

**SOURCES, REMARKS, OBSERVATIONS, ANECDOTES,
TRANSLATIONS, AND PERHAPS DIFFERENT
INTERPRETATIONS OF “NEW”**

SUPPLEMENTAL

FRENCH

MAZUR-MAZURKA

SOURCES

**DANCE MATERIAL (EXCLUDING DANCE MANUALS) TO
BE CONSIDERED AS AN ADDENDUM OR SUPPLEMENT
TO PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED WORK (1984) OF**

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**A CONTINUING WORK IN PROGRESS NOT IN A
CERTAIN TOPICAL OR THEMATIC ORDER BUT ONLY
ARRANGED IN A CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER — THERE ARE
OVERLAPPING CATEGORIES**

Readers Note: Original material is in italics and surrounded by quotation marks. Side-by-side or immediately following is the translation for foreign language material.

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1815 CONGRESS OF VIENNA

One of the observations from the Congress of Vienna allows to identify the meaning of a phrase with appears here and there, namely , “pas russe” which can become confused with the term “Mazurka Russe.”

“Rien n’est plus délicieux que le pas russe. Qu’on se représente une pantomime exprimant les desires de l’homme, . . .”

*Après le pas russe, on dansa des mazurkas, sorte de quadrille originaire de la Mazovie. Parmi les danses de salon il n ’en est pas qui exige plus d’agilité, et don’t les mouvements soient plus pittoresques.”*¹

There is nothing more delicious than the pas russe. It represents the expression of the desires of humanity, . . .

After the pas russe, the Dance of the Mazurka, is a sort of Quadrille which originated in the province Mazowsze. Among the Salon Dances the step requires skill and its movements are picturesque.

The first sentence above is a description of a dance pantomime like a classical Ballet but with a Russian peasant story line. It has nothing to do with the “Mazurka Russe.”

1815 WELLINGTON IN FRANCE

The Duke of Wellington was a man of high spirits with an eye for the Ladies and he liked to dance. He gives us a proof of when the Mazurka existed in France:

*“The Duchess of Richmond came out with a selection of her fourteen children to stay at his house at Cambrai. Among these children was her third daughter, the pretty, lively Georgiana who was to marry the twenty-third Baron de Ros. With her and her mothers and sisters, the Duke rode and danced the mazurka and supervised amateur theatricals and played a rowdy game called ‘riding in the coach’ in which the young ladies sat on carpets to be dragged about the corridors by the officers of the headquarters staff.”*²

How did these people come to a dancing knowledge of the Mazurka? This is too early for the Duke of Devonshire who, himself, only coming to the Mazurka in Russia in the 1820’s. The most likely sources were probably the Poles living in Paris or those serving in the Russian Army. There might have been only one dance leader at this occasion who directed the others.

¹ Le Comte August de La Garde-Chambonas, *Souvenirs Du Congres de Vienne*, 3rd ed.,(Paris: 1901), p.201.

² Christopher Hibbert, *Wellington: A Personal History*, (London: Addison-Wesley, 2001), p. 207.

1817-18 CREEVEY IN FRANCE

In the wake of the final Allied Victory over Napoleon many of the leaders and personalities of the Allied Nations were in France. From the various social events of the time comes one of the first references to the Mazurka Dance in Western Europe, in this case, France. This is from the Journal of Thomas Creevey, dated 1818.

*“Here again Cossack saddle horses were provided by Count Woronzow for all the strangers. . . We had been all invited beforehand to dine with Count Woronzow, and just as the review was finishing, he rode up to every English carriage to say he was to have a ball in the evening. . . . After dinner, the ball opened, when my delight was to see the Mizurko [Mazurka] danced by Madame Suwarrow and her brother the Prince Nariskin, Commander-in-chief of the Cossacks. The Dutchess of Kent waltzes a little, and the Duke of Kent put his hand upon her cheek to feel if she was not too hot.”*³

If only Mr. Creevey had left us a fuller account of the dancing. However, perhaps we may infer that since no other persons were described as dancing the Mazurka, that this was therefore only danced by this couple and that as such would be closer to the Polish Mazur Form rather than the quadrilled Mazurka. They probably just promenaded around the ballroom.

1822 PARIS,FRANCE

Prince Leon Sapieha, when a young man, was a student in Paris. In his letters we can see who was dancing the Mazurka at this time. This from his letter of January 3, 1822, written at the age of twenty:

*“Byłem także na balu u pani Komarowej, gdzie, mimo mocnego przedsięwzięcia nie tańcowania, dałem się mazurkowi skusić.”*⁴

I was also at a Ball given by Pani Komarowa, where, in spite of my efforts not to dance, I did attempt to dance the Mazurka.

By March of 1822 he enjoyed himself much more:

*“Wieczór u pani Komarowa, był bardzo zabawny, prawie sami tylko Polacy na nim i tańcowałem kilka mazurków i walców. Mogę powiedzieć, że od tego czasu, jak jestem w Paryżu, nigdy się jeszcze tak nie bawiłem.”*⁵

³ Thomas Creevey, *The Creevey Papers: Journal 1817-1818*, (London: 1903), p. 283.

⁴ Leon X. Sapieha, *Wspomnienia*, (Lwów: Altenberg, 1913), p. 289.

⁵ Leon X. Sapieha, *Wspomnienia*, . . . , p. 290.

Evening at Pani Komarowa's, it was very playful, only Poles were there and with them I danced a number of Mazurkas and Waltzes. I can tell you, that since that time, as I've been in Paris, I haven't enjoyed myself as much.

We see that this young student now danced. What is significant is that there were multiple Mazurkas done and that its dancing was very much a Polish émigré's Society activity.

1825 PARIS, STEP REMARK

From a Parisian dance teacher we have some step observations:

*“Le pas russe, l'anglaise, la cosaque sont des pas agréables, mais bizarres.”*⁶

So he points out that the steps are agreeable to these dances though bizarre. Where would he have seen them? We must remember that by 1816 the Russians and their Cossacks were in Paris and that the Poles were already there. Most probably the Pas Russe are the steps for the Mazurka.

1827 FRANCE, COMMONLY DONE DANCES

According to the Austrian ambassador to France the most commonly done dances in France in the early 19th century were the Waltz, cotillion, Quadrille, Gallop and Ecosaise.⁷

1831 CHOPIN IN PARIS

*“On Mondays he could always be seen at Prince Adam Czartoryski's and on Thursdays at the weekly soirees given by Count Ludwik Plater.”*⁸

1832 MORE CHOPIN IN PARIS & CELLARIUS

What was Chopin's influence with the Mazur-Mazurka as a Dance in Paris? We do not have much to go on but the following is helpful. From an evening of socializing with the Plater family:

⁶ J. Faget, *De La Danse, et particulièrement De La Danse de Société*, (Paris: 1825), p.31.

⁷ Rodolphe Appongi, *Journal Du Comte*, (1826-1830), (Paris:1913).

⁸ William Atwood, *The Lioness and The Little One*, (New York: Columbia U. Press, 1980), p.66.

*“But the émigré colony in Paris was no ghetto: Chopin’s French friends often accompanied him to Polish evenings, and vice versa. ‘At the house of the charming Countess Plater we used to play while the Polish émigrés danced, and we came to know a Mazurka so physical and full-blooded that we might have been in its native land,’ . . . ”*⁹

So we know that the French and Poles were at dances together in a Polish atmosphere: they saw Poles dance it. What is this reference, “so physical and Full-blooded,” refer to? It may be a conscious comparison with some of Chopin’s ethereal Mazurka compositions.

1837 PARIS, CHOPIN

Who danced the Mazur in Paris? From the diary entry for a Ball, given by Countess Mostowska, in 1837 of Jozef Brzowski we learn:

*“Towarzystwo, które zastałem, było wyłącznie polskie, a złożone po większej części z osób znanych mi w Warszawie. Z cudzoziemców były może dwie lub trzy osoby, między innymi sławny w domowej wojnie hiszpańskiej generał Cordoba . . . Cały wieczór tańczono, a najczęściej wznawianym tańcem był mazur. Jego to brzmienie, pełne szczerej wesołości, przenosiło mnie myślą w rodzinne ustronia; pewnie i wszystkim sprawiał to złudzenie, bo wszystko ochoczo rzuciło się w grono tańczących, a wódz hiszpański musiał w nim zasmakować, gdyż hasał porządnie. Wieczór ten miał postać więcej familijna niż ostentacyjna, nie było orkiestry, fortepian ja zastępował, a między chętnymi towarzyszenia był Chopin, który grał walca własnej kompozycji. Proszono potem i mnie, bym poszedł za jego przykładem.”*¹⁰

The Society, of which I was part, was predominately Polish, made up in large part of people I had known in Warszawa. Of foreigners, there were maybe two or three people, among who was the famous Spanish Civil War General, Cordoba . . . For the entire evening there was dancing; the most frequently requested Dance was the Mazur. Its sound, full of sincere gaiety, took my thoughts back to my homeland; probably this was true for all of us, because everyone joined gladly the crowd of dancers. Even the Spanish leader must have like it, because he [too] shouted-out. The evening was more of a family [affair] than an ostentatious occasion: there wasn’t an orchestra. A piano took its place and in between Chopin played [some] of his waltzes. And they asked me [to play] after his example.

Now this 1837. Where was Cellarius at this time? Actually, given the highly patriotic and symbolic meanings of the Polonaise and Mazur for the Polish émigrés, we wonder why there are no mentions of French dance teachers attending these Polish functions or taking dance lessons from Poles?

Would not they have been noticed and commented upon?

1838 PARIS

⁹ A. Zamoyski, *Chopin: A New Biography*, (New York: 1980), p. 103.

¹⁰ Adam Czartkowski, *Fryderyk Chopin*, (Warszawa: PIW, 1967), p. 217.

During years 1836-1840 a friend of Chopin contrasted the madding Cancan Quadrille, done in bizarre costumes, with its shouting and wild galloping to the Mazur: with the Mazur the better for it.

He found the Polish Balls to be more to his liking, which like always, as in Poland, had the Mazur.¹¹

1847 THE HOTEL LAMBERT

Where in the Hotel Lambert were Balls held. Here is what one person, a close friend of Chopin, said:

*“Na drugim piętrze jest sławna galerya balowa z freskami Lessueur’a, która służyła na bale i rauty w okolicznościach solennych, . . .”*¹²

On the second floor is the famous ballroom with the frescos of Lessueur, which [was used] for balls and for more solemn meetings, . . .

*“Tam odbywały się wszystkie przyjęcia, a w zimie bywały wieczory periodyczne, na których w r. 1848 i 1849 młodzi z eleganckiej emigracji wywijali jeszcze mazura jak za dobrych czasów.”*¹³

There all the meetings were held, but in the winter there were periodic evening [socials], at which in the years 1848 and 1849 the elegant Youth of the emigration still danced the Mazur as was done in the good times.

By the “good times” he meant in Poland when there was peace and they were free—when they were home.

1840s THE “LA MAZOURKA” PRINT

Immediately following is the illustration from an album of drawings entitled, “La Mazourka” done by the artist Labourde, sometime in the 1840s. It is one of the prettiest. It depicts the dancing of the Mazurka in a Ballroom of Paris, perhaps it is even from Cellarius’ Dance School.

If it could be proven that the pianist in the illustration is Chopin himself then this would not be Cellarius’ Ballroom but the Hotel Lambert and the dancers would be Poles—but there is no proof of this. Let us analyze the print.

¹¹ Karol Frankowski, *Moje wędrówki po obczyźnie Paryż*, Vol. I, (Warszawa: PIW,1973), p. 80.

¹² Juliusz Fiałkowski, *Wspomnienia z roku 1848 I 1849*, (Poznań: 1879), p.243. On the first floor the Czartoryski family lived.

¹³ Juliusz Fiałkowski, *Wspomnienia . . .*, p. 243.



The men of the two center couples are doing the PZDP with a relaxed grace: so relaxed that they may really be doing the PZJD variant, that is to say, done with only one hop or they may be doing it with no hop at all. They may be doing it without any risings at all! They may be just swinging their leg from the back to the front, supporting leg bent at the knee, dragging-sliding—really, just like ice-skating along the floor.¹⁴ This does resemble ice-skating since the couples are in what can be called the “back-hand hold skaters position.” This brings to mind the Waltzes of the French composer, Waldteufel.

One part of the great pleasure of dancing this step is sliding the entire dancers’ body weight across the dance floor. As we have mentioned elsewhere, this pleasure is a function of the condition of the floor and of the foot wear and of the physical conditioning of the dancer. If the floor is too slippery and the dancer too aggressive this movement can be dangerous to do!

Notice that here the Woman is on the Man’s left side: usually she is on his right side. Perhaps they got into this position from a halfly-formed Sur la Place couple turn—this would make a delicious variation!

We do not know the nationality of the dancing men, in particular of the soldier. This could be of some importance since in the popular imagination the Mazur-Mazurka, was and is, associated with the Polish Military, specifically, with the Polish Cavalry.

Obviously here the artist was at pains to show the PZDP step. So let us look at another more recent example of this step, in this case, from a photograph of Polish Dancers taken in the 1960s.

¹⁴ These and other variants of these steps have been thoroughly discussed in our other Mazur-Mazurka written works. See for example, *Mazur: The Elegant Polish Running-Sliding Dance*.



This photograph was taken as the dancers were dancing forward. Note in particular that the Woman is doing the Basic Running Step and she is making the transition from count 3& to count 1 and is not in contact with the ground. She is rather high off the ground. The ground is the “problem.” There is too much friction with the foot wear. It would be dangerous to stay on or just above the surface; however for the man wearing heavier foot wear, he can look as though he is doing a slide forward, although he is just posing the slide.

Is it instructive to place the men together? Let us try it.



Here we easily see the relaxed attitude or the nonchalance, of which the French were commented about, compared to the more vigorous attitude of the Polish pair. It is not a small thing to notice that the Pole does not have his hand on his hip. His free arm is to show guidance to the Woman.

But these are in some sense personal characteristics (either in-bred or learned) as well as sustained practice or lack thereof. Of course, it does matter from whom one learns the Dance and its step movements.

1850s PARIS, MARKOWSKI

Markowski left Poland at the age of 18 for Paris. In 1848 he opened his dance school at the Hotel Normandie. He was a great success and retired in 1863. He introduced the Schottisch in 1849.¹⁵ He may have invented the Polka-Mazurka.

His real name may have not have been Markowski.

1850s FRANCE, MARKOWSKI, THE FAKE DANCEMASTER

A Maurice Mayer, who was a dance-author went by the name Markowski!!!¹⁶ This is most probably the very same Markowski above. He was a prolific inventor of dances, for example, la friska, la lisbonienne, la hongroise, etc.

1860 MAZURKA IN FRANCE

From a guide book for English travelers to Paris we learn that the huge, amusing, brilliant entertainments of the public Masked Balls which took place during the Carnival Season of 1860, at the Paris Opera House featured, “the untiring velocity with which the dancers whirl themselves through the mazes of the waltz, polka, and mazourka, present an appearance of bewildering gaiety not to be described.”¹⁷

FRANCE DANCE TEACHERS

¹⁵ M. Gliński, *Taniec*, Vol. I, (Warszawa: 1930), p.136.

¹⁶ Francois Gasnault, *Guinguettes et Lorettes*, (Paris: Aubier, 1986), p. 259.

¹⁷ *New Paris Guide For 1866*, (Paris: 1866), p.476.

Laborde, Coralli, and Cellarius made their fortune teaching the Polka to Parisians in the 1843-44 season. The Polka, popular with everyone in Paris, represented the accession of the lower-classes over the upper-classes of Paris.¹⁸

¹⁸ A. Martin-Fugier, *La Vie Élegante*, (Paris: Fayard, 1990), p. 132-133.