

COLLECTION OF CRITICAL EDITIONS OF THE WORKS OF

*Fryderyk Franciszek Chopin*

No. 10

Polonaise Op. 44

*Introduction, Text, Fingering and Commentary*

*by*

*Franco Luigi Viero*

NEW EDITION COMPLETELY REVISED



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In the previous page: sculpture of Chopin's left hand carried out following the cast made by Jean-Baptiste Clésinger shortly after the death of the Composer.

## Foreword

*After the interruption imposed by the critical edition of the third Sonata, we now continue with this completely revised edition of the Polonaise Op. 44. With only the first three editions—French, German and English—available, establishing the text proved to be a complex undertaking. In the Introduction, we went into some detail in order to illustrate the procedure to be followed when an autograph is not available. All the principles of classical philology have been applied, with the difference that, whereas for a classical text—for example, a dialogue by Plato—the aim is to trace, through a collation of the available manuscripts, the earliest version, certainly not the autograph, when dealing with a nineteenth-century musical text, the editions of which are presumed to have had an almost direct relationship with the autograph, the aim is to recover the autograph text itself.*

*In the case of Chopin, who had to submit three antigraphs to the three publishers—French, German, and English—represented at times by a second and even a third manuscript, at times by a copy prepared by Fontana, Gutmann, or a third party, at times by the proofs of the French edition revised by the Composer—the recensio is no less complicated, albeit different, since it must take into account other factors, such as, for example, notational preferences, the continuous refinement of the composition even at the printing stage, and the inevitable copying errors—both the well-known errors that no copyist has escaped from antiquity to the present day, and those resulting from negligence—not only on the part of copyists and engravers, but also on the part of the Composer himself.*

*We hope that students, professional pianists, teachers, and musicologists will benefit from this new Chopin-focused endeavour of ours, the sole purpose of which is to honour the greatness of one of the most outstanding musicians of all time.*

*Dorno, April 2026.*



THE FIRST indirect reference to the *Polonaise in F# minor* seems to be contained in the letter to Fontana of August 20, 1841, towards the end: “In a few days I will send you a letter to Mechetti in Vienna, to whom I promised something. If you see Dessauer or Schlesinger, If you see Dessauer or Schlesinger, ask whether it is necessary to frank letters to Vienna.”<sup>1</sup> Some days later, on August 24, Chopin wrote to Fontana: “... No doubt you already know whether letters to Vienna should be prepaid. But if Dessauer has arrived, consult him, before posting my letter to Mechetti. It is a money-matter, so I should not like my letter to get lost somewhere in Austria; for you know how I love writing. I am offering him a new manuscript (a kind of polonaise, but it’s more a fantasia).”<sup>2</sup> In the letter to Mechetti, dated August 23, 1841, likely enclosed with the aforementioned letter to Fontana of August 24, Chopin writes: “Dear Mr. Mechetti, I currently have a manuscript at your disposal. It is a kind of fantasia in the form of a Polonaise and I shall call it a Polonaise. If the price of 25 louis for the German rights is convenient for you, please be so kind as to write to me, indicating the way you would like our reciprocal shipments to be made, as well as the publication date. Otherwise, please write to me anyway, so that I can dispose of my manuscript in another quarter.”<sup>3</sup>

On September 8th to Fontana: “[...] If you send [the *Tarantella*] to Wessel, ask him at the same time, whether he wants a new *Polonaise* – the one I am sending to Vienna [...].”<sup>4</sup> A few days later, on the 12<sup>th</sup>: “[...] As for Dessauer’s illusions about Mechetti, the other Viennese publisher, I had a letter from Miss Müller who tells me that he did not want to give Mendelssohn anything for a piece for that same album, for which I offered him the *Polonaise* [...].”<sup>5</sup> On September 13<sup>th</sup>: “[...] I received your letter this morning and Miss Müller’s letter telling me about the manuscripts for Mechetti [...].”<sup>6</sup> And on September 18<sup>th</sup>: “[...] be prepared to copy the polonaise for Mechetti (... *przygotuj si na przepisanie owego poloneza dla Mechettego*) [...].”<sup>7</sup> This last sentence

has been misunderstood by someone:<sup>8</sup> Chopin, in fact, does not say “copy the polonaise,” but rather “prepare to copy the polonaise.” And why? For the simple reason that Fontana did not yet have any manuscript! Within a few days Chopin himself would have delivered it to him.

As a matter of fact, Chopin had to return to Paris, mainly to take care of some business on behalf of Sand. He arrived there on Saturday, September 25<sup>th</sup>, at 11:00 a.m.,<sup>9</sup> and returned to Nohant either on September 30<sup>th</sup>,<sup>10</sup> around midnight, if he had left the day before, that is, September 29<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00 p.m.; or, if he had arrived in Nohant on the morning of the 30<sup>th</sup>, around 10:00 a.m., he would have had to leave on the evening of the 28<sup>th</sup>.<sup>11</sup> What business did he have to take care of? As for Sand, he was to meet her tenant, Jules Ajasson,<sup>12</sup> and, more importantly, try to resolve as best he could the dispute she had entered into with Buloz, who had not yet published ‘Horace,’ considering it too progressive.<sup>13</sup> As for himself, Chopin was to meet with Troupenas<sup>14</sup> and also with Schlesinger, who was to become his publisher for France once again.<sup>15</sup>

Before proceeding, however, we must dwell upon the dates of some letters. After personally delivering the manuscript of the *Polonaise* to Fontana,<sup>16</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Cf. *HN<sup>2</sup>* p. IV: “Chopin’s letters, however, allow us to ascertain that in the autumn 1841, while staying in Nohant, the country seat of his partner George Sand, he sent an autograph to Julian Fontana in Paris.”

<sup>9</sup> Cf. *KrFrCh* p. 443 (= *CFC* III, p. 78): “Here I am in rue Tronchet, arrived without fatigue. It is eleven in the morning. I am going to the rue Pigalle...”

<sup>10</sup> Cf. *ibid.* p. 447 (= *CFC* III, p. 79): “I arrived here yesterday, Thursday.”

<sup>11</sup> We can be very precise thanks to a detailed description of the itinerary that Sand sent to Delacroix on August 23, 1841, to convince him to accept her invitation, cf. *CGS* p. 405. — If Chopin had left on the evening of the 29<sup>th</sup>, he would have had the afternoon of the 25<sup>th</sup>, three days (from the 26<sup>th</sup> to the 28<sup>th</sup>), and the morning of the 29<sup>th</sup>; if, however, he had left on the 28<sup>th</sup>, his stay would have been two half-days and two days. But *v. infra*.

<sup>12</sup> Sand had rented her house on Rue de la Harpe to Jules Ajasson, who was causing problems with payments. According to Lubin (*CGS* p. 427), Chopin had the job of collecting 200 francs.

<sup>13</sup> The entire matter is fairly well outlined in M-P. Rambeau, *L’enchanteur autoritaire*, Paris 2005, p. 618 f.

<sup>14</sup> We know that the meeting was not with Troupenas or his associate Masset, but with Masset’s wife.

<sup>15</sup> For details, cf. on this site our article “For a correct *recensio* of Chopin’s *Polonaise* Op. 44,” p. 8 ff. ([www.audacter/AudChopinpo5e.html](http://www.audacter/AudChopinpo5e.html)).

<sup>16</sup> This is demonstrated by the following sentence (*KrFrCh* no. 373, p. 447, on October 1, 1841): “... do not

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *KrFrCh* p. 406.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *ibid.* p. 416.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *ibid.* p. 411; *KFC* II, p. 341.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *ibid.* p. 422.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *ibid.* p. 428.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. *ibid.* p. 435.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. *ibid.* p. 439. By “*poloneza dla Mechettego*” Chopin is referring to the polonaise, not the copy.

on October 5th Chopin prepared three letters: one to Schlesinger, in which he was offering him the Prelude (op. 45), one to Mechetti, which accompanied the delivery of the Polonaise, and the third to Haslinger.<sup>17</sup> On October 6th he sent Fontana two copies of the Prelude, one for Mechetti and the other for Schlesinger, with all the necessary instructions and enclosed the aforementioned letters. Having no more time to give further instructions (concerning the move to rue Pigalle) because the courier was arriving, Chopin wrote another letter, which he completed the following day, October 7th, at 2:30 a.m. On Saturday, October 9, he gave Fontana further instructions, warning him that around October 16, Sand's son, Maurice, passing through Paris, would deliver to him the manuscripts of both the Concerto (op. 46) and the Nocturnes (op. 48); but on Monday, October 11, Chopin wrote to Fontana that, since Maurice would no longer be passing through Paris, he would send him "the manuscript" (singular: *manuskrypt*) himself, adding that he did not know when he would return, and concluded: "Goodbye, my dear (friend), (see you) in a month (*Adieu, moje kochanie, może za miesiąc*)."<sup>18</sup> On the 18th, Chopin wrote: "Masset [...] could not, for instance, expect me to sell him 12 Etudes or a Piano-Method for 300 francs. The same applies to the *Allegro maestoso*, which I am sending you today. [...] Tomorrow you will receive the Nocturnes (*Jutro dostaniesz Nokturna*) and towards the end of the week the Ballade and the Fantasia [...] I will certainly be in Paris in the first days of November."<sup>19</sup> Notice that Chopin does not say "I am sending you (*posyłam Ci*)", but "you will receive (*dostaniesz*) the N.s tomorrow"; which means that they had been sent before October 18th with the letter mistakenly dated November 1<sup>st</sup>,<sup>20</sup> where you read: «[...] [...] I am sending you the two Nocturnes (*Posyłam Ci dwa nocturna*), and the rest on Wednesday." And here a difficulty arises, because at the end of the letter Chopin repeats: "You will receive the rest the day after tomorrow." If "the

hand over my Polonaise to Leo, even though you have already copied it." Fontana, in fact, could have only begun copying it on the day the manuscript was in his own hands, i.e. on September 25.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. *KrFrCh* pp. 455, 459 and 466 (the last one too likely dated October 5, rather than the 6<sup>th</sup>).

<sup>18</sup> This letter (*KrFrCh* no. 380, p. 483) is not included in *CFC*: it is undated, but the mention of the day (*Monday morning*) suggests October 11th.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. *KrFrCh* no. 381, p. 491 f.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. *KrFrCh* no. 386, p. 520 (*CFC* III, p. 91), where editor's notes 1 and 7 (ZH) contain an argument that is difficult to accept from a logical standpoint.

day after tomorrow" corresponds to the previous Wednesday, the letter should have been written on a Monday; of the four Mondays in October (the 4<sup>th</sup>, the 11<sup>th</sup>, the 18<sup>th</sup>, and the 25<sup>th</sup>), the 4<sup>th</sup> is excluded, as is the 25<sup>th</sup>, because the announced delay ("My departure is delayed: I shall not reach Paris until the 6th or 8th [November]") a few days before departure<sup>21</sup> is inadmissible; Sand indirectly confirms this, writing to Louis Viardot on October 17<sup>th</sup>: "[...] We start packing."<sup>22</sup> The 11<sup>th</sup> is the Monday on which Chopin announces that Maurice will no longer be going to Paris, and the 18<sup>th</sup> is the one on which he sends the *Allegro de concert*. November 1<sup>st</sup> is out of the question, since, in addition to what has already been reported, Chopin was travelling with his entire troupe (see note 21)! So, the logical conclusion available is that Chopin muddled the days:<sup>23</sup> he would have sent the *Allegro* "the day after tomorrow," and Fontana would have received it "on Wednesday"! Summing up, the letter dated November 1<sup>st</sup> is to be dated Saturday, October 16<sup>th</sup>. There is also a short letter, missing from *CFC*, dated October 20<sup>th</sup>, which fits in well with the others: Chopin confirms that he will certainly be in Paris between November 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>, and recommends Fontana to take care of his *Allegro*.<sup>24</sup>

And let us return to Chopin's brief stay in Paris. The aforementioned letter, which we have re-dated to October 16, is important because it certifies that Chopin had a conversation with the wife of Masset, Troupenas's partner, who had taken himself off: "As for the Prelude for Schlesinger's Album, I spoke to M<sup>me</sup> Masset the last time I saw her." As we have already mentioned, in addition to meeting Jules Ajasson<sup>25</sup> on Sand's behalf, he also had to negotiate a rather important business deal with significant financial implications.<sup>26</sup> This is testified by a letter from Pierre Leroux to George Sand: "Dear friend, yesterday Viardot and I spent a good part of the day dealing with the subject of your last letter:

<sup>21</sup> All six (Chopin, Sand, Solange, Alaphilippe, the servant, Pistolet and Jessy, the dogs) will leave on October 31<sup>st</sup>, cf. *CGS* p. 485.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. *CGS* p. 476.

<sup>23</sup> The manuscript, reproduced in *KrFrCh* (p. 522), reveals a certain good mood, but also considerable fatigue: he was probably happy to have finished copying the Nocturnes, but he was also exhausted.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. *KrFrCh* no. 383, p. 500.

<sup>25</sup> Lubin cites a letter by Ajasson, in which the latter confirms his meeting with the Composer: "I found Mr. Chopin in good health: it seems that the Nohant air is favourable to him," cf. *CGS* p. 428.

<sup>26</sup> *V. supra* n. 13.

your debt to Buloz and the rest. Viardot wrote to you about it, and, moreover, we spoke in detail with Chopin, who took over the commentary. [...] Our opinion, which is also Chopin's, is that you would be wrong to be against asking for a loan... Chopin told us that he could see two ways of contracting this loan without tormenting yourself. [...] Goodbye, dear friend, I can only write you these few words in a hurry, because I promised to deliver this letter to Chopin at 2:00 p.m. and I was only able to start at 1:30 p.m..."<sup>27</sup> An unsuspecting Chopin, financial advisor! Anyhow, the detail of the time allows us to reasonably believe that Chopin took the stagecoach on the evening of the 28th, not the 29th, and that, therefore, he arrived in Nohant on the morning of September 30th (*v. supra*). In short, Chopin spent the afternoon of the 25th in the rue Pigalle to prepare the new studio where he would give his lessons; on the 27th – as we have just verified – he negotiated the Buloz affair with Viardot and Leroux; the 26th and the morning of the 28th remain, when he was supposed to meet Ajasson and discuss business with Masset's wife and Schlesinger. Well, according to some, Chopin found the time to sit down at the piano and add the pedal to the manuscript of the Polonaise intended for Mechetti. A hypothesis that is not only naive, but also bizarre.

#### SOURCES.

No autograph is available.

**F1:** first printing of the first French edition (only one copy is known, missing the fourth leaf, containing pp. 5÷6, *cf. ACCFE* p. 345);

**F2:** second printing of the first French edition (*cf. ibid.* p. 346);

**A:** first Austrian edition (the second edition remains unchanged, as the only correction concerns the name of the French publisher: no longer Troupenas, but Schlesinger, *cf. ibid.* 346÷347);

**E:** first English edition (only one reprint of 1844 is known, *cf. ibid.* p. 349).

Chopin's pupils' editions must be added:

**TI:** *Collection | des | Œuvres pour le Piano | par | Frédéric [sic!] Chopin | 9 POLONAISES | 4.e LIVRAISON, PUBLIÉ [sic!] PAR T. D. A. Tellefsen, Paris (Richault) s.d. (ma 1860), pp. 60÷71.*

**Mk:** *Fr. Chopin's Pianoforte-Werke, revidirt und mit Fingersatz versehen (zum größten Theil nach des Autors Notirungen) von Carl Mikuli. Band 5. Polonaisen. Leipzig (Fr. Kistner, no. 5304) s.d. (but*

<sup>27</sup> *Cf.* Jean-Pierre Lacassagne, *Histoire d'une amitié*, Paris (Klincksieck) 1973, p. 135 ss.

1879 or 1880), pp. 46÷57. Copy provided by the British Library (shelfmark: *b.471.w*).

Ed infine:

**KI:** ŒUVRES DE FR. CHOPIN. | REVUES, DOIGTÉES ET SOIGNEUSEMENT CORRIGÉES D'APRÈS LES ÉDITIONS DE PARIS, LONDRES, BRUXELLES ET LEIPSIC | par Charles Klindworth | SEULE ÉDITION AUTHENTIQUE. Tome III, Moscou chez Jurgenson 1873. – We take the title from Tome II, containing opus nos. 12 to 21. The second edition (the one we consulted) grouped the works by genre. We are interested in emphasizing that, after the collection edited by Tellefsen, Klindworth's precedes all the others; its importance lies not in the text, but in the "interpretation" that he, as a pupil of Liszt and a great admirer of Chopin, gives of it. Liszt considered it the best possible edition.<sup>28</sup>

*BH<sup>cw</sup>*: *v. Bibliography.*

#### RECENSIO.

First of all, it is necessary to collate **F1**, based on a supposed Fontana's copy, with **A**, based on the autograph (*A*<sup>\*</sup>) sent to Mechetti with the letter dated October 5, 1841: "Dear Mr. Mechetti, I am sending you the Polonaise with its title."<sup>29</sup> We used the adjective 'supposed,' since the apparently negligible but numerous differences between **F1** and **A** are hardly attributable to Fontana. The suspicion that at least part of the manuscript delivered to Schlesinger was not Fontana's work is prompted by a recommendation Chopin makes to his old fellow student. In the aforementioned letter of October 20,<sup>30</sup> the Composer, after warning him to take care of the Allegro, adds: "Do not show it to Wolff,<sup>31</sup> "Do not show it to Wolff, because he always grabs something and prints it beforehand." Such a recommendation suggests that Fontana had shown the Polonaise to the crafty imitator. Wolff had already collaborated as a copyist,<sup>32</sup> but Chopin, browsing through compatriot's publications, must have noticed the 'imitations.' A second, not

<sup>28</sup> See, on this same site, our introduction to the edition of the Preludes, p. XII ff.

<sup>29</sup> *Cf. KrFrCh* no. 375, p. 459. Chopin writes in French *titre*, to be understood "title page," containing the name of the dedicatee.

<sup>30</sup> *V. supra* note 24.

<sup>31</sup> Édouard Wolff (1816-1880), a native of Warsaw, had studied composition with Elsner and from 1828 to 1832 had been in Vienna as a piano student of W. Würfel, whom Chopin greatly esteemed.

<sup>32</sup> We recall the letter of January 22, 1839: "My dear, I am sending you the Preludes. Copy them, you and Wolff..." (*cf. KFC* I p. 334; *KrFrCh* II.2, p.793).

indirect, clue is provided by mm. 262÷263: above the line, we read: “Tempo 1°. tempo di Pollacca” (later corrected in F2); Fontana would never have made such a spelling mistake. Fontana was overwhelmed with work at the time (Chopin’s new studio, his own move, manuscripts to copy, dealing with Masset, Wessel, Schlesinger, and other minor figures), so it’s entirely understandable that he would ask for help. Obviously, it’s not certain, but it’s highly likely that he did.

The clearest difference between F1 and A is that the pedal is missing in F1; the fact that it is only indicated in mm. 33÷34 of the Polonaise (shown on the right) and in the Mazourka, suggests a deliberate omission by the copyist for three probable reasons: (1) time was pressing, (2) the pedalling of the Polonaise did not present any problem and (3) Chopin could have added the pedal during the proofreading; in fact, that sporadic pedal in mm. 33÷34 seems to have been added by Chopin while proofreading (Fo\*). If this hypothesis could be confirmed, we could attribute the copy given to Schlesinger to Wolff, because Fontana would never have omitted the pedal.



#### THE AUTOGRAPH

By collating A and F1 the editor should, if possible, trace the structure of the autograph. From other manuscripts, we know that Chopin, to avoid rewriting identical measures, resorted to numbering and even double numbering.<sup>33</sup> Let us therefore note the similar measures. First, two large sections:

$$35 \div 77 = 268 \div 310;$$

more specifically (m. 17 is unique):

$$(17-)18 \div 23 = 43 \div 49 = 69 \div 75 = 276 \div 282;$$

(m. 78 is unique):

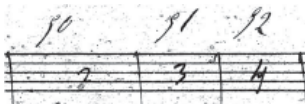
$$25 \div 26 = 51 \div 52 = 77(-78) = 284 \div 285;$$

$$79 = 80;$$

$$83 \div 84 = 85 \div 86.$$

Now we need to determine whether the collation allows us to determine which measures were rewritten and which were replaced by the number, which recalled the measures previously numbered.

<sup>33</sup> A good example is offered by mm. 66÷68 of the Polonaise Op. 26 no. 2:



Well, the collation indicates mm. 20÷22 = 46÷48 = 72÷74 = 279÷281 = 305÷307. Let us start with A:



M. 20: it is the only one in which the *appoggiatura* is slurred, and only here is a hairpin marked;  
 mm. 72 and 305: here the melodic line slur is missing, and m. 72 lacks the pedal;  
 m. 73: the pedal is missing;  
 mm. 48 & 281: the *seventh* is inserted in the first chord, as in the previous measure.

Hence, we can state that mm. 279÷281 were replaced by numbers that recalled mm. 46÷48. Likewise, if we ascribe the lack of the pedal in mm. 72÷73 to the engraver, mm. 305÷307 also recalled mm. 72÷74, not mm. 20÷22, because the two slurs and the hairpin we find in m. 20 are missing.

We can also assert that the *seventh* inserted in the first chord of m. 48 is a copying error by Chopin himself.<sup>34</sup>

And now let us move on to F1. If A and F1 have not been submitted to their respective proofreaders, the text of F1 should be identical to that of A. Possible differences can be attributed to the engraver, in the case of A, and either to the copyist (presumably Wolff according to our hypothesis) or to the engraver in the case of F1, either because they interpreted the autograph’s handwriting differently, or because they made the errors that every

<sup>34</sup> As Ekier also rightly recognized—unlike Müllemann (*HN<sup>2</sup>*)—, cf. *WN, Source Commentary*, p. 111.

copyist inevitably makes, Chopin included, as we have seen:

Here the pedal is missing everywhere;  
m. 20: compared to **A** the hairpin, the two slurs,  
and the # at the second  $A^2$  are missing;

mm. 46÷48: apart from the pedal, **A** and **F1**  
agree;

m. 72: compared to **A** only the # at the second  
 $A^2$  is missing; m. 73: like **A**; m. 74: like **A** but with-  
out ped.

mm. 279÷281: they copy mm. 46÷48;

mm. 307÷307: they copy mm. 72÷74.

The above not only confirms that mm. 279÷281  
and 304÷307 were replaced by numbers, but also  
that the insertion of the *seventh* in m. 48 (= 281)  
and the lack of the # at the second  $A^2$ , are oversights  
by the Composer. The # added to the second  $A^2$   
in **A** testify to the intervention of a proof-reader.  
As for the hairpin (m. 20), no longer repeated, and  
the slurs, no longer repeated, these are also defects  
in the autograph, which the copyist (Fontana, or  
rather Wolff) did not remedy.

From what has been said so far, with respect to  
the analysis we made in the cited article (*v. supra*  
note 15), where we hypothesized the invasive inter-  
vention of a pianist-corrector, the aforementioned

letter (not included in *CFC*) of October 20, 1841 (*v. supra* notes 24 & 31) and the publication of Friederike Müller's weekly reports,<sup>35</sup> where there is no mention of our Polonaise, allow us to attribute the differences between **A** and **F1** to the copyist's negligence and to Chopin himself; who, that summer, was getting ready the *Ops.* 43÷49: a great deal of work that could not fail to tire him, weakening his attention, which, according to the correspondence, was reserved above all for the *Allegro* (dedicated to Miss Müller). Certainly, the Austrian engraver could have done better, but the autograph must not have always been clear, especially in the pedalling. A small clue to the somewhat tired handwriting of the autograph is given by mm.

26 and 52 of **F1**:

in both the en-

graver read a ♪,

while in m. 52

the person preparing the copy for Schlesinger read

*tr.* The missing accent

and the slur suggest that

the engraver of **A** was

wrong; on the contrary,

the last two quavers of

m. 26 of **A** (a *sin.*)

have a staccato-dot, absent in **F1**. Two readers of

the same text, who, erring in different ways, allow

us to maintain that the autograph corresponded to

m. 26 of **A** and m. 52 of **F1**: two apparently similar

measures, where the last two beats require a com-

pletely different rendition.

But let us continue. The proofs of **F1**, which we  
call **Fo\***, were corrected by Chopin, who modified  
some passages; changes that cannot be considered  
*variae lectiones*.

M. 18: in **F1**  $C^{\#}$

is added to the last

four quavers. We

find this measure

again with no. 44. In

in both editions

(m. 18) the trill's

resolution is

missing, while in

**F1** (m. 44) a slur

is added to the

grace note; in **A** such a slur is marked only in m. 18.

In **A**, the twin measures 70, 277, and 303 are iden-

tical to m. 44, while in m. 277 of **F1** the grace note's

<sup>35</sup> *V. Bibliography* (G.-STR.[2018]).

slur is omitted; moreover, in m. 70 the Parisian engraver forgets to integrate the text (with  $C\sharp$ ), which will remain unchanged also in F2;

mm. 23÷24: Chopin, while proof-reading, add-

ed one  $D^5$  (r.h.) and two  $D^3$  (l.h.); but it should be noted that in A  $D^3$  of m. 23 is no longer repeated in the twin measures (49, 75, 282, and 308); which could confirm that the autograph was not prepared with the usual diligence; in fact, the three versions of m. 24 contain anomalies already present in the autograph. In m. 50  $D^3$  (l.h.) of m. 24 is missing, while in F1 the copyist (or the engraver?) makes a mess (not corrected in F2), and adds a  $D^3$  that should not have been added; twin m. 283 is, however, correct. The same goes for twin measures 76 and 309. In all these measures, the pedalling is rather undulating.

The other group of measures carelessly treated is that of the dotted rhythms in the *cantabile-sostenuto*, which Chopin, while proof-reading, modified; and these changes, too, are not *variae lectiones*.

In A mm. 27, 31, and 286 (*B flat minor*) are almost identical: the only difference is the position

of the vertical squiggle, which, in m. 27, precedes the grace note. The same is true for mm. 31, 57, and 290 (*A flat major*), with the difference that the grace note is slurred to the octave's lower note, and in mm. 57 and 290 the 2<sup>nd</sup> pedal is omitted. In F1, the first three mm. are almost identical, but, unlike A, they have a curved line in place of the vertical squiggle.

The second three mm., too, are not identical, because in m. 31 the grace note is tied to the main note. Hence: (1) the autograph's curved line disoriented the Viennese engraver who in mm. 27, 53, and 286 intended it as a vertical squiggle, while in mm. 31, 57 and 290 he intended it as a slur; (2) in F1 the tie was added by Chopin in proofs—presumably to be repeated in the analogous measures—, thus changing the execution of the *appoggiatura*; (3) the 2<sup>nd</sup> pedal of A (m. 31) must be reinserted in mm. 57 and 290.

M. 28 of F1 contains a typical copying error that was first noticed by Klindworth, followed by Mikuli, *BH<sup>cw</sup>*, and *PW*, but not by *EK*, *HN<sup>2</sup>*, *WN*, and *UT*. The last chord of the l.h., which repeats the previous one, is attributable to the engraver's carelessness. The correct reading is that of A. This is demonstrated by m. 32, where the last

quaver of the l.h. is an octave. Chopin intervened to modify the dotted rhythm of the first beat of the right h., so, pedal aside, the correct reading is that of F1. Incredible as it may seem, the same error is repeated in m. 54, as is demonstrated by m. 58; but

this time, to tell the truth, the carelessness is of the Composer himself. The simple octave, in fact, as

the last quaver of the l.h., gives greater dynamic effect to the liberating resolution of the following measure. Klindworth, the only one who has grasped the sense of the context, resolves the textual problem ingeniously, musically and pianistically impeccable, and perfectly Chopinian: his text

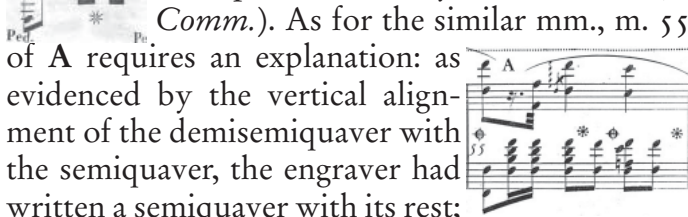
is reproduced here (on the right). It goes without saying that from a philological perspective, this is an unacceptable solution; however, it suggests a performance worthy of Chopin.



M. 29 and 33 differ in a confusing way: as for



m. 29, the confusion is resolved by **F2**, while in for m. 33 the addition of a slur (or a tie?) to the small note (but the pedal is also added) without erasure of the curved line specularly placed after the octave creates a performance problem, which in our opinion has only one solution (*v. Comm.*). As for the similar mm., m. 55



of **A** requires an explanation: as evidenced by the vertical alignment of the demisemiquaver with the semiquaver, the engraver had written a semiquaver with its rest; the corrector, however, convinced that here m. 29 should be re-proposed in a higher octave, added not only the 32nd broken beam and a dot to the rest—hardly attributable to Chopin—but also the vertical squiggle.

#### THE WESSEL EDITION (E).

Since Ekier (**WN**) and Müllemann (**HN<sup>2</sup>**) maintain that **E** depends on **F2**, we are forced to demonstrate the contrary. There are two measures that prove this incontrovertibly, i. e. mm. 91 and



100: in m. 91 the second group of demisemiquavers of the left hand is correct only in **F2**, while

**F1** and **E** contain the same error; similarly, in m. 100 the second quaver of the left hand is in **F2**  $A^3$ , while in **F1** and **E** is  $G^3$ . Now, whatever the cause of the error, it is quite clear that **E** does not copy **F2**. The corrections apparently deriving from **F2** were in reality made by Moscheles. This is proven by a letter first published by Kallberg.<sup>36</sup> On 2 November 1842 Moscheles wrote to Schlesinger: “[...] You will certainly recall that Chopin’s 6 compositions [*scil.* Opp. 44÷49], which you had brought to London and sold to Wessel, were previously corrected by me on the condition that W[essel] would give me 6 exemplars of each. You told me that this request had been granted. When I recently pressed W[essel] for that, he replied insolently that he owed me nothing, and that you would use my corrections and only later send him the corrected proofs for the engraver. Is that really so? [...]”<sup>37</sup> What had happened? Kallberg’s reconstruction is a bit fanciful.<sup>38</sup> Since all those proofs cannot be corrected in a day, we must presumably assume the following: Schlesinger mailed the proofs to Moscheles, agreeing on a delivery date; when they were ready, in early January, he went to London, picked up the proofs corrected by Moscheles, and sold the aforementioned compositions to Wessel.<sup>39</sup> But what proofs are we talking about? **F1**? No, we are talking about **Fo\***! When Chopin revised **Fo\***, he wrote out the corrections and changes onto a second exemplar, which Schlesinger sent to Moscheles, who, in turn, added his own corrections (nevertheless, not a few errors escaped his attention). Hence, Wessel, seeing that the proofs contained changes to the text—and therefore could not be by Moscheles—had an easy time claiming that Schlesinger had used Moscheles’s corrections. This was not true at all, because the proofs with

<sup>36</sup> Cf. KALLB.[1982] p. 134.

<sup>37</sup> The translation given *in extenso* (cf. KALLB.[1996] p. 211) is incorrect: “[...] When I thereupon asked W[essel] he told me impudently he was not liable to me for that, you had used my corrections, and he only sent additional corrected proofs to the engraver. Is it so?.” But the German original as Kallberg publishes it (*v. note 36*) says: “... du habest meine correctionen benützt, und ihm erst nachträglich corrigirte Abdrücke zum stecher geschickt,” where the subject of (*habest*)... *geschickt* (*habest*, moreover, is a subjunctive, not an indicative) is always *du*, not *he*, and the *additional* perhaps would like to translate *nachträglich* which links up with *erst* (‘only later’)!)

<sup>38</sup> Grabowski nicely defines it *rocambolique*, cf. GRAB.[1992] I, p. 88.

<sup>39</sup> The date of the contract signed by the parties is January 14, 1842, cf. *KrFrCh* p. 550 f.

Moscheles's corrections never came back to Paris. However, there was no way to prove the opposite; that is why Moscheles questioned Schlesinger, whose response, unfortunately, we do not know.

Let us return to the collation. If, for example, one compares m. 31 in E with F1 (*v. supra*, p. IXb), one will notice that the slur and the tie affecting the *appoggiatura* are missing. In m. 36, one can notice that in E the crotchet stem at the first F<sup>5</sup> is missing. The lengthening dots are also missing, which Moscheles will notice in the similar m. 269, while in F they are omitted; which proves that Moscheles's corrections were not used for F2. The last octave of m. 40 has no accidentals, because the engraver had omitted them in Fo\*. Such a tiny differences testify that, while making ready the second exemplar of Fo\* addressed to Moscheles in London, Chopin did not include all the corrections; perhaps knowing that his friend and colleague would review the proofs, weakened his attention. A few more examples demonstrate that Moscheles' corrections were not used for F. Compare mm. 16, 26, and 42:

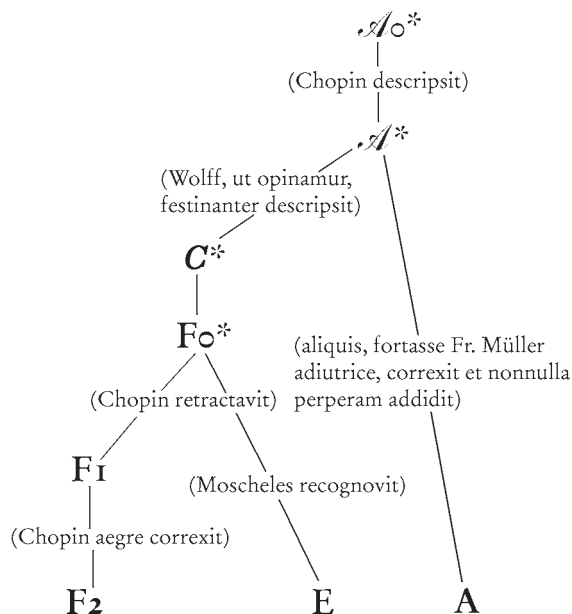


In E, we see the ♯ added to the penultimate octave of m. 16; in m. 26, the ♯ at E<sup>3</sup> is missing; the same goes for the ♯ at E<sup>2</sup> of m. 42 of E. All obliga-



tory accidentals which are ignored by F1 and F2. The above leads to a clear and indisputable conclusion: the antigraph of E was a copy of Fo\* corrected by Chopin and revised by Moscheles.

At this point, we can propose the *stemma*, or filiation of the sources:



In short: Chopin prepared A/O\* for Mechetti, copying, not without omissions and errors, A/O\*, the manuscript on which he had finalized the Polonaise. Wolff, in turn, prepared C\* with little diligence for Schlesinger.<sup>40</sup> Chopin revised the proofs (Fo\*), modified some passages (*v. Comm.* on mm. 142÷143) and made a copy for London, which Schlesinger sent to Moscheles. In December 1841, F1 was printed under no. 3477.<sup>41</sup> In early January 1842, Schlesinger travelled to London, collected the proofs revised by Moscheles, and delivered them to Wessel, who issued the aforementioned receipt.<sup>42</sup> The asterisk \* indicates unavailable sources.

The first announcement that the *Opp.* 44÷49 were for sale is found on the last page of issue 3 of the "RGM" of January 16, 1842, although on p. 539 of the same review from the previous year (issue 61 of November 28, 1841) the same *Opp.* ap-

<sup>40</sup> A not insignificant clue that supports our hypothesis comes from the letter Fontana wrote to Ludwika Jędrzejewicz, Chopin's sister, on July 2, 1852: "[...] When he was in Spain, in 1839 and 40, he [*sic.* Chopin] entrusted me with publishing all his existing compositions, sending me manuscripts that remain entirely in my possession to this day. At that time I published his Preludes, 2 Polonaises dedicated to me, the Tarantella, *Pièce de Concert*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ballade, 2 [*sic!*] Waltzes Op. 34, etc. [...]" (*cf.* M. Oliferko, *Fontana and Chopin in Letters*, Warszawa [Narodowy Instytut Fr. Chopina] 2013, p. 160). Note that the Tarantella (Op. 43) and the *Allegro de Concert* (Op. 46) are cited, but not the Polonaise Op. 44!

<sup>41</sup> Not in January 1842, as Müllemann says; in fact, the copy of F1 bears the year stamp both on the title page and on p. 1.

<sup>42</sup> *V.* note 39.

pear in the list of MUSIQUE POUR LES PIANISTES DE PREMIÈRE FORCE.<sup>43</sup>

For the more curious Reader, we offer the review by Maurice Bourges, a contributor to the “RGM”. In his column ‘Revue critique,’ he at times imagines himself corresponding with a Baroness of \*\*\*, whose daughter Brigitte, “although not yet able to read fluently, can decipher at first sight, reviewing them, all the masterpieces of the classical works.”<sup>44</sup> He thus comments on our Polonaise:

“The Polonaise in *F-sharp minor* is a brilliant piece and by no means easy. It requires uncommon power and clarity of execution. Everything must be rendered to perfection. Perhaps, Madame, after reading it or listening to it under Mlle Brigitte’s expressive fingers, you will think that the first six pages, though sparkling with melodic verve

<sup>43</sup> In the same month of January, both Mechetti’s edition (no. 3577) and Wessel’s (no. 5226, which in the 1851 reprint was corrected to 5296, cf. ACCFE p. 349 ff.) were published.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. “RGM” VIII (1841) p. 238.

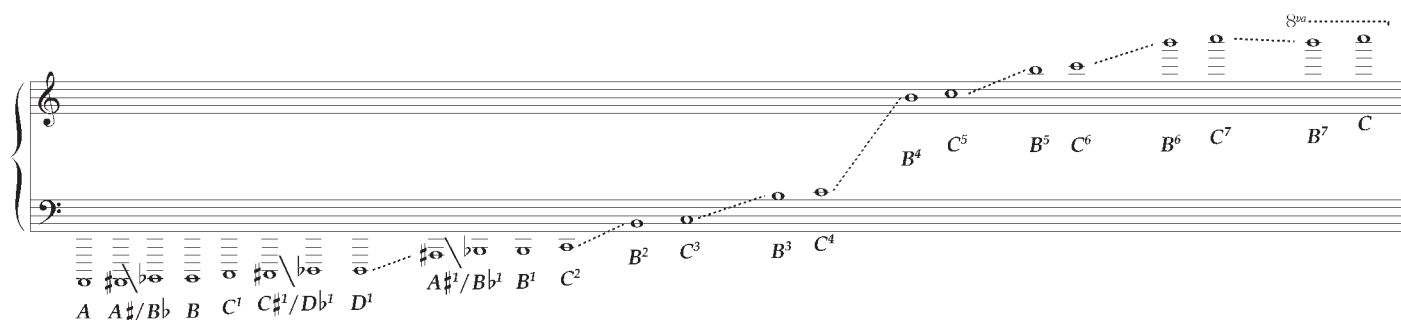
and rhythmic originality, contain a bit too many notes; one would be willing to do anything for a single pause. Therefore, it is with doubly pleasing that one welcomes the melody in *A major*, whose intriguing grace and youthful freshness create a delightful contrast with the strongly sonorous—and all equally sonorous—effects that precede and follow this melodic section, which is indeed rather extended, but which maintains a rigorous unity. This Polonaise is another enchanting composition, capable, like the Fantasia, of great effect in a spacious hall, something that cannot always be said of the works of M. Chopin, whose exquisite finesse of detail, the delicacy of certain forms, require a small, intimate setting where these lovely graces are not in danger of drowning and can be more easily appreciated.”<sup>45</sup>

<sup>45</sup> Cf. “RGM” IX (1842) p. 171 f. This excerpt is part of the fourth letter to the Baroness of \*\*\*, but it must be a careless error, since we searched for and found the first, cited in the previous note, and the second letter, but not the third!



*Ritratto ad olio della Principessa Charles de Beauvau née de Komar, cui è dedicata la Polonaise op. 44, eseguito da E. Hébert intorno al 1851.*

## Notes and keys



[To make a simple and immediate connection between the notes on the pentagram and the corresponding keys, we preferred a system of easy understanding for the piano student. Notes without number in superscript correspond to the few keys, which do not belong to full octaves and are at the ends of the keyboard; all the other notes are numbered from 1 to 7 depending on the octave (from C to B), to which they belong, from the lowest to the highest one.]

## Abbreviations & Bibliography

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- BH<sup>cw</sup>** *Fr. Chopin's Werke* (hg. von W. Bargiel, J. Brahms, A. Franchomme, F. Liszt, C. Reinecke, E. Rudorff – erste kritisch durchgesehene Gesamtausgabe), Band V (*Polonaisen für das Pianoforte*), Leipzig (Breitkopf und Härtel) 1878.
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- BROWN[1972]** MAURICE J.E. BROWN, *Chopin. An Index of His Works in Chronological Order*, Second, Revised Edition, London (Macmillan) 1972.
- CFC** *Correspondance de Frédéric Chopin*. Recueillie, révisée, annotée et traduite par BRONISLAS ÉDOUARD SYDOW en collaboration avec SUZANNE et DENISE CHAINAYE et IRÈNE SYDOW. ÉDITION DÉFINITIVE, REVUE ET CORRIGÉE, 1÷III, Paris ("La Revue musicale" – Richard Masse, Éditeurs) 1981.
- CFO** *CHOPIN'S FIRST EDITIONS ONLINE: [www.chopinonline.ac.uk/cfo/](http://www.chopinonline.ac.uk/cfo/)*
- CGS** George Sand, *Correspondance (avril 1840-décembre 1842)*, tome v. Textes réunis, classés et annotés par GEORGES LUBIN, Paris (Garnier) 1969.
- CPL** *Chopin's Polish Letters*, translated by DAVID FRICK, Warsaw (The Fryderyk Chopin Institute) 2016.
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- “RGM” “*Revue et Gazette Musicale de Paris*”, Paris 1834-.
- UT Frédéric Chopin, *Polonaisen*. Nach den Quellen herausgegeben und mit Fingersätzen und Hinweisen zur Interpretation versehen von Christian Ubbel, Wien (Wiener Urtext Edition) 2018.
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