.

2 <https://chopinonline.ac.uk/aco/>.

new studies on scores from the collections of Chopin's pupils bearing the composer's handwritten glosses (the collections of Jane Stirling, Camilla O'Meara-Dubois, Ludwika Jędrzejewicz and others). The results of those studies are reflected in the latest editions of Chopin's works (*The National Edition* edited by Jan Ekier, and *The Complete Chopin* edited by John Rink, Jim Samson, Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger and Christophe Grabowski).

The arrangement of the catalogue by Jaeger, a division into three parts, is intended to be transparent, but a closer look exposes the shortcomings of its structure. After a nearly 60-page introduction, containing a list of abbreviations, and a bibliography, there follows Chapter 1, more than 600 pages long, which contains a description of the manuscript sources and printed editions of Chopin, along with their bibliography. Chapter 2, which is less than 60 pages long, contains a thematically ordered bibliography of Chopin's works, not included in the discussion of sources in Chapter 1 or in the Appendices. The final chapter, of more than 80 pages, is a preliminary introductory catalogue of the Milanese and Swiss first editions of Chopin's works, to some extent already presented in the chapter devoted to sources.

In Chapter 1, Jaeger attempts to create a compendium, combining information on manuscripts, first editions, dedications of works, and student scores bearing Chopin's handwritten annotations. However, he treats many issues selectively. He omits a number of secondary manuscript sources, and discusses in depth only scores from his own private collection, avoiding detailed descriptions of the other editions. Moreover, he refers only to printed dedications, ignoring those present in the manuscripts.

Let us begin with the sequence for presenting Chopin's compositions. Jaeger discusses in succession: the works with opus numbers published during the composer's

lifetime, i.e. Opp. 1–65 (wrongly including in this group the Sonata Op. 4, which was published only after Chopin's death, in 1851), then the works published posthumously by Julian Fontana (Opp. 66–74), then works without opus number published during the composer's lifetime, and finally works published posthumously without assigned opus numbers. He ends the chapter devoted to the sources for Chopin's works with a Supplement, in which he presents editions of works that are not really suited to a catalogue of Chopin's works (*Galop des sorcières*, Op. 6 by the Marquis de Langalerie, with an inscription to Chopin, and the American piano school *The Modern School for the Piano-Forte* by Nathan Richardson (1853), in which a piece by Chopin was included). The most appropriate place for this Supplement, with editions of works by foreign composers, would of course be at the end of the entire volume, rather than as a continuation of the Catalogue of Chopin's works. Unfortunately, the further course of the book provides similar examples.

In presenting Chopin's works, Jaeger distances himself from both Kobylańska's method of separating the works published during the composer's lifetime (with and without opus numbers) from posthumous works, as well as from the alphabetical arrangement proposed by Chomiński and Turło. Thus, he prolongs the obfuscation caused by the Berlin publisher of Chopin's *Œuvres Posthumes*, A. M. Schlesinger, as a result of which the opus numbers of works published during Chopin's lifetime in chronological sequence was confusingly continued by works from the period of Chopin's youth, published posthumously, and by no means as refined as the mature works. Since Jaeger does not give the dates of composition at all in his entire catalogue, but only the dates of the first editions, a reader who is not familiar with the subject may mistakenly believe that Opp. 66–74 are late works.

Another issue is the selection and arrangement of the posthumous works without opus numbers. This seems to be devoid of any rationale: it is not arranged chronologically, alphabetically, by genre or by the WN numbers quoted by Jaeger (after *The National Edition* by Ekier). This makes it difficult to find the works one is looking for, especially since not all of them appear under their familiar title. I will discuss this further in due course.

Jaeger's catalogue unfortunately omits a number of Chopin's compositions published posthumously. First of all, those recognised as being by Chopin: the *Largo* in E flat major, the Nocturne in C minor (Bronarski, 1938), the song 'Dumka' to words by Bohdan Zaleski (Lviv, 1910), the Waltz in A minor (Richard-Masse, 1955) and the Fugue in A minor (Breitkopf & Härtel, 1898). Secondly, works attributed to Chopin: the Waltz in E flat major (Breitkopf & Härtel, 1902) and Mazurka in C major (Armin Kaufmann, Schott, 1870). The only exception here is a work of dubious authorship, the Variations in E major for Flute and Piano, published by Jaeger, which he mistakenly includes in the catalogue of works considered to be definitely by Chopin. The author makes not a single mention of the dubious authenticity of this work, despite the fact that the only surviving manuscript of the Variations, made by an unknown copyist, contains numerous errors that Chopin could not have made. Moreover, Jaeger does not mention the lost works of Chopin included in the list of the incipits of his works compiled by Chopin's sister Ludwika Jędrzejewicz.

Let us move on to the titles of Chopin's compositions, of primary importance for their identification. Jaeger gives incomplete titles for the works. In the case of works with opus number, he avoids, without exception, indicating their key (he also fails to provide this information further on in the text). With variations, there is often

no information at all about the theme on which the composition is based. More than once, Jaeger gives the names, not at all well known, taken from the first editions as the title of Chopin's works. For example, he presents Op. 2 under the title *La ci darem varié pour le piano* Op. 2 (although on the following pages he already discusses this work as Variations Op. 2). This problem is particularly important in the case of the works published posthumously without opus numbers, as it makes it much more difficult to identify them. Some of them are presented by Jaeger under commonly used titles (for example *Presto con leggerezza*, WN 44 as Prelude in A flat major), while in the case of others he gives only a tempo definition derived from the score (e.g. *Largo con gran espressione*, WN 37, commonly known as the Nocturne in C sharp major, Op. posth.). This method of supplying titles makes the catalogue by Jaeger more suitable for connoisseurs with a thorough understanding of the subject than for readers looking for background information.

Regarding the manuscript sources for Chopin's works, Jaeger's catalogue is surprisingly selective about their presentation, despite the fact that the publication sets out to provide a comprehensive coverage of the subject and to supplement the state of knowledge since the last editions of Kobyłańska, and of Chomiński and Turło. In many instances, the author maintains that no manuscripts have survived, which is not the case. Jaeger's selection therefore offers an incomplete selection of sources. For the most part, he ignores the incipits of Chopin's works from the Ganche collection, noted by Chopin, Auguste Franchomme, Sigismund Neukomm and Ludwika Jędrzejewicz, which were fortunately discussed in the catalogue by Kobyłańska. However, he does make one exception, introducing the one-bar incipit of the Impromptu in A flat major, Op. 29 written by Chopin in

the album of Maria Wołkow-Witowtowa, which is absent from the Kobylańska catalogue. Jaeger also ignores Chopin's Stichvorlage autograph of the Nocturne in E major, Op. 62 No. 2 in the Boutroux-Ferra collection in Valldemossa. Moreover, he does not provide any information on lost manuscripts (editorial autographs and copies, autographs of fragments) which are not preserved in reproductions, though they are known to have existed, *inter alia* based on Chopin's correspondence. These are putative manuscripts, discussed in detail in the catalogue by Kobylańska, and their appearance at some point in the future remains a fervent hope on the part of researchers. Jaeger's attitude, however, is once again inconsistent. On one hand, he omits the lost sources mentioned by Kobylańska; on the other, he mentions the unpreserved autograph of the title page and the first pages of the Impromptu, Op. 36, mentioned in the auction catalogue by Otto Jahn (1870),<sup>3</sup> for which no further data are available and which was omitted by Kobylańska. Jaeger also passes over (with a few exceptions) most of the lost manuscripts preserved in photocopies. The same applies to the counterfeits. He ignores their existence in every case, mentioning only the source of the Mazurka in F minor, Op. 63 No. 2, which is held in Tokyo.

Despite this selective approach to manuscript sources, Jaeger has managed to supplement the range of Chopin's manuscripts presented in the catalogues by Kobylańska (1977, 1979) and Chomiński and Turło (1990) with works found in the meantime by other researchers. This concerns the sources for Op. 11 (Stichvorlage autograph, Vienna; Franchomme's copy, Prague), Op. 23 (autograph of the front page, Warsaw), Op. 25 Nos. 1–2 (album incipits, auction information), Op. 33 No. 2 (album

autograph, Dresden), Op. 64 No. 1 (working autograph, Bonn) and the manuscripts of works published posthumously by Fontana (Op. 69 No. 1, Op. 72 No. 2, Op. 74 Nos 1, 2 and 10).

Doubts are raised by the inconsistent classification of the manuscript sources and the lack of a homogenous nomenclature. Jaeger abandons the classic division, based on creative process, into sketches, working and Stichvorlage autographs, and with an intermediate link in the form of album manuscripts. He describes working autographs in many ways: once as '*ms. de travail*', at other times '*version non définitive*' or '*rédaction non définitive*', sometimes also very generally as '*première version*'. Sketch autographs are confusingly classified as '*première rédaction*', and sometimes, as with album autographs, simply '*fragments*' or, more precisely, '*esquisse*'. He sometimes defines the album autographs more aptly as '*ms. de présentation*', but most often with a simply meaningless wording: '*autograph. fragment*' or '*autograph. première version*'. Jaeger also fails to explain on what basis he classifies the sources when he takes issue with other researchers. Often, he calls working manuscripts 'sketches' (Mazurka in E minor, Op. 17 No. 2 in the Jagiellonian Library, Prelude in E minor, Op. 28 No. 4 from the collection of Daniel B. Drachman in the US), classifying autographs of uncertain authorship as 'copies' and vice versa, without explaining what criteria are followed (op. posth., without opus no.). He often confusingly calls copies 'manuscripts'. The autograph of the Mazurka in A flat major, Op. posth. is called '*ms. de présentation*', although it is widely known to have been included in Maria Szymanowska's album as a single copy, transferred to the family of Adam Mickiewicz, most probably by Julian Fontana after Chopin's death.

The description of the manuscripts in Jaeger's work is rudimentary, focusing mainly on bibliographical issues, and not on the sources per se. He does not provide

<sup>3</sup> Otto Jahn's *Musikalische Bibliothek und Musikalien-Sammlung* (Versteigerung in Bonn am 4. April 1870) (Bonn, 1870), 41 (no. 944).

information about the source value of the manuscripts, omitting some information of key importance regarding their content. For example, a sketch autograph of a fragment of the Prelude in E flat minor, Op. 28 No. 14 (Robert O. Lehmann's collection in the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York), containing also the plan of the keys for the Preludes, Op. 28, fundamental for tracing creative process, is marked by Jaeger simply as a general sketch of Op. 28 No. 14 without further commentary. This particular page was analysed in detail in an article by Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger,<sup>4</sup> which incidentally is not included in the bibliography of Jaeger's catalogue. There are inaccurate descriptions too. The working autograph of the orchestral score with the piano part of the *Rondo à la krakowiak*, Op. 14 (Czartoryski Library in Kraków) is described by Jaeger as a 'partition d'orchestre', with no mention of the piano part at all. Since the author does not provide basic information about Chopin's manuscripts, their content or the nature of the corrections, changes and variants, the reader is still forced to use Kobylańska and Chomiński & Turło, as well as the online catalogue *The Virtual Chopin*. The only exception is the nearly full-page description of the sketch autograph of the Polonaise-Fantasy, Op. 61 from the Paul Sacher Stiftung in Basel, Switzerland (a kind of Appendix in the main text). Moreover, as regards the Stichvorlagen, Jaeger does not specify which publisher they were made for, which is extremely important in relation to variants, nuances of notation and the dedications of works.

In the case of sources where it is not clear how to classify them, Jaeger sometimes repeats erroneous information from the literature that has long since been corrected by other researchers. One example is a pencil sketch written in an unknown

hand on a single leaf from the album of Countess Karoline Buol-Schauenstein. Jaeger ascribes it, following Kobylańska (1977, 1979), to the sources of the Waltz in A minor, Op. 34 No. 2, while Chomiński's expert opinion from 1990 already showed that the study in seventh chords and the eight-bar cadence were not related to the material of that waltz. Jaeger is also inconsistent in his approach to the discoveries of other researchers: after Maciej Gołąb, he assigns a fragment of the last page of the draft autograph of the Trio in G minor, Op. 8 (NIFC Museum, shelf-mark M/1) to the Nocturne in B flat minor, Op. 9 No. 1. However, he omits Gołąb's expert evaluation of additional parts of the sketches scattered on the same page (excerpts from the Piano Concerto, Op. 21, the Waltz in E flat major, Op. 18 and the Etude in C major, Op. 10 No. 1). Neither does he mention that it is the last page of the draft manuscript of the Trio Op. 8, suggesting that the Nocturne, Op. 9 No. 1 is written throughout the M/1 manuscript.

The sequence in which the handwritten sources are discussed and grouped also raises reservations. These concern both the order in which manuscripts of the same work are presented (the source chain from the autograph of the first version to the Stichvorlage autographs and copies), and the order in which the internal numbers are discussed within multi-part opuses. With the former, instead of following the creative process, Jaeger introduces the working and album autographs before the draft manuscripts. Also, the copies made by Fontana or Gutmann are sometimes discussed before the presentation of the same works in Chopin's album autographs (Op. 33, Op. 35) or his incipit autographs (Op. 37). Thus, the reader is unable to follow Chopin's creative process through the successively appearing sources. The second point concerns the order in which the manuscripts are discussed in the case of multi-numbered opuses. Although

4 Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger, 'L'achèvement des Préludes op. 28 de Chopin. Documents autographes', *Revue de Musicologie*, 75/2 (1989), 229–242.

Jaeger initially presents individual numbers arranged chronologically, he later groups manuscripts according to their repositories, quite separately from the chronology of their numbering, even if the works have different library reference numbers. As a result, finding the entire set of the manuscripts of the work that the reader is looking for becomes a real challenge.

It is also surprising that the student scores bearing Chopin's handwritten annotations, which constitute intermediate links between the manuscript and printed forms and present – as a 'version of the last hand' – the greatest fidelity to the text, are discussed among the last details, after the first editions and dedications with their bibliography, while they should be ranked first, together with the preserved manuscripts.

Jaeger allocates a separate section of Chapter 1 to the first editions of Chopin's works. However, it by no means exhausts this complex field, to which Rink and Grabowski devoted their extensive, 909-page *Annotated Catalogue of Chopin's First Editions* (2010), along with its online version. Following Rink and Grabowski, Jaeger repeats information on the first editions, listing those authorised by Chopin (French, German and English, or Polish and Austrian editions). At the same time, he omits the corrected editions and reprints published during Chopin's lifetime and shortly after his death, as discussed in detail in the *Annotated Catalogue*. A reader seeking the full spectrum of knowledge about the first editions of Chopin's works absent from the catalogue by Jaeger is therefore forced to make use of Rink and Grabowski. Meanwhile, Jaeger looks in detail only at the first editions of Chopin's works that are in his private collection, introducing detailed descriptions of the covers of the rare Norwegian, Dutch, Belgian, Milanese, Swiss (Tessinian) and St Petersburg collections and their reproductions.

Jaeger devotes a separate section to the dedications of Chopin's works. Their description is not always complete. For example, he does not discuss dedications in the manuscripts, paying attention only to those in the printed editions. The abbreviated biographical entries assigned to the 'dedication' column, together with their bibliography, are mostly of disproportionate size: some of them are very extensive, while others are significantly shortened, regardless of the relationship of the addressees to Chopin.

The bibliography of individual works contained in Chapter 1, devoted to the sources, is organised in a logical way, according to thematic issues. However, with each genre, Jaeger also introduces threads that go beyond this type of study, for example the general history of forms and genres practised by Chopin, general issues of Polish folk music without specific references to Chopin's music, the authors of the lyrics of Chopin's songs and their personal relations with the composer. Sometimes the assignments in the bibliography are also questionable. For example, in a short biographical note on Chopin's close friend Delfina Potocka, referring to the Piano Concerto, Op. 21, there is almost no bibliography on her close relationship with Chopin, despite the fact that the literature on the subject is very extensive. Elsewhere, however, when discussing other sources in Potocka's album – the two single pages with copies of the Etudes, Op. 25 Nos 1 and 2 – Jaeger gives as a bibliography of the topic a book by Szumiński about Chopin's putative correspondence with Potocka (concerning the falsified love letters), which has no connection whatever with the manuscript. The right place for this bibliography would be, of course, the short biographical entry on Potocka, where incidentally there should also be many other bibliographical items dealing in a comprehensive way with the

subject of Potocka's alleged correspondence with Chopin.<sup>5</sup>

In Chapter 2, Jaeger presents a bibliography that is not included in Chapter 1, devoted to the sources. Within less than 60 pages, he makes an attempt to update the bibliography by Kornel Michałowski, which already in 1969 was 268 pages long! Thus, Jaeger's bibliography inevitably constitutes a selection of topics limited to three research fields: Chopin's work, its interpretation and recordings. In the first part, under the general title 'Technique, Style, Analysis', the author presents a choice of topics related to Chopin's work (agogics, fingering, dynamics, harmony and tonality, melody, rhythm and pedalling), including unrelated performance issues: the problem of Chopin's rubato, the scores of Chopin's students with the composer's handwritten annotations and Chopin as an improviser. He presents a bibliography of analyses of Chopin's works only from the angle of Heinrich Schenker, devoting much space to digressive topics, including his correspondence. Doubts are also raised by the selection of the bibliography that covers the question of Chopin's style. Jaeger distinguishes between the categories of Chopin's teachers and predecessors, but then mixes them up, listing composers with some personal connection to Chopin

with those who had a major influence on him, such as Bach and Hummel, with separate categories for figures who remained somewhat in the background, such as Ries and Kessler. Jaeger gives the bibliography on the genres and individual works of Chopin in the previous chapter, devoted to sources, without any cross-referencing. The reader must therefore guess where to look for information of interest. Relatively little attention is paid by Jaeger to the bibliography of editorial issues. Moreover, while discussing the bibliography of Chopin's works, he does not mention at all the compendiums, catalogues and bibliographies of his works. In his bibliography, Jaeger also completely omits not only general publications on Chopin's life and work (supplementary literature), but also studies on documents (collections of memorabilia, exhibitions, letters, diaries and memoirs) and sources concerning his life (chronicles, calendars, genealogical records and biographies). He gives some information on the bibliography concerning Chopin's contemporaries and his circle of friends only in the dedication column in Chapter 1. However, the figures from Chopin's circle who did not get a dedication were unfortunately not presented in the bibliography. Jaeger also omits another, extremely important topic, namely, Chopin and pedagogy, which has had a rich literature since Jan Kleczyński (1869). He only mentions Chopin's *Esquisses pour une méthode de piano* when alluding to the sources of his *Trois nouvelles Etudes*. Jaeger does deal with the bibliography of the student scores with the composer's handwritten glosses, referring mainly to the flagship study *Chopin vu par ses élèves* by Eigeldinger (1970 and subsequent). However, he does not devote any attention to Chopin's students, despite the fact that there have been many studies on this topic. Jaeger does not deal at all with Chopin's presence in other arts, although there is a wide literature on references to his work

5 Zbigniew Czeczot and Andrzej Zacharias, 'Comparative Graphic Expert Examination of Four Specimens of Letters Allegedly Written by Frederick Chopin', tr. Patricia Mroczyk, *Chopin Studies*, 1 (1985), 157-163; Lucjan Fajer, 'Chopin's Letters Allegedly Written to Potocka: Statement by Expert', tr. Patricia Mroczyk, *Chopin Studies*, 1 (1985), 153-156; Mateusz Gliński, *Chopin. Listy do Delfiny* [The letters to Delfina] (New York: Międzynarodowa Fundacja Chopinowska, 1972); Adam Harasowski, 'Fact or Forgery?', *Music and Musicians* (1973), 247; Wojciech Nowik, "'Delfina dispute' in Recent Years", tr. Patricia Mroczyk, *Chopin Studies*, 1 (1985), 173-179; Edward Rudzki, *Delfina Potocka* (Warsaw: Novum, 1990); Jerzy Maria Smoter, 'Spór o "listy" Chopina do Delfiny Potockiej' [The dispute over Chopin's 'Letters' to Delfina Potocka], *Biblioteka Chopinowska*, 11 (1967, 1976); Ryszard Soszalski and Władysław Wójcik, 'Examination No. ZKE-P-2871/74 of Frederick Chopin's Letters to Delfina Potocka', tr. Patricia Mroczyk, *Chopin Studies*, 1 (1985), 165-171.



in literature, theatre, film and fine arts. His publication also lacks any bibliography on the much-discussed popularisation of the composer's works (the history of festivals, competitions, Chopin societies around the world, congresses and conferences). He deals only with a single narrow form of popularisation: sound recordings. He also completely ignores the subject of Chopin periodicals and serial publications, as well as the extensive work on contextual research in recent decades. There is a rich literature on Chopin in social and interdisciplinary contexts, including gender studies, but none of this is referenced in Jaeger's catalogue. As a result, the bibliography represents only supplementary material and not a compendium covering the subject as a whole. Moreover, the inconsistent manner of presentation, scattered over many passages, makes it difficult for readers to use this catalogue. The part of the bibliography concerning the sources as well as the genres and forms practised by Chopin is included in Chapter 1, while the second part (the main bibliography) is in Chapter 2. The third part is to be found in Chapter 3 – in the preliminary catalogue of the Milanese and Swiss first editions of Chopin's works, and the last part (the appendices, which are not arranged according to subjects and constitute a supplement to Chapters 1–3) appears at the end of the publication as a kind of quasi-errata. While providing Chopin's bibliography in the main Chapter 2, Jaeger also makes no mention of the reception of his works at all. This topic is presented in a dispersed form in the appendices: a bibliography of the topic of Chopin reception in Italy and its influence on Italian piano music is to be found in the preliminary catalogue of the Milanese and Swiss first editions of Chopin's works (Chapter 3), and the bibliography of the reception of the first editions of Chopin's works at the end of the entire catalogue (in Appendix 2). The indexes at the end of the book are also arranged in a similarly

dispersed manner, with the personal indexes of editors, engravers, lithographers, persons and pianists presented separately, instead of combined into a single whole as a general index of persons. As a result, it is extremely difficult for the reader to find an interesting column.

The preliminary catalogue with the description of the Milanese and Swiss first editions of Chopin's works, contained in Chapter 3, is the most valuable part of Jaeger's book, and would fare best as a stand-alone publication. The author mentions here the Milanese editions of Epimaco et Pasquale Artaria and Ferdinando Artaria et fils (1835–1837), Francesco Lucca (1836–c.1863), Giovanni Canti (1837) and Giovanni & Tito Ricordi (1839–1865), and the Swiss editions of Friard Larpin (1837–1838) in Geneva, as well as Carlo Pozzi (1837/1838–1844) and Achille Bustelli-Rossi (1858) in Mendrisio. Jaeger presents not only the exact content of the covers of the Milanese editions, indicating their physical features, repository and date of publication, but also precedes them with a short introduction on the history of the editions of Chopin's works issued by each of the companies. At the end of the volume, he focuses on the bibliography of Chopin's reception in Italy and the composer's influence on Italian piano music in the nineteenth century. Chapter 3 ends with synoptic tables giving the chronology of the Milanese and Swiss editions of Chopin's works.

The last part of the catalogue consists of appendices. They are presented in the following order: the dating of the French prints on the basis of the *Régistres du Dépôt Légal* in the Bibliothèque nationale de France; a 20-plus-page bibliography of the reviews of Chopin's first editions by his contemporaries (the proper place for this would be in Chapter 2 under bibliography); the dating of Chopin's works in handwritten dedications; a list of the first editions of Chopin's works preserved in

Swiss libraries (in Basel, Geneva, Lausanne, Neuchâtel, Rapperswil and Zurich); a list of Chopin's autographs dated in his hand. Here too, the order of the appendixes seems to be random.

To sum up, Jaeger's catalogue is an ambitious attempt to arrange in a single volume, of relatively modest size, on one hand the basic information on manuscript sources, first editions and Chopin bibliography, and on the other hand, in-depth descriptions of the first editions in Jaeger's private collection, as well as Italian and Swiss first editions of Chopin's works. The volume is supplemented by a number of appendixes, some more related to the topic than others. Both the selection of primary sources and their rudimentary descriptions, combined with a manner of arranging the material that makes it difficult to access a range of information, makes the catalogue more a valuable supplement to the comprehensive compendiums published so far by his predecessors and contemporaries (Kobyłańska, Chomiński & Turło, Michałowski, Rink & Grabowski, and others) than a stand-alone catalogue.



## KAMILA STĘPIEŃ-KUTERA

Poznańskie Studia Polonistyczne  
Seria Literacka 41 (61): *Chopin. Dźwięk przed słowem* [Chopin: sound before words]  
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It seems that never in the history of Chopin studies have so many scholars explored the composer's relations with literature, as broadly conceived, from so many different perspectives. Previous takes on the subject have tended to be fragmentary contributions rather than monographs, and this is no doubt appropriate to such an exceptionally multi-faceted area, if we take into account all its possible meanings. After all, we can refer to Chopin's own education in the history of literature, to his knowledge

<sup>1</sup> A Polish version of this review is being published in parallel in the periodical *De Musica. Copernicus*, 2022/1.

of literary masterworks and the literature of his times, to his presence in literary milieux, first in Warsaw and later – on one hand in prominent literary salons and on the other through the intermediary of George Sand – in Paris (the heart of artistic Europe at that time), to his poetical tastes, partly concealed, we may assume, in his songs, to the reception of his life and work in literature, and finally to Chopin as himself a man of letters, including not least the literary qualities of his letters.

Until very recently, essentially throughout the whole of the last century, the composer's biographies were dominated by the conviction that Chopin did not show any particular sensitivity to the written word – be it in verse or in prose. The foundations for such a judgment were laid in 1852 by Franz Liszt, who in his extensive essay on Chopin emphasised several times the Polish composer's indifference to the cultural life going on around him, as well as to social and political affairs. In 1891 the prominent literary historian Bronisław Chlebowski declared that the bookcase in Chopin's Paris apartment served a purely decorative function. Ferdynand Hoesick, defending the composer against such extreme opinions, nevertheless admitted that Chopin 'took little interest in anything not connected to his speciality, that fell outside its scope. Hence his relative indifference to literature and learning, to painting and sculpture, and even to the theatre, to say nothing of political discussions. He had an excellent memory for everything he had learned at school, but that was where his general education ended'. During the second half of the twentieth century, Władysław Tatarkiewicz reiterated that thesis even more forcefully, opining that Chopin was indifferent to 'everything not directly connected to music'.

A similarly ruthless approach was taken to Chopin's correspondence, which was denied any aesthetic qualities whatsoever. In 1904, when publishing a selection of

Chopin's letters, Mieczysław Karłowicz warned his readers in his preface: 'Since the only thing of worth in the papers reproduced here is their *content* [Karłowicz's emphasis], I do not consider it an error to change the orthography to present-day usage. I would not venture to do this if I were publishing the letters of some outstanding writer, in which the *form*, not just the *content*, might be of interest'. Almost a hundred years later, even Ryszard Przybylski, reading Chopin's letters particularly closely, noted: 'The world of Chopin's letters is not [...] the world of the literary text. It is still the world of his everyday life'. Among Chopin scholars, we can still find individuals convinced that it is wholly inappropriate to value Chopin's correspondence on a par with the letters of Zygmunt Krasiński, for example, or Cyprian Kamil Norwid, and who declare that Chopin's letters were simply a pragmatic tool for communicating with his loved ones.

Yet the last two years have brought an unexpected (albeit thanks in part to long-term efforts to form a sort of Chopin alliance between linguists and literary scholars, on one hand, and musicologists and music theorists, on the other) but *bona fide* explosion of interest in Chopin's literary connections, understood in various ways. Particularly important events in this area included the symposium devoted to research into Chopin's correspondence organised as part of the 4th International Chopin Congress *Through the Prism of Chopin. Reimagining the 19th Century*, in December 2021, as well as the publication, three weeks later, of the volume *Chopin. Dźwięk przed słowem* (Chopin: sound before words), in the series *Poznańskie Studia Polonistyczne*, which is the subject of the present text.

This volume is divided into four sections. The first, focused on reading Chopin's letters from the perspective of their form and the meanings they bear (in other words, with the kind of precision we would apply to

reading literature), opens with Aleksandra Świtka's study 'Ciało fortepianu – artykulacja doświadczenia cielesnego w korespondencji Fryderyka Chopina' ('The body of the piano: the articulation of bodily experience in the correspondence of Fryderyk Chopin'), in which the author effectively debunks the established stereotype of Chopin as an almost bodiless, *élite* musician of the salons, pointing to numerous witty passages from the composer's letters about his own corporeality.

Particularly striking is the second article, Karol Samsel's excellent piece entitled 'Literackość korespondencji Fryderyka Chopina' ('The literary qualities of Fryderyk Chopin's correspondence'), where the author demonstrates, with admirable panache, features in our composer's writing that are reminiscent of the comic playwright Aleksander Fredro. The excerpts from Chopin's letters picked out by Samsel (such as this: 'some old German countess with a big nose and a physiognomy full of holes, daintily holding up her dress (as was the old custom) with two fingertips, with her head turned stiffly toward her dancing partner, such that the bones stuck out from the neck wherever they could, *minced* some bizarre waltz steps on her long, spindly legs') make one wonder how we could have failed to notice this feature in Chopin's turns of phrase.

This group of articles also includes a text by Ewa Hoffmann-Piotrowska, who offers a penetrating analysis of the relations between Chopin and Zygmunt Krasiński, all but ignored to this day.

The second part of the book contains a German translation of Norwid's poem 'Fortepian Szopena' (Chopin's piano) by Rolf Fieguth, a Slavic and literary scholar who translates from Polish, Russian and French, and has introduced such works as Norwid's *Vade-mecum* and Gombrowicz's *Transatlantic* to German readers, as well as Myrosław Trofymuk's essay, penned in a personal tone, showing Chopin's influence

on the work of the poetess Lesya Ukrainka, and the inspirational article 'Frédéric Chopin, entre exacerbation romantique du modèle vocal et innovations percussives: une mixité dynamique' by the composer Martin Laliberté, an expert on modern music technologies, demonstrating the singular balance between the almost vocal melodic writing and percussive rhythms that characterise Chopin's work.

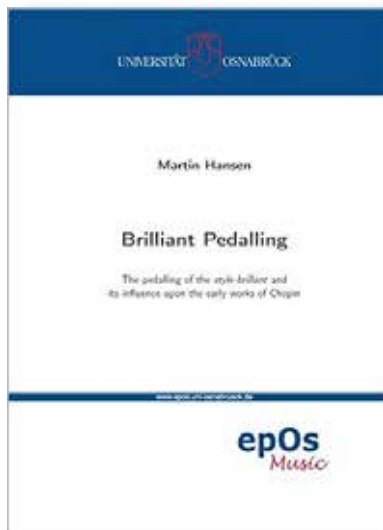
The third group of articles focuses on the reception of Chopin's output. They include Renata Stachura-Lupa's valuable text 'Galicyska recepcja Chopina. W kręgu Marceliny Czartoryskiej i Stanisława Tarnowskiego' ('The reception of Chopin in Galicia: in the circle of Marcelina Czartoryska and Stanisław Tarnowski'). Written with feeling and expertise, this article reveals certain features of the personality of Princess Czartoryska, one of Chopin's last pupils and at the same time one of the most active propagators of his pianism after the composer's death, and gives an even better presentation of Stanisław Tarnowski, who, drawing knowledge from the princess, attempted in his own texts and utterances to sketch a psychological portrait of Chopin. After reading Stachura-Lupa's study, one may indeed conclude that he did so with considerable sensitivity.

Joanna Zajkowska offers an absorbing account of Chopin's image in nineteenth-century literature for children, while Wiesław Mateusz Malinowski concentrates on literary portraits of the composer in the works of French writers. The latter is an incredibly interesting text, since the author does not confine himself to examples from the works of George Sand and Marcel Proust, encountered often enough in various publications, but includes in his survey Maurice Rollinat, Anna de Noailles, Edmond Rostand, Serge Gainsbourg, Marie-Véronique Gauthier and Éric-Emmanuel Schmitt. Far from merely cataloguing Chopin's presence in novels or poems

written by those authors, Malinowski subjects their reception of Chopin and his work to interpretation, as well as tracing the distinct tendencies that appeared in connection with a particular representation of Chopin at a given moment in history (Proust's personal Chopin, a sort of alter ego of the writer; the national and patriotic Chopin of the neoromantics on the eve of the First World War; the trivialised Chopin, whose music serves as the basis for pop songs that at times are poles apart from the original expressive character of the music; Chopin as a teacher of life and love in the prose of Schmitt).

Finally, the fourth part of the volume comprises articles that focus on specific literary works inspired by Chopin's music. Aleksandra Sikorska-Krystek and Jędrzej Krystek write about Artur Oppman, Augustin Voegele considers André Gide's comparison of Chopin with Baudelaire, Karolina Orłowska explores Cezary Jellenta's vision of Chopin, and Maria Jolanta Olszewska discusses Stanisława Fleszarowa-Muskat's play *Ostatni koncert* ('The last concert'), based on the farewell concert given by Chopin in Warsaw before he left Poland. This excellent issue of *Poznańskie Studia Polonistyczne* concludes with a profile of Piotr Wierzbicki's Chopin-related essays drawn by Dobrawa Lisak-Gębala.

The field of Chopin studies is seeking new paths. Interdisciplinary studies, enabling various fields of learning to shed light on issues crucial to one another, have been successfully pursued for some time. The intense recent interest in Chopin's legacy among scholars representing disciplines other than musicology and music theory, meanwhile, is a new trend, and one that has already brought interesting and significant results. There is no doubt that within the current of interdisciplinary research combining literary studies with Chopin studies, this volume of *Poznańskie Studia Polonistyczne* is one of the most notable achievements.



## DAVID ROWLAND

*Brilliant Pedalling. The pedalling of the 'style brillant' and its influence upon the early works of Chopin*  
Martin Sehested Hansen

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Much has been written about Chopin's pedalling, and we might well ask whether there is room for another volume on the subject. Martin Hansen answers that question with a book that provides a broad and extremely useful examination of early nineteenth-century pedalling along with a minute investigation of Chopin's early pedal markings.

According to Hansen, the context for Chopin's pedalling is the *style brillant* of the early nineteenth century, the style developed by the likes of Dussek, his contemporaries and successors, which found its mature manifestation in the performances of pianists such as Hummel, Moscheles and Kalkbrenner. The style is transitional, lying between the emergence of true pianism – as opposed to the

hybrid harpsichord/piano style of the late eighteenth century – and the more modern style that emerged in the middle of the nineteenth century. Hansen contrasts the pedalling style of the *style brillant* with the style adopted by most modern pianists. He describes how the sustaining pedal was used in the early decades of the nineteenth century in the context of a generally unpedalled approach, whereas modern pianists use more or less continuous pedal. He points out that while the proponents of the earlier pedalling style used the pedal for sustaining bass notes, for arpeggios and to expand the expressive capabilities of the piano, it was not routinely used for legato. Inevitably, individual pianists such as Hummel and Kalkbrenner used the pedals during this period to differing degrees (Hummel conservatively and Kalkbrenner more liberally), but the overall approach of both was fundamentally different from that of their modern counterparts.

Having thoroughly reviewed the secondary literature, Hansen sets out the parameters of his study before embarking on a description of piano tutors from as far back as C. P. E. Bach (1753), through his detailed discussion of the key accounts of pedalling in works by Milchemeyer (1797), Adam (1804), Müller (1804), Steibelt (1810), Starke (1819), and others. This is probably the most thorough examination of the evidence of the early nineteenth-century tutors that there is, even though the author is going over well-trodden ground. The descriptions of pedalling in these tutors are certainly of use, but there are nevertheless shortcomings in it; authors tend not to go into great detail about matters of technique, and there are biases in what they have to say. Further important information has to be deduced from the musical scores themselves, and this is where the book covers newer ground with its extensive and detailed examination of selected musical publications. The discussion begins with the three volumes of Clementi's *Gradus ad*

*Parnassum*, published in 1817, 1819 and 1826. Hansen's approach is systematic. Critically, he reviews the precise placing of the pedal markings in the printed text. Clementi, of all early nineteenth-century composers, was about as precise as it was possible to be with the placing of his pedal markings, notwithstanding the fact that the term 'Ped' has little or no capacity to indicate the precise moment at which the pedal should be depressed. Of arguably greater use is the pedal release sign (\*), which is often placed by Clementi at the beginning of a bar, or system, suggesting a knowledge of syncopated pedalling that is also found in other musical texts of the period.

Having looked at the means of notating pedalling, Hansen goes on to discuss some other general issues. One of those is the extent of the similarity in pedalling of analogous passages within individual studies that form the content of the *Gradus*. This raises some important questions. In particular, should similar passages be pedalled in the same way each time they occur? Are differences in similar or identical musical texts explained by inconsistencies in the composer's notation (or in the engraving process – a matter which Hansen perhaps should have examined in more detail, notwithstanding the difficulties of doing so in the absence of an autograph)? Or are the differences sometimes intentional?

Another general issue concerns the prevalence of so-called 'finger pedalling' in Clementi's music, meaning held notes and chords sustained only by the action of the fingers, not by the pedals, for which a particular kind of notation was used. There then follows an examination of Clementi's pedalling under more specific headings such as scales, passagework, octaves, various accompaniment figures, melodic lines in the upper registers, chordal and homophonic writing, repeated notes, tremolos and trills, arpeggios, the blurring of harmonies and spatial effects.

Having examined Clementi's *Gradus* for some 20 or so pages, Hansen draws a variety of conclusions, underlining the relative conservatism of Clementi's approach, but also his care and attention to detail. These features of Clementi's writing have been observed by other authors, but the evidence for them has not been documented in similar detail elsewhere.

I labour the discussion of Clementi's *Gradus*, not because it is more extensive than that of other early nineteenth-century figures, but because it epitomises the approach taken in this book. Systematising the discussion in this way certainly clarifies the issues, although wading through the detailed argument at times becomes somewhat overwhelming. But it is nevertheless invaluable for anyone undertaking a serious study of Clementi's music.

A similarly rigorous discussion of pedalled music from didactic sources follows, including Hummel's piano tutor, Czerny's Op. 500, Moscheles's Op. 70, Kalkbrenner's piano method, and Herz's Op. 21 and *Méthode*, leading to a comprehensive view of pedalling patterns in music by *style brillant* composers. Although the discussion inevitably focusses on printed sources (because the composers' manuscripts have not survived), a pattern emerges which defines the main pedalling characteristics of the style. What is perhaps less useful, but is included nevertheless, is an account of pedalling pedagogy for the rest of the nineteenth century, through later figures such as Wieck, Kullak and the authors of specialist pedalling methods like Schmitt, Lavignac and others. These later specialist publications include works by authors who were so disillusioned with the method of notating pedalling that they invented their own system for doing so. However, while their new systems had their individual merits and demonstrate how far the technique of pedalling had come by the end of the nineteenth century, they never

became commonplace and largely fell out of use within a few decades. But if nothing else, they emphasise the gulf that separates the pedalling of pianists in the *style brillant* from those who came later.

For the sake of completeness, Hansen also reviews a number of other, later piano methods and comments on reviews of published music, concert reviews and any other literature he can lay his hands on, and a whole chapter of nearly 200 pages is devoted to a survey of pedalling in works that Chopin is known to have played. While the discussions are useful and show how close Chopin was to the *style brillant* in his formative years, they generally add little to what we learn from the didactic literature and the discussion of musical texts reviewed earlier in the book.

All of the above paves the way for a review of Chopin's pedalling as evidenced in his works up to the mid-1830s. The clear message of this chapter is that Chopin was the inheritor of the pedalling style adopted by the composers of piano music in the *style brillant*. Such findings are potentially controversial for modern pianists, who still have to make decisions about performing Chopin's music on pianos designed in a manner unknown to the composer and whose techniques have been shaped according to the capabilities of modern instruments.

Hansen emphasises the message of many writers on Chopin's music who have observed the composer's minute attention to detail in his pedalling, despite the challenges of using an inherently imprecise notation. He observes many of Chopin's notational habits, including his habit of notating the indication 'ped' to the left of the note or chord to which it applies (unless the constraints of space within the notation dictates otherwise). He addresses the issue of possible mistakes and omissions, as well as the question of pedalling for parallel passages, for which the pedalling notation is not necessarily identical. These

and many other questions are addressed with characteristic thoroughness and according to the methods laid out earlier in the volume. Having been a student of Chopin's notation and pedalling for a number of decades, I learned much and would recommend this book to any serious student of the composer's works.

Despite the obvious qualities of this volume, there were some omissions which I found a little puzzling. The discussion is more or less entirely focussed on the use of the sustaining pedal. This is understandable in one sense, because the overwhelming weight of evidence concerns this essential feature of nineteenth-century and modern pianos. But the so-called *una corda* pedal ('so called' because it is not possible on modern pianos to reduce to one string) barely features, and a pianist who plays Chopin's music nowadays could surely do with some guidance on its use (or omission).

Another omission that somewhat compromises the usefulness of the book is the absence of an index. Perhaps this is understandable, given the text's nature as a published doctoral thesis, but it would have been useful nonetheless to readers who want to dip in and out of it for information on a range of composers, which inevitably many pianists will want to do.

But these omissions should not detract from the real strengths of his book. It is well conceived and written, with a rigorous approach. It is copiously illustrated, so readers have no need to delve into online or paper libraries. The book is a very valuable addition to the literatures of pedalling and of Chopin performance and will be of use to scholars and practitioners alike.