

# PERFORMANCE COMMENTARY

## Notes on the musical text

The variants marked as *ossia* were given this label by Chopin or were added in his hand to pupils' copies; variants without this designation are the result of discrepancies in the texts of authentic versions or an inability to establish an unambiguous reading of the text.

Minor authentic alternatives (single notes, ornaments, slurs, accents, pedal indications, etc.) that can be regarded as variants are enclosed in round brackets ( ), whilst editorial additions are written in square brackets [ ]. Pianists who are not interested in editorial questions, and want to base their performance on a single text, unhampered by variants, are recommended to use the music printed in the principal staves, including all the markings in brackets.

Chopin's original fingering is indicated in large bold-type numerals, **1 2 3 4 5**, in contrast to the editors' fingering which is written in small italic numerals *1 2 3 4 5*. Wherever authentic fingering is enclosed in parentheses this means that it was not present in the primary sources, but added by Chopin to his pupils' copies. The dashed signs indicating the distribution of parts between the hands come from the editors.

A general discussion on the interpretation of Chopin's works is to be contained in a separate volume: *The Introduction to the National Edition*, in the section entitled *Problems of Performance*.

Abbreviations: R.H. – right hand, L.H. – left hand.

## Andante spianato

In all his works only once did Chopin use the term *spianato* ("smoothed, even"). In this case, its purpose was probably to bring the performance closer to the unique ambience of the composition, created by, i. a. dynamics, tone colour, pedalling and phrasing. Particular attention should be paid to the subtle realisation of the authentic slurring. As a rule, short slurs, characteristic for this period in Chopin's oeuvre, do not embrace the whole phrases – hence although the beginning of the slurs should be slightly emphasised, the performers must be warned against releasing the hand when the end of a slur occurs within a phrase.

p. 10 *Bar 12 and 44* R.H. The grace-note  $b^2$  should be sounded together with G in the L.H.

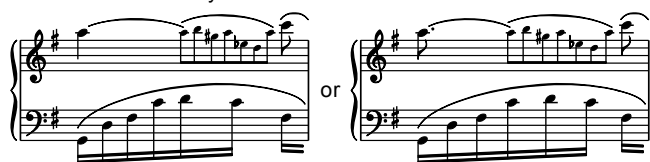
p. 11 *Bar 19, 20, 30 and 32* R.H. The grace-notes should be executed lightly in order not to disturb the rhythm (bar 19) or obliterate the impression of an accent on the subsequent note. It is less essential whether striking them will coincide with an appropriate note in the L.H. or slightly earlier.

*Bars 20-21* L.H. The editors recommend to apply a "harmonic legato" at the end of bar 20 (the fingers sustain the components of harmony) so as to accentuate the modulating transition of the bass:



The suggestion of such execution is contained in the *sempre legato* marking, written in bar 1 and binding throughout this whole section.

p. 12 *Bar 43* R.H. The rhythmic solution of the first half of the bar:



Cf. *Source Commentary*.

*Bar 48* R.H. The grace-note  $c\sharp^2$  should be struck together with G in the L.H.

p. 13 *Bars 55-56, 59-62 and analog.* R.H. The accented  $d^2$  notes should create an independent sonoric plan. Chopin applied a similar device upon several occasions – cf., e. g. *Polonaise in Ab*, Op. 53, bars 143-151 or *Berceuse in Db*, Op. 57, bars 53-54. The additional distinction of the lowest notes of the figuration, proposed by some editors, obliterates the effect intended by Chopin, concurrent with the titular *spianato*.

p. 15 *Last bar* Arpeggios should be executed continuously from G, to  $g^1$ .

## Polonaise

p. 17 *Bar 26 and analog.* In order not to blur the difference between those bars and bar 28 and analog. the grace-notes should be executed in an anticipatory manner.

p. 18 *Bar 41* R.H. Beginning of trill:  $d^2-f^2$  together with  $a-eb^1$  in the L.H.



*Bars 51-54* In bar 54 the accented notes  $f^2$  and  $\sharp^2$  can be executed with the L.H.

Different fingering of bars 51-53:



p. 19 *Bar 61* R.H. It seems more likely that Chopin envisaged the following performance:



The following execution, however, may be permitted:



*Bars 61-62* In the opinion of the editors the passage is best arranged in such a way that  $g^2$  would coincide with  $Eb$  at the beginning of bar 62, and  $g^3$  with  $bb-g^1$  on the third quaver of this bar.

p. 23 *Bars 125-126* R.H. It is better to execute the grace-notes in an anticipatory manner.

p. 24 *Bar 131* R.H. Beginning of trill:  $b^1$  together with the octave in the L.H.



p. 27 *Bar 161* R.H. The first  $g^1$  grace-note should be struck simultaneously with  $Eb$  in the L.H., as it was marked by Chopin in a pupil's copy in similar bar 55.

p. 35 *Bars 269-272* In the opinion of the editors the semiquavers in the L.H. can be performed simultaneously with the last semiquavers in each group in the R.H. Cf. a similar figuration at the end of *Variations in Bb*, Op. 12.

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# SOURCE COMMENTARY /ABRIDGED/

## Introductory comments

The following commentary sets out in an abridged form the principles of editing the musical text and discusses the most important discrepancies between the authentic sources; furthermore, it draws attention to departures from the authentic text which are most frequently encountered in the collected editions of Chopin's music compiled after his death. A separately published *Source Commentary* contains a detailed description of the sources, their filiation, justification of the choice of primary sources, a thorough presentation of the differences between them and a reproduction of characteristic fragments.

Abbreviations: R.H. – right hand, L.H. – left hand. The sign → symbolises a connection between sources; it should be read “and ... based on it”.

## Polonaise in E flat major, Op. 22

### Sources

- [A] There is no extant autograph.
- FE** First French edition, M. Schlesinger (M. S. 1926), Paris July 1836. **FE** is based on [A] and was corrected by Chopin probably twice.
- FED** Copy from the collection belonging to Chopin's pupil Camille Dubois (Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris). It contains fingering originating from lessons given by Chopin, a corrected printing error, and minor performance directives.
- EE1** First English edition, Wessel & C<sup>o</sup> (W & C<sup>o</sup> N<sup>o</sup> 1643), London May 1836, based most probably on the proofs of **FE** without Chopin's final corrections. It includes a number of adjustments; Chopin did not participate in its production.
- EE2** Second impression of **EE1** (same firm and number), after 1846, with few changes.
- EE** = **EE1** and **EE2**.
- GE1** First German edition, Breitkopf & Härtel (5709), Leipzig August 1836. Based on **FE** it contains traces of the publisher's adjustments and a number of errors. Chopin took no part in its production. There are copies of **GE1** with different details on the covers (three versions).
- GE2** Second German edition, (same firm and number), after 1852, containing the text of **GE1** with slight adjustments and several errors.
- GE3** Later impression of **GE2**, after 1872. It corrects some of the errors, supplements accidentals, and introduces certain arbitrary changes.
- GE** = **GE1**, **GE2** and **GE3**.
- Sc** Manuscript of the score of the *Polonaise* (Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna), prepared as a base for its first edition (Breitkopf & Härtel, 1880) most probably in the 1870s. The solo part was copied from **GE3** and subjected to further adjustments.

### Editorial Principles

We accept as our basis **FE** as the only authentic source, and take into consideration Chopin's annotations in **FED**.

A precise distinction of the long and short accents, characteristic for Chopin, as well as their assignment to the right or left hand is impossible due to the absence of an autograph and the visible imprecision of the first editions. We attempt to recreate the intention of the composer by taking in consideration his habits, documented in sources for other compositions.

## Andante spianato

- p. 10 **Bar 1** The value of the metronomic tempo given in parentheses, lower than the one printed in **FE** (→**EE,GE**), was added by Chopin into **FED**.

- p. 11 **Bar 27** L.H. Two versions of Chopin's fingering correspond to two possible readings of figures imprecisely written into **FED**.

- p. 12 **Bars 36-37** The pedalling in **FE** (→**GE1**) is recorded imprecisely – after the sign  $\text{ped}$  at the end of bar 36 there occurs a successive such sign at the beginning of bar 37. Possibly, the sign  $\text{ped}$  at the end of bar 36 is missing although it is quite probable that it was the sign  $\text{ped}$  in bar 37 which was unnecessarily put by the engraver of **FE**. Chopin used similar pedalling upon numerous occasions, e. g. in *Nocturne in F*, Op. 15 no. 1, bars 72-73, *Bal-lade in F minor*, Op. 52, bars 12-13, *Sonata in B minor*, Op. 58, third movement, bars 118-119. The version without the pedal change in bar 37 is found in **EE**.

**Bar 43** R.H. It is doubtful whether the value of the first  $a^2$  ( $\text{♩}$ ), occurring in the sources, is not mistaken. In the whole *Andante* the passages written with small notes fill the given rhythmic value, thus designating both the moment of their beginning and ending. Here, the rhythmic values and hence the moment of beginning the ornament are not defined. Taking into consideration arguments provided by sources – the probable reasons for the errors committed by the engraver, and musical arguments – the tempo of the performance comparable with the tempo of figures in bar 17 or 41, it seems most fitting of all to recognise the two notations in the *Performance Commentary*.

- p. 13 **Bars 55-56, 59-60 and analog.** R.H. Certain later collected editions arbitrarily distinguished the fourth and tenth semiquavers in those bars by means of additional stems. Cf. *Performance Commentary*.

**Bars 56 and 100** R.H. The tenth note in **GE3** was changed arbitrarily from  $\text{f}\sharp^1$  to  $a^1$ .

- p. 14 **Bar 78 and 90** In the notation in **FE** (→**EE,GE**):



those bars could be mistakenly played in 4/4 time. We render this notation more precise in order to avoid ambiguity.

## Polonaise

- p. 16 **Bars 1-16** In the sources the version intended for a single piano does not contain any markings as regards instrumentation in those fragments, which in the concert version are performed without the solo piano. We add the markings upon the basis of original orchestral parts in those cases where indicating the intended authentic instrumentation could prove to be inspiring for the pianist (bars 1 and 15).

**Bar 20, 58 and analog.** L.H. In the sources the prolongation of the crotchet  $f$  to the fifth quaver of the bar is noted imprecisely. In **FE** (→**GE**) this note is prolonged only in bar 20 (by means of a dot) and 164 (by means of a tie and a note). As a result of errors and omissions there are no prolongations in **EE**. Performance differentiation was certainly not Chopin's intention and thus we render the script of this detail uniform by following the example of bar 164.

- p. 17 **Bar 29** R.H. We change the  $\text{tr}$  sign, which occurs in the first editions probably due to a mistake, into  $\text{w}$ , found in all the analogous bars in the sources. A differentiation of such signs in Chopin's autographs can pose a difficult task (cf. for instance *Waltzes in A minor*, Op. 34 no. 2, bars 37, 39 and analog., and *in D♭*, Op. 64 no. 1, bar 20 and 92), and has sometimes caused problems for the engravers of the first editions (e. g. in *Waltz in A♭*, Op. 34 no. 1, bar 40 and analog.).

**Bar 31 R.H. FE** (→**EE1,GE**) mistakenly has  $bb^2-d^3$  instead of  $bb^2-eb^3$  as the demisemiquaver before the fourth quaver of the bar.

R.H. The first editions still have the accent below  $a^1$  on the sixth quaver of the bar. The absence of a corresponding accent in analogous bar 175 indicates the possible engraver's error in the bar discussed, since in **[A]** the reprise of the *Polonaise* (bars 162-220) was presumably not written in notes. Cf. bars 69-70 and analog., in which the accenting of notes on the sixth quaver of the bar is linked with a prolongation of their rhythmic value.

**Bars 32 and 176** In bar 32 the L.H.'s  $bb$  is not tied in the sources; besides, **GE2** (→**GE3**) missed the tie next to  $bb^1$  in the R.H. Some of the later collected editions also omitted corresponding ties in analogous bar 176.

p. 18 **Bars 42 and 186** R.H. The sources have the figures 2 and 4 above the  $d^2-f^2$  third. This fingering, not connected naturally either with the previous trill nor with the following figure, is evidently mistaken; presumably, it should be situated above the next  $c^2-eb^2$  third.

p. 19 **Bar 56 and 200** R.H. In **EE** there is no grace-note before  $eb^3$  and the sign of the turn is given between  $eb^2$  and  $eb^3$ . In **GE** this version is found only in bar 200. We cannot exclude the possibility that this is the original version, changed by Chopin in the last correction of **FE** (cf. the last part of the next comment).

**Bar 57 and 201** R.H. In the first editions the note  $bb^2$  on the second quaver of the bar has the value of a crotchet. Nonetheless, in **FE** (→**GE**) the figuration, written in small notes and filling the second part of the bar, is laid out in such a way as if the sustained  $bb^2$  beginning it was to coincide already with the third quaver of the bar (in **EE** the arrangement of the passage is essentially identical, and lacks only this opening  $bb^2$ ). Upon this basis, one of the later collected editions arbitrarily reduced the value of  $bb^2$  on the second quaver of the bar to a quaver. The following arguments speak against such a solution:

- a rhythmic scheme, characteristic of the main theme of the *Polonaise*, in which the revival of melodic motion, halted on the first or second quaver of the bar, does not take place until the fourth quaver; such a scheme occurs in bars 17-18, 21-22, 25 and 27 and primarily in bar 19, analogous to the discussed bar;

- errors in planning the L.H. in relation to the R.H. were made in **FE**, slight imprecision is to be found in *Andante spianato* (bar 15), and a more serious mistake is encountered in, e. g. *Nocturne in B♭ minor*, Op. 9 no. 1, bar 73.

R.H. The third and second penultimate notes of the passage in **EE** are  $ab^2$  and  $g^2$ . **GE** has this version only in bar 201. This is probably the original version, changed by Chopin in the last proof-reading of **FE**.

**Bar 62 and 206** R.H. The last small note in **EE** is  $a^2$ .

p. 20 **Bar 84** R.H. Unquestionably, only the limited range of the piano compelled Chopin to resign from transferring the chord an octave higher, an operation natural from the viewpoint of execution and characteristic of virtuoso cadences.

p. 21 **Bar 90** R.H. Some of the later collected editions arbitrarily changed the last quaver from  $b^2$  to  $b^3$ .

**Bar 92** R.H. In **FE** (→**EE,GE1**) there is no  $\natural$  prior to the eighth note from the end of the bar. This is certainly Chopin's omission, since starting from the sixth small note the figuration has an established G-major key with distinctly shown  $e^2$  sounds (the seventh and thirteenth small notes).

**Bar 93 and 94** In **FE** the absence of the ties sustaining  $d$  in bar 93 and  $b$  in bar 94 seems to be accidental. **EE** and **GE2** (→**GE3**) supplemented the tie in bar 93, and in bar 94 **GE** added a tie next to  $b$  but omitted it next to  $G$ .

**Bar 95** The mistaken rhythmic record in **FE**:



can be read in two ways:

- with a quaver at the beginning of the bar (according to the L.H.), recognising the three semiquavers following it as a triplet; in the main text we give this version, contained in **EE** and **GE**, due to its association with a polonaise rhythm and a rhythmic analogy to the previous two bars;

- with a semiquaver at the beginning of the bar (according to the R.H.), which seems to be indicated by the distances between the notes in **FE**.

p. 22 **Bar 101** R.H. **EE2** and the majority of the later collected editions arbitrarily changed the last note of the bar from  $g^3$  to  $f^3$ . The original version most probably does not contain a mistake – cf. similar devices in passages of this type in *Etude in C*, Op. 10 no. 1, bar 5 and 29.

p. 24 **Bar 128** L.H. **FE** (→**EE**) has  $f$  at the beginning of the bar. Chopin corrected this error in **FED**. **GE** also contains the proper version.

**Bar 132** L.H. In **GE1** there is no ledger line below the minim  $eb^1$  so that **GE2** (→**GE3**) mistakenly deciphered and printed it as  $c^1$ .

p. 25 **Bar 142** R.H. The mordent above  $g^1$  is found only in **FE**. R.H. There are no accidentals prior to the fourth and eighth quaver in **FE** (→**EE,GE**). Some of the later collected editions arbitrarily added naturals before those notes thus establishing their sound as  $c^2$  and  $c^3$ . We are entitled to presume that in the entire passage Chopin regarded  $\sharp$ , raising  $c^3$  to  $c\sharp^3$  at the beginning of the bar, as binding; this is proven by the following arguments:

- $\natural$  placed before  $c^4$ , the last note of the bar, shows that not until this spot did Chopin consider it necessary to restore  $c$ ;

- in the sources for the *Polonaise*, where an octave transposition sign is used, the accidentals remain binding at a pitch following from the record, which in this case signifies the reading of the fourth semiquaver as  $c\sharp^2$ ; since an exact repetition of the figure an octave higher does not give rise to even the slightest doubts, the eighth semiquaver should be  $c\sharp^3$ , and leaving it without a sign is only a slight imprecision in the notation;

- we come across a similar situation in the autographs of *Concerto in F minor*, Op. 21, first movement, bars 143-144, where in a figure transferred by an octave Chopin omitted the indispensable  $\sharp$ , raising  $f^2$  to  $f\sharp^2$ , and in the next bar cancelled the still heard sharps in the proofs of one of the editions.

Taking the above mentioned arguments into consideration we give the version with  $c\sharp$  indubitably intended by Chopin, supplementing it with sharps in accordance with the contemporary principles of chromatic spelling.

p. 27 **Bar 161** R.H. **EE** does not have one of the  $g^1$  grace-notes.

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