

Abstract of the DLA Thesis

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Julian Fontana as publisher of Chopin's G-flat major  
and f minor waltzes [Op. 70 no. 1–2] in light of  
handwritten sources

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## I. Antecedents to the Research

After Chopin's death, the family granted sole permission to Julian Fontana to publish two volumes of the, as yet, unpublished works that were part of the composer's estate.

Not long after publication, the volumes already received criticism. Fontana had created opus numbers for the works without taking into consideration the order of their composition. At the beginning of the twentieth century, in light of newly rediscovered handwritten manuscripts of works, Mieczysław Karłowicz (*Niewydane dotychczas pamiątki po Chopinie*, 1904), and Kornelia Parnasowa („O kajetach Chopina”, in *Obchód setnej rocznicy urodzin Fryderyka Chopina*, 1912) were the first to bring attention to the fact that the works Fontana had published varied from the composer's handwritten versions.

Not long thereafter, Edouard Ganch (*Dans le souvenir de Frédéric Chopin*, 1925) and Ludwig Bronarski („W sprawie wydania pośmiertnych dzieł Fryderyka Chopina”, *Kwartalnik Muzyczny* No. 1. 1928) also passed judgment on Fontana's publishing work, but these studies were isolated phenomena. Neither the music historians nor most of the performers paid any attention to the existence of text variations and the Fontana publications remained in many cases the only sources for the works found in those volumes.

As editor of the complete Polish edition, Jan Ekier collected all of the manuscripts of the works in the Fontana volumes and decided in what form these works would be published in the complete edition. His study, published in 1998, was the first comprehensive assessment of Fontana's publishing

work. In the interests of a more precise assessment, he felt it was vital to study Fontana's relationship with Chopin, as well as his musical qualifications. Unfortunately, he did not have access to much information about Fontana, his biography was often patchy and imprecise. The research of Magdalena Oliferko has filled this gap: she has published the letters of Stanisław Egbert Koźmian, a friend with whom Fontana maintained written correspondence. These letters not only supplement his biography but also provide a new perspective on Fontana and Chopin's relationship.

Ekier's study of Fontana's publishing work focuses on the variations in text and categorically reviews the differences from the original manuscripts. This summative work does not examine the origins of the works, so does not search for an answer to which types of original manuscripts they were taken from, which would be of basic importance in assessing the variations.

## II. Sources

Primary sources:

In the course of my work, I studied all of the handwritten sources of the two Chopin waltzes. In the case of the G-flat major waltz, two presentation manuscripts and a copy made by an unknown copyist remain. I accessed them through a facsimile publication (Byron Janis: *The Most Dramatic Musical Discovery of the Age*, 1978) and as digitalized documents available through the collection of the Bibliothèque National in Paris.

For the f minor waltz, five presentation manuscripts, as well as three complete copies and a partial copy made by Fontana are available through the Chopin Institute (Narodowy Instytut Fryderyka Chopina) in Warsaw and on the website of Trust that supports the Polish complete edition,

I studied the Fontana versions of the text in the 1855 Schlesinger edition (*Oeuvres Posthumes Pour Piano de Fréd. Chopin, Op. 66–73*, 1855). In the case of the f minor waltz, in addition to the Fontana edition, I also studied the waltz' first version and the edition published by the Wildt publishers of Cracow (*Deux Valses Mélancoliques composées pour le piano-forte par Frédéric Chopin*, 1852),

I became familiar with Fontana's correspondence with Stanisław Egbert Koźmian through the publication of Magdalena Oliferko (*Fontana and Chopin in Letters*, 2013)

I read all of Chopin's letters to Fontana, originally written in Polish, in an English translation that was published in 2016. (*Chopin's Polish Letters*, 2016)

Further important sources:

Jeffrey Kallberg. *The Chopin Sources: Variants and Versions in Later Manuscripts and Printed Editions* (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1982).

Kobyłańska, Krystyna. *Frédéric Chopin. Thematisch-Bibliographisches Werkverzeichnis* (München: G. Henle Verlag, 1979).

Tieles, Cecilio. „Julian Fontana: el introductor de Chopin en Cuba”, *Revista de Musicología* 9/1 (enero-junio de 1988), 123–150.

Tomaszewski, Mieczysław. *Chopin. The Man, his Work and its Resonance*, trans. John Comber (Warsaw: NIFC, 2015).

### **III. Methodology**

I chose to analyze two works from the 1855 volume, the G-flat major and f minor waltzes, in order to present Fontana's publishing work. This decision was based in part on the fact that Chopin's handwritten work is available for both pieces and also that I was able to access all of the handwritten sources of these works.

In order to interpret the Fontana versions, it is imperative to have full knowledge of the composer's manuscripts, thus, the initial step of the analysis was a comparison of signatures. This was followed by a comparison of the composer's texts with that of the Fontana edition.

As the differences were of disparate natures in the two works, I used different methodologies to assess them. In the case of the G-flat major waltz, the differences between two manuscripts written by the composer support a directional, conceptual change in how the composer viewed the piece. Thus the presentation of these changes is best illustrated with examples of the music, grouped in musical layers, thus making it possible to follow the similar logic exhibited in changes in the accompanying harmonies and the melody.

The f minor waltz has five equivalent composer manuscripts. The five have comparable presentation signatures but exhibit numerous variations. I have summarized the differences between the composer's manuscripts in a table. This table allows for the creation of statistics on the degree of similarity between the composer's manuscripts and provides a basis for comparison to the Fontana version.

The methods were developed primarily from the work of Jeffrey Kallberg in grouping Chopin's manuscripts and his dissertation researching text variations in works written after 1841. (*The Chopin Sources: Variants and Versions in Later Manuscripts and Printed Editions*, 1982).

## IV. Results

After examination and analysis of the selected composer's manuscripts and their comparison with the variations in the Fontana edition, it became clear that assessment of the variations in the Fontana edition must be undertaken on a piece by piece basis. In this way, it is possible to determine Fontana's role in the creation of a given work's text. While the complete Polish edition's commentary indicates a complete knowledge of the sources and details the known manuscripts for the Fontana edition, the conclusions of Jan Ekier and Pawel Kamiński do not always seem well-supported. Their statement that the Fontana version of the G-flat major waltz was based on a lost manuscript, which presented Chopin's most developed concepts may be argued on several points. After the analysis of the G-flat major waltz, I cover these points in detail. The source commentary in the complete Polish edition on the f minor waltz is also not comprehensive, as it does not consider the similarities between the Fontana version and the waltz' first edition, published without the permission of the inheritors, the Wildt edition. The similarities suggest that text in Fontana's edition of this waltz was primarily based on the text of the Krakow edition. Nonetheless, I attempted to show that the Fontana text does originate with Chopin and only exhibits variations from this source.

I wish to mention two more observations that I made while studying the composer's manuscripts of the G-flat major waltz, although they are not closely related to the topic of the dissertation. The G-flat major waltz manuscript that was

discovered in the Thoiry castle in France suggests that Chopin originally wanted to present the work in association with the E-flat major waltz (op. 18). This is supported by the continuity of the internal keys of the pieces, as well as the characteristics of the signature, which suggest that it is an original copy that was finally gifted to Clémence de Marquet. The literature makes no mention of the addressed: Clémence de Marquet's name is only identifiable through the memoirs of the pianist who discovered the manuscript, Byron Janis. The birthdate given in Janis' book does not correspond with the information found in the original obituary for Clémence de Marquet. The obituary can be found in the appendix of this dissertation.

## **V. Documentation of activities associated with the analyzed topic**

*Who was Julian Fontana?* – Presentation at the IV. „Gyöngyöző futamok” music camp. Gyöngyös, Pátzay János Music School, 2 August 2016.

*Chopin's manuscripts and the Fontana edition of the G-flat major waltz* – Presentation at the V. „Gyöngyöző futamok” music camp. Gyöngyös, Pátzay János Music School, 31 July 2017.