

## An Analysis of the National Characteristics of Chopin Polonaise

### -- Take Op.40 No.1 in A Major as an Example

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#### Abstract

Chopin's Polonaise Op.40 No.1 in A major was created in 1838, which is a classic Polonaise dance work. Taking this work as an example, this paper analyzes the creation background and music noumenon of Polonaise, and explores the national and patriotic music characteristics of Polonaise.

#### Keywords

Chopin, Polonaise Op.40 No.1 in A major, National characteristics.

#### 1. Chopin and Polonaise Op.40 No.1 in a major

Chopin's creation involves various musical genres. Many of his works are closely related to Polish folk music. At the age of 7, he composed two Polonaise in B major and G minor, which basically showed his deep understanding of Polish national music, its influence on him, and his keen perception of folk music.

This is enough to make Chopin's music have rich national characteristics. When Poland was invaded and Chopin was exiled, facing the suffering of the motherland and the people, he could only integrate endless grief and indignation into his works, thus creating such piano works as Polonaise, revolutionary Etudes and so on, which were full of ardent patriotic feelings and national feelings.

Chopin poured his strong emotion into his music, so that every work contains endless love for the motherland and the pain of his own national suffering. In his heart, Chopin gave his motherland the best blessing and did his best to fight for the nation and the motherland. It can be said that Chopin is an excellent national musician and also a national artist.

Polonaise dance piece No. 40 No. 1 in A major was written by Chopin in 1838. This piece is also known as "military Polonez dance". This is a popular piano piece, and more importantly, it is praised as Poland's glory. Therefore, the Polonaise dance piece No. 40 No. 1 in a major can be said to be a very successful work in the process of creating Polonaise by Chopin.

This dance music is not only worthy of appreciation or performance by the relevant musicians or artists at that time, but also very worthy of our in-depth understanding, appreciation and inheritance of this work, so that the dance music can be appreciated and passed on by more people.

#### 2. National characteristics of structure

Polonaise dance piece Op.40 No.1 in A major is composed of three parts with A-B-A' structure. Paragraph 'A' is the theme of the whole work. It is 24 bars in length and has a single trilogy. In the first part of a major, both hands start with powerful octave chords and expand the musical tension with progressive double tones (oblique). Then, the octave texture is used to make the theme motive reach the highest level of emotion by the way of three-dimensional modeling. Here can be seen as the image of the great hero and the image of the army waiting for trouble.

The second part of the phrase in B major, combining the singing and marching rhythm of the song with the unique rhythm of Polonaise dance music. It has successfully created a magnificent scene of enthusiastic singing and dancing of the Polish people.

Chopin made full use of homophony and repetition to transform the tense atmosphere and the inner anxious cry into the sound of a bugle, which was a declaration of war and a call for a resolute struggle of the Polish people. The third part completely reproduces the first part, in which tonality and theme are returned, which makes the listener feel the tension of critical moment again.

From the perspective of the structure of Polonaise dance music, many of Chopin's Polonaise dance music are completed by using regular trilogy, such as G minor and A major, which are closely related to Polish folk dance music. When people begin to dance, the dance music that accompanies the dance begins its first part; when people pass through luxurious rooms and enter the corridors or flower beds, music begins to enter the middle; finally, when people come back to the hall, they start playing the first part of the music again.

### 3. National characteristics of melody

Chopin's Polonaise dance in A major is characterized by passion, excitement and sincerity. But the most important thing is that this dance music is rich in singing and melody. Passionate rhythm, high melody and broad harmony are the characteristics of Polonaise of "army" and Polish national music.

Chopin absorbed the foundation of Polish traditional music, combined with his superb harmonic writing skills and genius composing nature, he made a creative development of Polish national music.

From the melody of this work, the left and right hands properly use the reverse melody, which pushes the dynamic of the music to a climax. The octave filling of two hands also reasonably expresses the firm momentum of fighting unyielding. It not only depicts the bravery of the army, but also has the determination and courage to fight to victory, depicting the heroic temperament and image of marching forward bravely.

Its harmony has a distinctive national color. Starting from national music and combining with its own unique creation, the sound technique has the track of Polish national music and is also the source of vitality of Chopin's music.

### 4. National characteristics of rhythm

Polonaise dance music originated from Polish folk dance, with a typical Polonaise rhythm. From the analysis of Polonaise rhythm, Chopin inherited the original characteristics of Polonaise dance music, and made his music appear more vigorous and powerful. The most typical rhythm should be the rhythm type accompanied by left hand. This rhythm type has a fixed rhythm formula: when the theme appears, the left hand accompaniment rhythm type is an octave note and two sixteenth notes, followed by four octaves.

The emergence of this rhythmic type makes people have a rhythm of marching forward, which is just a kind of music of queue type to boost morale and strengthen military prestige. It also shows the firm and brave personality of the Polish people.

Then, from the example of music score, we can observe the rhythm of punctuation interspersed with rest. The last sixteenth note of the original punctuation rhythm tends to  $1/4$  infinitely, including the use of rest, so as to avoid the continuous rhythm and ensure the clear rhythm of the whole song, so as to set off the national image of the Polish people who are brave and courageous.

### 5. Conclusion

To sum up, Chopin brought the characteristics of Polish national music into Polonaise dance music Op.40 No.1 in A major, showing the national characteristics and national emotions of Poland.

Chopin integrated and innovated Polish music elements and used them in his Polonaise.

When appreciating Polonaise in A major op. 40 No. 1, it's like seeing the ancient Polish warriors. They interweave their strong physique, open-minded mind, and loyalty to the motherland, twinkling with great chivalry.

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The Polonaise created by Chopin not only has the style of Polish folk music, but also integrates his own unique creation style in the process of creation. The dance music created by Chopin are most inclined to the music genre with national characteristics and patriotic characteristics. In his works, the spiritual essence of the Polish nation is embodied all the time. Chopin pushed Polish music to the whole world.

### References

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