

This study, after more than ten years by the appearance of our edition of *Polonaises*,<sup>1</sup> was spurred by a recent publication that has left us stunned, as it re-introduces errors and abuses, which we hoped not to see any more in an edition that should offer to pianists and musicologists the best that philology applied to musical texts can accomplish. We are talking about the *Polonaise fis-moll, Opus 44*, hg. von Norbert Müllemann, München (G. Henle Verlag) 2012. The young musicologist proves to ignore as philology is to be applied to *recensio* of Chopin's works, and most likely he is not familiar with the editorial habits of the Polish composer, and he does not possess an adequate training on Chopin piano playing.<sup>2</sup>

### THE TERMS OF THE QUESTION.

Since we have no autographs of the *Polonaise* Op. 44, two premises condition the *recensio*:

1. The first Austrian edition (A) faithfully reproduces the autograph sent to Vienna;
2. Fontana, a very meticulous copyist, prepared a copy of the autograph and delivered it to Schlesinger for the first French edition (F1).

But the collation of A and F1 detects many differences, the most striking of which is the lack of the pedalling, which is well indicated in A.

Now, since F1 is a document by its nature indisputable, logic dictates that one of two premises is inevitably wrong:

- (a) Either A does not faithfully reproduce the autograph;
- (b) Or Schlesinger was not given a copy written by Fontana (of course, we have to consider indisputable that Fontana made his job, as always, with diligence), but another autograph. *Tertium non datur*! It is a simple matter of logic: F1 cannot be with both premises.

The editor of the texts on the site *CFEO* (*v. infra*), the only one, apparently, who has realized the extent of the problem (other chopinologists, in fact, seem to well tolerate the most striking contradictions), suggested that Chopin added the pedalling to the autograph for Mecheti during his trip to Paris. But, first, this assumption is in total contradiction with Chopin's compositional habits, and, secondly, the correspondence suggests a hypothesis that would prevent such a solution; and thirdly, the composer would not have even had any time to sit at the piano and add the pedalling.

In our edition of the *Polonaises* (*see* note 1), taking for granted the premise 1., we were forced to assume that Schlesinger had received an autograph without pedalling, similar to the

<sup>1</sup> F. F. Chopin, *Polacche*, ed. crit. a cura di Fr. L. Viero, Corsico (Edizioni del Cygno) 2002, pp. 125÷151. Our edition, which currently remains the only true critical edition devoted to Chopin, contains inaccuracies: as for the *Polonaise in F# minor* this new study—waiting for a definitive edition—is intended as a substitute for the *Note* premised to the text (*cf.* p. 126f.).

<sup>2</sup> Henle's publishing house, for a very doubtful choice, has always entrusted the fingering of the keyboard works to a scholar different from the musicologist charged of establish the text. If such a choice is barely tolerable for any other author, it is not for Chopin. Indeed, it is absolutely necessary that the scholar who prepares the text, is also not only a pianist, but knows very well all aspects of Chopin's piano playing, starting with the fingering, which can not be excluded from the *recensio*, since in some cases it can resolve textual doubts. It is therefore terribly grotesque that an editor of Chopin gives up the analysis of both written and unwritten fingering. To give an inexperienced reader an idea of how grotesque is such a giving up, he ought to imagine a guy who, after having defecated, on the pretext of not seeing his own anus, calls another guy to clean it. Really grotesque, is it not? Well, any editor of Chopin, who accepts that another is concerned with the fingering, behaves from a philological point of view in the same grotesque way.

*Egerton* manuscript of *Polonaises* Op. 40. A chopinologist, who is among the best known and prepared, called our hypothesis *saugrenu*, that is preposterous. The most disappointing aspect of such a critique is stupidity. Whether this chopinologist is really stupid and, therefore, cannot understand the logical reasons for that hypothesis, or he wanted to look stupid, stupidity is the same: in the first case, innocent, in the second, guilty. If, in fact, a known and respected scholar can not follow, or pretends not to be able to follow a simple logical reasoning that even a child with a normal IQ can do, there is a communication problem and at the same time a social one, rather social class. Maybe academic chopinologists do not tolerate that a total stranger reveals their deficiencies, do they? The most obvious answer is “yes!”. But the worst consequence of this fact is that the first to suffer is precisely the object of our studies, *i.e.* Chopin! One of the reasons, because of which Chopin drew aside, was the intolerance to the stupidity of the world around him. And it still surrounds him ... The reader can verify how many nonsense are talked without shame.

So, stimulated, as we said above, by the aforementioned Henle edition, we have reviewed the whole issue again and came to the conclusion that it was a mistake to privilege the premise 1.: in fact, a painstaking collation of texts, examination of documents and biographical facts, suggest a different solution, by virtue of which all data are in harmony and support each other.

But let us come to the subject of our study, trying to get even the inexperienced but curious students to understand everything.

### THE SOURCES.

Since any manuscript of our *Polonaise* got lost, the only sources at our disposal are represented by the first editions:

- F1 first printing of the first French edition (there is only one known copy, whose the fourth leaf, containing pages 5 to 6, is missing, *cf.* Chr. Grabowski & J. Rink, *Annotated Catalogue of Chopin's First Editions*, Cambridge [Cambridge University Press] 2010, p. 345);
- F2 second printing of the first French edition (*cf. ibid.* p. 346);
- A first Austrian edition (the musical text of the second printing remains unchanged, since the only correction is the name of the French publisher: no longer Troupenas, but Schlesinger, *cf. ibid.* 346÷347);
- E first English edition (we know only a reprint of 1844, *cf. ibid.* p. 349).<sup>3</sup>

First duty of a philologist is to find out what kind of relationship links the sources.

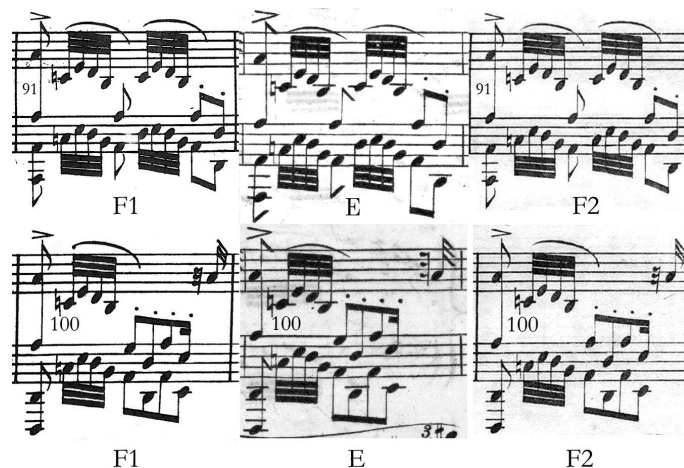
You do not need any collation<sup>4</sup> to determine that F2 depends on F1, and their differences are the result of two distinct, though contemporaries, corrective interventions by the author:

<sup>3</sup> In abbreviating the first editions we comply with the site *CFO* (see [www.cfo.co.uk](http://www.cfo.co.uk)). In classical philology almost never happens that different editors use different acronyms for the same codex, because it would create an unnecessary, not to say absurd, muddle. The aforementioned Henle edition, by contrast, opts for an even worse solution: the abbreviations vary according to reader's preferred language (English or German: the French readers have to be content with the *Préface*)! A part of the waste of space, it is a choice philologically meaningless and, therefore, decidedly deplorable.

<sup>4</sup> *Collation* is a term belonging to the philological lexicon and means “the act of collating; a comparison, esp. the comparison of manuscripts or editions of books”. Some chopinologists, would-be philologists, use the generic term *analysis*.

1. correction of engraving errors, 2. changes, *i.e.* additions and/or second thoughts, according to the well-known Chopin's custom in composing.

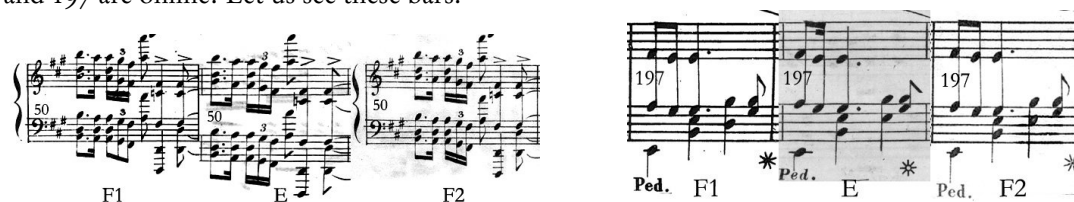
No difficulty, then, prevents from saying that the antigraph<sup>5</sup> of E was a copy of F1 containing handwritten corrections. This is clearly evidenced by mistakes made by the engraver of F1, corrected in F2, but transferred just so by the English engraver. Here are two examples:



Now, an inexperienced but smart student may ask both Müllemann and Ekier: “If the English engraver had before his eyes F2, how could he make the same mistakes I find in F1? Did he agree with his colleague in Paris by phone?” Therefore, the derivation of E from F1 is certain.<sup>6</sup> As for the hand-written corrections it would be legitimate to assume that they were the same pointed out by Chopin on the proofs for Schlesinger, and the composer himself or Fontana<sup>7</sup> or a Parisian publisher's co-worker reported on F1's copy addressed to Wessel. But a

<sup>5</sup> In modern philology the word *antigraph* refers to the model that a copyist, or engraver, has before his eyes, that is he is going to copy. The decked out chopinologists improperly use a German compound word, *Stichvorlage*, but the concept of model (*Vorlage*) is not a German invention.

<sup>6</sup> The Munich editor makes, here, the first of many errors. According to him, in fact, E would depend on F2: «F<sub>E</sub> was presumably engraved from proofs of F<sub>E2</sub>, at least in each case F<sub>E</sub> contains the corrected readings of F<sub>E2</sub> instead of the corresponding engraving mistakes of F<sub>F1</sub> (see comments on M 50, 197)», *cf. op. cit.*, p. 24f. Setting aside the illogicality, which emerges from the English translation—the German text is a little different—, the comments on bars 50 and 197 are online! Let us see these bars:



So, these bars would be the proof that E depends on F2, not F1. Actually, Müllemann did exactly the opposite of what both philological practice and logic have always taught: in fact, he sought the concordant corrections, which only prove that Moscheles corrected F1. In any case, he is in good company, because even the editors of the Polish national edition make the same mistake (*cf.* Fr. Chopin, *Polonezy*, Wydanie Narodowe, Kraków (PWM) 1995, *Source Commentary* p. 10: «EE [*scil.* first English edition] was based on FE2». However, these two bars—and Müllemann did not even notice it—show that Schlesinger did not bring back to Paris the proofs corrected by Moscheles and, therefore, Wessel behaved like a scoundrel against the latter (*v. infra*).

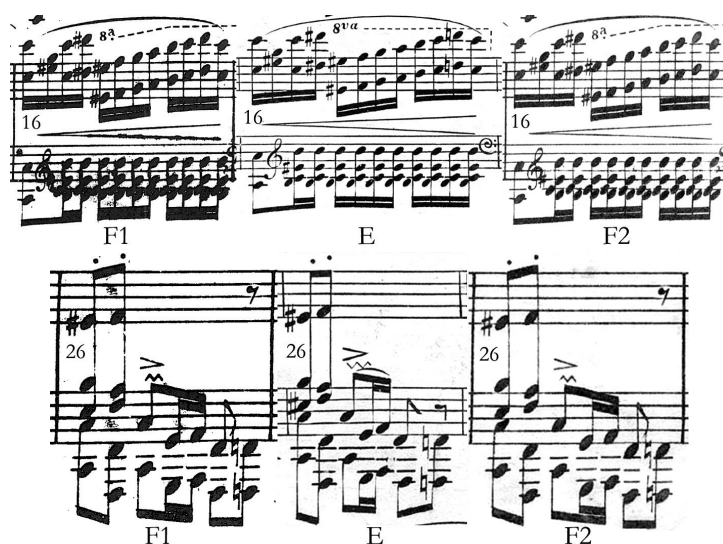
<sup>7</sup> On July 2, 1852 Fontana writes Ludwika Jędrzejewicz, sister of Chopin, a letter, where he remembers having collaborated in the publication of many compositions, but does not mention our *Polonaise*: «Maybe [Chopin] had occasion to relate you that for years after I arrived in Paris in 1835, he would always ask me to review, first, the manuscripts of all that he was publishing, because he would almost never deal with these trifles, and then to proofread. In 1839-1840, while he was in Spain, he entrusted me with the publication of all his recent compositions, sending manuscripts, which I still have in full (*Może wspominał Pani, iż przez wiele lat od przybycia*

Moscheles' letter seems to counteract this hypothesis: in fact, on November 2, 1842 the latter writes Schlesinger: «You certainly remember that the 6 compositions by Chopin [*scil.* Opp. 44 ÷ 49], that you had brought to London and sold to Wessel, have been previously corrected by me on condition that W[essel] should give me 6 copies for each. You told me this demand had been approved. When I recently pressed W[essel] for that, he answered me in an insolent way that he did not owe me nothing, and that *you* have used my corrections, and that only later you sent him the proofs for the engraver. Is this true?».<sup>8</sup> We do not know Schlesinger's answer, but we can answer. First, however, it is necessary to proceed in the collation.

Apart from the embarrassing correction of bar 98, which reveals a limited sensitivity to har-



mony, Moscheles added numerous both required and opportune accidentals, which were missing not only in F1, but also in F2. Here are just a few examples:

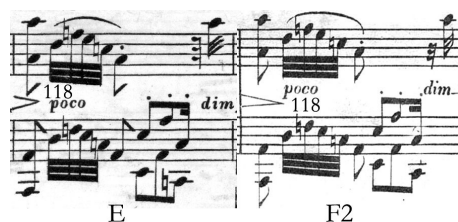


mojego do Paryża w roku 1835 ile razy co drukował, prosił mnie o przeglądanie naprzód manuskryptów, bo się temi drobniejszymi prawie nigdy nie chciał zajmować, następnie o korektę druków. Gdy roku 1839 i 1840 był w Hiszpanii, mnie polecił wydanie wszystkich ówczesnych kompozycji, przysyłając manuskrypta, które dotąd w całości posiadam. Wtedy ja wydałem jego Preludye, 2 Polonezy mnie dedykowane, Tarantelę, Pièce de Concert, Balladę 2<sup>ga</sup>, 3 Walzes op. 34. itd.)». This letter, which was summarized and partially quoted in M. Karłowicz, *Souvenirs inédits de Frédéric Chopin*, tr. par L. Disière, Paris (H. Welter) 1904, p. 205, is now published in M. Oliferko, *Fontana i Chopin w listach*, Warszawa (Narodowy Instytut Fr. Chopina) 2009, p. 150÷162.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. the original text of the letter in J. Kallberg, *The Chopin Sources*, Dissertation, Chicago, Illinois (1982), p. 134. The translation of the last sentence, given by Kallberg in *Chopin at the Boundaries*, Cambridge (Harvard University Press) 1998, p. 211, is not correct: «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...»; but the original text says: «... *du* habest meine correctionen benützt, und ihm erst nachträglich corrigirte Abdrücke zum stecher geschickt», where the subject of (*habest*)... *geschickt* is always *du*, then: «... and only later you sent him corrected proofs for the engraver...».



The fact that we cannot quote F1's bar 118, because it was in lost page 5 (*v. supra*), is insignificant here:



An odd case is represented by bar 40, where the English engraver omits the double sharp, clear in F1. May we think of an engraver's omission? It is not impossible, but it is improbable. What then had happened? Well, Moscheles, thinking at first that it was a chromatic scale, wanted to replace  $F \times$  with  $G \flat$ ; however, turning his eyes to the following line, he realized that the chromatic scale started again from  $G \sharp$ . The resulting inked scribble was interpreted as a



deletion of the accidental; on the other hand, in all similar bars (*cf.* 66, 273 and 299), the double sharp ( $\times$ ) is regularly signed.

Another special case is represented by bar 311:



Moscheles (E) mechanically affixed a  $\sharp$  to the first  $E$  of the upper staff (the one of the lower staff was already properly altered), but neglected to add a  $\flat$  before the second  $E$  on the same line. The Parisian engraver (F2), instead, seeing the correction (a  $\flat$ !), thought to be a mistake, since the  $\flat$  did not restore anything (the first  $E$  had no  $\sharp$ ), then he decided to change it to  $\sharp$ . If Moscheles had seen F2, probably would have had no difficulty to put the accidentals in their right place.

In summary—and this, for the time being, counts only for Op. 44—, in early January 1842<sup>9</sup> Schlesinger brought to London a copy of F1 without corrections and asked Moscheles to proofread it; then, he handed the corrected proofs to Wessel. As already Grabowski had suggested,<sup>10</sup> Wessel tricked Moscheles,<sup>11</sup> because Schlesinger did not bring back to Paris any corrected copy of F1: as proof of that it would be sufficient—as already observed in our edition—the only mistake of bar 100 in F1, that escaped Moscheles' attention, but was corrected in F2.

The above leads to a clear and indisputable conclusion: E is the apograph<sup>12</sup> of F1 corrected by Moscheles; therefore E should be excluded from the *recensio*. But, since the fourth leaf of F1 in the only specimen known to us—containing the bars 105 to 168—is lost, the editor of Chopin will collate, for this part, E too.

Before continuing, our attention should be paid to the correspondence, the relations with Troupenas, and the trip of Chopin to Paris.

#### CORRESPONDENCE.

Chopin's correspondence should be carefully examined, because in addition to many errors, the proposed dates, when you miss the postmark, require to be, where possible, verified. Moreover, the composer is not always reliable for three reasons: first, because events can take a different path from the one expected; secondly, because he is often repetitive, and he seems to say everything for the first time; and thirdly, wanting to look a certain way, he is not always straightforward with his recipients. This trend of disguising the reality, whatever was the reason, was definitely refined by living with George Sand, who for this matter deserved a professorship.

The first mention of the *Polonaise in F# minor* is in a letter dated August 20, 1841, incorrectly dated August 29 (No. 420):<sup>13</sup>

«Here then, I send you a letter for Bonnot [...] In a few days I shall send you a letter for Mechetti in Vienna, to whom I promised something. If you see Dessauer or Schlesinger, ask whether a letter to Vienna ought to be prepaid.»<sup>14</sup>

Here is the letter to Mechetti, which is not in *CFC*:

«Paris, 23 August 1841, 5, rue Tronchet  
Dear Mr Mechetti,

Right now I 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 Germany meets with your approval, have the goodness to

<sup>9</sup> The contract, signed by the parties, is dated January 14, 1842, cf. J. Kallberg, *The Chopin Sources* cit., p. [365].

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Krz. Grabowski, *L'oeuvre de Frédéric Chopin dans l'édition française*, Thèse de Doctorat en Musicologie présentée devant L'Université de Paris IV – Sorbonne, 1992, p. 918.: «Perhaps the argument of the British publisher... was only the fraud of a stingy merchant (*L'argumentation de l'éditeur anglais... N'était-elle pas seulement une ruse d'un marchand radin?*)».

<sup>11</sup> Still, in the new version of “*Chopin in the Marketplace*” (cf. *Chopin at the Boundaries* cit., p. 211), despite the contribution of Grabowski, who had forced him to change his reconstruction rather *rocambolique*, Kallberg insists: «Schlesinger's response to Moscheles's query is lost, but as curious as Wessel's statement sounds, he could well have been telling the truth», but see note 6, at the end.

<sup>12</sup> In philology is defined *apograph* the copy of the autograph (see n. 5).

<sup>13</sup> The original shows only “Friday, in the night”, but the 29th of August 1841 was a Sunday; anyhow, in the Polish edition of the Chopin's correspondence the date is correct. Also A. Hedley, in his *Selected Correspondence of Fryderyk Chopin* (New York-Toronto-London, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc, 1963), gives the correct date (cf. No. 169, p. 199). On the other hand, Kr. Kobylańska excludes this letter from its collection, cf. *Frédéric Chopin / Briefe*, hg. mit einem Vorwort und Kommentaren von Kr. Kobylańska, Berlin (S. Fischer Verlag) 1983.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. *Correspondance de Frédéric Chopin, III La Gloire*, par Br. Éd. Sydow, Paris (Richard Masse, Éd.) 1960, p. 68s.

write me a word, pointing the way you want to do the reciprocal dispatches as well as the date of publication. Should that not be the case, please write notwithstanding, so that I may otherwise dispose of my manuscript. I refer to your friendly souvenir.

Your  
Chopin.

A thousand and thousand fond greetings and respects to Mr Malfati [*sic!*] and his family.»<sup>15</sup>

On September 1 or 8, 1841, Chopin writes Fontana:<sup>16</sup>

«[...] If you send [*the Tarantella*] to Wessel, at the same time ask him if he wants a new *Polonaise*—the one I send to Vienna [...]»<sup>17</sup>

On September 12 (always to Fontana):

«[...] As for Dessauer's illusions about Mechetti—the other Viennese publisher—I have had a letter from Miss Müller, who tells me that he did not want to give Mendelssohn anything for a thing for that same Album, for which I offered him the *Polonaise* [...]»

On September 13 (14 of postmark), to Fontana:

«[...] This morning I received your letter and Miss Müller's. She writes about the manuscripts for Mechetti [...]»

On September 18, to Fontana:

«[...] and get ready to copy the *Polonaise* for Mechetti (... *i przygotuj się na przepisanie owego Poloneza dla Mechettego*) [...]»<sup>18</sup>

The warning here above is very important and should be carefully considered. As we mentioned above, there is no known autograph of this *Polonaise*, nor any copy. The scholars, who have dealt with the question, are convinced that Chopin posted his autograph to Fontana, so that the latter could copy it. Thus, the editor of the *Analysis of printed sources and the publication process* published on the site CFCO writes: «In his letter of 6 [*lege* 18] October to Julian Fontana, Chopin asked the latter to prepare a copy of the *Polonaise* for Mechetti». Similarly, Müllemann, even if he does not mention that letter (perhaps because it is not in the Kobiłańska's collection, see n. 13), in his edition's *Preface* writes: «No manuscripts of the *Polonaise* in f# minor have survived. Chopin's letters, however, allow us to ascertain that in autumns 1841, while staying in Nohant, the country seat of his partner George Sand, he sent an autograph to Julian Fontana in Paris».<sup>19</sup>

It is a wrong belief, caused by a superficial reading of the words of Chopin, who does not ask Fontana simply to *copy* the *Polonaise*, but rather to *get ready* to copy it. Why “get ready”? Because in a few days he himself would have delivered it by hand. Otherwise the expression

<sup>15</sup> Cf. *Korespondencja Fryderyka Chopina*, II, Warszawa (Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy) 1955, p. 341s.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. CFC III, p. 72.

<sup>17</sup> On August 24, 1841 (25 of postmark) Chopin asks Fountain to read, seal and deliver the enclosed letter for “Dr. Roth”: «[...] Go to Roth with the letter [...] If he tells you he can get the Tokay for me, find out at what price and let me know at once. I will send you the money, and instructions on how to ship this Tokay to Marseilles». Fontana, taking note on 27th of the new commission, may have immediately gone to Roth and posted on 28th the answer for Chopin, who received it on the 30th. Nevertheless, times are so pressed that the date of September 8 is perhaps more likely.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. KFC II, p. 37.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. *op. cit.*, p. IV. Müllemann, however, does not specify the letters, from which he derived such a deduction.

“get ready to copy” would make no sense. This is confirmed by the letter of October 1 (wrongly dated 30 September in *CFC*), 1841: «[...] I came here yesterday, Thursday. [...] do not hand over my *Polonaise* to Léo[n] (even though you have already copied it) [...]».<sup>20</sup> Again, Chopin’s words, written the day after his return to Nohant, would not make any sense: the concessive clause “even though you have already copied it” makes sense only if Chopin, on departure from Paris, knew that Fontana had not yet copied anything. And why ever Fontana could copy the *Polonaise* just during those two days, while Chopin was returning to the country? Obvious: because the manuscript, which the former had not yet before, was now in his hands.

So, Chopin did not send to Fontana any manuscript of the *Polonaise in F# minor*. It is not at all a minor detail, but determinant for a right *recensio*. It will be clear here below why.

### DEALINGS WITH TROUPENAS.

From a letter dated 22 January 1839 from Valldemossa, we know that Pleyel had talked Chopin into leaving Schlesinger and selling his own compositions just to Pleyel: «Dearest, since you wanted to commit yourself to being my publisher (*Puisque vous avez voulu, chérissime, prendre la corvée d’être mon éditeur*) [...]».<sup>21</sup> Probst also, trustee of Breitkopf, is talking about it in a letter dated March 10, 1839: «[...] Chopin does not want to have anything to do with Schlesinger, and Camille Pleyel, as if he were not already busy enough, is meddling in the publication of his works for the sake of Chopin. I prefer Pleyel, who is much more easy to get along with than Schles[inger]. But now, thanks to Pleyel,<sup>22</sup> Chopin is even more brazen and asks for honoraria beyond all reason, à la Herz. So I cut short, reserving to [...]. I think Chopin is jumping out of the frying pan into the fire. In addition, Pleyel is someone who starts a lot and finishes nothing; moreover, he is always suffering since autumn, and he is very worried too, as his company’s capital, of 209,000 fs, is at risk because of failure of Brillantais. In France, even the political climate always affects industry [...]».<sup>23</sup> Then, Chopin wrote several

<sup>20</sup> Cf. *KFC* cit. p. 37f.: «... jeszcze nie oddawał mego *Poloneza* Leonowi (choć już go przepisał) [...]». If Chopin says to be back “yesterday, Thursday”, i.e. on September 30, he wrote the letter on Friday!

<sup>21</sup> Cf. J.-J. Eigeldinger, *Chopin et Pleyel*, Paris (Fayard) 2010, p. 120f.

<sup>22</sup> To tell the truth, Probst writes «zum Danke gegen Pleyel», which, literally translated, means “for (showing) gratitude to Pleyel”. Lenneberg translates “out of gratitude” and Eigeldinger “par reconnaissance envers Pleyel” (cf. *op. cit.* p. 121), but this does not make sense. We prefer to believe that Probst—by a somewhat elaborate and wrongly used expression, like someone who wants to seem more cultured than he is—simply wanted to say “thanks to Pleyel (who beguiled him)”, that is “due to Pleyel”.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. H. Lenneberg, *Breitkopf und Härtel in Paris*, Stuyvesant (Pendragon Press) 1990, p. 106. In the notes to his translation, the author states «no Brillantais has been found in standard reference books» (see p. 62). Eigeldinger, having said that the «double company»—the one working in publishing and instruments’ hire, the other in construction and sale of pianos—was directed by Camille Pleyel (cf. *op. cit.* p. 43), states that «the banker Marion de la Brillantais, who directed and managed the company “Pleyel & Cie”, went bankrupt (January 1839), endangering the company’s health» (*ibid.* p. 45). The apparent contradiction is explained on p. 44: «[...] the two partners [*scil.* C. Pleyel e Kalkbrenner] buy from the banker Louis M. Marion de La Brillantais, on April 1, 1834, four important plots and annexes, sited at Nos. 20-22-24 rue Rochecouart [...]». But Eigeldinger’s statements are contradicted by a sentence published in “*Journal des Avoués*”, LXVII (1844), p. 630, whose background is summarized as follows: «Mr. Pleyel rented in the month of June, 1833, a house and annexes sited in Paris, rue de Bellefonds 37, for 2500 francs a year. He also had the right to do inside all the changes, which were not harmful to the property, without obligation, at the end of rental, to restore the original state, but he would have not been allowed to claim any compensation for the improvements resulting from the work carried out. — Moreover, the lessor, Mr. Marius de la Brillantais, consented to be bound by a sale promise to Mr. Pleyel, perfectible during the rental period, for a sum of 50,000 f. — Actually, Mr. Pleyel, who is a manufacturer of pianos, inside the house carried out the necessary work to make the buildings suitable to the practice of his profession. Thus, with the elimination of interior walls, a large part of both ground floor and top floors was transformed in laboratories for the manufacture of pianos. — In 1842, Mr de la Brillantais dies. — In 1843 Mr Pleyel decides to buy the house



times to Pleyel, but the latter did not answer! Chopin was concerned that his “friend” had backtracked, but when he knew it for sure, on March 12, 1839 from Marseilles writes him really angry: «[...] I have written two letters from Mallorca and I had the regret not to receive any response [...]»<sup>24</sup>. Probst was already well informed about all facts: «Chopin is in Marseilles. [...] all the publishers must refuse his new exorbitant pretensions. Even Pleyel backpedals, since he certainly does not want to lose his money either».<sup>25</sup> So, Probst was right: Chopin had jumped out of the frying pan into the fire. Pleyel had cheated the composer, and Schlesinger, irritated, was no longer willing to negotiate. Please read the bitter conclusion of the letter of August 8, 1839 to Fontana: «Pleyel has done me a bad disservice with his self-sacrifice, because I antagonized the Jew Schlesinger. But I hope that it will be put right somehow».<sup>26</sup> Perhaps Chopin still trusted Schlesinger would have give up his stubbornness, but that was not the case.

In a letter of January 10, 1840 to Breitkopf Probst confirms he has purchased for 2500 francs the Chopin’s manuscripts (Opp. 35 to 41), for which the composer had initially asked for 3500 francs.<sup>27</sup> But there was not yet a publisher for France, and time was pressing. From another Probst’s letter of March 25, 1840 we know that «Chopin sold the 7 works to Troupenas for 2100 francs»,<sup>28</sup> that is at a figure lower than that paid by Breitkopf! A month later, Chopin informs Fontana: «Troupenas has bought my 7 compositions, and will negotiate directly with Wessel. So do not worry about this any more».<sup>29</sup> Chopin appears here somewhat brisk: was he embarrassed? We believe so. Fontana had certainly been involved in finding a publisher, and it is likely that it was he who first made contact with Troupenas and talked about with Chopin.<sup>30</sup> One cannot but agree that on this occasion the behaviour of Chopin to Fontana was not flawless.

Which were the agreements with Troupenas, or better, with Masset, partner of Troupenas? Well, there was a verbal agreement «*d’honnête homme à honnête homme*», maintains Chopin,<sup>31</sup> but it would be better to say between an experienced trader and an author in dire straits. Although Troupenas understood little of music, he could manage his affairs. He was certainly well informed about the trouble Pleyel had caused to Chopin, and had heard of Schlesinger too, who would not support the role of the Good Samaritan. So, without splitting hairs, Troupenas made a single proposal to Chopin—take it or leave it!—consisting of two points: 1. From that time on the composer would not have sold any composition, in any case, to anybody;<sup>32</sup> 2. The pay was fixed at 300 francs each composition, one for the other.<sup>33</sup> In

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for 50,000 fr [...]. Miss de la Brillantais, a registered creditor, raises etc.. etc.. ». In summary, Pleyel turned to the judge, because he considered illegal the raising of one of the two heirs. As for the banker Louis-Marie de la Brillantais, he was an inventor too (in 1836 even took out a patent entitled “Changes in construction of pianos”).

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Eigeldinger, *op. cit.* p. 122.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Lenneberg, *op. cit.* p. 107.

<sup>26</sup> Grabowski in his thesis, cited above (cf. p. 68), shows the date of August 10, which is that of the postmark, but Chopin specifies “Thursday”, then the 8th.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Lenneberg, *op. cit.* p. 110 (letter No. 69) e p. 112 (letter No. 76).

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.* p. 113 (letter No. 80).

<sup>29</sup> Cf. CFC III, p. 22.

<sup>30</sup> Aside from the exhortation not to worry about the matter—which proves that Fontana had been involved in the search for a new publisher—, Fontana’s relations with Troupenas went beyond the mere role of Chopin’s agent, if in 1843, after the break between the publisher and the composer, Troupenas published a Fontana’s *Fantaisie Brillante Sur les Motifs du Freischütz* op. 6, and subsequently more.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. CFC III, p. 87 (letter of October 18, 1841).

<sup>32</sup> Chopin writes: «Masset [*partner of Troupenas*] knew about the Paccini [*sic!*] Waltz, and that I had promised it to the *Gazette*» (*ibid.*). Evidently Troupenas was not pleased with the publication of the Waltz Op. 42, printed by Pacini, who actually owned it since 1838 (cf. Lenneberg, *op. cit.* p. 91).

<sup>33</sup> «... (the price of my *ordinary* manuscripts was, to him, 300 fr)» (cf. KFC II, p. 43).

short, Troupenas put the squeeze on Chopin, because he was sure that the composer would have to give; on the other hand, a year was already over since Pleyel's rip-off, and the composer had not got time any longer. So Chopin gave in. Nevertheless, he claims he advanced during the negotiations some exceptions.<sup>34</sup> It is possible, but at that time he certainly was not able to assert his own requests, and, even if Masset heard something, he did not take that into the slightest consideration, in other words he turned a deaf ear.

Well aware that he had agreed a deal advantageous only for Troupenas, Chopin—this is our reconstruction—began to reflect on the best way to get rid thereof. In the night between 9 and 10 August he warns Fontana: «The commissions are not finished yet, for you will now have the Troupenas affair hanging over your head».<sup>35</sup> What did he mean? Was he referring only to the usual roles of messenger, copyist, proofreader, trustee, etc. etc.? We do not think so.

At the end of September, exceptionally, Chopin went to Paris. From the letters written after that trip is clear that something had changed: the affair Troupenas is treated with less anxiety and greater ease. Chopin seems concerned only with the formal side, that is, to save his face. He knows in his heart that he is going to break with Troupenas, but, as is his character, wants to look impeccably formal. In his letter of 18 October confesses: «If he does not care to have them [*scil.* the manuscripts], (*entre nous*) I shall be glad, because Schlesinger will be delighted to buy them», and a few lines later: «All I want is to get out of this situation with decency».

What? Will Schlesinger «be delighted to buy» the manuscripts? Had the “Jew” changed his mind? Yes, Chopin seems to know that! And since when? The answer is only one: since their meeting in Paris.

In fact, immediately after the pettiness of Pleyel, Chopin had well tried to get reconciled with Schlesinger, but without success. The events, however, seemed to come to his aid. Between November and December of 1839 he signed two receipts for two *Etudes* that later Schlesinger published in the *Méthode des Méthodes*.<sup>36</sup> Then, when Elsner, his old teacher, asks to put in a good word with Schlesinger for the publication of an oratorio, Chopin shows himself to be solicitous and, moreover, defends the negative response of the publisher: «I will not make philosophical remarks about Jewry, but I must defend him a little, for in truth that great works, like your *Oratorio*, are expensive for the publisher and are unsaleable [...]».<sup>37</sup> At last, Chopin—it is always our reconstruction—resorts to an ingenuous trick.

In the past a customer of a store did not pay, as now, every time, but at more or less regular intervals, linked to his activity (once a month or two / three times a year etc.). So did Chopin, when he bought scores or something else. We believe that Chopin, to shift Schlesinger, would propose to the latter paying off the debts piled up at the publisher's store, swapping a composition. The fact is that, on returning to Nohant, he wrote immediately to Fontana: «I came here yesterday, Thursday. I wrote a *Prelude in C-sharp minor* for Schlesinger: short, as he wished. As it is to come out at the New Year, like *Mechetti's Beethoven*, [...]». Therefore, even before his trip to Paris, Chopin had already written the *Prélude* Op. 45; on his return, he writes he composed it for Schlesinger, who wanted it short; he even knows that it will be published in the New Year. And that is not all: now, after coming to an agreement with the French publisher, he may propose the *Prelude* also to Mechetti: «[...] tomorrow I will send you a letter to Mechetti, in which I will explain to him that if he wants something short,

<sup>34</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, p. 44: «[...] especially as I told him, when I first discussed business with him, that the things might turn out so that I could not give them for that price».

<sup>35</sup> Cf. *CFC* cit. p. 63.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. *CFC* II, p. 374s.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. *CFC* III, p. 26, letter of July 24, 1840.

instead of the Mazurka that he asked for (which is already old), I will give him for that Album *today's* Prelude. It is well modulated and I can send it without hesitation». In short, in a day a Prelude springs out of nowhere, with publishers already written on the title page!

Chopin seems to be in a better mood: he had regained Schlesinger! Soon after, however, he realizes he had laid himself too much open to Fontana, so he tries to muddle things. On October 7, he sends an envelope to Fontana containing the letters of October 5 (CFC No. 430), October 6 (No. 431), October 7 (No. 432), and two copies of the *Prelude*, one for Mechetti and for Schlesinger. The letter of 5 October is to Schlesinger:

«Fontana has a *Prelude* for you. I give you the copyright for England (provided that you want to) for a hundred francs—in fact, I do not want to have anything to do with Wessel. As for the French copyright, it is yours in exchange for zeroing of my account with you to this day, together with a fine specimen of your *Keepsake*, which I can suitably offer to princess Tchernischeff, to whom I dedicate my Prelude [...].»<sup>38</sup>

Schlesinger knew, of course, that Chopin had composed a *Prelude* for him: they had already agreed on everything. Is it conceivable that they had already fixed the date of publication, but not the amount? No, it is not likely. Between the lines this letter confirms the suspicion that Fontana did not have to know anything about the trick deployed by Chopin, perhaps because Fontana had got too much involved with Troupenas, and Chopin had probably guessed that.<sup>39</sup> Hence, when in the letter No. 431 the composer writes: [...] if you do not find Schlesinger, leave the letter for him, but not the manuscript, till he lets you know that he accepts the *Prelude* in settlement of my account», he just wants to throw a little dust in the eyes of Fontana, who needed to feel respected. Then, in the letter No. 432, Chopin reminds his friend: «[...] Do not forget about Troupenas: our troubles have undoubtedly reached their zenith». “Zenith”? Perhaps the sense of this expression was differently interpreted by Fontana, but with this word Chopin confirmed that the Troupenas affair had been for good resolved. On October 7th!

What did Chopin and Schlesinger talk about during their meeting in Paris?

### THE TRIP TO PARIS.

The trip to Paris, too, is a key-topic for the purpose of a proper *recensio*. Here, we have necessarily to anticipate—but we will deal with (*see below*)—that the absence of pedalling in F1, *i.e.* in Fontana's copy, urged the above mentioned editor of the site CFCO to hypothesize that the pedalling was added by the composer on the manuscript for Machetti just during his Parisian call:

«While in Paris Chopin had the opportunity to revise his manuscript. Pressed for time, and knowing that he would find it difficult to participate in the preparation of the Austrian edition, Chopin added the pedalling only in the source that would be dispatched to Vienna. On the assumption that he would be able to make similar changes to the French proofs at a later date, he did not ask his friend Fontana to enter the pedallings in the copy to be given to Schlesinger. However, when it came to correcting the French proofs, Chopin found that the dense engraving made it almost impossible to add further indications on most pages.»

In light of what we have shown above—that is, Fontana saw the autograph only when Chopin himself brought it from Nohant—is not likely to think that the composer would bring with him a manuscript from Nohant with the intention of adding the pedalling in Paris.

<sup>38</sup> Hence, the widespread conviction that the *Prelude* was paid «only 100 franc» is wrong (*cf.* Kallberg. *op. cit.* p. 209), because in reality it was paid 100 francs + the amount of the debt piled by Chopin.

<sup>39</sup> *See* note 30.

It is an untenable hypothesis. Nevertheless, it is our duty to examine every aspect. In our opinion, in fact, Chopin would not have had the time to revise any manuscript.

It is known that the composer arrived in Paris on Saturday, September 25, at 11.00 *a.m.* and he informed G. Sand about in a note.<sup>40</sup> It is known as well that he returned to Nohant on Thursday, 30th September.<sup>41</sup> Luckily, we have got a detailed description of the route Paris-Nohant in the letter of August 23, 1841, by which George Sand tries to convince Delacroix to come in the country. It allows determining exactly when Chopin left again from Paris.<sup>42</sup>

«[...] You have to spend 35 francs to come and just as many to leave, which is not ruinous. Here is your itinerary—Departure from Paris by the Messageries royales, rue N[otre]-D[ame] des Victoires, at 7 h in the evening. The coupe is good. Breakfast at 6 *a.m.* in Orléans. Dinner in Vierzon at 3 or 4 in the afternoon. You will leave again from there an hour later with another carriage, which is quite good, and which also has a closed compartment (which is reserved to you, if you book it in Paris until Châteauroux), and arrive in Châteauroux at 9 h in the evening. There you will find my horse and my carriage with Maurice who will take you to Nohant in 2-½ h / 3 h at most. If you are tired, you will sleep in a very acceptable hotel in Châteauroux, and will leave with the same horse and the same Maurice at the time you want in the morning of the next day. In addition, there is a passable carriage with a closed compartment, which runs from Châteauroux to Nohant, leaving at 6 h in the morning and arriving at 10 h to my door.»

Therefore, leaving for Nohant at 19:00 h on Tuesday, September 28, the composer had at his disposal two days (Sunday 26 and Monday 27) and, more or less, two half-day (Saturday afternoon, and Tuesday until the afternoon).

What did Chopin during that time?

1. Saturday 25, the composer says he immediately went to the rue Pigalle: to do what? He had to think about how he would tidy out the room, where he would give his lessons. Fussy and pedantic as he was, most likely he thought again and again of every layout: I want this here, put that there, this should not be here, etc. etc. This is not a mere hypothesis, but it is confirmed by Sand, who, writing to Pelletan, complies with an undoubted request of Chopin:<sup>43</sup>

«[...] Since Chopin must give his lessons in the *salon*, he may not put on display the nakedness of Giorgione in front of his caste misses. Therefore, with all the work is awaiting us on our arrival, dear Pelletan, take care that we have not to move those paintings too.»

Apart from the bigoted side of such a request, we can assume that between one thing and another, with or without the company of Fontana, the afternoon went by that way.

2. It is very likely that Chopin together with Fontana went to visit some flats, just to see what the market was offering at the time. We could place such a going around in the morning of Tuesday 28, the day of departure. After lunch and having rested, he should prepare himself and luggage to be on time in the rue N.-D. des Victoires.

3. But let us get to the real reason for the trip to Paris: the meeting with Schlesinger. Chopin—it is our interpretation of the documents—had done everything (within the limits of the form, of course) to win back the publisher, and he was about to achieve his goal: only a clear verbal agreement, face to face, was missing. In the Troupenas affair Chopin wanted to be sure he might dig his heels in, in order not to find himself in the same situation, in which Pleyel had left him. Moreover, for both Schlesinger and Chopin it was not a new experience, because in the past they had plotted together something like this, when they had agreed on the

<sup>40</sup> Cf. *CFC* III, p. 78: «Here I am in the rue Tronchet, arrived without fatigue. It is eleven o'clock. I am going to the rue Pigalle.»

<sup>41</sup> Cf. *ibid.* p. 79.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. G. Sand, *Correspondance*, éd. de G. Lubin, v, Paris (Garnier Frères) 1969, p. 405.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. *ibid.* p. 456.

way of getting rid of Farrenc. Thus, they met, spoke, cleared things up; Schlesinger understood, and at last they came to an agreement. Everything went the right way. Chopin had got what he wanted. This is reflected in the letter of October 1, from which a new composition comes as out of nowhere together with the publishers and the publication date (*v. supra*).

4. We know for a fact that Chopin also wanted to meet Troupenas, *i.e.* Masset—obviously after Schlesinger. Actually, the sale to Schlesinger of the *Prélude* was a breach of the conditions imposed by Troupenas and previously accepted by Chopin, who wished to justify in person what had happened. But Masset was not available (had he already smelt a rat?), so the composer met Masset's wife. In the letter mistakenly dated 1 November 1841 Chopin wrote to Fontana:<sup>44</sup> «[...] As for the Prelude for Schl[esinger's] Album, I told Mme Masset last time [...]».

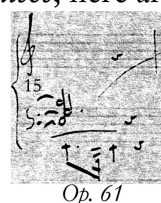
5. In addition, Chopin had to do other commissions. According to S. Delaigue-Moins he «negotiates some last deal with Buloz on behalf of George Sand»,<sup>45</sup> but she does not document her statement. Actually, Chopin did something on behalf of G. Sand: in fact, he met Ajasson, Sand's tenant, not Buloz. The former in his letter of September 28 writes to the writer: «[...] I noticed Mr. Chopin looks well: it seems that Nohant air does him good».<sup>46</sup>

Well, after all this, according to the editor mentioned above, Chopin would have had time to sit down at the piano and add the pedalling in the manuscript of the *Polonaise* for Mechetti. Frankly, it seems quite far-fetched.

To the first conclusion we came, namely, that E is an apograph of F1 (*v. supra*), we can now add a second one: Chopin did not add any pedalling «in the source that would be dispatched to Vienna».

### THE MANUSCRIPT.

The next step is to check whether the collation allows the structure of the manuscript to trace. When Chopin had to prepare a fair copy, he sat at the desk: it was a task for which he harboured a strong aversion, and, despite the fussiness for several details, he made while copying many mistakes, even coarse. Limiting us to the *Polonaises*, here are two examples:



In the first example, left hand, the author writes *A* instead of *F*, in the second, right hand, the first note of the chord is *E* instead of *D*.<sup>47</sup> If such solecisms pose no obstacle to an editor, others are not recognized, so that a false tradition begins growing up.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>44</sup> The date assigned by the CFC is undoubtedly wrong, since on November 1 Chopin—along with George Sand, Solange, Jean, a manservant, Pistolet et Jessy, the dogs respectively favorites by the composer and the writer—was on his way to return to Paris. The group, which started from Nohant October 31, arrived in Paris on the afternoon of 2 November and dined by Viardots (*cf.* G. Sand, *op. cit.* p. 484f.). It is true that Chopin writes: «My departure is delayed, so perhaps I shall not reach Paris till 6th or 8th»; but he was wrong, just as he had been wrong when he was informing Fontana that Maurice would have brought «about the 16th [...] the manuscript of my *Concerto* and the *Nocturnes*» (*cf.* CFC *cit.* p. 86). Here, we cannot dwell on the subject, which requires a separate discussion; we can only say that the words of Chopin are quite astounding.

<sup>45</sup> *Cf.* S. Delaigue-Moins, *Chopin chez George Sand à Nohant*, Le Pin (Les Amis de Nohant) 1996, p. 64.

<sup>46</sup> *Cf.* G. Sand, *op. cit.* p. 428.

<sup>47</sup> Errors of this kind provide two valuable information: 1. Written notes did not stimulate the inner sense of hearing (unlike Beethoven); 2. Chopin could hardly realize his mistakes, unless he came back to the piano. As for the accidentals, the composer omitted a lot of them, and he was aware of: «Perhaps—writes to Fontana—there are some sharps and flats missing» (*cf.* CFC III, p. 91).

Mistakes, whoever are the copyists, are inevitable. In classical philology they have been studied, and therefore classified.<sup>49</sup> We have not heard musicologists, least of all chopinologists, have paid some attention to copyists' errors, and indeed, most of them do not even know the existence of the problem, and while facing errors well known in classical philology, they make statements so absurd as to border on the ridiculous. Although the errors of a copyist of alphabetic texts are different from those of the copyist of music texts, the workings causing them are the same. Moreover, their usefulness for a philologist is not of minor importance.

To avoid rewriting bars, bars' groups, or entire sections, Chopin turned to numbering, even to double one. The autograph of the *Polonaise* Op. 26 No. 2 provides an emblematic example.<sup>50</sup> The manuscript of the *Polonaise in F# minor* did not constitute an exception. So, let us proceed with pointing out similar bars:

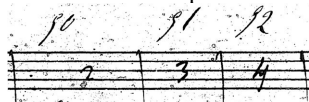
$$\begin{aligned} 18 \div 23 &= 44 \div 49 = 70 \div 75, \\ 43 &= 69, \\ 25 \div 26 &= 51 \div 52 = 77 \div 78 = 284 \div 285, \\ 35 \div 77 &= 268 \div 310, \\ 83 \div 84 &= 85 \div 86. \end{aligned}$$

A first clear indication is given by bars  $20 \div 22 = 46 \div 48 = 72 \div 74 = 279 \div 281$ .<sup>51</sup>

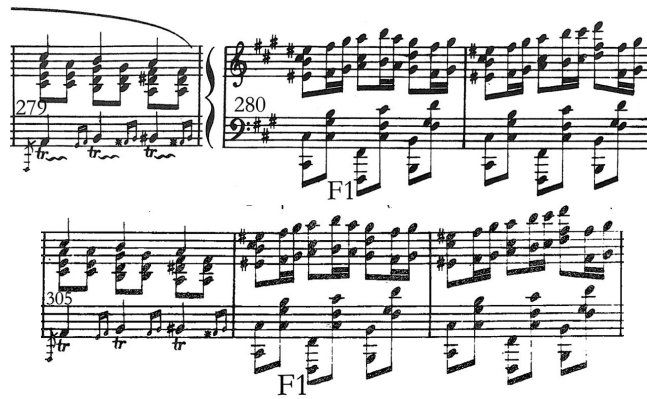
<sup>48</sup> A case in point is provided by bar 20 from Op. 61, which we have discussed in detail in our edition and which we are talking about again.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. L. Havet, *Manuel de critique verbale appliquée aux textes latins*, Paris (Hachette) 1911, in particular *Quatrième section. Les hasards. La discontinuité de l'attention*, p. 128.

<sup>50</sup> Here is an example from the *Polonaise* Op. 26 No. 2:



<sup>51</sup> To avoid any confusion, inside bars we have inserted their numbers.



You will notice that:

- Bars 20, 72 and 305 have no slur and the resolution of the second trill (A) has no accidental, while bars 46 and 279 have a slur and A is altered, *i.e.* has got a #;
- The first chord of bars 22, 74 and 307 has no *seventh*, while that of bars 48 and 281 is like the first chord of bars 21, 47, 72, 280 and 306.

It seems superfluous to point out that both the lack of # and the addition of the *seventh* are unquestionable mistakes of Chopin, who in the first case neglected the accidental, in the second, starting to copy bar 48, carelessly wrote out—and only here—the first chord of the previous bar, so that he made a typical copyist's mistake.<sup>52</sup>

You do not need a crystal ball, but just reasoning, to say that the internal collation of F1 leads to the conclusion that bars 71 ÷ 75 were definitely numbered, and most likely bars 268 ÷ 310 were the same.

The above must be confirmed by A. So, let us compare the same bars:



<sup>52</sup> Müllemann states in *Einzelbemerkungen* to bars «22, 48, 281, 308 [lege 307] u: 1<sup>st</sup> chord in places sometimes has *b'*, sometimes not. Since the notation in each case is the same in F<sub>F</sub> and F<sub>C</sub> and thus presumably identical to [A] and [C], we have here not standardised them» (cf. *op. cit.* p. 25). That statement quite embarrassing from a logical point of view, not only reveals some philological disorientation, but arrogance too, because Müllemann, although he probably consulted the Polish national edition, is careful not to mention it: «The first chord of bars 48 and 281—write Ekier and Kaminski—has four notes in the sources (with additional *b'*). The following arguments point to Chopin having made a mistake in this place: [...] — in [A] Chopin wrote the four-note chord with *b'* only once in bar 48 etc.» (cf. Fr. Chopin, *Polonezy*, Kraków (PWM) 1995, *Source Commentary*, p. 11). Neglecting the opinion of others is a very common habit among chopinologists.



Well, the first thing we notice is the presence of the pedalling, of which there is no trace in *F*<sub>1</sub>, and, secondly, *A* in the resolution of the second trill is  $\sharp$  everywhere—a sign that the proofreader worked. We see, however, that the first chord of bars 22, 74 and 307, has no *seventh*, exactly as in *F*<sub>1</sub>. Nevertheless, in bars 20, 72 and 305 we detect a discrepancy: in fact, while bars 72 and 305, as in *F*<sub>1</sub>, have no slur, bars 20 has not only a slur, but also a *crescendo*, and the grace note of the first trill is connected to the main note with a small slur—a detail which we do not see in bars 46, 72, 279 and 305 any longer. Finally, bars 72 ÷ 73 oddly have no pedalling.

The conclusion is as follows: *A* testifies that it derives from an autograph—*i.e.* Chopin's autograph—identical in structure to the one—*i.e.* Fontana's copy—from which also *F*<sub>1</sub> comes. But, the most surprising remark is that *A* testifies undoubtedly an invasive reading of a proofreader-pianist. The evidence is provided by bar 20: it was the proofreader, not Chopin, who added both the *crescendo* and the small slur. Hence, we can assert that even the pedalling in *A*, which is not in *F*<sub>1</sub>, was not in the autograph either. This is why Fontana could not copy it!

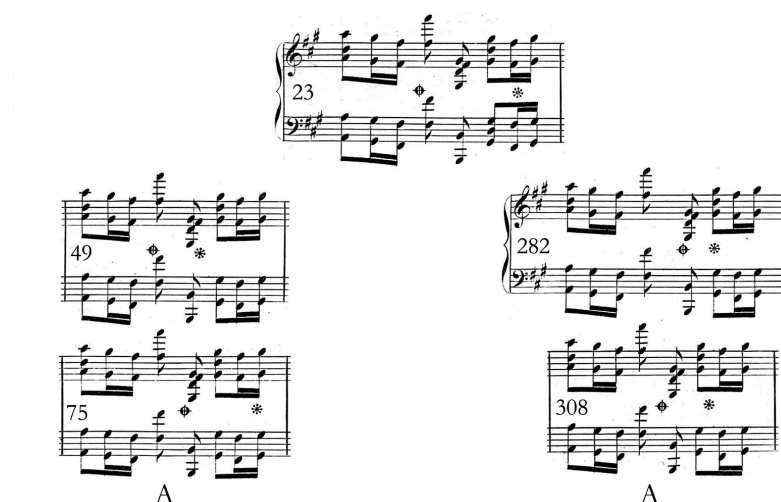
We have just seen that bars 72 ÷ 73, which were replaced by a number ( $> 46 \div 47$ ), do not have any pedalling. Why? Well, according to our hypothesis, the pedalling (and many other details) was added by the proofreader-pianist, who followed a rather mechanical criterion: the pedalling has to change, when the left hand's chord, *i.e.* the harmony, changes. Thus, the result is rather—we would not say wholly wrong, but certainly—coarse and uncertain here and there. *E.g.*, in bars 43, 69, 276, and 302 he added the *arpeggio*—which was not indicated by Chopin—, but not the pedalling, which, instead, is almost necessary with the *arpeggio*; so, while the analogous bar 17 has a pedalling almost useless (first forth), because the right hand can easily tie, in the quoted bars (third forth) the hand is forced to get detached:



It is well known that the use of pedals is very personal and varies depending on both the capacity and taste of the performer. What we want to emphasize is that the pedalling in *A* betrays many weaknesses that we may not ascribe to Chopin.<sup>53</sup> A confirmation, in our opinion irrefutable, is given by the bars 23, 49, 75, 282, and 308:

<sup>53</sup> The indiscriminate use of pedalling, so widespread among Chopin's interpreters, is definitely contradicted by a careful study of the autographs.

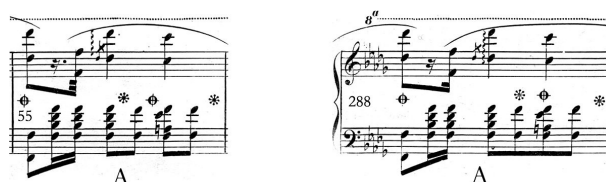




If one considers, e.g., that because of the double numbering bar 308 copies bar 49, since bar 75 was numbered, the difference of the pushing time of the pedal has no justification. Call into question the engraver's negligence would be to deny the evidence.

At this point, however, a question must be asked: which engraver could act so arbitrarily? Who was he? The first name that comes to mind is that of Friederike Müller, but we must immediately reject it, because Miss Müller, who was a pupil of Chopin from the winter of 1839 to the spring of 1841, owing to the veneration and respect towards the Master would never have dared so much. The anonymous proofreader is to be sought in the circle of pianists who attended Chopin during the second stay in Vienna of the latter. However, being well known the professional relationship of Miss Müller with the Polish composer, it is not unlikely that she had been consulted.<sup>54</sup> On the other hand, Miss Müller took lessons just within the time in which Chopin conceived and composed the *Polonaise in F# minor* and, therefore, could play some excerpts to her. In any case we may exclude that Fr. Müller cooperated to the insertion of the pedalling, for two reasons: the first one, we repeat, is the respect for Chopin, and, secondly, because she herself says in her *Diary* that the Master «[...]» was uncommonly strict regarding the misuse of it, [...],<sup>55</sup> while the proofreader of **A** seems rather *grossier*. On the contrary, we are inclined to attribute her the fingering—that Chopin did not add on the manuscript for Mechetti, since Fontana did not copy any fingering down—of bars 250 ÷ 251 (left hand), mainly because that fingering is just in accordance with Chopin's piano principles.

The surprising self-assurance of the anonymous Austrian proofreader is confirmed by bars 55 and 288:



Since in the autograph bar 288 sent back to bar 55, we should not detect any difference between them. But while revising (we infer that from the perfect drawing up in column of the *octave F-F* with the semiquaver of the l. h.), the proofreader changed the semiquaver into demisemiquaver and changed the rest too, of course. Instead, the sign of *arpeggio* was added

<sup>54</sup> It is a pity that in the letter of 13 September to Fontana (*v. supra*) Chopin is so untalkative: which relationship could exist between Miss Müller and the manuscripts for Mechetti?

<sup>55</sup> Cf. in the site "audacter.it" the extract of such a *Diary*.

in the autograph, and in bar 288 the engraver copied only the *arpeggio*: this is proven by the position of the grace note that in bar 55 is between the *arpeggio* and the *octave*, while in bar 288 it is before the *arpeggio*. There is no trace of all that either in F1 or in F2.

The consequence of such an intrepid arbitrariness is that for a *recensio* the value of A compared with F2 decreases, because the collation highlights its limited reliability. In fact, not all the changes of the Austrian proofreader can be easily recognised like those of bars 55 and 208.

The philologist, thus, is engaged in a slow and complex collation that does not always give satisfying results. As proof of what we say, we propose another example involving bars 28÷29, 32÷33:



We see that in bars 28 and 32 the time division is the same:  $\text{♩} \dots \text{♩} \text{♩}$ . As for bars 29 and 33, instead, we have  $\text{♩} \text{♩}$  versus  $\text{♩} \text{♩}$ , a not isochronous writing. To adapt bar 33 to bar 29, we should make two corrections: adding a dot to the first quaver and making shorter the rest. If, however, we consider bar 33 alone, changing the demisemiquaver into semiquaver would be the simplest correction. In other words, to ascribe the error of bar 33 to the engraver seems simplistic.



Let us collate, therefore, the same measures in F1:



For the moment, let us put aside the left hand. The upper staff of bar 28 corresponds to A, while in bar 29 the first quaver has no dot, and, in spite of the rest, the *octave* F-F is a semiquaver instead of a demisemiquaver (or perhaps: is it wrong the rest, which should be  $\text{♩}$  instead of  $\text{♩}$ ). By contrast, the first quarter of bar 32 does not correspond to A, while that of bar 33—where the time division is correct—the *octave* E-E is a semiquaver, being in A—where the time division is wrong—a demisemiquaver. The correction in F2 is satisfying only in appearance:

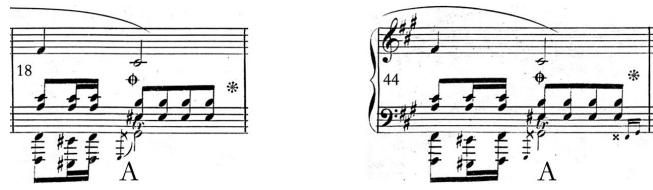


In fact, if we observe carefully the drawing up in columns of the semiquavers of the right hand with the demisemiquavers of the left hand, we see that in A the demisemiquavers of bars 28,

29 and 32 are slightly displaced, just as in F<sub>1</sub>, where, however, with the exception of bar 28, they should not. This suggests that for both Austrian and Parisian engraver the first quarter (right hand) of bars 28, 29 and 32 was represented by  and . In this case, the error in bar 33 of A ought to be ascribed to the engraver, whereas the text of F<sub>1</sub> would have been changed by Chopin on the proofs. The unsatisfying side of such a conclusion is that the dynamics of the error in A is not entirely clear, and the will of the composer to change the agogica in bars 29, 32 and 33, but not in bar 28, is supported only by the correction of bar 29 in F<sub>2</sub>, which was not made by Chopin. But that is not all. The problem of the left hand in bar 28 still remains: in A the last quaver is a simple *octave*, but in F<sub>1</sub> there is a chord. As in F<sub>1</sub> there are no traces of corrections, we have to conclude that that simple *octave* became a chord already on Fontana's copy; in other words, Chopin revised the copy of Fontana before handing it over to Schlesinger. It is curious—but less decipherable, being lost the autograph—the drawing up in columns of the two quavers of left hand with the first and third quaver of the right hands' triplets:<sup>56</sup> a graphic peculiarity that any serious editor must observe in each case. Another severe mistake of the editors is to confuse the sign of *brisé* (bar 33, r. h.) with the sign of *arpeggio* (l. h.).<sup>57</sup>

The conclusion is as follows: the collation of bars 28-29-32-33 confirms that the text of A, representing an earlier stage, gives worse readings than F<sub>1</sub>.<sup>58</sup>

A final example. Let us collate bars 18, 44, 70, 277, and 303. In A bar 18 differs from those analogous not only for a small slur, but also because there is no resolution of the trill:



F<sub>1</sub>, however, retains traces of what happened:



The first obvious fact is that, like in A, the trill of bar 18 has no resolution, then it is that the right *lectio*.<sup>59</sup> The second finding is that the slur confirms the numbering of bars 303 > 70 (without) and 277 > 44 (with). Third, and most importantly, since bar 70, which has remained

<sup>56</sup> In Chopin such an “elastic” writing is not uncommon (see the autograph of the *Nocturne* Op. 48 n. 1): about its meaning we will talk elsewhere.

<sup>57</sup> The totality of modern editors, having not detected nor understood their difference, standardizes irresponsibly the writing of Chopin, who assigns to those two signs a well distinct value.

<sup>58</sup> Even in this case Müllemann (*op. cit.* p. 23) shows little familiarity not only with philology, but even with the simple logic.

<sup>59</sup> If an editor wants to integrate the trill, he must signal such integration. Miraculously both Ekier and Müllemann do that, but against the common use in philology. The former, in fact, uses square brackets, which in philology indicate the text to expunge, while the latter uses round brackets, which in philology never change the text, but explain it. Two scholars, who are editors of two major Chopin's publishers, use opposite signs to mean the same thing!

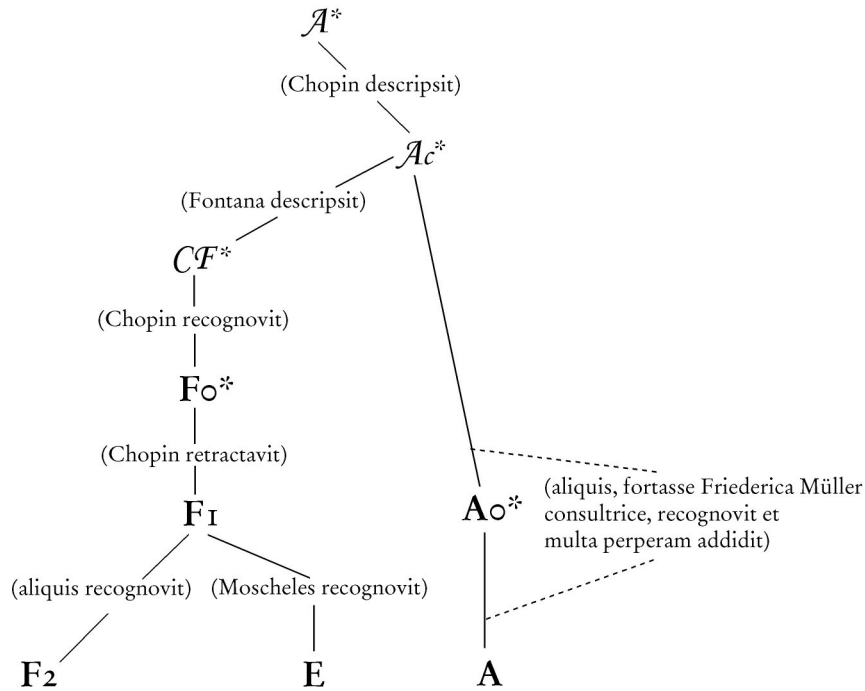
as in **A**, was not copied for writing bar 303, we can deduce that Chopin, after revising the copy of Fontana (*v. supra*), certainly read the proofs of **F**<sub>1</sub> (*i.e.* **Fo**\*), but did not correct the proofs of **F**<sub>2</sub>. If the change had been made on the copy of Fontana, bar 303 would be identical to bar 70.

\* \* \*

Finally, all is in agreement: biographical data, correspondence and collation not only do not contradict each other, but even support each other.

Reserving the right to complete our collation in a definite edition, here we have just pointed out some errors that hinder a proper *recensio* of *Polonaise in F # minor*, warning students and pianists not to use wrong editions. But, *non bos ad bovem collatus similis?*

Here is the *stemma*:<sup>60</sup>



*Legenda:*

- \* not available source;
- $\mathcal{A}^*$  antigraph of  $\mathcal{A}c^*$ ;
- $\mathcal{A}c^*$  copy of  $\mathcal{A}^*$  by Chopin;
- $CF^*$  copy by Fontana;
- $Fo^*$  proofs of **F**<sub>1</sub>;
- $Ao^*$  proofs of **A**.

Franco Luigi Viero © July 2013

<sup>60</sup> *Stemma*, a Greek word, or *conspectus*, a Latin one, are the usual terms in classical philology for the graph showing the sources' reciprocal relations. Some chopinologists call it improperly "scenario".

*A NECESSARY WARNING. — Today, the 21<sup>st</sup> June 2013, a few days after the upload of this article, we noticed that from the site CFEO have been deleted the texts, from which we have extracted the passages quoted by us on pp. 6 and 10 (v. supra).*