

It is nowadays acknowledged that pianists in the 19<sup>th</sup> century played in a style very different from pianists today. They seldom played at the same tempo for the entire piece and tended to use tempo rubato. That a very rich mode of expression was a feature of early recordings and piano rolls has already been established. This tradition was however abandoned at some point. The objective of this paper is to examine the performances of contemporary musicians in order to determine the nature of their playing at a time when the aforementioned rich mode of expression was prevalent.

To this end, nine piano rolls of Chopin's op.42 were analyzed in order to determine how the piece was played by performers living in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Of particular interest to this study was the relationship between notation and performance.

The piano rolls analyzed by this study were particularly illuminating in that they included written information pertaining to timing. Especially useful in this regard were the demarcated onset timings of any notes to be included in the performance (although the accuracy of the data cannot be confirmed). In spite of the fragility of piano rolls, the clarity of their transcriptions render them more revealing than audio recordings. Moreover, the piano rolls comprise the performances of many important performers, several of whom only ever committed their performances to piano rolls.

This study therefore examined both piano rolls and audio recordings according to the following procedure. Firstly, piano-roll performances and audio recordings by the same performer were analyzed and compared. This comparison showed the relationship between data derived from piano rolls and that derived from audio recordings. Secondly, an analysis of the following three particular points in Chopin's op.42 was conducted: (1) the second-theme section (bar 57-72); (2) the rhythmic passages in the third-theme section (bar 89-104); and (3) the turn passages in the fourth-theme section (bar 122 and 138). These analyses clarify the

relationship between performance in the 19<sup>th</sup> century style and Chopin's score notation.

(1) bar 57-72

(2) bar 90                      ↓                      bar 230                      ↓

bar 91                      ↓                      ↓

(3) bar 122

bar 138

As a result of this study, the following facts were brought light. Firstly, all the performances by the same performer, regardless of whether they were preserved as piano rolls or as audio recordings, tended to be quite

similar. The unique exception to this rule was Joseph Hofmann's piano-roll performance. Secondly, the analysis of the following three particular points in Chopin's op.42 revealed the following: (1) this particular section was played in a unique way (as demonstrated by the longer third beat) that, according to Moriz Rosenthal, was Mazurka-like; (2) Chopin's various rhythmic notations should be understood as being more suggestive than absolute notes; and (3) both single-turn and doubled-turn passages were played in similar ways.

### Biography

Akiko Washino is a musicologist and pianist, currently teaching as an Associate Professor at Fukuoka Prefectural University in Japan. Her research interests center around questions of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century performance practice. She has recently finished her Ph.D. dissertation at Osaka University, analyzing performances on piano rolls and early audio recordings of Chopin's Waltz in A-flat major, op. 42. Her interest in early performance style evolved over many conversations through the years with Malcolm Bilson, and during her time at The Royal Conservatory in The Hague, where she studied fortepiano with Stanley Hoogland. During the past year she has been a visiting scholar at Stanford University doing research for her dissertation using the Condon Collection of piano rolls in the Archive of Recorded Sound. She is interested in how nineteenth-century pianists interacted with the score, and how this relationship has changed over time.