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Haptic Influences on Chopin Pianism:

Case Studies from the music of Szymanowska and Kessler

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Abstract

What makes Fryderyk Chopin (1810-1849), one of the most revered and loved composers in the piano repertoire, and is he truly a unique figure? This question has driven me for most of my musical life, resulting in my current research. This project emerged from my fascination with the wealth of forgotten composers and their music, which seemed all so familiar - was Chopin influenced by them to a degree that was never documented or questioned before? While Szymanowska's influence has been noted before, the haptic considerations that led this process of influence have not been investigated. Using my experience as a pianist, I approached this question through a haptic lens. This thesis is divided into an Introduction, which addresses my motivation, Chapter 1, which refers to the historiographical and musical background of Chopin's formative years, the practice-as-research approach to the methodology, and the literature review. Chapter 2 focuses primarily on two composers: Maria Agata Szymanowska (1789–1831) and Joseph Christoph Kessler (1800-1871). I compare their preludes and etudes, through a haptic perspective, with the preludes and etudes of Chopin. The influence of Szymanowska and Kessler on Chopin is demonstrated, through the presence of clearly identifiable haptic characteristics. The musical examples are integrated with video clips that demonstrate the haptic connections, in each case, at the piano. The last section of the thesis discusses my reflection and conclusion that Chopin was indeed influenced by these composers, especially through the haptic process. Although Chopin later developed his style beyond the formative influence of Kessler and Szymanowska, I believe his music, and his approach to piano writing, owes a substantial debt to these two lesser-known composers, and that this connection can only be truly identified through the investigation of haptic considerations.

Haptic Influences on Chopin pianism: Case Studies from the music of Szymanowska and Kessler

Yuki Negishi

Introduction

Throughout my musical and pianistic life, I have lived on three different continents, studying with some of the most eminent pianists and musicians of our time.¹ This is extremely important to my current project in that my many years of experience and contact with the keyboard and its repertoire have helped me develop a certain ‘embodied knowledge’ of the instrument and the works of its composers. Only through this direct and inherent knowledge can the haptic process be fully understood and shown.² Of all the composers that I have played, Chopin’s music has the most personal resonance. This is the strong motivation behind my curiosity which led me to undertake this project. I also love the way it *feels* in my hands to play his music. As Chopin himself was an accomplished pianist who composed at the piano,³ I imagine him composing and improvising at the piano as he explores the physicality and capability of his hand movements whilst realising his unique sound world. The more I played Chopin, the more I became interested in his contemporaries and the musical context of the era in which he lived. How did Chopin develop his style and pianism? My curiosity led to new insights concerning many composers, such as Maria Agata Szymanowska (1789-1831), Joseph Christoph Kessler (1800-1872) and Johann Nepomuk Hummel (1778-1837) who have become overshadowed by him not necessarily solely because of the lesser quality of their music.

Although there is a lot of research on Chopin, mainly from a musicological and compositional perspective, very little has been explored about the haptic elements of his compositional process in detail. I initially define ‘haptic’ as the traditionally meaning ‘relating to the sense of touch’. Therefore, in this project touch is the foundation, but I would like to extend the terminology further to involve the feel

¹ Some of them have been Murray Perahia, Dominique Merlet, the late Peter Katin, Irina Zaritskaya and Christian Zacharias..

² According to <<http://www.merriam-webster.com>> (accessed 2 Dec 2018), the meaning of the term ‘haptic’ is relating to or based on the sense of touch. The word, deriving from the Greek word *haptesthai* meaning ‘to touch’, entered English in the late 19th century as a medical synonym for ‘tactile’. By the middle of the 20th century, it had developed into a psychological sense, describing individuals whose perception depended primarily on touch rather than sight. The current usage retains the broadened sense of ‘haptic’ as well as the older ‘tactile’ sense.

³ Chopin, who was in Mallorca to escape Paris for the winter with George Sand, wrote to Camille Pleyel in Paris on 21 November, 1838: “I dream of music but I can’t write any because there are no pianos to be had here. In that respect, it is a barbarous country.” On 22 January, 1839, Chopin wrote to Pleyel again from a monastery in Valldemossa, Mallorca: “Dear friend, I am sending you the Preludes. I finished them on your cottage piano which arrived in perfect condition in spite of the sea-crossing, the bad weather, and the Palma customs.” This describes *to an extent* that Chopin needed a piano to compose, more specifically, a Pleyel that he adored.

and movement of the hands and gesture, which is an approach to keyboard studies and musical analysis as an alternative to theoretical and harmonic analysis. This definition is relevant because it leads to 'haptic pianism', a word I borrow to examine how one may approach these pianistic aspects through the mechanisms of feel, touch, and hand gesture or movement of the hand.

As a performer of this repertoire, I believe that this aspect is very important and ground-breaking for this heavily researched and popular composer. My research proves how I, as a pianist, can show some of the influences from the above-mentioned composers through embodied knowledge, the haptic process (haptic pianism through the lens of a Practice-as-Research- PaR project)⁴ rather than through pure musicology and visual text. An integral part of this project in the form of video clips are provided with this thesis for clarity and enhancement. The process captured and shown on the clips are intertwined with the written text and are completely integrated- I have only been able to undertake and capture this project through combining the practical elements and written reflection.

Chapter 1

Historiographical framework

This project is focused on a selection of works which best demonstrate haptic connections between those of Chopin, Szymanowska and Kessler. Chopin, as a nineteenth century composer for the piano was writing music at a time very different from the present day, and writing music that served a different function, audience and set of expectations; he also played instruments very different from the modern concert grand piano. Chopin's milieu grew out of the social change happening across Europe in the early nineteenth century.

Compared to the Europe at the end of the eighteenth century to that of the nineteenth century, historians say that changes during that century were significant and tremendous. Traditionally, the nineteenth century has been seen as the period between the Great Revolution in France (1789) and the First World War (1914-1918). This was a period of physical sciences, industrialisation and rationalisation, as opposed to beauty, elegance and pageantry of the previous centuries. Urbanisation increased, resulting in new ways of life and customs. Nationalism rose and took a firm hold in the European psyche- most evidently as a

⁴ Robin Nelson, *Practice as Research in the Arts: Principles, Protocols, Pedagogies, Resistances* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 26-47. A PaR project involves the 'know-how' or the 'procedural knowledge- the experiential, haptic, embodied knowledge', 'know-what' or 'critical reflection, methods and principles' and 'know-that' or 'the knowledge gained through the experiencing of practices intrinsic to any specific research inquiry'. As Nelson states: 'Much of what is required by way of documentation may already be a part of professional process but that anticipation, preparation and 'sixth-sense' awareness can assist in capturing key insights.'

result of the Napoleonic Wars. The idea of a common past and the utopian dream of achieving national harmony (much like the current European Union) inspired artists, thinkers and authors throughout Europe.⁵

As Salmi has argued, after the French and Industrial Revolutions in France and Britain, the middle-class or the bourgeoisie became a class in its own right. Unlike the aristocracy or the nobility, this was a class dedicated to hard work and self-improvement, and good management and investment of finances led to their hard-earned wealth and status.⁶ The social break brought on by industrial culture formed the backdrop and the family became more important to urban culture. The nineteenth-century has indeed been called the century of the family, marking the birth of the nuclear family in its present-day meaning.⁷

The home, therefore became a private haven and refuge to the outside politicised press, which had become central in influencing public opinion. Writers such as Charles Dickens, Thomas Mann, Guy de Maupassant, Alexander Pushkin and Gustave Flaubert all described the activities inside and outside of the middle-class family home of the nineteenth century in detail in their novels.⁸

One of the family idyll of this era and class was literature, especially reading aloud, such as the Bible or short stories in literary magazines and newspapers, which later formed as the basis to the classic novel. The other was music, or more specifically, playing music.

Music fulfilled a range of social functions in this period, and one aspect of these revolved around the enclosed family in the private home- domestic, with the piano at its core. The bourgeois patriarch could relax in the comfort of his family environment to the warmth and attendance of his dutiful wife, children and servants. Music in general was central to this picture, with the versatility of the piano dominating proceedings. The ability to play the piano was regarded as important especially in the education of girls.⁹ The new genre favourite, the *character piece* (including the nocturne, ballade or song-without words) was especially popular. These pieces were the solo piano analogues of the most important form of entertainment, 'the song'.

Larger, more prosperous houses had bigger purposes: their salons were in line with the spirit of the court and became meeting places for artists, thinkers, writers and other professionals as well as the local intelligentsia. Presided over by women, their

⁵ Hannu Salmi, *Nineteenth-Century Europe: A Cultural History* (Polity Press, Cambridge 2008), 1-11.

⁶ Margaret R. Hunt, *The Middling Sort: Commerce, Gender and the Family in England, 1680-1780* (University of California Press, 1996) and Salmi, *Nineteenth-Century Europe: A Cultural History*, 72-88.

⁷ Salmi, *Nineteenth-Century Europe*, 73.

⁸ Salmi, 84.

⁹ Salmi, 85.

organisation and planning were with few exceptions, the closest to a profession a woman of the period could approach. Salons were a halfway house between the drawing room and the concert hall and were important venues for introducing new talent of all kinds, as well as being a good introduction into high society and invaluable for the furtherance of all kinds of career.¹⁰

The term 'salon music' made its earliest appearance in France, and in the late eighteenth century the term occurred in the *Allgemeine musikalisches Zeitung*, where salon music originally simply meant the music practiced in middle class homes and gradually replaced the concept of 'house music'. *Hausmusik*,¹¹ literally music designed for playing at home, was a terminology distinguished primarily by its place or location of performance; only secondarily by its style or genre. The intimacy of the *Hausmusik* setting contrasted sharply with the opulent and affected elegance of the aristocratic salon, as well as with the grandeur of the public performance spaces. The piano was also the choice of instrument for *Hausmusik* because of its reasonable cost and its unique ability to reproduce multiple-voiced textures.¹²

Andreas Ballstaedt argues that the term 'salon music' essentially means repertoire for solo piano - initially the 'brilliant' works of the keyboard lions from the 1830s French salons, and then with increasing generality in the second half of the nineteenth century, all virtuosic piano music which sounds difficult to play but which technically lies within the grasp of the moderately skilled amateur (such works were usually given poetic titles).¹³ Walter Gerogii, in his book *Klaviermusik* (1950),¹⁴ which deals with salon and virtuoso music in the nineteenth century, points out that salon music was considered elegant, refined, and attractive early in the nineteenth century, but was later carried out by amateurs, dilettantes, and commercial composers who merely furnished pieces for mass consumption.¹⁵ Similarly, John Irving describes the cultivation of genres from the emotion-oriented early Romantics (as opposed to the reason-based Enlightenment) as a variety of 'less ambitious genres, historically associated with the salon, rather than the concert hall.'¹⁶

¹⁰ Derek Carew, 'The Consumption of Music', *The Cambridge History of Nineteenth-Century Music*, ed. Jim Samson (Cambridge University Press, 2002), 248.

¹¹ The term was first invoked in a series of articles from 1837-39 by C.F. Becker for Schumann's own journal, *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*. See John Daverio, *Robert Schumann: Herald of a 'New Poetic Age'* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 404.

¹² Lora Deahl, 'Robert Schumann's *Album for the Young* and the Coming of Age of Nineteenth-Century Piano Pedagogy', *College Music Symposium* Vol.41 (2001), 26.

¹³ Andreas Ballstaedt, 'Chopin as 'salon composer' in nineteenth-century German criticism', in *Chopin Studies* 2, ed. John Rink and Jim Samson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 28.

¹⁴ Walter Gerogii, *Klaviermusik, Geschichte der Klaviermusik zu zwei und vier Händen von den Anfragen bis zur Gegenwart* (Zurich/Freiburg, Atlantis Musikbuch-Verlag, 1976).

¹⁵ Harold Gerald Aultman, 'Walter Georgii's *Klaviermusik*, part II: a translation and commentary' (PhD thesis, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, 1983), taken from Anne Swartz, 'Maria Szymanowska and the Salon Music of the Early Nineteenth Century', *The Polish Review*, Vol.30, No.1 (1985), 43-58.

¹⁶ John Irving, 'The invention of tradition', *The Cambridge History of Nineteenth-Century Music*, ed. Jim Samson (Cambridge University Press, 2002), 178-212.

Chopin's Early Years

Born in 1810, Chopin came into contact with music at a very early age. His mother played the piano and sang, and his father is known to have played the flute and the violin. His elder sister, Ludwika, also showed musical talent from a young age and played the piano. The atmosphere in the family home was warm and hearty. It was the home- diligently run by his parents, in accordance with the best models from Polish aristocracy- that would remain for Chopin a symbol of peace, security and love, which the composer would cherish throughout his adult life.¹⁷

He started playing the piano at home under the guidance of Ludwika, then at age 6 he began regular lessons with a private music teacher, the Czech immigrant Wojciech Żywny (1756-1842). Żywny soon realised that his young pupil was remarkably gifted and introduced him to the world of the great masters, mainly Bach and Mozart, closely observing his progress in pianism and free improvisation. Chopin's first compositions came soon after- polonaises, marches and variations. Initially written with his father's help, they almost immediately brought him a reputation as a child prodigy. In 1818, the *Pamiętnik Warszawski* noted: 'a true musical genius: not only does he play the most difficult pieces on the pianoforte, with the greatest ease and exceptional taste, but he is also the composer of several dances and variations, by which musical experts are constantly amazed.'¹⁸

In 1822, Żywny told the Chopins that he could not develop his pupil's skills any further and Chopin began taking regular private lessons with the most outstanding teachers in Warsaw: composition with Józef Elsner (1769-1854) and the piano and organ with the influential virtuoso Wilhelm Würfel (1790-1832). Chopin gave numerous performances as well as cultivating his improvisation skills amongst his close friends and in aristocratic salons. He also had an all-round education at the Warsaw Lyceum, and spent his summer holidays on the country estates of his close friends, where he absorbed the customs, rituals and especially the music of the common folk. The treasures of Polish culture and Polish 'folk' music would stay with him for the rest of his life.¹⁹

In 1826, Chopin enrolled in the main school of music attached to the Warsaw University, which was run by Elsner. After his first year, Elsner noted: 'special aptitude'. A year later, Chopin composed his first two serious works: the *Variations in B flat major* Op.2 on the theme of 'Là ci darem la mano' from Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, and the Sonata in C minor Op.4, which was dedicated to Elsner. The Variations, his first work published outside Poland, would open doors to concert halls during Chopin's

¹⁷ I am indebted to the biographical section of the website of The Fryderyk Chopin Institute: <<http://en.chopin.nifc.pl/chopin/life/biography/page/1>> (accessed 27 Nov. 2018).

¹⁸ *Pamiętnik Warszawski, czyli Dziennik Nauk i Umiejętności*, (Warsaw, January 1818), taken from the website above as well as Ateş Orga's *Fryderyk Franciszek Chopin- Illustrated Lives of the Great Composers* (Omnibus Press, London, 2015), 12.

¹⁹ <<http://en.chopin.nifc.pl/chopin/life/biography/page/1>> (accessed 27 Nov. 2018).

debut tour in 1829. A year later, he wrote the *Fantasy on Polish Airs* Op.13 and the *Rondo à la Krakowiak* Op.14. The *Fantasy* and *Rondo* follow the specific character of virtuosic genres in the *style brilliant*;²⁰ they also foreshadow the individual means of expression that Chopin would shortly be using in his most important compositions with orchestra- the two piano concertos.

When Chopin graduated from the main school of music in 1829, Elsner gave him the highest assessment; 'Szopen Friderik,- special ability, musical genius.' The same month, Chopin travelled to Vienna for the first time, giving two concerts (performing his *Variations* Op.12 and *Rondo* Op.13, and improvising), and returned after a hugely successful tour. This led to his next planned trip abroad, which would be the last time that he left Poland.²¹

Jim Samson notes that Chopin's stylistic change from '*style brilliant*' to 'a diversity of miniature designs and single-movement extended structures' started around 1830- from the Op.10 *Etudes* and the early nocturnes.²² Although my research does not focus on issues of genre but instead on the influence that is seen from other composers, I agree with Samson that the publication of Op.10 marks an important moment in Chopin's stylistic development.

Existing Research on Chopin Studies

There have been many studies written about Chopin and his music, starting with biographies written by Franz Liszt and George Sand, as well as poetic accounts by André Gide, Alfred Cortot, musicologists such as Arthur Hedley and many others. In the present-day, musicologists such as Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger,²³ Jim

²⁰ Described by Leonard Ratner loosely as 'rapid passages for virtuoso display', from www.oxfordhandbooks.com, Roman Ivanovitch, 'The Brilliant Style', *Oxford Handbook of Topic Theory*, 2014 <accessed 4 April 2018>. Another more original source according to Jim Samson in *The Four Ballades* (Cambridge University Press, 1994), is the 'brilliant style' discussed in Koch's Lexicon of 1802 and elsewhere in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In the early nineteenth century, it was often described as a 'modern school' (*The Athenaeum*, 16 February 1839) whose sole object seemed to be 'to play the greatest number of notes in a given time' (*The Musical World*, 15 July 1836) in contrast to the 'grave and well-considered works of Steibelt, Dussek, Clementi and Woelfl and the more thoughtful and less mechanical creations of Beethoven and Weber' (*The Athenaeum*, 26 February 1842).

²¹ Biography section of <<http://en.chopin.nifc.pl/chopin/life/biography/page/6>> (accessed 4 April 2018).

²² Jim Samson, 'Chopin and Genre', *Musical Analysis*, Vol.8 No.3 (Oct 1989), 213-231.

²³ Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger's *Chopin pianist and teacher as seen by his pupils* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986) is a bible for Chopin enthusiasts.

Samson,²⁴ Jeffrey Kallberg,²⁵ and John Rink,²⁶ as well as numerous other scholars of whom many are Polish, have all contributed to Chopin scholarship.

Through these many publications, a number of issues relating to the music of Chopin have been explored in depth. For instance, there have been a variety of analytical approaches to Chopin, although the use of Schenkerian theory predominates (including extensive studies and articles by John Rink and Jim Samson). I shall now give some examples of existing Chopin literature and of some key authors and their works.

Jim Samson

The main focus of Samson's *The Four Ballades* is the discussion of form – ballade form emerging from sonata form, how the creation of the German, French, English editions affected reception and performance practice of the works, and of most relevance to this project, the changes in Chopin's style. These are the Warsaw years (1817-1830) with Chopin as composer-pianist (Op.'s 2,3,4,8,12,13,14,21), The Vienna and early Paris years (1830-1832) where the transformation from the 'style brilliant' began to take place, as well as the increased disenchantment that Chopin felt in relation to his role as composer-pianist, show in works such as the Op.6 and Op.7 *Mazurkas*, Op.9 *Nocturnes* and Op.10 *Etudes*. Finally, Samson paints the background of genre renovation that Chopin's approach to single-movement extended structures developed, such as in the *Scherzi* and *Ballades* until his death.

In *Chopin Studies*, Jim Samson's chapter on the *Polonaise-Fantasy* Op.61 illuminates the process of composition that Chopin went through, using Schenkerian analysis and considering genre and structure through the foregrounding of social history; the importance of minor figures is made clear. *The Cambridge Companion to Chopin* is a compilation of essays from well-known Chopin scholars such as, John Rink, Jeffrey Kallberg, Zofia Chechlinska, Roy Howat divided into three sections- theoretical and stylistic, structures of the music and Chopin reception.

²⁴ Some significant publications by Jim Samson are: 'Chopin and the Structures of History', in *Chopin and his Work in the Context of Culture*, ed. I. Poniatowska (Warsaw: Narodowy Instytut Fryderyka Chopina, 2003), 47-57; 'Chopin, Past and Present', in *Early Music* 29/3 (2001), 381-87; *Chopin* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996 [Master Musicians]); *Chopin Studies 2*, ed. John Rink and Jim Samson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994; paperback reprint 2006); *Chopin: The Four Ballades* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); *The Cambridge Companion to Chopin* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

²⁵ One of Jeffrey Kallberg's representative works is *Chopin at the Boundaries: Sex, History and Musical Genre* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1996).

²⁶ Some important articles by John Rink are: *Chopin: The Piano Concertos* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); *Chopin Studies 2*, ed. John Rink and Jim Samson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994; paperback reprint 2006); 'Chopin and Performance Studies', in *Chopin and his Work in the Context of Culture*, ed. Irena Poniatowska, 2 vols. (Cracow: Musica Iagellonica, 2003), Vol.2, 11-26; 'Chopin Copying Chopin', in *Chopin's Work: His Inspirations and Creative Process in the Light of the Sources*, ed. Artur Szklener (Warsaw: Narodowy Instytut Fryderyka Chopina, 2003), 67-81; 'The Legacy of Improvisation in Chopin', in *Muzyka w kontekście kultury*, ed. Małgorzata Janicka-Słysz, Teresa Malecka and Krzysztof Szwałgier (Cracow: Akademia Muzyczna, 2001), 79-89; 'Authentic Chopin: History, Analysis and Intuition in Performance', in *Chopin Studies 2*, ed. John Rink and Jim Samson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); 'Chopin's Ballades and the Dialectic: Analysis in Historical Perspective', in *Music Analysis* 13/1 (1994), 99-115; 'Chopin and Schenker: Improvisation and Musical Structure', in *Chopin Studies*, 3 (1990), 219-31.

Samson's work paints the background from every possible angle, be it historical, cultural, sociological or biographical, often touching on everything from aesthetics to music history to philosophy to European cultural history. After establishing this context, he relates to possible historical documents regarding Chopin, from manuscripts to first editions to the copyist's scores. There are also Chopin's students' scores with markings to consider, as well as quotes from his letters, his contemporaries' letters and diaries. He further analyses individual pieces and explains Chopin's harmonic language, especially in mature pieces such as the Concertos, Ballades, Nocturnes and Preludes.

He has not, however explored many of the pre-Op.10 works of Chopin, such as the Rondos, the various sets of Variations and the early Polonaises. My feeling is that he is drawn to the intricate and rich harmonies and piano-writing found in Chopin's later and more structurally mature works. Another important and relevant aspect missing from the current literature is the haptic experience from a performer's point of view.

John Rink

The scholar and pianist John Rink, who edited the second *Chopin Studies* collection of essays together with Jim Samson, has also published many studies on Chopin.²⁷ He analyses Chopin's works from a historical, theoretical, and rhetorical point of view and says that finding a voice as a Chopin interpreter and performer amidst the present-day tendency towards a musicological base is extremely difficult.²⁸ He presents case studies based on theory, analysis and historical evidence as to how a particular piece of work could be deemed an authentic interpretation.²⁹

John Rink distinguishes his approach from Samson's in that he himself is a pianist. His work thus involves more of a performer's approach stemming on solid theoretical analyses. Even in his lectures, he demonstrates by performing the discrepancies rather than just lecturing about them. He does not make musicology and music research a somewhat 'dry' field; his practice-as-research method resonates with my ideal in incorporating performance and scholarship.

²⁷ John Rink, Jim Samson: *Chopin Studies 2* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

²⁸ John Rink, 'Authentic Chopin: history, analysis and intuition in performance', in *Chopin Studies 2*, ed. John Rink and Jim Samson (Cambridge University Press, 1994), 214.

²⁹ Some important articles by John Rink are: *Chopin: The Piano Concertos* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); *Chopin Studies 2*, ed. John Rink and Jim Samson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994; paperback reprint 2006); 'Chopin and Performance Studies', in *Chopin and his Work in the Context of Culture*, ed. Irena Poniatowska, 2 vols. (Cracow: Musica Iagellonica, 2003), Vol.2, 11-26; 'Chopin Copying Chopin', in *Chopin's Work: His Inspirations and Creative Process in the Light of the Sources*, ed. Artur Szklener (Warsaw: Narodowy Instytut Fryderyka Chopina, 2003), 67-81; 'The Legacy of Improvisation in Chopin', in *Muzyka w kontekście kultury*, ed. Małgorzata Janicka-Słysz, Teresa Malecka and Krzysztof Szwejgier (Cracow: Akademia Muzyczna, 2001), 79-89; 'Authentic Chopin: History, Analysis and Intuition in Performance', in *Chopin Studies 2*, ed. John Rink and Jim Samson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); 'Chopin's Ballades and the Dialectic: Analysis in Historical Perspective', in *Music Analysis* 13/1 (1994), 99-115; 'Chopin and Schenker: Improvisation and Musical Structure', in *Chopin Studies*, 3 (1990), 219-31.

Rink's work includes Schenkerian analysis, improvisation, performance issues and problems regarding Chopin editions. But like Samson, Rink seems to be drawn to the later, mature works. Although his PhD dissertation focuses on Schenkerian analysis on Chopin's earlier works and its relation to improvisation, there is little element shown of the haptic process.³⁰

Jeffrey Kallberg

The American Chopin scholar, Jeffrey Kallberg writes about critical theory, gender studies and genre, focusing in particular on Chopin's Nocturnes. His book: *Chopin at the Boundaries: Sex, History, and Musical Genre* (1996) is a collection of essays touching on these issues. Of particular notice, 'Chopin in the Marketplace' gives detailed descriptions of how Chopin's compositions were published and an even more specific account of how much they cost, which gives the reader a realistic feel of the music industry in Chopin's time.³¹

Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger

The Swiss scholar Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger's book *Chopin: pianist and teacher as seen by his pupils* (1986) has been of seminal importance for many Chopin studies (his book is always mentioned in research articles on Chopin),³² and my project is no exception. Eigeldinger has collected notes, references, letters, and musical sketches which had been in the possession of Chopin's students with in-depth annotated notes. The book gives the reader an insight into the heart of Chopin's artistry and musical aesthetic. Eigeldinger explains how Chopin used imagery, poetic words, and even a physiological approach to piano-playing and interpretation to convey his inner voice. For example, instead of starting the basics of piano-playing on a C major scale, as most pedagogues and pianists would do, Chopin used the B major form, which fits the hand naturally with no strain, to improve touch and technique.³³ Eigeldinger's article on the coherence of the 24 Preludes is also unique and eclectic, based on a wide range of historical, theoretical and analytical data to support his case.³⁴ His approach is one closest to my ideal, although my work is angled more from performance.

³⁰ Rink, John 'The Evolution of Chopin's 'structural style' and its relation to improvisation. University of Cambridge (doctoral thesis) 1989.

³¹ Jeffrey Kallberg, *Chopin at the Boundaries: Sex, History and Musical Genre* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1996).

³² Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger, *Chopin pianist and teacher as seen by his pupils* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

³³ Eigeldinger, *Chopin pianist and teacher as seen by his pupils*.

³⁴ Eigeldinger, 'Twenty-four preludes Op.28: Genre, form, significance' from *Chopin Studies*, ed. Jim Samson (Cambridge University Press, 1988,) 167-194.

Editions

The above-mentioned musicologists have also been the main editors for the most recent publication of the complete Chopin critical edition from Peters Edition, London (2004-2010) in which they attempt to unravel Chopin's complicating habit of constant revisions, even after publication.³⁵ The fact that he published from England, France and Germany simultaneously in order to increase his sales makes modern editing problematic, as no two editions are alike. Thus, multiple first editions of Chopin's works exist giving present-day scholars and performers difficulty in establishing what Chopin's original intentions were. Derek Carew explains the rise in music publication around Chopin's time:

The proliferation of domestic and semi-domestic music-making gave rise to the consumption of music on an unprecedented scale and provided a market which had a predictable effect on music-production, a market to which composers were not slow to respond. Lithography, a new method was invented in this period by Alois Senefelder. It was a cheaper way and was closely associated with the music from the beginning. The cumbersome tones were replaced by metal plates, and manuscript, if written on the right kind of paper with the right kind of ink, would transfer directly to the plates. This gave composers direct control over their works and allowed for self-publication.³⁶

The Peters Edition gives thorough commentaries starting with the background of each of the works from the angle of genre, performance, structure and origins. The editors not only cite and refer to all sources, including the manuscripts and the original French, German and English editions, they also look to Chopin's pupils' scores and markings, which often include clues concerning how Chopin intended his music to be played.

The Paderewski edition (1980),³⁷ which has long been thought of as the authoritative edition for Chopin's works, has been proven to be unreliable,³⁸ not

³⁵ *The Complete Chopin- A New Critical Edition* (2004-) from Peters Edition, London is edited by the already-mentioned authorities on Chopin scholarship- John Rink, Jim Samson, and Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger. Their unrivalled collective knowledge imbues this project with unique authority, drawing upon the latest international scholarship. The edition includes an introductory essay in English, German and French examining the historical background, compositional features and performance practice issues; the identification of, and adherence to, a single principal source; a detailed and comprehensive critical commentary; uses Chopin's authentic fingerings only; emphasis is placed on retaining expressive features of the original notation and it has notes on the editorial principles and methodology guiding the whole project. It is considered to be the modern urtext edition for Chopin.

³⁶ Derek Carew, 'The Consumption of Music', *The Cambridge History of Nineteenth-Century Music* (Cambridge University Press, 2002), 250.

³⁷ Of the 'source' or 'Urtext' editions produced following World War II, the most popular today is the Polish Complete Edition ('Paderewski Edition'), based mainly on the work of Ludwik Bronarski. Yet whatever its pioneering significance, this is a deeply flawed text, selecting permissively from different sources, mistaking copies for autographs and basing orthography and phrasing not on legitimate sources but on unidentified recent editions and even personal judgments made in the light of particular harmonic theories. - Kornel Michałowski and Jim Samson, 'Fryderyk Chopin' in *Grove Music Online*. *Oxford Music Online*, <<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/51099>> (accessed Oct. 19, 2013).

³⁸ One of the editors of the Peters Edition, John Rink, along with Swiss musicologist Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger, my professor Dominique Merlet who is another authority on Chopin, and my former professor Jan Marisse Huizing, pupil of Jan Ekier have all ingrained this 'fact' in me!

because of the shortcomings of Paderewski as a Chopin interpreter, but simply because there are too many versions to consider, which editors of this edition had not done thoroughly.

The main editor of the Polish National Edition (2000-), Jan Ekier,³⁹ another leading Chopin researcher and pianist, leads a group of Polish scholars, who also attempted to publish the complete works of Chopin in recent years based on a thorough re-visitation of Chopin's manuscripts, notes, sketches, etc. Polish pride (the main international airport in Warsaw is called the Fryderyk Chopin International Airport) together with a proud research tradition motivates this group. This edition is highly reliable in authenticity and honesty and is the recommended edition for the famous International Chopin Piano Competition in Warsaw. Like the Peters Edition, there is a renewed interest in creating a Chopin urtext, and the Polish Edition does not disappoint with its extensive commentaries and detailed accounts of its sources.

Further references

Another important reference material for Chopin scholarship are the letters of Chopin, compiled by Henryk Opieński (1931).⁴⁰ Halina Goldberg, Zdzisław Jachimiecki, Barbara Milewski, Iwo and Pamela Zahiski, Wojciech Nowik, Zofia Chechlińska all have articles published in English.⁴¹ They have contributed to a deeper understanding of Chopin the man, Chopin and his nationalistic origins through Polish musical and political history (especially through his Mazurkas), studies on his individual pieces such as the Polonaise-Fantasy, the Preludes, Nocturnes and Etudes, the Ballades and his Concertos. The Austrian theorist Heinrich Schenker listed Chopin as an important, influential and canonical composer as much as Beethoven and Mozart and favoured his compositions for theoretical analyses.⁴²

An issue that remains relatively unexplored is the influence of lesser-known composers on the formation of Chopin's earlier style. Szymanowska (1789-1831), who, like her compatriot Chopin, was an accomplished pianist and teacher with a distinguished career, and whose compositions are mostly written for or with piano,

³⁹ Jan Ekier (1942-2014) was born in Krakow, Poland. He was a Polish pianist and composer known for his authoritative edition of Chopin's music for the Polish National Edition.

⁴⁰ *Chopin's Letters*, ed. Henryk Opieński, trans. E.L. Voynick (New York: Alfred A Knopf, Inc., 1931).

⁴¹ Some of these articles are: Halina Goldberg, 'Chamber Arrangements of Chopin's Concert Works', in *The Journal of Musicology* 19/1 (Winter, 2002), 39-84; Zdzisław Jachimiecki, 'Polish Music', in *The Music Quarterly* 6/4 (Oct., 1920), 553-572; Barbara Milewski, 'Chopin's Mazurka and the Myth of the Folk', in *19th Century Music* 22/3 (Spring, 1999), 113-135; Iwo Zahiski and Pamela Zahiski, 'Chopin in London', in *The Musical Times* 133/1791 (May 1992), et al.

⁴² See for example: *Chopin Studies*, ed. Jim Samson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988); *Chopin Studies 2*, ed. John Rink and Jim Samson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Jim Samson, *The Four Ballades* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); John Rink, 'Chopin and Schenker: Improvisation and Musical Structure', in *Chopin Studies*, 3 (1990), 219-31, et al.

shows elements in her works that Chopin used. There has been some research carried out on Szymanowska's influence on Chopin. Anne Swartz writes about the times and circumstances when Szymanowska was active as a well-respected teacher, composer and virtuoso. She was admired and known by the most eminent musicians of her time, something made more remarkable by the fact that she was a woman. Swartz's work raises Szymanowska's profile considerably, and is an important source concerning the composer.⁴³ Another example is the work of Sławomir Dobrzański, whose DMA dissertation *Maria Szymanowska and Fryderyk Chopin: Parallelism and Influence* won the 2001 Wilk Essay Prize for Research in Polish Music (Student Category *ex aequo*), and addresses the similarity in both composers' writing (Szymanowska always preceding Chopin).⁴⁴ Anna Kijas is another scholar whose biography on Szymanowska chronicles her extensive body of works, many of which are unpublished and remain unattainable in the present-day.⁴⁵

The role of Kessler has rarely been considered. Kessler's 24 Preludes (1835) are substantial in their musical quality and content as well as their evident influence on Chopin's Preludes. There is very little existing references and literature on Kessler except for a chapter on musical salons in Halina Goldberg's book *Music in Chopin's Warsaw*.⁴⁶ But as I shall show later, there is direct evidence of his influence on Chopin. The role of haptic elements amongst these composers are completely neglected, where I shall solely focus on.

Methodology

Approaches taken by Chopin scholars include examining theoretical and motivic connections that run through Chopin's works, such as the work on the 24 Preludes undertaken by Eigeldinger by examining annotated scores and sketches by Chopin.⁴⁷ But there are issues in using only score-based techniques when they do not include a consideration of the act of performance.

This issue has been identified by people such as Nicholas Cook in *Beyond the Score: music as performance* (2013), and through the PaR frameworks as explored by Mine Doğan-Çakır, Robin Nelson and John Irving. Cook describes the following in relation to our perspective when researching music:

⁴³ Some articles on Szymanowska by Anne Swartz are: 'Goethe and Szymanowska: the years 1823–1824 in Marienbad and Weimar', *Germano-Slavica*, Vol.4 (1982–4), 321–30; 'Maria Szymanowska: Contemporary Accounts from Moscow and St Petersburg', *New Journal for Music* 1 (1990), 38–64; 'Szymanowska: the Virtuoso-Composer in Transition' *New Journal for Music* 3 (1991), 7–31; 'Maria Szymanowska to Adam Mickiewicz: Unpublished Letters from 1827', *Australian Slavonic and East European Studies* 1 (1991), 25–44.

⁴⁴ Sławomir Dobrzański, 'Maria Szymanowska and Fryderyk Chopin: Parallelism and Influence', *Polish Music Journal* 5/1 (Summer 2002). <http://www.usc.edu/dept/polish_music/PMJ/issue/5.1.02/dobrzanski.html> (accessed 2 April, 2018).

⁴⁵ Anna E. Kijas, *Maria Szymanowska: A Bio-Bibliography*, (The Scarecrow Press Inc), 2010.

⁴⁶ Halina Goldberg, *Music in Chopin's Warsaw* (Oxford University Press, 2008), 183–200.

⁴⁷ Eigeldinger, 'Twenty-four Preludes Op.28: Genre, structure, significance' from *Chopin Studies*, ed. Jim Samson (Cambridge University Press, 1988), 167–194.

It is not only about changing the scope of the research- for example, situating the research from the performer's perspective- but to adjust our fundamental view of how we understand music, not as 'music as writing' but 'music as performance'.⁴⁸

He goes on to say:

My aim is not to displace traditional musicology but rather to rethink it from the inside. I want to address the issues of culture and meaning that concern most musicologists, but to build performance deeply into their formulation, and make it possible to bring the specifics of individual performances- often in the form of recordings- to bear upon them. I want to go beyond the score, as my title puts it, but at the same time I suggest that it is only once you think of music as performance that you can start to make sense of scores. Seen in the context of performance culture, scores are much more like theatrical scripts than the literary texts as which musicology has traditionally understood (or misunderstood) them, and that is just one of several ways in which thinking of music performance means rethinking basic assumptions of the music-as-writing approach.⁴⁹

The quotes above motivate discussion of PaR as an organic and relevant way of integrating musicology and performance, as something more meaningful and useful, not as separate entities. A contrary view is in what Robin Nelson says, that 'some artists hold that their work is intuitive and to engage in critical reflection upon it would be to extinguish the creative spark'.⁵⁰ I have experienced this line of thought, but through this research I have discovered the multi-faceted and exciting recent developments of PaR.

Therefore, some of the examples of how understanding the likes of Szymanowska, Kessler and Chopin's intentions will have its limitations if explained purely by text. For more conviction, it must be conducted 'from theorist to performer, from page to stage' (Cook, 2012), giving way to a 'pianistic way of knowing music' (Mine Doğantan-Dack, 2015). Furthermore, a pianist relies on one's *ear* as much as one's hands and mind to guide their artistic intentions, hence my conviction that an 'aural way of knowing music' is an equally important aspect of knowing the piece, needing to be explored in order to gain a deep understanding of the repertoire.

Herself a pianist and musicologist, Doğantan-Dack says:

Integrating embodied artistic practice into musical thought requires thinking about and in terms of the musical instrument and the performer's bodily engagement with it. The kind of sensuous knowing is a function of a cultivated sense of touch in both hands, which – coupled with the ensuing sonic image – provides the experiential basis for artistic judgment and knowledge.⁵¹

⁴⁸ Nicholas Cook, 'Introduction' in *Beyond the Score: music as performance* (Oxford University Press, 2013), 1.

⁴⁹ Cook, *Beyond the Score*, 1.

⁵⁰ Robin Nelson, *Practice as Research in the Arts: Principles, Protocols, Pedagogies, Resistances* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 33.

⁵¹ Mine Doğantan-Dack, *Artistic Practice as Research in Music: Theory, Criticism, Practice* (Ashgate, 2015), 175.

Methodology- My Project

My project examines the influence of Szymanowska and Kessler, using a PaR methodology that demonstrates the influence on Chopin's compositions through haptic considerations, not just score-based analytical processes. Swartz, as mentioned earlier, was primarily concerned with her standing as a female composer-pianist and has not fully considered the role of her pianism in respect to Chopin's compositional process. Dobrzański has shown some visual text comparisons between Chopin and Szymanowska, but he too fails to deal with the practical implementation of this knowledge.

Some possible ways are the approaches shown by David Code in 2007; his analysis of Debussy's Prelude 'Voiles' makes distinctive use of video-recorded performance to trace the piece's choreography of hands and fingers on the keyboard in order to present the obvious interrelationships of motives and gestures that ultimately leads to the 'unity' of the piece.⁵² Eugene Montague in 2012 examined the role of instrumental gestures, or the movements required to perform a piece in music-making through an analysis of Chopin's Etude in A-flat major, Op.25 No.1. This particular etude is limited in its actual number of movements, but Montague explains that this gesture expands thematically as well as physically (expansion of the span of the hand), thus becoming a logical thematic element in the piece. He concludes that this gesture unites with harmony and motive in creating the experience of the music for both performer and listener. After all, music and sound begin with movement, and to create performance of music, the roots are fundamentally in human gesture.⁵³

There have been PaR models as early as the beginning of the twentieth century, such as those of the French pianist and pedagogue Alfred Cortot's method books on Chopin's Preludes and Etudes. He diligently shows ways to practise a particularly difficult passage, with practical daily plans in musical notation and words and how to attain the goal.⁵⁴ He has audio recordings of these works, although they do not show the process. A more recent and effective model is John Irving's Mozart project,⁵⁵ also Nelson's recommendation as an ideal PaR model. Irving's project includes multiple short video clips explaining and demonstrating certain elements in Mozart interpretation, for example how to execute trills and ornaments, etc. I have found it most insightful and helpful as he shows the process between the score and the performance. This aspect is often ignored as musicians have inherent (haptic) knowledge embedded after many, many years of training and learning. The haptic process is probably most effective to amateurs, piano enthusiasts and

⁵² David Cole, 'Parting the Veils of Debussy's 'Voiles'', *Scottish Music Review* 1, no. 1 (2007), 43–67.

⁵³ Eugene Montague, 'Instrumental Gesture in Chopin's Etude in A-Flat Major Op 25 No. 1', *A Journal of the Society for Music Theory*, Volume 18 No. 4 (2012), 17.

⁵⁴ ed. Alfred Cortot, *Chopin: 12 Studies for Piano Op.10* (Editions Salabert, 1930).

⁵⁵ <http://www.mozartclavichord.org.uk/Mozart_on_the_Hass_Clavichord/Welcome.html> (accessed 6 April 2018).

students, who are also the main audience for my project. The reason it is most effective for this type of audience is because the haptic process analyses physically how a certain passage is played, or how certain fingerings are used. For professionals, this process is almost second nature and we do not stop to think about it, whereas during the process of teaching and showing to a less experienced audience, one has to slow it down and break it down to explain what is happening without relying on instinct.

Chapter 2

Chopin's admiration for Bach, Mozart and the *bel canto* composers such as Bellini and Donizetti is well-known and well-documented.⁵⁶ But there are numerous other composers to whom Chopin owes his musical output and compositional style, including: his own professor Elsner (1769-1854), who composed music from Polish folk songs and dances and stressed the importance of the inflection of the Polish language in the art song; Szymanowska (1789-1831), the female virtuoso and composer of Polonaises, Mazurkas and many genres which Chopin later developed and personalized; the London Pianoforte School, led by Clementi and his pupils Field⁵⁷ and Dussek, who influenced his Concertos and Nocturnes; and his slightly older colleagues, Kalkbrenner, Hummel, Kessler, Moscheles, and even Beethoven, whose influence is shown in Chopin's Preludes, Etudes, and Sonatas.⁵⁸ Notes from his pupils survive to show the composers Chopin studied, played and taught. They include the above-mentioned composers as well as Schubert and Weber.⁵⁹ Further proof of Chopin's association with the music of his contemporaries, particularly of Szymanowska and Kessler are described by Halina Goldberg in *Music in Chopin's Warsaw*:

The most acclaimed (music salons) were the gatherings in the homes of Kessler...and the Wołowskis (parents of Maria Szymanowska). For Chopin, the association with the well-respected Kessler was valuable in entering the musical circles abroad.⁶⁰

Chopin took part in salon gatherings...such performances by Chopin as well as the concerts at the Wołowskis featuring Maria's expert performances...⁶¹

⁵⁶ Nicholas Temperley, 'Fryderyk Chopin' in *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*, <<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/51099>> (accessed Jan 15, 2017).

⁵⁷ I will discuss Field further in the thesis.

⁵⁸ Wayne C. Petty, 'Chopin and the Ghost of Beethoven', in *19th Century Music* 22/3 (Spring, 1999), 281-299.

⁵⁹ Eigeldinger, Chopin: pianist and teacher as seen by his pupils, 59-63.

⁶⁰ Halina Goldberg, *Music in Chopin's Warsaw*, (Oxford University Press, 2008), 183-192.

⁶¹ Goldberg, *Music in Chopin's Warsaw*, 192.

The piano virtuosi active in Warsaw's salons also made considerable contributions as composers to the piano repertory performed in private concerts.⁶²

...through the publication of fashionable musical genres associated with opera and the salon, local printers provided Chopin with the repertory that served as the basis for the formation of his idiomatic musical vocabulary.⁶³

It is not an overstatement to say that exposure to their music served as a backbone for his education and aesthetic, and to the development of his musical ideas in form, genre, style and musical language.

Szymanowska and Kessler

Chopin developed his musical language through his exploration of pianistic technique based on the developing keyboard pianism of the early nineteenth century, and his extensive knowledge of counterpoint and harmony. Chopin mingled with other musicians in the salons of Warsaw and Paris, hearing the latest compositions of the most talented emerging composers/performers of the day. Szymanowska was amongst them; she had studied piano with John Field (1782-1837), and was great friends with her compatriot Elsner, who was a frequent visitor to her home in Warsaw. She had a career as a celebrated virtuoso, travelling across Europe, and is perhaps one of the earliest female concert pianists, preceding Clara Schumann. She was highly respected and is said to have been a central figure amongst distinguished musicians and artists of her time.⁶⁴

Evidence of her high-standing is stated in one review of her performance in Kiev in April 1823 in the respected *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*:

On the 25th, Madame Szymanowska, first Imperial Russian pianist, presented a noon concert. She played the Grand Concerto (in A minor) by Hummel, the first Allegro of a Steibelt'sch Sonata with violin (in E minor), two Bagatelles by Field and a Rondo by Mozart, Jr (in E flat major). This genuine virtuoso pianist offered us a first-rate artistic enjoyment.⁶⁵

Another reference to her importance as a concert pianist is found in the review of an 1824 concert in Leipzig, from the same journal:

⁶² Goldberg, *Music in Chopin's Warsaw*, 193.

⁶³ Goldberg, *Music in Chopin's Warsaw*, 54-55.

⁶⁴ Zofia Chechlińska, 'Maria Agata Szymanowska' in Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online, <<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/27327>> (accessed Sept. 10, 2017).

⁶⁵ [Unsigned] *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* XXV (Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1823), 254, taken from Dobrzański, 'Maria Szymanowska and Fryderyk Chopin: Parallelism and Influence', *Polish Music Journal* 5/1 (Summer, 2002), <http://www.usc.edu/dept/polish_music/PMJ/issue/5.1.02/dobrzanski.html> (accessed Nov 2018).

On October 20, Madam Szymanowska, first pianist of Her Majesty Empress of Russia, offered us most magnificent enjoyment. Previously, she was heard in the subscription concert and this brought her a very full house. Madame Szymanowska is a master of her instrument in the full sense of the word. Skill and musical spirit are equally strong in her...⁶⁶

Although Szymanowska married and had three children, during which time she took a break from touring, she divorced her husband and enjoyed a period of concertising full-time. She later settled in St Petersburg to concentrate on teaching and composing. Her home became a cultural haven for many distinguished artists of the time, such as Adam Mickiewicz and Johann von Goethe. When she died, she had left one hundred and thirteen compositions. Zofia Chechlińska writes in *Grove Music Online*:

Szymanowska's compositions for piano, particularly her studies (Vingt exercises et preludes), Nocturnes and dance miniatures, herald Romanticism in style, and demonstrate new technical and colouristic possibilities for the instrument; they occupy an important position in the history of Polish music before Chopin.⁶⁷

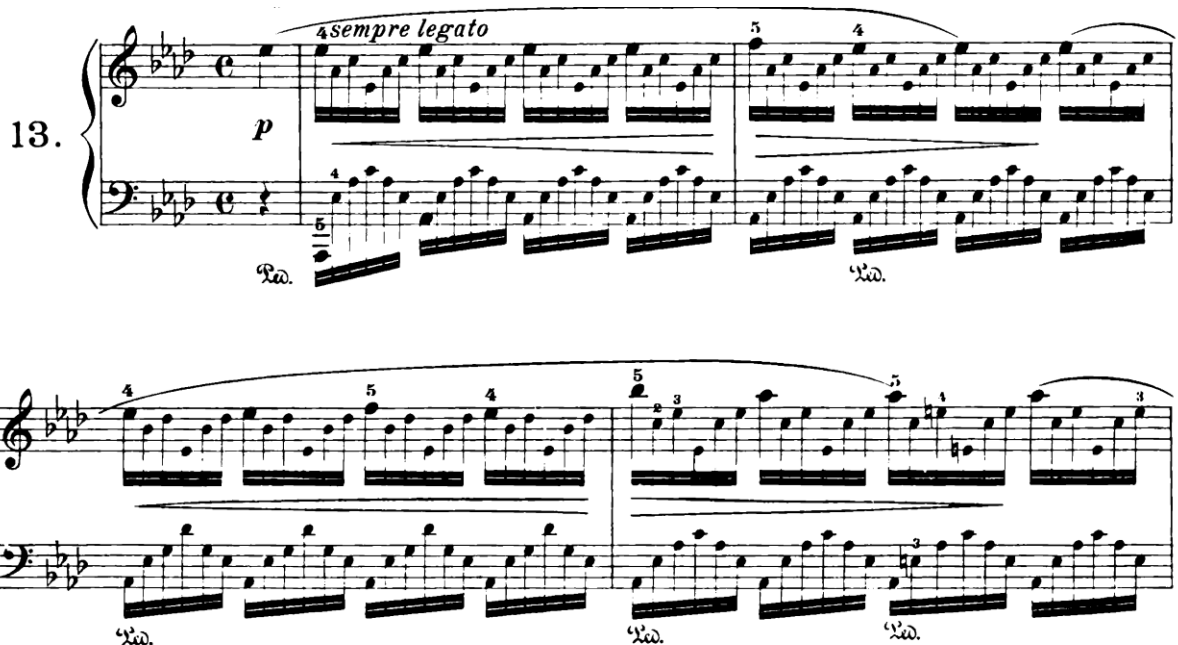
Another figure that had an important influence on Chopin was Joseph Christoph Kessler: very little is written about Kessler (he does not even have an entry in the *Grove*) but it is known that although he was of German birth, he spent a significant part of his musical career in Poland. He was born in 1800 in Augsburg, Germany, and was active as a pianist and composer in the Austrian Empire. He spent part of his long musical career in Poland, during which he became friends with the leading figures of Polish music, including the young Chopin. A mere glance at Kessler's 24 *Etudes* Op.20, shows how Chopin was in his debt, as shown in the following examples.

⁶⁶ [Unsigned] *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* XXVI (1824), 204, taken from Dobrzański, 'Maria Szymanowska and Fryderyk Chopin: Parallelism and Influence', *Polish Music Journal* 5/1 (Summer, 2002), <http://www.usc.edu/dept/polish_music/PMJ/issue/5.1.02/dobrzanski.html> (accessed Nov 2018).

⁶⁷ Zofia Chechlińska, 'Maria Agata Szymanowska' in *Grove Music Online*. Oxford Music Online, <<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/27327>> (accessed May 15, 2018).



Kessler *Etude* Op.20 No.9 (Edition Ricordi 1896)



Chopin *Etude* Op.25 No.1 (G. Schirmer 1916)

Note the similarities with Chopin's *Etude* Op.25 No.1, in particular the key, the textural concept, and the way in which the melody notes are emphasised.⁶⁸

Here are some further examples of Kessler's apparent influence on Chopin:

⁶⁸ I have been made aware that some of these similarities have been previously pointed out by Halina Goldberg in *Music in Chopin's Warsaw* (Oxford, 2008), 195-96, although this was pointed out after I had implemented them in my thesis.



Kessler *Etude* Op.20 No.15

Chopin *Prelude* Op.28 No.17 (G. Schirmer 1943)

The following extracts both show chordal/octave melody in the right hand, and semiquaver passages in the left:

Nº 20

Allegro energico. ♩ = 154

Kessler Etude Op.20 No.20

58

Chopin Etude Op.10 No.12 'Revolutionary'

These examples are in double sixths:

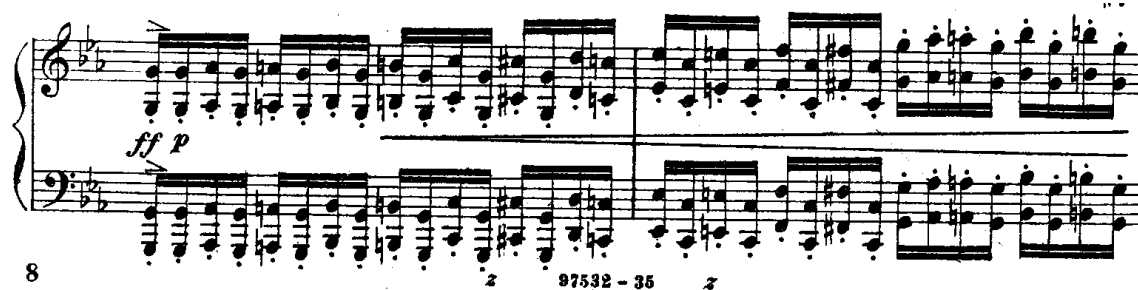


Kessler Etude Op.20 No.23



Chopin Etude Op.25 No.8

These are in double octaves:



Kessler Etude Op.20 No.8



Chopin Etude Op.25 No.10

It is no coincidence that Chopin first started writing etudes in 1829, the year Kessler arrived on the Warsaw scene with his newly published etudes in hand. As I wrote earlier, Kessler spent part of his long musical career in Poland, during which he became friends with the leading figures of Polish music, including the young Chopin. Yet Kessler has been a figure on the very fringes of Chopin scholarship. His formative influence on the Polish master is mostly ignored except for a brief chapter on him by Halina Goldberg in *Music in Chopin's Warsaw*.⁶⁹ He does not even have an entry in the *Grove Dictionary*, and there is very little information about Kessler generally available. We do, however have some of his music, such as his aforementioned *Etudes* Op.20, *Rondo Grazioso* Op.52, *Four Character Pieces Pensées Fugitives* Op.72, and the *Two Nocturnes* Op.48. A striking characteristic of Kessler's music is the expansive use of the keyboard, use of many scales and arpeggi reminiscent of Chopin, use of octaves and double intervals (as seen in his study), and technically quite difficult passagework and leaps.

The following quote from a letter written by another contemporary canonical composer and pianist, Franz Liszt to Kessler in 1838 provides some evidence of the esteem in which Kessler was held in the highest circles of 19th century Europe:

Years ago, my dear Sir, I worked a good deal on your beautiful Etudes, and ever since then I have always followed all your publications with a lively interest. My dear friend Chopin too has very often spoken to me about you, and it would be a great pleasure for me to know you personally.⁷⁰

Aside from Kessler's etudes (which rank as his foremost compositional achievement) the 24 *Preludes* Op.31 are also worthy of attention. The Preludes were published in Milan by Ricordi in November 1835. On the title page, there is a dedication "A son ami Frédéric Chopin." In time, Chopin repaid in kind by dedicating the German edition of his own *Preludes* Op.28 to Kessler in 1839. The exchange of dedications raises an intriguing question: Did Kessler's Op.31 serve as the most immediate inspiration and model for Chopin's Preludes? Some striking thematic affinities between Chopin and Kessler, which I will show, suggest that this may have been the case.⁷¹

Unlike Chopin's Preludes, Kessler's do not follow a particular order of keys. In this respect, Chopin seems to follow Hummel's 24 *Preludes* Op.67 from twenty-five years earlier- which are set in the circle of fifths. The noted Chopin scholar, Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger, compared Chopin's set with seven collections of preludes published in the first three decades of the century.⁷² He finds the only significant relationship to

⁶⁹ Goldberg, *Music in Chopin's Warsaw*, 183-197.

⁷⁰ *Liszt Letters in the Library of Congress*, trans. and ed. Michael Short, 'Franz Liszt Studies Series', 10 (Hillsdale, NY: Pentagon, 2003) xiv, 391.

⁷¹ ed. Ferdinand Gajewski, *Joseph Christoph Kessler: 24 Preludes* Op.31 (Kraków: Polskie Wydawnictwo Muzyczne, 1994), Foreword.

⁷² Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger, 'Twenty-four Preludes Op.28: genre, structure, significance' from *Chopin Studies*, ed. Jim Samson

be the ordering of the numbers by key progressing around the circle of fifths-which, which as I mentioned was done by Hummel. It is perhaps puzzling that Eigeldinger does not acknowledge the thematic resemblances between the two works, as there are quite evident direct musical and thematic influences from Chopin's colleagues, such as Kessler.

While Eigeldinger did not ascribe any particular importance to Kessler, Halina Goldberg boldly claims that:

Among Maria Szymanowska's piano compositions, *Vingt Exercices et Préludes* published in 1820 by Breitkopf und Härtel had the greatest impact on Chopin. These pieces, alongside Kessler's *Études* Op.20 and 24 *Préludes* Op.31 make up an important ancestry of Chopin's etudes and preludes.⁷³

It is also of interest to mention that Kessler was recommended by Schumann as a writer of studies, together with Szymanowska. That both Kessler and Szymanowska are mentioned in a discussion that includes Chopin demonstrates a contemporaneous connection of some relevance. Schumann writes:

No one will deny how much Clementi and Cramer owed to Bach. Between them and Moscheles there was a pause. Perhaps this was caused by the influence of Beethoven, who, an enemy of all mere mechanism, incited artists to purely poetic creativeness. After these five, including Chopin, the greatest and most original are L. Berger and C. Weyse. Ries and Hummel have displayed their peculiar styles more clearly in free compositions than in etudes. Grund and Kessler must be mentioned as solid and able; Aloise Schmidt also, whose simple clearness will gratify young hearts. Kalkbrenner, Czerny, and Herz did not accomplish gigantic things, but valuable ones, on account of the composers' thorough knowledge of the instrument. We must not overlook Potter, or Hiller, on account of their romantic spirit, neither should we forget the tender Szymanowska or the cheerful C. Mayer. Bertini deceives us, yet in a graceful way. But he who desires the most difficult will find it in the Paganini Etudes of Liszt.⁷⁴

The testament to the contribution of, for example, Kessler in this pianistic heritage leading to Chopin is evident in another comment of Schumann's: 'Study a dozen of these Kessler studies and you will find the bridge between Clementi and Chopin.'⁷⁵

While the comparison of the scores reveals some connections, they do not communicate the haptic aspects that are shared by these composers' works. In order to investigate these linkages, it is necessary to use the piano and the physical

(Cambridge University Press, 1988), 167-194.

⁷³ Goldberg, *Music in Chopin's Warsaw*, 193.

⁷⁴ Schumann, 'Die Pianoforte-Etuden, ihren Zwecken nach geordnet,' *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, 4/11 (1836), 45, taken from Edith A.H. Crawshaw, 'Studies', *The Musical Times*, Vol.71 No.1045 (March 1st, 1930), 233.

⁷⁵ Schumann, 'Etuden für das Pianoforte,' *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, 10/19 (5 March 1839), 73, taken from Edith A.H. Crawshaw, 'Studies', *The Musical Times*, Vol.71 No.1045 (March 1st, 1930), 236.

sensations created by my interaction with the instrument as a guide to tracing the patterns of influence.

Case Studies (with accompanying videos)

Through playing the works of Szymanowska and Kessler, I have been able to physically re-trace haptic influences on Chopin's own compositions. I have discovered aspects that foreshadow discoveries that have been credited to Chopin – for instance, the use of the index finger as a pivot instead of the middle finger,⁷⁶ and the harnessing of the natural physiognomy of the hand to create different sounds on each individual finger, (freeing the third, fourth and fifth fingers to allow cantabile or independent playing in the right side of the hand, whilst the left side of the same hand plays the accompaniment or obligato). This approach to the division of the hand opened possibilities for more polyphonic textures, greater harmonic variation, and further technical innovation such as the use of extended arpeggios in open positions across the whole of the keyboard.

[Video 1-Intro]

Let us now look at the video clips as part of this project, alongside the text. These videos demonstrate a number of haptic connections which I will explain in each excerpt. In video 1, I introduce my intentions and refer to examples where Kessler may have predated Chopin in these concepts.

Perhaps a more original Chopin invention is his discovery of a light movement of the hand in the direction of a run, such as a scale or an arpeggio, in order to attain evenness of fingers. 'One needs only to study a certain positioning of the hand in relation to the keys to obtain with ease the most beautiful quality of sound, to know how to play long notes and short notes and [to attain] maximum dexterity.'⁷⁷ Many pedagogues of the time sought equality of the fingers through strenuous and repetitive exercises.

[Video 2,3- Index finger pivot] –

In videos 2 and 3, I demonstrate the connection between the two examples which share the haptic characteristics of the use of the finger pivot by comparing Chopin's A minor Etude Op.10 No.2 and Ignaz Moscheles' Etude Op.70 No.3. In Chopin's Etude, it is virtually impossible to play the right hand without using Chopin's philosophy of the index finger as a pivot for the hand position.

⁷⁶ Eigeldinger, *Chopin: pianist and teacher as seen by his pupils*, 18.

⁷⁷ Eigeldinger, *Chopin: pianist and teacher as seen by his pupils*, 16.



Chopin 12 Etudes Op.10 No.2 (1829-1832)

A few years earlier, Ignaz Moscheles composed a similar study, but the chromatic passage is in the lower part of the hand, hence the position of the pivot being the traditional middle finger. I am using the haptic memory of the precise configuration of the hand for these two examples- the index finger being the core feeling for Chopin's study and the middle finger for Moscheles'. Thus, it appears that Chopin took the textural idea from Moscheles but used a different finger as the pivot. Halina Goldberg in *Music in Chopin's Warsaw* speculates that Chopin's fingerings in this study may have been influenced by Baroque organ fingerings.⁷⁸

⁷⁸ Goldberg, *Music in Chopin's Warsaw*, 36.

ETUDE III.

Ign. Moscheles, Op. 70. No. 3

This study is designed for practice in chromatic runs intermingled with double notes. These latter should be brought out clearly and forcibly. This study is specially useful for the little finger.

Diese Etude bewerkstelligt eine Übung in chromatischen Längen, bei welcher die damit verbundenen äussersten Noten kräftig hervortreten müssen. Sie soll besonders eine nützliche Übung für den kleinen Finger sein.

Allegro brillante. (♩ = 160.)

Moscheles 12 Etudes Op. 70 No.3 (1825-1826)

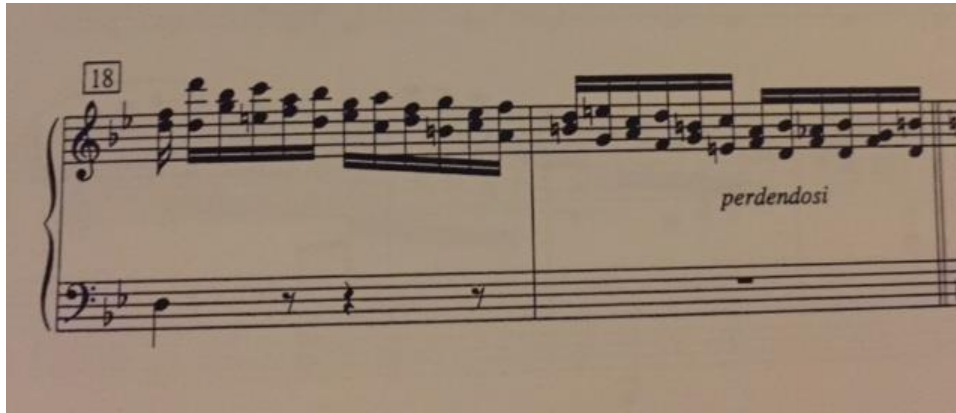
Kessler was more advanced than his contemporaries including Chopin in that he had already incorporated some of what was until now, deemed to be Chopin's technical discoveries. As mentioned earlier, his Preludes were published in 1835, and was dedicated 'à son ami, Frédéric Chopin'. Chopin responded in kind by dedicating his Preludes to Kessler in 1839. Little is recorded about the interaction between these two composers but playing Kessler's Preludes leads me to believe that Chopin owes him quite substantially more than he is given credit for.⁷⁹

[Video 4-Double Notes]

In video 4, the haptic element under consideration is the use of double notes in Szymanowska, predating Chopin through her Etude Op.20 No.17 and Chopin's Op.10 No.7. In his book *Chopin pianist and teacher as seen by his pupils* (Cambridge 1986), Jean-Jacques Eigledinger lists the following as some of the results of Chopin's original physiological discovery (the index pivot): writing in double octaves and

⁷⁹ See 'Methodology' in Introduction in Chapter 1.

writing in double notes using all the intervals from the 2nd to the 7th.⁸⁰ As I showed in an example earlier, Kessler had already used double notes (p.24 in this thesis). He had used all the intervals in double notes from the 2nd to the 10th. It had also already been explored by Szymanowska; perhaps the most obvious correlation between Szymanowska and Chopin in this regard is shown by these two examples.⁸¹



Maria Szymanowska *Etude* Op.20 No.17 (Hildegard, 1998; composed 1820)



Chopin *Etude* Op.10 No.7

Szymanowska uses double notes of the 2nd, 3rd and 6th in the example above. Furthermore, in Kessler's Prelude Op.31 No.16 (p.33 in this thesis), he writes in double notes of diminished and augmented intervals (augmented 2nd, perfect 4th, diminished 5th, 6th and 8th). Therefore, it would appear that Eigeldinger is not entirely correct in claiming that Chopin was the first composer to use all intervals in double notes.

In this video, I am showing the use of double notes in different intervals, both examples alternating smaller intervals with the 6th. When playing these, I can feel the movement of the wrist pushing and pulling from the lid of the keyboard instead of a vertical movement.

⁸⁰ Eigeldinger, *Chopin: Pianist and Teacher as seen by his pupils*, 19.

[Video 5-Slides]

In video 5, I demonstrate the connection between the two examples which share the haptic characteristics of the 'slide', which is using the same fingerings between two notes through Kessler's Prelude Op.20 No.16 in the right hand and Chopin's Prelude Op.28 No.21 in the left hand. The link between these two examples are thematic/harmonic. However, the most telling revelation for me is the haptic sensation created by the polyphonic writing in Kessler's right hand, who is clearly using the index finger as a pivot. Kessler also uses distinctive fingerings like 3-3 and 5-5 – finger slides that Chopin often used in his legato passages. Some of these can be found in the right hands of several of the Preludes Op.28, for example the Raindrop Prelude and Op.28 No.17. The left-hand writing in Chopin's prelude No.21 also uses a 1-1 slide. The technique used in Kessler's prelude makes me strongly believe that Kessler foresaw this approach to legato playing commonly associated with Chopin, as well techniques associated with polyphonic playing and writing.

It feels relevant at this stage to briefly touch on Johann Nepomuk Hummel's⁸² monumental method book, *Ausführliche theoretisch-practische Anweisung zum Piano-Forte-Spiel* (1828), translated into English as *A Complete Theoretical and Practical Course of Instruction on the Art of Playing the Piano Forte* (1829),⁸³ which served as a substantial influence on Chopin's aesthetic. For example, Hummel suggests several unorthodox approaches to fingering that are also included in Chopin's technique, including using the thumb to play black keys, using only one finger (instead of the traditional two) to play from black key to white key, or white key to white key when the keys are adjacent to one another, using substitute fingerings in order to create a seamless *legato*, using the same finger on a repeated note, placing the third finger over the fourth finger, and placing the thumb over the fifth finger. It would seem that Kessler had also incorporated Hummel's innovative fingerings.

These are the scores for the examples on the finger slide:

⁸² Johann Nepomuk Hummel (1778-1837) was an Austrian composer and virtuoso pianist. His music reflects the transition from Classical to the Romantic era. His monumental work, *Ausführliche theoretisch-practische Anweisung zum Piano-Forte-Spiel* (1828) sold thousands of copies within days of its publication and brought about a new style of fingering and playing ornaments. He taught Carl Czerny, who taught Franz Liszt.

⁸³ Johann Nepomuk Hummel, *Ausführliche theoretisch-practische Anweisung zum Piano-Forte-Spiel*. 3 vols. Vienna: Tobias Haslinger, 1828. Translated in English as *A Complete Theoretical and Practical Course of Instruction on the Art of Playing the Piano Forte*. London T. Boosey, 1829.

Ex.7 Kessler 24 Preludes No.16

Joseph Kessler, 24 Preludes Op.31 No.16 (1835)

Fryderyk Chopin, 24 Preludes Op.28 No.21 (1839)

I can feel a slight push at an angle in my wrist on both hands to crawl (slide) onto the second note using the same fingerings to create a seamless legato.

[Videos 6-8 Wrist breathing]

In videos 6-8, the haptic aspect in consideration is the concept of 'wrist-breathing'. They show how Kessler grouped his figurations in couplets, instead of using whole-bar groups. From a haptic perspective, the physical motion required to play this

texture is so specific and distinctive that it is very difficult to imagine the two works not being linked. This texture can become very tiring to play in extended passages, and some pedagogues such as the great Alfred Cortot, the late Nadia Boulanger and the Frenchman Dominique Merlet describe the technique used to avoid this fatigue as ‘wrist breathing’. This term has evolved from Chopin’s own comment - “The wrist: respiration in the voice.” (Chopin, *Projet de méthode*)⁸⁴

7. Ex.3 Kessler 24 Preludes Op.31 No.21, mm.13-25 (1835)



⁸⁴ “*Sketch for a Method*”- This is a collection of autograph notes by Chopin, consisting of texts in various stages of completion, for the beginning of a piano method (it was never finished). See Eigeldinger, *Chopin pianist and teacher as seen by his pupils*, 90.



Ex. Chopin Prelude Op.28 No.12

In these two examples, I find it crucial to practise slowly first, watching and feeling my wrist go up and down after every two quavers. Then I speed up gradually until it becomes natural in tempo. The movement of the wrist is up and down in quick succession.

[Videos 9,10 Two against Three]

In videos 9 and 10, I demonstrate the connection between the two examples of the use of the 2 against 3 in separate hands. The haptic element in the triplets in this Kessler study bear resemblance to the right hand of Chopin's Op.10 No.10 study. Another correspondence between the two works is the use of 'two against three' as a basic texture, with the left-hand bass notes sounding on every two beats.

Eigeldinger, once again, claims this use of playing 'two against three', each in a separate hand (requiring perfect independence of the hands for the parts to fall harmoniously into place) as a Chopin invention;⁸⁵ in this case it is clear that Kessler had already explored this.

⁸⁵ Eigeldinger, *Chopin pianist and teacher as seen by his pupils*, 19.

Ex.5 Kessler 24 Preludes Op.31 No.23

23

p e legato

Kessler Prelude Op.31 No.23

PIANO

p dolce

legato sempre

Chopin Etude Op.10 No.10 (G. Schirmer 1916)

When playing two against three, feeling the gravity on the downbeat is obviously important. Equally important is keeping the weaker beat in the '2' steady so that it falls equally between the last two notes of the '3'. Hence, I can feel the weight shifting from both hands to the left hand, then back to both hands and repeat.

The use of the same key and the same figurations by Chopin and Kessler in the following two Preludes further supports my conviction concerning Kessler's haptic influence on Chopin's Preludes. Although Chopin writes in octaves, the shared key and the rise and fall of the notes create a similar effect. Note also the use of a flexible wrist (and index pivot) to play the right hand in the Kessler study, yet again predating Chopin's supposed discoveries.

Ex.9 Kessler 24 Preludes No.18

The image displays the musical score for Kessler's 24 Preludes No. 18, consisting of three systems of piano notation. The first system begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (B-flat), and a time signature of 8/8. The tempo/mood is indicated as *p con molto leggerezza*. The right hand features a series of eighth-note figures with fingerings 5, 3, 2, 1, 1, 2, 4, 5, 1, 2, 4, 1, 4, 5, 2, 3, 4, 5. The left hand plays a simple eighth-note accompaniment. The second system continues the right-hand melody with a measure marked [m.s.] and fingerings 5, 2, 3, 1. The third system includes vocalizations: *cre-*, *-scen-*, and *-do*. The fourth system is marked *Molto agitato* and *f*, featuring a more complex right-hand texture with triplets and sixteenth notes, while the left hand continues with a steady eighth-note pattern.

Ex. Chopin Prelude Op.28 No.22

In these two examples, the feeling in the right hand of the Kessler Prelude feels very similar in the left hand of the Chopin Prelude, although the Chopin Prelude are in octaves. From a haptic perspective, there is a strong sense of a gravitational fall from the B flat to the G, due to how it is placed on the keyboard. The wrist is leading this with the fingers following, not the other way around.

It is not just in the works of Kessler, however, that we encounter strong links to Chopin's compositional style.⁸⁶ The works of Szymanowska also exhibit some remarkable connections. Some of the following musical examples of Szymanowska and Chopin are already noted in Slawomir Dobrzański's dissertation,⁸⁷ however, the haptic elements that are experienced at the piano by performers of both composers' works are not explored in Dobrzański's research. There is much more that can be learned about Szymanowska's influence on Chopin when approached from this perspective, as the following section will demonstrate.

[Videos 11-13 Leaps]

Videos 11-13 show leaps which were innovative at the time. In the following study, Szymanowska presents a technical feat that requires an anticipation in keyboard technique development. This probably led to Chopin's philosophies in piano technique with leaps only possible through using the hand's natural physiognomy of the index finger pivot. Although Scarlatti had already used big leaps in his works, they are mostly single notes, making use of the rotation of the wrist. The double note- single note (or single note- double note) leap, as in the examples below, prompts the use of the index finger pivot.



Maria Szymanowska, *Etude in E-flat Major No. 12* (1820)



Chopin *Etude Op. 25 No. 4*

⁸⁶ Some of these similarities have been previously pointed out by Halina Goldberg, *Music in Chopin's Warsaw*, 196-201 and in Ferdinand Gajewski, preface to Joseph Christoph Kessler, *24 Préludes Op. 31* (Kraków: Polskie Wydawnictwo Muzyczne, 1994).

⁸⁷ Slawomir Dobrzański, 'Maria Szymanowska and Fryderyk Chopin: Parallelism and influence', *Polish music journal* 5/1 (Summer 2002), <http://www.usc.edu/dept/polish_music/PMJ/issue/5.1.02/dobrzański.html> (accessed Aug. 10, 2017).

A similar texture appears in Chopin's *Variations La ci darem la mano* Op.2, although his main point of weight is in the chords of the middle register, slightly changing the movement of the wrist. The leaps towards far-reaching single notes in both hands require the wrist to turn from the inside out, as opposed to Szymanowska's, where the wrist turns from the outside in.



Fryderyk Chopin, *Variations La ci darem la mano* Op.2, No. 4 (1827)

In these three examples, I demonstrate the connection between them which share the haptic characteristics that are similar to videos 2 & 3 using the index finger pivot but with a firmer grasp of the keys (from the fingers) of the single and double notes.

[Videos 14,15 F major Etudes]

Sometimes, the influences are not just pianistic, but also aural. When I hear or play Chopin's Etude Op.10 No.8 in F major,



Fryderyk Chopin, *Etude* Op. 10 No. 8 (1833)

I am strongly reminded of Szymanowska's Etude in F, composed more than a decade prior. From a haptic perspective, although Chopin's study uses a turn of the wrist, which allows a much more expanded use of the keyboard in comparison to Szymanowska's study in a confined position (without using a turn of the wrist, but instead a flexible thumb), could Szymanowska's work have been a conscious or subconscious template for Chopin's idiomatic writing?⁸⁸

⁸⁸ Some of these similarities have been previously pointed out by Goldberg, *Music in Chopin's Warsaw*, 196-201.



Maria Szymanowska, *Etude No. 1 in F Major* (1820)

There is also a connection with Chopin's *Prelude Op.28 No.23* in F major, which utilizes the same 'water-like' sound of cascading notes in a peaceful F major texture.



Fryderyk Chopin, *Prelude Op. 28 No. 23* (1839)

The connection between these three examples share nearly identical haptic characteristics- the only differences are the spacing of the fingers for the different intervals between the notes. Chopin's examples use a further rotation of the wrist and an immediate re-positioning to its original position, all done within a split second. My arm is assisting with the direction of the passages.

[Videos 16-18 Nocturnes]

A much-cited example of a case in which Chopin may have been aurally influenced, is that provided by John Field's Nocturnes, whose influence on Chopin's Nocturnes is widely known and established.⁸⁹ Although this thesis focuses on the haptic influences of Szymanowska and Kessler on Chopin, an important and solitary example relating to an aural influence from Field and Szymanowska is included here to demonstrate the unmistakable similarities as previously pointed out by Dobrzański. This is to show that Chopin might have been aurally influenced as much as haptically. Visually, the similarities are all too striking, as well as aurally. The haptic elements add a greater and deeper level of meaning to the connection. Pianistically, the single note cantabile playing in the right hand and the undulating left hand accompaniment is like a textbook exercise on cantilena playing for the piano. Chopin was greatly attracted to the art of singing, particularly to the *bel canto*, which is the great vocal school of the 1830s in which the art of declamation

⁸⁹ Many scholars such as Nicholas Temperley in his article 'John Field and the First Nocturne' from *Music & Letters*, Vol.56, No.3/4 Jul-Oct (Oxford University Press, 1975), 335-340, and Patrick Piggott's *The Life and Music of John Field* (London, 1975), refer to the influences of Field's Nocturnes on Chopin's. I will not go into depth here.

and its dramatic expression in music were harmoniously united.⁹⁰ The *bel canto* approach represented to him the ideal and definitive model for interpretation. Chopin is repeatedly reported to have declared that ‘You must sing if you wish to play’.⁹¹ In this discussion I have also included Szymanowska’s only Nocturne, which was composed in the 1820s, after Field and before Chopin, to shed light on the thread of influence that helped to form Chopin’s approach. The exact date of Szymanowska’s composition is unknown; although published posthumously in 1852, the majority of her compositions date between 1820-1825.⁹²



John Field, *Nocturne No.1* (1812)



Maria Szymanowska, *Nocturne in B flat major* (posth. published in 1852, probably written between 1820-1825)⁹³



Fryderyk Chopin, *Nocturne in A flat Op.32 No.2* (1837)

⁹⁰ *Bel canto* generally refers to the Italian-originated vocal style that prevailed throughout most of Europe during the 18th and early 19th centuries. I recommend further reading of Robert Toft's *Bel Canto A Performer's Guide* (Oxford University Press, 2013).

⁹¹ Frederick Niecks, *Frederick Chopin: As a Man and Musician Vol. II* (London: Novello, Ewer & Co., 1888), 187.

⁹² These musical examples stem from Dobrzański's 'Maria Szymanowska and Fryderyk Chopin: Parallelism and influence', *Polish Music Journal* 5/1 (Summer, 2002) <http://www.usc.edu/dept/polish_music/PMJ/issue/5.1.02/dobrzanski.html> (accessed Nov 2018), but I have used them here to show the haptic experience on video to enhance the musical text, which Dobrzański has not done.

⁹³ This is the only Nocturne by Szymanowska.

The previous examples have shown the similarities between the composers in the left hand accompaniment writing and the right hand melody style. The Nocturnes then develop further into chordal passages with chromatic melodies:



John Field, *Nocturne No.5* (1812)



Maria Szymanowska, *Nocturne in B flat major* (1852),⁹⁴



Fryderyk Chopin, *Nocturne in A flat Op.32 No.2* (1837)

The haptic elements of the first three examples bear equal resemblance with the visual and aural aspects. The same applies for the second set of examples with the repeated chords where I voice the right hand to give the top melody line more weight in sound for all of the examples.

⁹⁴ This piece was published posthumously, hence the late date (Szymanowska died in 1831).

Conclusion

Through looking at the works of Szymanowska and Kessler from a haptic point of view, my understanding of Chopin has transformed significantly. Dobrzański, in his thesis and Goldberg in *Music in Chopin's Warsaw* concentrate on the compositional elements, missing out on what the haptic elements tell us when we compare the repertoire. For example, in the Szymanowska and Chopin Etudes in F major, Dobrzański points out the compositional and key similarities, but does not explain the physicality of the pieces and why he thinks and *feels* there are influences on Chopin from Szymanowska. The same applies for Goldberg. My research adds to this from a haptic perspective as well as further highlighting Kessler as one of the major influential figures on Chopin's piano music.

There is existing research on the aspect of interpretation in real time, such as Nicholas Cook's chapter from *Beyond the Score* on the recordings of Chopin's Waltz Op.63 No.3, using and comparing the speed of the recordings of various performers, which at least acknowledges this aspect.⁹⁵ However, Cook has not investigated his own experience as a pianist using his own hands; unsurprising as he is not a pianist. When one reads his book, one thinks it's interesting, informative and useful, but the experience of playing the repertoire with one's own hands adds an extra dimension and added conviction and authority.

Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger has perhaps misrepresented the extent of Chopin's innovation when he claims that Chopin was the first composer to use the two against three figure, or double notes, or the sliding of the same fingers. As I mentioned in the previous chapter, this was already done by Kessler, and also written as a treatise by Hummel.

This then begs the question: why is this repertoire neglected? Chopin, although in his earlier style owes a great amount to his contemporaries as we have seen, he later moved on and developed his own style, more intricate harmonies, long melodic lines, and extended form as seen in his Ballades and Sonatas. This all started to develop particularly after the *Op.14 Rondo*. Jim Samson, as I mentioned in Chapter 1 notes that Chopin's stylistic change from 'style brilliant' to 'a diversity of miniature designs and single-movement extended structures' started around 1830- from the *Op.10 Etudes* and the early nocturnes.⁹⁶ Chopin matured his idiom and style, increasingly using chromaticism (which eventually leads to Wagner) harmonically and melodically. Composers influenced from later Chopin are boundless- Scriabin, Debussy, the Russian school, to name a few. Szymanowska and Kessler never developed or expanded their musical style and form, thus probably never being included as part of the canon and being forgotten from the history of piano literature.

⁹⁵ Nicholas Cook, 'Phrase Archiving in History' from *Beyond the Score: Music in Performance* (Oxford, 2013), 182-209.

⁹⁶ Jim Samson, 'Chopin and Genre', *Musical Analysis*, Vol.8 No.3 (Oct 1989), 213-231.

However, the contribution of Szymanowska and Kessler to the piano tradition is, as we have seen, significant. For example, my new approach to programming is an outward symptom of my new understanding of the importance of these two composers, and the quality of their work. As a result of the process that I have undertaken, I cannot now think of these works by Chopin without also considering their precursors/related works. Because of this, when programming Chopin's Preludes and Etudes, I now incorporate works by Kessler and Szymanowska as well, showing audiences the connections that exist.

I would place the pieces of various composers, for example, according to key or an idiomatic focus. The reason for this is quite simple; it is easier to compare and group together basing on a common issue: key is an obvious grouping, as is idiom. Some examples would be:

I.

Szymanowska *Etude in F major* (1820)
Chopin *Prelude Op.28 No.23 in F major* (1839)
Chopin *Etude Op.10 No.8 in F major* (1833)

Kessler *Prelude Op.31 No.16 in G major* (1815)
Chopin *Prelude Op.28 No.21 in B flat major* (1839)

Kessler *Prelude Op.31 No.18 in g minor* (1815)
Chopin *Prelude Op.28 No.22 in g minor* (1839)

Szymanowska *Etude in C major* (1820)
Chopin *Etude Op.25 No.1 in A flat major* (1837)

John Field *Nocturne No.1* (1812)
Szymanowska *Nocturne in B flat major* (ca.1820)
Chopin *Nocturne Op.32 No.2 in A flat major* (1837)
(40 minutes)

Interval

Chopin *Complete 24 Preludes Op.28* (1839) (35 minutes)

II.

Kessler *24 Preludes Op.31* (1815) (15 minutes)
Szymanowska *Selections from Vingt exercices et preludes* (1820) (20 minutes)

Interval

Chopin *24 Preludes Op.28* (1839) (35 minutes)

The particular programmes that I have presented as an example showcase the lineage between the composers through their idiomatic writing. The first programme is especially prominent. The second half consists of Chopin's 24 Preludes, which for me is the culmination of these elements from the first half. For the second programme, this showcases the main compositions of the three composers. The complete Szymanowska Preludes do not exist in print.

My research also serves an important pedagogical purpose, showing students and piano enthusiasts how the compositional process developed through the pianistic tradition. It also assists in overcoming technical difficulties by understanding its source and how to tackle them. By studying some of the etudes and preludes of Kessler and Szymanowska, students can better play Chopin's etudes and preludes, a direct product of the writings of these composers and others that came before and around Chopin's time. It also helps in understanding the mind and creative process of these composers, who were pianists and performers themselves. The closer one can get to them, the more personal the interpretation and performance.

I hope my research will encourage other pianists to play and perform this neglected repertoire, with the haptic process facilitating a greater understanding of its relationship to the works of the ever more familiar composer, Chopin.

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