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REVIEW ESSAY

A Crash Course in Chopinology

Chopin 1810–2010: Ideas, Interpretations, Influence, 2 vols., ed. Irena Poniatowska and Zofia Chechlińska. Warsaw: The Fryderyk Chopin Institute, 2017. 587 + 672 pages. €45.

The Lyric and the Vocal Element in Instrumental Music of the Nineteenth Century, ed. Kamila Stępień-Kutera. Warsaw: The Fryderyk Chopin Institute, 2017. 344 pages. €12.

The Chopin Review, gen. ed. John Rink. 2019–. http://chopinreview.com/.

As the Western world celebrated the dawn of its third millennium, devotees of nineteenth-century art music started to prepare for a spate of bicentennials. By 2013, Hector Berlioz, Felix Mendelssohn, Robert Schumann, Franz Liszt, Giuseppe Verdi and Richard Wagner had been honoured with symposia, concerts, exhibitions and premieres the world over. These events offered opportunities for participants to take stock of who these composers once were, who they are now, and how they might endure to the next milestone anniversary.

At least far as scholarship goes, few composers of the Romantic Generation had a better showing than Frédéric Chopin, whose namesake institute in Warsaw organized a weeklong international congress that ended precisely on the composer's two-hundredth birthday. The resulting proceedings, containing 91 contributions that unfold over more than 1,250 pages across two volumes, reinforce co-editor Irena Poniatowska's recollection of the event as 'wide-ranging, open to diverse fields of study, not just the traditionally musicological – historical-analytical – but also the acoustic, genealogical, instrumentological, sociological and cultural' (1: 17–18).[1]

Indeed, when *Chopin 1810–2010: Ideas, Interpretations, Influence* (hereafter: *C2010*) is read alongside *The Lyric and the Vocal Element in Instrumental Music of the Nineteenth Century* (hereafter: *LVE*) and *The Chopin Review*, two further publications issued about the same time under the auspices of the Fryderyk Chopin Institute, an entire sub-disciplinary framework that might reasonably be called 'Chopinology'[2] emerges. Thus, rather than cover the contents of these publications in order, by section,[3] or in total, this review-essay attempts to identify the most salient ingredients needed to cook up the modern Chopinologist.

[1] Chapters in *C2010* are in either English, French or German; any translations of German or French excerpts in this review are my own.

[2] This neologism derives from a series of conferences organized by the Fryderyk Chopin Institute between 2016 and 2020. Further information can be found at https://en.chopin.nifc.pl/institute/events/conferences/year/2016–2020.

[3] *C2010* is broadly organized into four sections: 'Chopin's Personality, Heritage and Milieu', 'Interpretations of Chopin's Music', 'Chopin in Contemporary Culture', and 'The Influence of Chopin and his Music'. The final section encompasses the entire second volume.

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Following, and Sticking to, the Paper Trail

Chopin remains a composer in need of thorough documentation. His letters began to appear regularly in print as early as 1857, culminating with the publication of a two-volume critical edition in 1955.[4] Yet as Zofia Helman shows in the opening chapter of *C2010*, epistolary matters are far from resolved: new letters by or to Chopin have been discovered (or have [re]surfaced) in the last half century, a situation attested by Mariola Nałęcz's short research report in *C2010* on Chopiniana in Warsaw's National Library. Several letters need re-dating, while the recipients of others have finally been deciphered, and various people and events that proved mysterious to earlier editors have now been decoded. The revised and expanded three-volume critical edition[5] should prove especially useful in providing insight into Chopin's Warsaw years, by far still the most veiled period of his professional life.

C2010 repeatedly reinforces the value of these letters. Jerzy Miziołek, for instance, draws on them heavily to establish details surrounding Chopin's decade at the Warsaw Lyceum and the University of Warsaw – from curricula and schedules to professors and classmates. The letters also ground a fascinating overview (1: 208–219) of the composer's lifelong enthusiasm for the visual arts, which Miziołek argues should be integrated more comprehensively into any consideration of Chopin's musical aesthetics. Letters also dominate Helmut Loos's essay, which follows Chopin's appearances in the correspondence of Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy (as well as a healthy number of supplemental mentions in the letters of his sister, Fanny). Mendelssohn held Chopin in high regard as a pianist ('einer der allerersten') and composer ('geistreich'), although Chopin's compositions did not always win him over. Still, Loos provides Mendelssohn's comments – almost all available in reliable, published editions – as a hedge against a German Chopin reception that has long been dominated by the 'literary freedom' (1: 483) of Robert Schumann. Yet given the severe judgments that Chopin's music received under Ludwig Rellstab's critical pen in *Iris im Gebiete der Tonkunst* during the 1830s and 1840s (discussed in detail by Zbigniew Skowron in *C2010*), Schumann's enthusiasm makes more sense. Nevertheless, Mendelssohn's 'more realistic' observations and conclusions, argues Loos, might help begin the process of 'demythologication' (1: 483).

Indeed, a critical eye toward the correspondence can lead toward overturning, or at least nuancing, some Chopinian myths. Bruno Moysan sets himself the ambitious task of teasing out the extent to which Chopin engaged with liberal politics in his art and life. After picking apart various statements in Chopin's letters (with doses of Sand, as well), Moysan concludes that the composer 'appears as a realist and moderate' (1: 249) on par with Mendelssohn and Kalkbrenner, and far from the utopian, Promethean, revolutionary voices of Liszt and Wagner. How Chopin's politics influenced and were influenced by the larger social network in which he moved remains unclear, although Nicholas Chopin's influence, which Ewa Zarzycka charts in *C2010* primarily through epistolary evidence, should not be underestimated. Moysan hears in Chopin's music a reinvented form of pre-Revolution rationalism, a conclusion bolstered by Jolanta T. Pekacz's

[4] *Korespondencja Fryderyka Chopina*, ed. Bronisław Edward Sydow and Janusz Miketta, 2 vols. (Warsaw: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1955).

[5] To date, two volumes, covering the years 1816–1831 and 1831–1839, have appeared in print. See *Korespondencja Fryderyka Chopina*, ed. Zofia Helman, Zbigniew Skowron, and Hanna Wróblewska-Straus (Warsaw: Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2009–).

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investigation of discourse networks in the July Monarchy. Chopin, she suggests, 'positioned himself at the center of a discourse that looked at the Old Regime and the traditional aristocracy as a model, and he fashioned himself from that vantage point' (1: 128).

Such conscious positioning fanned out in many directions of Chopin's art, including publishing. To be sure, Chopin's manuscripts and first editions of his music have generated sustained scholarly interest for decades.[6] But even seemingly cut-and-dry codicological issues have been subject to revision, prompting John Rink to return to his and Christophe Grabowski's *Annotated Catalogue of Chopin's First Editions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), which has been supplemented by two online resources: Chopin First Editions Online and the Online Chopin Variorum Edition,[7] the latter of which can help 'facilitate and enhance comparative analyses of disparate types of source material, attaining a level of manipulability outstripping that manifested in extant printed editions of the music Chopin and indeed of any composer to date' (1: 42). But even when armed with such extraordinary documentation, what is the Chopinologist to do with the incomplete holograph of the Etude in F minor, Op. 25, no. 2, contained in an album assembled by the Polish composer, cellist and singer Antoni Teichmann? As Bożena Schmid-Adamczyk shows in an exhaustive examination of the manuscript, the work's disposition regarding notation and articulation differs significantly from the other manuscript (currently missing but available in facsimile) and authorized first editions. Few would argue with Schmid-Adamczyk's assertion that 'In every autograph manuscript, each note of the genius [Chopin] must be respected, since nothing replaces the original manuscript' (1: 171); but for the critical editor and discerning performer, this paradox offers no easy practical solutions.

Documents also come to the fore in Jeffrey Kallberg's satisfyingly circuitous contribution to *C2010*. Chopin's pencil, an ostensibly unassuming piece of ephemera, serves as linchpin for a rewarding overview of the composer's creative practices. Kallberg connects the pencil to 'fleeting and hasty modes of communication' (1: 102), be it croquis, caricature, offering 'immediacy of expression' (1: 106), or giving 'nuance to the present' (1: 110). Chopin employed pencils to revise, annotate, personalize, excise, or simplify the music on which he worked with his students. From a practical perspective, his use of ink (in general) for the creation of a permanent work of art versus lead for the ephemeral performance of that same music might help clarify various codicological problems, particularly as regards a universal, authentic text. From a hermeneutic perspective, Kallberg's deep dives into the vagaries of two musical sketches from the last years of the composer's life reinforce a pursuit of compositional perfection undone by his failing physical health.

Networks

Compared to most of his contemporaries, Chopin stayed out of the public eye. Yet his familial, social and professional networks extended far beyond the Parisian salons in which he spent much of his time. Some of the contributions to *C2010* establish basic facts and figures about various members of these groups. Ewa

[6] The gold standard among English-language scholarship is Jeffrey Kallberg, *Chopin at the Boundaries: Sex, History, and Musical Genre* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996).

[7] See respectively www.chopinonline.ac.uk/cfeo/ and www.chopinonline.ac.uk/ocve/.

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Stawińska-Dahlig covers Adolf Gutmann, who besides being Chopin's 'favourite pupil' also composed a hefty amount of piano music, mostly for the salon. Another close acquaintance, the short-lived Polish physician Jan Matuszyński, is given attention by Kazumi Oshima. Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger's introduction of Pauline Chazaren, 'a mostly unknown student of Chopin' (1: 45), primarily serves as a pretext for re-investigating facets of Chopin's well-known admiration for J.S. Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier*, an edition of which Chopin had in hand as he composed the Preludes, Op. 28.

Such chapters contribute small but important details to our understanding of some of Chopin's acquaintances and aficionados. More far-ranging in their consequences for future Chopin research are the contributions by Pierre Goy, Magdalena Oliferko, Nicolas Dufetel and Halina Goldberg. Goy examines the piano music of Joseph-Christoph Kessler, a pianist and composer whom Chopin, Liszt and most of the European musical establishment respected greatly in the 1820s and 1830s, but who has survived today at best as a footnote to nineteenth-century piano music. On the basis of Goy's overview of Kessler's piano music, this is an unfortunate situation, as his nocturnes, fantasies, mazurkas and etudes (especially the seminal Op. 20 set) offer a significant reportorial addition to what Carl Czerny called the 'new manner … of pianoforte playing', and whose practitioners included Thalberg, Liszt and Chopin. Indeed, the musical intersections between Chopin and Kessler, already established by previous authors[8] and amplified by Goy, are intriguing. How do Kessler's 24 Preludes, Op. 31, and Sonata, Op. 47, connect to Chopin, their dedicatee? What can be said of Chopin's posthumous reception on the basis of Kessler's Op. 69, published in 1863, a *Marcia funèbre* dedicated to Chopin's memory? Or if asked with a musical focus: how did Chopin's famous death march shape other commemorative works that followed, such as Liszt's *Funérailles*, Stephen Heller's curious *Élégie et Marche funèbre*, Op. 71, and Édouard Wolff's *Hommage à Chopin, Rêverie-Nocturne*, Op. 169?

Dufetel's chapter examines another facet of Chopin's reception (mis)shaped by those who knew him. Liszt's *F. Chopin*, published in book form in 1852 after appearing serially in *La France Musicale* a year earlier, has divided both Liszt and Chopin scholars. Rather than wading into the fractious debate concerning the book's veracity, Dufetel helps clear a path through the 'philological jungle' (2:94) that went into its creation, early reception, new edition (1879) and translations. Rather than dissertate on the numerous differences that these various versions reveal, Dufetel focuses on the ways in which Liszt responded to Chopin's Preludes, Op. 28, over a 45-year period. Liszt respected Op. 28 greatly; but when it came to modelling Chopin compositionally, he could not follow suit. Dufetel concludes that Liszt was amenable to composing ballades and polonaises because they could be shaped to conform to Liszt's programmatic orientation and principal compositional technique of thematic transformation.[9] Chopinian preludes were incompatible with Liszt's aesthetic, in which 'music cannot be confined to small

[8] See, for instance, Simon Finlow, 'The Twenty-Seven Etudes and Their Antecedents', in *The Cambridge Companion to Chopin*, ed. Jim Samson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992): 51–77, and especially Halina Goldberg, *Music in Chopin's Warsaw* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008): 192ff.

[9] Joanne Cormac's detailed study of Liszt's Weimar years shows that the structural and thematic properties of many of the symphonic poems were as much a product of circumstance as they were of long-envisioned design. See Cormac, *Liszt and the Symphonic Poem* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

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forms' (2:105). Nevertheless, there remains a substantial interpretive tradition of the Op. 28 Preludes connected to the Liszt school. Dufetel shows in the second half of his chapter just how imaginative and complicated that tradition can be, especially when it spans generations, national boundaries and serendipitous archival discoveries. His filiation of sources (illustrated nicely on 2: 112) involves not just Liszt and Chopin, but also Karol Mikuli and Wilhelm von Lenz as way stations to twentieth-century commentaries on the Preludes by Liszt's student Laura Rappoldi-Kahrer and Mikuli's student Heinrich Schenker.

While Dufetel's study of Chopin's network is rigorously documentary, Oliferko offers intertextual readings à la Julia Kristeva of selected compositions by Chopin, Liszt and Julian Fontana, whose careers overlapped in Paris in the 1830s. In the main, the musical connections Oliferko identifies from Chopin to Liszt, Chopin to Fontana, and Fontana to Liszt are compelling, but there remains the question of agency. It is very likely that Liszt's *Funerailles* connects to Chopin's Polonaise in A-flat major, Op. 53, just as it is sensible to assume that features of Chopin's pathbreaking Op. 10 Etudes would have affected the transformation of Liszt's *Étude en douze exercices* of 1826 into the *Douze Grandes Études* a decade later. Fontana's intimate knowledge of Chopin's music notwithstanding, even though the melodic shape of his F-sharp minor caprice, Op. 1, no. 2 follows that of Chopin's Op. 28, no. 8, metre, texture and harmony separate the two works. As regards Fontana's piece, Mendelssohn's piano music (see, for instance, the Song Without Words in F-sharp minor, Op. 19b, no. 5) may have been as decisive a model as Chopin's. In other words, the 'emancipation' (1: 501) from Chopin that Oliferko sees as taking place with Fontana leaving for Cuba in 1844 (a period covered by Cecilio Tieles Ferrer in *C2010*) may have already been in the making.

Goldberg raises many of the same issues as Goy, Dufetel and Oliferko – albeit in concentrated form – in her examination of the various memento albums (*Stammbücher*) that bear Chopin's hand. *Stammbücher* 'elucidate[ed] networks of private relationships that generated social and personal dialogues' (1: 185) in the nineteenth century and they offer a side of Chopin that biographers rarely articulate, perhaps partly due to the often opaque, 'insider' references that many of his inscriptions bear. A casual reader of the memento album of Alfred de Beauchesne might miss the many references to Chopin's Prelude, Op. 28, no. 20, nested in Ferdinand Hiller's 'Largo', despite the two pieces being inscribed on the same page, the former directly above the latter. Even more complex and coded is the appearance of Chopin's last song, 'Melodia', in the pages of the Countess Delfina Potocka's *Stammbuch*. In setting Zygmunt Krasiński's messianic poem, Chopin laid bare feelings of isolation and hopelessness, touched on his failing health, and tried to rouse his diminished compositional voice. Such a composition would have been antithetical to Chopin's public image, yet the 'function of this composition and the medium [and recipient] for which it was destined' (1: 195) allowed Chopin to communicate a different, but arguably more relatable, side of himself.

Contingencies of Meaning

Oliferko recognizes that the 'meaning' of her examples are not dictated by, or at least not restricted to, their creator. Musical ontologies are negotiable, contingent on an infinite number of permutations. Many of Chopin's contemporaries sought to impart meaning to their compositions via titles, programmes or extended analyses. Scholars in search of meaning have been undaunted by Chopin's wholesale

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avoidance of these tactics. Zbigniew Granat understands Chopin's haunting Prelude in A minor, Op. 28, no. 2, to be a misreading of Franz Schubert's Lied 'Nacht und Träume', 'clearly intentional and allud[ing] to memory as a musical faculty par excellence, so favoured by Romantic composers' (1: 453). (The author expands on this thesis in *LVE*, where a second song by Schubert, 'Der Wanderer', ostensibly provides Chopin with an additional set of programmatic 'gestures' (149).) Eero Tarasti takes for granted 'the Parisian oral hermeneutic tradition' (1: 229) of the Fantasy in F minor, which understood the second theme to be 'George Sand', and the third theme to represent 'Chopin and his passion'. In exhaustively arranging Chopin's output by key and mood, Zofia Chechlińska concludes that 'The expressions ascribed to particular keys [by nineteenth-century theorists and critics] certainly played a role in Chopin' (1: 352). Her underlying assumption is put to the test in the next chapter, where Andrzej Tuchowski considers five works in C minor that project musical characters that 'can convey meanings almost as precisely as words, yet by purely musical means' (1: 354).[10] Petra Weber's objective conclusions in *C2010* concerning Chopin's works in F major serve as a loud counterpoint to Tuchowski's claim.

Context allays base speculation. Given Chopin's reluctance to explain his works outright, contextualizing the environments in which they were created takes on added importance. Of course, the degree to which context impacts composition varies greatly, as many contributors to *C2010* illustrate. Jonathan D. Bellman offers a 'thick context' to explain how 'instrumental works *without* explicit programmes or explanatory captions [that is, like Chopin's] would still have been heard in similarly narrative ways by audiences well-versed in the contemporary musical vocabulary' (1:112). Jan Ladislav Dussek's *The Sufferings of the Queen of France* (1793), Fernando Sor's *Funeral March on the Death of Emperor Alexander* (1826), Franz Kotzwara's *The Battle of Prague* (1788), Daniel Steibelt's *Brittania* (1797) and *The Battle of Ulm* (1809), or Wilhelm Würfel's *Grande fantaisie lugubre au souvenir des trois héros Prince Joseph Poniatowski, Kościuszko, et Dąbrowski, composé et dediée à la nation polonaise* (1818) no longer sit on the music stands of most of today's pianists, but the stock formulas they employed and popularized to depict religiosity, grief or ruin survive in Chopin's 'artful' adaptations, whether in the First Ballade, Second Sonata, or other associative works. Similarly, in *LVE* David Rowland investigates compositions by many of the same composers cited by Bellman in order to prepare the stage for the extended left-hand techniques, pedalling procedures and melodic constructions found in Chopin's nocturnes.

The tonal dramaturgy of Chopin's Piano Sonata in B-flat minor, Op. 35 may also owe a debt to Chopin's immediate pianistic predecessors. Stefan Keym reviews important examples of modal homogeneity across multi-movement works, including Dussek's *Élégie harmonique sur la mort de son Altesse Royale le Prince Louis Ferdinand de Prusse*, Op. 61 (aka Piano Sonata no. 24, 1806), Clementi's Sonata in G minor, Op. 50, no. 3 ('Didone abandonata', 1821) and Hummel's Sonata in F-sharp minor, Op. 81 (1819). He concludes that none quite match Chopin's Sonata, whose 'Funeral March was not only the starting point of the compositional process, but also the core of the motivic structure and the heart of the emotional tragedy' (1: 375). Keym makes explicit what Bellman cautiously insinuates in adducing a strong connection between Chopin's Sonata and Schumann's *Concert*

[10] In what is presumably an editorial oversight, Tuchowski's chapter concludes with the exact same paragraph as Chechlińska's (*cf.* 1:352 and 1:372).

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sans orchestre, Op. 14, a work rechristened as a sonata 17 years after its initial composition in 1836. The connection between these two works, however, stems not so much from what they have in common musically, but rather from how they extend the dramaturgical paradigms of their predecessors, especially Beethoven.[11]

What Bellman calls the '"in the air" principle' methodologically unites chapters in *C2010* by Piotr Dahlig, Raoul Meloncelli, Marco Bizzarini, Tomasz Nowak, Martin S. Hansen and Stephanie Frakes. Dahlig's short study makes Chopin's interest in folk music plain, although the author leaves open the question of how Chopin's documented contacts with Spanish, Scottish, Swedish and Jewish music might have materialized in the Bolero, Op. 19, Tarantella, Op. 43, and Barcarolle, Op. 60. Rather than address the 'ethnic' elements of Chopin's Italianate style that these latter two works might project, Meloncelli focuses on the time-honoured connection between Chopin and the Italian *bel canto*, especially as conveyed in the operas of Vincenzo Bellini. Meloncelli's conclusions echo Bellman's, in that Chopin adopted techniques of Italian opera 'with discretion' (1: 284). Chopin's synthesis of Italian singing traditions may account in part for this discretion, for Bizzarini convincingly demonstrates how Chopin's meticulous markings seen in his Op. 2 Variations, Op. 16 Rondo and *Andante spianato*, Op. 22, show strong connections to the prescriptions of Manuel García, whose *Traité complet de l'art du chant* marks a decades-long culmination of Italian singing practice. Scholars have introduced vocabulary from other media/genres to help clarify otherwise opaque details of instrumental music, such as rhetoric or narratology, with various levels of success. It remains to be seen whether scouring Chopin's oeuvre for moments of *portamento*, *volata/volatina*, *roulade*, *timbro aperto*, *tremolo*, *canto di agilità*, or *canto spianato* would help clarify or just muddy further the sources of his instrumental-vocal style.

Nevertheless, *tempo rubato* and *cantabile* have become established features of that style. A team of scholars led by Alicja Kraft analyses recordings of the Nocturne in D-flat major, Op. 27, no. 2 across 70 years to adduce details of the former. Frakes widens the sources in her investigations of the latter term by turning to eighteenth-century Italian *opera seria*, Viennese chamber music and German treatises on instrumental music, through which she concludes that the *cantabile* during Chopin's life was to be 'natural, comfortable, or "singable"'. But paradoxically, 'cantabile also required the most advanced technique' (2: 177). While Thalberg is the go-to pianist for establishing a context for Chopin's inimitable *cantabile*, Frakes suggests that the pianist, composer and Conservatoire professor Hélène Montgeroult is far more suitable, since she could sustain sound on the unforgivingly percussive piano and 'sing' with her fingers. Montgeroult's comments on the *cantabile* in her piano treatise of 1820 nicely align with aspects of Chopin's music, whose 'cantabile' pieces round out Frakes's chapter.

A means of achieving some of these vocal effects on the piano was through the pedal. Hansen situates Chopin's piano concertos within the *stile brillante* of Field, Hummel, Kalkbrenner and Moscheles. Detailed data (see 2: 164) on the presence of pedal markings in selected concertos by these and other forerunners to Chopin allow Hansen to speak convincingly of Chopin's penchant for a pedalling practice that is as much dramatic as it is structural. Given that Chopin's two piano concertos

[11] A far more detailed consideration of this issue can be found in Andrew Davis, 'Chopin and the Romantic Sonata: The First Movement of Op. 58', *Music Theory Spectrum* 36/2 (2014): 270–94.

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come at the beginning of his professional career, it would be worth carrying Hansen's mode of inquiry into the music of Chopin's Paris years, if only to ask whether his pedalling practices shed their brilliant origins in favour of something more modern and individualized. A complete answer would require a far more extended study, but Sandra P. Rosenblum's investigation in *C2010* suggests that Chopin took into consideration which pianos would be playing pieces like the Fantasy, Op. 49, Mazurkas, Op. 50, and Berceuse, Op. 57, when he dispatched versions with different pedal markings to his English, French and German publishers.

These studies reinforce how much of Chopin's milieu has been lost to time, or at least to music scholars. Nowak hammers home this point by connecting the environments in which Chopin would have engaged with folk or social dance, especially in Warsaw, to two mazurkas using kinetographic transcription. The result is promising, as Nowak shows correspondences in 'rhythmical dance patterns and accentuation … [and] a feel for the formal structure of the dance' (1: 313). Whether Chopin is truly innovative in this regard remains unclear, since Nowak's chapter barely broaches a topic that not only impacts Chopin's mazurkas, but his other genres of (stylized) dance. Still, any attempt to put choreology and musicology in closer dialogue is commendable.

Analytical Perspectives

Even though Chopin's output seems to prioritize dance and/or ethnic elements over motivic unity or large-scale formal designs, *C2010* provides several examples of theorists attempting to understand that output within an Austro-German analytical tradition. Szklener, for instance, investigates Chopin's music for its variability, its 'tendency … to change when repeated' (1: 297), and how (perception of) form is affected. While the connection between motives/themes and structure has a long history before and after Chopin, Szklener identifies a 'periodic variability' in Chopin's music that gives 'a work greater fluidity or elasticity, at graduating changes, and at eroding symmetry and the division into formal units' (1: 303), which became more refined with time. Crucially, Szklener attributes some of this zeal for variability to Chopin's background as an improviser and devotee of Italian opera. His analyses of the First Concerto and the Barcarolle are but tips of a much bigger repertorial iceberg, but his study does inadvertently highlight the bewildering array of ways that scholars discuss and characterize the spectrum of musical change. Indeed, a reader might legitimately wonder what separates variation, variability, thematic transformation and developing variation. Are these practices new for the nineteenth century, or are they repackaged from a close (mis)reading of a tradition of ontogenetic compositional practices that can be easily traced back to Beethoven and Haydn?

Form is also the overriding concern of Nathalie Hérold, whose complex attempt to connect timbre and form leads to a re-engagement with Chopin's repeated figures. Rather than see the 'different rewritings' (1: 333) of the Barcarolle's main themes as variable à la Szklener, Hérold understands them as 'timbral variations' (1: 334), whose constituent parts she identifies via spectral analysis, hierarchical ordering and graphical presentation. Putting theory into practice, Hérold examines how three recordings of Chopin's Berceuse can, through timbral variation, create three significantly different aural impressions. Hérold's data sets are small, but they do seem to endorse the testimony of Chopin's students, namely, that his music possesses a 'formalizing organization logic vis-à-vis timbre' (1: 343). A

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chief virtue of Hérold's approach is its scalability, meaning that not just the rest of Chopin's music but that of his contemporaries could also be given over to timbral analyses. Such studies would undoubtedly enhance an understanding of Romantic timbral practices.

Another fundamental concern of the Romantics – memory – is given consideration by Adriana Ponce in selected nocturnes by Chopin. Whereas listeners (and analysts) are comfortable with memory as an act of recollection, the implication being that a musical memory can only reference something that has already sounded, Ponce claims that Chopin's approach is more complicated: '[Memory] is the recollection of a number of 'secondary' musical and affective qualities that characterize the initial material in the context of the new material. It is an understanding that depends on the possibility of a memory without an object or, at most, on a memory of the "traces" left by an object' (1: 414). Chopin is not usually counted among those nineteenth-century composers who, like Schubert, Schumann, Berlioz and Brahms, actively cultivated Romantic longing and metaphorically created musical distance, but Ponce's claims force listeners and players to rely on their imaginations, intuitions and experiences to make sense of the piecemeal memories that Chopin's music creates. Indeed, the hermeneutic options posed by Chopin's music is on full display in *LVE*, where Wojciech Nowik and Lauri Suurpää offer competing analyses of the Nocturne in C minor, Op. 48, no. 1. Nowik recreates the work as poetic, political and Polish, whereas Suurpää hears the unfolding of a tragic operatic *scena* without words.

Analytical and aural intimation is also called for by David Heyer, Antonio Cascelli and Anatole Leikin. Heyer and Cascelli apply Schenkerian analysis to examine 'hidden' features of Chopin's two 'chorale' nocturnes – in C-sharp minor (*Lento con gran espressione*) and A-flat major, Op. 32, no. 2 – and the finale of the Second Sonata, Op. 35, respectively. As additional evidence that could bolster Ponce's claims vis-à-vis non-linear memory, Heyer hears the chorales return numerous times and at different levels. The phenomenon is particularly well documented in the A-flat major Nocturne, where 'hidden repetitions' of the chorale's melody not only appear numerously in the outer A sections, but do so in symmetrical patterns, thus also impacting aspects of the Nocturne's deeper sub-structure. Cascelli's evaluation of Schenker's graphs of the Op. 35 finale, in which 'layers of structural signification … collide at a moment of disorientation that is clarified only when the structural tonic returns, well into the reprise' (1: 547), helps account for the unease that reviewers since Schumann have felt for this opaque movement.

The Op. 35 finale has been justifiably likened to an etude or prelude. Ascertaining the extent to which Chopin's Preludes Op. 28 belie large-scale cohesion is Leikin's goal. The clearest point of contact is with Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier* (recall Eigeldinger's chapter, discussed above), although other, less famous, pieces may have been 'in the air' when Chopin set pen to paper around 1835. Leikin, however, argues that Alphonse de Lamartine's poem *Les Préludes* and the sequence from the Requiem Mass, *Dies irae*, are in fact chiefly responsible for the symbolic character and motivic construction of Op. 28. While he briefly investigates the theme of death in *Les Préludes*, Leikin disassembles the *Dies irae* into a series of motivic cells, which he then 'extrapolate[s]' (1: 509) into 29 motivic variants of primes, inversions, retrograde inversions, 'partial' inversions and retrograde inversions, and 'abbreviations'. Such granular analyses undoubtedly invite criticism, especially since there is no evidence of Chopin intending Op. 28 to be 'essentially a piano requiem in twenty-four movements' (1: 518). Hartmuth Kinzler's analysis of the Preludes in *C2010* as built out of two abstract 'generative ideas' is a more

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generalized version of Leikin's model, and thus similarly invites counterarguments. Still, Leikin's attempts to employ analytical observations to solve problems of performance (e.g., pedalling in the B-flat minor Prelude) is refreshing.

Discerning Influence

Despite Chopin's peripheral presence in Arnold Schoenberg's own writings and works (as Marcin Krajewski explains in *C2010*), Leikin's proto-Schoenbergian analytical framework speaks to the persistent influence that Chopin has exerted on European musical culture since his death in 1849, as well as the heuristic methods that scholars have used to establish it. Harald Krebs, Stephen Downes, Iza Nemirovskaya, Yvan Nommick, Agnieszka Kościelak-Nadolska, Audronė Žiūraitytė and James William Sobaskie offer numerous perspectives in *C2010* on ways in which Chopin's influence may be discerned in the compositions, emulations and attitudes of musicians that followed in his wake.

Krebs offers a laudably cautious model for establishing direct influence, by discussing four mazurkas written by the Munich-based composer Josephine Lang in the mid-1830s. Chopin spent some time in the city in the summer of 1831, where the two musicians probably met. With definitive evidence of a meeting lacking, however, Krebs is careful to explore only 'Chopin's impression on her' (2: 50) by comparing his published mazurkas through 1836 (Opp. 6, 7, 14 and 24) with her own. The musical evidence he presents is reasonable, but there are no smoking guns among the correspondences. Probably the most compelling evidence of Chopin's influence are the subtitles for her Mazurkas in F minor ('Zum Andenken an Chopin') and G minor ('Erinnerung an Chopin'), which suggest an unusually close level of devotion, especially in the 1830s. The unique nature of Lang's contributions, to say nothing of the commemorative culture to which she and Chopin belong, could be expanded by including Clara Wieck, whose *Soirées musicales*, Op. 6, features two mazurkas, a notturno, a ballade and a polonaise. Wieck had yet to meet Chopin when she published this opus in 1836, yet her nod to him is unmistakable, albeit in ways far different than Lang's homages.[12]

Nemirovskaya takes a different tack in establishing aspects of Chopin's influence on Tchaikovsky's ballads. Suggesting that the two composers 'are linked by the genres of "story" and "legend", marked with tragic content, an epic tenor of narration, a specific serenity to the melodic motives, a general dramatic context and a tragic denouement' (1: 490), Nemirovskaya explores the 'symphonic ballad' *The Voyevoda* (after Mickiewicz), Op. 78, as well as selected vocal ballads, 'ballad-like' themes and sections of Tchaikovsky's symphonic works. With neither recourse to primary sources nor engagement with foundational scholarship, the result is an expansive, albeit often unfocused, consideration of a topic that was extremely important to Tchaikovsky and his colleagues (especially The Five) regarding the future of Russian music. Indeed, as Irina Nikolska shows in a short overview in *C2010*, during this period Vladimir Stasov manipulated the

[12] Regarding this specific connection, see Daniel Gallagher, 'Between Paris and Leipzig: Encountering Chopin in the music of Clara Schumann', in *Chopin in Paris: The 1830s*, ed. Arthur Szklener and Magdalena Chylińska (Warsaw: Narodowy Instytut Fryderyka Chopina, 2006): 9–22. The various codes associated with the nocturne / notturno are dissected by Jeffrey Kallberg in 'The Harmony of the Tea Table: Gender and Ideology in the Piano Nocturne', in *Chopin at the Boundaries*, 30–61.

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understanding of Chopin's music to advance his anti-Hanslick, pro-programmatic critical agenda.

Although almost eight decades separate the careers of Chopin and Manuel de Falla, Nommick shows a deep appreciation of the latter for the former. Falla's pianistic family tree stretched back to Chopin via Georges Mathias and José Tragó – and more generally benefitted from a robust Spanish interest in French music and piano technique, anchored by Chopin and Kalkbrenner, which M. Carmen García Mallo commandingly covers in *C2010*. Perhaps more important, however, was Falla's deep appreciation for Chopin's compositional aesthetic, which included 'the search for the essentials, for concision, for perfection; a rejection of monotony, of bloat, of excessive pathos; the rigorous selection of musical materials and compositional procedures' (2: 515). Chopin's compositional style is easily discernible in Falla's Mazurka (c. 1899) and Nocturne (c. 1896), although Fauré's shadow also hovers over the latter; and it is most intriguing in *Andalouse* (from the *Pièces espagnoles*), the opéra comique *Fuego fatuo* (aka *Feu follet*) and *Balada de Mallorca*. Composed over a 25-year period, these works are testaments to the ways in which Chopin repeatedly guided Falla's 'musical trajectory' (2: 529) through modernism's passive-aggressive responses to musical Romanticism.

Apparently immune to these swings was Sergei Bortkiewicz, whose piano music Kościelak-Nadolska investigates as paraphrases of, homages to and resonances with Chopin. On the basis of the included examples, Bortkiewicz's early music seems shockingly Chopinesque; little wonder that the *New Grove* dismisses him as someone who 'mastered the skills of the past without adding anything distinctly personal or original'.[13] Kościelak-Nadolska is more charitable, suggesting that Bortkiewicz's frequent allusions are chimerical rather than derivative, operating in thematic, formal, affective and atmospheric counterpoint with their aged sources of inspiration.

That dialectic is still very much at work today, as Žiūraitytė shows in a survey of modern Lithuanian compositions. Juozas Gruodis's *À la Chopin* (1921), Osvaldas Balakauskas's *Chopin-Hauer* (1990) and Vidmantas Bartulis's *I like Chopin. Sonata in B minor* (2000) bookmark an extensive intertextual analysis of Onutė Narbutaitė's *Autumn ritornello. Hommage à Fryderyk* (prem. 1999), a piano quartet that draws on 13 distinct pieces from Chopin's pianistic oeuvre. The composer's preface to the *Autumn ritornello* (reproduced on 2: 574) seems to recommend that the listener exercise a critical detachment; yet Žiūraitytė is clearly won over by the work, going so far as to conclude that 'one can find not only intertextual links, but also the presence of Chopin himself. … [The work charts] a genuinely Romantic journey from the material world into the spiritual realm' (2: 581).

Another line of influence concerns stylistic borrowings, of appropriating elements of Chopin's style. When done 'well', scholars speak of 'creative responses'; otherwise, such acts are deemed derivative, unimaginative or parodistic. Sobaskie, arguing how Gabriel Fauré, 'like that of any successful artist, depended equally on appropriating stylistic and structural elements he admired in the music of his predecessors and merging them with his own preferences and innovations' (2: 604), charts connections between Fauré's predilection for 'modal suggestion, precursive prolongation and musical dramatization' (2: 590) and Chopin's mazurkas,

[13] Boris Schwarz, revised by Sigrid Wiesmann, 'Bortkiewicz [Bortkievich], Sergei [Sergey] Eduardovich', *Grove Music Online*, *Oxford Music Online*, https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.03637.

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preludes and ballades, respectively. In a similar vein, the unique contours of the mazurkas, nocturnes and ballades that Alexandre Tansman peppered throughout his piano albums, suites and sonatas speak to an 'aesthetic attitude' (2:448), as Małgorzata Gamrat calls it, similar to Chopin's.

In other cultural environments, however, those same models could lead to a composer's ruin. Downes compares the reception of music by Anatoly Lyadov and Alexander Scriabin, particularly against 'the confluence of maximalisation and Chopinesque miniaturism' (2: 483) that hit Russia at the turn of the twentieth century. Lyadov ostensibly suffered from a manneristic, unnatural, inartistic response to Chopin, whereas Scriabin's 'miniaturization of the sonata' (2: 487), begun in 1903 with the Fourth Sonata, represented a natural development of Chopin's 'generic interpolations of miniatures in the larger works' (2: 486). Chopin's influence, in short, was varied and unpredictable, with one person lauding the very same thing that another might damn.

Documenting Reception

Diagnosing influence can be a challenging and controversial activity. For every epigone like Lang or Bortkiewicz, there is a disruptor like Tchaikovsky or Falla. Indeed, Magdalena Chylińska, in a thorough consideration of Juliusz Zarębski's piano music, preaches caution, lest scholars 'take elements of works that are common characteristics of a particular genre, or general elements of the compositional technique of the time, to be features connecting the works of two particular composers' (2: 470). Documenting reception – where the burden of proof moves from establishing a one-to-one relationship to a one-to-many – might seem more straightforward, but the potential pitfalls are equally numerous. Indeed, Jiří Kopecký, Rosalba Agresta, James Methuen-Campbell, Rafał Ciesielski, Barbara Literska, Joachim Draheim and Alicia C. Levin show how the spread of Chopin's name and music resulted in complicated negotiations of inherited tradition, local custom, self-interest, and aesthetic and political ideologies.

Kopecký, for instance, explores how the search for a distinctly Czech musical style found its origins in Chopin, who, according to propagandists like Max Konopásek, was 'the first Slavic genius' and 'the mature model for non-German composers' (2: 546). Bedřich Smetana was the first Czech composer to be tested against this criterion, whose piano music, despite clear debts to Liszt, employs modal mixing, manipulates triple (i.e., dance) metres, and invests accompaniments with ingenious counterpoint à la Chopin. While Kopecký's examples of the Chopinesque in the music of Antonín Dvořák and Leoš Janáček are less successful, the author convincingly shows that Chopin remained a foundational figure in the conception of a 'Czech-Slavic style' well into the early twentieth century. An equally receptive – albeit less political – environment seems to have existed in Milan, where, according to Silvia Del Zoppo in *LVE*, Francesco Sangalli and especially Giovanni Rinaldi turned to Chopin's music for compositional and technical inspiration following the death of the Italian pianist and pedagogue Francesco Pollini in 1846.

The situation was quite different in England, however, where Chopin enjoyed lasting success in the marketplace and on the concert stage but never became a figure of national cultural importance. Agresta's data show a gradual increase in performances of Chopin's music in the second half of the century thanks to locals like Charles Hallé and Walter Bache and visitors like Anna Yesipova and Hans von

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Bülow, whose all-Chopin concert on 7 April 1875 was the first of its kind in the Empire and precipitated Chopin's entrance into the English musical pantheon. (Bülow, along with Sophie Popper-Menter and Anton Rubinstein, also helped spread Chopin's music throughout Denmark; prior to their visits in the early 1880s, Knud Ketting documents an extremely muted reception.) Nevertheless, critics remained divided on much of Chopin's non-Polish music, especially the sonatas and concertos. That such music was still being met with critical disdain in the English-speaking world prompted, as James Methuen-Campbell shows, James Huneker's defence of 1900, *Chopin: The Man and His Music*, which 'elevated Chopin's music from the notes of the score into some idealised realm of poetry' (2: 206).

Huneker's *Chopin* is part of a brand some 70 years in the making. As Ciesielski reminds readers, a brand can operate on many levels, 'such as its creation, its projection in visual form, its promotion, its advertising and public relations, its strategic management, its placement in the market, etc.'. (1: 552–553). Chopinology has rarely engaged with these aspects of reception,[14] but a few contributors to *C2010* prove to be an exception. While Barbara Pabjan's data show that Chopin is known by name but largely dismissed in Poland today (see, for instance, 1: 572), Literska's examination of a dizzying number of arrangements, adaptations and (depending on one's tastes) derangements that appeared between 1830 and 1919 show the growth of a robust brand shaped by practice and ideology. On the one hand, some of Chopin's works were simplified for domestic use while others were made more difficult for the concert hall; on the other, such changes also reflected a conscious effort among arrangers and publishers to market Chopin as either rigorous (Germany), sentimental (Russia), sensitive, delicate and emotional (France), or naïve and demotic (England and Poland). Literska collates thousands of arrangements to arrive at these conclusions, but in his chapter, Draheim is able to hone in on a much smaller subset – four-hand music – to illustrate the 'unique form of musical communication between like-minded musicians' (2: 66–67) that such a format allowed. Chopin performed four-hand music with Liszt, Hiller and Moscheles, as well as students, during his Paris years, and intimates of his youth in Warsaw. The Rondo in C major, Op. 73, Variations in D major (on a National Air of Moore) and F major, and perhaps even a self-made arrangement of his Op. 1 Rondo in C minor, are evidence of the social value he placed in the four-hand medium.

Beyond introducing readers and performers to these overlooked compositions, a brand-driven mindset can also help scholars dig out of entrenched 'facts' of reception. Levin's chapter, for instance, questions the image of the 'soulful Polish anti-virtuoso' (2: 133) that Chopin apparently brought with him to the French capital. If the image is true, at the very least it did not come into being organically: Levin credits Kalkbrenner both as an important broker of Chopin's success and model for the Pole's behaviour in Paris's dog-eat-dog salon culture. Kalkbrenner counselled Chopin, rallied a vast network of local contacts, and arranged for the Salle Pleyel to host Chopin's debut concert. Chopin followed Kalkbrenner in teaching well-to-do amateurs and published (and strategically dedicated) dances, exotic miniatures, and other types of pieces that reinforced his connection to the Parisian elite while simultaneously distancing himself from titans of the concert stage like Liszt and Thalberg. Chopin, in short, was fully

[14] An important exception is Wojciech Bońkowski, *Editions of Chopin's Works in the Nineteenth Century: Aspects of Reception History* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2016).

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aware of the brand that he was creating for himself, which his 'social calculations' (2: 141) all but prove.

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Poniatowska is keen to point out that *C2010* has benefitted from an unprecedented number of non-Polish contributors. Indeed, its two volumes offer a comprehensive, international digest of the contemporary scholarly landscape concerning Chopin. Sources are the bedrock on which cautious interpretation takes place. Analytical models derived from Austro-German repertoire are preferred. Influence and reception are etiologic in method. In short, Chopin the artist, Chopin the model, Chopin the brand, Chopin the exploited – these themes are amply covered in *C2010*.

However, Chopin the infirm, Chopin the lover, or Chopin the tactician are less conspicuous. Jordi Desola's investigation of Chopin's ailments during his stay in Mallorca is a welcome addition, but a full account, say, of how his frail health affected his reception, has yet to be written. The Chopin–Sand affair remains wide open, despite a few mentions throughout *C2010* of her activities. Chopin's chamber music goes unreviewed and uncontextualized, as do all but one of his songs. His letters and related primary sources are taken at face value, rarely inviting the same level of scepticism as those of Liszt, Wagner or Berlioz. And David Kasunic's mix of Schenkerian analysis, reception history, comparative philology and editorial practice in order to 'link piano technique to compositional craft and body movement to sound' (2: 373) is unusual for its intermethodological ambition, as most analyses in *C2010* stick with a single mode of investigative or analytic inquiry.

To be sure, absence of these topics or approaches is not tantamount to their suppression or prohibition – *C2010* is, after all, extensive but not exhaustive. In this regard, then, *The Chopin Review* will prove decisive in charting new paths for the twenty-first-century Chopinologist. Its publisher promises 'new research, translations of significant and canonic articles, and transcriptions of papers and panel discussions from important symposia and conferences', as well as a review section that features 'informed discussion of books … recordings and films' (3). The first two issues do in fact seem to live up to that claim, with coverage ranging from recent international piano competitions to Chopin's appearances in Russian poetry during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[15] Taken as a whole, *C2010*, *LVE* and *The Chopin Review* show that, despite Chopin's enduring (if misleading) reputation as a miniaturist, his life and his music have taken – and will continue to take – listener, performer and scholar in nearly limitless directions.

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[15] As of 6 November 2019, complete issues of *The Chopin Review* are available for free at http://chopinreview.com/.

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