

THE STORY OF FREDERIC CHOPIN.

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FORWARD

The general purpose of this investigation is to evaluate the life and works of Frederic Chopin. To arrive at this objective, a study of the social history of the Romantic era, a study of Chopin's life, and an investigation of his compositional style will be made.

Under social history is found a general historical background, which, in turn, is comprised of social trends of the period, religious factors, and artistic values in the field of the fine arts.

Concerning his life story, I have attempted to make it, insofar as possible, devoid of music, and save this last item until later in the paper.

Chopin being well-known as a teacher and as a piano player, this section precedes one concerning his compositional style. About his style I have included his early training and many of the factors bearing influence on it, regarding melody, rhythm, and harmony. As a last section in the paper, I have included illustrations of some of the characteristics of his compositional style.

(Note: If any of the illustrations seem to be biased, it is because I have played most of them and they are personal favorites.)

J. K.

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Part I

SOCIAL HISTORY OF THE ROMANTIC ERA

The years 1810 to 1829 represent the Napoleonic Era and its overthrow in Europe. Prior to this time the czar of Russia, Czar Alexander I, had had a benevolent interest in Poland in that he wanted to reconstruct Poland (as it was before its partition,) into a constitutional state with himself as the ruler. This idea was considered at the Vienna Conference, but was not completed because Prussia and Austria kept their respective shares of the former Poland. However, part of it did become a state and the czar gave it a fairly liberal administration until his death in 1825.

Alexander I was succeeded by Czar Nicholas I. In 1830 there were a series of revolutions, and this new ruler, who was autocratic by nature, had no sympathy with the Poles; consequently, many of their privileges were shut off. Poland was not the only country to be touched by revolt at this time, since there seemed to be a wave of revolutions sweeping over Europe. In France, where this crisis started, Louis Philippe, of the House of Orleon, came into office with his liberal middle-class constitution. This was followed by similar uprisings in Germany and Belgium.

The Poles aspired to complete their independence, and the year 1831 marked another revolt which was completely unsuccessful. They were repressed savagely by Nicholas, who unmercifully destroyed their former mode of existence as a semi-autonomous state; Poland was then absorbed by Russia as a conquered province. After such an era of hope, the Poles were at that time a shattered and conquered people. Nicholas endeavored to extinguish every vestige of Polish nationality, and attempted to "root out" the Poles by forcing them to use the Russian language in their schools and official documents. Even though he tried to humiliate them, Polish nationality became stronger after the destruction of their country.

In 1848 was another revolutionary outbreak in Europe, but Russia seemed so much satisfied by the rule of Nicholas that there was not even a hint of revolt there. Consequently, Poland remained as it was.

With the political uprising came an artistic uprising also, and, art being an expression of life, there developed an interest in the individual.

Religiously speaking, there was a great deal of feeling between Russia and Poland. Ever since their acceptance of Christianity several centuries before this period, the Poles had adopted the Pope in Rome as their tenet in Roman Catholicism. On the other hand, the Russians held to the Greek Orthodoxy belief, never having accepted the authority of the Pope.

General aspects of artistic values of the Romantic Era, which extended roughly from the year 1820 to 1900, were very closely related in the field of the fine arts. Painting and sculpture, the drama, literature, and music, all were overshadowed by individualism, emotionalism, subjectivity, and nationalism. Favorite subjects for artistic works included the ancient (with special emphasis on the medieval), the supernatural (emphasizing witches, etc.), the wierd, and the mystic.¹ Among the specific musical characteristics of the era were these: (1) Melody was characterized by a warmth of personal feeling and irregular phraseology; (2) New chords and chord progressions were introduced; (3) Contrary to the composers of the Classical Period, remote keys and varied key schemes were utilized; (4) Counterpoint seemed to be going out of style, and, therefore, was seldom used; (5) The piano was the chief medium of musical expression; and (6) In piano music, the classical sonata was being replaced by various free forms, such as nocturnes.²

Part II
THE LIFE OF CHOPIN

Fryderyk Franciszek Chopin was born February 22, 1810, at Zelazowa Wola, Poland, located just outside Warsaw. The only son of Justina Krzyanowska (of Polish petty nobility) and Nicholas Choppen (a Frenchman), he saw his first light of day in a tiny cottage which was actually servants' quarters on the estate of Count Skarbek. Although some writers say that Zelazowa Wola was a small village, it wasn't a village at all, but the formal name of the Skarbek estate instead.³

Nicholas Choppen, who was originally from Nancy, Lorraine, came to Poland from France as a soldier to aid in that country's constant struggle for independence. It was during this time that he met, and later married, Justina Drzyanowska. After his release from army life, Choppen kept a private school. At that time the name Choppen suddenly became Poland-ized, and that family was known thereafter as Chopin.

There has been some dispute as to whether Chopin ever really was French. Others insist that Chopin is a Frenchified name of the Polish "Szopa".⁴ At any rate, little Frederic Francois came into the world after the triple murder of his native land; he was born just in time to be an eye-witness to the most deplorable phases of the desperate struggle for national self-determination. He grew up, then, in a country most bitterly resentful at having been betrayed by the very man (Napoleon Bonaparte) that they had worshipped with such blind and loyal devotion.

There was no past genius in Chopin's family, although his father played the flute and the violin and his mother dabbled at the piano. Immaterially concerned were his godparents who were both musicians. After becoming aware that their son was a child prodigy, the Chopins

moved to one of the better areas of Warsaw - in spite of their poverty - in order that Frederic could come into contact with the socially prominent and artistic life of Warsaw.

Here he became associated with the Polish nobility who attended his father's school. Thus it was due to the Radziwill family that Chopin had aristocratic surroundings and associations and thence his delicate refinement.⁵

Usually depicted as a frail and sickly individual, it is surprising to learn that Chopin was quite the opposite during the greater part of his life. In his childhood he was completely physically fit and had the usual boyhood interests. A precocious child, his quick wit and good sense of humor gained him early popularity.

His general education took place at the Warsaw Lyceum where his father was then teaching. At sixteen, this part of his secondary education being over, he went to the Principal Music School, which was the music department of the Warsaw Conservatory, for three years. His holidays were spent in the country, where he absorbed the national song and dance form which he put to remarkable usage during his compositional career. Nothing that concerned the life and art of Poland failed to interest Chopin. He became acquainted with the various features of his land and its legends, including science, literature, music, and art and their respective contributions to Poland.

Chopin, the composer, is considered a member of Poland's national quartette. Others of the quartette include Mickiewicz, the national poet, Matyko, the national painter, and Sienkiewicz, the national historian in fiction.⁶

Unlike many professionals, Chopin had a delightful disposition, free from the pettiness and jealousy that often mar artistic natures. He was master of a pithy language colored with philosophical humor. An excellent sketcher, Chopin could draw brilliant caricatures of people whom he found to be unsympathetic or amusing. His wit, which fascinated some and irritated others, reflected in his art, and he judged, characterized, and joked about himself the same as he did anyone else.

During the latter part of his life Chopin became interested in the theater, and in 1848 he collaborated with his sister to write a one-act comedy entitled "The Mistake; or the Pretended Rogue."⁷

Known to be one of the most nationalistic composers of the Romantic period, Chopin seldom discussed politics. However, he did say that "The songs and reveries of the Polish folk constituted a spiritual deposit, a legacy of the past and living tradition, and the only pure spring of life to the dying organism of the nation."⁸

He used to say that his life was an episode without beginning and with a bad end. Although he never married, love affairs played an important role in his life. Among his "admirers" were Delfina Potocka (a singer, pianist, and composer), Konstancja Gladkowska (opera singer), Maria Wodzinska (sister of a school mate of his), and Amandine Lucile Aurore Dudevant nee Dupin, alias the trouser-wearing, cigar-smoking George Sand.⁹ Much has been said about this latter name and Chopin, but he was happy with her for eight years. From the time that he met her at a Christmas party in 1836, that period of his liason was one in which Chopin produced some of his best works. His instant like for this woman, who was six years his senior, soon developed into love; and her motherly instinct toward him seemed to give him what he most needed: care, companionship, and security.

Chopin was not really sick until the last ten years of his life. The real delicacy lay in his nervous system and he carried sensitive-ness and refinement to fault. The first serious breakdown in health occurred in the winter of 1838-1839 after an attack of influenza; consequently, he spent the winter on the island of Majorca with George Sand and her three children. Then, all of them left for Marseilles where Chopin spent the spring in convalescence. Thereafter, he spent four months of every year, usually the summers, at Nohant (Sand's chateau), where the bulk of his best work was produced. Their winters were spent more or less together in Paris.

The most talked about episode in Chopin's life was his relationship with George Sand. They eventually parted, in 1846, owing to fraying nerves on both sides and her unruly children. The house was finally divided into two warring camps with her son Maurice, her adopted daughter Augustine, and George Sand, against her daughter Solange and Chopin. About him, George Sand wrote, "The delicacy of his constitution rendered him interesting in the eyes of women. The full yet graceful cultivation of his mind, the captivating originality of his conversation, gained for him the attention of the cleverest men; while the less highly cultivated liked him for the exquisite courtesy of his manner."¹⁰ She later wrote a book about him called A Winter in Majorca.¹¹

Pictures are many of this well-known and well-loved romanticist. He was painted by many aspiring portraitists, among them his own contemporary, Eugene Delacroix.

Chopin was an easy victim to the myth that Poland was the Savior of Christianity in that she had given up her independence because she couldn't bear to be selfish with her neighbors.¹²

Thus it was in an atmosphere of Polish propoganda that he lived and died. Since his parents wanted him to go abroad, (during the reign of Nicholas I, 1829), Chopin left Poland for Vienna where he gave two public concerts. In 1830 he left Warsaw for Paris never to return to his native land again. His parents' finally went abroad, to Carlsbad, in 1835 and it was here that Chopin last saw them.

When the Cossacks let loose on Warsaw after the first outbreak of disorder, they knew they must fear this musical agitator; therefore they broke into his house, got his piano, and threw it out the window and used it for kindling wood.¹³ Other writers say that Chopin's home at Zelazowa Wola was ravaged during World War II by the Germans, and that, when the Chopin Institute at Warsaw took it over in 1946, the only remaining piece of furniture was his piano.¹⁴ In fact there was no other reminder of his birth place at all except for a monument in the yard, and the entire Skarbek estate was being used for agricultural purposes. (During World War II, also, the Germans forbade the performances of his national dances, such as the ~~Mazurkas~~ Mazurkas and Polonaises, and his "Revolutionary" Etude).

The Parisian Revolution of 1848 found Chopin in England, where his health grew steadily worse. It is said that his quarrel with George Sand hastened and embittered his last days. However, the anonymous help of his Scottish friend and pupil, Miss Jane Sterling, saved him from much discomfort and want when his income ceased due to his inability to continue his teaching, performing, or composing. He then returned to Paris, and from that time to his dying day tuberculosis was literally consuming him. Although his was a constant struggle with this disease, he did enjoy a last bit of happiness when Delfina Potocka came to see him (at

his request) and sang for him just before he died. Present at his deathbed, October 17, 1849, at the final hour were his sister, Ludwika, Princess Czartoryska, and Solange Clesinger (George Sand's daughter). Although not much is said about Chopin's religious life, it is known that he belonged to the Roman Catholic parish,¹⁵ and he was, consequently, buried from Madeleine, in the cemetery of Pere Lachaise October 30. His heart was placed in a mortuary urn and eventually enshrined in the Church of the Holy Cross at Warsaw where it remains today.¹⁶ His funeral service at Madeleine and the procession to Pere Lachaise was one of the important events of Parisian life in the year 1849. Chopin's own funeral march (Marche Funebre from Sonata in B minor, Op. 36) was arranged for orchestra, and Lefebure Wely played two of his Preludes (the one in E minor and the one in B minor from the 24 which make up his Op. 28) on the organ at this occasion.¹⁷

The one hundredth anniversary of Chopin's death was observed throughout the world in 1949; celebrations of the man's fame were carried out by means of concerts, recitals, and little festivals of music. Even the Holy Cross Church of Warsaw observed the hundredth anniversary by singing a solemn mass. In the United States, too, this most fantastic poet of the romantic school was known and loved. Owing to him the Kosciuszko Foundation House - the only institution in America promoting cultural relationship between Poland and America on a non-political basis - was established.

After Chopin's death, the great pianist, Franz Liszt, said that posterity would rank him even better than did his contemporaries, and the last fifty years has seen a steady increase in his popularity.¹⁸ Camille Bellaigue, the distinguished French musical essayist, said of him; "The heart of his nation beat in his breast. I know of no other

musician who is a greater patriot than he. He was a Pole in far greater degree than any Frenchman was ever a Frenchman, any Italian an Italian, or any German a German. He is a Pole, and nothing but a Pole; and from that devastated, murdered country his music rises like its immortal soul."¹⁹

Part III

CHOPIN AS A TEACHER AND AS A PERFORMER

It has been said that the work of any romanticist is autobiographical,²⁰ and Frederic Francois Chopin is no exception. He felt that the artist's real business is with human impulses themselves, the most familiar and the least understood of earthly facts, and though he neither preaches nor paints, his art is decorative and dramatic; it is "soul written in sound."²¹ He looks to the heart and soul of man for the nuances of every feeling which he transfers to music.

When he was only six years old Chopin could improvise, and showed his musical ability as a pianist and composer; thus his musical education began at an early age. At seven, he was considered to be Mozart's successor, and at eight he made his debut at a charity concert. However, the great romanticist, Robert Schumann, is said to have "discovered" him and to have given impulse to the popularity of Chopin's works and his piano playing in his magazine entitled Neue Zeitschrift fur Musik, the first critical journal within the field of music.²² It was said that the "rapid and enduring fame in Germany of Schumann's only true rival was due to Schumann himself."²³

Chopin's going abroad being attributed to the persuasion of his friends and family, he visited Berlin in 1828, and then Vienna. It was in Vienna that he met and fell in love with Constantina (or Konstancja) Gladkowska; since this was his first serious love affair, its termination probably influenced the deepening of the emotional side of his character. From Vienna he went to Paris, and it was here that he decided to take lessons from Kalkbrenner, one of the finer piano teachers of the day; however, after his first interview with this temperamental maestro, Chopin changed his mind, and in spite of Kalkbrenner, became one of the most admired pianists and fashionable teachers of the day. He journeyed to Dresden in 1835, where he met the next lady in his life Marie Wodzinska, the daughter of a Polish count. Even though he proposed to her and wasn't accepted by her

family, he didn't seem to suffer any "heartbreak", or, if he did, it wasn't noticeable as far as his music was concerned. Chopin also toured Breslau and Prague at this time. In spite of the fact that Chopin was now a legal Russian subject, he had difficulty in securing a visa to Paris lest he augment the rank of Polish patriots and conspirators already there. However, he finally did gain permission to go there, and he stopped at Munich then Stuttgart en route.

It was in Leipzig that Chopin enjoyed a pleasurable stay with the Schumanns and Mendelssohn, who affectionately called him "Chopinnetto".²⁴ From here Chopin went, with Mendelssohn to Scotland. There they were heartily accepted, since they were the only musical geniuses of first rank ever to tour that country. However, Chopin didn't like it here and inside of a few months he moved on to England, where Queen Victoria attended his concert at Stafford House. However, here his health declined rapidly and he finally returned to Paris in 1848. His travels in Great Britain did prove fruitful, though, because here he met and became acquainted with Carlyle, Dickens, Jenny Lind, and Emerson.

Chopin always hoped for some pianistic Stradivarius, the piano not being perfected. He himself said that if or when the piano would finally disappear from the world, so would Chopin!²⁵ However, he became acquainted with all types of symphonic and instrumental music, since he felt that a general music education was a prerequisite to becoming an artist.

From his earliest youth, Chopin was distinguished on the piano. He followed his own dictates of instinctive genius after reaching the age of twelve.

Being slight of stature, Chopin's hands, too, were in true characteristic form, and he could reach comfortably only the space of a ninth; therefore, he was physically unable to play fortissimo. This didn't seem to present any drawback to his piano performance; in

fact, critics said that he could make "one hundred gradations between piano and pianissimo."²⁶ Moscheles was quoted as saying: "His piano is so delicate that no very strong forte is required to give the desired contrast. Thus we do not miss the orchestral effects which the German school demands from a pianist, but feel ourselves carried away as by a singer who, paying little heed to the accompaniment, abandons himself to his feelings. He is quite unique in the pianistic world."²⁷

He created a new school of technique and developed the entirety of piano playing to a remarkable extent. Here again, the critics said that his desire to make good music predominated noticeably over his desire to please his audiences.²⁸ He was considered to be a tone-poet in that he could make the listener apprehend the poetry living in his heart, and his playing was likened to dreamland in its marvellous charm, poetry, originality, perfect freedom, and absolute lucidity.

One of the most noticeable features of his playing was his rubato. Chopin himself said that "the left hand is the conductor, and it must not waver or lose ground; do with the right hand what you can and will."²⁹ Chopin compared this to a tree, the left hand being the trunk, which remains steady, and the right hand being the leaves, which drift along almost at will. Some said he was ravishing on his fluctuations of tempo, and was always a specie of the miracle of good taste. Berlioz stated that Chopin couldn't bear restraint of time and carried independence in rubato too far. Heuffer, well-known music critic called him one of the most perfect embodiments of lyrical power that the history of art or poetry can show.³⁰ All possible expressions were to be found in his compositions and could be played by him in perfect beauty. Paderewski said that Chopin beautified and ennobled all that he touched, and it was owing to him that "our nation, our land, the whole of Poland lives, feels, and moves in tempo rubato."³¹

The opposite of Liszt, who performed at his best before an audience of two thousand, Chopin was the delicately refined virtuoso of small groups. He justified this idiosyncrasy by answering that crowds intimidated him, their breath suffocated him, and their unknown faces struck him dumb.³² While preparing himself for a concert, he always played Bach instead of his own compositions, saying that "without Bach there is no true pianist. A pianist who does not respect Bach is a bungler and a charlatan."³³ He adored this Baroque master, and seemingly neglected Beethoven, saying that the bulk of his works could be summed up in his C sharp minor Sonata. According to Chopin Scarlatti would achieve the concert hall. Of his contemporaries, he played Hummel, Field, and Moscheles, and was especially fond of the latter's duets. Although he liked certain of Schubert's works and thought posterity would keep only a few of Mendelssohn's pieces, he predicted a gloomy future for Schumann, Berlioz, Weber, and Liszt; in general, his interest in music other than his own was slight. Chopin hated virtuoso music and, except for a few of Liszt's compositions, would touch none of these. Mozart he esteemed above all others because he felt that he alone could cross the step separating refinement from vulgarity. Liszt declared: "In the great models and masterworks of art Chopin sought only what corresponded with his nature. What resembled it pleased him, and what differed with it hardly received justification from him."³⁴

After watching a Chopin concert, an anonymous critic in London remarked: "Over himself his art exercised a great charm. I have seen him (meaning Chopin) look fifty when he took his place, and twenty-five when he quitted it; he would sit down a meagre, worn, livid, panting man (his face, as someone described it, seemed with pain and anxiety), and, as he proceeded, shadow after shadow gradually dissolve

and fold after fold soften, and the flush of health come back into the cheek, and the dim glassy eyes brighten up with a cheerful and living intelligence."³⁵

After disappointments in giving concerts and insufficient income from his published works, Chopin turned again to teaching. In spite of heavy competition in this field, through his entree into social circles he met the Rothschilds, who, in turn, introduced him to counts and nobles, thus supplying him with wealthy pupils. Usually fastidious in his choice of students, Chopin did accept these less talented but wealthy aspirants who could be useful to him as a source of income and for social reasons as well. As a rule, however, he had as many students as he wanted, and he continued to devote most of his time and attention to the talented pupils; and, in later years, only taught those of exceptionable ability.³⁶

Chopin said that "people with empty heads and cold hearts should not waste time on music. The best metronome and the most diligent practicing will be of no avail. Music is more than skillful moving of the fingers."³⁷ To Chopin, skill was an acquired power of unconscious action toward a desired end, and, after skill was acquired, conscious thinking must be directed wholly toward the end.

Financially speaking, Chopin moved from poverty, to increasing comfort, and thence to luxury at the height of his teaching career. With five, and not more than six, lessons per day at twenty francs each, plus added income from composing and performing, he became one of the richest Poles in Paris, moving among ambassadors, ministers, and princes. Generous and unbusinesslike, he never was able to save any money and, when his health began failing he was reunited with poverty again. His last concert in Paris was February 16, 1848, and his last public appearance as a concert artist was November 16, 1848, in

Guildhall, London, for the Polish refugees there.

Always kind and helpful with his students, the only noticeable way in which Chopin gave vent to his annoyances was by breaking up his pencils into small pieces. He showed extraordinary patience with the talented, and his pupils idolized him. He stressed smoothness of execution, beauty of tone, and intelligent phrasing; moreover he urged his pupils to hear and study good singing in order to develop true and expressive methods of cantabile playing.³⁸ Chopin told his pupils that, if it was difficult for them to play forte, they must learn to manage their piano and pedaling in a dozen different ways. Amateurs, he felt, must play according to rules and advice from their betters but "to an accomplished virtuoso, all the devil's tricks are permissible."³⁹

Fingering was exceedingly important to Chopin, and, as he put it, "Every finger is built differently, each having different strength as well as a different role."⁴⁰ He said that touch and sound depend upon the position of the hands and stressed that the keys be struck with the pads or cushions and not the tips, of the fingers. (Chopin recommended the B major scale as appropriate practice for this touch). He felt that every finger should be doing a different job, and stressed adequate practice for the fourth finger, it being naturally stiffer than the others; piano-playing owes him many innovations in fingering. For the turn (gruppetto) and appoggiatura he recommended the great Italian singers as models; he desired octaves to be played with the wrist-stroke, but without losing the fullness of tone thereby. However, to him, as to many, music was something more than skillful moving of the fingers or wrists.

In his teaching as well as in his own playing Chopin followed the first rule in musical expression, this rule being that, in any melodic phrase, some one note must be predominant.⁴¹ Musical rhythm

was to be patterned motion without its equal for fluidity, grace, or energy; it was the body of tone. A great advocate of tempo rubato - stolen time - Chopin wanted it used only when the desired effect could be gained by no other means. Another of his devices was the agogic accent, first used as a musical term by Dr. Hugo Reimann,⁴² which lengthens the time value of a note giving the illusion of accenting it or playing it louder. However, this must be only a substitution for tempo rubato and not a distortion of tempo.

Chopin never tolerated any pose or affectation, but he did encourage individual interpretation, so long as the interpreter didn't devise any unusual meaning for a phrase and used musical common sense. Chopin himself wouldn't permit any changes in the score, stating frankly: "I'll always say to anyone: if you want to play my things, play them as they are written, and if you don't like them, compose for yourself instead of crawling into other peoples' compositions like a pig into a garden."⁴³ He felt the interpreter to be a cooperator with the composer, a continuer along the line of musical thought and expression. One writer has said, "When Chopin put his thoughts down upon paper, he left a record in ink and paper which must be born again every time it is brought to the minds of men."⁴⁴

Some instructors and writers feel that no one lends himself worse to youthful instruction than does Chopin. Youth supposedly don't (sic) understand him, for his greatness lies in the fact that he preserves the mean between immaturity and decay.⁴⁵

Chopin didn't approve of symbolic music and wrote, in a letter to Miss Potocka: "There is no way of guessing what the composer thought when he wrote a piece of music. Don't fantasy on this subject, for the result will be nothing but nonsense of the kind produced by that German who wrote about my variations on 'La ci darem' from Don

Giovanni. He said that Don Giovanni kisses Zerlina in D flat major! Capital, isn't it?"⁴⁶

In order, then, to preserve Chopin's spirit, whether it be as a performer, a teacher, or even a composer, the master would always repudiate any changes (like those of Tausig, for example) by which some virtuosi pretend to "emphasize" or "modernize" Chopin's personal and perfect pianism.⁴⁷

Part IV

CHOPIN'S COMPOSITIONAL STYLE

As in his pianistic ability, Chopin's ability as a composer showed itself at an early age. His first tutor was Zochowski, about whom little is known. Then, at the age of six, since he could improvise, he began his piano studies with Zwiny, who, though primarily a violinist, knew much about the piano. This Czech, a pupil of Kuchar who was, in turn a disciple of Bach, awakened Chopin's interest in the archaic scales and curious folk harmonies, over which he soon reigned as master. He stayed with Zwiny for six years, and composed his first work of art, a polonaise at the age of twelve. During his three years at the Warsaw Conservatory, Chopin was under the tutelage of Josef Elsner; here his course prescribed the design to form a complete professional artist, and when he left Poland for good in 1830 he was already accomplished. Even as early as 1826 he said that he had taken up a study of "all subjects bearing any possible relation to music."⁴⁸

The three persons having the greatest influence on Chopin were Oginski, Elsner, and Kurpinski.⁴⁹ Oginski, who was known as king of the polonaises, had direct bearing on Chopin's dance forms. Chopin enlarged and enriched the polonaise by infusing into his own the Polish spirit of rhythm, salon elegance, lightness and fluency in ornamental passages, melancholy mood, and a strong national feeling; he raised the polonaise to a higher artistic perfection. Elsner was a prolific writer and, at one time, Director of the Warsaw opera. As Chopin's composition teacher, he influenced him with his teacher's ability to inspire and guide the natural inclinations of a gifted pupil. Under him, Chopin could develop his musical ability almost uncontrolled. Kurpinski's influence on Chopin lay chiefly in the fact that he was able to transmute Polish folk music into artistic music. A self-taught composer, and successor to Elsner as Director of the Warsaw Opera, Kurpinski was both a contemporary and precursor

of Chopin. Of lesser importance to him were Hummel-who had formative influence on him - and Field, from whom he adopted the form of the nocturne, adding to it a warmth and distinction which it did not have previously.

Mozart always seemed to be his model, and Chopin held him in highest regard. He seemed to feel that Mozart was a genius, a status never to be reached by him. He considered that a gift of nature. Schubert he disliked; Wagner's piano music was too operatic; he didn't approve of Beethoven, and said that much of Schumann's music could scarcely be called music. Thus, Chopin was considered a classicist.⁵⁰ He introduced to Europe the forgotten intervals of the old Grecian scales and consequent order of harmonic sequences and color hitherto unknown in the accepted classical forms; the joyful Lydian fourth and the melancholy Phrygian second are both found in his G minor Ballade. Although Chopin was held up as an arch romanticist and nationalist, Huneker says that he remained aloof from the romanticists, though in a sympathetic attitude, and was a "classic without knowing it." He further bore this idea out by saying that Chopin's form was conditioned with idea, and that he took up the dancing patterns of Europe - specifically Poland - because they suited his inner life.⁵¹

Chopin was noted for his architectural symmetry, his attitude toward program music, and his devotion to beauty. Schumann declared him "the boldest, the proudest soul of the time."⁵²

Some criticize Chopin's music as being sick and unhealthy, with a vein of sadness running throughout. Mendelssohn went along with this theory, and thought it "a little infected by the Parisian mania for despondency and straining for emotional vehemence."⁵³ Buns counteracted this statement by adhering to the principle that Chopin's greatness lay in his aristocracy.

Chopin was said to be the originator of the modern nationalistic "blues,"⁵⁴ and was considered a modernist in his time, this latter owing to Schumann, who said he discovered linguistic errors and false harmonics in Chopin.

Considered a classic by some, a modernist by others, and a romanticist by still others, (for some considered him a romantic in feeling with his roots in the classic school) we may thus see that Chopin stands alone in music history. In his book entitled Music and Musicians, Lavignac is quoted: "Although France was the country of his adoption, and, indeed, his family were of French origin, I do not hesitate to class him by reason of his affinities in the romantic schools of Germany."

Chopin displayed a keen sensitivity to colorful pianistic tone and seemed unable to apply that unique gift of touch to any other media. Hence, he began his slow isolation from the rest of the musical world. His artistic growth, in turn, though an advance in technical mastery, also became a kind of recession from the great world of music. He was admittedly incapable of writing a symphony, and felt strongly that the literature of the piano was incomparably richer than that of any other instrument. Fetis, the chief Parisian music critic of Chopin's day found "in M. Chopin's inspirations the signs of a renewal of forms which may henceforth exercise considerable influence upon this branch of the art."⁵⁵ Followers of Chopin and the romantic school probably agree with Rubinstein when he said, "The piano rhapsodist, the piano mind, the piano soul is Chopin."⁵⁶

A musical thought is no mystery; we lack only the skill to utter it. Not everyone can compose. As Chopin himself stated: "Everyone can acquire knowledge, but talent cannot be bought even for diamonds; hence, thank God for your talent, and try to acquire knowledge."⁵⁷ He labored over every composition, afraid he'd forget the theme before

he was able to write it down. Endeavoring to make each piece of music a unified whole, he wanted it to sound like an improvisation from beginning to end; Chopin felt that the improvisations of a composer who has the gift for them would always be more original than his printed works. He felt it undesirable to be too much concerned with details. Once overheard from him was this: "An artist should never lose sight of the whole. Coherence is absolutely necessary. If one becomes excessively concerned with the details, one finds that the thread binding the whole will burst, and, instead of a necklace, one is left only with a stupid handful of pearls."⁵⁸

Another of his quotations was the following: "In my boring compositions, all the beauty often lies in the accompaniment. Remember that in my works the accompaniment always has equal rights with the melody, and often it must be put into the foreground."⁵⁹ He called harmony the soul and rhythm the back-bone of his works, and felt that in musical composition everything - expression marks included - has its own meaning. Josef Hofmann, original as an interpreter of Chopin, became famous for his ability to put accompaniment in the foreground. He could always find a way to bring out another voice, another chord, or another note, and used to "invent" polyphonic surprises where no other pianist even suspected them.⁶⁰ Accompaniment is a deciding factor in the classification of a work of music. If a Chopin accompaniment were set to a Bach melody, it would sound more like Chopin than Bach; this may be exemplified by the Bach-Gounod "Ave Maria," which definitely sounds more like Bach than Gounod because of the Bach accompaniment.

Infinite possibilities of varied and beautiful tone color inherent in the piano are to be found in Chopin. His chief genius lies herein. He was superior in actual expression of the piano and

in choice of subject matter most fitly to be expressed thereon. First to realize the subtleties of the sostenuto and una corda pedals,⁶¹ he dictated that these be used for quality, not quantity, of tone desired.

This piano bard and piano mind, as Rubenstein called him, revealed himself through his art. Parry said of him: "His work for pianoforte is so marvellously perfect in its adaptation to the idiosyncracies of the instrument, that it becomes historically important on that ground alone. His work is not often great in conception, or noteworthy in design, but it is the spontaneous expression of a poetical, refined, and sensitive temperament."⁶²

In Hadow's essay on Chopin he says that Chopin lacks the dignity, breadth, and high seriousness to rank among such masters as Palestrina, Bach or Beethoven. "In structure he is a child, playing with a few simple types, and almost helpless as soon as he advances beyond them; in phraseology he is a master, whose felicitous perfection of style is one of the abiding treasures of the art. There have been higher ideals in music, but not one that has been more clearly seen or more consistently followed. There have been nobler messages, but none delivered with a sweeter or more persuasive eloquence."⁶³

Chopin's wit in music is best illustrated in his G flat minor Etude, which is based on the pentatonic scale and utilizes only the black keys. A kind of fantastic joke, it suggests an exotic harmony barely muffled by a Chopinesque accompaniment in the left hand. It is not at all monotonous, in fact its original passages and scarcely Chopinesque harmonies strike one with their unexpected pianistic and tonal structures. As one critic wrote, "In this phenomenal musical satire, Chopin best expresses the combination of ingenuity, wit, and genius, which reflects his personality."⁶⁴

Chopin's attitude of Polish folk music being critical, he did not consider himself as being representative of it. His work was not, in that sense, cosmopolitan, but cosmic; but in spite of his patriotism, he was not necessarily an artistic nationalist, and "in quality and manner he was as much western as he was Slavish, as much French, Italian, Austro-German, as Polish."⁶⁵ However, his sensitivity to national or folk music was evident in his early youth. Although folk music in its primitive form seemed to him crude, heartless, and clumsy, he was annoyed by any imitation of folk music. He constantly repeated the phrase that "this one must be refined and seasoned."⁶⁶ To him art should be a "mirror of the national soul" and he strongly emphasized the need for independence in each nation's culture and art.⁶⁷

It has been said that "the whole life of Chopin belonged to Poland, the first half in its entirety, physically and spiritually. In the second half, despite his attachment to Paris, those bonds of love and loyalty were even strengthened."⁶⁸ His messages from Vienna were anxious when he heard of the war in Poland. Chopin described a lonely Christmas Eve spent in the vast twilight of St. Stephen's Cathedral; it was probably then that he composed his Scherzo in B minor" with its thundering chords and tender carol lullaby in the middle part. In Paris he found himself in the midst of political and intellectual ferment, and keen competition in artistic activity. When he moved on to Stuttgart, he received the news of the fall of Warsaw; it is supposed that here he received the inspiration for his "Revolutionary" Etude Op. 10, No. 12. Among strangers, uprooted and tormented by fate of his family, friends, and country, in a letter to Miss Potocka he wrote: "And here I am, helpless. Here I am with my empty hands."⁶⁹ This same mood is evident in his G minor Ballade and his Prelude in D minor.

About his avid love and dedication to his country, this appeared in the Warsaw Press of 1830: "Chopin knows what sounds are heard in our fields and woods; he has listened to the Polish village; he has made it his own. In the March 13, 1949 issue of the New York Times, Music critic, Alin Downs wrote of him: "No composer stuck his roots deeper into his own soil, and none, taking essentially so nationalistic a position, produced an art of such enduring and universal significance."

Chopin composed with sincere simplicity, making each statement interesting, clear, and accessible. He didn't write just for today or just for tomorrow but for years and years to come. His directness plus his deep insight represented his genius. Seemingly unaware that he himself was a genius, Chopin wrote, "Every genius is a revolutionary who produces a great deal of commotion in the world... Genius has a big nose and a splendid sense of smell which enables him to catch the direction of the wind of the future."⁷⁰

According to Chopin, all creative music takes labor and inspiration, and he was no exception. He felt that often the result was different from the intention; thus he decided not to print anything until he was completely satisfied with it. To him, it was better to toil than to publish something that would remain for him an occasion of silent remorse. Chopin always feared that his least valuable works would be played and his more valuable ones would be left alone; Hans von Bulow first brought recognition to his less popular but musically more significant works.

From the beginning, Chopin's creative images were virtual rather than real. He had the power of lending creditability to his images which is the possession of a few. He makes his image of feelings seem natural even when they aren't natural to us, by showing his high degree of dramatic expression in presenting entreaties and suffering, doubt and despair, joy and a feeling of

strength, triumph and zeal, and thankfulness and adoration. Owing to him, a strong national feeling was accented in Polish music for the first time. This being the age of color, he was less a colorist than a figure painter. Chopin was governed more by the laws of poetry than were other composers. Instead of following the trend of the day to join in the movement against form, he founded his entire creation upon poetry. An example of this is his A flat major Ballade which can easily be sung to Clement Marot.⁷¹

His motifs became complete melodies, and his progressions and cadencies became motifs. Even the inner harmonic voices often bespoke a melody. The creative philosophy of this romantic genius includes three factors: humility, simplicity, and directness of expression, and values of a beneficent nationalism.⁷² By humility, Chopin means that it is as important to write a great song as a great symphony. As he said, "I myself understand the piano and laugh at those who think I am a fool because I reject higher perspectives and write only for the piano."⁷³ To him, it was not so much the form in which one writes, but the creative expression which is poured into that form, that mattered. By simplicity and directness of expression, Chopin meant that music must be a medium of expression from the composer to the people. He said, "Bach was 'like an astronomer who, with the help of ciphers, finds the most wonderful stars...Beethoven embraced the universe with the power of his spirit...I do not climb so high. A long time ago I decided that my universe will be the soul and heart of man."⁷⁴ Though Chopin is frequently intricate in his inner constructions, he makes no demand of erudition on the part of the listener; in fact, he is easy to understand. By means of his values of a beneficent nationalism," Chopin gave to the rest of the world the spirit of

Poland through music. Many persons often asked the question, is music international or intra-national? Chopin answers, "Art must be a mirror of the national soul. A nation which reaches out for foreign art - because it is supposed to be better - will never see its own soul...I do not consider myself even a John the Baptist of Polish music...I should like only to write and leave for posterity the ABC of that which is truly Polish and to teach people how to discard things which are called Polish but which are not really Polish."⁷⁵

The critic Heine, in speaking of Chopin, said: "Poland gave him the spirit of Chivalry and his historical grief; France endowed him with light charm and grace, and he owes to the Germans his meditative romanticism."⁷⁶ Nietzsche, another critic, said, "Chopin emancipated music from German influence, from a tendency toward gloominess, ugliness, provincialism, and boastfulness."⁷⁷

In Chopin's piano works, with the exception of Beethoven, he stands the unchallenged master, Beethoven being superior in the fundamental brain-stuff and majesty of musical material, and Chopin being superior in actual expression and in choice of appropriate pianistic subject matter. Chopin composed a total of 214 works, these being mainly for the piano and including only a few vocal compositions. Of all great composers, he produced, proportionately to his output the least poor music.⁷⁸ A greater percentage of all he wrote is alive today than that of any other great master. His art brought all men and nations together.

Part V
CHOPIN'S WORKS

Of his total output, the greater portion of Chopin's works were grouped into eleven different headings. Included in these were the following: nocturnes, mazurkas, preludes, rondos, etudes, waltzes, scherzi, ballades, polonaises, impromptus, and sonatas. Let us consider them separately.

NOCTURNES

Chopin wrote nineteen nocturnes. John Field, the Irish composer and pianist who was considered Chopin's equal and whose style was admired by Chopin, looked at Chopin contemptuously, describing him as "sick-room talent".⁷⁹ This is perhaps more appropriate to his nocturnes than to his other works; however, this feeling is no doubt due to mawkish pianists. A sounder criticism of his nocturnes, though this is not always true, would be that they include in them the play of fancy rather than imagination.

The flexibility of the piano itself was never better exhibited than in his nocturnes. His later ones, though increased in skill and delicacy, show notable deterioration in imaginative quality; it was said that the stagnant air and artificial light (sometimes extensively shaded) formed the environment for them.⁸⁰ He is, in many of the nocturnes, morbidly sad and complaining. The most admired of his compositions, they are in several instances the weakest. They are imbued with dramatic breadth, passion, and grandeur. He loved the night and its starry mysteries, and his Nocturnes are true night pieces, some wearing an agitated remorseful countenance, others seen in profile only, while many are like whisperings at dusk.

The F sharp major Nocturne, Op. 15, No. 2, is one of his most popular nocturnes. The doppio movimento is extremely striking and the entire piece is saturated with young life, love, and a feeling of good will to mankind. Ehlerst thinks it unseparable

from champagne and truffles.⁸¹ Other writers say that this is his first full revelation of his imaginative stature.⁸² For its comparative playableness and its essential poetry, this nocturne is deservedly a favorite and a valuable preparation for later works. It has been said that the most interesting and probably the most valuable of his works are the rare compositions combining captivating melody, interesting harmony, and original rhythm. An ideal example of this is the forementioned nocturne.⁸³ It is an artistic product of high class; the rhythmical combinations of both hands is rather exceptional.

Chopin was criticized in Vienna for not observing the old rule that every phrase should have an accent on the first note. This so-called "spiritual bleakness" is evidenced in his Op. 15, No. 3, the Nocturne in G minor, which was seldom productive of musical inspiration until the later years of Brahms.⁸⁴ However, this breadth in Chopin's musical mind remained, for the most part, unexplored.

The E flat Nocturne is graceful but shallow in content.⁸⁵ However, if it is played with purity of tone and freedom from sentimentalism, it is not nearly as banal as it seems. Since it is Field-like in character, it should be played thusly. Rellstab, in his "Iris" writes of this: "Where Field smiles, Chopin makes a grinning grimace; where Field sighs, Chopin groans... we implore Mr. Chopin to return to nature."⁸⁶

MAZURKAS

In the year 1832 Chopin published his first book of mazurkas. From that time until his death (1849) he did about eight of these dances per year. Of the entire two books, most of these were good, with the exception of a few around 1833 which reflect Parisian society. It seemed as though his "facile salon" attempts lowered

his ideals.

The mazurka, written in 3/4 time, is slower than a waltz; showing a great variety of rhythm, they are a distinctively Polish dance, the daring and impulsive steps suggested, implying moods and excitements far outside the range of the more conventional German dance. Chopin is nowhere more original or more engaging than in the mazurka.⁸⁷ He often places a strong accent on beat three and uses subtle harmonies. Tempo being a vital question in a dance so unpredictable, Chopin felt that instinct gave the ultimate answer. He gave great attention to detail and meticulous indications of his meaning. In his harmonies herein, he often used the so-called "German" or "French" sixth, which is nothing more than an augmented sixth.

Schlessinger, a music publisher in Paris, published most of his Mazurkas along with many of his other works.

Of the fifty-five mazurkas, there is a marked difference between opus 41 and those that follow. In the latter, according to Niecks, the savage beauty and spontaneity is missing.⁸⁸ As Chopin gripped the form, as he felt, suffered, and knew more, his mazurkas grew broader, more characteristic of Poland, became elaborate and at times impersonal, but seldom lost their racial hue and snap. DeLenz said of them, "Chopin was a phoenix of intimacy on the piano. In his Nocturnes, Mazurkas, he is unrivalled, downright fabulous!"⁸⁹

The F sharp minor Mazurka, Op. 6, No. 1, begins with the characteristic triplet that plays such a role in this dance form. First in order of publication, it is melodious, slightly mournful, but of genuine freshness. The third section, with the appoggiatura, realizes a vivid vision of country couples determinedly dancing.

In Op. 24, No. 2, in C major, is found, beside the curious general content, a mixture of tonalities, including Lydian and Medieval church

modes; the trio is definitely Occidentala. The entire dance leaves a vague impression of discontent, while the refrain recalls the songs of the Russian bargemen; being so capricious and varied, even Chopin himself never played it twice alike!"⁹⁰

The C minor Mazurka, Op. 30, No. 1, full of beautiful melodies, with the deepening feeling at the con anima section, is replete with pathos. Of it, Schumann said, "Chopin did not make his appearance accompanied by an orchestral army;...he passed only a small cohort, but to him belongs every soul to the last here."⁹¹

PRELUDES

Nowhere else did Chopin reveal his artistic self as fully as in the 24 Preludes, Op. 28. He feared that, to some extent, they were too much like his Etudes, and jokingly called them his "Little Bits."⁹² Chopin could never measure up to Bach in his Preludes, but neither was this his intention. Though differing from Bach's use of the word, many of these, by their very brevity in proportion to the weight of their thought, leave the hearer with a sense of expectancy, and are, in that sense, preludes to reflection. Thus Chopin has given a new meaning to the term "prelude", one that others, when at a loss for a title for their own compositions, have been glad to accept.

Some of the preludes are rather easy to play, but many of them are difficult. The imaginative interest is independent of technical demand.

The harmony of Op. 28, No. 2, in A minor, is almost ultra-modern. No. 7 is a mazurka in miniature.

Chopin exerted himself less on the Ballade in G minor, Op. 23, than he did on the F sharp minor Prelude, Op. 28, No. 8. He was convinced that large works came to him more easily than small ones.

Many of his works are definitely program music, and the B minor

prelude, No. 6, is a vivid example of this. It seems that George Sand and her son had gone for a boat ride on the lake near her chateau. When they failed to return after a reasonable length of time, Chopin was convinced that they had been drowned. It was out of this experience that he received the inspiration for the fore-mentioned prelude, and the reiterated note, b, represents the dropping water.⁹³

The 24 Preludes were published in 1839; it wasn't until two years later that his Op. 45, a single prelude was published. Exquisitely dressed in harmonies, at that date no other composer could have invented it. To enjoy its delicate flavor, one must go back into the days when romanticism was unchallenged, because the tone is somewhat nocturnal and the melodic phrases are all of questionable, indecisive design.

RONDOS

At the age of 16, Chopin published Op. 1 in Vienna. Though the full flavor of some of his greater works is lacking, he shows skill in its variance of rhythm, which betrays his own musical sensitivity and demands a consciousness of values belonging only to the accomplished artist. Concerning the rondos, as well as his other works, Chopin said, "A musical work should itself reveal its essence."⁹⁴

ETUDES

Chopin wrote twelve etudes between 1829 and 1831; herein he discovered the secrets in the piano which he found to be so remarkable in Paganini and his violin.⁹⁵ His etudes present elemental problems in comparatively simple form and are still of high musical interest. He dreamed of composing easy beginners' exercises to equal his other works regarding form, harmony, and melody, but was unsuccessful, and so left his dream to posterity. Of these works

Chopin proclaimed, "In writing my Etudes, I tried to put not only science but also art in them."⁹⁶ Jachimecki, eminent Polish musicologist, called them "the Gospel of piano music."⁹⁷

Chopin wanted his etudes to be artistic as well as intellectual. His two favorite ones were the one in A minor, Op. 25, No. 11, and the one in C minor, Op. 25, No. 12. He felt that he had never written anything with which he was so completely satisfied.⁹⁸

Chopin himself said that his E flat major Etude was based on the motives of "reconciliation improvisation" which he had played to Delphine Potocka; he further quoted that it originated in a programmatic improvisation set against the background of a quarrel with her.⁹⁹ Liszt said he'd have given four years of his life to have been the author of this masterpiece.¹⁰⁰

The last page of his first etude, which has the rhythmic problem of four against three, is said to contain the most poetic page in all of Chopin.¹⁰¹

Chopin himself says that his third etude begins with the loveliest melody he ever wrote.¹⁰²

WALTZES

Long the most favored of all his works, many of them now have lost their savor. It is no longer so easy to recapture the sense of grace and elegance that they once conveyed.

Not to be danced, many of these works also have programmatic flavor. Perhaps the most famous of these is Valse in D flat major, Op. 64, No. 1, often called the "Minute Waltz," which represents George Sand's dog chasing its tail.¹⁰³

Many of his works were dedicated to some of his admirers and he dedicated one of his smaller waltzes to a former lover, Maria Wodzinska.

It has been said that the Op. 42 in A flat major is the most distinguished of the waltzes. If it were to be danced, Schumann thought that "half the ladies should be countesses at least."¹⁰⁴

The most sparkling of the waltzes, and one of the most difficult, is the one in E minor, which was published posthumously without opus number.

SCHERZI

Of Chopin's larger works, the four scherzi were the next large form to evolve out of what was originally a minor type of composition. No doubt his want of success as a pianist as well as a composer led him to compose a finer and more elevated work.

The "Second Scherzo", Op. 31, is the most popular of the four. Of this one, it has been said that Chopin has seldom set down more clearly his musical intoxication.¹⁰⁵

BALLADES

To Chopin, the ballades were folk songs, commemorating some stirring or sentimental event such as is found in "Chevy Chase" or "Edward." The music doesn't tell the story, but merely illustrates it. He wrote four ballades which were possibly illustrated with a story; however, he never told them.

The "First Ballade," Op. 23 in G minor, is said to be the finest of the four. When Schumann expressed same, Chopin answered, "I am glad of that, (sic) it is the one I, too, like best."¹⁰⁶ It seems to be the most elemental of all and, thus, the truest. Herein, too, Chopin seemed to desire recognition as a fine composer and elegant pianist. Written after his broken engagement to Maria Wodzinska, it is said to be one of the bitterest and most personal of his works.¹⁰⁷ Again Chopin utilizes the fascinating harmonies of the old Greek church modes.

His "Third Ballade", Op. 47 in A flat major, is more like a romantic novel than a ballade. The terms aristocratic, gay, piquant, and graceful don't even begin to describe it. Of this one Schumann remarked, "The refined, gifted Pole, who is accustomed to move in the most distinguished circles of the French capital is preeminently to be recognized."¹⁰⁸ Op. 47 quite loses touch with that rudiment of life out of which folk ballades are made. The development of its two main themes is more logical in a purely musical way than almost any other work of Chopin's.

POLONAISES

The polonaises are often described as expressions of his passionate attachment to his native land.

In 1939 (during World War II) the one in A major, Op. 40, No. 1, probably better known as the Military Polonaise, was sounded hourly over Warsaw radio stations as a sign that Poland still breathed. This was for the Poles of the twentieth century just what Chopin felt it to be for those of the nineteenth century.¹⁰⁹

The most imposing contribution to its form was the Polonaise in A flat major, Op. 53. A brilliant and stimulating composition, it has most of the virtues of a permanently appealing work.

IMPROMPTUS

Although Chopin wrote four impromptus, these were by no means his finest efforts. The "Fantasie Impromptu", Op. 66 in C sharp minor, which was thought unworthy of publication, attained post-humous popularity greater than that of any of his other compositions. The easiest of all his impromptus, the problem of four against three is largely exemplified herein. Of this Busoni said: "A well-known piece, a shallow salon study, it will never be criticized adversely the way Liszt's compositions are so frequently criticized."¹⁰¹

SONATAS

The sonata form was naturally uncongenial to his fanciful mind. His Op. 4, published posthumously was done at the age of eighteen, and by no means represents his capability at that age. Only in the Minuet and Larghetto - where there are five beats to a measure - does he seem free of the burden of form.

Probably the best known of his three sonatas is the Op. 35 in B flat minor. An extremely difficult work, probably the slow movement, Marche Funebre, is most familiar. This sonata has been commended as well as condemned. It has a nervous rhythm followed by a still more nervous principal theme, the very counterpart of an almost uncontrollable agitation. Seldom can such high excitement be embodied successfully in the main theme of a sonata form, but Chopin does it.

OTHER WORKS

The Berceuse, Barcarolle, his two concerti and the F minor Fantasie are of consummate technical artistry, but only the Berceuse survives the affection of the average music lover. An amazing harmonic feat, it is an excellent example of pedal point, which frequents many of his works. It is said that Liszt, who admired Chopin to the utmost as a composer allegedly used Chopin's "Berceuse" as a model for his own. Both the Berceuse and the Barcarolle evidenced Chopin's increasing isolation from the active world of music and his preoccupation with cultivating refinements in tonal sensation to which he was abnormally sensitive. Liszt spoke of the Fantasie as "a product of deranged nerves and impoverished talent."¹¹¹

Chopin's orchestrations were admittedly poor and thus weakened the beautiful pianistic effect of his two concerti. The F minor concerto, Op. 21, is favored by the public more than the E minor one,

Op. 11. The first movement of the former far transcends the latter in breadth, passion, and profound musical feeling, though it is shorter and there is no coda. The Larghetto is poetic, mellifluous, and serene, and the Adagio is beautiful, deep-toned, and love-laden. Gracefulness and pure, sweet melody characterize the final Allegro vivace. The instrumentation being considered delicate by some, Berlioz declares that "in the composition of Chopin all the interest is concentrated on the piano part, the orchestra of his concertos is nothing but a cold and almost useless accompaniment."¹¹²

At present, recognition of his sonatas, his works with orchestra, and even his chamber music and seventeen songs is coming to the fore. At a country festival before World War I hundreds of Polish children were singing Chopin's songs.

Characteristic of much of Chopin's music was a wide broken accompaniment (Example 1), broken sixths in the melody (Example 2), pedal point (Example 3), overlapping phrases (Example 4), reversed accompaniment (Example 5), and compositions containing an irregular number of measures.

The three best editions of his works are published by the following: (1) Bote and Bock, ed. Karl Klindworth, (2) Schlesinger (Robert Lienau) ed. Theodore Kullak, and (3) Brietkopf and Hartel, of Leipzig.

Op. 27, No. 1

1. Nocturne in C Sharp Minor

Op. 15, No. 2

2. Nocturne in F Sharp Major

3. Berceuse

Op. 57

4. Prelude in F Sharp Minor

Op. 45

5. Prelude in A Flat Major

Posthumous

FOOTNOTES

1. Miller, History of Music, p. 135.
2. Ibid. , pp. 136, 137.
3. The International Library of Music, Vol. I, p. 219.
4. Mizwa, Frederic Chopin, p. 9.
5. Jonson, A Handbook to Chopin's Works, p. 22.
6. Mizwa, op. cit., p. 8.
7. Grove, Dictionary of Music and Musicians, p. 520.
8. Mizwa, op. cit., p. 36.
9. Ibid., p. 11.
10. The International Library of Music, loc. dit.
11. Van Loon, The Arts, p. 613.
12. Ibid., p. 611.
13. Ibid., p. 612.
14. Mizwa, op. cit., p. 88.
15. The International Library of Music, op. cit., p. 218.
16. Mizwa, op. cit., p. 88.
17. Ibid., p. 27.
18. Jonson, op. cit., p. 17
19. Mizwa, op. cit., p. 15
20. Ferguson, Piano Music of Six Great Composers, p. 127.
21. Krehbiel, The Pianoforte and its Music, p. 214.
22. Van Loon, op. cit., p. 581.
23. Bie, A History of the Pianoforte and Pianoforte Players, p. 255.
24. Jonson, op. cit., p. 24.
25. Holcman, The Legacy of Chopin, p. 9.
26. Ibid., p. 2.
27. Jonson, op. cit., p. 28.
28. Ibid.
29. Ibid., p. 29.

30. Ibid., p. 20.
31. Mizwa, op. cit., p. 78.
32. Ibid., p. 30.
33. Holcman, op. cit., p. 11.
34. Jonson, op. cit., p. 32.
35. Ibid., p. 30.
36. International Library of Music, op. cit., p. 220.
37. Holcman, op. cit., p. 8.
38. Jonson, op. cit., p. 31.
39. Holcman, op. cit., p. 11.
40. Mizwa, op. cit., p. 69.
41. Ferguson op. cit., p. 10.
42. Ibid., p. 13.
43. Holcman, op. cit., p. 19.
44. Cooke, Great Pianists on Piano Playing, p. 281.
45. Bie, op. cit., p. 257.
46. Holcman, op. cit., p. 63.
47. Cooke, op. cit., p. 282.
48. Mizwa, op. cit., p. 33.
49. Ibid., p. 26.
50. Krehbiel, loc. cit.
51. Ibid.
52. Ibid., p. 215.
53. Ibid., p. 216.
54. Ban Loon, op. cit., p. 609.
55. Mizwa, op. cit., p. 8.
56. Krehbiel, op. cit., p. 217.
57. Holcman, op. cit., p. 81.
58. Ibid., p. 78.

59. Ibid., p. 75.
60. Ibid., p. 76.
61. Jonson, op. cit., p. 19.
62. Ibid., p. 20.
63. Ibid.
64. Holcman, op. cit., p. 92.
65. Mizwa, op. cit., p. 8.
66. Holcman, op. cit., p. 95.
67. Ibid.
68. Mizwa, op. cit., p. 35.
69. Ibid.
70. Ibid., p. 50.
71. International Library of Music, op. cit., p. 224.
72. Mizwa, op. cit., pp. 18, 19.
73. Ibid., p. 18.
74. Ibid.
75. Ibid., p. 19.
76. Holcman, op. cit., p. 49.
77. Ibid. p. 50.
78. Mizwa, op. cit., p. 88.
79. Ferguson, op. cit., p. 195.
80. Ibid., p. 203.
81. Preface to Chopin's Nocturnes, Book IV.
82. Ferguson. loc. cit.
83. Holcman, op. cit., p. 76.
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104. Ferguson op. cit., p. 210.
105. Ibid., p. 215.
106. Ibid., p. 220.
107. Spaeth, op. cit., p. 140.
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MISCELLANEOUS:

1. Preface to Chopin's Ballades, Book V.
2. Preface to Chopin's Concerto in E Minor, Op. 11.
3. Preface to Chopin's Concerto in F Minor, Op. 21.
4. Preface to Chopin's Mazurkas, Book II.
5. Preface to Chopin's Nocturnes, Book IV.
6. Preface to Chopin's Preludes, Book IX.