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**The Waltzes Op. 69 of Frederic Chopin: An Analytical Survey of
Their Historical Background and Modern Performing Practice.**

Matthew J. Gill

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The Waltzes Op. 69 of Frederic Chopin: An Analytical Survey of Their Historical
Background and Modern Performing Practice

A Treatise

Presented to the

Department of Music

and the

Faculty of the Graduate College

University of Nebraska

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Music in Piano Performance

University of Nebraska at Omaha

by

Matthew J. Gill

May 1999

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Acceptance for the faculty of the Graduate College,
University of Nebraska, in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree Master of Music,
University of Nebraska at Omaha.

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The Waltzes Op. 69 of Frederic Chopin: An Analytical Survey of Their Historical
Background and Modern Performing Practice

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University of Nebraska at Omaha, 1999

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Performers of all ages are drawn to the poetic essence of the Chopin waltzes and are challenged by their technical and stylistic demands. Of the nineteen waltzes, this treatise will address the two waltzes from the Op. 69. Along with the historical background, editions, analysis, and performing practice will be discussed. Two different recordings, those of Vladimir Ashkenazy and Artur Schnabel, will be compared in this study.

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The Waltzes Op. 69 of Frederic Chopin: An Analytical Survey of Their Historical Background and Modern Performing Practice

Introduction

Frederic Chopin (1810-1849) was born in Zelazowa Wola, a small city near Warsaw, Poland. He played his first public concert at the age of 7, and his first compositions had been published by the time he was 15 years of age. By the late 1820s, Chopin had earned reputation as a piano virtuoso and composer of piano pieces. He toured Europe, giving concert performances for ecstatic audiences and critics (BMG 1).

Chopin received a sound general education both at home and at school. He was brought up in his father's private school, among sons of the Polish nobility. His parents took care that nothing should interfere with his regular studies, and he was an intelligent and industrious pupil (in later years he felt the advantages of this solid foundation). As a child he was extraordinarily precocious--he was writing verses by the age of six--and his musical gifts soon made it clear that he was destined to be 'Mozart's successor' (Brown, Hedley 292). His musical education was entrusted to the Bohemian, Albert Zywny, for piano and the Director of the Warsaw School of Music, Joseph Elsner, for composition (Slonimsky 315). Chopin's aptitude for the keyboard was so great that the lessons of Zywny, who taught him from 1816 until 1822, may have been superfluous. Zywny's chief merit as a teacher was that he kept the boy's exuberant facility within bounds and imposed on it the discipline of Bach and the Viennese Classical composers. As a pianist Chopin was almost self-taught, which may account for his lack of slavish reverence for

tradition in his approach to the piano. His inventiveness and ingenuity were never inhibited by professorial pedantry (Brown, Hedley 292). As for Elsner, his wise comment about Chopin was, 'Leave him alone; his is an uncommon way, because his gifts are uncommon' (Scholes 179).

In 1831, he arrived in Paris for a concert while on tour; so immediate was his love for this city that he promptly decided to make it his new home. He was never to return to Warsaw (BMG 1). From his arrival, he became a social and artistic favorite in Parisian circles, speedily securing contact with important musicians there and abroad (Pratt 279). He was befriended by many artistic luminaries of the day, including Hugo, Balzac, Liszt, Berlioz, Schumann, Dumas, and Delacroix. The intense poeticism in his music made him a Romantic icon to many of his contemporaries, and he was embraced by the society elite (BMG 1).

As a player, he was not only intuitively a master of all ordinary dexterities, but he was also peculiarly gifted in bringing out pianistic effects that were novel, especially in the treatment of lace-like decorations, the extension of chord-effects through arpeggiation and the like, and the development of extremely telling variations of tone-color. Though usually preferring dreamy and pathetic passages, he had the capacity for intense passion and majestic power on occasion. His instinct was essentially that of a poet, but balanced by a delicate and acute intellectuality. He was not successful as the interpreter of others' works, but was unique in the rendering of his own. In early life he was noted for striking improvisation (Pratt 280). Chopin was, indeed, a new and freer pianist, free from the conventional discipline of stiff bodily action. And his music was entirely new,

demanding novel forms of hand coordination. His technique was flawless, and he always caused great excitement with the evenness of his scales and the careful manipulation of his legato. The pianist-writer Wilhelm von Lenz noticed him “changing his fingers on a key as often as an organ player” (Dubal 2). With him begins the modern conception of piano-playing, with its flexible manipulation, its facile conquest of technical difficulties, its development of sonority and color by means of dextrous treatment of the pedals, the study of every device of ‘pathetic’ or discriminative dynamics and its liberation of rhythm through the use of the *tempo rubato* (Pratt 280).

As a harmonist, Chopin can be placed among the greatest innovators of the 19th century. Although, like every other aspect of his music, his harmony is inseparable from the character of the piano, it had a profound influence on later music of all kinds, including Wagner’s music dramas. On occasion Chopin’s harmonic innovations were revolutionary, but the more important aspect of his originality was in pushing the accepted procedures of chromatic dissonance and modulation into previously unexplored territory (Brown 302). “Chopin’s chromaticism,” wrote Gerald Abraham, “marks a stage of the greatest importance in the evolution of the harmonic language . . . he was the first composer seriously to undermine the solid system of diatonic tonalism created by the Viennese classical masters and the contemporaries in other countries.” Chopin displayed an almost inexhaustible resource in discovering pianistic formations that are uniquely suited to the instrument. To transcribe Chopin or to change the medium in any way destroys the music’s evocative power, more than with the music of any other composer. (Dubal 3).

Chopin's form, however, is generally considered to be his weakest point. It was also the weakest point of all his contemporaries. And, of course, compared with Beethoven's--an unfair comparison--his sense of form is primitive, being limited almost exclusively to the possibilities of more or less modified ternary form. The elementary formula ABA is the structural basis of the vast majority of Chopin's shorter pieces. It underlies the majority of his second-period mazurkas, all his second-period polonaises, and practically all the second-period nocturnes. Only the waltzes tend to break away into looser patterns akin to the 'suite of waltzes' initiated by Hummel in 1808 and familiar through the works of the Strauss, Lanner, and Gung'l (Abraham 44-45).

It is absolutely crucial for one to understand *tempo rubato* in order to understand the music of Chopin. The chief characteristic of Chopin's playing was his highly personal and wayward use of *tempo rubato*. In Chopin's view of this device, "the left hand is the conductor; it must not waver or lose ground; do with the right hand what you will and can." Liszt's description of the much-discussed *tempo rubato* is more pictorial: "Do you see those trees? The wind plays in the leaves, life unfolds and develops beneath them, but the tree remains" (Dubal 4).

Rubato can be defined as the practice of altering the relationships among written note-values and making the established pulse flexible by accelerating and slowing down the tempo. This has long been an expressive device. *Rubato* may also be defined as the practice of making changes in tempo and rhythmic figuration are made in all parts at the same time without any compensation. The original tempo is simply resumed at the performer's discretion (Randel 719).

Chopin seldom used the term *rubato* in his music. When he wanted to indicate the quickening or slackening of time, he used terms like *accelerando*, *stretto*, *rallentando*, *ritard*, and *ritenuto*. He almost always followed these terms with a clearly marked *Tempo I*, *Tempo primo*, *a tempo*, or a change in tempo like *Adagio* or *Andante* several bars later. Tempo changes are in fact meticulously notated in all of Chopin's scores. Perhaps the reason the word *rubato* appears infrequently in Chopin's music is because the composer preferred to write out his rubatos. While certain *rubato* passages do exist which require a steady left hand, sensitive musicians have long known that Chopin's music should be played flexibly (Strauss 24-25).

It is also important to understand the '*bel canto*' style which is evident in all of Chopin's compositions. Chopin himself seemed drawn to opera as the proverbial moth is to the flame. That fascination could be traced back to the day in 1820 when the legendary Angelica Catalani, billed as "*Prima Cantatrice del Mondo*," came to Warsaw to sing four concerts and heard the young prodigy play, or rather improvise, at the piano. She awarded him a gold pocket watch as a tribute to his talent, and that watch can still be seen in Poland. Until his last days, Chopin was linked with the greatest singers of his time. Jenny Lind came to sing for him during his terrible illness in 1849. Ironically, that same year marked Catalani's death, due to the cholera raging throughout Europe. Reports from Chopin's deathbed include singing, though what was sung varies greatly in these accounts. Franz Liszt recorded that Delfina Potocka, his beautiful, intelligent, talented friend--some say lover--of many years (and dedicatee of his "Minute" Waltz and F-minor Piano Concerto) came to sing songs of Stradella and Marcello. Another says she sang

Marcello and an aria of Pergolesi, while still another talks of an aria from Bellini's Beatrice di Tenda and still another of selections by Bellini and Rossini (Janis 12).

According to Kleczynski, one of Chopin's students, Chopin's advice was, that this theory of musical declamation should be grounded upon the rules which guide vocalists, and that it should be perfected by hearing good singers. Karasowski, another one of Chopin's students, said that the best way to attain naturalness in performance, in Chopin's view, was to listen frequently to Italian singers, among whom there were some very remarkable artists in Paris at the time. He always held up as an example to pianists their broad and simple style, the ease with which they used their voices and the remarkable sustaining powers which this ease gave them (Eigeldinger 44).

Chopin's melodic structure--mellow, emotional, singing--makes his listeners desire to know more about the vocal art. Aware of this, Chopin often discussed this subject with his pupils. The dominance of the melody (the leading part) in the homophonic texture of Chopin's compositions forces the performer to develop a technique that would enable him to show its beauty in as "attractive" a way as possible. The melody, supported by the bass part and discreetly stressed ("commented on" harmonically) in the complementary parts should show, through the dynamics and color, Chopin's very unique and unparalleled harmonic structure--exquisite modulations, the chromatic scale, deceptive cadences, enharmonic changes (Smendzianka 2).

Tone is the basic medium in the process of developing an interpretive concept for a piece of music by any composer. In the case of Chopin the tone must be soft and resonant, with a singing quality through its entire dynamic scale, not too "broad", but it

must also allow the interpreter to play the ideal legato. The Chopin tone differs from that of other Romantic composers. As a pianist and a teacher, Chopin placed much importance on tones (their type, the ways of producing and carving them) when he performed his own compositions. Also, Chopin allotted a great deal of space to this problem in the preserved reports on his pupils' progress. The frequently used term, "a beautiful tone," although far from precise, indicates its noble quality achieved by means of concrete technical procedures. Chopin believed that only the correct use of the motor apparatus and its proper forming may enable the performer to extract the right tones from the instrument in a perfectly natural manner. "It may appear that a well-formed mechanism means a skillful modulation of tones which lends them a beautiful quality." Chopin's tone, just like the other elements of performance of his music (the uses of dynamic scale, agogic, *tempo rubato*, pedal technique, kind and extensity of emotions) were radically modified as the Polish composer's style became increasingly mature (Smendzianka 1).

Waltzes

Chopin's waltzes must be understood as stylized dances. Of these dances, the waltzes, which he composed throughout his life, represent the very character of Chopin. No form more typifies the glitter and grace of the Parisian salons than the waltz and the Chopin waltz in particular (Siepmann 98). Chopin's Waltzes are among the world's most often played piano music. They fall into two styles: gracious and brilliantly decorated, or

melancholy. John Ogdon calls them “the brightest jewels in the greatest salons of the time.” (Dubal 1).

We must not look for features in the waltzes of Chopin that create the charm of the Viennese waltzes. During his stay in Vienna he said, “I don’t have what it takes to imitate Strauss or Lanner.” Chopin’s Waltzes, graceful or nostalgic, were not meant to be danced to. Chopin, himself, maintained that they “should not be danced, and are not intended to be.” No more does he want us to consider them salon music. “I will never send another note to that scoundrel Wessel, who entitled one of my impromptus ‘A Salon Ornament’--unless it was one of my waltzes” (Gavoty 400).

His own waltzes undoubtedly reached their finest flowering in Paris, but it was in Warsaw that he had first discovered and explored the form. Like the mazurka and many other folk dances, it was a dance in triple time with a characteristic emphasis on the second beat, and some of Chopin’s earliest examples might easily be confused with urbanized mazurkas. Curiously, they also anticipate the tone and style of composers whose works were unknown to him. The beautiful A-flat Waltz of 1830, for instance, sounds remarkably like Brahms (as yet unborn), while the slightly earlier E major might almost be Schumann. Chopin’s Polish waltzes have little of the dash and bejeweled elegance of his Parisian works, and unlike most of their later siblings could easily be danced to, the notion of the idealized ‘concert’ waltz then being in its infancy. They retain something of the formalized grace and slower speeds of the minuet, with its courtly undertones, and follow their simpler structure. Only in the brilliant E minor of 1830 do we get a real foretaste of the Chopin waltz in its fullest maturity. With its cascading

introduction, the panache of its almost militaristic repeated notes and its virtuoso coda, it found its way for many decades into the repertoire of virtually every performing pianist and belongs there still (Siepmann 97-98).

With Chopin the waltzes forsook the noisy ballroom or beer-garden and became, without composer's intentions, salon pieces. And Chopin carried the waltz far beyond the point where Schubert and Weber had left it. Nine waltzes were published by the composer himself; the others (drastically edited) appeared after his death and should not be taken into account when one considers Chopin's method of putting together a complete waltz (Westrup 150).

Waltz in A-flat major, Op. 69, No. 1 was published posthumously with the B minor Waltz in 1855. The manuscript has the inscription "Pour Mlle Marie." Chopin wrote this waltz in 1835, while courting Maria Wodzinska. He had fallen in love with the young and beautiful countess and had proposed marriage to her. This waltz was given to Maria just before his departure for Paris. Marked Lento, this beautiful dance poem has often been called L'Adieu (Dubal 2-3).

It was apparently at Maria's request that he composed a waltz for her. As Jozefa tells it, Frederic presented the manuscript to Maria just before leaving for Leipzig at noon on October 3. He played it for the family as a farewell gesture, then climbed aboard the stagecoach. Jozefa wrote, "in this waltz, passionate and lyrical at the same time, the trio was composed in such a way that the note repeated twelve times in the left hand. It is reminiscent of the sound of the clock at Frauenkirch (church) striking twelve o'clock; the middle part is a passage with a rhythmic crescendo, turning into appassionato to imitate

the sinister creaking of the wheels of the carriage approaching the house” (Szulc 122-123).

Frederic and Maria vowed to meet again the following year--her parents treated him like a family member and the countess clearly favored the relationship with the famous composer--but Maria wasted no time. Within days of Chopin’s departure, she wrote him a long, gushing letter in French, describing how much he was already missed (Szulc 123).

Indeed, Chopin’s physical and, presumably, mental health was so improved in the new year, 1836, that he seems to have allowed himself to think seriously for the first time about such things as love and marriage. His thoughts and perhaps hopes centered naturally on Maria Wodzinska, whose company he had so greatly enjoyed during his stay in Dresden the previous September. With Chopin, however, it was impossible to judge what was love--or his idealized notion of it. There was the adolescent flirtation with Alexandrine de Moriolles, the daughter of the tutor of Prince Pawel, the son of Grand Duke Konstanty; he called her “Moriolka” and played with her and Prince Pawel when they were children, at Belweder Palace. Later, the friendship became more serious, and Frederic wrote Tytus Woyciechowski about her: “You know, those are my amours, which I very willingly admit.” But they never saw each other again after he left Warsaw. Then, there was the platonic veneration of Konstancja Gładkowska—“my ideal”--whom Frederic forgot quite easily once he was abroad. In the course of his first visit to Vienna, in 1829, he flirted enthusiastically with eighteen-year-old Leopoldina Blahetka, a beautiful pupil of Czerny and already a leading Viennese pianist. But it was a short visit and Chopin never saw Leopoldina again, though he mentioned her admiringly in letters to

Woyciechowski. Chopin, as a matter of fact, had a pronounced propensity for falling in love, or thinking he was in love, with countless women, but always ever so briefly (Szulc 132-133).

There is no need to assume that considerations of family pride caused Count Wodzinski to withhold his consent to the marriage: he knew quite well that the wife of Frederic Chopin would have her place in the most distinguished society in Paris. What weighed most with him was the question of Chopin's health, and in the end he was proved to be right. The only one who could be blamed was Mme Wodzinska, and then only for having been too hasty in encouraging Chopin. It will be noticed that Maria herself has scarcely been mentioned in this account, but that is hardly surprising. As the daughter of a noble Polish family she was absolutely ruled by her parents and did not question their right to arrange her life for her. Convention forbade her to reveal her feelings, so that we have no means of telling for certain whether she returned Chopin's love with an ardour equal to his. She remains a somewhat shadowy figure in his life-story and was soon to be supplanted by a woman of incomparably greater fascination: George Sand—whose real name was Aurore Dudevant (Westrup 66).

Chopin's biographer Niecks observes that "tender passion was a necessary of his existence . . . he would passionately love three women in the course of one evening party and forget them as soon as he had turned his back, while each of them imagined that she had exclusively charmed him." He adds that "Chopin was of a very impressionable nature: beauty and grace, nay, even a mere smile, kindled his enthusiasm at first sight, and an awkward look or equivocal glance was enough to disenchant him." But Maria

Wodzinska was the first real test of Frederic's desire and willingness to make a lifetime commitment, something he had always evaded, as he approached his twenty-sixth birthday. Hesitations were his hallmark and, once more, he acted as if he wished that a decision be made for him. Nevertheless there were signs that Chopin was finally considering in earnest a family life for himself even if he had no idea under what circumstances it might occur and what it might entail in terms of his work, habits, surroundings, and quality of life (Szulc 133).

Chopin's musical texts have been subjected to a more than ordinary amount of interference from editors. The ultimate reason for this can be traced to the composer's own dislike of writing out his music. Because much of his music was published simultaneously by Brandus (later Schlesinger) in Paris, Wessel in London, and Breitkopf & Hartel in Leipzig, three manuscript copies were often required for each work. For this reason Chopin frequently employed a copyist, one of whom, Julian Fontana, even went out of his way to imitate Chopin's handwriting. Fontana also wrote out and published several works after Chopin's death, claiming that he was incorporating the composer's revisions (Temperley 307). Such was the case with the first of the two waltzes from the Op. 69.

Through a comparison of recordings by two great pianists, Vladimir Ashkenazy and Artur Schnabel, it is interesting to see how the same piece can be played in two completely different ways. It is obvious that the two artists are playing from different editions. Not only do they play from different editions, but they also add to and disregard what is written on the page of those editions. This comparison will show how the

performance of a piece may be influenced through the use of different editions and through a variety of contrasting interpretative features brought to it by the player.

The major difference in playing and treatment of the waltzes, Op. 69, by the two pianists under discussion occurs because of the differences in the editions. In the first waltz, Ashkenazy plays from the edition of Julian Fontana, published after Chopin's death, and Rubinstein plays from the autographed version. The difference occurs, immediately, in the first measure. Rubinstein plays the first of the last two notes, in the right hand, as dotted-eighth and a sixteenth and Ashkenazy plays the two notes as two equal eighth notes.

Ex. 1

The image shows two musical staves for the first measure of a waltz. The left staff shows two equal eighth notes. The right staff shows a dotted-eighth and a sixteenth note, with a tempo marking 'Lento (♩ = 138)' and a dynamic marking 'p con espressione'. The right staff also includes a trill ornament and a fermata over the final note.

In measure 7, Ashkenazy plays after a quarter rest with a grace note and Rubinstein plays with out the rest but with a quarter note (e-flat) with ornaments included.

Ex. 2

The image shows two musical staves for measure 7. The left staff shows a grace note after a quarter rest. The right staff shows a quarter note (e-flat) with ornaments included. Both staves include a dynamic marking 'f' and a fermata over the final note.

Same differences occur in measures 23 and 55.

Measure 9 brings us to the similar problem as in the first measure. Again, Rubinstein plays the last two notes of the right hand as a dotted-eighth and a sixteenth while Ashkenazy plays them as two eighth notes coupled together.

Ex. 3

This happens throughout the piece where the same notes appear (measures 17, 25, 49, and 57) when section A comes back in the middle and at the end of the piece.

In measure 11, both play the same notes except Ashkenazy plays them in groups of five and three notes on the first two beats of the measure while Rubinstein plays groups of three and five after an eighth rest.

Ex. 4

At the end of the first phrase of the 'A' section, in measures 14 and 15, Rubinstein plays f-flat and e-flat as the last two notes of the last beat. Ashkenazy, however, plays e-flat only (the last quarter note of measure 14).

Ex. 5

The image shows two musical staves side-by-side. The left staff is marked 'stretto' and the right staff is marked 'riten.'. Both staves show a sequence of notes with fingerings and articulation marks. The left staff has two asterisks under the notes, and the right staff has two asterisks under the notes.

Again, same things happen as the section is repeated--in measures 30, 31, 62, and 63.

In measure 19, Rubinstein plays the notes of the last beat as three notes of equal value. Ashkenazy plays the same notes, except, he plays it as two equal notes with a grace note added.

Ex. 6

The image shows two musical staves side-by-side. The left staff shows a sequence of notes with a grace note. The right staff shows a sequence of notes with a grace note. Both staves have asterisks under the notes.

This ends the first section, section 'A'.

Section 'B' starts with an interesting difference in the left hand. In measure 33, Ashkenazy plays a b-flat dominant-seventh chord--first the a-flat, b-flat and the f-natural,

in that order, on the downbeat and then the two d-naturals added later in the same measure. However, although it is the same chord, Rubinstein plays three arpeggiated quarter notes in f-natural, g-natural, and d-natural. And there are slight differences in the left hand in the following three measures.

Ex. 7

con anima

sempre delicatissimo

Next four measures (measures 37 to 40) are very similar except for slight variation in the left hand. And in measure 39, although it is not indicated in the printed music, Rubinstein adds a grace note to the first of the last two eighth notes in the right hand.

Ex. 8

(continued on the next page)

In the second phrase of the same section, Rubinstein plays it exactly the same way as he did before in the first phrase of the same section; however, Ashkenazy plays with a slightly variation in the rhythm. In measures 41, the last two notes he plays are sixteenth followed by a dotted-eighth note and in measure 42, the first note he plays is an eighth note followed by a sixteenth rest and then a sixteenth note.

Ex. 9

This happens in following four measures.

Ex. 10



Rubinstein's treatment of the last two notes in measure 47, in which the first of the two is a dotted-eighth note and the second one a sixteenth note, is another one of Rubinstein's own ideas. In the music, it is clearly written as two equal eighth notes; however, Rubinstein decided to keep it the same way as before.

Ex. 11



This ends the second section.

Ashkenazy plays the beginning of the *ritenuto*, *con forza*, as if to indicate the return.

Rubinstein doesn't.

Ex. 12

(on the next page)

a tempo
con forza

Tad * Tad *

In measure 57, Ashkenazy adds a grace note before the third note of the measure (this happens again in measure 121).

Ex. 13

P

* Tad * Tad *

In measure 59, while Rubinstein plays as before in measure 11, Ashkenazy plays a 13-note chromatic scale divided within the first two beats of the measure (Rubinstein does play the passage the same way as in measure 27, however, not here).

Ex. 14

9

P

59

Tad *

At the end of this *ritenuto*, Ashkenazy goes back and repeats the 'B' section and the *ritenuto*, while Rubinstein goes to the next thematic idea.

The next section, section 'C', starts on the third beat of measure 64 (measure 65 in the Fontana version). At measure 72 (measure 73 in the Fontana edition), Rubinstein plays an a-flat in the descant and Ashkenazy plays an e-flat.

Ex. 15

The image shows two musical staves side-by-side. The left staff is labeled '71' and the right staff is labeled '72'. Both staves have a treble clef and a 3/4 time signature. The left staff features a triplet of eighth notes in the upper voice and a descending line in the lower voice. The right staff features a triplet of eighth notes in the upper voice, marked with 'len.' (lento), and a descending line in the lower voice. Both staves have notes marked with flats and sharps in the bass line.

This treatment creates an enormous difference in the sound and in the mood. While going to the a-flat might help to maintain a bell-like mood of the section, it creates an uneasy feeling to the hearing ear because it happens as a surprise. All along the section, in similar situations, the descant landed on e-flat. When the descant lands on the a-flat, it is not expected. This also happens at the time of a resolution, which makes it even more difficult to hear. An e-flat, however, creates a sense of finishing up an idea and also sets the measure to either repeat the same idea or to go on to the next idea--and both cases do happen in this section. Same thing happens in measures 80 and 96 (measures 81 and 97 in the Fontana version).

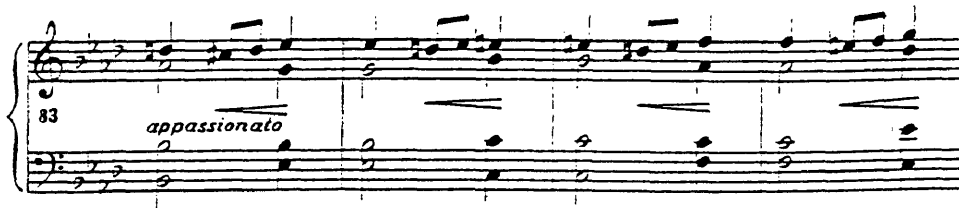
In measure 80 (measure 81 in the Fontana version), there is a major difference written in the music. In the Fontana version, in the descant, the last note of the measure is a quarter note (c-natural) which leads into the next section—which begins in the next measure. However, in the autographed version, there is not anything that leads to the next idea. It just starts right there on the third beat of the measure with a *sforzando* (there is no *sforzando* written in the Fontana version). This starts the next section, rather, abruptly and creates a significant difference in the rhythmic accent.

Ex 16



There is also an *appassionato* written in the autographed version, for this section, which is not indicated in the Fontana version.

Ex. 17



(continued on the next page)

In measure 87 (measure 88 in the Fontana version), Ashkenazy plays the last two notes of the measure, eighth notes, as an f-natural and g-natural going up to the a-flat in the next measure. But Rubinstein plays f-sharp and g-natural before the a-flat.

Ex. 18

This rhythmic difference is resolved in measure 88 (measure 89 in the Fontana version), because of the difference in length of the notes. The *ritenuto* of the initial idea of this section is started on the third beat in both versions.

Ex. 19

(on the next page)

In measure 96 (measure 97 in the Fontana version), Ashkenazy repeats the second idea of this section and comes back to the *ritenuto* (repeats both ideas of this section in its entirety, again) but Rubinstein goes back to the original idea of this waltz.

Ex. 20

There is only one difference in the playing of the two in this last section of the composition. In measure 107 (measure 124 in the Fontana version), Rubinstein plays the chromatic run as he did in measure 27. Ashkenazy on the other hand plays something that has not been played before. He plays an arpeggiation and ends on a note octave higher than Rubinstein's does.

Ex. 21

At measure 110, as if to indicate the end, Rubinstein skips the last note (the e-flat) written in the music--different than how Rubinstein has been playing this figure, all along in the piece, as in measure 15.

Ex. 22

The B-minor Waltz of Op. 69 was composed in 1829. It is the most fragile of all the waltzes of Chopin and thus the most frequently played by amateurs. It modulates into

B major and then returns to the original key, ending as it began (Gavoty 402). This often-played work was composed when Chopin was nineteen. The composer wanted it and others of his early works burned, but they were issued posthumously. (Dubal 3).

Ashkenazy and Rubinstein again play from different editions. However, this time Ashkenazy plays from the edition of Oxford University Press and Rubinstein plays from the edition of Julian Fontana. It is interesting to see the change in the choice of editions from the first waltz. In the first waltz, Ashkenazy plays from the Fontana edition but here he plays from the Oxford edition. Although there is a Fontana version available for this waltz, he chooses a different version. However, Rubinstein plays this waltz from the Fontana edition, which was not his choice for the first waltz.

The major difference in their playing is that Rubinstein's interpretation tends to be slower with lots of hesitation between phrases and Ashkenazy plays it fast with the left hand accompaniment being very waltz-like (accent on the first beat and slight differences in length of the chords between the second and the third beat--second beat is always longer than the third).

In measure 12, Rubinstein plays a chord on the third beat of the measure, in the left hand, to start the ending of the second phrase while Ashkenazy skips the third beat, also in the left hand, to prepare for the ending of the same phrase. This happens again in the next measure in the same manner.

Ex. 23

(on the next page)



In measure 13, Rubinstein plays the figure with an eighth note (tied to the last quarter note of the previous measure) and a series of five eighth notes. Ashkenazy plays with a grace note, sixteenth rest and a sixteenth note following the first note, and a series of five eighth notes.

Ex. 24



At the end of measure 16 and in the beginning of measure 17, Ashkenazy plays d-natural as the last note of the measure 16 and plays an f-sharp as the first note of the measure 17. Rubinstein plays a c-sharp to a d-natural in the same places--perhaps to end the second phrase and lead into the next by the use of a passing tone.

Ex. 25

At the end of the first section, before a new theme is introduced, Rubinstein plays a different figure than what he played before. In measure 14, he plays d-sharp and e-natural as the eighth-note couple on the third beat, however, in measure 30, he plays e-natural and g-natural (g-natural is repeated as the first note of the next measure) as the eighth-note couple of the third beat.

Ex. 26

In the next section, section 'B', although notes played are almost the same, Rubinstein's treatment carries a much slower and more mysterious and subdued character while Ashkenazy plays as if Strauss or Lanner had composed the piece. The way

Ashkenazy plays the second section has no *bel canto* quality and it is played very much like a traditional Viennese waltz.

In measure 36, Rubinstein plays a series of three eighth notes. Ashkenazy plays with a grace note, before the second eighth note, a dotted-eighth, and a sixteenth note.

Ex. 27

Ex. 27 shows two measures of piano accompaniment. The first measure features a sequence of chords with a grace note and a dotted eighth note. The second measure is marked 'simile' and shows a similar sequence of chords.

When the same idea is played for the second time, Ashkenazy adds grace notes to the repeated ideas and Rubinstein plays it the same way as before (measures 43 and 44).

Ex. 28

Ex. 28 shows a sequence of piano accompaniment with grace notes and fingerings. The notation includes a series of chords and eighth notes with fingerings (1, 2, 3, 4) and grace notes.

Except for the third-beat *tacets* (silences) in the left hand, there aren't significant differences in the left hand of this section.

After the second section, the original idea comes back. Both players play a slightly different version than the beginning. The difference in the playing of the two occurs in measure 51 and 59. They play different notes in these two places.

Ex. 29

Example 29 shows two systems of musical notation. The first system consists of a piano part (left) and a violin part (right). The piano part has a dynamic marking of *sf* and the violin part has a dynamic marking of *f*. The second system also consists of a piano part (left) and a violin part (right). The piano part has a dynamic marking of *sf* and the violin part has a dynamic marking of *f*. The notation includes fingerings and articulation marks.

In measures 60 and 61, Ashkenazy adds some ornaments, in the right hand, to color the ending of this *ritenuto*.

Ex. 30

Example 30 shows two systems of musical notation. The first system consists of a piano part (left) and a violin part (right). The piano part has a dynamic marking of *sf* and the violin part has a dynamic marking of *f*. The second system also consists of a piano part (left) and a violin part (right). The piano part has a dynamic marking of *sf* and the violin part has a dynamic marking of *f*. The notation includes fingerings and articulation marks.

In measures 62 and 63, Ashkenazy plays a different left hand. This really emphasizes the ending of the section. It thickens the chordal structure of the section.

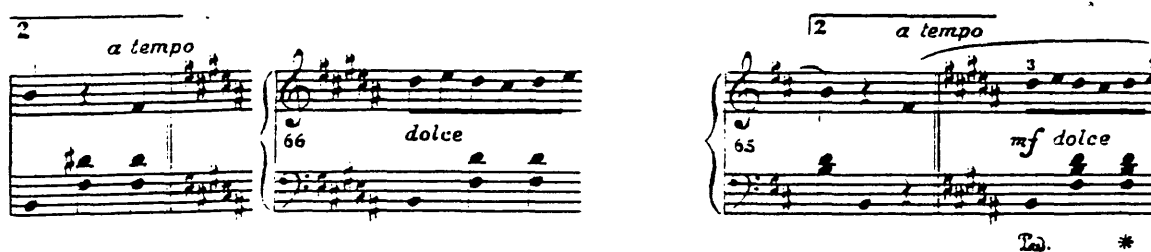
Ex. 31



Again, except for some third-beat *tacets*, not much differences occur in the left hand.

At the end of this section, comprised of a 'B' section and a repeat of the 'A' section, Ashkenazy repeats starting from measure 33, while Rubinstein moves on to the next idea, although there is a repeat indicated in the edition. The very last measure of this section, Ashkenazy plays a b-major chord, outlining the tonal center of the next section, but Rubinstein doesn't.

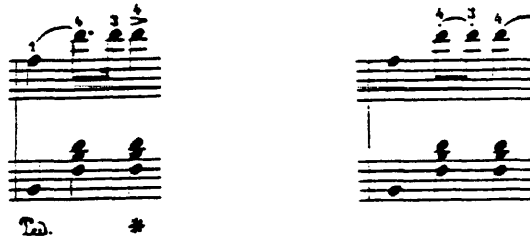
Ex. 32



In the next section, section 'C', the left-hand differences are minimal, however, Rubinstein and Ashkenazy does play different figures in the descant in measure 70.

Ex. 33

(on the next page)



And this is repeated every time similar ideas are presented (measures 71, 72, 73, 78, 79, 80, and 81).

When this new idea of the third section is repeated, as before in other sections, Rubinstein keeps it the same way except for the key change at measure 90. In the music, however, there are variety of intervals added underneath the descant.

Ex. 34



Ashkenazy does include all the intervals underneath the descant written in the music.

Ex. 35

The image displays two systems of musical notation for piano. The first system, labeled '83', features a treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 4/4 time signature. The right hand plays a melodic line with various ornaments and slurs, while the left hand provides a harmonic accompaniment of chords. Above the first few notes of the right hand, a fingering diagram is provided: a sequence of notes with fingerings 1, 2, 1, 2, 1, 2, 1, 2. A dynamic marking 'mf' is placed below the first few notes of the right hand. The second system, labeled '89', continues the piece with a 'cresc.' (crescendo) marking above the right hand's melodic line.

This makes the harmonic structure much more interesting.

Toward the end of the 'C' section, another interesting harmonic treatment occurs.

In measure 95, the quarter note of the first beat is played differently by the two.

Ashkenazy goes to a d-natural in the descant along with a minor third below, but

Rubinstein goes up, from the d-natural of the previous measure, to a d-sharp without any notes underneath. Again, this is Rubinstein's own. This is not how it is indicated in the score.

Ex. 36

The image shows two systems of musical notation for piano accompaniment. The first system consists of a grand staff with a treble and bass clef, marked with the number '94' and the instruction 'dimin.'. The second system is also a grand staff with a treble and bass clef, marked 'dimin.', and includes fingerings (5, 4, 3, 2, 1) and articulation marks (Tad., *).

The next three sections include the original 'A' and 'B' sections and a final repeat of the 'A' section (slightly different version as before). The treatment of the two pianists of these last sections is the same as before, for it is the same thing being repeated.

In the very last measure of the piece, both masters play the same notes except that the order is reversed. It is interesting how the exact same notes, played in different order, adds different feeling to the music.

Ex. 37

The image shows two systems of musical notation for piano accompaniment. The first system is a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The second system is a grand staff with a treble and bass clef, showing a different arrangement of notes.

This ends the second waltz of the Op. 69 set.

Last Years

Chopin's last years were dominated by his relationship with George Sand. In the autumn of 1836, Chopin met George Sand for the first time when she had asked Liszt to bring Chopin to see her at the house of the Countess d'Agoult. His first impression was not at all favorable, and he declined an invitation to join her house party at Nohant (near Chateauroux) during the summer of 1837. But a period of depression following the Wodzinska episode passed away as he yielded to George Sand's powers of fascination. And under the spell of a passion such as he had never before experienced, his musical imagination was roused to a pitch of excitement that was almost constantly maintained for the next nine years. Chopin gained from George Sand's affection and care a sense of security and peace of mind which hastened the final maturing of his genius. The love affair with George Sand cooled, after nine years, into a comradeship in which Chopin was the more enthusiastic partner. By May of 1847 they were separated (Brown, Hedley 296-297).

Chopin's break with George Sand marks the beginning of the last stage of his career. His health began to deteriorate rapidly and he lost all interest in composition (his last works had been handed to the publishers just before the final separation). On February 16, 1848, he gave his last concert in Paris, and the exceptional atmosphere of that evening (the hall and stairs were decorated with flowers, the audience was carefully selected) was intensified by forebodings of revolution and of the end of Louis-Philippe's reign (Brown, Hedley 298).

Chopin returned to London at the beginning of November and made his last public appearance at a concert and ball given for the benefit of Polish refugees on November 16 at the Guildhall. A week later he went back to Paris, no longer capable of composing or of giving lessons. He spent the summer of 1849 in Chaillot and in the autumn moved to his last home, at 12 place Vendôme. His sister Ludwika and other Polish friends were with him when he died at two o'clock on the morning of October 17 of that same year (Brown, Hedley 298).

There was a service at the Church of the Madeleine, where the choir and orchestra of the Paris Conservatory performed Mozart's Requiem before a congregation of four thousand. He was buried in the spot he had chosen--in Pere-Lachaise, next to his friend Bellini (Scholes 180).

Conclusion

All of Chopin's works are still being played, today. Artur Rubinstein commented: "When the first notes of Chopin sound through the concert hall, there is a happy sign of recognition. All over the world men and women know his music. They love it; they are moved by it. Yet it is not Romantic music in the Byronic sense. It does not tell stories or paint pictures. It is expressive and personal, but still a pure art." Anton Rubinstein called him "the Piano Bard, the Piano Rhapsodist, the Piano Mind, and the Piano Soul," declaring that "whether the spirit of the instrument breathed upon him, I do not know . . . but all possible expressions are found in his compositions, and are all sung by him upon this instrument" (Dubal 4).

Although he composed for the piano exclusively, his accomplishments as a composer have left him a permanent place in music history. Wherever his music is played, it is instantly recognizable. He is notable among the greater musicians because of the rather small number of works produced and the fact that by far the largest part of them belong wholly to one field. However the breadth of content and the variety of mood and manner in them imply a scope of high musicianship that links him with the greatest masters. His genius was eminently romantic in essence, and its poetic sentiment was heightened both by his strong Polish sympathies and by his growing physical disability. His sentimentality often verges upon the morbid, but is held in check by an innate impulse toward the noble and the beautiful (Pratt 280).

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