

1998

# Chopin's twenty-four preludes, opus 28 : historical background and performance considerations

Yi-Sy-Tieh Kuo  
*San Jose State University*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/etd\\_theses](https://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/etd_theses)

---

## Recommended Citation

Kuo, Yi-Sy-Tieh, "Chopin's twenty-four preludes, opus 28 : historical background and performance considerations" (1998). *Master's Theses*. 1646.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31979/etd.923z-8vn6>

[https://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/etd\\_theses/1646](https://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/etd_theses/1646)

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Master's Theses and Graduate Research at SJSU ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Master's Theses by an authorized administrator of SJSU ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact [scholarworks@sjsu.edu](mailto:scholarworks@sjsu.edu).

## INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

**The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.** Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps. Each original is also photographed in one exposure and is included in reduced form at the back of the book.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.

# UMI

A Bell & Howell Information Company  
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor MI 48106-1346 USA  
313/761-4700 800/521-0600



**CHOPIN'S *TWENTY-FOUR PRELUDES, OPUS 28*:  
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND PERFORMANCE CONSIDERATIONS**

**A Thesis**

**Presented to**

**The Faculty of the Department of Music**

**San Jose State University**

**In Partial Fulfillment**

**of the Requirements for the Degree**

**Master of Arts**

**By**

**Yi-Sy-Tieh Kuo**

**May 1998**

UMI Number: 1389657

Copyright 1998 by  
Kuo, Yi-Sy-Tieh

All rights reserved.

---

UMI Microform 1389657  
Copyright 1998, by UMI Company. All rights reserved.

This microform edition is protected against unauthorized  
copying under Title 17, United States Code.

---

**UMI**  
300 North Zeeb Road  
Ann Arbor, MI 48103

© 1998

Yi-Sy-Tieh Kuo  
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

APPROVED FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

*Laurel Brettell*

Dr. Laurel Brettell

*Cherie M. Curry*

Professor Cherie Curry

*William B. George*

Dr. William George

APPROVED FOR THE UNIVERSITY

*Suzana Dr. Stanford*

## ABSTRACT

### CHOPIN'S *TWENTY-FOUR PRELUDES, OPUS 28*: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND PERFORMANCE CONSIDERATIONS

by Yi-Sy-Tieh Kuo

The purpose of this thesis is to give pianists the information needed to understand the historical position of Chopin's *Twenty-Four Preludes, Opus 28* and make informed performance decisions concerning them. Included is the evolution of the prelude as a musical form, the development of the piano through the modern piano, and Chopin's own approach to teaching and performing piano.

Finally, this information is applied to selected preludes to serve as models of how to use Chopin's principles and original pedalings to arrive at performance solutions on the modern piano. I found in the course of my research that no editions give pianists adequate information to understand how to approach Chopin's *Preludes*. This thesis is designed to fill this gap.



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Dr. Laurel Brettell for her guidance in my thesis and never ending support through the years. Her encouragement has helped me realize a project I thought would never end. My thanks to Professor Cherie Curry for her wonderful piano instruction, for giving me access to excellent books from her personal library, and for her flexibility with my scheduling needs. My thanks to Dr. William George who has been very supportive and encouraging at difficult times during the process of this research. My thanks to Nancy Lorimer and Riva Bacon of Stanford University Library for assistance in research and access to the rare books in their care as if I were one of their own students. My thanks to Professor Daniel Cheng for giving me access to his personal music library, for expertise as a piano consultant, and for last minute transportation of my daughter from school. Special thanks to Kenneth J. Andrade for technical assistance, for help proof reading, for musical insight and many helpful suggestions. Finally, my unbounded gratitude to my family. Thanks to my dearest mother, Alice, for always supporting me with encouragement and endless love. Thanks to my beloved husband, Howard, for taking up the family chores and endless understanding while I have been completing this thesis and to my dear children Sandie and Phillip, for understanding why their mother could not be around all the time.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title Page.....	i
Copyright Page.....	ii
Signature Page.....	iii
UMI Abstract.....	iv
Acknowledgments.....	v
Table of Contents.....	vi
List of Examples.....	ix
List of Figures.....	xi

Chapter	Page
I. Introduction.....	1
II. Historical Background.....	3
The Evolution of the Prelude through Chopin.....	3
Tonal Scheme.....	7
Chopin's Life from 1836-1839.....	11
III. The History of the Pianoforte.....	15
The Development of the Pedal.....	16
The Damper Pedal.....	17
The Una Corda Pedal.....	19
Other Pedals.....	19
The Pleyel Piano.....	20

IV.	The Development of A Pianistic Style of Composition.....	26
	Dampers as Part of Piano Language.....	31
	Knee Dampers.....	32
	The Development of Pedal Technique.....	33
	The London School.....	35
	Development Under Ludwig van Beethoven.....	39
	Resistance to the Pedal.....	49
	Conclusion.....	50
V.	Chopin's Pedaling.....	51
	Considerations for the Modern Pianists.....	58
	Rhythmic and Syncopated Pedaling.....	58
	The Question of Pedaling on the Modern Piano?.....	62
	Exploring the Basic Possibilities for Use of the Pedals.....	63
VI.	Pedagogical Study and Performance Suggestions.....	65
	First Editions.....	66
	Available Editions.....	67
	Chopin's Concepts of Touch and Interpretation.....	70
	Hierarchy for Interpretation.....	72
	Study and Performance Suggestions.....	75
	Tempo and Mood.....	77
	Prelude No. 1, in C Major (Agitato).....	78
	Prelude No. 2, in A Minor (Lento).....	79
	Prelude No. 3, in G Major (Vivace).....	81
	Prelude No. 4, in E Minor (Largo).....	82
	Prelude No. 5, in D Major (Allegro Molto).....	84
	Prelude No. 6, in B Minor (Lento Assai).....	86

Prelude No. 8, in F-sharp Minor (Molto Agitato).....	88
Prelude No. 10, in C-sharp Minor (Allegro Molto).....	89
Prelude No. 11, in B Major (Vivace).....	90
Prelude No. 14, in E-flat Minor (Allegro).....	92
Prelude No. 15, in D-flat Major (Sostenuto).....	92
Prelude No. 16, in B-flat Minor (Presto con Fuoco).....	94
Prelude No. 19, in E-flat Major (Vivace).....	95
Prelude No. 20, in C Minor (Largo).....	97
Prelude No. 22, in G Minor (Molto Agitato).....	99
Prelude No. 24, in D Minor (Allegro Appassionato).....	101
Conclusion.....	103
Sources Consulted.....	104
Books and Periodicals.....	104
Scores.....	110
Recordings.....	111

## LIST OF EXAMPLES

Example	Page
1. Anthony Holborne, <i>Praeludium</i> (2).....	3
2. Silvius Leopold Weiss, Prelude from <i>Suite XIX Divertimento A Solo</i> .....	4
3. Ludwig van Beethoven, <i>Two Preludes</i> ( <i>Through the Twelve Major Keys</i> ) <i>Op. 39</i> , mm. 1-13.....	5
4. Key Relation by Cycle of Fifths.....	7
5. J.S. Bach's, <i>Das Wohltemperirte Clavier</i> key scheme.....	8
6. August Alexander Klengel, <i>Fuge No. 1</i> , mm. 1-5.....	8
7. J.S. Bach, <i>Fuge No. 10 in E Minor, BWV 855</i> , mm. 1-5.....	9
8. Frederic Chopin, <i>Nocturne op 27 No. 2</i> , mm. 66-71.....	22
9. Frederic Chopin, <i>Nocturne Op. 62 No. 1</i> , mm. 26-27.....	24
10. Frederic Chopin, <i>Prelude Op. 28 No. 16</i> , mm. 1-4.....	24
11. Frederic Chopin, <i>Nocture Op. 55 No. 2</i> , m. 56.....	25
12. Joseph Haydn, <i>Adagio in G Major Hob XV/22</i> , mm. 1-6.....	29
13. Joseph Haydn, <i>Adagio in G Major Hob XV/22</i> , mm. 44-47.....	30
14. Ludwig van Beethoven, <i>Sonata Op. 79</i> , 1st movement, mm. 91-93.....	40
15. Ludwig van Beethoven, <i>Sonata Op. 106</i> , 3rd movement, mm. 5-6.....	41
16. Ludwig van Beethoven, <i>Sonata Op, 109</i> , 1st movement, m. 13.....	42
17. Ludwig van Beethoven, " <i>Hammerklavier</i> " <i>Sonata Op. 106</i> , 1st movement, mm. 91-94.....	43
18. Ludwig van Beethoven, " <i>Hammerklavier</i> " <i>Sonata Op. 106</i> , 2nd movement, mm. 76-81. ....	44
19. Ludwig van Beethoven, <i>Sonata, Op. 106</i> , 1st movement, mm. 34-37.....	45

20.	Ludwig van Beethoven, <i>Sonata Op. 111</i> , 1st movement, mm. 157-158.....	46
21.	Ludwig van Beethoven, " <i>Waldstein</i> " <i>Sonata Op. 53</i> , Rondo movement, mm. 55-58.....	47
22.	Ludwig van Beethoven, " <i>Moonlight</i> " <i>Sonata Op. 27, No 2</i> , mm. 10-14.....	48
23.	Frederic Chopin, <i>Prelude No. 20</i> , mm. 1-4 edited with rhythmic pedaling.....	59
24.	Frederic Chopin, <i>Prelude No. 20</i> , mm. 1-4 edited with syncopated pedaling.....	60
25.	Frederic Chopin, <i>Prelude No. 24</i> , mm. 54-56.....	76
26.	Metric stress in 4/4 of bass ostinato from <i>Prelude No. 2</i> .....	80
27.	Metric stress in 2/2 of bass ostinato from <i>Prelude No. 2</i> .....	80
28.	Effect of Pedal on Melody from <i>Prelude No. 19</i> , mm. 1-3.....	97

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1. Johann Nepomuk Hummel, Facsimile of <i>Prelude No. 1</i> and <i>No. 2</i> from <i>Vorspiele für das Piano - Forte vor Anfänge eines Stükes aus allen 24 dur und Mol Tonarten Op. 67</i> .....	6
2. Johann Christian Bach, Facsimile of <i>Allegretto</i> from <i>Sonata Op. 5 No. 1</i> , mm. 19-24.....	28
3. Joseph Haydn, Facsimile of <i>Sonata Hob XVI/50</i> , mm. 119-122.....	31
4. Daniel Steibelt, Notice from <i>Piano Concerto Op. 33</i> .....	34
5. Muzio Clementi, Facsimile of <i>Finale</i> from <i>Sonata Op. 37 No. 3</i> , mm. 303-344.....	36
6. Muzio Clementi, Facsimile of <i>Finale</i> from <i>Sonata Op. 40 No. 1</i> , 4th movement, mm. 206-226.....	37
7. Johann Ladislaus Dussek, Facsimile of <i>Sonata Op. 39 No 3</i> , 2nd movement, mm. 75-84.....	38
8. Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of <i>Prelude No. 16</i> , m. 46.....	54
9. Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of <i>Prelude No. 16</i> , mm. 2-4.....	54
10. Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of <i>Prelude No. 7</i> , mm. 2-4.....	55
11. Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of <i>Prelude No. 18</i> , mm. 9-11.....	55
12. Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of <i>Prelude No. 17</i> , mm. 28-30.....	56
13. Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of <i>Prelude No. 10</i> , mm. 1-4.....	56
14. Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of <i>Prelude No. 21</i> , mm. 53-57.....	57
15. Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of <i>Prelude No. 1</i> , mm. 33-34.....	57
16. Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of <i>Prelude No. 11</i> , mm. 1-4 (above) and 19-22 (below).....	58

17.	Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of <i>Prelude No. 1</i> , mm. 1-5.....	61
18.	Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of <i>Prelude No. 2</i> , mm. 21-23.....	75
19.	Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of <i>Prelude No. 1</i> , mm. 11-14.....	78
20.	Frederic Chopin, <i>Prelude No. 1</i> , mm. 1-5.....	79
21.	Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of <i>Prelude No. 2</i> , mm. 1-3.....	81
22.	Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of <i>Prelude No. 4</i> , mm. 17-18.....	83
23.	Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of <i>Prelude No. 5</i> , mm. 1-5.....	85
24.	Frederic Chopin, <i>Prelude No. 5</i> , mm 1-5.....	85
25.	Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of <i>Prelude No. 5</i> , mm. 33-39.....	86
26.	Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of <i>Prelude No. 6</i> , mm. 11-15.....	87
27.	Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of <i>Prelude No. 6</i> , mm. 22-26.....	87
28.	Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of <i>Prelude No. 8</i> , m. 1.....	88
29.	Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of <i>Prelude No. 8</i> , m. 22.....	89
30.	Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of <i>Prelude No. 10</i> , mm. 7-8.....	90
31.	Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of <i>Prelude No. 11</i> , mm. 13-16.....	91
32.	Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of <i>Prelude No. 15</i> , mm. 1-5.....	92
33.	Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of <i>Prelude No. 15</i> , mm. 24-27.....	93
34.	Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of <i>Prelude No. 16</i> , mm. 2-4.....	94
35.	Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of <i>Prelude No. 16</i> , mm. 8-10.....	95
36.	Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of <i>Prelude No. 19</i> , mm. 1-4.....	96
37.	Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of <i>Prelude No. 20</i> , m. 3.....	98
38.	Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of <i>Prelude No. 20</i> , mm. 5-13.....	99
39.	Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of <i>Prelude No. 22</i> , mm. 16-21.....	99
40.	Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of <i>Prelude No. 24</i> , mm. 73-77.....	101



## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

Chopin created a new genre of the prelude when he wrote his *Twenty-four Preludes*. Unlike the preludes of Bach, Clementi, or Hummel, Chopin's preludes are written as independent pieces which can form a cycle. Chopin's predecessors either retain the traditional introductory function of the prelude, or composed preludes as student pieces not acceptable for the concert stage. Chopin's preludes lack the introductory function and are rich study pieces as well as excellent concert material. His preludes are frequently presented as a unified cycle of self-contained pieces and are best known as intimate pieces. Each prelude is itself a whole, with its own affection and its own generic character. After Chopin, the title "prelude" was used frequently to refer to a self-contained miniature which might be published separately, such as Chopin's own later *Prelude Op. 45*, or as part of a larger collection. Chopin's treatment of the prelude became a model for composers into the present century. Scriabin's *Twenty-four Preludes Op. 11*, Rachmaninoff's *Ten Preludes for Piano Op. 23*, Shostakovich's *Twenty-four Preludes Op. 34*, Debussy's *Preludes*, and Ginastera's *Doce Preludios Americanos Op. 12* are just a few of the works composed following Chopin's example.

Nearly a century and a half after their first publication, fascination continues for the *Twenty-four Preludes* of Chopin. Writings on the *Preludes* range in length from one-word descriptions as "pearls"<sup>1</sup> to Chominski's 347-page book. Other publications include Thomas Higgins's articles and books concentrating on the topics of analysis and interpretation, and Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger's essay focusing on the genre, structure and

---

<sup>1</sup> Robert Schumann was the first person who used the word "pearl" in his comment of reviewing *Preludes Opus. 28*.

significance of the *Preludes*. Articles appearing in various periodicals concentrate on harmonic or structural aspects of each individual prelude.

This thesis will deal with the historical background of Chopin's preludes, and the development of the piano and its music to the time of Chopin. The ultimate focus of this information is to give a modern pianist the basic information needed to make informed decisions for performing Chopin's preludes on the modern piano. Finally, selected preludes will be looked at in light of the preceding discussion to highlight performance considerations. A historical overview of the pedal will be included in my discussion of the piano, and its technique and literature. In this paper the term pedal will refer to the damper mechanism in general. When the nature of the damper mechanism is important to the discussion, it will be specified as a hand, knee or pedal mechanism. Other pedals, such as the *una corda*, will always be specified. Since "...the nature of a work of art is associated with the incidental physical conditions surrounding its composition,"<sup>2</sup> the background of the *Twenty-four Preludes* and the composer's life from 1836-1839 are included in the first part of this thesis. This study also offers an evaluation of various editions available to teachers and students.

---

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Higgins, ed., Frederic Chopin. Prelude, Op. 28: An Authoritative Score, Historical Background, Analysis, Views and Comments, 4.

## Chapter 2

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

#### The Evolution of the Prelude through Chopin

Chopin's preludes are a new development in a musical form and practice reaching back to the Renaissance. "Preludes evolved from the short improvisations made by lutenists checking the tuning of their instruments, keyboard players testing the touch and tone of theirs, or church organists establishing the pitch and mode of the music to be sung during the liturgy..."<sup>3</sup> Early written preludes imitated the styles of the improvised preludes and may have been written for amateur musicians who lacked skill to improvise. The following example is from Anthony Holborne's The Cittham Schoole, 1597.



**Example 1** Anthony Holborne, *Praeludium (2)*.<sup>4</sup>

Some preludes, such as the above example, are written as individual pieces but are obviously not designed to be played by themselves. They are written to be used as preludes, that is, to precede music in the same key. Other preludes are written as part of a

---

<sup>3</sup> Howard Ferguson, "Prelude." The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, vol. 15, 210.

<sup>4</sup> Anthony Holborne, Die Cisterwerke: aus der Schule von 1597, 9, rescored.

pair or collection of pieces, such as J.S. Bach's preludes and fugues or any of the preludes written with suites. The Baroque suite is a collection of dances which typically included an Allemande, Courante, Sarabande and Gigue, and was frequently begun with a prelude.<sup>5</sup> The complexity of preludes ranges from very simple to very complex. Simple improvisational preludes continued to be composed until the time of J.S. Bach, as in the following prelude from one of Silvius Leopold Weiss' Suites for the lute.

The image shows a musical score for a prelude by Silvius Leopold Weiss. It consists of three staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (B-flat), and a common time signature (C). The music starts with a single eighth note, followed by a series of eighth-note chords. The second staff continues with similar eighth-note chords, featuring a five-finger fingering bracket over a sequence of notes. The third staff shows a more complex rhythmic pattern with eighth notes and rests, and includes a fermata over a final chord. The score is written in a standard musical notation style.

**Example 2** Silvius Leopold Weiss (1686-1750), Prelude from *Suite XIX, Divertimento A Solo*.<sup>6</sup>

This prelude by Weiss could not stand alone musically. In contrast, many of the preludes of J.S. Bach could be played alone since they have much higher level of musical interest. It is normal practice, however, to play Bach's preludes in the context for which he wrote them.

---

<sup>5</sup> K. Marie Stolba, The Development of Western Music-A History, 350.

<sup>6</sup> Sylvius Leopold Weiss, Intavolatura Di Liuto, 201, rescored.

Most preludes, and most music, during the Baroque era had only one mood, or “affection” in a given movement of a work. The idea of “affections” was that music should arouse the emotions of the listener, and that only one emotion should be aroused at a time.<sup>7</sup>

During the Classical era, the prelude was not an important musical form. Introductory material was generally written by the composer as an integral part of a sonata or symphony rather than as a separate composition. A few preludes were written by Mozart for fugues written by Johann Sebastian Bach and Wilhelm Friedemann Bach. Beethoven wrote *Two Preludes (Through the Twelve Major Keys) Op. 39* in 1789. Beethoven’s preludes “...are no more than student exercises in modulation...” through the major keys by the cycle of fifths (C, G, D, ...etc.).<sup>8</sup>



**Example 3** Ludwig van Beethoven, *Two Preludes (Through the Twelve Major Keys)*  
*Op. 39*, mm. 1-13.<sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup> Donald Jay Grout, *A History of Western Music*, 351.

<sup>8</sup> Howard Ferguson, 211.

<sup>9</sup> Ludwig van Beethoven, *Various Piano Works*, 22, rescored.

In 1814, Johann Nepomuk Hummel composed a collection of preludes, *Vorspiele für das Piano-Forte vor Anfänge eines Stückes aus allen 24 dur und Mol Tonarten Op. 67*. Like Beethoven's preludes mentioned above, Hummel's preludes appear to be designed as study pieces for the different key signatures. Hummel's preludes use both major and relative minor keys and progress by the cycle of the fifths (C, a, G, e,...etc.) Figure 1 is the complete score of Hummel's first two preludes in C major and A minor. Notice that Hummel's brief preludes are simply elaborate cadences.



**Figure 1** Johann Nepomuk Hummel, Facsimile of *Prelude No. 1* and *No. 2*. from *Vorspiele für das Piano-Forte vor Anfänge eines Stückes aus allen 24 dur und Mol Tonarten Op. 67*.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Johann Nepomuk Hummel, *The Complete Works For Piano*, 196.

## Tonal Scheme

Jean-Philippe Rameau (1683-1764) was an important composer and theorist whose concepts of harmonic progression and modulation influenced the practice of composers through the time of Chopin.<sup>11</sup> Harmonic progressions and modulations emphasized tones a fourth or fifth apart (such as C-G). This kind of progression causes changes of only one accidental at a time to a key signature.



**Example 4** Key relation by cycle of fifths.<sup>12</sup>

The choice of key progression in the preludes of Hummel and Beethoven were in keeping with standard harmonic practice. The tonal progression of J.S. Bach's *Das Wohltemperirte Clavier* does not follow this model, but was designed in part to demonstrate the advantages of using a particular temperament.<sup>13</sup> During the time of J. S. Bach and before (circa 1700), keyboard instruments, such as the harpsichord, were tuned with the octave unequally divided.<sup>14</sup> This made certain harmonic intervals very stable, but others discordant. This kind of tuning made modulations to more remote keys (keys which differed by a greater number of accidentals) impractical because of the harmonic clashes that resulted. A solution was to divide the octave into more or less equal semitones.<sup>15</sup> This would make all of the intervals slightly out of tune but avoid more discordant clashes. The key progression of *Das Wohltemperirte Clavier* is from a major key to its parallel minor and then

---

<sup>11</sup> Donald Jay Grout, 493.

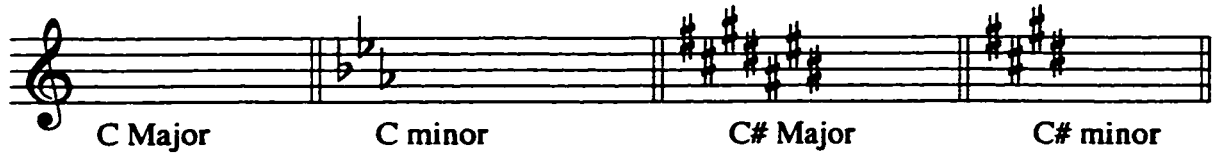
<sup>12</sup> Original example.

<sup>13</sup> Donald Jay Grout, 449.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

chromatically to the next major key.



**Example 5** J.S. Bach's *Das Wohltemperirte Clavier* key scheme.<sup>16</sup>

This resulted in more drastic changes of key signature which demonstrated the possibilities for greater freedom in key choices.

In the Romantic era, there was a renewed interest in older music. Mendelssohn, Lizst, and Brahms each wrote preludes and fugues. August Alexander Klengel edited Bach's *Das Wohltemperirte Clavier* and composed his own set of *Kanons und Fugen in allen Dur-und Moll-Tonarten* modeled after them. Klengel's Canons and Fuges imitated the Baroque style and followed Bach's tonal scheme. The following examples (Example 6 and 7) show Klengel's imitation of the Baroque style by comparison with J.S. Bach:



**Example 6** August Alexander Klengel, *Fuge No. 1*, mm. 1-5.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Original example.

<sup>17</sup> August Alexander Klengel, *Kanons und Fugen in allen Dur-und Moll-Tonarten*, 10, rescored.





**Example 7** J.S. Bach, *Fuge No. 10 in E Minor, BWV 855*, mm. 1-5.<sup>18</sup>

Before Chopin wrote his preludes, preludes were either written as introductory pieces or study pieces. Chopin was already familiar with *Das Wohltemperirte Clavier* of J.S. Bach and finally decided to compose the *Preludes, Opus 28* after listening to Klengel play his set of forty-eight *Canons and Fugues*.<sup>19</sup> Chopin's treatment of the prelude was not simply an imitation of a respected past, as were Klengel's *Kanons and Fugues*, or written mainly for instruction in the different keys as were Hummel's and Beethoven's. Chopin established the prelude as an independent piece,<sup>20</sup> which became the model for composers following him. Chopin used the cycle of fifths for preludes paired in relative major and minor keys, as had Hummel.<sup>21</sup> Chopin's preludes have a much higher musical content than Hummel's. Although technically demanding, his preludes are not merely exercises

---

<sup>18</sup> J.S. Bach, *Das Wohltemperirte Clavier*, vol. I, 52, rescored.

<sup>19</sup> Nicholas Temperley, "Chopin," *The New Grove Early Romantic Masters I*, 52.

<sup>20</sup> John Gillespie, *Five Centuries of Keyboard Music*, 223.

<sup>21</sup> Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger, "Twenty-four Preludes Op. 28: Genre, Structure, Significance." *Chopin Studies*, 172.

but are concert pieces which also have didactic value. Chopin writes about the composition of his preludes in one of his letters as follows:

Themes are descending upon me like swarms of bees. I keep on noting them down. You would laugh at these small fragments, but I've decided not to put them together, they will make *Préludes*. Only I don't know whether I'll scrape together forty-eight of them like Bach. I believe I'll not reach that number, for this is too much for my Polish patience!...

I am worried most of all lest some *Préludes* (so far I have a few, only a handful) resemble the *Etudes* too much, but I am tired of the exercises and don't intend to write more. I console myself that this is because I've spent too much time on the exercises but after a while there will be a change in my head and the *préludes* will get a different coloring.

I have four new numbers which I may turn into *Etudes*, though I doubt it. I plan to send them into the world as *Préludes* though they are no match for Bach's, nor will they be followed by *Fugues*, for this is no task for my ability.<sup>22</sup>

Wilhelm von Lenz, one of Chopin's former pupils, described the preludes' technical value as follows:

The (24) *Preludes, Op. 28* are on a small scale what the *Etudes* are on a large one, less developed but no less interesting or full of ideas. They are suitable for use as advanced keyboard exercises.<sup>23</sup>

Franz Liszt, the legendary contemporary of Chopin, describes the preludes musical value as follows:

Chopin's *Preludes* are compositions of an order entirely apart: they are not merely, as the title would indicate, introductions to other *morceaux*-they are preludes instinct with poesy, analogous to those of another great contemporary poet, who cradles the soul in golden dreams, and elevates it to the regions of the ideal...<sup>24</sup>

Chopin's preludes are also a set apart from earlier preludes by their relationship with each other.

---

<sup>22</sup> Bronislaw E. Sydow, "Ipse Dixit: Excerpts from the unpublished letters of Chopin." *Frederic Chopin: 1810-1849*, 65.

<sup>23</sup> Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger, 171.

<sup>24</sup> Thomas Higgins, ed. , 91-92.

Although some of his preludes are epigrammatically short, others are so large in scale and so dramatic in content that they would overshadow and alien sequel to which they might be attached. It seems likely, therefore, that they were always intended either to be played as a complete cycle or to serve as a quarry from which shorter homogeneous groups could be made up.<sup>25</sup>

Most of Chopin's preludes, like their Baroque counterparts, have only one mood for their duration (exceptions are the *Preludes No. 13* and *No. 15*). The language, however, is the romanticism of Chopin rather than an imitation of the Baroque style. Another difference, as already mentioned, is the cyclical nature of the work. Unlike the preludes of Bach's *Das Wohltemperirte Clavier* which are intended to introduce the fugues which follow them, Chopin's preludes are intended to take the listener on an emotional journey through many contrasting moods.

### **Chopin's Life from 1836-1839**

Frédéric François Chopin was born in Zelazowa Wola, Poland circa March of 1810 (there is some question of the exact date). He was a remarkable child who began writing verses at age six and already showed great musical talent at that age.<sup>26</sup> Chopin was largely self taught in his piano playing. Adalbert Ziwny, his teacher from 1816-1822, directed Chopin's energies towards the music "...of Bach and the Viennese Classical composers."<sup>27</sup> Chopin's musical focus was always for the piano and the focus of his composing and improvising was his native land.<sup>28</sup> This relationship with the piano finally came to an end in Paris on October 17, 1849.<sup>29</sup>

---

<sup>25</sup> Howard Ferguson, 211.

<sup>26</sup> Arthur Hedley and Maurice J. W. Brown, "Chopin, Frédéric François." The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, vol. 4, 292.

<sup>27</sup> Arthur Hedley/Maurice J. W. Brown, "Chopin, Frédéric François." The New Grove Dictionary, vol. 4, 292.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 293-4.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 292.

Chopin's preludes were composed at a time when his fame was securely established, but he was suffering from the effects of tuberculosis. He began composing the preludes around 1836 (*No. 7 in A major* and *No. 17 in A flat major*) but did not complete the project for some time.<sup>30</sup> In 1838, when Chopin's health demanded a change of climate, he and George Sand traveled to the Balearic Islands to further their artistic experiences.<sup>31</sup> Their time in Majorca was not as expected. Their stay began well, as Chopin himself relates in a letter to Juljan Fontana written from Palma on November 19, 1838:

I am in Palma, among palms, cedars, cacti, olives, pomegranates, etc. Everything the *Jardin des Plantes* has in its greenhouses. A sky like turquoise, a sea like lapis lazuli, mountains like emerald, air like heaven. Sun all day, and hot; everyone in summer clothing; at night guitars and singing for hours. Huge balconies with grape-vines overhead; Moorish walls. Everything looks towards Africa, as the town does. In short, a glorious life! Love me. Go to Pleyel; the piano has not yet come. How was it sent? You will soon receive some Preludes. I shall probably lodge in a wonderful monastery, the most beautiful situation in the world...<sup>32</sup>

"As soon as he could [after arriving in Majorca] (28 November), Chopin set himself to his main 'holiday task,' the completion of the 24 Preludes..."<sup>33</sup> Unfortunately, the situation soon changed. Chopin's tuberculosis began flaring up, as related by Chopin in a second letter to Juljan written from Palma on December 3, 1838.

I can't send you the manuscript, for it's not finished. I have been as sick as a dog these last two weeks; I caught cold in spite of 18 degrees of heat, roses, oranges, palms, figs and three most famous doctors of the island. One sniffed at what I spat up, the second tapped where I spat it from, the third poked about and listened how I spat it. One said I had died, the second that I am dying, the 3rd that I shall die. And today I'm the same as

---

<sup>30</sup> Maurice J. E. Brown, *Chopin-An Index of His Works in Chronological Order*, 95-6.

<sup>31</sup> Moritz Karasowski, *Frederic Chopin-His Life and Letters*, 292-293.

<sup>32</sup> Frederic Chopin, *Chopin's Letters*, 185.

<sup>33</sup> Arthur Hedley/Maurice J. W. Brown, "Chopin, Frédéric François." *The New Grove Dictionary*, vol. 4, 296.

ever...But all this has affected the Preludes, and God knows when you will get them.<sup>34</sup>

The weather became oppressive with the tropical rains and Chopin's physical and mental health suffered greatly.<sup>35</sup> Chopin seemed by turns to be taken by the beauty of his surroundings and then consumed by the strangeness of his situation.

...It's a huge Carthusian monastery, stuck down between rocks and sea, where you may imagine me, without white gloves or haircurling, as pale as ever, in a cell with such doors as Paris never had for gates. The cell is the shape of a tall coffin, with an enormous dusty palms and cypresses, opposite the window my bed on rollers [?] under a Moorish filigree rosette. Beside the bed is a square *claque nitouchable* for writing, which I can scarcely use, and on it (a great *luxé* here) a leaden candlestick with a candle. Bach, my scrawls and (not my) waste paper — silence — you could scream — there would still be silence. Indeed, I write to you from a strange place...The torrents make the roads, the avalanches keep them in repair; today you can't pass here, because it's been ploughed, tomorrow only mules can manage; and what vehicles!!!...But all that is just a grain of sand, when one has this sky, this poetry that everything breathes here, this colouring of the most exquisite places, colour not yet faded by men's eyes. No one has yet scared away the eagles that soar every day above our heads!<sup>36</sup>

It was in this monastery in Valldemosa that Chopin composed his famous "Raindrop Prelude". In George Sand's recollection, Story of My Life, she describes how one day she returned to the monastery after a heavy storm and heard Chopin playing one of his preludes "...against the monotonous accompaniment of rain drops falling from the eaves."<sup>37</sup> This prelude Sand heard Chopin playing has never been discovered. Some have suggested *No. 6 in B minor* with its slow, deliberate pulse and the repetition of one note in the right hand part, but it is usually thought to be the *No. 15 in D-flat major*.

---

<sup>34</sup> Frederic Chopin, Chopin's Letters, 186.

<sup>35</sup> Moritz Karasowski, 294-295.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> George Sand, My Life, 232.

In spite of the artistic richness of the place, Chopin's illness and the general conditions of the place caused them to leave the island in March.<sup>38</sup> Chopin's compositions from this sojourn included most of the *24 Preludes Op. 28*, the *Sonata in B-flat minor, Op. 35*, the *Impromptu in F sharp minor, Op. 36, No. 2*, the *Ballade in F major, Op. 38*, the *Mazurka in E minor, Op. 41, No. 2*, the *Polonaise in A major, Op. 40, No. 1*, and the *Polonaise in C minor, Op. 40, No. 2* and the *Scherzo in C-sharp minor, Op. 39*.<sup>39</sup> The majority of these pieces were composed in 1838 and published in 1839-1840.

---

<sup>38</sup> Thomas Higgins, 5.

<sup>39</sup> Ashton Jonson, *A Handbook To Chopin's Works*, 49-50.

## Chapter 3

### THE HISTORY OF THE PIANOFORTE

To understand the issues relating to pedaling of Chopin's preludes on the modern piano, the development of the piano, and of Chopin's favorite piano, the Pleyel, must be discussed. At the beginning of its history, the pianoforte was essentially "...a harpsichord with hammers."<sup>40</sup>

The clear advantage of the piano over the harpsichord is its dynamic flexibility, but the very first pianos do not seem to have been able to compete with harpsichords for power and projection. It is likely that they simply did not sound as good; after all, harpsichords had existed and had been developed over some 300 years, while the piano was new. It is in fact harder to make a piano sound well; in a harpsichord the strings are lightly stretched over a rather delicate bridge and a thin soundboard, and they are plucked: such a mechanism can give enormous resonance from a minimum of input. A similar light-stringing method will not, however, support the blow of a piano's hammer; the string will flex like a rubber band. For strings to accept such a blow they must be thicker and must be pulled to greater tension over a heavier bridge and soundboard, such reinforcements were found to be injurious to the quality and quantity of tone produced.<sup>41</sup>

As the pianoforte developed, the problems of adequate tension for strings being struck instead of plucked were given various solutions and the sound was improved and increased. The pianoforte quickly became its own instrument and displaced the older harpsichord and clavichord as the preferred keyboard instrument.<sup>42</sup>

The first pianoforte was built by Bartolomeo Christofori in 1709. This was the first incidence of the piano strings being struck by hammers rather than by tangents or quills as was the case with the clavichord and the harpsichord.<sup>43</sup> Under several transformations,

---

<sup>40</sup> Joseph Banowetz, *The Pianist's Guide to Pedaling*, 1.

<sup>41</sup> Malcolm Bilson, "Keyboard." *Performance Practice*, 223-224.

<sup>42</sup> Joseph Banowetz, 1.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

John Broadwood in 1781, built a sturdier piano in London. It was triple-strung throughout its range.<sup>44</sup> Triple stringing means that a given pitch would be produced by three strings simultaneously instead of by just one. Although thicker strings and triple-stringing provided rich sonority, its tension debilitated the piano frames. The frames developed “cheek disease”<sup>45</sup> or warped corners. In 1825, Alpheus Babcock (1785-1842) invented the one-piece cast iron frame<sup>46</sup> which was strong enough to resist the strings’ enormous tension. Babcock also invented cross-stringing in 1830. William Sumner said this invention

...was a milestone in the history of the instrument; not only could pianofortes become more compact, but the longest bass-strings were almost as long as the diagonal of the case; and a new tone quality, rich in overtones, pleasing but less chaste than that of the parallel strung piano, resulted.<sup>47</sup>

Therefore, the pianoforte began to increase not only in its sonority, but also the duration of its sound.

### **The Development of the Pedal**

The piano’s predecessors made use of levers to modify either the quality or quantity of sound produced. The organ had developed into the Baroque era as an instrument with multiple ranks of pipes made of wood or metal.<sup>48</sup> Each rank had its own characteristic sound and could be activated individually or in combination with other ranks to achieve contrasts in sound within a composition.<sup>49</sup> Similarly, harpsichords often had more than

---

<sup>44</sup> Edwin M. Good, Giraffes, Black Dragons, and Other Pianos: A Technological History from Cristofori to the Modern Concert Grand, 30-32.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 87.

<sup>46</sup> William Leslie Sumner, The Pianoforte, 73.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 73.

<sup>48</sup> Edward Higginbottom, “Organ.” The New Grove Dictionary, vol. 13, 754.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*



one rank of strings within the same instrument. These ranks of strings were generally of varying length so that one rank would be double the length of another rank. By the adjustment of levers these ranks of strings could be played either coupled or in isolation, to increase the quantity of sound produced. Additionally the harpsichord often included a lute stop, a lever which changed where the strings were being plucked to imitate the tone quality of the lute.<sup>50</sup> The organ<sup>51</sup> and harpsichord<sup>52</sup> often had more than one manual (keyboard) which could be independently related to the instrument's mechanism. This made it possible to alternate between two different tone colors or levels of volume at the same time. These alterations of the quantity or quality of sound made contrast possible on these instruments, but only in a terraced fashion, which is to say that the individual pitches of each manual would be at the same level of volume and have the same timbre. Neither instrument was capable of a gradual increase or decrease of sound but only of moving from one level of sound to another. One final point regarding the older keyboard instruments is that tones could only be kept sounding while the keys being played were actually being depressed by the fingers.<sup>53</sup> There was no device on these instruments to mechanically prolong the tones once the fingers released the keys that produced them.

### **The Damper Pedal**

"The earliest pianos were equipped with hand stops for controlling the dampers."<sup>54</sup> The dampers, when against the strings, stopped the strings from sounding.<sup>55</sup> The dampers were linked to the keys of the keyboard so that the act of playing one of the keys removes:

---

<sup>50</sup> Edwin M. Ripin and Howard Schott, "Harpsichord." The New Grove Dictionary, vol. 8, 229.

<sup>51</sup> Edward Higginbottom, "Organ.", 738.

<sup>52</sup> Edwin M. Ripin and Howard Schott, "Harpsichord.", 229.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 216.

<sup>54</sup> Joseph Banowetz, 1.

<sup>55</sup> Edwin M. Good, 32.

the damper from the string while the key was depressed and allowed the string to be sounded by the hammer.<sup>56</sup> When the finger released the key, the damper returned to the string and mutes it.<sup>57</sup> This was similar to the harpsichord's mechanism of damping strings which was discussed earlier.<sup>58</sup> The hand controls for the dampers would remove the dampers from the strings over an area of the keyboard and allowed tones to remain ringing without the fingers' direct involvement.<sup>59</sup> Hand stops were eventually replaced by knee levers and finally by foot pedals by the time of Chopin.<sup>60</sup> The damper stops opened many new possibilities for the musical resources of the piano.

The modifications to the tone and dynamics of a single note and chords, of various types in different parts of the compass, should be heard by the critical musical ear when (i) The pedal is put down before the note or chord is struck; (ii) the pedal is put down simultaneously with the playing of the note or chord; (iii) the pedal is put down after the note or chord is struck. In (i) all the components of the tone activate other strings on the sound-board which are in a sensitive, responsive condition waiting to receive impulses. In (ii) the sound is still full but less lively and only some of the sound components are apparent in forced vibrations or resonance. In (iii) the noise components have had time to die away but the harmonic components of the note are available to activate other strings by resonance. Then the resulting sound is purer and more bell-like than the others.<sup>61</sup>

This new range of colors and dynamics greatly expanded the palette from which a composer or performer could draw when creating or interpreting a work for the piano.

Vladimir Horowitz expressed this potential of the piano in this way:

The pedal is everything. It is our lungs and we breath through the pedal. You can blend two harmonies which are completely dissonant for one millionth of a second and create possibilities for endless varieties of color.<sup>62</sup>

---

<sup>56</sup> Edwin M. Good, 32.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Joseph Banowetz, 1-3.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> William Leslie Sumner, 88-89.

<sup>62</sup> Glenn Plaskin, *Horowitz-A Biography*, 100.

The impact of the piano's new potential on composition will be discussed in the next chapter.

### **The *Una Corda* Pedal**

As previously mentioned, the pianoforte was triple strung in order to increase its volume. This meant that a hammer would strike as many as three strings to produce a given pitch. The sound of three separate strings ringing at the same time would of course be louder than one string. The *una corda* pedal of the pianoforte "functioned by shifting the keyboard and hammers to the right so that only one string, instead of two or three, would be struck."<sup>63</sup> This produced a decrease in the volume as well as a change of timbre.<sup>64</sup>

On the pianos of the late eighteenth to early nineteenth centuries, the pianist could shift from the normal three-string (*tre-corde*) position to one in which either two strings (*due corde*) or only one (*una corda*) would be struck, depending on the depth to which the pedal was pressed. This subtle but important choice does not exist on modern pianos, but was readily available on the earlier instruments. Beethoven refers to this selective degree of shifting in a number of his piano works.<sup>65</sup>

On modern pianos the *una corda* pedal shifts the keyboard over by only one string. There is still a change of tone color and of volume, but not quite as dramatic as that afforded by the pianoforte.

### **Other Pedals**

There were many other pedals for modifying the sound of the pianoforte which did not survive the development of the piano. One example was the bassoon pedal. This pedal "...laid a roll of paper and silk over the bass strings, thereby creating a buzzing noise that

---

<sup>63</sup> Joseph Banowetz, 5.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

listeners of the day felt resembled the sound of the bassoon.”<sup>66</sup> These other pedals will not enter into the discussion of Chopin’s music.

### **The Pleyel Piano**

Ignace Pleyel of Paris, France, was an important manufacturer of pianos. Pleyel founded his piano factory in 1807 at the age of fifty. His previous vocation had been that of concert pianist and composer.<sup>67</sup> His son, Camille, joined the firm in 1821 and eventually took over the firm. Camille followed the example of his father’s career, having himself been a performer of the piano and composer before joining his father’s firm. Camille Pleyel was a musician and a very close friend of Chopin. He presented a Pleyel grand piano to Chopin as a gift in 1831. Chopin himself admitted his preference for the Pleyel rather than the Erard piano by stating:

When I am indisposed, I play on one of Erard’s pianos and there I easily find a ready-made tone. But when I feel in the right mood and strong enough to find my own tone for myself, I must have one of Pleyel’s pianos.<sup>68</sup>

“The Pleyel piano responded very well to the player and produced all the tone color Chopin required without sounding harsh or ugly in loud passages.”<sup>69</sup> Hipkins said that, “[Chopin’s] fortissimo was a full pure tone without noise, a harsh inelastic note being to him painful.”<sup>70</sup> Chopin himself characterized the tone of this instrument as veiled and silvery in tone color. Chopin expressed his love for this piano when he replaced a rented poorly made Spanish piano with a Pleyel upright in Majorca.<sup>71</sup>

---

<sup>66</sup> Joseph Banowetz, 6.

<sup>67</sup> Edwin M. Good, 160.

<sup>68</sup> Frederick Niecks, Frederick Chopin As a Man and Musician, vol. II, 105.

<sup>69</sup> Maurice Hinson, “Pedaling the Piano Works of Chopin.” The Pianist’s Guide to Pedaling, 180.

<sup>70</sup> Edith J. Hipkins, How Chopin Played, 7.

<sup>71</sup> Maurice Hinson, 180.

The Pleyel piano was a relatively conservative instrument. The Broadwood action was chosen for their grand piano construction rather than the newer repetition action Erard had developed (Erard was their chief competitor). The main developments in the Pleyel piano were as follows: a composite frame (a wooden frame reinforced by iron bars) which would allow greater string tension, the introduction of felt hammers covered by leather, and then of hammers covered only by felt (developed by Henri Pape while he was working for Pleyel). The felt covered hammers produced "...a more rounded and sonorous tone..."<sup>72</sup> Each register of the Pleyel piano "...projected a different sonority."<sup>73</sup> This difference of timbres created very specific effects in some of Chopin's compositions when played on the Pleyel. "Their tone is transparent and delicate, suiting perfectly Chopin's directives for the damper pedal, such as the dreamy veiled effect of the coda to the D-flat major *Nocturne Op. 27 No. 2*. The registral split between the grace note and the melody notes creates a polyphonic effect unattainable today on the modern piano."<sup>74</sup>

---

<sup>72</sup> James Methuen-Campbell, "Chopin in performance." Cambridge Companion to Chopin, 192.

<sup>73</sup> Robert Winter, "Keyboards." Performance Practice, 359.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 360-361.

**Example 8** Frederic Chopin, *Nocturne Op 27 No. 2*, mm. 66-71.<sup>75</sup>

Chopin's pedal markings make perfect sense when performed on a Pleyel grand similar to the ones he used. Even the absence of pedal for many bars seems correct. When the pianist remains faithful to Chopin's avoidance of pedal, its use—when indicated—is like a breath of fresh air. Slight blurring also sounds correct at specific places. Often these purposely blurred passages sound almost 'impressionistic,' and give the music a kaleidoscopic and multicolored effect.<sup>76</sup>

By contrast, the modern piano's design causes it to have a homogenous sound through out its range. Sudden contrasts of timbre through its registers are not a part of the modern piano's design. The attack is more sluggish and the sustain much longer on the modern piano as well. The two main differences between the modern piano and the Pleyel at the time of Chopin are cross stringing and greater string mass.

<sup>75</sup> Frederic Chopin, *Nocturnes*, 47, rescored from Henle edition.

<sup>76</sup> Maurice Hinson, 180.

The issue [of cross stringing] has been consistently confused in the literature, with cross-stringing described as a device to maximize the length of bass strings. In practice, over-stringing lengthens strings by only an insignificant amount, but it does move them away from the rim towards the heart of the soundboard. Piano tone, as already observed, is affected by the nature of the striking material, the striking point and the properties of the wire. But it is also affected by the point on the soundboard at which the bridge is attached. Two factors are at work here. The first is the manner in which individual notes are distributed over the soundboard. If they are spread evenly over all the available space then the tones will be distinct and of varying colours-rounder towards the middle, more brilliant and penetrating near the rim. With many strings activating the same area, the tone is collectively more powerful (much as a gymnast bounces higher at the center as opposed to the edge of a trampoline) but also less distinct.<sup>77</sup>

So the effects of cross stringing on the modern piano are an increase in volume but a decrease in distinct string timbre. The increase in string mass made possible by the cast iron frames of the modern piano changes the piano's responsiveness and sustain. The modern piano is less responsive but has greater sustain than Chopin's Pleyel and earlier pianos. Differences in technique are required to compensate for these differences. Chopin, as well as Beethoven and others, gave pedal indications through changes of harmony. "...The modern piano, with its greatly increased resonance, tends to change many long pedal marks of these [Pianoforte] composers from a gossamer veil into a smeary mush."<sup>78</sup> Examples 9 and 10 show long pedal marks in diatonic passages at a strong dynamic level. Both these examples would produce a muddy confusion if pedaled as indicated on a modern piano.

---

<sup>77</sup> Robert Winter, 365

<sup>78</sup> Malcolm Bilson, 231

**Example 9** Frederic Chopin, *Nocturne Op. 62 No. 1*, mm. 26-27.<sup>79</sup>

**Example 10** Frederic Chopin, *Prelude Op. 28 No. 16*, mm. 1-4.<sup>80</sup>

There are also passages in which accented notes or chords are contrasted by quiet passage work. The greater string mass of the modern piano takes more time to be set in motion

<sup>79</sup> Frederic Chopin, *Nocturnes*, 89, rescored from Henle edition.

<sup>80</sup> Frederic Chopin, *Préludes*, 28, rescored from Henle edition.



than the lighter strings of Chopin's Pleyel. This changes the immediacy of accented notes. "When a modern pianist does make an accent, the result is a kind of swell."<sup>81</sup> "...the rapid decay is the main expressive element; in performances on modern instruments one rarely hears one loud note followed by three soft ones."<sup>82</sup>



**Example 11** Frederic Chopin, *Nocturne Op. 55 No. 2*, m. 56.<sup>83</sup>

These differences have required new solutions of the modern pianist for the works Chopin wrote for his Pleyel, even if those solutions are extensions of Chopin's own innovations. Although the Pleyel piano was the preferred piano of Chopin, most performers today play his works on modern pianos. Therefore a discussion of the differences between these instruments and solutions available to the modern pianist will be dealt with in chapter 5.

---

<sup>81</sup> Malcolm Bilson, 232.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Frederic Chopin, *Nocturnes*, 87, rescored from Henle edition.

## Chapter 4

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF A PIANISTIC STYLE OF COMPOSITION

Chopin's entire musical life was associated with piano composition. Arthur Hedley said, "For Chopin, there was a peculiarly intimate relation between piano and composition."<sup>84</sup> Chopin inherited a great tradition of piano performance and composition. The piano had gone through a tremendous evolution from Mozart's time to Chopin's, and particularly through the piano compositions of Beethoven. "The matching of the instrument with the composer's requirements poses a dilemma illustrated more vividly by Beethoven than by anyone before or since."<sup>85</sup> In the last chapter, the development of the piano was traced. In this chapter the development of piano technique and idiomatic composition for the piano shall be looked at in brief.

At the time the piano appeared it had been the general practice to write music for keyboard, but not a specific keyboard.<sup>86</sup> The choice of instrument was made by the performer or by the circumstance. For example, when Mozart gave a performance of his *Concerto K. 365* for two pianos with his sister on harpsichords because there were no fortepianos available.<sup>87</sup> Malcolm Bilson, a noted authority on the development of the piano, states that "...one cannot underestimate the importance of the fact that these instruments [pianos and harpsichords] (and even occasionally the organ), were used interchangeably."<sup>88</sup>

As discussed earlier, the piano's predecessors did not have a sustaining pedal or the capacity for gradual dynamic changes. Even though the piano did have damper stops from

---

<sup>84</sup> Arthur Hedley and Maurice J. E. Brown, *The New Grove Dictionary*, vol. 4, 298.

<sup>85</sup> David S. Grover, *The Piano-Its Story from Zither to Grand*, 104.

<sup>86</sup> Howard Schott, *Playing the Harpsichord*, 38.

<sup>87</sup> Malcolm Bilson, 225.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*

the beginning, it was at first thought of as just another version of the harpsichord.<sup>89</sup> The composers for the early piano therefore wrote for the piano as they had been accustomed to writing for the keyboards they were familiar with. Early piano music was still very suitable for the harpsichord, and clavichord. Over time the language for the piano developed so that music written for it became increasingly unsuitable for the other keyboards. This is evidenced by the music published for keyboards in England.

The transition from harpsichord to pianoforte is reflected in the title pages of printed English keyboard music from 1750 to 1800; a period when England was an important center for music publishing. In nearly three hundred solo keyboard music editions in this period no publication for piano only appeared during the period 1750-80, thirty years, though from 1770 more editions mentioned both pianoforte and harpsichord than harpsichord only. After 1785, editions for harpsichord only hardly ever appeared, though both instruments are still mentioned on the title-page, doubtless to suggest a wider scope for the works for commercial reasons. In 1800, out of thirty-eight works, none appears for harpsichord only, three for both instruments and thirty-five for pianoforte only.<sup>90</sup>

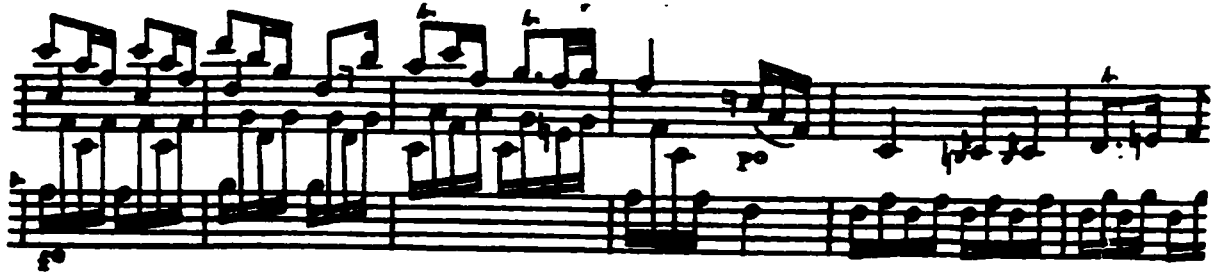
The first step in the development of an idiom for the pianoforte was in the approach to dynamics. As discussed earlier, dynamics on the piano's predecessors had been handled in a terraced fashion, due to their mechanical limitations. Indications for dynamic contrasts in scores called for a contrast of sections or passages. Figure 2 shows a contrast between forte (**fe**) and piano (**po**) in a sonata for harpsichord. "Generally, the dynamic indications in these Sonatas do not go beyond harpsichord registration, '*piano*' and '*forte*' being easily achieved by the use of two 8-foot stops."<sup>91</sup>

---

<sup>89</sup> Joseph Banowetz, 1.

<sup>90</sup> William Leslie Sumner, 50-51.

<sup>91</sup> Jeanne Roudet, "Aspects of Interpretation." in Sonates pour le Clavecin ou le Piano-forte Opus V-Opus XVII, Collection Dominantes, 27.



**Figure 2** Johann Christian Bach, Facsimile of *Allegretto* from *Sonata Op. 5 No. 1*, mm. 19-24.<sup>92</sup>

As composers wrote for the piano, they began to make use of gradual dynamics and sudden accents, as well as textures which would be unclear on the older instruments. Example 12 contains syncopated accents which the harpsichord or organ would be incapable of differentiating from the surrounding material. The *crescendo* moves from a thicker texture at the end of its measure to a thinner texture. On the harpsichord, the greater quantity of notes would be louder than the following texture and would produce the reverse of what Haydn indicates.

---

<sup>92</sup> Johann Christian Bach, Sonates pour le Clavecin ou le Piano-forte Opus V-Opus XVII, Collection Dominantes, 2.

The image displays two systems of musical notation for a piano piece. The first system is marked 'tenuto' and consists of two staves. The right-hand staff contains a melodic line with slurs and accents, while the left-hand staff features a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. The second system continues the piece with similar textures, showing the continuation of the melody and accompaniment across two staves.

**Example 12** Joseph Haydn, *Adagio in G Major Hob XVI/22*, mm. 1-6.<sup>93</sup>

The accents in Example 13 would also be meaningless on the harpsichord. The octaves in the first measure are in forte and then arrive at another octave which should produce an accent on the second quarter note of the following measure. If played on the harpsichord, the forte would be the only level of loud available and the syncopation would be impossible to achieve.

---

<sup>93</sup> Joseph Haydn, *Piano Pieces*, 70, rescored.

The image displays two systems of musical notation for a piano piece. Each system consists of a grand staff with a treble clef on the upper staff and a bass clef on the lower staff. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is common time (C). The first system begins with a dynamic marking of *f* in the treble staff. The second system features dynamic markings of *fz* and *p* in both staves. The notation includes various rhythmic values, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. There are also some markings that appear to be *fz* in the bass staff of the second system.

**Example 13** Joseph Haydn, *Adagio in G Major Hob XVI/22*, mm. 44-47.<sup>94</sup>

The more integral dynamics of this kind are to a composition, the more unsuitable the composition would be for the older keyboards.

Joseph Haydn (1732-1809) began marking dynamics in his keyboard scores early in the 1780's.<sup>95</sup> There is very little pedaling marked in the piano scores of Haydn, and none in those of Mozart.<sup>96</sup> The pedal markings in Haydn's piano works are in the first of his "*London*" *Sonatas* which was composed while Haydn was visiting London in 1794.<sup>97</sup> London was an important center for music and for the piano. Haydn's pedalings are interesting in that they are similar to pedaling used in the London School (which will be discussed later), but predate the development of conventions of pedaling in that school.

<sup>94</sup> Joseph Haydn, *Piano Pieces*, 72, rescored.

<sup>95</sup> Malcolm Bilson, 224.

<sup>96</sup> Joseph Banowetz, 136-7.

<sup>97</sup> Peter Brown, *Joseph Haydn's Keyboard Music-Sources and Style*, 159.

Haydn rarely used pedal indications in his piano scores. The only indications for damper pedal are in his “*London*” *Sonata in C major, Hob. XVII/50*. “These pedalings are marked not because these passages are the only places where Haydn desires pedal but because they create unusual effects.”<sup>98</sup>



Figure 3 Joseph Haydn, Facsimile of *Sonata Hob XVII/50*, mm. 119-122.<sup>99</sup>

### Dampers As Part of Piano Language

The earliest pianos were equipped with dampers, as discussed earlier, but it took some time for the dampers to become an integral part of the piano’s language. The organ and harpsichord both made use of handstops to vary either the color or quantity of sound. The idea of contrasting one section or movement of a work with another by means of stops had already developed when the piano appeared. The very nature of the hand stops as a hand operated mechanism implies a continuation of this musical conception.

To use the damper stops, the player either had to go on playing with the right hand alone while moving the stops with the left or had to stop completely and wrestle the handles into place. Or an assistant had to be employed. The hand-stop was nothing new. Harpsichordists and organists had always used it, and organists still do.<sup>100</sup>

<sup>98</sup> Joseph Banowetz, 137.

<sup>99</sup> Joseph Haydn, *Works for Pianoforte Solo by Continental Composers in London. Haydn, Dussek and Contemporaries*. Published from 1766 to 1810, vol 6 of *The London Pianoforte School*, 42.

<sup>100</sup> Edwin M. Good, 48.

The conception of the hand stops would have been similar to that of the lute stop on the harpsichord: simply a contrasting registration to be used or not at the discretion of the performer, not an integral part of the composition, or a means of extending the technique.

Documentary sources such as C.P.E. Bach demonstrate that even the earliest pianists employed tone-modifying devices to some extent, an assumption consistent with the presence of these devices on most 18th-century pianos. The fact that they tended at first to be operated by hand stops rather than pedals or knee levers meant that their use was almost certainly restricted to large sections or whole movements at a time. The very earliest pedal markings follow this pattern, though not without exception.<sup>101</sup>

Carl Philip Emmanuel Bach (1714–1788), in the second volume of his *Versuch uber die Wahre Art das Clavier zu spielen*, which appeared in 1762, states that “the undamped register of the pianoforte is most pleasing, and, if one but knows how to carefully control the after-ring, the most attractive of all in improvisation.”<sup>102</sup> This statement shows that the hand stops were used as a registral effect as was common to the harpsichord. The hand stops were not suitable for rapid changes from raised to lowered dampers which became a part of the piano’s language later. Pedaling with changes of harmony or at key moments was not possible until the next developments in the damper mechanism.

### **Knee Dampers**

Mozart wrote to his father at Salzburg from Augsburg in October, 1777 to express his admiration for an improvement of the pianoforte’s dampers: the knee-lever damper control.

The device which you work with your knee is better than what is found on other instruments. You only need to touch it and it works, and as soon as

---

<sup>101</sup> David Rowland, “Early Pianoforte Pedalling.” *Early Music*, 15-16.

<sup>102</sup> C.P.E. Bach, *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments*, 431.



you move your knee the least bit, you do not hear the slightest remainder of sound.<sup>103</sup>

Although this quote shows that Mozart used the damper pedal, he never gave pedal indications in his scores. The piano music of Mozart can be performed entirely without pedal without damaging the effect, so the pedal is not an integral part of his music. “...Mozart did not take this [damper] pedal into account [when composing for the piano] and only thought of its being used occasionally, chiefly as a special effect...”<sup>104</sup> A conservative attitude from the time of Mozart well into the time of Beethoven involved avoidance of the pedal.<sup>105</sup> It was considered by conservatives to be unnecessary, and even a means of covering deficiencies in technique.<sup>106</sup> This was contrasted by more progressive composers who experimented with possibilities afforded by the pedal with the extreme side of this group promoting the variety of pedals such as the lute and bassoon pedals discussed previously.

### **The Development of Pedal Technique**

Johann Peter Milchmeyer (1750-1813), a piano teacher and theorist, wrote about the pedal’s lack of use in his piano tutor of 1797 as follows:

[The pedals]...have only rarely been used by players and are therefore similar to a great book collection that no one reads. Composers and teachers did not pay attention to them, and considered them unimportant until the great talent of Herr Steibelt, a native Berliner now living in London, precisely developed all of these mutations, showed the effects of each one, and determined their place.<sup>107</sup>

---

<sup>103</sup> Wolfgang A. Mozart, The Letters of Mozart and His Family, 329.

<sup>104</sup> Walter Giesekeing, quoted in Reimer Riefling, Piano Pedaling, 37, from Das MusikLeben, February, 1948.

<sup>105</sup> David Rowland, 16.

<sup>106</sup> Daniel M. Raessler, “A New Look at Old Pedaling.” Clavier, 18.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., 16-17.

Milchmeyer refers to Daniel Gottlib Steibelt (1765-1823) as the first innovator for piano pedaling technique. Steibelt used the variety of pedals (such as the lute stop, bassoon stop etc.) that were available on pianos that were popular in England but not in Germany.<sup>108</sup> His earliest printed pedal markings were published in 1792-3.<sup>109</sup> “In the space of five years, he [Steibelt] had progressed from a varied but rudimentary use of the pedals in his sixth Pot-porri to one which forms the basis of many aspects of our modern technique, in his *Concerto Op. 33*.”<sup>110</sup> Steibelt explained his pedal markings in the beginning of *Op. 33* as follows:

*The Author wishing to make more Variety on the Piano Forte finds it necessary to make use of the Pedals, by which alone the tones can be united, but it requires to use them with Care: without which, in going from one Chord to another Discord & Confusion would result. Hereafter the Author in all his Compositions will make use of the following signs to denote the Pedals.*

⊕ *The Pedal that raises the Dampers.*

△ *The Piano Pedal.*

\* *To take the Foot off the Pedal that was used before.*

Figure 4 Daniel Steibelt, Notice from *Piano Concerto Op. 33*.<sup>111</sup>

<sup>108</sup> David Rowland, 6.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>111</sup> William S. Newman, “Beethoven’s Uses of the Pedals.” *The Pianist’s Guide to Pedaling*, 154.

## The London School

It is noteworthy that Steibelt was active in London, as was Haydn at the time he wrote pedal indications in his sonata. London was an important center of piano development and pianist/composers involved in these developments are known as the London School. According to David Rowland,

...the leading features of this school are the cultivation of amazing powers of execution, overwrought sentimentality, and the production of piquant effects by the most rapid changes from the soft to the loud pedal...<sup>112</sup>

“The founder of the London School is generally been acknowledged to have been Clementi, with Cramer, Dussek and Field its chief exponents in the following generation.”<sup>113</sup> Muzio Clementi (1752-1832) was born in Italy and transplanted to England at the age of 14 under a contract.<sup>114</sup> The foundation of Clementi’s keyboard skills was connected to the organ (he had become the organist of his home town church at age 13) and harpsichord (he spent the first seven years of his time in England in isolated study of the harpsichord to fulfill the afore mentioned contract).<sup>115</sup> “Belonging to an earlier generation, his approach to pedaling was, not surprisingly, conservative. That he never adopted the sustaining pedal as a fundamental element of technique in the same way as Steibelt, Cramer, Dussek or Field is shown in his reluctance to make use of new features.”<sup>116</sup> His earliest printed markings, in the *Sonatas Op. 37* (1798) show a remarkably cautious approach for recurring rondo themes.

---

<sup>112</sup> David Rowland, 12.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> Leon Plantinga, “Muzio Clementi.” The New Grove Dictionary, vol. 14, 484.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid., 485.

<sup>116</sup> David Rowland, 12.





**Figure 6** Muzio Clementi, Facsimile of *Sonata Op. 40 No. 1*, 4th movement, mm. 206-226.<sup>119</sup>

Johann Ladislaus Dussek (1760-1812) became part of the London scene due to the French revolution. He had formed ties with the French aristocracy and was therefore “...unpopular with the revolutionary regime.”<sup>120</sup> Dussek’s “*Military*” *Concerto Op. 40* of 1798 has more than “...sixty indications for the sustaining pedal, demonstrating a technique equal to that of Steibelt and considerably more advanced than either Clementi or Cramer at that time.”<sup>121</sup>

The pedal is used [in the *Military Concerto*] to reinforce the resonance of the piano’s treble register, for *crescendos* and accents, arpeggios spread over large areas of the keyboard and to extend the range of left-hand accompaniments....[and] in his arrangement of Kelly’s *Adieu* (1799) it is also used for passages involving hand crossing. All these examples exemplify Dussek’s preoccupation with the pedal as a means of extending his keyboard technique, in marked contrast to Clementi.<sup>122</sup>

---

<sup>119</sup> Muzio Clementi, Works for Pianoforte Solo by Muzio Clementi. Published from 1787 to 1804, vol 2 of The London Pianoforte School, 172.

<sup>120</sup> Howard Allen Crow, “Dussek.” The New Grove Dictionary, vol. 5, 754-5.

<sup>121</sup> David Rowland, 6.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

The second movement of Dussek's *Sonata Op. 39*<sup>123</sup> shows pedaling similar to the pedaling of the "Military" *Concerto Op. 40*.

**Figure 7** Johann Ladislaus Dussek, Facsimile of *Sonata Op. 39 No 3*, 2nd movement, mm. 75-84.<sup>124</sup>

Notice that the pedal markings in Figure 7 enclose bass notes which the left hand must leave in order to play the chords immediately following. The pedal here retains the bass note beyond it's written value giving more richness to the texture.

Johann Baptist Cramer (1771-1858) was a moderate member of the London School. His pedaling was "...somewhere between the conservatism of Clementi (his teacher) and the more progressive technique of Steibelt and Dussek."<sup>125</sup> Cramer and Dussek both cultivated "...beautiful *cantabile*, the avoiding of all coarse effects, and astonishing equality in the runs and passages, as a compensation for that degree of

<sup>123</sup> The *Military Concerto* was not available at Stanford or any other facilities I had access to.

<sup>124</sup> Johann Ladislaus Dussek, Works for Pianoforte Solo by Continental Composers in London. Haydn, Dussek and Contemporaries. Published from 1766 to 1810, vol 6 of The London Pianoforte School. 158.

<sup>125</sup> David Rowland, 12.

volubility which is less thought of in their works, and a fine *legato*, combined with the use of the pedals.”<sup>126</sup>

The following list summarizes the uses of pedal in the London School:

1. Blurred pedaling: the dampers are raised for the duration of a section of a work. This is normally done when there is little change of harmony to avoid blending of discordant tones, as well as at a soft dynamic level.
2. Rhythmic pedaling: the dampers are raised with changes in harmony so as to reinforce the sound of successive harmonies
3. Pedaling to reinforce the treble register (see Figure 6).
4. Pedaling to extend the range of bass accompaniments (see Figure 7).
5. Pedaling to reinforce accents or dynamics.

### **Development under Ludwig van Beethoven**

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827) was one of the earliest composers to think about the pedal as an integral part of the piano’s language. He may have been influenced by the London school in some aspects of his piano writing<sup>127</sup>, but developed the principals he found there beyond the models they provided (as will be seen below). Beethoven’s earliest pedal indication from his sketches predates the earliest examples of pedaling from other known sources. One of his sketches from 1790-92 has the indication for raised dampers “mit dem knie” (with the knee).<sup>128</sup> This is before the printed pedal indications of Steibelt, which are the earliest known published pedal indications. This shows that Beethoven had already begun to explore the use of the pedal in his music prior to exposure

---

<sup>126</sup> David Rowland, 12.

<sup>127</sup> Malcolm Bilson, 236.

<sup>128</sup> William S. Newman, 144.

to the London school composers.<sup>129</sup> Beethoven uses both clear marking of phrases and pedal indications. This clear marking of musical ideas is a part of the influence of Haydn and Mozart.<sup>130</sup> Haydn and especially Mozart used phrase markings to clearly show their musical ideas. The London school composers tended not to mark their scores in this way. Beethoven, by using both pedaling and clear phrase markings wove the pedaling of a composition even more tightly with its formal structure.

William S. Newman, an authority on Beethoven, gives a summary of Beethoven's pedaling in Beethoven on Beethoven-Playing His Piano Music His Way. Below is the substance of Newman's summary (in quotes) along with examples drawn from Beethoven's piano sonatas and a comparison with the London School pedaling:

1. "to sustain the bass, providing harmonic support while the hands remain free to play elsewhere on the keyboard."<sup>131</sup> This use of the pedal was also part of Dussek's technique. Example 14 shows the left hand both playing a bass note and involved in the texture of the right hand as part of the melody. This kind of extension of technique through pedaling is related to but more advanced than Dussek's shown in Figure 7.



**Example 14** Ludwig van Beethoven, *Sonata Op. 79*, 1st movement, mm. 91-93.<sup>132</sup>

<sup>129</sup> Barry Cooper, The Beethoven Compendium, 83-84.

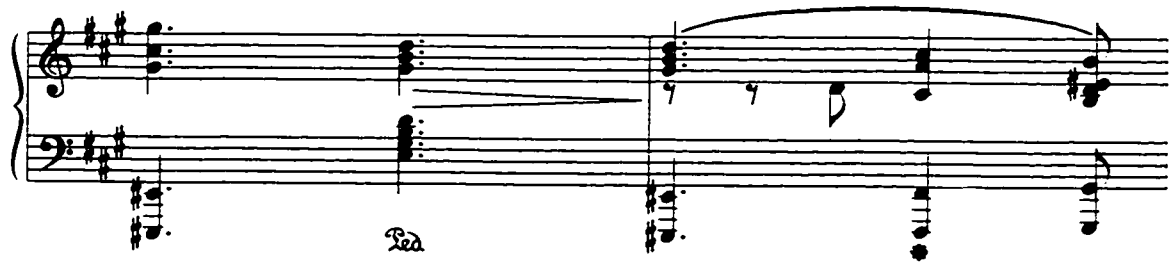
<sup>130</sup> Malcolm Bilson, 231-2.

<sup>131</sup> William S. Newman, Beethoven on Beethoven-Playing His Piano Music His Way, 237.

<sup>132</sup> Ludwig van Beethoven, Piano Sonatas, book II, 172, rescored.



2. “As a component of *legato* playing.”<sup>133</sup> Beethoven’s principle of *legato* involved using fingerings that would connect notes without the aid of the pedal, but when this was impossible, the pedal was used to extend the *legato*. Example 15 shows the pedal being applied to extend the chords at the end of m. 5 for their full value. This prevents the sound of the left hand from being clipped as the hand travels to the low bass notes at the beginning of the next measure.



**Example 15** Ludwig van Beethoven, *Sonata Op. 106*, 3rd movement, mm. 5-6.<sup>134</sup>

*Legato* is one of the hallmarks of Chopin’s style both in playing and composing.<sup>135</sup>

Beethoven is credited as the first pianist to emphasize *legato*.

Beethoven told Czerny that he had heard Mozart play; his execution was delicate, but choppy, without *legato*...[and further] that his playing was neat and clear, but rather empty, weak and old-fashioned. The *legato* and *cantabile* on the piano were unknown at that time, and Beethoven was the first to discover [these?] new and grand effects on that instrument... and excelled all others in his mastery of *legato*.<sup>136</sup>

3. “to create a collective, composite sound.”<sup>137</sup> In Example 16, the pedal allows all of the pitches being played to ring through to the release mark. The open pedal also allows

<sup>133</sup> William S. Newman, “Beethoven’s Uses of the Pedals.”, 151.

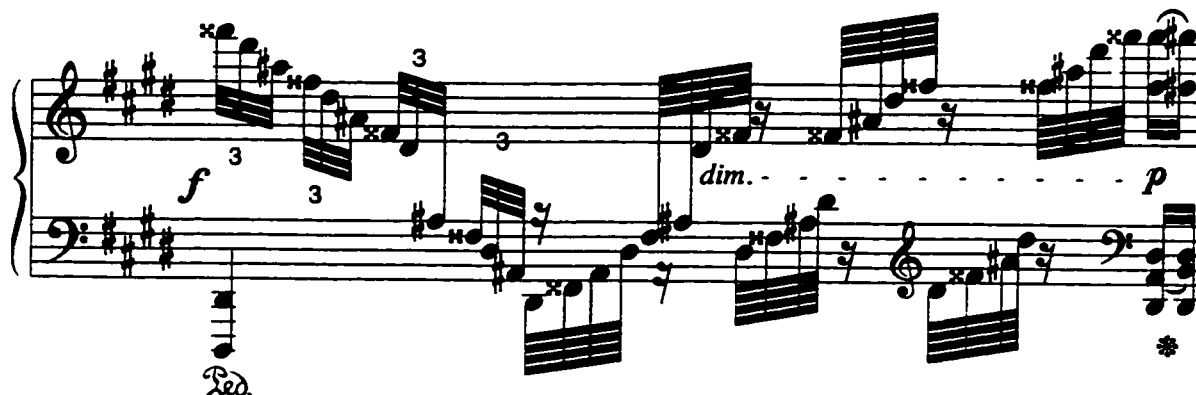
<sup>134</sup> Ludwig van Beethoven, *Piano Sonatas*, book II, 244, rescored.

<sup>135</sup> Reginald R. Gerig, *Famous Pianists And Their Technique*, 160-1.

<sup>136</sup> Franz Kullak, *Beethoven’s Piano-Playing*, 13.

<sup>137</sup> William S. Newman, *Beethoven on Beethoven-Playing His Piano Music His Way*, 240.

the other strings to vibrate sympathetically. This creates a mass of sound which increases in volume and density till the release mark.

A musical score for a piano piece, likely a sonata. It features two staves: a treble clef staff on top and a bass clef staff on the bottom. The music is in a key with two sharps (F# and C#) and a 3/4 time signature. The piece starts with a forte (f) dynamic. The right hand plays a series of chords, some with triplets (indicated by a '3' above the notes). The left hand plays a steady eighth-note accompaniment. A 'Ped.' marking is placed below the first few notes of the left hand. The dynamics shift from forte to a diminuendo (dim.) and then to piano (p). There are some 'x' marks above certain notes in the right hand, possibly indicating specific performance techniques or corrections. The score ends with a double bar line and a fermata over the final notes.

**Example 16** Ludwig van Beethoven, *Sonata Op. 109*, 1st movement, m. 13.<sup>138</sup>

4. "...implementing dynamic contrasts."<sup>139</sup> As discussed on p. 17, if the dampers are raised when a string/s is sounded, the remaining strings are able to respond. Example 17 shows the pedal being used with certain accented or strong notes, but not with others. This will separate, distinguish those pitches from the rest both in color and volume.

---

<sup>138</sup> Ludwig van Beethoven, *Piano Sonatas*, book II, 244, rescored.

<sup>139</sup> William S. Newman, *Beethoven on Beethoven-Playing His Piano Music His Way*, 236.

The image displays two systems of musical notation for a piano piece. Each system consists of a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The first system begins with a 'Sua' marking above the treble staff. The first measure of the first system has a forte (ff) dynamic marking in the bass staff. The second measure of the first system has a sforzando (sf) dynamic marking in the bass staff. Below the first system, there are two 'Ped.' markings with a star symbol, indicating where the pedal should be applied. The second system also features 'sf' markings in both the treble and bass staves across its measures. Similar to the first system, 'Ped.' markings with a star symbol are placed below the second system.

**Example 17** Ludwig van Beethoven, *“Hammerklavier” Sonata Op. 106*, 1st movement, mm. 91-94.<sup>140</sup>

5. “...use pedal on thematic and even structural aspects of a composition.”<sup>141</sup> In Examples 17, 19 and 21, the specific effect being created by the pedal also serves a structural or thematic purpose. In Example 17 the pedal is consistently used at the recurrence of the opening of the phrase rather than with each accent. Example 19 is the main theme of the first movement of the “Hammerklavier” sonata, which is consistently marked as shown. In Example 21 the pedal is being applied to the theme of the Rondo, which serves both thematic and structural functions.

<sup>140</sup> Ludwig van Beethoven, *Piano Sonatas*, book II, 229-230, rescored.

<sup>141</sup> William S. Newman, *Beethoven on Beethoven-Playing His Piano Music His Way*, 243.

6. "...to interconnect sections or movements."<sup>142</sup> In Example 18 the pedal is used to connect sections of the second movement. The movement begins in 3/4 as *Assai Vivace* and the pedal is used to connect it to the following *Presto* in 2/4.

**Example 18** Ludwig van Beethoven, "*Hammerklavier*" Sonata Op. 106, 2nd movement, mm. 76-81.<sup>143</sup>

<sup>142</sup> William S. Newman, *Beethoven on Beethoven-Playing His Piano Music His Way*, 243.

<sup>143</sup> Ludwig van Beethoven, *Piano Sonatas*, book II, 241-2, rescored.

7. "Pedaling through rests..."<sup>144</sup> (see Example 19)

The image shows two systems of musical notation for a piano piece. The first system consists of a grand staff with a treble clef on the upper staff and a bass clef on the lower staff. The upper staff has a tempo marking 'a tempo' above it. The lower staff has lyrics 'ritar - - dan - - do' written below it, with 'pp' (pianissimo) above the first measure and 'f' (forte) above the second measure. The second system is a continuation of the first, with a 'Ped.' (pedal) marking below the bass staff in the second measure. The music features chords and melodic lines in both hands.

**Example 19** Ludwig van Beethoven, *Sonata Op. 106*, 1st movement, mm. 34-37.<sup>145</sup>

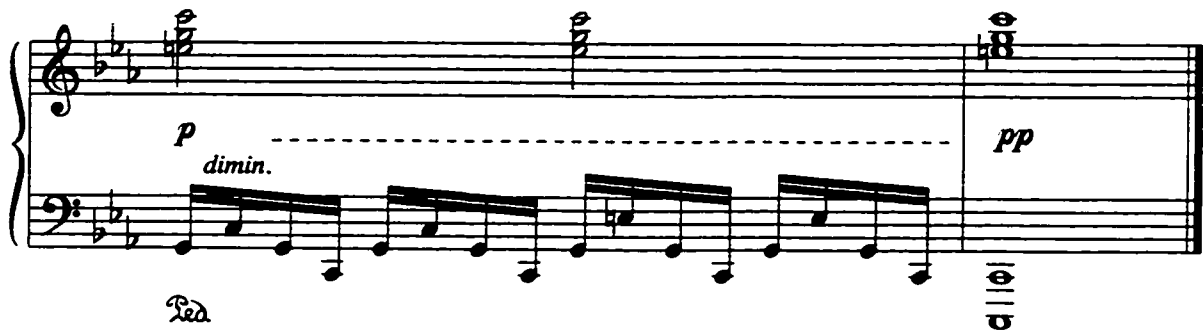
8. " frequent lack of a release sign when the pedal is indicated...more often the omission seems to mean that the sound is left to die away."<sup>146</sup> (see Example 20)

---

<sup>144</sup> William S. Newman, *Beethoven on Beethoven-Playing His Piano Music His Way*, 242.

<sup>145</sup> Ludwig van Beethoven, *Piano Sonatas*, book II, 228, rescored.

<sup>146</sup> William S. Newman, *Beethoven on Beethoven-Playing His Piano Music His Way*, 244.



**Example 20** Ludwig van Beethoven, *Sonata Op. 111*, 1st movement, mm. 157-158.<sup>147</sup>

9. “to blur the sound through harmonic clashes.”<sup>148</sup> Example 21 shows the pedal being used through both a scale passage and a trill at a volume of double forte. This creates a mass of sound which will contain dissonance because many of the pitches are adjacent. Example 22 is the first movement of the “Moonlight” sonata. This entire movement is to be played with out dampers, but at a low dynamic level. Beethoven’s indications at the beginning of the first movement are: “*Si deve suonare tutto questo pezzo delicatissimamente e senza sordino*” which means “This whole movement should be played delicately and without damper(s).”<sup>149</sup> The example shows that this will cause the blending of contrasting harmonies and a chromatic descent in the bass. The effect would not be harsh on the pianos available to Beethoven as compared with a modern piano, however. Czerny states that Beethoven played the slow movement of the *Concerto, Op. 37* in this way as well.<sup>150</sup>

<sup>147</sup> Ludwig van Beethoven, *Piano Sonatas*, book II, 316, rescored.

<sup>148</sup> William S. Newman, *Beethoven on Beethoven-Playing His Piano Music His Way*, 245.

<sup>149</sup> William S. Newman, “Beethoven’s Uses of the Pedals.”, 160.

<sup>150</sup> Carl Czerny, *On the Proper Performance of All Beethoven’s Works for the Piano*. 107.

The image displays two systems of musical notation for a piano piece. Each system consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. In the first system, the treble staff begins with a trill (tr) and a fortissimo (ff) dynamic marking. The bass staff contains a wavy line. In the second system, the treble staff has a trill (tr) and a wavy line, while the bass staff also has a wavy line. Both systems feature a fermata over a note in the treble staff.

**Example 21** Ludwig van Beethoven, *“Waldstein” Sonata Op. 53*, Rondo movement, mm. 55-58.<sup>151</sup>

---

<sup>151</sup> Ludwig van Beethoven, *Piano Sonatas*, book II, 104, rescored.



**Example 22** Ludwig van Beethoven, *Sonata Op. 27 No 2*, mm. 10-14.<sup>152</sup>

10. To create a specific tone color. This was not found in Newman's list, but is worth mentioning. He marked certain soft chords with individual pedals, not to prolong them but simply to establish a certain tone color. Examples are found at the very last chord of the finale of the E Major *Sonata, Op. 109* (in which the theme was first heard without such pedaling) and in mm. 95-98 of the first movement of the A major *Sonata, Op. 101*.<sup>153</sup>

Carl Czerny, Beethoven's pupil who contributed to the development of nineteenth-century piano pedagogy, was the first composer to write fully and instructively about the pedal in the third and fourth volumes of his *Piano Method*. But he only mentions the pedal simultaneously with the attack, and expressly requires it to be used only in that manner.

---

<sup>152</sup> Ludwig van Beethoven, *Piano Sonatas*, book I, 249, rescored.

<sup>153</sup> Konrad Wolff, *Master of the keyboard*, 156.



This type of pedaling is referred to as rhythmic pedaling. It was considered a normal type of pedaling, and was not marked in most of Beethoven's scores.<sup>154</sup> This type of pedaling may be appropriate if no other pedaling is indicated.

### **Resistance to the Pedals**

A leader of the conservatives at the time of Beethoven was Johann Nepomuk Hummel (1778-1837), a student of Mozart who became an important performer and teacher in the next generation.<sup>155</sup> Hummel's conservatism can be seen in the following quotes:

...Neither Mozart nor Clementi required these helps [the pedals] to obtain the highly deserved reputation of the greatest and most expressive performers of their day, a demonstration of the fact that, without having recourse to such worthless means, a player might arrive at the most honourable rank.<sup>156</sup>

"Around the turn of the century, antagonism between those who accepted the pedals and those who rejected their use increased, with the emergence of a strong, anti-pedal group led by Hummel."<sup>157</sup> Carl Czerny, a student<sup>158</sup> and associate of Beethoven, records that "Hummel's partisans accused Beethoven of mistreating the piano, of lacking all cleanness and clarity, of creating nothing but confused noise the way he used the pedal..."<sup>159</sup> This antipathy for the pedal continued in Germany at least until the 1820's.<sup>160</sup>

---

<sup>154</sup> Daniel Raessler, 16.

<sup>155</sup> Joel Sachs, "Johann Nepomuk Hummel." The New Grove Dictionary, vol. 8, 781-3.

<sup>156</sup> Johann Nepomuk Hummel, A Complete Theoretical and Practical Course of Instructions on the Art of Playing the Pianoforte, 62.

<sup>157</sup> David Rowland, 14.

<sup>158</sup> William S. Newman, Beethoven on Beethoven-Playing His Piano Music His Way, 21.

<sup>159</sup> Carl Czerny, Erinnerungen aus meinem Leben, 19.

<sup>160</sup> David Rowland, 15.

## Conclusion

Beethoven's requirements of the piano for his compositions actually pushed the development of the piano, increasing its range, volume and sustaining qualities.

The customary five-octave compass was sufficient for twenty of Beethoven's piano sonatas and his first two concertos....The sonatas from the 'Waldstein' onwards demand at least six octaves range and the '*Hammerklavier*' Sonata the six-and-a-half-octaves of the Viennese Conrad Graf, Beethoven's last piano, as strong as his six-octave Broadwood...<sup>161</sup> The fury of the '*Hammerklavier*' Sonata with in excess of twenty thousand notes made it urgent that the piano's frame should be sturdier and the action more reliable, and so Beethoven's compositions marked a turning-point in the instrument's progress. Exposing its inadequacies beyond any shadow of doubt, his prompting led to quicker development of the instrument than otherwise would have been the case. At the same time, if the expressive capabilities of the piano had not reached the stage they had in Beethoven's lifetime, the ethereal atmosphere of the last sonatas stretching the emotional range of the instrument would have been incapable of attainment."<sup>162</sup>

Beethoven's changes in the musical language of the piano and of the piano itself left an instrument and tradition fully developed from which Chopin could continue.

Beethoven's last sonata used the highest and lowest octaves of the keyboard with extraordinary eloquence-this is indeed one of the colouristic features of the piano writing of his last years. Chopin and Liszt carried this usage further, pianistically if not musically; some of the delicate filigree threads of sound woven by Chopin in his *Berceuse* and by Liszt in *Ricordanza* are intimately bound up with the new range of sound available, and would have been impossible to realize on the instruments of a generation before.<sup>163</sup>

---

<sup>161</sup> David S. Grover, 99.

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*, 104.

<sup>163</sup> Denis Matthews, *Keyboard Music*, 209-210.

Chapter 5  
CHOPIN'S PEDALING

Chopin's uses of the pedal included all of those developed by Beethoven. In addition to those, Chopin employed a technique which today is known as "flutter pedaling," or "vibrato pedaling."<sup>164</sup> The flutter pedal was never indicated by Chopin in his scores, but was described by Chopin's contemporaries. F. Henri Peru (1829-1922), a self described pupil of Chopin, described Chopin's pedaling as follows:

His own pedaling was most extraordinary. His foot was constantly bobbing up and down so as to produce the effect of constant pedal but also constant sharpness.<sup>165</sup>

Peru is describing the way Chopin pedaled his own music. Peru's observation may be of doubtful authenticity, but is confirmed by Chopin scholar, Arthur Hedley. Drawing from the available documentation of Chopin's contemporaries, Hedley wrote that "...his foot seemed literally to vibrate as he rapidly pedaled certain passages."<sup>166</sup> In flutter pedal, the dampers should never be fully lowered or fully raised.<sup>167</sup> Specific occasions for this technique will be discussed later. The *una corda* pedal was also frequently used by Chopin, according to his contemporaries, but is also not specifically notated in his music. Chopin "...used both pedals to their fullest effect and in an astonishing free manner, Chopin was a master of touch, and with the assistance of pedal effects he endowed his musical sounds with distinctive colouring."<sup>168</sup> The statement below was made by Antoine Marmontel (1816-1898), a French pianist and teacher who was a contemporary of Chopin.

---

<sup>164</sup> Joseph Banowetz, "Pedaling Technique." Teaching Piano: A Comprehensive Guide and Reference Book for the Instructor, vol. I, ed. Denes Agay, 100.

<sup>165</sup> Frederick Niecks, 99.

<sup>166</sup> Arthur Hedley, Chopin, 123.

<sup>167</sup> K. U. Schnabel, Modern Technique of the Pedal (A Piano Pedal Study), 7.

<sup>168</sup> Reimar Riefing, 48.

...Chopin used the pedals with marvellous discretion. He often coupled them to obtain a soft and veiled sonority, but more often still he would use them separately for brilliant passages, for sustained harmonies, for deep bass notes, and for loud ringing chords. Or he would use the soft pedal alone for those light murmurings which seem to create a transparent vapour round the arabesques that embellish the melody and envelop it like fine lace. The timbre produced by the pedals on Pleyel pianos has a perfect sonority, and the dampers work with a precision very useful for chromatic and modulating passages; this quality is precious and absolutely indispensable."<sup>169</sup>

Marmontel was describing the effects Chopin was able to achieve by the individual and combined uses of the *una corda* and damper pedals. Although the *una corda* pedal and techniques of flutter pedal are not indicated by Chopin in his scores, they will be discussed as possible solutions to certain situations, particularly because they are part of his own practice. We have very little specific description from Chopin on the technique of the pedal. The following quotes give a general sense of the kinds of information we have from his letters and students' recollections:

From Chopin:

"The correct employment of pedal remains a study for life."<sup>170</sup>

"I am always telling my pupils that those for whom the *forte* is difficult must learn to shade their *piano* in a dozen ways, and well manage the pedal, then the listener will not regret the lack of the *forte*."<sup>171</sup>

"Learn to make a diminuendo without the help of the [*una corda*] pedal; you can add it later."<sup>172</sup>

---

<sup>169</sup> Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger, Chopin: Pianist and Teacher As Seen by His Pupils, 58.

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*, 57.

<sup>171</sup> Bronislaw E. Sydow, "Ipse Dixit: Excerpts From the Unpublished Letters of Chopin." Frederic Chopin: 1810-1849, 69.

<sup>172</sup> Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger, Chopin: Pianist and Teacher As Seen by His Pupils, 57.

“Be careful with the pedal for this is a frightfully touchy and noisy rascal. One must deal with it very politely and delicately - as a friend it is very helpful, but it isn’t easy to reach the stage of intimate acquaintance and love with it...”<sup>173</sup>

From Chopin’s pupils and contemporaries:

“Use the pedal with the greatest economy.”<sup>174</sup>

“Chopin did not want [me to use the] pedal, yet he himself used it, particularly the soft pedal-without however indicating this to his pupils, in order not to exaggerate or to overstep its resources.”<sup>175</sup>

“...His [Chopin’s] pianissimo is so delicate that he can produce the greatest effects of crescendo without requiring the strength of the muscular virtuosi of the modern school, and he produces marvels of nuance by the use of the pedal, both pedals together and by his unique *legato*.”<sup>176</sup>

Chopin’s pedal indications are similar to those handed down by Beethoven (see pp. 41-50). Like Beethoven, Chopin wrote pedaling for special effects. In some cases Chopin wrote no pedaling where the pedaling (rhythmic pedaling) would seem to be very basic (*Prelude No. 20*). The following list is drawn mainly from Maurice Hinson’s Chapter, “Pedaling the Piano Works of Chopin,” in The Pianist’s Guide to Pedaling.<sup>177</sup> Examples have been drawn from Chopin’s *Preludes* to illustrate these uses.

---

<sup>173</sup> Bronislaw E. Sydow, 69.

<sup>174</sup> Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger, Chopin: Pianist and Teacher As Seen by His Pupils, 57, from Carl Mikuli.

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.*, 58, from Mme Courty.

<sup>176</sup> Bronislaw E. Sydow, Selected Correspondence of Fryderyk Chopin, 216, from Joseph Filtsch to his parents.

<sup>177</sup> Maurice Hinson, 191-195.

1. "Chopin uses pedal to connect many final chords in his works, but more for the purpose of adding resonance than to help the *legato*..."<sup>178</sup> The final chords of *Prelude No. 16* are individually pedaled (see Figure 8).



Figure 8 Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of *Prelude No. 16*, m. 46.<sup>179</sup>

2. "Chopin uses pedal in scale [and diatonic] passages (upward or downward moving)...to avoid dryness and to give needed brilliance and glitter."<sup>180</sup> Note that Chopin has crossed out pedal indications in *Prelude No. 16* to put the entire passage under one pedal (see Figure 9).



Figure 9 Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of *Prelude No. 16*, mm. 2-4.<sup>181</sup>

<sup>178</sup> Maurice Hinson, 191.

<sup>179</sup> Frederic Chopin, *24 Preludia*, Facsimile.

<sup>180</sup> Maurice Hinson, 191.

<sup>181</sup> Frederic Chopin, *24 Preludia*, Facsimile.

3. "...pedals through non-harmonic tones in a melody [to blur into their resolutions]."<sup>182</sup>  
In m. 3 of *Prelude No. 7*, the double appoggiatura (B-sharp, D-sharp) and its resolution (C-sharp, E) are taken in one pedal (see Figure 10).



Figure 10 Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of *Prelude No. 7*, mm. 2-4.<sup>183</sup>

4. "...to reinforce the sound..."<sup>184</sup> (see Figure 11)



Figure 11 Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of *Prelude No. 18*, mm. 9-11.<sup>185</sup>

<sup>182</sup> Maurice Hinson, 192.

<sup>183</sup> Frederic Chopin, *24 Preludia*, Facsimile.

<sup>184</sup> Maurice Hinson, 192.

<sup>185</sup> Frederic Chopin, *24 Preludia*, Facsimile.

5. "Deliberately use pedal to blur the changes of harmony."<sup>186</sup> In parts of *Prelude No. 17* the right hand is involved in changes of harmony which are all taken in one pedal (see Figure 12).

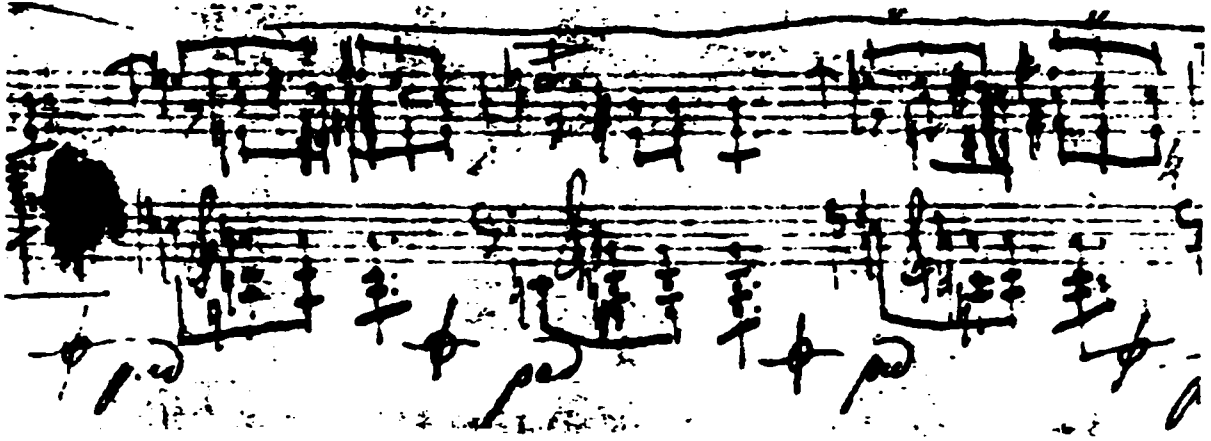


Figure 12 Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of *Prelude No. 17*, mm. 28-30.<sup>187</sup>

6. "Use contrasting pedaling for themes that have contrasting character."<sup>188</sup> In *Prelude No. 10* the passage work is pedaled while the simple dance motif following it is left unpedaled (see Figure 13).



Figure 13 Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of *Prelude No. 10*, mm. 1-4.<sup>189</sup>

---

<sup>186</sup> Maurice Hinson, 192.

<sup>187</sup> Frederic Chopin, *24 Preludia*, Facsimile.

<sup>188</sup> Maurice Hinson, 193.

<sup>189</sup> Frederic Chopin, *24 Preludia*, Facsimile.



7. "Use pedal through the rests."<sup>190</sup> (see Figure 14)



Figure 14 Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of *Prelude No. 21*, mm. 53-57.<sup>191</sup>

8. "Omit a pedal release sign at the end of a composition."<sup>192</sup> (see Figure 15)



Figure 15 Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of *Prelude No. 1*, mm. 33-34.<sup>193</sup>

9. Use the pedal to sustain bass notes. This is not mentioned in Hinson's listing. The bass notes beginning each measure in Figure 12, although written as eighth notes, are carried through the measure by the pedal (see Figure 12).

<sup>190</sup> Maurice Hinson, 193.

<sup>191</sup> Frederic Chopin, *24 Preludia*, Facsimile.

<sup>192</sup> Maurice Hinson, 193.

<sup>193</sup> Frederic Chopin, *24 Preludia*, Facsimile.

10. Various pedaling is used in similar or identical passages in the same work. This is also not mentioned in Hinson's listing, but can be found in Chopin's scores. In Figure 16 the first mm. 1-2 are unpedaled while mm. 21-22 are taken in one long pedal. In mm. 3-4 the pedal is changed in each measure while mm. 19-20 are taken in one pedal.



Figure 16 Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of *Prelude No. 11*, mm. 1-4 (above) and 19-22 (below).<sup>194</sup>

## Considerations for the Modern Pianists

### Rhythmic and Syncopated Pedaling

Rhythmic pedaling was described in the discussion of Beethoven as raising the dampers simultaneously with the attack of a harmony, and then releasing the dampers

<sup>194</sup> Frederic Chopin, *24 Preludia*, Facsimile.

before the next harmony is sounded to avoid blurring. The dampers would then be raised again with the attack of the next harmony. Rhythmic pedaling is typically used in passages with regular, clear harmonic changes.

Syncopated pedaling is a refinement of rhythmic pedaling which is described during Liszt's lifetime as pedaling "...after the striking of the chords."<sup>195</sup> In syncopated pedaling the dampers are raised just after the striking of a given harmony and held till just after the striking of the next harmony, and then lowered and raised again. This type of pedaling is an implication of Beethoven's pedaling to aid in the *legato* when the fingers cannot achieve it unaided. Syncopated pedaling can be used as a substitute for rhythmic pedaling as a basic pedaling in cases such as those following if nothing is indicated. *Prelude No. 20* is written with almost no pedal markings in the autograph. The opening of *Prelude No. 20* (originally with no markings) is shown below edited first with rhythmic, and then with syncopated pedaling.

The image shows a musical score for the opening of Frederic Chopin's Prelude No. 20, measures 1-4. The score is in G major (one sharp) and common time (C). It is marked 'Largo' and 'ff'. The music features a series of chords in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The score is edited with rhythmic pedaling, indicated by horizontal lines under the notes in both hands, showing the timing of the damper pedal being raised and lowered.

**Example 23** Frederic Chopin, *Prelude No. 20*, mm. 1-4 edited with rhythmic pedaling.<sup>196</sup>

---

<sup>195</sup> Daniel Raessler, 18.

<sup>196</sup> Frederic Chopin, *Préludes*, 41, rescored from Henle edition.

The brackets below the bass in Examples 23 and 24 represent the duration of pedaling and its location relative to the beat. Note the release in Example 23, which takes place before each succeeding harmony (see also Figure 17 for original rhythmic pedal markings).

**Example 24** Frederic Chopin, *Prelude No. 20*, mm. 1-4 edited with syncopated pedaling.<sup>197</sup>

In Example 24 the pedal is held from one harmony until the next harmony has been sounded. Then it is released and applied again. The pedal thereby connects the sound of one harmony till the fingers are holding the next harmony, eliminating any break except where desired (notice that the pedal is released between phrases).

Pedaling after the attack (syncopated pedaling), which we consider the ordinary method of pedalling, was not used until after 1870 (by Liszt, Kullak, and Deppe among others)... the syncopated pedal is the method most often used, First and foremost in *legato*, for instance; in rigorously sustained chords (not least in *legato* chords some distance apart which the fingers cannot manage alone); or also when one and the same key is struck repeatedly without any 'air' in between.<sup>198</sup>

<sup>197</sup> Frederic Chopin, *Préludes*, 41, rescored from Henle edition.

<sup>198</sup> Leimar Riefing, 23-4.

A word of caution though, when deciding on this substitution. Rhythmic pedaling sometimes is applied in situations where a break in the pedal is desired. To replace it with syncopated pedaling in those cases would alter rather than enhance the desired effect.

*Prelude No. 20* is scored with phrase markings and notation which generally call for a *legato* approach. An exception in *Prelude No. 20* is the breaks between phrases. Musical judgment is required here. Syncopated pedaling through the breaks the phrase markings in Example 24 would distort the musical structure. In the following figure, the rhythmic pedaling would be preferred throughout.



Figure 17 Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of *Prelude No. 1*, mm. 1-5.<sup>199</sup>

The melodic movement in the figure is essentially in two note phrases. There is a staggered octave from the first triplet to the second triplet which moves to a simultaneous octave at the end of the second triplet of each measure. This figure, which is within the texture of the arpeggiation, is brought out by the pedaling, which is clearly marked to break between measures. This is also reinforced by the phrasing which breaks between measures, and by the marking *Agitato*. The *Agitato* calls for a restless, agitated quality which is better represented by the breaking of the rhythmic pedal than by the connection of the syncopated pedal.

---

<sup>199</sup> Frederic Chopin, *24 Preludia*, Facsimile.

## The Question of Pedaling on the Modern Piano

Even on Chopin's piano there would be some question of how to pedal, since Chopin's practice differed from his scores, and from performance to performance. Chopin also wrote pedal indications into scores of his students, and these also differ from each other in the same works. I shall begin with a brief review. We know from descriptions of Chopin's playing that he employed the technique which is known today as flutter pedal (see pp. 52-53) We know that Chopin frequently employed the *una corda* pedal, either singly or in combination with the damper pedal (see p. 52). Neither of these elements are indicated in the preludes, and the flutter pedal is never indicated in any of Chopin's works. We know that he pedaled more than was indicated in his scores (see p. 52). Chopin advised his students to use the pedal far less than he himself did, since he did not want them to use it inappropriately (see p. 53). We know that Chopin never played a work the same way twice. We know that Chopin talked of the development of pedal technique as a "...study for life."<sup>200</sup> It follows then that Chopin's pedalings must be seen as pedaling guidelines, rather than exact indications. The modern pianist, as the pianist of Chopin's day, needs to be aware of the range of possibilities that can be drawn from, and use that knowledge as appropriate to the situation at the moment of playing. The difference of resonance between our piano and Chopin's is greater, but similar to the difference between the Pleyel (Chopin's favorite) and the Erard piano. So we should answer the question of pedaling in the same way that Chopin suggested, by reaching the "...stage of intimate acquaintance and love with it..."<sup>201</sup> Following is a suggestion of a way of becoming aware of the main possibilities available from the pedals. It is presented in a fairly academic

---

<sup>200</sup> Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger, Chopin: Pianist and Teacher As Seen by His Pupils, 57.

<sup>201</sup> Bronislaw E. Sydow, "Ipse Dixit: Excerpts From the Unpublished Letters of Chopin.", 69.

fashion, but should be used in compositions to explore with curiosity the resources the piano offers.

### **Exploring the Basic Possibilities for Use of the Pedals**

There are only a few ways in which the pedal can be actually be used. But these possibilities can be shaded by infinite degrees. The following list gives the basic possibilities:

Dampers fully lowered (no pedal).

Dampers fully raised.

Dampers partially raised (half or quarter pedaling, the degree of dampening is actually variable). For this pedaling, one raises the dampers only slightly, so the effect of the pedal is not as great.

Dampers gradually raised (*crescendo* pedaling).

Dampers gradually lowered (*decrescendo* pedaling). The pedal is used by fully depressing the pedal and then gradually releasing it to create a *diminuendo* effect on a group of running notes.

Dampers rapidly alternating between degrees of dampening (flutter, or vibrato pedaling).

*Una corda* pedal either singly or in combination with any of the above.

These possibilities can be employed more or less effectively in various situations. Experiment with the possibilities listed to get a sense of their effects. Play and sustain a single pitch, or a single chord in various dynamics from *pianissimo* to *fortissimo* without the pedal. Then do the same with the dampers fully lowered before the attack, then with the attack, then increasingly after the attack. Do the same while the *una corda* is depressed. Experiment with the various effects of the pedal in soft, or full dynamics, or through

*crescendo* or *decrescendo* in a variety of settings. These settings should include some which have no problems of dissonance (such as extended arpeggios), and some where dissonance is a concern (such as a chromatic scale). These settings could be derived from passages in the repertory, or from technical studies, or simply created in the process of exploration.



## Chapter 6

### PEDAGOGICAL STUDY AND PERFORMANCE SUGGESTIONS

After Chopin presented his “pearls” to the world, they attracted the attention of his contemporaries. *Preludes Opus. 28* elicited numerous comments from musicians and lay listeners alike. For instance, from George Sand, who accompanied Chopin while sketching the *Twenty-four preludes* in Majorca:

It was there [Majorca] he composed these most loveliest of those few pages which he modestly called Preludes. They are masterworks. Several of them offer to our thoughts visions of long-departed monks, and the sound of those snatches of funereal plainsong that so oppressed him; some are melancholic and mild; they came to him at hours of sun and health, with the children’s laughter floating over the window sill, with the distant thrum of guitars, with the pale roses abloom in the snow.<sup>202</sup>

As previously mentioned, the *Twenty-four Preludes, Opus 28* were concerned with the composition of a single musical idea. When carefully examined, each prelude is found to be a musical thought. Some are expressions of happiness and gaiety, while others depict anger, conflict, and anxiety. As Andre Gide said:

...Each one of them is a prelude to a meditation; nothing can be less a concert piece; nowhere has Chopin revealed himself more intimately. Each of them, or almost, creates a particular atmosphere, establishes an emotional setting, then fades out as a bird alights. All is still. Not all are of equal importance. Some are charming, others terrifying. None are indifferent.<sup>203</sup>

It is interesting to note that Alfred Cortot, an inspired interpreter of the *Twenty-four Preludes*, included subtitles for each of the preludes in his edition. Cortot’s subtitles offered the public his reactions as an interpreter. Nor is Cortot the only one to be struck by

---

<sup>202</sup> George Sand, 231.

<sup>203</sup> Andre Gide, Notes on Chopin, 33.

the preludes in this way. George Sand, in her Story of My Life, describes her return to the monastery where she and Chopin lived during their stay in Majorca. It was following a heavy storm when she entered hearing Chopin play one of his preludes.<sup>204</sup> Sand wrote, “...I made him [Chopin] listen to the sound of these drops, which were actually falling all the while on the roof...”<sup>205</sup> Most people associate this with *Prelude No. 15* which is therefore known as the “Raindrop” prelude.

### **First Editions**

The *Twenty-four Preludes* were first published in June, 1839 by the Parisian publisher Catelin who, “...for purely commercial reasons, split them into two volumes: Nos. 1-12 and 13-24.”<sup>206</sup> Chopin sold Camille Pleyel the French rights to his preludes as well as dedicating the work to him: “*A son ami Pleyel.*” “Pleyel offered support and promised two thousand francs in advance [for the preludes].”<sup>207</sup> Because of his financial support of Chopin and Chopin’s subsequent dedication of the preludes, Pleyel claimed the right to say: “These are my preludes.”<sup>208</sup> Chopin told his pupil, Gutmann, “I sold the preludes to Pleyel because he liked them.”<sup>209</sup> The German edition, published the same year by Kristner in Leipzig, was presented to J. C. Kessler.<sup>210</sup>

---

<sup>204</sup> George Sand, 231.

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.*, 232.

<sup>206</sup> Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger, “Twenty-four Preludes Op. 28: Genre, Structure, Significance.” 167.

<sup>207</sup> Bernard Gavoty, Frederic Chopin, translated from the French by Martin Sokolinsky, 393.

<sup>208</sup> *Ibid.*, 393.

<sup>209</sup> *Ibid.*, 394.

<sup>210</sup> Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger, “Twenty-four Preludes Op. 28: Genre, Structure, Significance.” 167.

## Available Editions

For every musician learning music, first hand material is very important. In the case of the preludes, the autograph is the most reliable source for Chopin's musical text. Composers frequently interact with publishers in producing first editions from their manuscripts, so first editions can present yet a further step in the evolution of a piece. But Chopin was unable to supervise the publication of his preludes.<sup>211</sup> I was very fortunate to have the opportunity to examine a facsimile of these twenty-four preludes at Stanford University. The facsimile edition was published by Polskie Wydawnictwo Muzyczne (Polish Music Publications) in 1951. Upon close examination, I found that Chopin made and then changed pedal markings throughout the score. Even as he was creating the autograph, he was still considering and refining his preludes. This is proof that he thought very carefully about pedaling in his music and sought to convey a precise musical effect. The facsimile of the twenty-four preludes is available at Braun Music Library, Stanford University. The facsimile can be difficult to read, however, and if available should be used in conjunction with an urtext such as Henle. An urtext edition is valuable, since the goal of an urtext is to present the source material without editorial alterations. In addition to the facsimile, there are several editions available to teacher and student. They also served as comparison editions in my thesis except for the edition of Willard A. Palmer and the Wiener Urtext Edition which are not included in my discussion. The editions are listed in the order of faithfulness to the original text (as compared with the autograph facsimile).

---

<sup>211</sup> Paul Badura-Skoda, Chopin Preludes Op. 28 (Urtext Edition), in editorial notes, 86.

1. Fryderyk Chopin: 24 Preludia - This edition, published by Polskie Wydawnictwo Muzyczne, reproduces Chopin's autograph in facsimile.
2. Chopin Préludes Op. 28 (Urtext Edition) - Edited by Paul Badura Skoda, published by C. F. Peters. This is an excellent critical edition. It draws from three kinds of sources, which are all clearly differentiated and explained in end notes. These sources are as follows: (1) original pedaling and fingering are preserved (the fingering is in italics), (2) editorial additions are in brackets and (3) secondary sources are in parentheses. The secondary sources include the first French, German and English editions, editions owned by Chopin's pupils (Mme. Dubois, Jane Stirling, Mikuli), a copy owned by Chopin's sister Ludwika Jedrzejewicz, and the Polish edition (Paderewski).
3. Frédéric Chopin: Préludes (Urtext Edition) - A complete re-edition of Hermann Keller's edition, edited by Ewald Zimmermann published by G. Henle in 1971. In this edition, all the slurs, dynamic indications and pedal marks as well as the notation of the original manuscript have been preserved. There are minor discrepancies between the placement of release marks on pedaling when compared to the facsimile, and changed pedalings or other markings in the autograph are not preserved. Consequently, this does not give as great a sense of the development of Chopin's thought in writing the preludes as the facsimile, but gives a fairly accurate sense of the finished work.
4. Frédéric Chopin 24 Préludes Op. 28 - Edited from the autograph and first editions by Bernhard Hansen/ Fingering by Jörg Demus, Wiener Urtext Edition, UT 50005, Musikverlag Ges. m. B. H. & Co., K. G., Wien, 1973. The autograph and the three first editions were used for this edition along with critical notes and directions for performance. This edition is similar to the Peters edition (No. 2 on this list) except for the fingerings added by Demus.
5. Chopin Complete Works: Preludes Opus 28 - Edited by Ignacy Jan Paderewski, Ludwik Bronarski and Jozef Turczynski. This edition was initiated by the Fryderyk

Chopin Institute/Polish Music Publications in Warsaw. It is based on the autographs and original editions, but with added fingering and a critical commentary which mainly addresses dynamics. This edition contains various inaccuracies since the editor did not clarify the editorial materials from the original materials.

6. Frédéric Chopin: Complete Preludes and Etudes for Solo Piano (The Paderewski Edition), edited by Ignacy Jan Paderewski, Ludwik Bronarski and Jozef Turczynski, published by Dover Publications Inc. in 1980. “Unabridged (1980) republication of music and commentaries (in one volume) from the seventeenth (1949) Paderewski edition...”<sup>212</sup> It contains all the music and commentary from Volume I, Preludes for Piano, and Volume II, Studies for Piano, in the Seventeenth Edition, 1949, of the work Fryderyk Chopin/Complete Works, published by the Fryderyk Chopin Institute/Polish Music Publications (*Instytut Fryderyka Chopina/Polskie Wydawnictwo Muzyczne*). This edition is preferred to the one published by the Polish Music Publication since it is identical in content and very modestly priced.

7. Chopin: Complete Works for the Piano. Book IX. Preludes - Edited and fingered, and provided with an introductory note by Carl Mikuli. It was published in 1915 by G. Schirmer, Inc. Mikuli, as mentioned before, was a student of Chopin's. This edition may reflect suggestions that Chopin gave Mikuli as a student. However, there are many changes in pedaling, and even some changes in notation, without editorial comment. This would not be a good primary source for a student.

8. Chopin Preludes - Edited, revised, and fingered by Rafael Joseffy. This edition was published in 1915 by G. Schirmer, Inc. This edition also has alterations when compared to the autograph.

---

<sup>212</sup> Frederic Chopin, Frédéric Chopin: Complete Preludes and Etudes for Solo Piano (The Paderewski Edition), Dover edition, back cover.

9. Chopin: 24 Preludes Op. 28, Students' Edition - Edited by Alfred Cortot, translated by David Ponsoy. This edition was published by Editions Salabert. Cortot is recognized as an inspired interpreter of the works of Chopin. In his edition, a study guide and performance suggestions are included for each of the 24 preludes as well as footnotes to indicate editorial additions. Metronomic indications were added by Cortot to suggest the approximate duration of each prelude. Cortot included subtitles for each of the twenty-four preludes (discussed above) to share the way each one moved him. This edition also offers a great deal of technical information, including exercises for specific preludes, and advice on interpretation.

10. Chopin Preludes for the Piano - Edited by Willard A. Palmer published in 1992. The advantage of this edition is that it was based on the autograph of 1839 and the earliest printed editions. This edition has the original text in heavy print as well as Palmer's suggestions in lighter print, so the editorial additions are clear. It also includes some important information, such as historical background of the *Twenty-four Preludes*, tempo suggestion etc. This informative edition is very helpful to younger students.

### **Chopin's Concepts of Touch and Interpretation**

When interpreting Chopin's music, the first source of information should be Chopin himself. The following quotes present some of Chopin's ideas concerning playing and interpretation. These quotes are either from Chopin, or from the recollections of his contemporaries.

Chopin's greatest concerns for the piano seemed to be for achieving nuance of tone. This should be accomplished by a combination of use of the pedal/s and a highly developed touch. Chopin stated that one would continue developing their mastery of the pedal "for life." He also spoke of interpretation as something which should be a union of the

composer's creation and the performers present emotional reality. The following quotes deal with Chopin's treatment of touch.

"He made me practice first of all constantly varying the attack of one single note, and showed me how he could obtain diverse sonorities from the same key, by striking it in twenty different ways."<sup>213</sup>

"He treated the different types of touch very thoroughly, especially the full toned [tonvolle] *legato*."<sup>214</sup>

"No one will notice the inequality of sound in a very fast scale, as long as the notes are played in equal time."<sup>215</sup>

"Don't destroy, but develop the charm of the touch which is peculiar and natural to each finger. Play daily Bach's Fugues and Préludes—this is the supreme and best school, till the end of time no one will create a more ideal one."<sup>216</sup>

"When you have time, learn Bach by heart; only when one has memorized a work can it be played with full perfection. Without Bach there is no freedom of the fingers, no clearness or beauty of tone. Without Bach there is no genuine pianist. A pianist who does not recognize Bach is a fool and a charlatan."<sup>217</sup>

---

<sup>213</sup> Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger, Chopin: Pianist and Teacher As Seen By His Pupils, 32, from Henry Peru.

<sup>214</sup> *Ibid.*, 32, from Carl Mikuli.

<sup>215</sup> *Ibid.*, 37, from Frederic Chopin.

<sup>216</sup> Bronislaw E. Sydow, "Ipse Dixit- Excerpts From the Unpublished Letters of Chopin.", 72, from Frederic Chopin.

<sup>217</sup> *Ibid.*

## Hierarchy for Interpretation

I offer this hierarchy of considerations for interpreting music based on quotes from Chopin or his contemporaries.

### 1. Chopin demanded respect for the composer.

Now when he [Liszt] plays my works, he does not add a single note, since I have given him some seasoned compliments. I always repeat to everybody: if you wish to play my things, play them as they are written; if not, please compose yourself and do not enter into someone else's music like a pig in the garden.<sup>218</sup>

For Playing double notes and cords, Chopin demanded that the notes be struck strictly simultaneously; breaking was allowed only where the composer himself had specified it.<sup>219</sup>

2. Chopin demanded self respect from the performer. He insisted that an interpretation not be decided on in advance and fixed, but come from the performer in the mood and emotion the performer is feeling at the moment he is playing. He told his pupils not to imitate him:

You know that I tell my pupils to play my own and others' works as they feel them, and that I dislike it if they imitate me too much, adding nothing of their own in the interpretation.  
As for myself, you know, I seldom play a thing twice in the same way.  
You realize that the cause is in the disposition.<sup>220</sup>

Jean Kleczynski (1837-95), Polish pianist, composer, teacher and musical author, gives a similar account of Chopin's playing: "He himself played his own compositions in different

---

<sup>218</sup> Bronislaw E. Sydow, "Ipse Dixit- Excerpts From the Unpublished Letters of Chopin.", 52-53, from Frederic Chpin.

<sup>219</sup> Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger, Chopin: Pianist and Teacher As Seen By His Pupils, 41, from Carl Mikuli.

<sup>220</sup> Bronislaw E. Sydow, "Ipse Dixit: Excerpts From the Unpublished Letters of Chopin.", 68, from Frederic Chopin.



styles, according to the inspiration of the moment, and always charmed his audience.”<sup>221</sup>

3. Chopin required great care in the use of the pedal. As mentioned in the preceding chapter, he wanted students to achieve as much in a work without the pedal as possible. The pedal would be added to a piece as other aspects were secure. Excessive pedaling too early in the learning process would make it difficult to be aware of problems in the fingers (see quotes on pp. 53-54).

4. Chopin insisted on *legato* phrasing. The *legato* should be achieved as much as possible by the fingers, and aided by the pedal if needed. Chopin always “advised his pupils not to fragment the musical idea, but rather to carry it to the listener in one long breath.”<sup>222</sup>

I tell them to sing and hum as much as possible, let them learn slowly, but the *suite* must be kept and they must know by heart the whole work which they are learning to play.<sup>223</sup>

The best way to attain naturalness in performance, in Chopin’s view, was to listen frequently to Italian singers, among whom there were some very remarkable artists in Paris at the time. He always held up as an example to pianists their broad and simple style, the ease with which they used their voices and the remarkable sustaining powers which this ease gave them.<sup>224</sup>

5. Related to phrasing was Chopin’s shaping of the melodic line, and use of stress in general.

A long note is stronger, as is also a high note. A dissonant is likewise stronger, and equally so a syncopated note. The ending of a phrase, before a comma, or a stop, is always *weak*.. If the melody ascends, one plays *crescendo*, if it descends, *decrescendo*. Moreover, notice must be taken of natural accents. For instance, in a bar of two, the first note is strong, the

---

<sup>221</sup> Jean Kleczynski, Chopin’s Greater Works, 62.

<sup>222</sup> Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger, Chopin: Pianist and Teacher As Seen by His Pupils, 44, from Moritz Karasowski.

<sup>223</sup> Bronislaw E. Sydow, “Ipse Dixit: Excerpts from the unpublished letters of Chopin.”, 71, from Frederic Chopin.

<sup>224</sup> Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger, Chopin: Pianist and Teacher As Seen by His Pupils, 44, from Moritz Karasowski.

second weak, in a bar of three the first strong and the two others weak. To the smaller parts of the bar the same direction will apply. Such then are the rules: the exceptions are always indicated by the authors themselves.<sup>225</sup>

Under his [Chopin's] fingers each musical phrase sounded like song, and with such clarity that each note took the meaning of a syllable, each bar that of a word, each phrase that of a thought. It was a declamation without pathos; but both simple and noble.<sup>226</sup>

6. Chopin insisted on integrity of the beat. He said the left hand should play in strict time even when the right hand plays freely above it. Chopin was actually one of the first composers to give metronome markings in his scores. The urtext edition of his etudes, for example, include metronome markings.<sup>227</sup>

Rhythm and tempo should never be violated. The left hand ought to be like an orchestra conductor, never hesitating or wavering for a moment. It is the clock, while with the right hand you may do whatever you want or are able to do. A given piece may last, say, five minutes; the important thing is not to extend it beyond this length of time, however differently you may treat the details of the composition.<sup>228</sup>

His student, Carl Mikuli commented on his use of *tempo rubato*:

In keeping time Chopin was inexorable, and some readers will be surprised to learn that the metronome never left his piano. Even in his much maligned tempo rubato, the hand responsible for the accompaniment would keep strict time, while the other hand, singing the melody, would free the essence of the musical thought from all rhythmic fetters, either by lingering hesitantly or by eagerly anticipating the movement with a certain impatient vehemence akin to passionate speech.<sup>229</sup>

---

<sup>225</sup> Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger, Chopin: Pianist and Teacher As Seen by His Pupils, 42, from Jean Kleczynski.

<sup>226</sup> Ibid., from Carl Mikuli.

<sup>227</sup> Frederick Chopin, Chopin Etudes.

<sup>228</sup> Jan Holcman, The Legacy of Chopin, 18, from Frederic Chopin.

<sup>229</sup> Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger, Chopin: Pianist and Teacher As Seen by His Pupils, 49, from Carl Mikuli.

## Study and Performance Suggestions

Study at first without the pedal

Develop good fingerings

Hum and sing each part of the texture.

Begin adding pedal, at first only in those places where it is clearly marked.

Rhythmic, or syncopated pedaling may also be appropriate as an aid to *legato*, as discussed on pp. 58-59. Many of the preludes are concluded with cadences where the texture is similar to *Prelude No. 20* (see Examples 23 and 24). The concluding chords of *Prelude No. 2* are part of the concluding phrase, and are marked *sostenuto* (see Figure 18).

Syncopated pedaling would be appropriate.



Figure 18 Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of *Prelude No. 2*, mm. 21-3.<sup>230</sup>

Experiment with varieties of pedaling and touch to create various effects within the framework of the score. Take the following passage for example.

---

<sup>230</sup> Frederic Chopin, *24 Preludia*, Facsimile.



**Example 25** Frederic Chopin, *Prelude No. 24*, mm. 54-56.<sup>231</sup>

There is a long pedal in *fortississimo* over a chromatic scale. The modern piano is more resonant than Chopin's, and different halls will be more or less reverberate. Try playing the passage with full pedal as shown, or with some degree of half pedal, or with flutter pedal, or with half pedal transitioning to flutter pedal. Try all of the above with varying degrees of speed and shadings of attack. Develop the ability to shade the sound of the piano at will with subtle variations of coloring by a combination of the pedal and touch. Develop the technical aspects to the point that they need not be in the foreground of your mind as you play, but are their in the background as part of your musical vocabulary to come spontaneously as needed for what you are expressing, and as required by the location in which you are playing. Develop each prelude to the point that the musical score can be kept intact, but the performance of the moment is shaped to your feeling within that

<sup>231</sup> Frederic Chopin, *Frédéric Chopin Preludes*, 50, rescored from Henle edition.

moment. The many shadings of color that have been cultivated should be available to use to that end. This would be the ideal according to Chopin, rather than having a fixed exact pedaling and effects and emotions to try to reproduce each time a piece is played.

### **Tempo and Mood**

Chopin gave no metronome markings in his preludes. He did give two elements which combine to create the tempo. These are the time signatures and character/tempo designations. Character designations, such as *Allegro* (happy)<sup>232</sup>, *Vivace* (lively, vivacious)<sup>233</sup>, and *Agitato* (agitated)<sup>234</sup> are also associated with ranges of speed. Both *Allegro* and *Agitato* are normally taken as fast tempos, but the character of happiness is very different from that of agitation. This is an important consideration when exploring the possibilities of each prelude. The time signature, as most pianists know, gives a basic framework of metric stress and pulse. *Preludes No. 2, No. 3, No. 4* and *No. 14* have different signatures in some editions than in the facsimile. This will be pointed out in the discussion of specific preludes later. The tempo should ultimately be arrived at by the performer based on his or her own mood at the time of playing, and considerations of the location where the performance is taking place. A large and reverberant hall would allow a slower tempo to be effective than a smaller, acoustically dull hall. Conversely, an acoustically dull hall would allow faster tempi to still be heard clearly. As discussed earlier, the elements of interpretation should be handled with freedom within the framework of the score. The tempi should be included as such an element.

I have chosen certain preludes as examples of the pedaling problems and possible solutions for the modern pianist. The discussion will include a comparison of the

---

<sup>232</sup> David Fallows, *The New Grove Dictionary*, vol. 1, 268.

<sup>233</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 20, 31.

<sup>234</sup> David Fallows, *The New Grove Dictionary*, vol. 1, 156.

Facsimile edition with those of Henle, Peter, Mikuli, Joseffy, Paderewski and Cortot, as well as technical suggestions based on the preceding discussion.

### **Prelude No. 1, in C Major (Agitato)**

The prelude is marked agitated, which indicates a nervous or restless quality. Schumann described it as “passionate breathing.” The Facsimile has a clear break in pedaling between each measure (see Figure 19).



**Figure 19** Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of Prelude No. 1, mm. 11-14.<sup>235</sup>

This break gives the effect of breathlessness if taken in a tempo which is not too extreme. None of the editions show as much of a break as the autograph. Figure 19 shows the placement of Chopin's release at the final sixteenth note of mm. 11-12. In mm. 13-14, the release is placed at the final eighth note. This shift of the release keeps the chromatic movement from blurring. This same pedaling is used in mm. 29-32 for similar reasons. The end of this prelude lacks a release mark. The pedal should be held till the sound fades away, as discussed earlier. All of the editions place the pedaling closer to the end of the measure, and some of the editions make all the pedaling equal, not observing Chopin's clear direction to pedal even less in the measures where it would obscure the melody.

---

<sup>235</sup> Frederic Chopin, 24 Preludia, Facsimile

Except for the pedaling, the Urtexts, Mikuli and Paderewski, reproduce the notation of the facsimile as shown in Figure 19. Joseffy and Cortot alter the notation for the mm. 1-4 as shown in Figure 20.

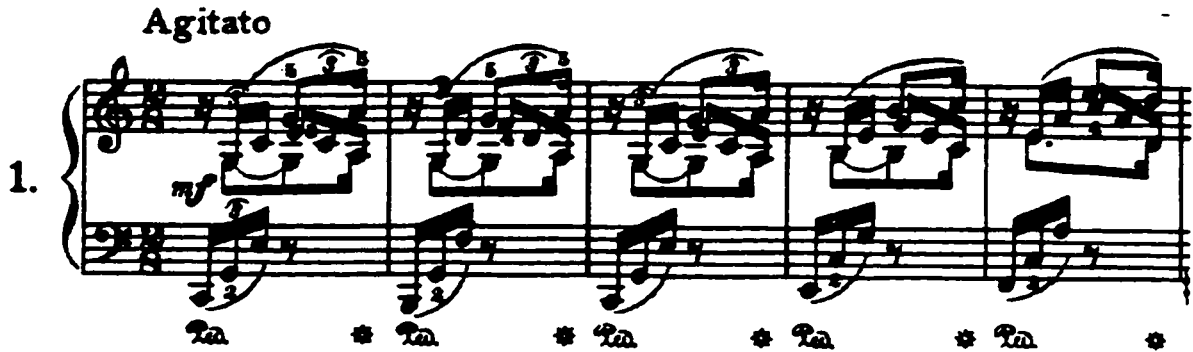


Figure 20 Frederic Chopin, *Prelude No. 1*, mm. 1-5.<sup>236</sup>

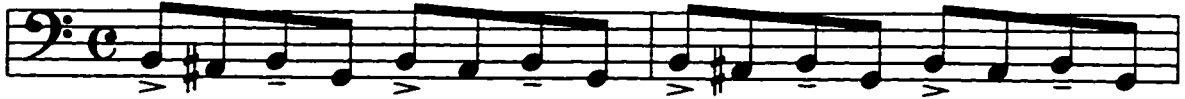
This alteration is rhythmically accurate according to the time signature, but obscures the melody. The original notation is not quite accurate rhythmically, but is visually much clearer.

### Prelude No. 2, in A Minor (Lento)

In the Facsimile, this prelude is in 2/2. In Cortot's and Paderewski's editions, the time signature has been changed to 4/4. This alteration changes the conception of the beat from the half note to the quarter note, and should be disregarded. The beat should be conceived of as the half note, as indicated by Chopin's autograph. The following examples show the placement of stress in both meters. In these examples, the accent marks (>) are showing the stronger stress points, the *tenuto* marks (-) the weaker stresses in each measure. The time signature 4/4 would make the ostinato drag with a stress at the

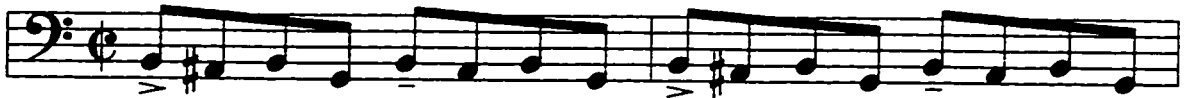
<sup>236</sup> Frederic Chopin, *Chopin Preludes*, ed. Rafael Joseffy, 3.

beginning of each quarter note value. This would tend to over-emphasize the repeated notes (See Example 26).



**Example 26** Metric stress in 4/4 of bass ostinato from *Prelude No. 2*.<sup>237</sup>

2/2 would only place stress at the beginning of each half note value. This would help highlight the melodic shape of the ostinato (See Example 27).



**Example 27** Metric stress in 2/2 of bass ostinato from *Prelude No. 2*.<sup>238</sup>

The movement is designated “*Lento*,” which means slow.<sup>239</sup> The left-hand is notated differently in the first two bars than in the rest of the prelude. The first two measures clearly show a melodic figure as part of an ostinato. Chopin simplifies the notation following this opening, but retains the same bass figuration through most of the prelude (see Figure 21).

---

<sup>237</sup> Original example.

<sup>238</sup> Ibid.

<sup>239</sup> David Fallows, *The New Grove Dictionary*, vol. 10, 665.





**Figure 21** Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of *Prelude No. 2*, mm. 1-3.<sup>240</sup>

Cortot suggests that “This prelude must be played throughout as though the bass were written as it is in the first two bars, thus the melodic continuity of the inner voice of the left hand will be insured.”<sup>241</sup> Chopin gives pedaling within this figure only towards the conclusion of this prelude from m. 18 through m. 19. It creates a special effect that Chopin obviously intended. The general absence of pedaling makes sense for keeping the bass ostinato clear. Any pedaling beyond this would need to be handled with great care so as not to obscure this figure.

Cortot added pedal marks also for each of the chords in the last three measures. These measures are marked *sostenuto* (sustained) by Chopin. This added pedaling is in a location where syncopated pedaling would be appropriate as discussed earlier (see Figure 18).

### **Prelude No. 3, in G Major (Vivace)**

Chopin uses no pedal in the autograph for this prelude. As with *Prelude No. 2*, the facsimile indicates 2/2. In Paderewski’s edition, the time signature has been changed to 4/4. This alteration should be disregarded, as discussed in *Prelude No. 2*. The term

<sup>240</sup> Frederic Chopin, *24 Preludia*, Facsimile.

<sup>241</sup> Frederic Chopin, *Chopin: 24 Preludes Op. 28. Students’ Edition*, ed. Alfred Cortot, 7.

“*Vivace*,” according to Sébastien de Brossard, is an “...Italian adjective often taken as an adverb to show that one must sing or play with fire, vivacity, spirit, etc....It is roughly the same as *Allegro*.”<sup>242</sup> “*Leggieramente*” is defined as “Light, nimble, quick; sometimes *nonlegato*.”<sup>243</sup> The term *leggieramente* would go against any kind of heavy pedaling except for the concluding chords, which could be taken in one pedal since they are in only one harmony. Cortot, Mikuli and Joseffy add pedaling for these last two chords. Cortot’s edition has pedaling for the first four notes of each measure, with the caution that “The sustaining pedal is only to be used in light touches and it must not be left down during the descending periods in the figure played by the left hand.”<sup>244</sup>

#### **Prelude No. 4, in E Minor (Largo)**

As with *Preludes No. 2* and *No. 3*, Chopin wrote this prelude in 2/2 which is often overlooked by performers who play the prelude in 4/4. The time signature change to 4/4 in Cortot’s, or any other edition should be disregarded. The indications for this prelude are “*Largo*,” and “*espressivo*.” *Largo* is Italian for broad,<sup>245</sup> or large, and refers to the largeness of the beat. As with the second prelude, if the large beat was given to the quarter note, the tempo would drag (being twice as slow as intended) and the metric stress would distort the melody. The only pedal marks in this prelude in the facsimile are in mm. 17 and 18 (see Figure 22).

---

<sup>242</sup> Jean-Claude Veilhan, *The Rules of Musical Interpretation in the Baroque Era*, 62.

<sup>243</sup> Don Randel, ed., *The New Harvard Dictionary of Music*, 443.

<sup>244</sup> Frederic Chopin, *Chopin: 24 Preludes Op. 28, Students' Edition*, ed. Alfred Cortot., 8.

<sup>245</sup> Don Randel, ed., 436.



Figure 22 Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of *Prelude No. 4*, mm. 17-18.<sup>246</sup>

These pedal marks ensure that the bass is sustained through the harmonies they are part of.

If pedaling is employed in this piece, it must keep clear both the harmonic changes and the melody. The absence of pedaling in this prelude seems to be because Chopin considered it a more elementary kind of pedaling. Cortot commented on this prelude in his edition as follows:

The change of pedal necessitated by each modification in the harmony is obvious. We recommend, even on French and American pianofortes, which are so sensitive to the action of the foot, analogously with our remark relating to *Prelude No. 2*, a practically uninterrupted throbbing, whose effect will be to isolate the melodic line more fully.<sup>247</sup>

As discussed earlier, syncopated pedaling would be appropriate for this prelude, although it needs to change both with the harmony and to preserve melodic clarity. Without the aid of pedal, this piece will sound choppy rather than *legato* because of its accompaniment of repeated chords. The *una corda* could be used for the last three chords to give a *pianissimo* color.

---

<sup>246</sup> Frederic Chopin, *24 Preludia*, Facsimile.

<sup>247</sup> Frederic Chopin, *Chopin: 24 Preludes Op. 28. Students' Edition*, ed. Alfred Cortot, 12.

*Prelude No. 4* was composed at the end of November, 1839, when Chopin fell ill. Later this prelude and *No. 6* were transcribed for the organ, and played at Chopin's funeral service in the Madeleine. This was Chopin's request before he died.<sup>248</sup> It would explain Cortot's imaginative subtitle for this prelude- "Beside a grave." Deryck Cook discusses the minor second as an interval frequently used to express final anguish or despair.<sup>249</sup> Both the melody and the accompaniment feature prominent, consistent minor seconds. Chopin's indication of *expressivo*, and his wish that this prelude be played at his funeral, would seem to agree with this.

### **Prelude No. 5, in D Major (Allegro Molto)**

The texture and pedaling in this prelude are similar to the first prelude. The figuration and melody create a hemiola of 2/8 through the first four measures. Chopin's pedaling reinforces this grouping and outlines melodic pairs of eighth notes which need to be heard above the arpeggio figuration (see Figure 23). This hemiola figuration is repeated in mm. 17-20 and 33-36, while the remainder of the prelude emphasizes the 3/8 time signature. The pedaling outside of the hemiola passages reinforces the 3/8 (notice the last measure of Figure 23). Joseffy and Cortot added accent marks above these syncopated eighth notes which create the opening melody. These marks, although they alter the score, are in keeping with Chopin's treatment of syncopation as quoted on p.75.

---

<sup>248</sup> Ashton Jonson G. C., 175.

<sup>249</sup> Deryck Cooke, The Language of Music, 78.



Figure 23 Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of *Prelude No. 5*, mm. 1-5.<sup>250</sup>

Mikuli, Joseffy and Cortot also displaced the pedal markings in mm 1-4 when compared with the Facsimile.

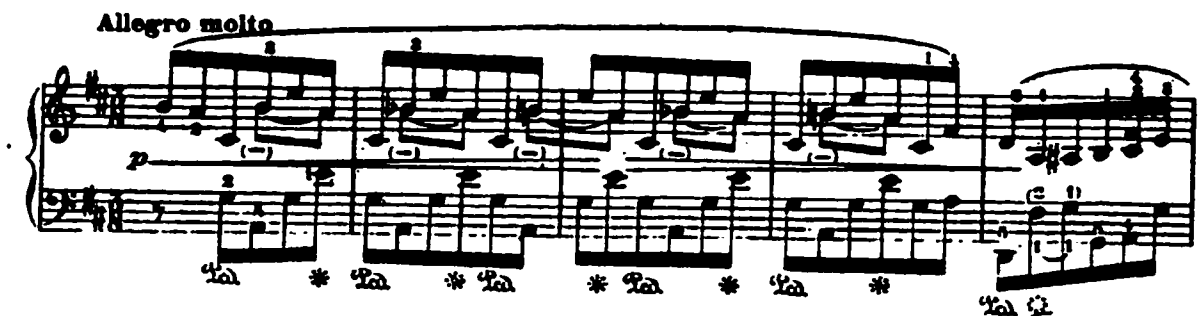


Figure 24 Frederic Chopin, *Prelude No. 5*, mm 1-5.<sup>251</sup>

The Facsimile has pedaling through most of this prelude, including the final chords. The only absence is in mm 21-28 which are identical to mm 5-12. The question for the performer is whether this is an intentional omission indicating a contrast, or an omission because the parallel passage was already marked. The score would seem to suggest the latter, since the parallel passage actually begins four measures earlier, and Chopin did reiterate his pedal markings in these measures. Another pedaling contrast in this prelude is the extended pedal in mm. 34-37.

<sup>250</sup> Frederic Chopin, *24 Preludia*, Facsimile.

<sup>251</sup> Frederic Chopin, *Chopin 24 Preludes Op. 28. Students' Edition*, ed. by Alfred Cortot, 15.



**Figure 25** Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of *Prelude No. 5*, mm. 33-39.<sup>252</sup>

This extended pedal is in the conclusion of prelude, during the final statement of the 2/8 syncopation, creating some degree of melodic blurring, while the accompaniment is harmonically static.

Finally, be aware that Joseffy alters a clearly marked A natural to an A-sharp in m. 16 of his edition.

### **Prelude No. 6, in B Minor (Lento Assai)**

This prelude is largely unpedaled in the facsimile. The left hand carries a bass melody with *legato* phrasing. This can be achieved entirely without pedal. The right hand has a repeating eighth figure which is marked *soto voce* (an undertone).<sup>253</sup> In mm. 6-8 the right hand becomes melodically active, giving the first statement of a motif that the left hand

---

<sup>252</sup> Frederic Chopin, *24 Preludia*, Facsimile.

takes up in mm. 16-21. This passage for the right hand may require some pedal to aid the *legato*, but it should be used unobtrusively if at all. There are only three pedal markings in the facsimile of this prelude. The first is in mm. 13 and 14 (see Figure 26) where the left hand line is carrying a short arpeggiation with a *crescendo* instead of longer melodic phrases.



Figure 26 Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of *Prelude No. 6*, mm. 11-15.<sup>254</sup>

This is a good example of using pedal to reinforce the resonance and to help achieve the *crescendo*. Another pedal mark is in m. 23 through the end without a release mark.



Figure 27 Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of *Prelude No. 6*, mm. 22-26.<sup>255</sup>

<sup>253</sup> Eric Blom and David Fallows, *The New Grove Dictionary*, vol. 17, 544.

<sup>254</sup> Frederic Chopin, *24 Preludia*, Facsimile.

<sup>255</sup> *Ibid.*

This pedal lasts through the final statement of the opening melody. The pedal here will provide contrast with the preceding statements if they are left as originally written.

### **Prelude No. 8, in F-sharp Minor (Molto Agitato)**

Pedaling in this prelude is similar to *No. 1*, as is the mood (very agitated). The facsimile has release marks at the final sixteenth of most beats (see Figure 28).



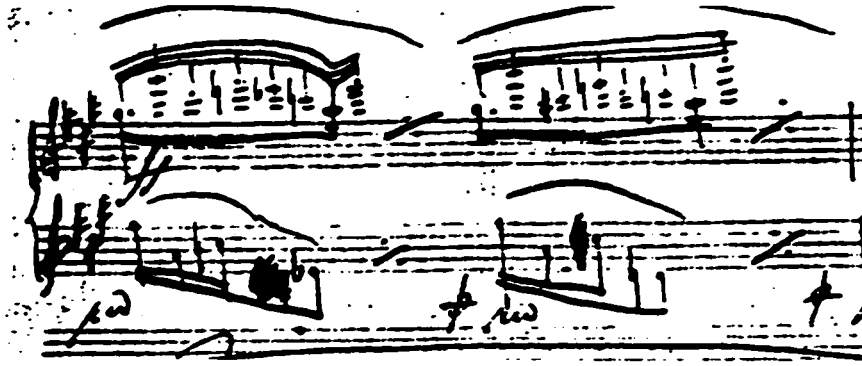
**Figure 28** Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of *Prelude No. 8*, m. 1.<sup>256</sup>

Chopin gave no pedal indications from mm. 5-21, but it seems in this case that he intended a *simile* pedaling. The pedaling in mm. 1-4 is very consistent and the figuration in mm. 5-21 is identical to the opening measures. Chopin begins giving pedaling again at m. 22, but the pedaling differs from the opening. It seems likely that Chopin intended the opening pedaling to be the model for the measures which followed, and only gave additional pedaling again when he needed to show a change (see Figure 29).

---

<sup>256</sup> Frederic Chopin, *24 Preludia*, Facsimile.





**Figure 29** Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of *Prelude No. 8*, m. 22.<sup>257</sup>

The performer is of course free to try these unmarked measures without pedal to make them sound musically in this way.

With the exception of the Urtext editions, all of the editions compared added pedaling in mm. 5-21 in the same pattern as Chopin used in mm. 1-4. Cortot also continues this pedaling through to the conclusion of the prelude, beyond the point where Chopin began changing the pedaling at m. 22.

### **Prelude No. 10, in C-sharp Minor (Allegro Molto)**

The indications for this prelude are *Allegro molto* (very fast, or lively) and *leggiero*. The prelude consists of rapid descending passage work followed by short chordal fragments with a mazurka like rhythm.<sup>258</sup> Chopin's original pedaling for the passage work is "rhythmic pedaling." The Mazurka fragments, occurring in mm. 3-4, 7-8, 11-12, 15-16, 17-18 have no pedaling, with the exception of a trill in mm. 7-8. Chopin gave pedaling through the trill to its conclusion, which would have added resonance and color to the trill (see Figure 30).

---

<sup>257</sup> Frederic Chopin, *24 Preludia*, Facsimile.

<sup>258</sup> Thomas Higgins, 64.



**Figure 30** Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of *Prelude No. 10*, mm. 7-8.<sup>259</sup>

The pedal should be handled carefully through the passage work. A heavy pedal will destroy the lightness of the *leggiero* which Chopin notated. Flutter pedal or half pedal should be considered.

Cortot and Joseffy omit the pedaling Chopin gave through the trill in m. 7.

### **Prelude No. 11, in B Major (Vivace)**

Chopin wrote this prelude with “rhythmic pedaling.” The original pedaling lasts from the beginning of most measures to the final note of that measure, except for mm. 5-6, 19-20, 21-22 which each span two measures. The original pedaling also creates a separate voice leading in most measures, which is not evident in the notation, except for mm. 13 and 14 where Chopin has written the upper note of the right hand’s double note as a separate voice (see Figure 31).

---

<sup>259</sup> Frederic Chopin, *24 Preludia*, Facsimile.



Figure 31 Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of *Prelude No. 11*, mm. 13-16.<sup>260</sup>

If pedaled as Chopin indicated, the effect of most measures would be of a separate voice standing out above the movement of the figuration. It would be advisable to take this into account when deciding on pedaling.

Cortot and Paderweski have altered the pedalings in their editions. Cortot adds a pedal change at the middle of each measure, so most measures have two pedal changes. Paderewski moves some of Chopin's release marks earlier in the measure from the 6th to the fourth eighth note of the measure (mm. 3-9, 14-15, 19-20). These alterations seem to have been designed to avoid melodic blurring that would produce dissonance. Both of these solutions destroy the voice leading which Chopin's pedaling creates. It is noteworthy that Chopin marked this prelude *legato*. It lacks any dynamic indication, but begins with a *decrescendo*. All editions consulted give the dynamic of *piano* for most of this prelude. That would tend to decrease the dissonance that might result if pedaled as indicated by Chopin.

---

<sup>260</sup> Frederic Chopin, *24 Preludia*, Facsimile.

**Prelude No. 14, in E-flat Minor (Allegro)**

Only the Urtexts preserve the time signature 2/2 as in the Facsimile. All other editions consulted have changed the meter to 4/4. As discussed earlier, this alteration should be disregarded. There are no pedal markings or phrase markings in this prelude. This may indicate a dry approach is desired.

**Prelude No. 15, in D-flat Major (Sostenuto)**

Chopin's original pedaling is essentially of the rhythmic type. He changes pedal with changes of harmony and to retain melodic clarity. But he also seems to be working with contrasts of shading in his pedaling. Mm. 1-4 show a variety of pedaling (see Figure 32).



Figure 32 Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of *Prelude No. 15*, mm. 1-5.<sup>261</sup>

The first measure is taken in one pedal, since it is harmonically static. Mm. 2-4 have pedaling changes with the melody, which also have harmonic movement. The embellishment at the end of m. 4 is taken in one pedal in spite of the diatonic movement. There are also short passages which are unpedaled alternating with pedaled passages in mm. 12-19. As discussed previously, the final restatement of the opening theme before the

<sup>261</sup> Frederic Chopin, 24 Preludia, Facsimile

middle section has a long pedal in its last two measures (mm. 26-27).



**Figure 33** Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of *Prelude No. 15*, mm. 24-27.<sup>262</sup>

This is the only point at which Chopin has written pedal through a change of harmony. This is clearly another special effect since this pedal is during a transition with an elided cadence to a contrasting idea.

There is a large pedaling contrast in the middle section in C-sharp minor. The same material is presented first unpedaled and marked *sotto voce*, except for the concluding measure (m. 35), which is pedaled. Then it is restated with pedal when the texture is thickened and marked *fortissimo*.

In the Facsimile, a long pedal mark without a release mark, from mm. 81 to 83, will produce blurring through a melodic passage in forte. This can be handled with some form of partial pedaling such as half pedal or *decrescendo* pedaling.

---

<sup>262</sup> Frederic Chopin, *24 Preludia*, Facsimile.

Even if the lightness of the Pleyel is taken into consideration, Chopin seems to be looking for specific effects and contrasts throughout this prelude. Cortot alters the pedaling more than any of the other editors. His pedaling is designed to keep the melody always clear and the color of the pedaling consistent. His pedaling will eliminate the contrasts mentioned above. Joseffy, Paderweski and Cortot add extra pedal marks to break the long pedal at mm. 26-27.

### **Prelude No. 16, in B-flat Minor (Presto con Fuoco)**

In mm. 2-4 of the autograph, Chopin originally wrote a pedal change every two beats, then crossed them out (see Figure 34).

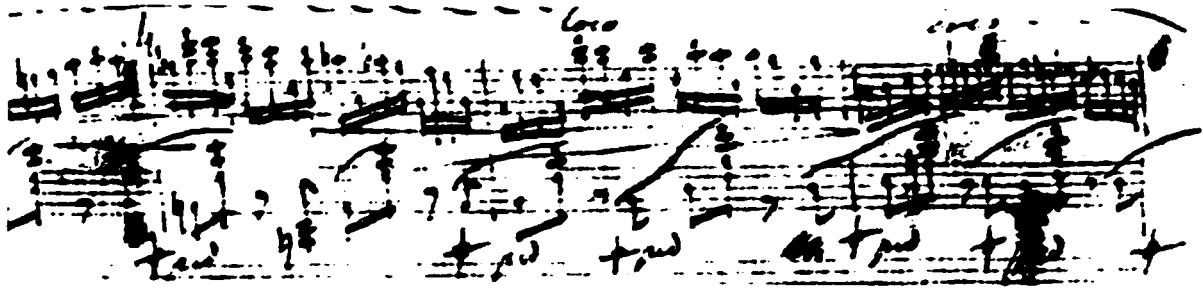


**Figure 34** Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of *Prelude No. 16*, mm. 2-4.<sup>263</sup>

He decided on a long pedal for the opening as a specific effect. There is another long pedal in mm. 5-7, followed by a one measure pedaling in m. 8 and then more conventional pedaling which changes so as to reinforce the meter and make clear the eighth note pick up figure leading to the strong beats (see Figure 35).

---

<sup>263</sup> Frederic Chopin, *24 Preludia*, Facsimile.



**Figure 35** Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of *Prelude No. 16*, mm. 8-10.<sup>264</sup>

The restatement of the opening theme (mm. 18-21) has a pedaling extended one full measure compared to the opening even though the dynamic is *fortissimo* with a *crescendo*. Chopin has extended the effect that he clearly wanted in the beginning. These passages should be approached with a great deal of experimentation as already discussed. It should be born in mind during this exploration that even on the Pleyel piano, these passages played at a rapid tempo and strong dynamic level (as indicated in the autograph) would have produced blurring. As Newman commented in his book, "Blurring is out of place in Mozart but absolutely necessary in Debussy and often very effective in Chopin."<sup>265</sup>

Mikuli, Joseffy, Cortot, and Paderewski use a consistent pedal change twice per measure as Chopin had in m. 9.

### **Prelude No. 19, in E-flat Major (Vivace)**

Chopin's original pedaling gives a long pedal for the opening theme (mm. 1-2), followed by pedaling on almost every single beat thereafter. Chopin gives no pedal markings from mm. 9-12 which are identical to the opening theme. On the second restatement of this theme (mm. 33-36) Chopin does give pedaling identical to the opening.

---

<sup>264</sup> Frederic Chopin, *24 Preludia*, Facsimile.

<sup>265</sup> William S. Newman, *The Pianist's Problems-A Modern Approach to Efficient Practice and Musically Performance*, 73.

Chopin may have intended a contrast in sound between these three statements. However, it would be impossible to fulfill the direction for *legato* in these measures without the pedal.

These long pedals take place in a single harmony, when the upper note of the triplet figure outlines an E-flat arpeggio. The shorter pedals occur when the successive beats either go through a change of harmony, or when the melody is moving stepwise. If this pedaling is followed, the melodic notes (and accompaniment) would be sustained as a collection of sound. The shorter pedals would give a greater sense of forward motion, as the melodic notes would not be retained by the pedal. This effect overall, would be a change in the sense of forward motion achieved by the pedal alone, where the written rhythm is unchanging. Figure 36 shows the first four measures as originally notated.



Figure 36 Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of *Prelude No. 19*, mm. 1-4.<sup>266</sup>

Example 28 shows the effect of the pedaling on the melody in mm. 1-3. This pedaling would create an accumulating mass of sound which would add to the *crescendo*, as well as changing the sense of forward motion as shown.

---

<sup>266</sup> Frederic Chopin, *24 Preludia*, Facsimile.





**Example 28** Effect of Pedal on Melody from *Prelude No. 19*, mm. 1-3.<sup>267</sup>

Cortot altered the pedaling of this prelude so that almost every beat is pedaled including mm. 9-12 (which were originally unpedaled in the Facsimile). Paderewski, Mikuli, and Joseffy also added pedaling in mm. 9-12, but in accordance with Chopin's pedaling in the opening theme. Cortot, Paderewski, and Mikuli add release marks in the final chords where Chopin had pedaling through rests.

### **Prelude No. 20, in C Minor (Largo)**

In the Facsimile, the only pedal marking is in m. 12 on the last beat without a release, which binds the last beat to the final chord in m. 13. This general lack of pedal is compensated for by very clear phrase markings. A *legato* approach is the most likely intention. The texture is largely homo-rhythmic. Each beat has its own chord, and each successive chord is a change of harmony from the previous beat. This is the kind of situation in which rhythmic pedaling would be assumed. As discussed earlier, syncopated pedaling may be used to create as clear a *legato* as possible. Cortot and Paderewski added pedal marks on every single beat which are appropriate for this prelude. Cortot commented, "Put down the pedal before attacking the first chord."<sup>268</sup> The *una corda* can be added on the restatement of the second theme in *pianissimo* for a change of color.

<sup>267</sup> Original example.

<sup>268</sup> Frederic Chopin, *Chopin 24 Preludes Op. 28, Students' Edition*, ed. Alfred Cortot, 67.

The E in the last quarter note of m. 3 is in some versions (coming from Chopin) as an E-flat, and in others an E natural (see Figure 37).



Figure 37 Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of *Prelude No. 20*, m. 3.<sup>269</sup>

The copies given to George Sand and Jane Stirling both have the E-flat, as does the first English edition.<sup>270</sup> The autograph lacks this flat sign, as do the first French and German editions. Since both of these versions come from Chopin, it is up to the performer to determine their preference. Cortot, Peters, Paderweski and Henle chose the E-flat. The Joseffy and Mikuli follow the autograph with the E-natural.

Another important point concerns the *ritenuto* in mm. 7-8 appearing in some editions.

In a note in the lower margin of the autograph, Chopin wrote “note pour l’editeur de la Rochechouart: petite concession faite à Mr. XXX qui a souvent raison.” (Presumably Monsieur XXX was the musicologist François-Henri-Joseph Blaze who signed his essays with XXX). This “minor concession” was the repeat of m. 5-8 with a *pp* in m. 9, crescendo in m. 11 and pedal mark in m. 12. Apart from these notations, Chopin did not write out the repeat, but simply marked the bar line with the letters a-d. This belated addition may also have been the reason for the *ritardando* which is found in m. 7-8 in the sources and which probably is only valid for the end. In F [first French edition], W [first English edition] the *ritenuto*

<sup>269</sup> Frederic Chopin, *24 Preludia*, Facsimile.

<sup>270</sup> Paul Badura-Skoda, *Chopin Preludes Op. 28 (Urtext Edition)*, ed. Paul Badura-Skoda, 88, from editorial note.

is missing in m. 11-12. In most of the album leaves Chopin, by the way, omitted m. 9-12, i.e., he wrote down the earlier version.<sup>271</sup> (see Figure 38)



Figure 38 Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of *Prelude No. 20*, mm. 5-13.<sup>272</sup>

### Prelude No. 22, in G Minor (Molto Agitato)

There are no pedal markings in the autograph until m 17. This initial pedal marking takes place in at the end of a passage marked *crescendo* (see Figure 39).



Figure 39 Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of *Prelude No. 22*, mm. 16-21.<sup>273</sup>

<sup>271</sup> Paul Badura-Skoda, *Chopin Préludes Op. 28 (Urtext Edition)*, ed. Paul Badura-Skoda, 88-89, from editorial note.

<sup>272</sup> Frederic Chopin, *24 Preludia*, Facsimile.

<sup>273</sup> *Ibid.*

The *crescendo* in m. 16 leads to a dynamic of *fortissimo* where the bass is repeating the D-flats in octaves for the first time. Most of the pedaling is either on this kind of figure, or when the bass is reinforcing a cadential figure. All of the pedaling is at points which harmonically are leading to the final cadence, which is also given pedal markings. When the bass is moving diatonically, or is more active melodically than harmonically, there is no pedaling. In this prelude the pedaling seems to serve the function of reinforcing structurally significant harmonies. If pedal is added at any other locations, care must be taken to differentiate between the structural pedaling given by Chopin and any others which are added. The drive to the final cadence achieved with the aid of Chopin's original pedalings should be preserved.

Cortot added pedal markings from the beginning of this prelude (mm. 1-16.) Mikuli begins adding pedal at m. 9 and Joseffy at m. 10. Mikuli and Joseffy also move many of the release markings from the beginning of the next measure to the end of the preceding measure.

This prelude is an example where an understanding of the structure of a piece, and the significance of its harmony lead to insight into its performance. Chopin required that his students pursue the study of harmony and composition, and that they analyze and understand the structure of any work they played.

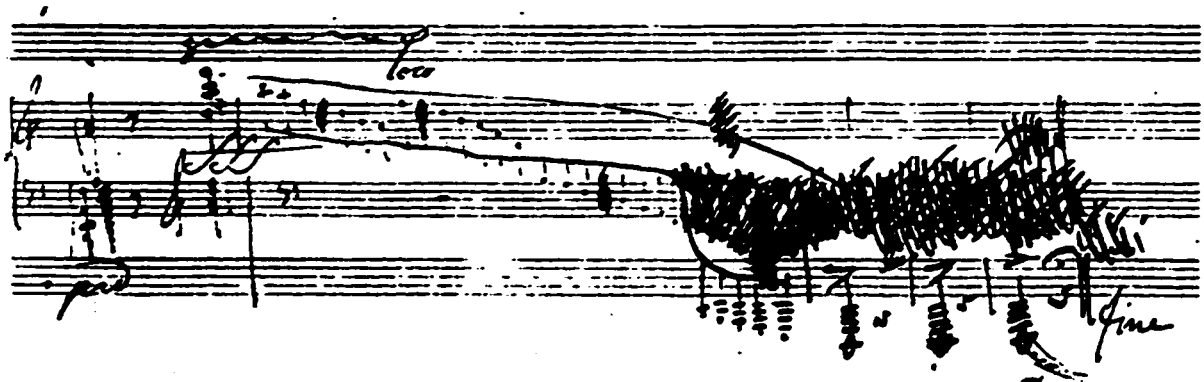
Chopin insistently advised his students to take up basic theoretical studies as early as possible....Any work selected for study should be carefully analyzed for its formal structure, as well as for the feelings and psychological processes which it evokes.<sup>274</sup>

---

<sup>274</sup> Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger, Chopin: Chopin: Pianist and Teacher As Seen By His Pupils, 59, from Carl Mikuli.

### **Prelude No. 24, in D Minor (Allegro Appassionato)**

Chopin uses many long pedal markings in this prelude, some spanning four measures (mm. 1-4, 6-9, 19-22, 24-28, 43-46, 48-50, 54-56, 57-60 and 73-77). The prevailing dynamic level is forte and much of this pedaling encloses passage work which is diatonic. The most notable example of this is the pedaling through a descending chromatic scale in double thirds in *fortissimo* (see Example 25, p77). This pedaling would definitely produce a wash of sound. Since the modern piano is much more resonant than the Pleyel piano, half pedaling or flutter pedaling could be used to avoid excessive blurring, but some blurring was obviously intended. Heavier pedaling could be used in passages which are essentially in the same harmony, but the difference in pedaling needs to make musical sense as well. The long pedal in mm. 73-77 is through an arpeggiation of the tonic harmony (with an added B-flat). There is no release mark in this pedal, which extends through the rests at the end. Chopin intended an accumulation of sound which would remain and begin to fade as the final bass notes are sounded (see Figure 40).



**Figure 40** Frederic Chopin, Facsimile of *Prelude No. 24*, mm. 73-77.<sup>275</sup>

---

<sup>275</sup> Frederic Chopin, *24 Preludia*, Facsimile.

Cortot alters the pedal markings so there is a pedal change twice per measure through entire piece. Mikuli adjusted the pedaling in mm. 6-10, 24-28, 34-37, 42,45-46, 47-8, 53, 55-56 and 58-59. The alterations limit most pedalings to a maximum of one measure (except for mm. 1-4 and 58-59), and some to twice per measure. With the exception of mm. 6-10, Joseffy alters pedaling in the same passages as Mikuli, but with fewer extra pedal markings.

## Conclusion

The ideal of interpretation, according to Chopin is to have a meeting of the composer's creation and the life of the performer. This task involves the entirety of the performer. The intellect is needed to analyze and interpret the notation as revealed in the available editions, and especially, in autograph sources, as well as available historical information. The body and mind must interact in curious exploration of the possibilities for sound available from the piano. An open mind and ear are needed to be free of preconceptions while exploring the potential range of interpretation for any given piece. And finally, a degree of self awareness is needed that will allow each rendition to be an expression of life, a present expression of the performer's growing relationship with the music and self. The teacher, in the spirit of Chopin, should equip and guide the student for the exploration of possibilities. The performer in the spirit of Chopin should never cease to be a student.

## SOURCE CONSULTED

### Books and Periodicals

- Abraham, Gerald. Chopin's Musical Style. London: Oxford University Press, Inc., 1981.
- Agay, Denes, ed. Teaching Piano-A Comprehensive Guide and Reference Book for the Instructor. Vol. I and II, Yorktown Music Press, Inc., 1981.
- Bach, Carl Phillip Emanuel. Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments. Translated by William J. Mitchell, NY: W.W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1949.
- Banowetz, Joseph. The Pianist's Guide to Pedaling. Indiana University Press 1985.
- Banowetz, Joseph. "Pedaling Technique." in Teaching Piano: A Comprehensive Guide and Reference Book for the Instructor. Vol. I, ed. by Denes Agay, Yorktown Music Press Inc., 1981.
- Barra, Donald. The Dynamic Performance: A Performer's Guide to Musical Expression and Interpretation. NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1983.
- Bie, Oscar. A History of the Pianoforte and Pianoforte Players. Translated and revised from the German by E. E. Kellett and E.W. Naylor, NY: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1899.
- Bilson, Malcolm. "Keyboards." in Performance Practice-Music After 1600. Edited by Howard Mayer Brown and Stanley Sadie, W.W. Norton & Company, 1989.
- Bostrom, Sandra. "Developing Stylistic Interpretations." Clavier. Vol. 27, No. 2 (February 1988), 25-28.
- Brook, Donald. Masters of the Keyboard. Second edition, London: Salisbury Square, 1947.
- Brown, A. Peter. Joseph Haydn's Keyboard Music-Sources and Style. Indiana University Press, 1986.
- Brown, Maurice J. E. Chopin: An Index of His Works in Chronological Order. Second edition, NY: Da Capo Press, 1972.
- Chopin, Frederic. Chopin Letters. Collected by Henryk Opienski. Translated from Polish and French with preface and editorial notes by E. L.Voynich, NY: Vienna House, 1973.
- Collet, Robert. "Studies, Preludes and Impromptus." in The Chopin Companion: Profiles of the Man and the Musician. Edited by Alan, Walker, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 1966.



- Cook, Deryck. The Language of Music. NY: Oxford University Press, 1959, Reprinted in 1991.
- Cooper, Barry. ed. The Beethoven Compendium-A Guide to Beethoven's Life and Music. London: Thames and Hudson Ltd., 1991.
- Cooper, Peter. Style in Piano Playing. London: John Calder, 1975.
- Cortot, Alfred. Alfred Cortot's Studies in Musical Interpretation. Set down by Jeanne Thieffry, translated by Robert Jaques, London: George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., 1937.
- Czerny, Carl. Erinnerungen aus meinem Leben. Edited and annotated by Walter Kolneder, Strasbourg: P.H. Heitz, 1968.
- Czerny, Carl. On the Proper Performance of All Beethoven's Works for the Piano. Reprint, edited by Paul Badura-Skoda. Vienna: Universal Edition, 1970.
- Ehrlich, Cyril. The Piano-A History. Revised edition, Oxford Clarendon Press, 1990.
- Eigeldinger, Jean-Jacques. "Twenty-four Preludes Op. 28: Genre, Structure, Significance." in Chopin Studies. Edited by Samson, Jim, London: Cambridge University Press, 1988.
- Eigeldinger, Jean-Jacques. Chopin: Pianist and Teacher-As Seen by His Pupils. Translated by Naomi Shohet, ed. by Roy Howat, London: Cambridge University Press, 1986.
- Einstein, Alfred. Music in the Romantic Era. NY: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1947.
- Finck, Henry T. Chopin and Other Musical Essays. Essay Index Reprint Series, NY: Books for Libraries Press, 1972.
- Gavoty, Bernard. Frederic Chopin. Translated from the French by Martin Sokolinsky, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1977.
- Gerig, Reginald R. Famous Pianists And Their Technique. NY: Robert B. Luce, Inc., 1974.
- Gide, Andre. Notes on Chopin. Translated from the French by Bernard Frechtman, NY: Philosophical Library, 1949.
- Giesecking, Walter and Karl Leimer. Piano Technique-Consisting of the Two Complete Books, the Shortest Way to Pianistic Perfection and Rhythmics, Dynamics, Pedal and Other Problems of Piano Playing. NY: Dover Publications, Inc., 1972.
- Gillespie, John. Five Centuries of Keyboard Music. Wadsworth Publishing Company, Inc., 1965.
- Glennon, James. Making Friends with Piano Music. Adlaide: Rigby Limited, 1967.

- Good, Edwin M. Giraffes, Black Dragons, and Other Pianos: A Technological History from Cristofori to the Modern Concert Grand. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1982.
- Grout, Donald Jay and Palisca, Claude V. A History of Western Music. Fourth edition, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 1988.
- Grover, David S. The Piano-Its Story from Zither to Grand. London: Robert Hale, 1976.
- Harding, Rosamund E. The Pianoforte: Its History traced to the Great Exhibitions of 1851. New York: Da Capo Press Edition, 1973.
- Hedly, Arthur. Chopin: with Eight Pages of Plates and Music Examples in Text. The Master Musicians Series, London: J.M. Dent & Son Ltd., 1974.
- Higgins, Thomas. "Chopin's Practices." The Piano Quarterly. No. 113 (Spring 1981), 38-41.
- Higgins, Thomas. "Chopin's Music and Fashions of Performing it; Some Crucial Differences." American Music Teacher. XXIX (Feb-Mar, 1980), 12-14.
- Higgins, Thomas, ed. Frederic Chopin. Prelude, Op. 28: An Authoritative Score, Historical Background, Analysis, Views and Comments. A Norton Critical Score, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1973.
- Hinson, Maurice. "Pedaling the Piano Works of Chopin." in The Pianist's Guide to Pedaling. Edited by Joseph Banowetz, Indiana University Press, 1985.
- Hipkins, Edith J. How Chopin Played-from Contemporary Impressions Collected from the Diaries and Notebooks of the Late A.J. Hipkins. London: J.M. Dent and Sons, 1937.
- Holcman, Jan. The Legacy of Chopin. NY: Philosophical Library, 1954.
- Hummel, Johann Nepomuk. A Complete Theoretical and Practical Course of Instructions on the Art of Playing the Pianoforte. London, 1828.
- Huneker, James. Chopin-The Man and His Music. Introduction, footnotes and index by Herbert Weinstock, NY: Dover Publications, Inc., 1966.
- Hutcheson, Ernest. The Literature of the Piano-A Guide for Amateur and Student. Third edition, Revised and brought up to date by Rudolph Ganz, NY: Alfred. A. Knopf, 1964.
- Jonson, G.C. Ashton. A Handbook to Chopin's Works. Second edition, London: William Reeves Bookseller Ltd., [n. d.].
- Karasowski, Moritz. Frederic Chopin-His Life and Letters. Translated by Emily Hill, William Reeves Book Seller Limited, 1938.

- Kleczynski, Jean. Chopin's Greater Works-How They Should Be Understood. Second edition, Translated with additions by Natalie Jonathan, London: William Reeves, [n.d.].
- Kullak, Franz. Beethoven's Piano-Playing. Translated from the German by Dr. Theodore Baker, NY: Da Capo Press, Reprint of the 1901 ed., 1973.
- Last, Joan. Interpretation for the Piano Student. London: Oxford University Press, 1969.
- Letnanove, Elena. Piano Interpretation in the Seventeenth, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries-A study of Theory and Practice Using Original Documents. London: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publisher, 1991.
- MacNabb, George. "The Pedals-the Soul of the Pianoforte." The Etude. (September 1947), 503.
- Matthay, Tobias A. Musical Interpretation-Its Laws and Principles, and Their Application in Teaching and Performing. NY: Books for Libraries Press, 1913.
- Matthews, Denis. ed. Keyboard Music. NY: Praeger Publishers, 1972.
- Meckna, Michael. "The Legacy of W.A. Mozart." Musical Journal. XXXIX/1 (January 1981), 11-14.
- Methuen-Campbell, James, "Chopin in Performance." in Cambridge Companion to Chopin. Edited by Jim Samson, Cambridge University Press, 1992.
- Mizwa, Stephen P., ed. Frederic Chopin: 1810-1849. NY: The Macmillan Company, 1942.
- Mozart, Wolfgang A. The Letters of Mozart and His Family. Vol. I, Edited and translated by Emily Anderson, second edition, prepared by A. Hyatt King and Monica Carolan, NY: St. Martin's Press, 1966.
- Newman, William S. Beethoven on Beethoven-Playing His Piano Music His Way. NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 1988.
- Newman, William S. The Pianist's Problems-A Modern Approach to Efficient Practice and Musically Performance. NY: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1950.
- Nieck, Frederick. Frederick Chopin: As a Man and Musician. Vol. II, NY: Novello, Ewer and Company, 1890.
- Orga, Ates. Chopin: His Life and Time. Midas Books, Britain: Planet House Press Ltd., 1976.
- Paderewski, Jan Ignace. The Paderewski Memoirs. Edited by Mary Lawton London and lasgow, Collins, 1939.
- Plaskin, Glenn. Horowitz - A Biography. NY: William Morrow and Co., 1983.

- Porte, John F. Chopin the Composer and His Music. London: William Reeves Bookseller Ltd., [n.d.].
- Raessler, Daniel M. "A New Look at Old Pedaling." Clavier. XXX 18 (October 1991), 16-19.
- Randel, Don Michael, ed. The New Harvard Dictionary of Music. London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1986.
- Riefing, Reimar. Piano Pedaling. Translated from the Norwegian by Kathleen Dale, London: Oxford University Press, 1992.
- Robert, Walter. "Chopin's Tempo Rubato in Theory and Practices." The Piano Quarterly. No. 113 (Spring 1981), 42-52.
- Rowland, David. "Early Pianoforte Pedalling-the Evidence of the Earliest Printed Markings." Early Music. 13:4-17n1-1985, 5-17.
- Sadie, Stanley, ed. The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians. 20 Vols., London: Macmillan Publishers Ltd., 1980.
- Sand, George. My Life (Histoire de ma vie). Translated from the French and adapted by Dan Hofstadter, Harper & Row, Publishers, 1979.
- Schnabel, K. U. Modern Technique of the Pedal (A Piano Pedal Study). NY: Mills Music, Inc., 1919.
- Schonberg, Harold C. The Lives of the Great Composers. NY: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1981.
- Schonberg, Harold C. The Great Pianists. NY: Simon & Schuster, Inc., 1987.
- Schonberg, Harold C. "Apotheosis of the Piano-Frederic Chopin." in The Lives of the Great Composers. NY: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1981.
- Schott, Howard. Playing the Harpsichord. NY: St. Martin's Press, 1971.
- Schumann, Robert. Grande Sonate pour le Pianoforte composee et dediee a Mademoiselle Clara Wieck Pianiste de S. M. l'Empereur d'Autriche, Op.11. Second edition, Leipzig: Friedrich Kistner, 1840.
- Skinner, C. Noden. "Tonal Ambiguity in the Opening Measures of Selected works by Chopin." College Music Symposium. Vol. 24, No. 2, (Fall 1984), 31-32.
- Slenczynska, Ruth. "Master Class-Chopin's Prelude Op. 28, No. 3." Keyboard. Vol. 12 August 1986).
- Stolba, K. Marie. The Development of Western Music-A History. Second edition, A division of Wm. C. Brown Communications, Inc., 1994.
- Sumner, William Leslie. The Pianoforte. NY: St. Martin's Press, 1966.

- Sydow, Bronislaw E. "Ipse Dixit: Excerpts from the unpublished letters of Chopin." in Frederic Chopin: 1810-1849. Edited by Stephen P. Mizwa, Published under auspices of the Kosciusko Foundation, NY: The Macmillan Company, 1949.
- Sydow, Bronislaw E. Selected Correspondence of Fryderyk Chopin-Abridged from Fryderyk Chopin's Correspondence. Translated and edited by Arthur Hedley, NY: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1963.
- Temperly, Nicholas. "Chopin." in The New Grove Early RomanticMasters 1. Edited by Sadie, Stanley, NY: W.W. Norton, 1985.
- Temperly, Nicholas, ed. The London Pianoforte School 1766-1860. Clementi, Dussek, Cramer, Field, Pinto, Sterndale, Bennett, and OtherMasters of the Pianoforte. 20 Volumes, NY: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1987.
- Toasi, Pietro Francesco. Observations on the Florid Song. Translated by J. E. Galliard, Second edition with a new preface by Paul Henry Lang, NY: Johnson Reprint orporation, 1968.
- Veilhan, Jean-Claude. The Rules of Musical Interpretation in the Baroque Era. Translated by John Lambert, Paris: Alphonse Leduc, 1977.
- Weeks, Douglas. "The Unity Within Chopin's Preludes." Clavier. (September 1995), 23-29.
- Weinstock, Herbert. Chopin-The Man and His Music. NY: Alfred. A. Knope, 1949.
- Weitzmann, Ehrlich C.F. History of Pianoforte-Playing and Pianoforte Literature. Da Capo Press Music Reprint Series, NY: Da Capo Press 1969.
- Wierzynski, Casimir. The Life and Death of Chopin. Foreword by Arthur Rubinstein, Translated by Norbert Guterman, NY: Simon and Schuster, 1971.
- Winter, Robert. "Keyboard." in Performance Practice-Music After 1600. Edited by Howard Mayer Brown and Stanley Sadie, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 1989.
- Wolff, Konrad. Master of the keyboard-Individual Style Elements in the Piano Music of Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Chopin, and Brahms. Enlarged Edition, Indiana University Press, 1990

## Scores

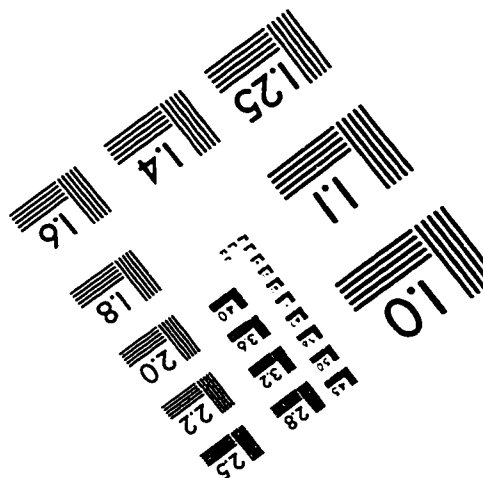
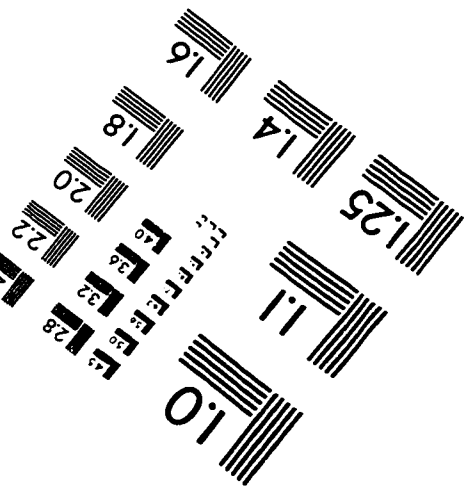
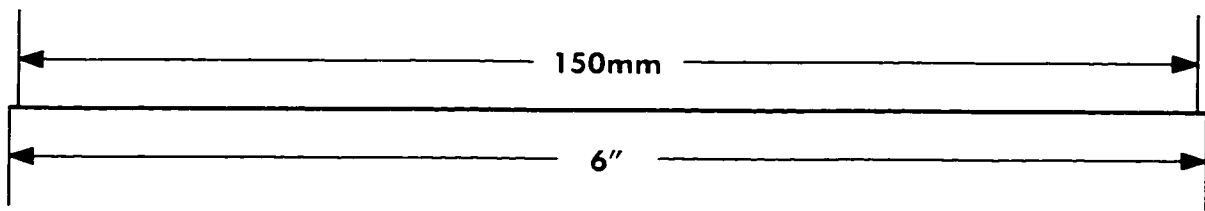
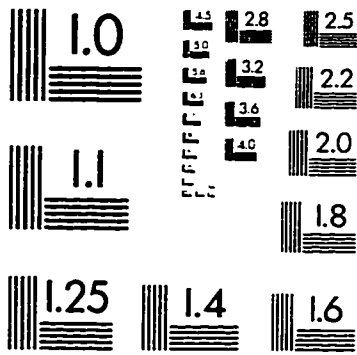
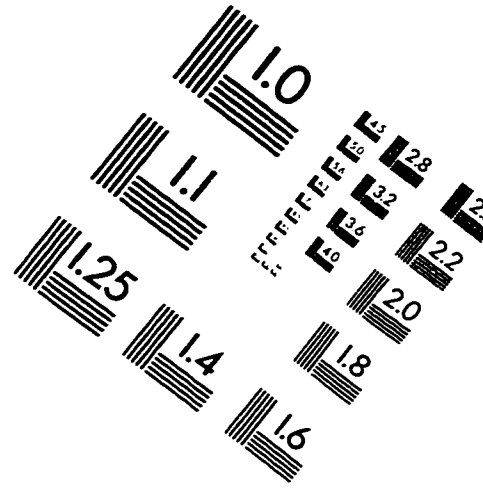
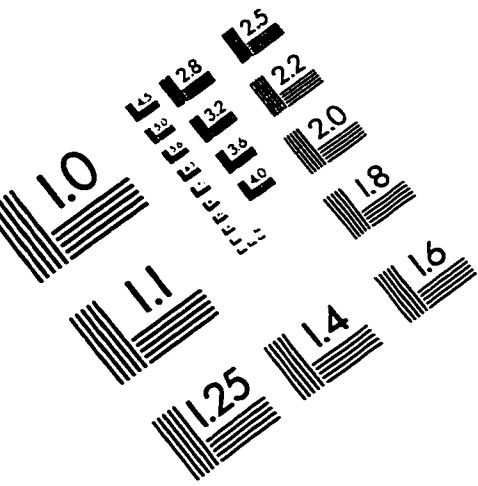
- Bach, Johann-Christian. Sonates Pour Le Clavecin Ou le Piano-Forte Opus V-Opus XVII. Collection Dominantes, ed. Jeanne Roudet. [n.d.].
- Bach, J.S. Das Wohltemperirte Clavier. Urtext. 2 volumes, ed. Otto von Irmer, fingered by Hans-Martin Theopold, G. Henle Verlag Munchen, 1950/1978.
- Beethoven, Ludwig van. Various Piano Works Including Bagatelles Complete, Rondo a Capriccio, Various Preludes and Phantasy. Kalmus Piano Series 3194, Belwin Mills Publishing Co., [n.d.].
- Beethoven, Ludwig van. Piano Sonatas (Urtext Edition). 2 volumes, ed. B.A. Wallner, fingered by Conrad Hansen, G. Henle Verlag Munchen, 1980.
- Chopin, Frederic. Chopin Etuden (Urtext Edition). Edited by Ewald Zimmermann, fingered by Hermann Keller, G. Henle Verlag Munchen, with a preface written by wald Zimmermann in 1975, [n.d.].
- Chopin, Frédéric. Nocturnes (Urtext Edition). Edited by Ewald Zimmermann, fingered by Has-Martin Theopold, G. Henle Verlag Munchen, with a preface written by Ewald Zimmermann in 1979, [n.d.].
- Chopin, Frederic. Chopin: Complete Works for the Piano, Book IX, Preludes. Edited and fingered by Carl Mikuli, Schirmer's Library of Musical Classics, 1915.
- Chopin, Frederic. Chopin Preludes. Edited, revised, and fingered by Rafael Joseffy, Library of Musical Classics, 1915.
- Chopin, Frederic. Chopin Preludes for the Piano. Edited by Willard A. Palmer, Alfred Publishing Co., Inc., 1992.
- Chopin, Frederic. Chopin Préludes Op. 28 (Urtext Edition). Edited by Paul Badura-Skoda, I.epizig: Edition Peters, 1984.
- Chopin, Frederic. Frédéric Chopin: Complete Preludes and Etudes for Solo Piano (The Paderewski Edition), Ignacy Jan Paderewski, Ludwik Bronarski and Jozef Jurczynski, editors, New York: Dover Publications Inc., [n.d.].
- Chopin, Frederic. Chopin 24 Preludes, Op. 28 Students' Edition. Edited by Alfred Cortot, translated by David Ponsonby, Paris-22, rue Chauchat.
- Chopin, Frederic. Frédéric Chopin Préludes (Urtext Edition). Edited by Ewald Zimmermann, fingered by Hermann Keller, G. Henle Verlag Munchen, 1970.
- Chopin, Frederic. Frédéric Chopin 24 Préludes Op. 28 (Wiener Urtext Edition). Edited from the autograph and first editions by Bernhard Hansen, fingering by Jörg Demus, Musikverlag Ges. m. B. H. & Co., K. G., Wien, 1973.

- Chopin, Frederic. Fryderyk Chopin: 24 Preludia. Faksimilowane Wydanie Autografow F. Chopina-Zeszyt 1, Rekopis Biblioteki Narodowej, W. Warszawie, Polskie Wydawnictwo Muzyczne.
- Haydn, Joseph. Piano Pieces. Edited from autographs, manuscript copies and first editions and with fingering added by Franz Eibner and Gerschon Jarecki, Wiener Urtext Edition, Musikverlag Ges. m. B.H. & Co., K.G., Wien, 1975.
- Holborne, Anthony. Die cisterwerke: aus der Schule von 1597. Friderich Hofemeister, Hofheim am Taunus, 1978.
- Hummel, Johann Nepomuk. The Complete Works For Piano-A Six-Volume Collection of Reprints and Facsimiles. Edited with Introduction by Joel Sachs, A Garland Series, Barland Publishing, Inc., 1989.
- Klengel, August Alexander. Kanons und Fugen in allen Dur-und Moll-Tonarten. Leipzig, Breitkopf & Hartel, [n.d.].
- Weiss, Sylvius Leopold. Intavolatura Di Liuto. Translated by Ruggero Chiesa, Milano-Edizioni Suvini Zerboni, [n.d.].

### Recordings

- Argerich, Martha. Frederic Chopin 26 Preludes. Barcarolle. Polonaise in A flat major. Scherzo No. 2 in B flat minor. Deutsch Grammophon, 415-836-2, 1986.
- Ashkenazy, Vladimir. Chopin-Sonata No. 3. Preludes, Op. 28. London, D102410, 1993.
- Cortot, Alfred. Chopin aeuvres pour piano. Disc 2, EMI Classics, CZS-7-67359-2-B, 1991.
- Magaloff, Nikita. Chopin- 24 Preludes. Piano Sonata No. 3. Denon, CO-79158, 1992.
- Pogorelich, Ivo. Frederic Chopin-Preludes. Deutsch Grammophon, D 125266, 1990.
- Rubinstein, Artur. Chopin-Preludes. Sonata No. 2. Barcaroll. Berceuse. RCA Victor, 60047-2-RG, 1989.

# IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (QA-3)



APPLIED IMAGE, Inc  
1653 East Main Street  
Rochester, NY 14609 USA  
Phone: 716/482-0300  
Fax: 716/288-5989

© 1993, Applied Image, Inc., All Rights Reserved