

CHOPIN'S
POLISH
LETTERS

CHOPIN'S POLISH LETTERS

Translated by David Frick

The Fryderyk Chopin Institute
Warsaw 2016

Table of contents

Preface	15
Editor's note	21
A note on usage	23
Sources and abbreviations	25

I. 6 December 1816 — 9 September 1828 27

001.	Greetings card with wishes for Mikołaj Chopin on his name-day. [Warsaw], 6 December 1816	36
002.	Wishes for Justyna Chopin on her name-day. [Warsaw], 16 June 1817	36
003.	Wishes for Mikołaj Chopin on his name-day. [Warsaw], 6 December 1817	36
004.	Wishes for Mikołaj Chopin on his name-day. [Warsaw], 6 December 1818	37
005.	To Eustachy Marylski in Książenice. [Warsaw, 8 September 1823]	37
006.	A poem dedicated to Julian Fontana (?). [Warsaw, 1823–1826 (?)]	38
007.	To his parents in Warsaw. [Szafarnia], 10 August 1824	38
008.	To his family in Warsaw. Szafarnia, 16 August 1824	40
009.	To his family in Warsaw. Szafarnia, 19 August 1824	42
010.	To Wilhelm Kolberg. [Szafarnia,] 19 August 1824	42
011.	To his family in Warsaw. Szafarnia, 24 August 1824	43
012.	To his family in Warsaw. Szafarnia, Friday, 27 August 1824	45
013.	To his family in Warsaw. Szafarnia, 31 August 1824	47
014.	To his family in Warsaw. Szafarnia, 3 September 1824	50
015.	Wishes from Emilia Chopin and her siblings for Mikołaj Chopin on his birthday. [Warsaw], 17 April 1825	52
016.	To Jan Białobłocki in Sokołowo. [Warsaw], 8 July 1825	53
017.	To Jan Białobłocki in Sokołowo. [Warsaw, 27 July 1825]	54
018.	To his parents in Warsaw. [Szafarnia], 26 August 1825	55
019.	To Jan Matuszyński in Puławy (?). [Szafarnia, first half of September, 1825]	59
020.	To Jan Białobłocki in Sokołowo. [Sokołowo, ca. 20 September 1825]	62
021.	To Jan Białobłocki in Sokołowo. [Warsaw, 29] September [1825]	63
022.	To Jan Białobłocki. Warsaw, 30 Oct[ober] 1825	65
023.	To Jan Białobłocki. Warsaw, [toward the end of November 1825]	67
024.	To Jan Białobłocki in Sokołowo. [Żelazowa Wola, 24 December 1825]	68
025.	To Jan Białobłocki in Biskupiec [i.e. Bischofswerder]. Warsaw, 12 February 1826	70
026.	Fragment of a poem. [Warsaw, after 13 February 1826]	72

027. Wishes of Emilia Chopin and her siblings for Mikołaj Chopin on his birthday.
[Warsaw], 25 April 1826 73
028. To Jan Białobłocki in Sokołowo. [Warsaw, 15 May 1826] 73
029. To Jan Białobłocki in Sokołowo. [Warsaw, 20 June 1826] 76
030. To Wilhelm Kolberg in Warsaw. Bad Reinertz [Duszники Zdrój], 18 Aug[ust 1826] 79
031. To Jan Białobłocki in Sokołowo. Warsaw, 2 [October 1826] 81
032. To Jan Białobłocki in Sokołowo. Warsaw, 8 [January 1827] 84
033. To Jan Białobłocki in Sokołowo. Warsaw, [12] March [1827] 86
034. To his family in Warsaw. Kowalewo, [6 July 1827] 88
035. To Jan Matuszyński in Warsaw. [Warsaw, 1827 or 1828] 89
036. To Tytus Woyciechowski in Poturzyn. Warsaw, 9 September 1828 90

II. 16 September 1828 — 12 September 1829 97

037. To his family in Warsaw. Berlin, [16 September 1828] 104
038. To his family in Warsaw. Berlin, 20 [September 1828] 106
039. To his family in Warsaw. Berlin, 27 [September 1828] 108
040. To Tytus Woyciechowski in Poturzyn. Warsaw, 27 December 1828 109
041. To his family in Warsaw. Vienna, 1 September 1829 111
042. To his family in Warsaw. Vienna, 8 August 1829 112
043. To his family in Warsaw. [Vienna], 12 August [1829] 114
044. To his family in Warsaw. [Vienna], 13 September [1829] 117
045. To his family in Warsaw. [Vienna], 19 September [1829] 118
046. To his family in Warsaw. Prague, 22 August 1829 120
047. To his family in Warsaw. Dresden, 26 [-27] August 1829 121
048. To Tytus Woyciechowski in Poturzyn. Warsaw, 12 September [1]829 125

III. 3 October 1829 — 12 October 1830 131

049. To Tytus Woyciechowski in Poturzyn. Warsaw, 3 October [1]829 137
050. To Tytus Woyciechowski in Poturzyn. Warsaw, 20 Oct[ober] 1829 140
051. To Tytus Woyciechowski in Poturzyn. Warsaw, 14 November 1829 143
052. A poem addressed to Ignacy Maciejowski (?). [Warsaw, ca. 1829 (?)] 146
053. To Tytus Woyciechowski in Poturzyn. [Warsaw], 27 March 1830 146
054. To Tytus Woyciechowski in Poturzyn. Warsaw, 10 April 1830 150
055. To Tytus Woyciechowski in Poturzyn. Warsaw, 17 April 1830 155
056. To Tytus Woyciechowski in Poturzyn. Warsaw, 15 May [1830] 158
057. To Tytus Woyciechowski in Poturzyn. [Warsaw], 5 June 1830 161
058. To Tytus Woyciechowski in Poturzyn. Warsaw, 21 August [1]830 165

- 059. To Tytus Woyciechowski in Poturzyn. [Warsaw], 31 August [18]30 168
- 060. To Tytus Woyciechowski in Poturzyn. [Warsaw], 4 [September 1830] 172
- 061. To Tytus Woyciechowski in Poturzyn. Warsaw, 18 September 1830 175
- 062. To Tytus Woyciechowski in Poturzyn. Warsaw, 22 September [1]830 178
- 063. To Tytus Woyciechowski in Poturzyn. [Warsaw], 5 October [1830] 182
- 064. To Tytus Woyciechowski in Poturzyn. [Warsaw], 12 October 1830 185

IV. 9 November 1830 — September 1831 189

- 065. To his family in Warsaw. Wrocław, 9 November 1830 194
- 066. To his family in Warsaw. Dresden, 14 November [1830] 196
- 067. To his family in Warsaw. Prague, 21 November 1830 198
- 068. To Jan Matuszyński in Warsaw. Vienna, [24 November 1830] 200
- 069. To his family in Warsaw. Vienna, 1 December 1830 202
- 070. To Joseph Christoph Kessler in Warsaw. [Vienna], 14 December 1830 207
- 071. To his family in Warsaw. Vienna, [22 December 1830] 207
- 072. To Jan Matuszyński in Warsaw. Vienna [26 and 29? December 1830] 211
- 073. To Jan Matuszyński in Warsaw. [Vienna, 1 January 1831] 218
- 074. To Jan Matuszyński in Warsaw. [Vienna, first half of January 1831] 218
- 075. To Józef Elsner in Warsaw. Vienna, 26 January 1831 219
- *** Fragments from Chopin's Album. Vienna, April-May 1831 222
- 076. To his family in Warsaw. Vienna, 14 May 1831 222
- 077. To Václav Hanka in Prague. Vienna, 15 May 1831 224
- 078. To his family in Warsaw. Vienna, 28 May 1831 225
- 079. To his family in Warsaw. Vienna, 25 June 1831 227
- 080. To his family in Warsaw. Vienna [16 July] 1831 229
- *** Fragments from Chopin's Album. Stuttgart, September 1831 231

V. 18 November 1831 — June 1838 235

- 081. To Norbert Alfons Kumelski in Berlin. [Paris, 18 November 1831] 242
- 082. To Tytus Woyciechowski in Poturzyn. Paris, 12 Dec[ember] 1831 245
- 083. To Józef Elsner in Warsaw. Paris, 14 December 1831 251
- 084. To Tytus Woyciechowski in Poturzyn. Paris, 25 Decemb[er] 1831 254
- 085. To Józef Nowakowski in Warsaw. Paris, 15 Ap[ril] 1832 259
- 086. To Kalasanty Jędrzejewicz in Warsaw. Paris, 10 September 1832 260
- 087. To the President of the Polish Literary Society in Paris. [Paris], 16 Jan[uary] 1833 261
- 088. To Dominik Dziewanowski in Berlin. [Paris, ca. mid January 1833] 262
- 089. To Julian Fontana in Paris. [Paris, without a date, 1839 at the latest] 263

- 090. To Feliks Wodziński in Geneva. Paris, 18 July 1834 264
- 091. To Julian Fontana in Paris. [Paris, no date] 265
- 092. To Julian Fontana in Paris. [Paris, 1834] 265
- 093. To Julian Fontana in Paris. [Paris, 1835/1836] 265
- 094. To Kalasanty Jędrzejewicz in Warsaw. [Karlsbad, 16 August 1835] 266
- 095. To Julian Fontana in Paris. [Paris, 1835] 266
- 096. To Antoni Barciński in Warsaw. Paris, 14 March 1836 267
- 097. To his parents. [Paris, autumn 1836] 267
- 098. To Teresa Wodzińska in Służewo. Paris, 1 Nov[ember] 1836 267
- 099. To Julian Fontana in Paris. [Paris, 1836] 269
- 100. To Julian Fontana in Paris. [Paris, without a date] 269
- 101. To Józef Brzowski. [Paris, 13 December 1836] 269
- 102. To Józef Brzowski in Paris. [Paris, winter 1836] 269
- 103. To Teresa Wodzińska in Służewo. Paris, 2 April 1837 269
- 104. To Teresa Wodzińska in Służewo. Paris, 14 May 1837 270
- 105. To Antoni Wodziński in Saragossa. [Paris, May 1837] 271
- 106. To Teresa Wodzińska in Służewo. Paris, 18 June 1837 271
- 107. To Julian Fontana in Paris. [London, July 1837] 273
- 108. To Teresa Wodzińska in Służewo. Paris, 14 August 1837 274
- 109. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. [Paris, no date] 275
- 110. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. [Paris, 1837] 275
- 111. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. [Paris, summer 1837] 275
- 112. To Wojciech Grzymała. [Paris, ca. 6 June 1838] 275

VI. Summer 1838 — June 1847 277

- 113. To Wojciech Grzymała. [Paris, summer 1838] 286
- 114. To Julian Fontana in Paris. Palma, 15 November 1838 286
- 115. To Julian Fontana in Paris. Palma, 3 December 1838 287
- 116. Chopin and George Sand to Wojciech Grzymała. [Establiments], 3 December [1838] 288
- 117. George Sand and Chopin to Wojciech Grzymała in Palma. [Establiments or Palma, ca. 9 December 1838] 288
- 118. To Julian Fontana in Paris. Palma, 14 December 1838 289
- 119. To Julian Fontana in Paris. Palma, 28 Dec[ember] 1838 290
- 120. To Julian Fontana in Paris. Valldemossa, 22 January 1839 292
- 121. To Julian Fontana in Paris. Marseille, 7 March 1839 293
- 122. Chopin and George Sand to Wojciech Grzymała. Marseille, 12 March 1839 295
- 123. To Julian Fontana in Paris. [Marseille, 12 March 1839] 295
- 124. To Julian Fontana in Paris. [Marseille], 17 March 1839, Sunday 297

125. To Wojciech Grzymała. Marseille, 27 March [1839] 298
126. Chopin and George Sand to Wojciech Grzymała. Marseille, 12 April 1839 299
127. To Julian Fontana in Paris. [Marseille, toward the end of March 1839] 300
128. To Julian Fontana in Paris. [Marseille, March 1839] 301
129. Chopin and George Sand to Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. [Marseille, 13 April 1839] 302
130. Chopin and George Sand to Wojciech Grzymała. [Marseille, 16 April 1839] 303
131. To Julian Fontana in Paris. [Marseille, 25 April 1839] 304
132. Chopin and George Sand to Wojciech Grzymała. Marseille, 21 May 1839 305
133. Chopin and George Sand to Wojciech Grzymała. [Nohant], 2 Ju[ne] 1839 306
134. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. [Nohant, end of June 1839] 306
135. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. Nohant, Monday [in June 1839] 307
136. Chopin and George Sand to Wojciech Grzymała. [Nohant, 8 July 1839] 307
137. To Julian Fontana in Paris. [Nohant], Thursday, [8 August 1839] 308
138. To Julian Fontana in Paris. [Nohant, end of August 1839] 311
139. Chopin and George Sand to Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. [Nohant, 20 September 1839] 311
140. To Julian Fontana in Paris. [Nohant], Saturday, [21 September 1839] 311
141. To Julian Fontana in Paris. [Nohant], Wednesday, [25 September 1839] 312
142. To Julian Fontana in Paris. Sunday, [Nohant, 29 September 1839] 313
143. Chopin and George Sand to Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. [Nohant], Sunday, 29 September 1839 315
144. To Julian Fontana in Paris. [Nohant, 1 October 1839] 315
145. To Julian Fontana in Paris. [Nohant, 3 October 1839] 318
146. To Julian Fontana. [Nohant], 4 October [1839] 319
147. To Julian Fontana. [Nohant], Monday [7 October 1839] 320
148. Chopin and George Sand to Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. [Nohant, 8 October 1839] 320
149. To Julian Fontana in Paris. [Nohant, 8 October 1839] 320
150. To Julian Fontana in Bordeaux. Thursday, [Paris, end of 1839] 322
151. To Julian Fontana in Bordeaux. Paris, 23 c[urrent] m[onth]; April 1840] 322
152. To Ludwik Plater in Paris. [Paris, before 29 April 1840] 322
153. To Konstanty Gaszyński in Aix. [Paris], 3 May [1840] 323
154. To Józef Elsner in Warsaw. Paris, 30 July 1840 323
155. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. [Paris, ca. 1840?] 324
156. To Seweryn Goszczyński in Paris. [Paris, probably the beginning of 1841] 325
157. To Julian Fontana in Paris. [Nohant, around the middle of June 1841] 325
158. To Julian Fontana in Paris. [Nohant], Sunday [27 June 1841] 326
159. To Julian Fontana in Paris. [Nohant, 18 July 1841] 328
160. To Julian Fontana in Paris. [Nohant, 21 July 1841] 328
161. To Julian Fontana in Paris. [Nohant], Monday night, [26 July 1841] 329
162. To Julian Fontana in Paris. [Nohant, 29 July 1841] 330

163. To Julian Fontana in Paris. [Nohant], night of 9/10 August 1841 331
164. To Julian Fontana in Paris. [Nohant, 10 August 1841] 332
165. To Julian Fontana in Paris. [Nohant, 18 August 1841] 332
166. To Julian Fontana in Paris. [Nohant, 20 August 1841], Friday night 334
167. To Julian Fontana in Paris. [Nohant], Tuesday, [24 August 1841] 335
168. To Julian Fontana in Paris. [Nohant, 1 or 8 September 1841] 336
169. To Julian Fontana. [Nohant, 11 September 1841] 337
170. To Julian Fontana in Paris. [Nohant, 13 September 1841] 3 in the morning — stars 339
171. To Julian Fontana in Paris. [Nohant], Saturday, [18 September 1841] 340
172. To Julian Fontana in Paris. [Nohant, 30 September 1841] 340
173. To Julian Fontana in Paris. [Nohant, 6 October 1841] 341
174. To Julian Fontana. [Nohant, 7 October 1841] 343
175. To Julian Fontana. [Nohant, 9 October 1841] 344
176. To Julian Fontana in Paris. [Nohant, 11 October 1841] 345
177. To Julian Fontana in Paris. [Nohant, 18 October 1841] 346
178. To Julian Fontana in Paris. [Nohant, 20 October 1841] 348
179. To Julian Fontana in Paris. [Nohant], Wednesday [27 October 1841] 349
180. To Julian Fontana in Paris. [Nohant, 1 November 1841] 351
181. To Stefan Witwicki in Paris. [Paris, winter 1841/42] 351
182. To Józefa Turowska in Paris. [Paris, winter 1841/42] 351
183. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. [Paris, 1842] 352
184. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. [Paris, without a date] 353
185. To Adolf Cichowski in Paris. [Paris, without a date] 353
186. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. Nohant, Tuesday, [spring, 1842] 353
187. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. Nohant, Wednesday, [25 May 1842] 354
188. Chopin, George Sand, Maurice and Solange to Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. [Nohant, 3 July 1842] 354
189. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. [Nohant, 27 July 1842] 355
190. To Tomasz Nidecki in Warsaw. Paris, 30 November 1842 356
191. To Wojciech Grzymała. [Paris, October 1842–1844?] 356
192. To Joseph Elsner in Warsaw. Paris, 8 November 1842 357
193. To Tomasz Nidecki in Warsaw. Paris, 25 January 1843 357
194. To Wojciech Grzymała. [Nohant], Saturday, [27 May 1843?] 357
195. To Zofia Rozengartówna in Paris. Nohant, 16 June [1843] 358
196. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. [Nohant, 15 or 16 October 1843] 359
197. To an unknown female addressee. [Paris, without a date; November 1843?] 359
198. To an unknown addressee in Paris. [Paris, without a date] 360
199. To Zofia Rozengartówna in Paris. [Paris, winter 1843–1844] 360
200. To Zofia Rozengartówna in Paris. [Paris, winter 1843–1844] 360

201. To Stefan Witwicki in Paris. [Paris, without a date] 360
202. Chopin and George Sand to Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. [Nohant, 26 July 1844] 360
203. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. [Paris, 30 August 1844] 361
204. To Wojciech Grzymała (?). [Nohant, 5 (?) September 1844] 361
205. To Ludwika Jędrzejewiczowa in Warsaw. Nohant, 18 September 1844 362
206. To Ludwika Jędrzejewiczowa in Warsaw. Nohant, 31 Oc[tober] 1844 363
207. To Adolf Cichowski in Paris. [Paris, without a date] 365
208. To Adolf Cichowski in Paris. [Paris, without a date] 365
209. To Adolf Cichowski in Paris. [Paris, without a date] 365
210. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. [Paris, without a date] 365
211. To Adolf Cichowski in Paris. [Paris, ca. 1844] 366
212. To Adolf Cichowski in Paris. [Paris, without a date] 366
213. To Krystyn Ostrowski in Paris. [Paris, 17 January (?) 1845] 366
214. George Sand and Chopin to Stefan Witwicki in Graefenberg, near Freiwaldau [Jeseník]. Paris, Easter, [23 March 1845] 367
215. To Zofia Rozengartówna in Paris. [Paris, after 5 March 1845] 368
216. To his family in Warsaw. [Nohant, 18–20 July 1845] 368
217. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. [Nohant], 8 July [1845] 376
218. To Ludwika and Józef Kalasanty Jędrzejewicz. [Nohant, beginning of August 1845] 377
219. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. [Paris, the beginning of December 1845] 383
220. To his family in Warsaw. Paris, Friday 12 [–26] December [1845] 383
221. To Adolf Cichowski. Paris, end of 1845 389
222. To Wojciech Grzymała. [Paris], Monday, [end of 1845 (?)] 389
223. To Adolf Cichowski in Paris. [Paris, without a date, Wednesday] 390
224. To Adolf Cichowski in Paris. [Paris, without a date] 390
225. To Adolf Cichowski in Paris. [Paris, without a date] 390
226. To Adolf Cichowski in Paris. [Paris, without a date] 390
227. To Adolf Cichowski in Paris. [Paris, without a date] 391
228. To Antoni Kątski in Paris. [Paris, 1845] 391
229. George Sand and Chopin to Wojciech Grzymała. [Nohant, 26 August 1846] 391
230. Chopin and George Sand to Wojciech Grzymała. [Nohant, 30 August 1846] 392
231. To his family in Warsaw. Nohant, 11 October 1846 393
232. George Sand and Chopin to Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. [Nohant, 12 October 1846] 400
233. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. [Paris, 30 or 31 December 1846] 401
234. To an unknown addressee in Paris. [Paris, 1846 (?)] 401
235. To an unknown addressee in Paris. [Paris], Friday 401
236. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. [Paris, without a date; end of 1846] 401
237. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. [Paris, without a date] 402

238. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. [Paris, 4 February 1847] 402
 239. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. [Paris, 5 February 1847] 402
 240. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. [Paris, 17 February 1847] 403
 241. To his family in Warsaw. [Paris, 28 March–19 April 1847] 403
 242. To his family in Warsaw. [Paris], 8[–9] June [18]47 410

VII. 15 September 1847 — 21 November 1848 419

243. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. [Paris] 17 [actually 15] Sept[ember] 1847, Wednesday 424
 244. To Hipolit Błotnicki in Paris. [Paris, 15 December 1847] 424
 245. To Ludwika Jędrzejewiczowa and Izabela Barcińska. [Paris], Christmas [26 December] 1847[–6 January 1848] 424
 246. To Józef Nowakowski in Paris. [Paris], Wednesday evening, [1847] 427
 247. To Ludwik Piotr Norblin in Paris. [Paris, January 1848] 428
 248. To Ludwika Jędrzejewiczowa in Paris. [Paris], Thursday, 10 February 1848 428
 249. To his family in Warsaw. [Paris], Friday, 11 February 1848 430
 250. To Adolf Cichowski in Paris. [Paris, toward the end of February 1848] 432
 251. To Julian Fontana in New York. Paris, 4 April 1848 432
 252. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. London, Good Friday [21 April 1848] 434
 253. To Karol Franciszek Szulczewski in London. [London, 24 April 1848] 434
 254. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. [London], Thursday, 11 [May 1848; written on the 4th, dated the 11th, and sent on the 13th of May] 435
 255. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. London, Saturday 13 May [1848] 435
 256. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. [London], 48 Dover Street, Piccadilly, Friday, 2 June [1848] 437
 257. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. [London, 8, 15, 17 July 1848] 441
 258. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. [London, 18] July [1848] 444
 259. To Julian Fontana in London. Edinburgh, 18 August 1848 445
 260. To his family in Warsaw. [Calder House], 19 [10] August 1848 446
 261. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. [Calder House], 19 August 1848 457
 262. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. [Begun] 4 Sep[tember] 1848], Johnstone Castle, [finished 9 September 1848] 459
 263. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. 1 October [1848], Keir 463
 264. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. [Edinburgh, 3 October 1848] 466
 265. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. [Hamilton Palace], 21 Oct[ober] 1848] 466
 266. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. Edinburgh, 30 October [1848] 469
 267. To Adam Łyszczynski in Edinburgh. London, 3 November 1848 471
 268. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. London, 17 and 18 October [actually, November 1848] 471
 269. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. [London], Tuesday, [21 November 1848] 474

VIII. 1849 475

270. To Adolf Cichowski in Paris. [Paris, without a date] 478
271. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. [Paris, 1849] 478
272. To Adolf Cichowski in Paris. [Chaillot, spring 1849] 478
273. To Adolf Cichowski in Paris. [Chaillot, summer 1849] 478
274. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. [Chaillot], Monday, 18 [June 1849] 479
275. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. [Chaillot], Friday, 22 June 1849 480
276. To Ludwika Jędrzejewiczowa in Warsaw. [Chaillot], Mond[ay], 25 June 1849 482
277. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. Chaillot, 2 July [1849] 486
278. To Adolf Cichowski in Paris. [Chaillot, 1849] 487
279. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. [Chaillot], Tuesday, 10 July [18]49 487
280. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. Chaillot, Saturday 28 July [1849] 488
281. To Napoleon Orda in Paris. [July 1849] 490
282. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. [Paris, without a date; July 1849?] 491
283. To Wojciech Grzymała in Paris. [Chaillot], Friday, 3 August [1849] 491
284. To Adolf Cichowski in Paris. [Paris, 15 August 1849] 492
285. To Tytus Woyciechowski in Karlsbad. Paris, 20 August 1849, Square d'Orléans,
Rue St Lazare 9 493
286. To Tytus Woyciechowski in Ostend. Paris, 12 September 1849 493
- Historical notes 495
- Index of names 527
- Index of Chopin's works 544
- Index of places 546

Preface

“The man waited three days in Châteauroux for the piano before I called him off yesterday, once I’d received your letter; but what sort of voice the piano has, I don’t know yet, because it hasn’t been unpacked . . .”

— Chopin to Julian Fontana, 9/10 August 1841

Readers who know only English have for almost a century faced the same problem as did the composer with his crated piano: what sort of voice Chopin had remains hidden, boxed up behind incomplete and inaccurate translations.¹ The situation has been most acute for the letters Chopin penned in his native Polish (the majority of his extant correspondence). Without correct and complete translations of those letters in which Chopin expressed himself most fluently, the English reader has had to struggle in order to grasp his personality and his modes of thinking.

The present volume is thus cause for celebration. The translations by David Frick at last allow the Anglophone audience unfettered, nuanced access to the composer’s distinctive Polish voice. Within individual letters, we witness the characteristic processes of the composer’s imagination, at times in fully developed narratives (with logical structures of storytelling and distinctive turns of phrase), at other times unfolding through spontaneous digressions, entertaining outbursts, or angry curses (with the flow of the prose feeling more fragmented, often taking place in incomplete sentences).

Countless details emerge clearly for the first time to English readers. One wonderful example is Professor Frick’s trenchant translation and explanation of Chopin’s atypical use of the Polish feminine first person singular in the last extant letter to his sister

1 E. L. Voynich’s translation (now over eighty years old) lacks over half of the extant Chopin correspondence. See *Chopin’s Letters*, ed. Henryk Opieński, trans. E. L. Voynich (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1931; repr. ed. New York: Vienna House, 1973). And Arthur Hedley’s translation (more than fifty years old) likewise omits a large number of letters, while at the same time excising from the letters that he did publish multiple passages that he felt were of “small interest” to the general reader, and bowdlerizing expressions by Chopin that he felt might offend the reader. See *Selected Correspondence of Fryderyk Chopin, abridged from Fryderyk Chopin’s Correspondence, collected and annotated by Bronislaw Edward Sydow*, ed. and trans. Arthur Hedley (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1963).

Ludwika (25 June 1849), an interpretation that lends poignant shading to our understanding of the importance of hope to the dying composer. Entire casts of characters — friends, colleagues, students, and antagonists — are fully restored to the documentary roster, again permitting the reader to witness the communities and contexts within which Chopin lived and worked. The new translations make it possible for the reader to experience Chopin's voice in an almost conversational way, the composer commenting, letter-by-letter, on the life he led.

All the major landmarks of Chopin's compelling existence emerge in these Polish letters. From the years he resided in Poland, we read exuberant reports of a young lad away from his family embracing the diversity of country life, and lively and passionate missives to his friends Jan Białobłocki and Tytus Woyciechowski that document the deepening of Chopin's emotional ties, the rapid expansion of his musical vision, and his first major successes as a pianist and composer. We encounter his first sustained residence abroad in Vienna, a time marked by further successes on the stage, but marred by the outbreak of revolution in Poland.

Chopin's Parisian years are first reported in chronicles that detail the musical and social whirlwinds he experienced. These give way to the letters of a composer who had quickly risen to acclaim as one of the major artistic figures of the day. From this position, he scrupulously negotiated through associates like Julian Fontana and Wojciech Grzymała the nagging details of his musical and personal life, larding his instructions with various measures of humor, abuse, and invective. His emotional relationships emerge as well, first in glimpses of his failed courtship of Maria Wodzińska. Chopin's fabled liaison with George Sand is then described in passages from letters to his family and Polish acquaintances, penned from exotic locales in Majorca, Marseille and Nohant in France, and of course from Paris once Chopin and Sand returned there as a couple. We learn much about Chopin's interests and pursuits in the 1840s, with his routine split between Nohant in the summer and Paris in the fall, winter, and spring. The rupture with Sand again emerges through the lens of his reports to family and friends.

Finally, the correspondence vividly and movingly documents Chopin's declining years, with the planning for his last concert in Paris, his extended, suffocating (figuratively and literally) sojourn

in England and Scotland, and his poignant final months back in Paris. Through all these letters there pass a wide range of minor characters and places: the stories they narrate from Chopin's life are as deep as they are broad.

The letters in this volume bristle with details about the publication of his music, and offer up many comments on his pending and past performances of them. But unlike the correspondence of many composers, Chopin's letters seldom offer reflections on the content and sense of his own music. (The rare instances of such commentary are therefore all the more precious, as when Chopin explains to Tytus Woyciechowski that the Adagio of his E-minor Concerto "should create the impression of a pleasant gazing at a place where a thousand delightful memories come to mind . . . a sort of pondering during a beautiful springtime, but under moonlight" — letter of 15 May 1830.) But this hardly means that Chopin's Polish letters only describe the details of the non-creative side of his daily life. As Ryszard Przybylski has persuasively argued (and Przybylski's book makes a fine companion volume to the present tome), Chopin's prose constantly reveals the invention and vision of its author.²

An excellent guiding illustration of this sort of verbal creativity comes in a passage from Chopin's letter to his family of 18–20 July 1845. Near the end of a beautiful description of his room in Nohant that is otherwise meant to convey an element of his wistfulness at recalling the prior stay of his sister there, he nonchalantly invokes a striking Cartesian term:

[. . .] I have placed the piano differently — next to the wall where there had been a little sofa with a little desk, at which Ludwika often embroidered my slippers, and the Lady of the House worked on something else. In the middle stands the desk at which I write, on the left lie a few of my music papers — Mr Thiers and poetry (including 'the moustache') ; on the right, Cherubini; before me, that repeater you sent me in its case (4 o'clock). Roses and carnations, pens and a piece of sealing wax still left over from Kalasanty.

2 Ryszard Przybylski, *A Swallow's Shadow: An Essay on Chopin's Thoughts*, trans. John Comber (Warsaw: The Fryderyk Chopin Institute, 2011).

I am always one foot with you — one foot in the room next door, where the Lady of the House works — and not at all in my own place at that moment — only, as usual, in some strange space.

Those are no doubt those *espaces imaginaires* — but I'm not ashamed of this; after all, it has become a proverb for us that 'he went to the coronation in his imagination', and I'm a genuine blind Mazovian.

It is not hard to sense Chopin evoking "imaginary spaces" throughout many of his Polish letters.³ We can perceive an anticipation of them already in the sometimes-nonsensical whimsy of the issues of the "Szafarnia Courier" that the fourteen-year-old Chopin created for his family back in Warsaw. They emerge again, surely, in the macabre scenarios rehearsed in the so-called Stuttgart Diary, and not much later toward the end of long letter to Tytus Wojciechowski that he wrote on 25 December 1831:

Just when I was getting ready to describe a ball to you, at which a certain divinity with a rose in her black hair enraptured me, I receive your letter. Everything *moderne* leaves my head. I move even closer to you. I take you by the hand, and I cry. I had your letter from Lwów — we shall meet all the later, and perhaps not at all, because, speaking seriously, my health is poor; I'm happy on the outside, especially among my own (I call the Poles 'my own'), but inside something is killing me — some sort of forebodings, anxieties, dreams or insomnia — longing — indifference — the desire to live, and a moment later the desire to die — some sort of sweet peace, some torpor, unconsciousness of mind, and sometimes a precise memory torments me.

"Imaginary spaces" could be for Chopin strange places of nostalgic rumination, but they could also lead him to inhabit disturbingly darker realms.

Other times, the *espaces imaginaires* blended directly into Chopin's dream worlds, but in ways that led back to the nonsensical paths

3 Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger has shown that the concept seems equally appropriate to describe passages in his music that presage a symbolist aesthetic. See "Placing Chopin: Reflections on a Compositional Aesthetic," *Chopin Studies* 2, ed. John Rink and Jim Samson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 136–139.

he explored in the *Szafarnia Courier*. Thus Chopin's envoi to Julian Fontana from 9/10 August 1841:

Once I dreamed I'd died in a hospital, and that became so lodged in my head that it seems to me it was yesterday. If you outlive me, you'll learn whether one should believe in dreams; several years ago, I dreamed something else, but it didn't come true. And now I dream while awake; blither-blather, as they say; that's why I'm writing you such nonsense. Right?

It should not surprise anyone that a composer celebrated for some of the most innovative flights of invention in the history of music should show an imaginative streak in his letters. This is not to suggest that his prose inventions in any direct way "explain" or somehow run parallel to his musical means of expression: Chopin himself inveighed with disgust against all such efforts (witness his complaints in these letters about the titles that the English publisher Wessel added to his publications). But from Chopin's Polish letters we can infer creative habits of mind, ways of making sense of the outside world, and his place within it, and these habits in turn prove invaluable as we situate Chopin's musical endeavors in their nurturing contexts.

Chopin of course never imagined that anyone but the intended recipients would read his letters (and the further notion that they might be translated into another language would have been completely foreign to him). This puts the creativity we perceive in them in a different realm than that of his compositions: they cast light on a more private domain of inventiveness, one focused in Chopin's past and present, but decidedly not on posterity. This, then, is the great gift of this new translation: the chance to eavesdrop on Chopin, to insinuate ourselves into his perception of his contemporary world, and to better understand his place in it.

Jeffrey Kallberg
University of Pennsylvania
Philadelphia

The correspondence presented here comprises all the known letters that Chopin wrote in Polish, as well as youthful verse and greetings, and also extracts from his personal journal dating from the period 'in limbo' between his youth in Warsaw and his life in Paris. Footnotes are provided to explain things that might otherwise be rather obscure, but in general this is not intended to be a scholarly edition. Consequently, although obviously no changes have been made to the substance of Chopin's texts, their appearance has been slightly modified in some respects compared to the manuscripts, for ease of reading: occasional spelling mistakes are tacitly corrected, including the orthography of personal names, which was never Chopin's forte; italics are used both for Chopin's own italics and also for his underlinings; second person pronouns are given with a small first letter, although Chopin generally used the capital letter in line with traditional Polish usage; Chopin's punctuation and paragraphing have occasionally been simplified and rendered easier on the eye — for instance, full stops and even new paragraphs are most often given instead of Chopin's dashes, which were due, at least in part, to his wish to save paper (the publisher will forgive our profligacy in this respect!).

The correspondence has been divided into sections, based largely on the criterion of location (Warsaw, Vienna, Paris, UK, and so on), as well as changes in Chopin's personal circumstances. Each section has been provided with an introduction, comprising a very brief historical/political background, biographical notes for Chopin, a list of the works he composed during the given period (only those works published during his lifetime, Opp. 1–65) and notes on selected individuals appearing repeatedly in the letters from that time. The dating of the compositions is based on Mieczysław Tomaszewski's list in *Chopin. Człowiek, Dzieło, Rezonans*, and the biographical information is drawn largely from volume 1 of the new Warsaw University edition of Chopin's correspondence (KorFCh), the updated edition of Krystyna Kobylańska's *Korespondencja Fryderyka Chopin z George Sand i z jej dziećmi* and the website of the Fryderyk Chopin Institute in Warsaw (<http://en.chopin.nifc.pl/institute>), which is recommended for further information on all aspects of Chopin's life and music.

The letters themselves are taken from KorFCh (1-80) and B. E. Sydow's original two-volume *Korespondencja Fryderyka Chopina* (81-286), with additional letters supplemented from Kobylańska. All original sources and editions can be found in those three publications.

JC