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Contemporary Russian Piano School Pedagogy and Performance

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CONTEMPORARY RUSSIAN PIANO SCHOOL: PEDAGOGY AND PERFORMANCE

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A thesis submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

King's College London
University of London

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ABSTRACT

This research identifies primarily the characteristics of modern Russian pianism. In the process of exploring performance practice, this study throws light on the interlocking relationship between pedagogy and performance. Further, it will take the opportunity to expand on the ‘Russian Piano School’ ideology and to examine how this ideology has affected the interpretation of Russian pianists. This thesis uses written documentary sources, observations, interviews as well as sound recordings to form its conclusions.

Chapter one takes the opportunity to examine the current scholarship and aims to demonstrate the relative depth of this thesis. The second chapter focuses on the contemporary idea of the ‘Russian Piano School’ and sets the scope of the discussion for this research. The term Russian School or Tradition – occurs throughout the last century and has been widely used in association with a particular style of performance. This chapter, however, disputes the implication of the term and its connection with performance style, and provides another perspective to current scholarship. Chapter three embarks on further investigation of Russian piano pedagogy at present, and expands the subject-matter with reference to three distinctive principles of the Russian School of playing: the idea of a long melodic line, a cantabile singing tone and a solid technical foundation. This section reveals some particularly striking observations. It should be of interest to note that globalisation has already made a significant impact on the Russian pedagogical approach. The fourth, fifth and sixth chapters present the three characteristics of Russian pianism separately. Chapter four places the spotlight

on the technical foundation. In contrast to other schools, Russian pianists pay heavy attention to technique at an early age. This chapter aims to deconstruct their current curriculum for technical exams, and analyses a number of études and technical excises. It should be of interest to note that this section considers the tutor books used throughout the student period, leading to the solid technical foundation with which generations of Russian pianists seem to have been equipped. Chapter five looks closely at the long melodic line in the performance of Russian pianists and explores the effectiveness of long lines in Romantic music. It does, however, suggest this particular feature has been ‘embedded’ into their playing unconsciously, which has influenced some of their performance decisions. The sixth chapter, as its title suggests, focuses on the cantabile sound quality in Russian performances – another noticeable feature of the Russian musical aesthetics. The ways in which Russian pianists construct their tonal layers at different levels can be studied in depth and can be examined from a number of different angles. It proves helpful to use Tchaikovsky’s B flat minor Piano Concerto, Op. 23, and Mozart’s Piano Sonata in F major KV 332, as case studies to furnish examples. Finally, a concluding chapter draws together the strands of the preceding discussion. In sum, the thesis reconsiders the modern ‘Russian Piano School’ in relation to the globalisation of teaching and practice, and concludes with suggestions for further study.

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INTRODUCTION

Musicians have frequently expressed their interests and views about the ‘Russian Piano School’. For example, the pianist and music writer, Jessica Duchen, seems to recognise that the classification of the Russian School does is not only limited to pianists, as she stated in an article:

‘It was a far cry from the glory days of what used to be called the “Russian School” – the legendary musicians of the early- to mid-20th century: Sergei Rachmaninov, Fyodor Chaliapin, Sviatoslav Richter, David Oistrakh and Mstislav Rostropovich.’¹

Further back in the history, Western pianists such as Artur Schnabel (1882-1951) also provided a view on the subject. Schnabel disagreed that the Russian School is different from others; and he naturally understood it as a kind of playing:

‘I cannot accept that there is anything specifically Russian about playing with straight and flat fingers. I lived for thirty years in Germany and even so I would not be able to say what the “German technique” is.’²

The two examples above show that there are diversified opinions within Western music society on the Russian School. On the other side of the world, there has always been a steady flow of useful information about the ‘Russian Piano School’ in Russia, covering every aspect of piano playing as well as its musical history. However, due to the language barriers and cultural separation, access to such materials is not straightforward, and most of these publications have remained untranslated and

¹ Jessica Duchen, ‘Russians Hit a Wrong Note’ in *Standpoint* 2009. <http://standpointmag.co.uk/music-october-09-russians-hit-a-wrong-note-jessica-duchen> [Accessed 24 February 2016].

² Artur Schnabel. *My life and Music, with Reflections on Music* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1963), 195-96.

unreachable outside Russia. It is not surprising that some Western performers and musicologists have attempted to analyse the Russian school of piano playing merely through recordings, and formulated through them alone a conception of the piano training within the nation. Although the recordings have their bearing on the many-sided picture, the reliability of writings based on the recordings can be questionable, such as in the case outlined in Philip's study of Sergei Rachmaninov, Josef Lhévinne and Josef Hofmann.³ With this in mind, I attempted to be as comprehensive and structured as possible with my research methodologies. Using triangulation research technique, I was able to validate the research data through cross verification from four approaches:

Written Documents

Since the available resources are limited, performing literature and method books are particularly important. Rather as György Sándor's treatise outlined some performing habits that Western musicians favoured in the twentieth century, Alexander Nikolaev edited a series of educational method books for beginners during the Soviet period, all of which are still widely used in Russia today.⁴ Sándor's treatise, and other similar texts, provides an explanation and description on performing principles of Western musicians; while Nikolaev's method books offer an overview of the Russian teaching and learning process. In addition to these resources, personal dairies of Russian pianists and observation notes also provide valuable information. For instance, Sviatoslav Richter's *Notebooks and Conversations* explores the inside world of the pianist, as well as his studies with Henrich Neuhaus at the Moscow Conservatoire.

³ Robert Philip. *Performing Music in the Age of Recording*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 189.

⁴ György Sándor. *On Playing Piano*. (New York: Schirmer Books, 1982); Alexander Nikolaev (ed.). *The Russian School of Piano Playing* (London: Boosey & Hawkes, 1978).

Although Richter stated that three hours a day at the piano would be his normal ration, all the evidence found seems to contradict his claim on the question of practising.⁵ In a letter written to the marshal of the USSR in 1950, Richter stated:

‘I need a two-room flat where I can practise for between twelve and fourteen hours a day, including the hours of darkness, without disturbing anyone. It is vital that two grand pianos can be installed in one of these rooms...I can assure you that no other musician with such a busy concert schedule is in a situation like mine.’⁶

These first-hand materials are undoubtedly useful resources to understand the educational background and political situation of the Soviet period. This thesis, however, deals with the contemporary aspect of the Russian performing school, and many of these documents were written several decades ago. Therefore, it has prompted me to include interviews as part of my research methodology.

Interviews

Interviews with Russian pianists clarified inquiries and provided valuable first-hand insights. Not only was this a useful research tool to reveal Russian pianists’ self-perception, but also an opportunity to discover concepts that I may not have known. In particular, semi-structured and unstructured interviews were employed in this thesis because the semi-structured interviews allowed me to get answers to precise areas of the research that need clarification and are specific to each interviewee; whilst the unstructured interviews, which were less restricted, allowed the interviewees to express their opinions freely and gave me the opportunity to get information that was useful to my research that I didn’t necessarily know existed.

⁵ Bruno Monsaingeon. *Sviatoslav Richter: Notebooks and Conservations* (London: Faber and Faber, 2001), 138.

⁶ Letters of Richter at archives of the Gnessin Institute in Moscow, 18th November 1950.

Further, some unstructured interviews gave me the opportunity to get in-depth and varied responses from a number of interviewees. All interviews were conducted in English, apart from two interviews, where those interviewees were not comfortable with spoken English. Although their interviews were conducted in Russian, an interpreter was present at each of their interviews – ensuring that the questions were understood and their views fluently expressed.

Although all interviews conducted generated verbal and gestural data, the focus was on verbal data. It was then analysed with Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). This analysis methodology has been widely employed in psychological qualitative research, and according to McPherson, Davidson and Faulkner, this is particularly valuable in music psychology as it provides an insight into the participants' experience and examines it with an idiographic focus.⁷ IPA was particularly useful for this research because of the way in which performers perceive the performing traditions, and their personal or emotional involvement with the 'Russian School'. As pointed out previously, cross-validation and triangulation were used in order to be as accurate as possible with the data as well as the analysis.

The data analysis process followed the standard IPA procedure suggested by its pioneers (Smith, Flowers and Larkin 2009). At the initial stage, notes were made whilst listening to the recordings before transcribing the data into full text. This initial coding process focused on a phenomenological approach, recognising the main theme of discussion of each participant and subsequently, what these themes meant to them. These themes are likely to reveal important messages about what matters to the participants. The second stage in the coding process includes an interpretative

⁷ See McPherson, G.E, J.W. Davidson, and R. Faulkner, *Music in our lives: rethinking musical ability, development and identity*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2012, 92.

approach which helps to recognise how and why pianists emphasised those themes, and links the phenomenological codes to concepts. As with all other research involving the IPA approach, each interview was analysed individually before working on the next set of interview data. As pointed out above, the interview process yielded both verbal and gestural data although the latter were minimal. Therefore, gestural data will not be taken into account in this research.

Table 1 indicates the themes associated by participants when discussing the ‘Russian Piano School’ i.e. how they define the term; whether it still exists after external influences (other performing schools, political changes); the distinctive features. Some themes are self-explanatory, but it would be beneficial to discuss briefly each theme category, and where possible, provide a few examples.

Theme	Russian pianists					Russian immigrant pianists						Total
	AM	EK	NT	PN	Total	RH	BB	DA	TS	SG	Total	
Educational System	✓	✓	✓	✓	4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	5	9
Performance Style	✓	✓	✓	✓	4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	5	9
Ideology			✓	✓	2						0	2
Tradition	✓	✓	✓	✓	4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	5	9
Limitations			✓	✓	2		✓	✓		✓	3	5
Sound	✓	✓	✓	✓	4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	5	9
Technique		✓	✓		2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	5	7
Legato	✓	✓	✓	✓	4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	5	9
Global			✓	✓	2		✓	✓	✓		3	5
Political	✓	✓			2		✓			✓	2	4

Table 1: Themes associated by participants

Educational System

This theme was usually raised by the participants when describing to the way in which their school functions. This was also how a few of the participants defined and understood the ‘Russian Piano School’. Participants discussed the idea of ‘Russian Piano School’ as being ‘a very complex system’⁸ and that ‘it was a very high level of education’.⁹ Other participants discussed the ‘Russian Piano School’ uncertainly as some of them are no longer connected with the ‘school’ in Russia, with Sarkissova commenting: ‘It is very difficult for me to say; because I am not aware of what is happening there now’.¹⁰

Performance Style

All of the participants discussed ‘Russian Piano School’ as something that had an influence on their performance style, though all of them admitted that they were not able to label what is ‘Russian’ and what is not in their own playing. Nersessian pointed out that ‘I cannot divide what are the ‘Russian Piano School’ and the other musicianship in me. It is impossible to divide’.¹¹ Kuznetsova also stated that ‘Normally Russian piano music making is something like a mother tongue that we have absorbed from parents and do not notice when we make the music’.¹² Despite the fact that they are unable to divide the ‘Russianness’ in their own playing, Alexeev for example, is able to identify the ‘Russian School’ through others’ playing.¹³

⁸ Interview with Dimitri Alexeev.

⁹ Interview with Natalia Trull.

¹⁰ Interview with Tatiana Sarkissova.

¹¹ Interview with Pavel Nersessian.

¹² Interview with Elena Kuznetsova.

¹³ Interview with Dimitri Alexeev.

Ideology

‘Russian Piano School’ as ideology was raised by two of participants, with Natalia Trull commenting: ‘I can say, at the moment ‘Russian Piano School’ is a school ideology.’¹⁴

Tradition

The association of tradition and performing school was discussed by all participants although Trull preferred it as ‘ideology’. All of the other participants described how this tradition influences both their teaching and performing style. Sarkissova was amongst the first participants to refuse labelling the ‘Russian Piano School’ as ideology. As she states, ‘Of course it is wrong [to call it an ideology]. But the ‘Russian School’ was based on the great musicians’.¹⁵ Alexeev, too, believed that this tradition ‘will develop and will exists and will live for many generation to come.’¹⁶

Limitations

Participants discussed the characteristics of Russian pianism but only a few agreed that Russian pianists have characteristic limitations in their playing. These limitations included playing Mozart with unnecessarily long lines,¹⁷ playing with only one kind of sound (full and long lasting),¹⁸ lack of understand in style.¹⁹

¹⁴ Interview with Natalia Trull.

¹⁵ Interview with Tatiana Sarkissova.

¹⁶ Interview with Dimitri Alexeev.

¹⁷ Interview with Pavel Nersessian.

¹⁸ Interview with Boris Berman.

¹⁹ Interview with Sofya Gulyak.

Sound

All participants discussed sound as the most important part in their playing. Many also suggested how this theme was embedded into their musicianship earlier in their study.

Technique

All of the participants who mentioned technique in their interview agreed that it has to be dealt with at the earliest stages, i.e. prior to the studies at Conservatoires.²⁰ Many discussed the importance of giving the appropriate repertoires to strengthen a specific area of technique.²¹

Legato

Like sound, legato is another performance element that was discussed by all participants. Many discussed the relationship between Russian music literature and legato line.²² Neresisan pointed out that long legato is a sign of the ‘Russian School’, but ‘probably not the first sign’. Further, he suggested that it could be a key feature Rachmaninov’s music.²³

Global

Trull, Neresisan, Berman, Alexeev, and Sarkissova all discussed global effects such as globalisation (via competitions)²⁴ in performance than influenced their performing school. In particular, Trull also stated that the educational system is also at risk due to the fact that international students could now study at Moscow Conservatory without

²⁰ Interview with Elena Kuznetsova & Natalia Trull.

²¹ Interview with Natalia Trull.

²² Interview with Boris Berman & Elena Kuznetsova.

²³ Interview with Pavel Nersessian.

²⁴ Interview with Elena Kuznetsova.

going through the preparation studies at Music Colleges or Central Music School in Russia.²⁵

Political

Four participants felt that political situation is also an important factor for the ‘Russian Piano School’ and that it has influenced the way in which the ‘school’ functions. Berman discussed the influential role the government has in shaping the musical scene in Russia, as well as the values of music in the society.²⁶ Gulyak suggested that she did not feel the political situation was better during the Soviet period, but from musicians’ point of view the music profession was better respected, jobs were more secure.²⁷

Summary of themes

In sum, all of the abovementioned themes prompted the interviewees in their understanding of the ‘Russian Piano School’ and shaped their teaching and performing activities. Participants seemed to have a similar thought towards the performance aesthetics and its educational value, but have different views on ‘Russian Piano School’ as merely an ideology. As we progress into this thesis, we will investigate how participants used some of these themes to modify the way in which they play, and occasionally, adjust their teaching approaches in instrumental lessons.

²⁵ Interview with Natalia Trull.

²⁶ Interview with Boris Berman.

²⁷ Interview with Sofya Gulyak.

Summary of the Interview Approach

Interview questions were designed to address specific areas and all interviews were conducted exclusively for this research.²⁸ Although I had contacts with many eminent Russian pianists, the interview arrangements were not always straightforward. All interviewees who took part in this research are concert pianists with busy performance schedules; therefore, interviewing time was slightly pressurised in some interviews. But there was enough time to collect what I needed from the interviewees. All interviewees selected in this thesis went through their musical training during the Soviet period; half of them are currently teaching at the Moscow Conservatoire, whilst the other half have taught in the West for over twenty years. It was particularly beneficial that Elena Kuznetsova, the former Dean of Piano Faculty at the Moscow Conservatoire, was able to be interviewed. Her experience in that managing role was undoubtedly valuable to this research. Besides extracting additional information from the contemporary Russian pianists, interviews also helped clarify notions stated in various documents. Although these interviews revealed a number of thought-provoking conceptions from the twenty-first century Russian pianists, it was not possible to judge whether these concepts were carried through in their actual teaching activities. Thus, field study was incorporated into the research.

Observations & Questionnaires

Observation is one of the most direct ways to understand participants' behaviour. Due to the nature of the research, I have decided to employ non-participant observation.²⁹

The aim of this approach is to describe and reveal Russian teachers' behaviour in one-

²⁸ See Appendix 1 for the list of interview questions.

²⁹ Non-participant observation: This observation technique has no intervention by the researcher. It allows me, as the researcher, to study behavior that occurs naturally in natural contexts. I have used a systematic checklist to help structuring the observation. See Appendix 3 for the observation checklist and Appendix 4 for the observation coding.

to-one instrumental lessons. Further, this observation concerned an assessment of how Western cultural influences have affected Russian teachers' behaviour, or to some extent adjusted their teaching strategies. Observations also showed how Russian teachers tend to deliver their ideas and how they solve musical problems. It yielded useful first-hand information from their teaching and learning process. These systematic observations took place in London (Royal College of Music, Royal Academy of Music), Moscow (Moscow Conservatoire, Central Music School), and New Heaven (Yale School of Music) – totalling fifty-five hours of observation. Although I observed in one-to-one lessons for a long period of time, there were bound to be aspects of teaching that were not revealed during the observations. As pointed out in the footnote earlier, this thesis employed the non-participant observation method – allowing the observed participants to perform naturally in a natural context. Yet, there was a noticeable change in their teaching behaviour because of my physical presence. Together with my non-participant observation, a video recording was used at the beginning of the process. However, Russian pianists felt unease with the environment and tended to look at the camera whilst they taught. Instead of using video, audio recording was adopted after the first hour of observation. Their teaching was somewhat different when the latter approach was employed; they felt more natural without the camera, and were able to teach in a musical setting that was as close to a one-to-one lesson as possible.

Besides using observation, a questionnaire appeared to be a useful research technique. It complemented extremely well the research observation. These questionnaires were given to students of the Russian teachers randomly.³⁰ It explored various Russian teaching strategies from the students' perspective; for instance, the similarities or

³⁰ See Appendix 5 for the sample questionnaire.

difference of Russian pedagogical approaches compare to those of their former teachers. After all, students of Russian teachers are part of the teaching and learning process. Furthermore, they have spent a longer period of time with their Russian teachers than the observer (in this case, me). To this end, it is worth pointing out that the questionnaire was included as a research method, in the hope that it would reveal additional data that were not discovered during the observation period.³¹

Recordings

The research may seem comprehensive at first with all of the above-mentioned methodologies. However, I truly believed the essence of this research would be absent without listening and analysing the musical recordings. The recordings applied here were from my personal CD library, which comprises several hundred musical recordings. In addition, my role as a 2015-2016 Edison Research Fellow at the British Library allowed me to gain special access to the extensive collection at the Sound Archive. With the assistance of Sonic Visualiser, I was able to examine and analyse subtle details of the recordings such as the dynamic projection of each note (power curve plugin). In order to structure the discussion, I have also used two case-studies for the analysis: Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto in B flat minor, Op 23, and Mozart's Piano Sonata in F major, KV 332. The first case study was suggested by some Russian pianists – a composition that is considered as a crowning achievement by Russian musicians. It is also a work that a majority of Russian pianists have played or performed at some point in their career. On the other hand, the Mozart case study emerged in response to notions pointed out by some Russian pianists at interviews. This classical composition has elements that go against the nature of the Russian

³¹ See Appendix 8 for the ethical approval from the A&H Research Ethics Panel at King's College London.

pianism; for instance, short classical phrasing against long phrasing (Russian performing aesthetic). Thus, it would seem plausible to analyse the approaches Russian pianists would adopt.

In terms of the performer selections, it is unfortunate that not all of the Russian pianists who took part in the interview and observation have made a recording of either the Tchaikovsky concerto, or the Mozart sonata; it would be reasonable to examine the Russian pianists, who support the notion of the Russian performing aesthetics, and who may apply these aesthetics in their recorded performances. Nevertheless, I aimed to choose different generations of pianists in the analysis of Russian pianists, and in the case of Western to Russian comparison; I selected Western pianists with a wide-range of nationalities, as well as representatives of different generations.

In sum, this thesis combines theoretical (written documents, and interviews), practical (recordings), and pedagogical (observations and questionnaires) aspects to support its conclusions – making this as the first research to compare Russian and Russian emigrant teaching directly. In addition, it is worth pointing out that this thesis is also the first to compare the recordings of Russian and non-Russian pianists on the subject of ‘long phrasing’ and of ‘singing tone’.

Most of the Russian translations in this thesis are by Russian language specialists, unless stated otherwise in the footnote, where they are translated by me.

CHAPTER 1

A BRIEF REVIEW OF THE CURRENT SCHOLARSHIP

Before entering into the main discussion, it will be useful to briefly examine the state of the literature on Russian pianism. This chapter will take the opportunity to identify gaps in the current knowledge, and aim to demonstrate the relative depth of this study. This thesis identifies the performing aesthetics of modern Russian pianists, whilst most previous writers lean towards historical investigation without taking account of modern Russian artists' points of view. In addition, this research compares the teaching approaches of Russian and Russian emigrant teachers directly. These are all issues that have hitherto been neglected in the literature; therefore the necessity of these arguments touches the heart of what constitutes 'Russian Piano School' and has obvious implications for performance studies. This study also offers a further view of the Russian pedagogical method and provides a perspective that is underdeveloped in the music literature.

As pointed out earlier, access to Russian literature on music is not as easy as one may think, owing to the language barriers; many articles that were written several decades, or in some cases, almost a century ago, have either remained untranslated or unavailable outside Russia.³² Among the limited resources that are available,

³² For instance, Shlesinger, S.F. (1899) *Etyudy po fortepiannoi metodologii* [Essays on pianoforte methodology] *Russkaya muzykalnaya gazeta*; Maykapar, S.M. (1938) *Gody ucheniya* [Years of study] Moscow and Leningrad: Iskusstvo; Nikolaev, A. (1955) *Rabota nad etyudami I uprazhneniyami* [The work on études and exercises], *Ocherki po metodike obucheniya igre na fortepiano*. Moscow: Muzgiz.

Alexeev's books (1948 and 1988) are particularly useful; the earlier one covers the development of the Russian pianists before 1945, while the other serves as an outline of the history of piano playing. Parts of it also touch on some the pedagogical methods. For example, Alexeev (1948) indicates a practice method for pianissimo passages: slow practice with a firm tone at first, leading eventually to lighter and faster playing. Liberman (1978/1996) devotes two books to technique and echoes this statement by pointing out that this method remains unchanged within the 'Russian Piano School'.

The Russian pedagogical tradition laid its foundation when Anton Rubinstein founded the St. Petersburg Conservatoire in 1862, and Nikolai Rubinstein founded the Moscow Conservatoire in 1866. Anton Rubinstein was not only a renowned pianist in the nineteenth century but according to Tsipin, he was the 'initiator of a definite aesthetic in national piano culture, the founder of a tradition' (Tsipin, 1995, p.72). Anton Rubinstein's (1890) autobiography shares many personal and emotional memories. It reflects many aspects of educational development at the beginning of institutionalised Russian music education, and reveals some of his concerns when designing the Conservatoire's curriculum. Alongside the Rubinstein brothers, the Polish born pianist Theodor Leschetizky is often considered as one of the founders of the 'Russian Piano School'. On an invitation from Anton Rubinstein, Leschetizky began teaching at the St Petersburg Conservatoire in 1862. He shared many pedagogical thoughts with Anton, and according to Artur Schnabel, his pupils numbered nearly 1,800 (Schnabel, 1961, p.124). Although he is an impressive figure, Leschetizky rejected any fixed method in piano pedagogy, as he states in both Brée's (1905) and Prentner's (1903) publications, 'I have no method and I will have no method.' However, Newcomb (1921) claims that in later years Leschetizky had

second thoughts about the ‘Leschetizky method’ and commented, ‘If I had a method it would be based upon the mental delineation of a chord’ (Newcomb, 1921, p.194).³³ Apart from his own contribution to the framework of the ‘Leschetizky method’, much was also written about his teaching system by his pupils. Whilst Fannie Bloomfield Zeisler claims Leschetizky studied the individuality of each pupil and taught him according to his individuality, Gabrilowitsch argues that the system might be much more accurately described as the ‘Leschetizky attitude’ towards music and life itself (Schonberg, 1963, p.296). The influences of Leschetizky in Russian musical cultural have been heavily understated, and therefore a brief inquiry of the ‘Leschetizky Method’ is included as part of this research, i.e. how this ‘method’ assists the development of, or at least, connects with the ‘Russian Piano School’.

As we shall see, the twentieth century’s Russian pianism owes its development to three pianists, who were all prolific writers on the subject of musical and piano pedagogy: Samuel Feinberg, Alexander Goldenweiser and Henrich Neuhaus. It is their notes, treatises and various collective accounts that provide us with valuable and fascinating insights into their creative process. Feinberg’s article *The art of piano playing* (n.d.) is in two parts: ‘The Composer and The Performer’, and ‘The Style’. It is a philosophical and ideological discussion of performance interpretation together with the changes in performing style. The author also expresses his thoughts on various individual composers, along with his definition of tradition and habit in piano playing. Interesting pedagogical research can be found in Feinberg’s other publication *The Road to Artistry* (1965). As we will see in this chapter, it offers a number of his

³³ Mental delineation of a chord, by this, Leschetizky’s pupil, Ethel Newcomb explained: ‘Many times he would ask the pupil to make a list of all the chords, as well as of groups of notes, to make a picture of them in his mind’s eye, and to study the picture, at the same time shaping the hand according to the picture, before touching the keys. He called this the “physiognomy of the hand”...His principle was that one should not strike a note or a chord without thinking of, and visualizing, or sometimes even saying, the next one.’ See Ethel Newcomb, *Leschetizky as I knew Him*, (New York: D. Appleton, 1921), 194.

artistic philosophies and pedagogy methods, including Feinberg's 'mirror' exercises for left and right hand. Another rare source on Feinberg is the conversation with the psychologist Alexander Vitsinsky, published in 1990 in the *Pianist in Conversation* (1st edition, Moscow). According to Vitsinsky, Feinberg's comments are highly speculative, and Feinberg frequently uses 'perhaps...but...maybe.' In any case, the interview is perhaps the most reliable and is significantly truthful in revealing his personality.³⁴ Whilst Goldenweiser's notes and articles (1975, 1984) are mainly reviewing general practice of the Russian education system, some are based on his concert and teaching experience as a pianist and as a teacher (1990). His personal diary has been well preserved in the Goldenweiser Apartment and Museum. It reflects much of his artistic thought on the subject as well as hidden love and respect for some of his contemporary colleagues, including Neuhaus, where on one occasion, he states, 'I have read Neuhaus' book [*The Art of the Piano Playing*]. Its style is objectionable to me. But many of the ideas in it are proper and valuable. It is amazing – with such a drastic difference in style, so much, in essence, coincides with my thoughts' (Goldenweiser, *The Goldenweiser Diary*, 24th February 1954). The most famous book from the 'Russian School' is no doubt by Neuhaus (1958). Not only was it the first book about the Russian musical education that was available outside Russia, but also its detailed explanation of piano playing and its philosophical ideas won much acclaim from his Western colleagues. According to Paperno (1998), on the other hand, Neuhaus's contemporary Alexander Goldenweiser did not show interest in those issues he raised and argued that much was alien to him.³⁵ Lev Barenboim (1959) likewise expressed some disagreement with some of Neuhaus's pedagogical ideas and

³⁴ See online version <http://arbiterrecords.org/catalog/samuel-feinberg-first-recordings-1929-1948/> [Accessed 25 May 2016]

³⁵ This encounter with Paperno is not the same as the quotation mentioned above from Goldenweiser's *Diary*.

claimed that little was said about the use of left pedal. Apart from his book (1958), Neuhaus also published a handful of articles (1965, 1991) and many of them cover different aspects of music creativity together with philosophy. Ashkenazy (1984) reported on the reputation that Neuhaus is renowned for at Moscow Conservatoire, ‘It would be best for me not to go to the most obviously attractive and glamorous class, that of Henrich Neuhaus...I would be swept up into the wonderfully creative atmosphere of the Neuhaus class. There everything was rather easy-going with a lot of very heady talk – actually lots of wonderful ideas but not too much hard work’ (Ashkenazy, 1984, p. 36).

Feinberg, Goldenweiser and Neuhaus represent different strands of the national school but they all share some performance aesthetics and pedagogical tradition. While Valk-Flk and Gulina (2001) argue that the St. Petersburg Conservatory represents the Russian national school and Moscow has traditionally represented a broader international style, Neuhaus claims that ‘we all say the same in different words’ (Sokolov, 1991, p.12). Feinberg also supports that statement and argues that they ‘all proceeded to realise the same aim in different ways’ (1979).

1.1 Music Literature by Western musicologists

Turning to Western commentators, Ritterman (2002) and Hamilton (2008) both reject the idea that a unified playing tradition still, or in the latter case, ever existed. There will be an intensive discussion of this question in the next chapter, but it would be useful to outline some of their opinions at this point. Ritterman (2002) questions the idea as to whether, by the twentieth century, there were any performers or teachers who could still be categorised as a representative of a particular national school. And in Hamilton’s view, playing tradition or national school was a matter of collective

taste and style of performance. As we progress in the thesis, particularly in Chapter 5 and 6, it will become apparent that their conclusions may not be applicable. Among the recent publications by Western researchers, Mine Doğantan-Dack's publication, *Artistic Practice as Research in Music: Theory, Criticism, Practice* is particularly valuable. This book explores cultural, theoretical, and practical aspects of artistic research in music, and investigates various topics such as the issue of practice-led research at conservatoires; the conditions under which artistic practice becomes a research activity – all of which are important areas that have been neglected previously. In particular, Doğantan-Dack's article (*The Role of the Musical Instrument in Performance as Research: The Piano as a Research Tool*) offers a fresh insight on the subject of 'singing' tone – an area of investigation in this thesis. For instance, as Doğantan-Dack points out, 'While the outcome of my survey, indicating that this highly valued aspect of artistic pianism has not been conceptualised in any clear or coherent manner in the pedagogical literature, may at first appear surprising to the reader, this state of affairs is not unpredictable: whereas both the artist and the artist-researcher are involved in artistic creation, it is the latter that is consistently concerned with persistent and systematic enquiry into the processes of art making' (Doğantan-Dack, 2015, p.179). In addition, Doğantan-Dack summarises further the terms, concepts, and metaphors in pedagogical discourse that are connected with cantabile playing, and provides a comprehensive list of expressions associated with 'singing' tone.³⁶ As we will see in Chapter 6, a number of these terms ('sinking into' or 'growing into'), can be found in some of observed lessons with Russian teachers.

³⁶ 'A singing piano tone is recognised by its "intense", "round", "sonorous", "full", "luscious", "cushioned", "long-lasting", "carrying", "clear", "expressive" aural quality, "coming from the depths of the keys". When performing in a cantabile manner, pianists feel as if they are "caressing", "grasping", "grabbing", "kneading", "growing into", "merging with", "sinking into", "fusing with" the piano keys; they "cling to the keys as to something soft, velvety or downy", "knead the keys as if with

As we will see in the next two chapters (Chapter 2 and 3), educational work plays an important role in the ‘Russian Piano School’. Along with all the published articles on Russian music education, Izabela Wagner’s recent publication (*Producing Excellence: The Making of Virtuosos*) is particularly useful. Although her work is focused on the violin, she outlines the process of becoming a professional performer. From the investigation of instrument choices to career establishment; from the exploration of teacher-parent relationship to psychological thoughts of student violinist – all of which can be applied to piano students. It briefly touches on the Russian School of Violin, and as Schwarz points out, ‘The initial success of the Russian school was not entirely due to the teaching of one man but the result of a variety of favourable circumstances, such as a vast reservoir of native talent (especially among the Jewish population), unified teaching methods, generous public support of the arts, and an unbroken tradition of excellence and high standards’ (Schwarz, 1983, p.409). Along with Schwarz’s observation, Wagner also suggests an interesting point: ‘With the proliferation of virtuoso education centres around the world in the second half of the twentieth century, the meaning of “the Russian school” changed...In my study...I use the term in accordance with the perceptions of those involved in the process. It refers to the relationships among the participants in this training, their common origin and networks, trained in a closed space within similar geopolitical environments...’ (Wagner, 2015, p.19). This is particularly important, since Wagner has first related the term to educational activities. It would, of course, be more appropriate if she would also associate the term with Russian performance tradition. Nonetheless, many of Wagner’s findings are highly related to this thesis. For instance, the second stage of

silken fingers”, “shape the phrase as if moulding warm clay”, “press the key as if grasping the hand of a friend with warmth, with feeling”.’ For the full list of expressions, see Mine Doğantan-Dack (ed.). *Artistic Practice as Research in Music: Theory, Criticism, Practice*. (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2015), 179-180.

soloist education – ‘the period of crisis’, as she would define it. According to her, this stage usually occurs between thirteen and nineteen. It is a stage where the student ‘grasps the competitiveness of the soloist world’ and begins to question his/her ability to become a professional performer. This also echoes with some of the findings in this thesis, when Natalia Trull claims, ‘Maybe sometimes we are too serious with our profession. For example, this kind of system of education [Russian music education system], when the kid is realised at the age of sixteen or eighteen, that he is not gifted enough – then it is a big trouble, in terms of psychological. They spent all their life working and then have to stop, it is a big trouble. This situation is very often.’³⁷

However, Wagner did not stop there; in addition to ‘competitiveness’, she proposes that this is a stage where the student ‘becomes aware of their parents’ heavy investment in their careers and the built-up expectations’ (*Ibid.*, p.76). Some of Wagner’s findings (competitiveness, for instance) will undoubtedly apply to the majority of music students in Russia, but reasons such as investments may not be applicable for students there. Not only would the majority of Russian students receive full scholarships from Conservatoires, hence, no investment is needed; but it is also worth remembering that becoming a successful performer during the Soviet period would mean wealth, luxury, and honours for the rest of the family. Although it would not carry such high prestige in Russia today, parents who lived through the Soviet Union firmly believe a career as a professional performer would transform their family’s life and, as a result, the family will achieve a higher social status.³⁸ Another striking phenomenon Wagner points concerns the alternatives to a career as a performer. Despite the fact that all students are professionally trained at Conservatoires, only a few, or sometimes, none will become a performer. However,

³⁷ Interview with Natalia Trull.

³⁸ Interview with Sofya Gulyak.

Wagner suggests that the music training leaves little room for other identities to develop (*Ibid.*, p.199).³⁹ This leads many students who are not as good on their instrument to have difficulty in switching to other fields. As one of her interviewee claims: ‘I was very interested in bio [biology], and if I were not in my violin class, I would like to study biology. Now, I have no time for that...I forgot a lot...I only know how to play’ (*Ibid.*, p.200). This apparently is also highly common in Russia; however, this does not only apply to those who are incapable of being a professional, but also to those who have the ability to establish a career. As Natalia Trull recalls, ‘One of my students [who] won twelve or thirteen competition awards, now he is working on the cinema production – not with the music but with computers.’⁴⁰ In sum, Wagner’s publication outlines a comprehensive process in establishing a professional performing career, and through her qualitative research methodologies,⁴¹ she was able to offer some fresh insights that were previously unexplored in that musical terrain.

In another case, as we recall earlier in the introduction, Artur Schnabel states, ‘I cannot accept that there is anything specifically Russian about playing with straight and flat fingers. I lived for thirty years in Germany and even so I would not be able to say what the “Germany technique” is’ (Schnabel, 1963, p.195-196). However, Holcman’s (1959) point seems to be that Western pianists and musicologists have not captured the whole picture of the ‘Russian Piano School’ and do not have a clear impression of their playing tradition. As he claims, ‘Current Western trends also keenly interest the Russian musical scholar. While the West generally remains aloof

³⁹ See also David Westby, ‘The Career Experience of the Symphony Musician’ *Social Force* 38 (1960), 227.

⁴⁰ Interview with Natalia Trull.

⁴¹ Her research methodologies include observations of more than twenty young violinists, for periods from two weeks to one year; interviews – a) formal multipart interviews with students and parents [focused group], b) more than one hundred formal, semi-open audio-taped interviews, and c) several hundred informal interviews [unstructured interviews] between 1997 and 2004; analysis on the lives of ninety violinists. For her complete research methodologies, see Isabela Wagner. *Producing Excellence: The Making of Virtuosos* (Rutgers University Press: London, 2015), 1-9.

from Soviet piano methods, the Soviets closely follow the West at the keyboard’ (Holcman, 1959, p.33). This argument is supported by a recent publication when, for the first time, Barnes (2007) reveals some of the critical writings on the ‘Russian Piano School’ that were forgotten in the West – almost fifty years after they were first published in Russia.

1.2 Music Literature by Russian pianists

Barnes’s book is vital to this research; not only because it is highly relevant to this topic, but the translated articles are also immensely valuable. These articles are drawn from a number of respected piano and musical research journals in Russia.⁴² The authors are equally distinguished: Feinberg, Goldenweiser, Oborin, Igumnov, Ginzburg, Neuhaus, and Richter, to name a few. This publication is in two parts: ‘Technique and Artistry’ and ‘Lessons and Masterclasses’. As the titles suggested, one may associate the first part with performance, whilst the second part is solidly based on pedagogy. It is interesting to note that Barnes has placed these two parts (performance and pedagogy) under one label – *The Russian Piano School*, the title of the book. Since Barnes’s publication has an irreplaceable position in this thesis, it is reasonable to review each of the articles individually.

For the sake of clarity, here is the list of fourteen articles, and we will discuss each work in more detail.

⁴² M.G. Sokolov (ed.) *Pianisty rasskazyvayut*, No. 1, 2nd edition. Moscow: ‘Muzyka’, 1990; M.G. Sokolov (ed.) *Voprosy fortepiannogo ispolnitel’sтва, ocherki, stat’I, vospominaniya*, No. 1, Moscow: ‘Muzyka’, 1965; M.G. Sokolov (ed.) *Voprosy fortepiannogo ispolnitel’sтва*, No. 2, Moscow: ‘Muzyka’, 1968; M.G. Sokolov (ed.) *Voprosy fortepiannogo ispolnitel’sтва*, No. 3, Moscow: ‘Muzyka’, 1973.

Part One: Technique and Artistry

- 1) Samuil Feinberg – *The Road to Artistry*
- 2) Alexander Goldenweiser – *Advice from a Pianist and Teacher*
- 3) Lev Oborin – *Some Principles of Pianoforte Technique*
- 4) Konstantin Igumnov – *Some Remarks on Technique*
- 5) Grigory Ginzburg – *Notes on Mastery of the Piano*

Part two: Lessons and Masterclasses

- 6) Samuil Feinberg – *Beethoven's Appassionata: A Performer's Commentary*
- 7) Sviatoslav Richter – *Three Answers to Questions about Beethoven's Sonata Appassionata*
- 8) Heinrich Neuhaus – *Work on Beethoven's Sonata in A major, Op. 101*
- 9) Maria Eshchenko – *Chopin Etude (based on classes with Samuil Feinberg)*
- 10) Yakov Flier – *Reflections on Chopin's Fourth Ballade*
- 11) Alexander Goldenweiser – *Notes on Chopin's Ballade in F minor*
- 12) Konstantin Igumnov – *Chopin's Fourth Ballade in F minor*
- 13) Nina Lelchuk and Elena Dolinskaya – *Lessons with Yakov Flier*
- 14) Olga Stupakova and Genrietta Mirvis – *Yakov Zak as Teacher*

The first article, *The Road to Artistry*, is self-explanatory. Feinberg offers his views on the process in becoming a concert pianist, and touches on various pianistic issues: from legato to tone production; from practice session to concert performance. Interestingly, this work also discusses the talent and musical virtue of a performing artist – a topic that rarely appears in other contemporary writings. In addition, Feinberg took the opportunity to dispel some preconceptions. For example, he suggested a number of instances where long notes should be played more softly. He further explained, ‘The rapid fading of a series of short loud chords seems natural. But if one plays a long chord with even greater strength, the listener is bound to notice the

rapid fall-off in sonority, and the long chord will thus seem to him just as short as the preceding ones' (Barnes, 2007, p.13). In any case, one would not fail to notice the frequent emphasis Feinberg made on singing quality, and how this subject relates to movements and gestures. Movement, as Feinberg understood, is 'purposeful and useful motion involved in depressing the key, and which is essential in order to produce any musical sound or series of sounds'; whilst gesture is part of 'the motion that is designed to express the performer's own mood, feeling, and emotion' (p.8). In sum, Feinberg describes gestures as 'meant to compensate the pianist for shortcomings in his own playing' (p.10).

Besides the 'mirror exercise', which is included later on in this thesis (Chapter 4), Feinberg also introduces some of his self-invented exercises to overcome difficult technical passages.⁴³ These exercises provide an insight as to how Feinberg would tackle certain technical difficulties (double thirds, scalar passages etc.). Using the idea of *perpetuum mobile*, his exercises frequently return to the starting point of the passage. Taking Beethoven's *Appassionata* Sonata as an example:



**Ex 1.1 Feinberg's original version of third movement of Beethoven's
*Appassionata***

⁴³ According to Feinberg, these exercises first appeared in the collection *Masters of the Soviet Piano School* [A. Alexeev ed., *Mastera sovetskoi pianisticheskoi shkoly* (Moscow, 1967)].

Based on the example above, Feinberg derives two further exercises:



**Ex 1.2 Feinberg's modified version of third movement of Beethoven's
*Appassionata***

In developing exercises, Feinberg outlined ten basic requirements i.e. 'an exercise must relate directly to a pianist's current artistic work'; 'an exercise should be easier than the difficulty that you want to master' (p.28).

The second article, *Advice from a Pianist and Teacher*, was in fact, not written by Goldenweiser. Unlike Feinberg, Goldenweiser did not publish major monograph of method that could summarise his views on teaching and performance. Thus, the 'advice' here was drawn from various sources, both written and spoken, and was edited by Russian musicologist Dmitri Blagoi. Although this work was only a collection of Goldenweiser's output, the qualities noted in this article can also be heard in Goldenweiser's own performance. For instance, on the subject of tone, Goldenweiser noted that 'When the right hand is playing a melody, the extreme top

notes are highly important...' (p.56). As we will see in Chapter 2 (Section 2.1.3), Goldenweiser's performance of the Beethoven's Sonata in C sharp minor has this precise quality. Furthermore, it is interesting to note that Goldenweiser seems to be aware of 'authentic performance'. Reading between the lines, it is not difficult to notice Goldenweiser repeatedly highlight the issue of interpretation. As he claims, 'People often speak and write about the supposedly approximate nature of musical notation. But even if printed notes are only a rough and ready indication of the composer's intentions, they should certainly not be altered except in case of extreme necessity' (p.54). According to Blagoi, Goldenweiser deliberately made this statement in response to Grigory Prokofiev,⁴⁴ who in *Igra na fortepiano*, stated that 'one should accept the idea that musical notation is only a "highly approximate" expression of the composer's intentions' (p.67). Unlike Feinberg, Goldenweiser does not favour exercises when working at the piano. However, he highlights one self-invented exercise that he finds particularly useful: 'Place the five fingers of each hand on five different keys, then raise one finger, followed by the next, and so on, and when only one finger is left, I have to feel the increased weight of hand and arm on this one finger. (This exercise can also be tried on the closed lid of the piano)' (p.64). Goldenweiser claims that this exercise could develop the pianist's ability to stress one note in chord passages. Not only do they disagree with each other on the subject of exercise, but also the method in which a pianist should learn a new piece of music. For Feinberg, it is important to 'play first and only then practice' (play through the whole composition once to get an overview, before learning or working on various passages); whilst Goldenweiser suggests the contrary as he states, '...it is dangerous to try and achieve everything at once. It is important to concentrate attention on various

⁴⁴ Grigory Prokofiev was a Soviet musicologist and pianist, who graduated from Konstantin Igumnov's class at the Moscow Conservatoire in 1909.

problems in turn...when learning a new work; one should first of all insert various “punctuation marks”. Furthermore, if some phrase does not turn out when working on the piece it is useful to isolate it, pause, and linger over it’ (p.63). In other words, Goldenweiser prefers working on various passages individually first, before putting the piece together.

Although Oborin’s article is much shorter in length, his work is equally valuable. Oborin was the first prize winner at the First Chopin International Piano Competition in Warsaw in 1927, and one may have thought technique came somewhat naturally to him. However, this is far from the truth. Oborin noted his technical incapability during his studentship at the Moscow Conservatoire, and how he overcame those obstacles. Similar to other essays on piano technique, Oborin’s work touches on hand and arm positions, and finger movements, as well as those exercises he used as a student. The more interesting part surely is his thoughts on the physiological principle of piano technique. Indeed, there are constant comments on the association between physical movements and piano technique; but it is the physiological aspect, as the author pointed out, that has been neglected. In order to develop one’s piano technique, Oborin simply feels ‘psychological and physical freedom is the first essential element’. It should be noted that it is not complete freedom that Oborin is after: the ‘ideal’ freedom is that ‘only the essential muscles are involved in any work’ (p.71). Oborin goes further and comments on how one should not regard technical systems as a universal panacea, and that technique, in his view, is largely based on physiological laws, for instance, the type of hand, size, length of fingers etc. What Oborin fails to address, especially on the subject of technique, is the psychological aspect. Indeed, one would naturally associate any technical obstacles with the physical ability of a pianist; however, the psychological aspect also plays an important role i.e. confidence

in tackling difficult technical passages.⁴⁵ Another noticeable area that he does not cover in this article is the teaching of piano technique. Oborin stresses at the beginning that his teacher, Konstantin Igumnov, did not address his technical problems whilst studying at the Moscow Conservatoire – ‘a bitter experience of youth’, as he recalled (p.69). It would have been more useful to understand how Oborin, when he became a professor at the Conservatoire in 1928, would in turn address the technical issues of his students. However, as we will see in Chapter 3, the introduction of Specialist Music School in the Russian Music education hierarchy prevented students incapable in piano technique from progressing to conservatoire studies. This may mean that Oborin had more virtuoso students than the previous generation, and need not to focus on any basic technical problems in his teaching career.

Although Oborin claims that Konstantin Igumnov focused more on the musicality of students’ performance, Igumnov seemed to have changed his thoughts slightly towards the end of his life. The fourth article was in fact a published interview with Igumnov, where, like Oborin, he also discusses the issue of technique. Despite the fact that this was a short interview, Igumnov pointed out an issue on hand position. ‘I don’t like any inclination toward the thumb. Generally, there should be some inclination toward the fifth, but sometimes the structure of a particular passage may require the opposite’ (p.79). In addition to this unusual hand position, this interview also discusses how a piano stool would affect movement and weight. ‘Recently Alexander Goldenweiser told me that at one time he used to try and sit at the instrument as low as possible, but now he does quite the opposite. We agreed on this,

⁴⁵ See Oborin’s colleague, I. Berezovski. *Psikhologiya tekhniki igry na fortepiano* [Psychology of the technique of pianoforte playing], (Moscow: Muzgiz, 1928) for further exploration on the effect of psychology on piano technique.

and I am beginning to think that it is far more convenient to sit higher. This is a very important matter' (p.82). The discussion of stool's height is not commonly seen in music literature, it is beneficial to look into the thoughts of Goldenweiser and Igumov on this particular issue, as well as their preferences.

Along with Lev Oborin, Grigory Ginzburg was another Russian pianist who won a prize at the First Chopin International Competition in 1927. Ginzburg was a noted Russian teacher, but rarely was he considered as a prolific writer. The article included in Barnes's book was taken from *Voprosy fortepiannogo ispolnitel'stva*, No. 2, where Ginzburg discusses three areas: tempo, pedalling, and the performer's willpower. This article revealed an important encounter between Goldenweiser and Rachmaninov, which led Rachmaninov to believe metronome indication in his compositions was not necessary. Ginzburg seems to suggest that following composers' tempo indication is not at all realistic, as he claims: 'The tempo of a piece is decided by the performer, based on the composer's markings of *allegro*, *andante*, *presto*, etc. However these are all fairly flexible notion, and to make them more precise composers sometimes add metronome markings. But even the latter should be taken as a very approximate guide and not as an absolute requirement' (p.84). This statement contradicts the thought of his teacher, Alexander Goldenweiser, where, as pointed out earlier, performers should follow a composer's indications without any hesitation. In Ginzburg's view, it is not possible to follow the exact tempo indication but pianists are able to form a tempo that would suit them naturally. Ginzburg concluded that forming the 'correct tempo' of a work depends on various factors: 1) the performer bearing in mind the composer's indications; 2) the content of the particular work; 3) the character of dynamic shading; 4) the degree of expressiveness; 5) brilliance, impetus and other elements in the concept of the performance; 6) the technical abilities of the performer

himself; and finally, 7) the physical strength required to give an artistic rendering of the work in question (p.87). Despite the fact that Ginzburg outlined these factors, he failed to explain in detail what some of them mean. It is slightly unclear, for instance, when he noted ‘other elements in concept of the performance’. Besides the issue of ‘authenticity’, this article also suggested that Ginzburg was unaware of the history of his instrument. On the subject of pedalling, Ginzburg stated that ‘Mozart played on instruments that had no dampers. Consequently any compositions performed on them had a hollow resonance and lacked any sharp clarity of harmony’ (p.89). This statement was in fact not accurate. Although Mozart’s instruments were lighter than those on modern instrument, they did not lack dampers.⁴⁶

The second part of Barnes’s book is focused on pedagogy, and the first article (*Beethoven’s Appassionata: A Performer’s Commentary*) was again by Samuil Feinberg. In his previous article (*The Road to Artistry*), we have seen what Feinberg is like as a musician (i.e. his insistence on ‘authentic’ interpretation); and only occasionally does he touch on the pedagogical side (i.e. exercises and practice). This article is a mixture of both – a performer’s commentary, yet at the same time, a teaching summary. According to Barnes, this article ‘summarised Feinberg’s remarks on Beethoven’s *Appassionata* in classes with students’ (p.97). If we were to compare

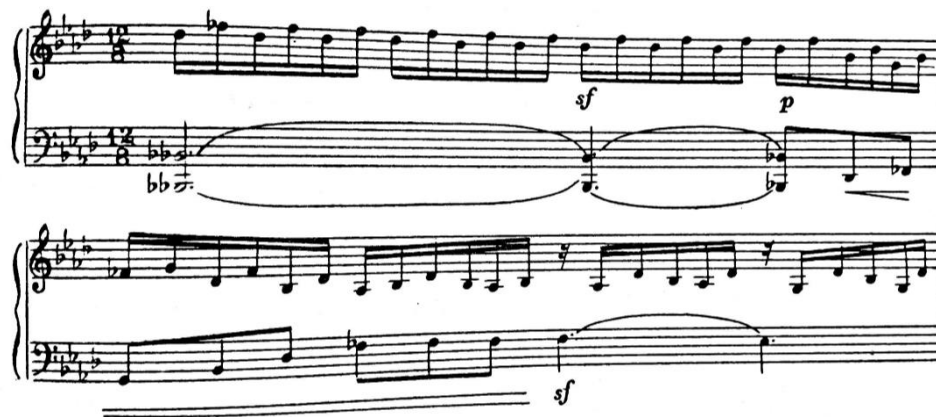
⁴⁶ In the Mozart Museum in Salzburg, there is a piano by Anton Walter. This piano has two fewer octaves than a modern piano, a knee device to dampen the sound, as well as a knob on the fascia which acts on the damper between hammer and string. See <http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio3/mozart/piano.shtml> [Accessed 8 June 2016] for further detail. Beside a Walter instrument, Mozart owned a Stein piano. Stein was Mozart’s favourite instrument at the time, and it did not lack any dampers. In fact, Stein was credited for introducing knee-lever controls for the dampers. A letter from Mozart to his father indicates that how much he preferred Stein’s instrument to others. ‘This time I shall begin at once with Stein’s pianofortes. Before I had seen any of his make, Späth’s claviers and always been my favourites. But now I much prefer Stein’s, for they damp ever so much better than the Regensburg instruments. When I strike hard, I can keep my finger on the note or raise it, but the sound ceases the moment I have produced it. In whatever way I touch the keys, the tone is always even. It never jars, it is never stronger or weaker or entirely absent; in a word, it is always even...His instruments have this special advantage over others that they are made with escape action. Only one maker in a hundred bothers about this.’ From Letter from Mozart to his Father on 17th October 1777. Emily Anderson (ed.) *The Letters of Mozart and his Family* Vol. III (Palgrave Macmillan: 1989), 327-328.

the first and second article by Febinberg, they are somewhat similar. The first article suggests that the performer cannot be as ‘authentic’ in their interpretation. While the second article echoes the first, and it encourages the performer to interpret the *Appassionata* with added performance indications. Taking bar 53 as an example:



Ex 1.3 Original version of Beethoven's *Appassionata* – bars 53-54

The dynamic indication in this passage is fortissimo, and naturally the B flat in the left hand should also be played with the same dynamic force. However, in Feinberg's view, this passage should be interpreted as follows:



Ex 1.4 Feinberg's interpretation of Beethoven's *Appassionata* – bars 53-54

According to Feinberg, ‘the left hand octaves at bar 53 may be joined by a slur, with the second octave played *sforzando*, after which the ensuing upward flight of eighth notes begins piano and rises to a new *sf*’ (p.99). Feinberg's view is understandable, since his interpretation provides a better sense of direction to the listener. What is

more surprising are his alternations at the opening of the development section in bar 65; Beethoven had indicated:



Ex 1.5 Original version of Beethoven's *Appassionata* – bars 65-67

This passage is marked *pianissimo* throughout, but Feinberg alternated the indications and suggests the following:



Ex 1.6 Feinberg's interpretation of Beethoven's *Appassionata* – bars 65-67

It is unclear as to why Feinberg would prefer a quieter moment in the second motif. The only purpose of his suggestion is perhaps to emphasise the second motif with different tone. However, even with the same dynamic level (*pianissimo*) it is possible to produce a different tone colour. There are several ways to achieve this; for instance, the use of *una corda* pedal (where the hammers will shift to the right, and hit two

strings instead of three); the balance of sound (where the pianist could play a fraction heavier with his/her left hand in order to create a darker tone, among other options); the touch (where the pianist could employ different touches i.e. ‘rounded’ fingers, ‘flatted’ fingers, to create a different tone colour), to name a few.

It is fortunate that Feinberg recorded this Sonata during 1930s, and many of those suggestions he makes here can also be found in his recording. One of these concerns the opening of the third movement. The movement is marked *Allegro ma non troppo*, but Feinberg plays this movement *Presto*. His interpretation is explained in this article: ‘Beethoven’s tempo indications are not always totally precise, and occasionally some measure of correction is needed to evaluate their meaning. In some cases the change from *Allegro* to *Presto* is a sort of figurative suggestion based on an artistic impulse. At other times, however, it clearly indicates an acceleration of tempo, even a *doppio movimento*’ (p.104). Even if Feinberg had a strong argument on the choice of tempo, the performance undoubtedly needs clarity – a quality which is absent in the final movement of Feinberg’s recording.⁴⁷

Feinberg not only disagrees with the tempo marking of Beethoven, but also the pedalling indication. In many cases, Beethoven often uses long sustaining and collects different harmonic dissonances to create a special effect.⁴⁸ However, Feinberg seems to ignore these pedalling markings, and he claimed that ‘One can hardly approve some pianists’ efforts to follow exactly Beethoven’s pedal indications in such episodes as, for example, the recitatives in the first movement of Sonata 17 in D minor, Opus 31, No. 2, or in the coda of the first movement of the *Appassionata*’

⁴⁷ In Feinberg’s recording, there are notes that cannot be heard because of his choice of tempo.

⁴⁸ For instance, the final movement of op. 53 (*Waldstein*); the recitatives in the first movement of op. 31 no. 2 (*Tempest*); the first movement of op. 27 no. 2 (*Moonlight*); the coda of the first movement of op. 57 (*Appassionata*); the third movement (the variations) of op. 109; the recitatives in second movement of op. 110. Note: the titles of these Sonatas were not officially given by Beethoven.

(p.106). Indeed, having read Feinberg's viewpoint from this article, one would not be surprised to realise that that pedalling is in fact absent in his recording. To this end, it is worth recalling Czerny's memoir on Beethoven: 'He [Beethoven] used the pedals very often, far more frequently than indicated in his work'.⁴⁹ If we assume Czerny's statement was accurate, Feinberg's performance is hugely 'under pedalled'. His argument that Beethoven's and modern performances would have a different sonority is neither entirely true. On one hand, it is reasonable; in the sense that our instrument differs slightly to those in Beethoven's time. But on the other hand, the harmonic effects created on modern instruments are comparable to those created on Beethoven's; though, Beethoven's sound would not be as resonant as ours.

The second article in Part two was a short interview with Sviatoslav Richter about Beethoven's *Appassionata*. It only contains three questions and was conducted by Dimitri Blagoi in early 1960. Although a short interview, it suggests that Richter was slightly unclear on the historical background of the sonata. Blagoi had misled Richter that Beethoven's word about Shakespeare's *The Tempest* is associated with the *Appassionata*. Although Richter admitted that this association had never played any part in his work; much to our surprise, Richter echoed Blagoi: 'I think they are very important, since they are the composer's own word' (p.108). Christopher Barnes, the editor of this book [*The Russian Piano School*], has also mistakenly thought Shakespeare's *The Tempest* should be connected with Beethoven's Sonata Op. 31 No. 2 (*Tempest*) (p.xiii). In fact, the title of this Sonata (*Tempest*), as well as its association with that Shakespeare's play, came from Anton Schindler – a secretary

⁴⁹ Carl Czerny. *On the Proper Performance of All Beethoven's Works for the Piano* (Universal: 1970), 22. See also 'Common and touch' from Tilman Skowronek. *Beethoven the Pianist* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Sandra Rosenblum, *Performance Practices in Classic Piano Music* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), Chapter 4; David Rowland, *History of Pianoforte Pedalling* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

and early biographer of Beethoven. However, Western scholars have questioned Schindler's reliability as early as 1850s.⁵⁰ The modern musicologist Barry Cooper has even claimed in *The Beethoven Compendium* that virtually nothing Schindler has recorded can be trusted unless it is supported by other evidence, since the 'inaccuracy was so great' (Cooper, 1991, p.52). If we were to apply Cooper's principle, the conclusion that the *Tempest* Sonata is connected to Shakespeare's play is therefore not valid, since there is no recorded evidence, other than Schindler, for such an association. And even if Beethoven had intended for such an association, he would have added the title (*The Tempest*) at the opening of the Sonata, as he did in some of his other works.⁵¹

Despite the discovery of Richter's background knowledge on *Appassionata*, this interview reveals that Richter is extremely mindful of tempo changes in *Appassionata*. 'I very much dislike the way in which many performers of the *Appassionata* change the tempi within one single movement' (p.108). Richter pointed out specifically that this acceleration tends to occur at the start of the repeating triplets in the first movement. He also noted a phenomenon that 'pianists are inclined to play the easier passages faster' (p.109). However, Richter does not seem to apply this statement to his performances of the third movement of *Appassionata*. For instance, in his live recording in St. Petersburg (May 1960), the tempo in the third movement greatly

⁵⁰ Alexander Wheelock Thayer was the first person to question the credibility of Anton Schindler, and subsequently sailed for Europe to undertake his own research in 1849. Thayer became the first author of the scholarly biography of Beethoven. See Alexander Wheelock Thayer, *Thayer's Life of Beethoven* (2 vols.), Elliot Forbes (Rev.& Ed.). Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992.

⁵¹ For instance, Beethoven's Sonata No. 26 in E flat major, op. 81a (*Les Adieux*); Symphony No. 6 in F major, op. 68 (*Pastoral-Sinfonie*); Sonata No. 29 in B flat major, op. 106 (*Große Sonate für das Hammerklavier*) – all titles are clearly indicated on the composer's manuscript. As with the case of Sonata No. 8 in C minor, op. 13 (*Pathétique*), it is unfortunate that Beethoven's manuscript had been lost and we are only left with the first edition. But even in this case, the title is still clearly indicated on the front page of the first edition. Again, we can only rely on first edition in the case of op. 31. Three piano sonatas were published under the same opus number, however, there is no sign that Beethoven intended for a title for the second sonata in the first edition, nor did he express such intention in any of his surviving conversational books, letters or note books.

varies. Instead of playing ‘the easier passages faster’, Richter seems to play the difficult passages in a faster tempo. Richter’s performance is somewhat clearer than his predecessor, Feinberg;⁵² but it is apparent that his tempo is unstable, especially if we compare his performance with his contemporary colleague, Emil Giles.

As pointed out earlier, Neuhaus published a handful of articles, but rarely do we have a detailed report on his actual teaching activity. The next article presented here is a transcript from Neuhaus’s masterclass, where the student played Beethoven’s Sonata in A major, Op. 101. It details Neuhaus’s comments on the student’s performance and his thoughts on how this Sonata should be played. It is unfortunate that we are unable to see and hear physically how Neuhaus taught this particular student; but it is fortunate that this transcript has occasionally noted his teaching approach. For instance, in a polyphonic passage, the student did not hold on to the inner voice. Neuhaus first explained verbally where the mistake lies, and subsequently demonstrated on the piano. It is not merely the correct version that Neuhaus demonstrated, but also the incorrect way of performing that passage. This allows the student to compare the difference and identify the errors themselves. Besides this masterclass transcript, it may be useful to point out that there are recorded sound clips of Neuhaus’s teaching at the Moscow Conservatoire, and those sound clips confirm that Neuhaus inclines to demonstrate different versions (correct and incorrect version; first version and edited version of the music text) of the same passage to the student.⁵³

Maria Eshchenko’s article *Chopin Études* was based on her classes with Samuil Feinberg. This article focuses on five études by Chopin (No. 2, 4, 12 from Op. 10; No.

⁵² As pointed out earlier, Feinberg plays the third movement in a much quicker tempo than indicated.

⁵³ One of which was a lesson on Chopin’s Ballade No. 4 in F minor, op. 52. See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SzMqH1j8tc> [Assessed on 10 June 2016]. At the beginning of this sound clip (7’30), Neuhaus pointed out the difference in musical text in various editions, and demonstrated those differences at the instrument.

5, 11 from Op. 25), and Eshchenko provides a brief analysis on these works. Since this article is based on Feinberg's teaching, it is no surprise to find that Feinberg employs his mirror exercise in some of these études. He emphasises, once again, that this exercise, 'if performed uninterruptedly and very rapidly, will help players to master the difficulties of this passage' (p.137). Eshchenko employs a systematic approach throughout the article. She first highlights where the difficulties lie, and then provides solutions or practice methods as to how one would overcome them. It is undoubtedly an invaluable article to understand Eschenko's problem solving process.

The next three works can be jointly discussed, since their discourse focuses on one common interest – Chopin's Ballade No. 4 in F minor, Op. 52. The first article was written by Yakov Flier; the second was by his predecessor, Alexander Goldenweiser; and the third was an account of a masterclass by Konstantin Igumnov. According to Flier, Chopin has an irreplaceable position in the minds of young musicians in the Soviet Union. In particular, the Ballade in F minor is a composition that he frequently taught (p.146). It is unsurprisingly, therefore, to find three related articles on this composition, along with a recorded lesson by Neuhaus (see footnote 24). Despite the fact that these three articles and masterclass transcript discuss the same composition, the authors approach the music rather differently. Flier provides a general overview of how this Ballade should be performed, and occasionally gives a detailed commentary on recurring motifs. These detailed commentaries do not only note why Flier would interpret the music with a certain approach, but also how he would interpret it physically. For instance, Flier notes that, 'the introductory motif is heard twice, the second time in slightly altered form and requiring a fuller and more assertive tone.' In addition, Flier went further and explained how the following should be played:



Ex 1.7 Chopin's Ballade No. 4 in F minor, Op. 52 – bars 1-3

'I recommend playing the start of the Ballade with absolutely loose arm, using the hand to sink, without forcing, into the octaves. The upper G in the right hand should be a little brighter than the lower one, and the arm should therefore incline slightly toward the fifth finger' (p.148). This model of explanation (why and how) occurs throughout, although the latter section of the article is not as detailed as the opening part. Another noticeable approach from Flier is that he uses other musical examples to illustrate his point. For instance, on the subject of octave legato, Flier suggests that practising legato octaves (without using sustaining pedal) is extremely useful, as legato octaves frequently appears in this Ballade. Further, he emphasises that legato octaves have an important role in piano literature, and identifies three advanced piano compositions that require the same technique:



Ex 1.8 The beginning of the second piece in Schumann's *Kreisleriana*



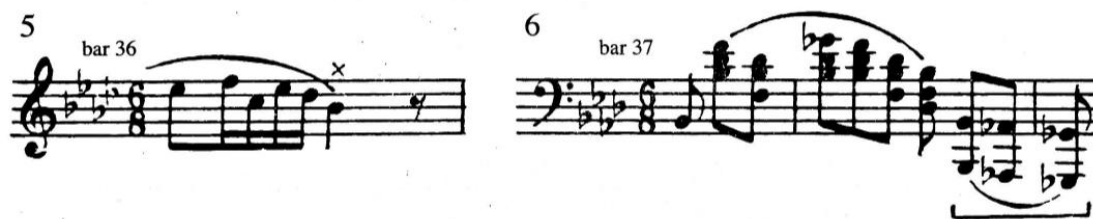
Ex 1.9 Second movement of Brahms's Second Piano Concerto – bars 215-219



Ex 1.10 Chopin's Étude in B minor Op. 25, No. 10 – bars 31-34

Indeed, more of the same kind could be easily added to Flier's list. But at this point, if we compare the work of Flier and Goldenweiser, it becomes apparent that Goldenweiser tends to analyse the composition in smaller parts. Goldenweiser identifies 28 musical examples from the Ballade and highlights areas that the pianist may have missed in practice. As Goldenweiser noted, for instance, 'In the motif quoted in example 5, the final note is extremely important. Here it is a quarter note, elsewhere it is an eighth note. Sometimes it is held, sometimes cut short. All these details should be carefully noted and observed when playing...The octaves (example 6) should not be played as if they represented some totally new idea, but they should flow out of what went before. The pedal should be changed on each eighth note.' (p.159)⁵⁴

⁵⁴ Examples 5 and 6 are Goldenweiser's examples, and they are indicated as Example 1.11 in the thesis.



Ex 1.11 Goldenweiser's example from Chopin's Ballade No. 4 in F minor, Op. 52

– bars 36-37

In another example, Goldenweiser is simply stating obvious facts:

‘The three accents (Goldenweiser's example 28), on D flat, F and F, were placed there by Chopin, and they should be observed:’ (p.164)



Ex 1.12 Goldenweiser's example from Chopin's Ballade No. 4 in F minor, Op. 52

– bars 233

In other words, Goldenweiser's article is simply pointing out all those indication made by Chopin, and this only adds a little value to our existing knowledge. What it does, however, is that it informs us of the general mistakes Goldenweiser tends to observe from the students whilst teaching at the Moscow Conservatoire at that time. Igumnov's account is slightly different from the previous two articles (Flier's and Goldenweiser's). Not only does it provide another perspective on how this Ballade could be interpreted; it also demonstrates Igumnov's extensive knowledge of the mechanics of the instrument: ‘Piano tone depends not only on one's approach to the instrument, but also on proper use of the pedal. The pedal not only sustains the

harmony, but also gives the melody its full sonority. This is very important. I can tell you from experience that when the pedal is kept absolutely and completely crystal clear, not only does it not help the melody to sound, but it can also create an empty void. Because if I release the dampers every second, all the overtones disappear and only the bare fundamentals are left. You should bear this in mind and not raise the pedal without good reason; use half-pedal so that only the unwanted sounds disappear' (p.168). In addition, Igumnov also made an important observation: 'A fault often found in students when they come to the conservatoire is poor placing of the feet on the pedals' (p.168). If the transcript is 'a verbatim account of the masterclass' as its claims, there is no sign suggesting that Igumnov demonstrated in this masterclass. Unlike the previous article on Neuhaus's masterclass (*Work on Beethoven's Sonata in A major, Op. 101*), where his demonstration was noted, Igumnov's teaching appears to rely solidly on verbal communication.

We have just seen Yakov Flier's performer commentary on Chopin's Fourth Ballade, but the article (*Lessons with Yakov Flier*) by Nina Lelchuk and Elena Dolinskaya offers another perspective on Flier's pedagogical method. This article focus on Flier's teaching on two compositions: Liszt's Mephisto Waltz No. 1, and Prokofiev's Sonata No. 3. As in the Chopin's Fourth Ballade, Flier analyses each of the compositions respectively, and explains how these works should be performed. However, an interesting insight from this article is that the authors (Lelchuk and Dolinskaya) provide a brief summary of Flier as a teacher, and present some of the teaching approaches Flier adopted. As Lelchuk and Dolinskaya points out, Flier prepares his pupils to familiarise the orchestral part when they are working on a concerto, so that his pupils could make adjustments in their solo part. 'It is well known, for example, that because of the thick orchestration it is often hard for the piano to be heard at the

start of Rakhmaninov's Second Piano Concerto. Flier therefore recommends special fingerings that make maximum use of the more powerful first, second and third fingers' (p.199).

The last article in Barnes's publication – *Yakov Zak as Teacher*, is written by Olga Stupakova and Genrietta Mirvis. As the title suggests, this article reflects on the authors' learning experience with Zak, as well as his teaching methods. It is incredibly useful, since there is only a handful of information on the teaching of Zak. Not only does it confirm that Zak frequently demonstrated during his class, but this article also shows his extensive knowledge and enormous interest in studying chamber music. According to Stupakova and Mirvis, Zak's particular affection and admiration lies in the quartets of Beethoven, and that studying these quartets is compulsory for all his students. He insisted that students study these quartets as part of their study programmes with him, 'not only by listening to records or concerts, but also via their own music-making in four-hand arrangements' (p.202). Another observation from this work is that Yakov Zak seems to be aware of the changing style of piano playing. For instance, a student played from a different edition of Schumann's Symphonic Étude, and at one point, Zak claimed that, 'it is better to play all notes of the chords together; this edition maybe reflects the influence of the late nineteenth-century salon style of piano playing' (p.202). In addition to style of performance, one obvious and important feature of Zak's teaching method is the great store he sets on having a conductor's view. He frequently points out that students must 'know the score like a conductor' (p.215). It is apparent that Zak has also applied some of the conducting mindset in his teaching methods; one of which is 'sectional rehearsal'. As pointed out by Stupakova and Mirvis, Zak expects the student first to grab the complete concept and idea of the composition, 'as if the

conductor carefully thinks through his/her score'. It is only then that the student should apply their 'tonal, dynamic and emotional characteristics into the general scheme, obtaining the right sonorities from various "instrumental sections" which are necessary for achieving an overall balanced "orchestral" sound' (p.215). Zak believes that by approaching music with a conductor's mentality and perspective, 'it will stimulate the pianist's own activity and willpower, organises his thoughts, and forces him to undertake a detailed analysis of the work under study as if it were a conductor's score' (p.215-216). Furthermore, this article touches on a topic that is often discussed among Zak's contemporaries – tone production. It is usual that Russian pianists would emphasis producing a 'beautiful' tone colour in writing; however, it is unusual that they would discuss technically how certain timbres can be produced. Instead of merely listening to different instruments, Zak suggests various piano techniques for various types of tone production. 'The tone of brass instruments is produced by playing with almost straight, firm fingers but with an active wrist; flute tones are obtained with the free flight of one's fingers; the bassoon is imitated with flat fingers accompanied by slight movement from the elbow...' (p.218). The bassoon timbre, for instance, can be applied to the following left hand passage in Chopin's third Scherzo:



Ex 1.13 Chopin's Scherzo No. 3 in C sharp minor, Op. 39, bars 57-61

To conclude, this article offers a privileged insight into Zak's teaching methods, as well as some of his pedagogical principles. These have not been available and assessable elsewhere, and it draws together some of Zak's teaching philosophy from his forty years of teaching experience.

1.3 Unpublished Theses

In the field of study carried out amongst Russian pianists by Western researchers, Kofman's (2001) thesis offers information on the history of Russian pianism and shows interesting connections between the pianists within the tradition. Nevertheless, its data relating to modern Russian piano education is not valid at present and in fact, out of date. For instance, as Kofman states, 'They [Igumnov, Goldenweiser, Neuhaus, Feinberg, Flier, and Zak] produced renowned, world-class pianists-pedagogues, such as Gilels, Richter, Gornostaeva, Malinin, Naumov, Lyubimov, Viardo, Sultanov, Glavatskih, Berezovsky, Itin, and Lifschitz who gave and continue to give such a creative drive to the Russian piano school that it is now considered one of the best in the world'.⁵⁵ Only based on those names, it is difficult to understand why and how the 'Russian Piano School' is considered as 'one of the best' today; in any case, it is important to note that of those twelve names she mentioned; six of them had died, five of them now reside in Europe or America and are not involved in any teaching activity in Russia. It is only Lyubimov who continues to teach at the Moscow Conservatory today. Up to this point, one may begin to question whether those data are still relevant to the current state of the 'Russian Piano School'; however, it is not only the relevance of the data that is questionable; but various claims made in her thesis are also slightly suspicious. As Kofman claimed, 'Even today, the Moscow

⁵⁵ Irena Kofman, 'The History of the Russian Piano School: Individuals and Traditions'. (DMA Dissertation, University of Miami, 2001), 1.

Conservatory is one of the most distinguished music schools in the world, and its piano department is one of the strongest.’⁵⁶ However, she did not explain why it was the case, nor did she include any evidence or analysis to support her statement. It is therefore unclear as to why and how Kofman arrived at the conclusion that ‘Moscow Conservatory is one of the most distinguished music schools in the world’.

As we will see in Chapter 3, it would be more precisely to claim that it is in fact, the Russian music educational hierarchy that is perhaps ‘one of the most distinguished systems in the world’. According to Izabela Wagner, ‘These kinds of schools [Specialist Music School], especially the Central School in Moscow, are a model for Yehudi Menuhin’s school in Folkestone in Great Britain and the Pre-College Division of the Juilliard School of Music in New York.’⁵⁷ Of course, not all data in Kofman’s thesis are invalid; there is some valuable fact-based information. For instance, her brief discussion of the hierarchical structure of Russian music education provided some basic background knowledge. In particular, my table of Russian music education in Chapter 3 is borrowed and enhanced from Kofman’s thesis. Another useful reference from her work is the student trees of Theodor Leschetizky and Nikolai Rubinstein. These two tables offer a general overview of their students, and provide the opportunity to trace some of their pianism and pedagogical methods among the living Russian pianists today.

Interesting comparative research can be found between Russian, Vietnamese and UK piano pedagogy in the thesis by Nguyen (2007). However, this research does not draw much on the view from a Russian pianist’s perspective, nor does it seem to provide a clear clarification of what constitutes the Russian tradition. Similarly, Shiromoto’s

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 103.

⁵⁷ Wagner. *op.cit.*, 80.

(2007) research only shows limited sources from contemporary Russian pianists and it is inconsistent in its treatment of Russian keyboard history. Of all the recent studies, two theses are most relevant to this research: Yuan-Pu Chiao (2012) and John Rego (2012). Chiao examines recordings of some eminent pianists who have caused the playing style of Rachmaninov to change over the years. Chiao's study is based on two research methodologies: recordings and interviews. He first outlines different views from pianists and researchers on the issue of 'performing school' and presents a thorough discussion on 'Early Russian' and 'French' Schools of piano playing respectively. In particular, the discourses on 'Early Russian School' were useful and detailed resources. Not only does Chiao suggest the possibility of 'school within a school',⁵⁸ but he also points out that Russian pianists favour a 'melody-orientated' style. Although he only compared 'Early Russian' and 'French' Schools, it is clear that a large majority of Russian pianists he examined emphasise some melodic notes. In contrast to the Russian pianists, Chiao proposes that German and Central European pianists prefer to emphasise the bass and harmony notes. In addition to the 'melody-orientated' style, Chiao also investigates a typical 'Russian' style of phrasing. With the assistance of Sonic Visualiser, the results of recording analysis indicate that Russian pianists tended to create a diminuendo at the end of phrases. This, according to his interviewees (Bella Davidovich and Rustem Hayroudinoff), came from the speaking style of the Russian language. As Hayroudinoff suggests, 'You will constantly hear that they [early Russian pianists such as Neuhaus, Igumnov, Rachmaninoff, Horowitz] started the melody strongly and then let it fade away, just

⁵⁸ For instance, Anna Essipova studied with Leschetizky, and in her recordings as well as her pupils', Chiao points out one particular characteristic in common: 'very relaxed and free wrists, which endowed them with the ability to play difficult pieces at a fast tempo.' According to Chiao, only Essipova's pupil play in the same way, and this characteristic cannot be found among Leschetizky's pupil. This leads Chiao to question Essipova had in fact formed her own School of playing. See Yuan-Pu Chiao, *The Changing Style of Playing Rachmaninoff's Piano Music*, (Unpublished PhD dissertation, King's College London, University of London, 2012), 67-68.

like someone was singing, taking a full, deep breath first and then gradually exhale, or speaking, because it is also the way we speak in Russian, the accent is in the beginning of a phrase. This style also can be heard in some early Russian singers and pianists, but it is almost extinct now' (Chiao, 2012, p.102). Along with this hypothesis in mind, Chiao compares the recordings of Western and Russian pianists and notices that 'Russian diminuendo singing phrase is a kind of performing habit or preference commonly heard in the playing of (early) Russian pianists' (Chiao, 2012, p.117). Furthermore, he argues that recordings may have played a more significant role in the evolution of interpretation than the score. In clarifying various interpretative issues, Chiao conducts interviews with fifty-five concert pianists – one of which was Ruth Slenczynska, a private pupil of Rachmaninov. Many interviewees who took part in the research also played a significant role in changing the way Rachmaninov's music is performed – allowing Chiao to question their interpretive approach directly.

Likewise, Rego (2012) also briefly touches on the performance practices of the 'Russian Piano School', and highlights some common pedagogical methods among Soviet pianists. Although it was a brief discussion (merely a chapter of the thesis), Rego proposes some striking information. For instance, he offers a detailed summary of Russia's keyboard history, suggesting that 'European culture gradually permeated Russian life at the end of the eighteenth century' (Rego, 2012, p.36). Furthermore, Rego's comprehensive account of pre-1860s Russian musical culture provides a fresh insight to the current Western literature. The most beneficial part to this thesis, however, is his investigation of the pedagogical work of some of the early Russian pianists. Rego's comparison between Nikoloi's and Anton's teaching approach provides a starting point as to how these founders of the 'Russian School' began their pedagogical activity in 1860s. It suggests some of their teaching philosophies that

were previously unavailable elsewhere. Rego suggests that Anton Rubinstein inclines to avoid pedagogical repertoire that ‘hone the mechanical skills of his students. He considered such repertoire substandard and believed that a student’s investment of time in learning these compositions was wasted’ (Rego, 2012, p.53). Mechanical skills imply those technical studies or exercises. If such repertoire were not a primary concern of Anton’s teaching approach, it would be interesting to understand how the technical aspect was taught in the early 1860s. Another useful element from Rego’s thesis is his exploration of Rubinstein’s phrasing. According to Rego, ‘He [Anton] also recommended adding text to music to assist the pianist to distinguish phrases. In using such an idea, students would be able to identify the particular notes which receive the most emphasis or stress. The second factor concerned the climax of a phrase. Rubinstein suggested that a phrase should begin with a low energy level with a highpoint being synonymous with the climax of the phrase. The third principle concerned the dissection of a phrase into small motifs and, conversely, the merging of phrases into an inclusive whole.’ (*Ibid.*, p.55-56.) As we will see later on in Chapter 5 (Section 5.3), the second and third principles continue to occur in some of the teaching observed in this study. The central area of Rego’s thesis, however, remains the pianism of three Russian composer-pianists: Scriabin, Rachmaninov, and Prokofiev. He also takes the opportunity to analyse some of the recordings from ‘members of the Russian School’ and suggests that their interpretation of Scriabin can be considered as historically informed performance (*Ibid.*, p.411). In sum, Rego carefully examines each of these composer-pianists individually, and comes to the conclusion that the three had vastly different approaches to piano playing, and yet, they emerged from the same piano tradition.

With all deepest respect toward what was written, all of the works mentioned have one common weakness – pedagogy and performance are treated as isolated from each other. It is somewhat surprising that in these studies very little has been made of the connection between the Russian pedagogy system and its performance tradition. The topic of what constitutes Russian performance tradition is indeed a concern that Western musicologists have attempted to clarify. Needless to say, during the course of inquiry, the culture, political and social elements of Russian history and its present will have had a considerable impact on Russian teachers' pedagogical approach in this research. Although these issues certainly have had significant effects on the education systems in Russia and the West, I will not attempt to address these issues here. My focus, rather, is on sound and technique, and on the kinds of evidence that can be used to clarify their nature.

This research, not only is the first to draw an association between performance and pedagogy, but also the first study to compare the teaching of Russian and Russian emigrant teachers. Of course, it would have been more interesting to compare the performances of these Russian and Russian emigrant teachers, who also took part in the interviews and observations. However, as pointed out in the introduction, many of the Russian emigrant teachers have not made a large number of, or even any recordings. In any case, an understanding of the historical and respective formation of the Russian piano tradition will provide the necessary context to enhance our appreciation specific manners which may also represent shared characteristics with pianists of today who were trained within the same school.

1.4 Conclusion

The purpose of this literature review was to understand the development of Russian piano studies in the last fifty years, and to identify gaps in the current knowledge. It is clear from the review above that the notion of viewing performance and pedagogy as one unifying aspect is not widely acknowledged in today's musical society. There has been much research and discussion carried out on these topics respectively; some are closely related to the 'Russian Piano School' including the changing style in performing Rachmaninoff's music, and the performance practice of the Russian piano tradition. Most of the research discussed above focuses on performance issues, however, more research and testing on the pedagogical aspect is required in order to gain a better understanding and insight into what 'Russian Piano School' means to modern Russian pianists, and how this ideology has subsequently affected their playing and teaching. It is vital to conduct more studies on their recorded performances, and analyse their approaches towards musical text. Further, lesson observation will help us to reveal some of the teaching strategies that are frequently used by Russian pianists.

CHAPTER 2

THE RUSSIAN PIANO TRADITION

If we are to deconstruct the ‘Russian Piano School’, what qualities are thought to define the term from a modern perspective? How do Russian performers see themselves under this ideology or perhaps, tradition? If it is a performing tradition, how has the impact of globalisation changed Russians’ performance aesthetics from the past to the present day?

In providing a context for the definition of the framework of the ‘Russian Piano School’ it is critical that a brief history of the piano in the Soviet Union be outlined. A discussion of the establishment of the Conservatoires in St. Petersburg and Moscow will provide the context for an in-depth study of the ‘Russian School’ of piano playing and teaching at present. Further, it prepares the appropriate setting for various contemporary Russian pianists mentioned in this chapter who continue to have a direct impact on Russian pianism.

2.1 The Russian School in the Past

The greatest pianist of the nineteenth century, Franz Liszt (1811-1886) never missed an opportunity to insist that Germany and France had had their say in music, and that everything new must perforce come from Russia.⁵⁹ Although Russia was highly praised by the master, the country did not have a highly developed musical cultural before the mid-nineteenth century. Similarly to Western Europe, Russia began its musical activity with vocal music, and it was folk-song that captured the interest of

⁵⁹ Alexander Siloti, ‘My Memories of Liszt’ in *Remembering Franz Liszt*, introduction by Mark N. Grant (New York: Limelight Editions, 1986), 367.

Russian audiences. The popularity of keyboard instruments, however, only began in early nineteenth century when a number of renowned pianists and teachers, such as John Field (1782-1837) and Adolf von Henselt (1814-1889), travelled to Russia from Western Europe. The former settled in St. Petersburg in 1803, while the latter arrived in the same city in 1838 and began an influential forty-year teaching career. In particular, Field found himself in great demand as a teacher, and the essential elements of his teaching were *legatissimo* and tone production.⁶⁰ These elements were introduced in his piano playing too, where Mikhail Glinka (1804-1857) commented that 'his playing was combined with a singing style, precise and delicate touch. He places his virtuoso technique at the service of the music and was always aiming for smoothness of phrase together with graceful movement.'⁶¹ It is not surprising therefore, to find differences between Field's refined pianism and Liszt's virtuoso approach – which latter influenced Russia during his recital tours in 1840s.⁶² These performers made a considerable impact on artistic development, pianistic culture and musical education in Russia, before the two Conservatoires were even founded. Through such exchanges Russian pianists were able to learn from the practices of Western European pianism.⁶³

During the first half of the nineteenth century, Russian musicians frequently performed in house gatherings and, in consequence, these events provided the

⁶⁰ Alexander Dubuque (1812-1898), a student of John Field, stated 'the perfection of Field's muscular control was such that he needed to use only the smallest possible finger action to produce a wide range of tone.' While Louis Spohr (1784-1859) mentioned in his autobiography 'As soon as his touching performance began one forgot everything and became all ear.' According to Piggott, Spohr was the first musician who have fully appreciated the most important quality of Field's playing – the beautiful singing quality of his tone more than his technical facility. See Patrick Piggott. *The Life and Music of John Field, 1782-1837, Creator of the Nocturne*. (University of California Press, 1937), 102, 105.

⁶¹ Mikhail Glinka, ed. A. Liapunova and A. Rozanov. '*Polnoe sobranie sochinenii: literaturnye proizvedeniia i perepiska*' (Moscow: Muzyka, 1973-1977), 218-219.

⁶² See Vladimir Stasov. *Selected Essays on Music*. Trans. Florence Jonas (New York: Praeger, 1968), 120-121.

⁶³ Alexander Alexeev. '*Russkaia fortepiannaia muzyka ot istokov do vershin tvorchestva: predglinkinskii period, Glinka i ego sovremeniki, A. Rubinstein, Moguchaia kuchka*' (Moscow: Izdatel'stov Akademii Nauk SSSR, 1963), 17.

opportunity to foster the arts in their society. In addition to ‘home music making’, many music societies were established⁶⁴ and these organizations provided a foundation for a structured musical education in later years.⁶⁵ The expansion of music societies along with the visits of European pianists had expedited the development of musical culture in Russia; contributions from national composers were undeniable too. In particular, Glinka’s piano compositions reflect the melodic and harmonic language of Russian vocal music together with a strengthening of ties with folk art.⁶⁶ With the formation of The New Russian School of composition in 1856, a new era began to evolve. The New Russian School, commonly known as *The Five* ‘Mighty handful’ were all self-trained composers including Mily Balakirev (1837-1910), César Cui (1835-1918), Modest Mussorgsky (1839-1881), Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov (1844-1908) and Alexander Borodin (1833-1887). Under the leadership of Balakirev, *The Five* aimed to produce a distinctive identity in Russian musical art instead of imitating European music styles. Through their compositions, they incorporated village and folk songs into their music, and their works became associated with imitating sounds of Russia. Further, Balakirev was stimulated by Glinka’s conception of unique educational training in Russia which, in fact, led him to establish the Free School of Music in 1861.⁶⁷ Admission to the Free School of Music was not restricted to limited

⁶⁴ The Philharmonic Society was founded in 1802; The Musical Academy of Amateurs founded by F.P. Lvov (1766-1836) and A.F. Lvov (1798-1870) in 1827; The Society for Music Lovers in 1828; The Symphonic Society was founded in 1840 and operated until 1950.

⁶⁵ Musicians such as John Field, Adolf von Henselt and Anton Gerke (1812-1870) were among the teachers. According to Alexeev, “Supporting the education curriculum was one of the progressive characteristics of the pedagogy of that time, providing for the discovery of people who were artistically gifted and the foundation of a significant circle of musically cultured people.” See Alexeev, *op. cit.*, 21. Apart from systematic training at music societies, music education became part of the curriculum of boarding schools.

⁶⁶ Alexander Alexeev. *Istoriia fortepiannogo iskusstva* 3 vols., (Moscow: Muzyka, 1982), II, 216-223.

⁶⁷ Free School of Music – with the aim of ‘freedom’ from European music influences.

professional musicians and therefore the School was able to bring musical culture to the ‘The Masses’.⁶⁸

2.1.1 Anton Rubinstein and the Rise of Nationalism

Despite many Russian musicians who attempted to awaken the musical potential of the nation, the first figure among pianists to captivate the country was Anton Rubinstein (1829-1894).⁶⁹ As a pianist, A. Rubinstein’s performances often left a long-lasting impression on his audiences, both professional musicians and music lovers. Ignaz Moscheles (1794-1870) heard Rubinstein play in London and wrote in his diary ‘...a rival to Sigismond Thalberg, a Russian boy has fingers light as feathers and with them the strength of a man.’⁷⁰ A London critic, William Ayrton also left the following interesting description of the young pianist:

‘[He] excited the astonishment not only of those who are easily and willingly surprised by youthful genius...This lad, who is small for his age and very slenderly made, though his head is of large dimensions – executes with his little hands the very same music in which Thalberg excels...We...can answer for the unimpeachable correctness of his performance; and, what is still more remarkable, for the force by which, through some unparalleled gift of nature, he is enabled to exert a degree of muscular strength which his general conformation, and especially that of his arms and hands, would have induced us to suppose he could not possibly possess. To gratify those whose taste leads them to prefer fashionable music, he plays the fantasias of Liszt, Thalberg, Herz, etc.; but when exhibiting before real connoisseurs he chooses for his

⁶⁸ The classes at School were held in the evenings or on Sundays so that workers, shop clerks, seamstresses or chambermaids might find there an opportunity to make sure of their leisure. See Mikhail Zetlin. *The Five: The Evolution of the Russian School of Music*’ Trans. Geogre Panin. (New York: International University Press, 1959), 128.

⁶⁹ From the age of eight, Anton Rubinstein studied with Alexander Villoing (1804-1878) for a period of five years. At Felix Mendelssohn’s (1809-1847) recommendation, Anton received theory lesson from Siegfried Dehn (1799-1858) in Germany, but soon realized he was not fitted to a rigid discipline of polyphonic study under Dehn. See Reginald Gerig. *Famous Pianists and Their Technique* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1974), 290.

⁷⁰ Charlotte Moscheles, *Life of Moscheles*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1873, reprint 2014) Vol. II, 100.

purpose the elaborate compositions of the old German school – all of which he executes with an ease as well as a precision which very few masters are able to attain; and, to add to the wonder, he plays everything from memory...’⁷¹

Through his studies with Villoing, young Anton developed a fine finger technique and tonal sensitivity which earned him much praise from the critics and musicians.⁷² Furthermore, his encounter with the Italian tenor, Giovanni Rubini (1794-1854)⁷³ and the meeting with Liszt during A. Rubinstein’s concert tour of Paris in 1841 left an unforgettable impression on the young pianist, where A. Rubinstein naturally adopted Liszt’s free use of full arm movement.⁷⁴ The use of arm movement enabled A. Rubinstein to possess a breadth of tonal colours and power that was unique during his time. The twelve-year-old Sergei Rachmaninov (1873-1943) heard him and noted ‘One listened entranced, and could have heard the passage over and over again, so unique was the beauty of the tone which Rubinstein’s magic touch drew from the keys.’⁷⁵ However, A. Rubinstein’s pianistic power frightened some of his fellow musicians in Vienna. Clara Schumann (1819-1896) heard A. Rubinstein in 1857 and recalled: ‘First he played Mendelssohn’s Second Trio; but he rattled it about so horribly that I could barely sit still...and he oppressed the violin and cello so badly that I often could not hear them. At the same time the piano often sounded awful, like glass, namely when he made his frightful *tremolandos* in the bass – truly ridiculous,

⁷¹ Alexander M’Arthur. *Anton Rubinstein: A biographical Sketch*. (Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1889), 14-15.

⁷² ‘Villoing especially devoted much time and pains – with most successful results – to the correct position of my hands. He was most particular in this regard, as well as in the care he bestowed on the production of good tone...To him and to no one else am I indebted for a thorough, firm foundation in technique – a foundation which could never be shaken.’ See Anton Rubinstein. *Autobiography* (Boston: Little Brown and Co., 1890), 7-8.

⁷³ Anton could barely wait to get home and try to imitate upon the piano those lingering, heavenly sounds of Rubini’s. See Catherine Drinker Bowen. *Free Artist: The Story of Anton and Nicholas Rubinstein*. (New York: Random House, 1939), 30. According to Anton, ‘Strength with lightness’ was one secret of his touch. See Harold C. Schonberg. *The Great Pianists* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1987, 1963), 271.

⁷⁴ A. Rubinstein noted in his autobiography that he became at that time ‘a devoted imitator of Liszt, of his manners and movement, of his trick of tossing back his hair, his way of holding his hands, of all the peculiar movements of his playing.’ Rubinstein, *op. cit.*, 19.

⁷⁵ Bowen, *op. cit.*, 291-292.

but they delighted the public.’⁷⁶ However, it is worth pointing out that negative statements by others rarely appear in connection with A. Rubinstein’s performances.

Anton Rubinstein did not only leave his legacy as a pianist but also as an educator. On the return to Russia from his international tours during the 1850s, he noticed music in Russia was not appreciated and valued as much as in Europe.⁷⁷ Through many occasions, he began to question the definition of his social position and considered the need to establish an education institution that would raise the status of musicians in the country. Building on the work of the Imperial Music Society,⁷⁸ A. Rubinstein founded the St. Petersburg Conservatory in 1862, but thereby initiated a conflict with the Free Music School. Balakirev and the other four members of his group were concerned that the German influence that A. Rubinstein had brought back to the country would hinder the development of Russian classical music.⁷⁹ As far as nationalism was concerned, A. Rubinstein established his own examination requirements and all lessons were delivered in Russian.⁸⁰ However, A. Rubinstein was still under attack by the nationalistic group arguing that his ‘School’ could not be called ‘Conservatory’ – a Western word, which was seen as offensive to Slavic patriotism; ‘Professors’ must be called ‘Instructors’ – ‘Professors’ was also a Westernism in their eyes.⁸¹ Instead of being involved in wars of words, A. Rubinstein focused on how he would personally define ‘nationalism’ – nurturing the first

⁷⁶ Berthold Litzmann. *Clara Schumann*, 3 vols. (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1905) Vol. III, 19.

⁷⁷ On one occasion in the Kazan Cathedral, a deacon failed to identify musician as a vocation. See Rubinstein, *op. cit.*, 91-92.

⁷⁸ The Imperial Music Society (or Russian Musical Society) was founded by Anton Rubinstein along with the Grand Duchess Elena Pavlovna in 1859 and was closed down in 1917. The society was set up to encourage the study and performance of music in Russia. A similar branch was set up in Moscow in 1860 by Anton’s younger brother, Nikolai.

⁷⁹ As Balakirev’s personal situation with A. Rubinstein became more difficult, his nationalism turned into undisguised xenophobia. See Francis Maes. *A History of Russian Music: From Kamarinskaya to Babi Yar* (California: University of California Press, 1996), 39.

⁸⁰ Parents expressed their surprise that music education in Russia should be taught in Russian and many were astonished by this original idea. Rubinstein, *op. cit.*, 107.

⁸¹ Bowen, *op. cit.*, 168.

generation of ‘pure’ Russian-trained musicians though his work as the Conservatory director and teacher.⁸² Apart from administrative work as the director, A. Rubinstein played an active role in teaching, and his work at the Conservatory was not limited to the piano; he also gave classes in composition, chamber music, orchestral and ensemble playing. In particular, A. Rubinstein’s teaching principles and pedagogical approach on the piano were somewhat unique too. He believed that by setting uncompromising tasks the students would lose their ability to assimilate important musical concepts and in consequence, his way of teaching was flexible. He was reluctant to demonstrate or explain technical details in relation to performance; rather, he preferred the student to address such problems by way of trial and error.⁸³ It was precisely the freedom of creativity and independence that A. Rubinstein sought in his students. However in Josef Hoffman’s (1870-1956) view, ‘Rubinstein’s pedagogical approach would not work with all pupils, but it was nevertheless well calculated to develop a student’s original thought and bring out whatever acumen he may possess.’⁸⁴ Although A. Rubinstein valued his students deeply, he gradually began to suppress his own interpretative thoughts in lessons, worrying his students would simply reproduce his way of playing.⁸⁵ To A. Rubinstein, shaping students’ individual personality and developing their creative imagination were his main tasks as a teacher; but as a teacher-performer,⁸⁶ A. Rubinstein always felt performance was an art in which originality and being able to communicate new ideas were important. These

⁸² Russia had waited long for a Conservatory and when it appeared, men and women of mature talent hurried eagerly to its door. This was indeed A. Rubinstein’s primary goal – a Russian Conservatory for the Russians. Ibid., 169.

⁸³ Jordan Krassimira. *The Legacy of Anton Rubinstein* (Clavier 31: December 1992), 25.

⁸⁴ Josef Hoffman. *Piano Playing with Piano Questions Answered* (New York: Page and Co. 1909), 64.

⁸⁵ Alexander Alexeev. *Russkie pianisty: ocherki I materialy po istorii pianizma*. 2 Vols. (Moscow-St. Petersburg: Muzgiz, 1948), 76. German critic, Eduard Hanslick (1825-1904) once wrote: ‘Young virtuosi must beware of imitating the excesses of Rubinstein’s playing, rather learning from him to play with expression, keeping strict watch over the tempo...’ Bowen, *op. cit.*, 290.

⁸⁶ Teacher-Performer: A teacher who performs regularly; Teacher: A teacher who only teaches but does not necessarily perform.

new ideas should come from the performer who should literally interpret the musical meaning of the composer.⁸⁷ A. Rubinstein would often tell his student: ‘Just play first exactly what is written. If you have done full justice to it and then still feel like adding or changing anything, why, do so.’⁸⁸

2.1.2 Nikolai Rubinstein and the Moscow Conservatory

Whilst Anton Rubinstein had great successes with the St. Petersburg Conservatory, his younger brother, Nikolai Rubinstein (1853-1881) was not far behind. Having founded the Moscow branch of the Imperial Music Society in 1860, Nikolai assembled theory and choral singing classes for the general public, and began piano classes in 1863. The Conservatory in Moscow was eventually founded in 1866, and on Liszt’s advice N. Rubinstein invited the pianist Joseph Wieniawski (1837-1912), the violinist Ferdinand Laub (1832-1875) and the cellist Bernhard Cossmann (1822-1910) onto the staff as its foundation.⁸⁹ Despite the fact that Wieniawski only remained at the Conservatory for three years, N. Rubinstein was able to attract an impressive list of teachers including pianist Karl Klindworth (1830-1916), Anton Door (1833-1919) and Rafael Joseffy (1852-1915); singer Giacomo Galvani (1825-1889), the composer Pyotr Tchaikovsky (1840-1893) along with Nikolai Hubert (1840-1888), who was a professor of theory and later succeeded N. Rubinstein as Conservatory’s director.⁹⁰ On N. Rubinstein’s invitation, these men were joined by Nikolai Zverev (1832-1893) in 1871 – a prominent piano teacher, whose pupils included Sergei Rachmaninov (1873-1943) and Alexander Scriabin (1872-1915).

⁸⁷ Lev Barenboim. *Anton Grigor’evich Rubinstein: zhizn’z artisticheskii put’, tvorchestvo, muzykal’no-obshchestvennaia deiatel’nost’ (1867-1894)* (St. Petersburg: Muzgiz, 1962), II, 348.

⁸⁸ Harold C. Schonberg, *op. cit.*, 377-378. Rubinstein’s insistence on first mastering the original score was a rather rigorous point of view for his era. See Hoffman, *op. cit.*, 59-60.

⁸⁹ Wieniawski was a student of Liszt; Laub and Cossmann played in the Weimar Orchestra under Liszt’s baton. Konstantin Zenkin. *The Liszt Tradition at the Moscow Conservatoire* (Franz Liszt and Advanced Musical Education in Europe: International Conference) 42. 1/2 (2001), 98.

⁹⁰ Tchaikovsky and Hubert both graduated from the St Petersburg Conservatory, later joining the Moscow staff in 1865 and 1871 respectively. *Ibid.*

Nikolai was above all an exceptional organizer and teacher; the course at the Conservatory, and the first programme of the piano class, were written by himself together with Anton Door and Alexander Dubuque (1812-1898)⁹¹ in 1867. Attention was on three types of work: Classical works (Beethoven, Schumann, Mendelssohn, Hummel and Bach), Virtuoso works (Liszt, Friedrich Kullak, Hummel, Weber) and Genre works (*Lieder ohne Worte* by Mendelssohn, Nocturnes by Field or Chopin and Transcriptions such as Schubert-Liszt). Apart from the traditional teaching of Russian Orthodox Church music, N. Rubinstein included intensive technical training at junior level and training on touch and tone production.⁹² As at the St Petersburg Conservatory, pianists in Moscow had lessons in ensemble playing and accompaniment; in addition, N. Rubinstein not only stressed the importance of sight-reading, orchestral scores, transposition but most essential of all, the study of theory and analysis. Anton Arensky (1861-1906), contemporary of Rachmaninov and a graduate of St Petersburg Conservatory noted:

‘When I came from the Petersburg Conservatoire to Moscow, I was impressed by the difference I noticed in the study of Theory. At the Petersburg Conservatoire non-majors did not take it seriously, no one was interested in the discipline and therefore no one knew it; by contrast, in Moscow any poor student could eclipse a good student [of the Petersburg Conservatoire]. Such a state of things was due to the fact that non-major classes were taught by Tchaikovsky.’⁹³

The conservatory’s programme in Moscow was more sophisticated and structured than in the St. Petersburg Conservatory; this is largely based on the fact that Nikolai

⁹¹ A pupil of John Field and teacher of Mili Balakirev; Professor of piano at Moscow Conservatory from 1866 – 1872.

⁹² Christopher Barnes (ed.), *The Russian Piano School: Russian Pianists & Moscow Conservatoire Professors on the Art of the Piano* (London: Kahn & Averill Publishers, 2008), xvii.

⁹³ From a letter to Sergei Taneyev of 7 March 1898: *Sergei I Taneyev: Materials and Documents* (Moscow 1952) Vol 1, 164.

concentrated his efforts on the development of musical institutions in Russia more than his brother,⁹⁴ but also the fact that Nikolai was an analytical musician and his early counterpoint and theory studies with Siegfried Dehn (1799-1858) made a significant impression on him. Derived from a similar background, comparisons were often made between Anton and Nikolai during their lifetime, not only on their achievements as Conservatory directors and educators but also as pianists. Although N. Rubinstein did not choose the career of a performing pianist, Nikolai could have been the better pianist of the two, if he really had worked at it.⁹⁵ In 1895, one of Liszt's distinguished pupils, Emil von Sauer, wrote a comparison of the two:

‘It is difficult to say which was the better pianist. In every way as different as the brothers were in personal appearance – the one dark, almost to blackness; the other very fair – so different was their playing. The playing of Nikolai was more like that of Tausig, only warmer and more impulsive. Perhaps Anton Rubinstein was the more inspired performer of the two, but he was unequal. Nikolai never varied; his playing both in private and in public was always the same, and kept up the same standard of excellence.’⁹⁶

N. Rubinstein was a natural born pianist and is said never to have practised after he was twenty.⁹⁷ Nevertheless, he knew his contemporary repertoires inside out and had all new music under his fingers. This can be seen again from the words of Emil von Sauer: ‘When Grieg’s A minor Concerto, now the property of all pianists, and Brahms’s Variations [on Paganini’s themes] were novelties in the concert programmes, and no one thought of using them for educational purposes, they had been for a long time pearls of N. Rubinstein’s repertoire and could be heard at the

⁹⁴ Nikolai spent all of his time only on teaching and administration work as a conservatory director. On the other hand, Anton found himself in various positions: a conservatory director, a teacher, a composer, and a performer; leaving no time to consider any programme development. See Alexeev (1948), *op. cit.*, 88-89.

⁹⁵ Schonberg, *op. cit.*, 279.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Bowen, *op. cit.*, 338.

Moscow Conservatory.’⁹⁸ Unlike in St Petersburg, students at the Moscow Conservatory were aware of the latest music available to them – a result of Nikolai’s interest in new music.⁹⁹

Both Anton and Nikolai provided a solid foundation for music education in Russia. Further, their substantial influence on later generations of pianists (the powerful strength in their pianism; long *cantabile* sound; the distinctive melodic element) led to those features being incorporated into Russian pianism.

2.1.3 The Four Giants: Goldenweiser, Igumnov, Neuhaus, and Feinberg

In the beginning the St Petersburg was the more illustrious Conservatory; however, with the Soviet capital being relocated to Moscow in 1922, the Moscow Conservatory gradually developed its own prestige. After the death of Nikolai in 1881, the Russian piano tradition was carried on by his two major successors: Vasilii Safonov (1852-1918) and Pavel Pabst (1854-1897). Safonov nurtured a number of gigantic figures including Alexander Scriabin, Nikolai Medtner, Josef and Rosina Lhévinne; Pabst possessed a brilliant virtuosity and lyrical pianism. These trademarks were passed on to some of his remarkable graduates, including two of the founding fathers of the Soviet school of piano playing: Alexander Goldenweiser (1875-1961) and Konstantin Igumnov (1873-1948).¹⁰⁰ The former was a pianist, composer, scholar, and most important of all, a celebrated teacher whose teaching career spanned six decades. Goldenweiser was an eminent figure of Russian pianism and it is useful here, to lay out some of his pedagogical principles.

⁹⁸ Email von Sauer. *Meine Welt* (Berlin - Stuttgart: 1901), 78-79.

⁹⁹ According to the piano syllabus of Moscow at the time: Liszt’s *Étude Harmonies du soir* and Fifth *Hungarian Rhapsody* were included in their seventh year of studies; and in their final, ninth year, Liszt’s *Spanish Rhapsody* as well as *Hungarian Rhapsodies* No. 6, 12 and 14 were all included. During 1880s students at Moscow Conservatory already played late works by Liszt. See Zenkin, *op. cit.*, 105.

¹⁰⁰ Barnes, *op. cit.*, xvi.

Like the Rubinstein brothers, he often emphasised that performers have no right to add anything unless they can do what is written ‘The author actually wrote much more than that the performer realizes...most of playing against composers’ strict performing indication is laziness. Playing by way of the particular occasion is much easier than constantly following what is written.’¹⁰¹ While Goldenweiser applied this principle to his playing, he also expected his student to follow composers’ indications as accurately as possible. In bringing a new work to his class, instead of playing the composition in an individual manner, students were expected to play with maximum precision, and to concentrate on the composer’s indications.¹⁰² Although the format of lessons with Goldenweiser always varied, students received short remarks regularly on two musical aspects: phrasing and articulation – two elements of piano playing to which he was highly sensitive. For instance, Goldenweiser would make such a comment on these elements as ‘here use more legato in the upper voice, and there make the imitations in the subordinate voices clearer.’¹⁰³

Although Goldenweiser rarely focused on technical issues during lessons, he emphasised pedalling. He was constantly against over-use of the pedal and stressed the importance of correct pedalling in an early childhood education:

‘When working with beginners, it is best to begin by teaching them to use “short pedal”, i.e. depressing the pedal at the same instant when the note is played. Only later should one move on to use “delayed pedal”. The essential point, however, is that from the very outset pedalling should be regulated by hearing and should not merely follow some metrical scheme or other.’¹⁰⁴

¹⁰¹ Alexeev (1948), *op. cit.*, 101.

¹⁰² Barnes, *op. cit.*, 54.

¹⁰³ Dimitri Paperno, *Notes of a Moscow Pianist* (Oregon: Amadus Press, 1998), 42.

¹⁰⁴ Barnes, *op. cit.*, 60.

Despite the fact that Goldenweiser did not comment much on technical issues during his teaching, he left written accounts where he showed a keen interest in foundational technical concepts. He was particularly concerned with hand ‘positioning’ and suggested the hand should ‘depict’ what it is about to play and what it has just played. He further advised pre-college students to focus systematically on scales and arpeggios but recognised that chromatic scales are one of the hardest forms of passage playing.¹⁰⁵

As a pianist, Goldenweiser’s sound distribution is particularly noticeable. In many of his recorded performances, Goldenweiser rarely allows the accompaniment to be louder than the melody. His recording of Beethoven’s Piano Sonata No. 14 in C sharp minor, Op. 27 No. 2 serves as a fine example.¹⁰⁶ Although the first movement is in a slower tempo than Beethoven indicated, Goldenweiser’s performance presents many hidden melodies, and all represented by different quality of sound: upper voices are in a *cantabile* tone quality; triplet accompaniments are played with delicacy; the bass octaves are deep, and sometimes melodic. Goldenweiser starts the first and second movement with free tempo rubato but as the music goes on, his rubato becomes more reserved. Furthermore, Goldenweiser plays with clear articulation and maintains a long musical phrase throughout the sonata. In essence, Goldenweiser was an intellectual musician with emotional intensity in his playing – a figure who could represent the Soviet school in the twentieth century.

One of his exceptional students was Samuel Feinberg (1890-1962). Goldenweiser once commented in his diary:

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 61-62

¹⁰⁶ Alexander Goldenweiser – Beethoven Piano Sonata Nos. 14, 6, 27, 21. (The Moscow State Tchaikovsky Conservatoire Recording: Live Recordings of 1940s – 1950s) ID: SMCCD0115.

‘The phenomenal gift of Feinberg never ceases to amaze me. His mental organization and technical skills are really phenomenal...Feinberg plays like a devil...His fabulous talent strikes me fresh each time...Musically his brain works significantly better than mine, and I always have the feeling that I am behind him.’¹⁰⁷

Being held in such high regards by a musician such as Goldenweiser was indeed remarkable. Feinberg was the first Russian pianist to play the whole of Bach’s *Well-Tempered Clavier* and the complete piano sonatas by Beethoven, as well as all works by Schumann and most works by Chopin, Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninov.¹⁰⁸ Feinberg was greatly influenced by Goldenweiser, yet they had different musical preferences; for instance, Feinberg had an open attitude and unique musical interpretation towards contemporary music. He performed the complete sonata cycle by Scriabin, and also received critical acclaim for his performance of works by Prokofiev and Myaskovsky. His performance of Prokofiev’s works was highly praised by Myaskovsky too.¹⁰⁹ Although his mentor made a significant impact on Feinberg’s musical development, the two had very different personal perspectives on pianists playing by memory – one of Goldenweiser’s most important requirements. In Goldenweiser’s opinion, it is only when playing from memory that a performer could feel total freedom. On the contrary, Feinberg noticed students were too often required to play ‘by heart’; and they sometimes memorised badly largely because they play too much without the score.¹¹⁰ He further commented, ‘the more thoroughly a pianist wants to familiarise himself with a work, the more intently he should study the printed text.’¹¹¹ Rather than considering the difference between Goldenweiser and Feinberg,

¹⁰⁷ From the diary of Alexander Borisovich Goldenweiser (1926).

¹⁰⁸ Paperno. *op. cit.*, 127-128.

¹⁰⁹ Vasily Kiselev. *Sergei Prokofiev and Nikolai Miaskovsky: Perepiska* (Moscow: Sovetsky Kompozitor, 1977) Miralda Kozlova & Nina Iatsenko (eds.), 151.

¹¹⁰ Barnes, *op. cit.*, 22.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

one should look closely at their similarities. Like Goldenweiser, Feinberg, as well as many other Russian pianists, considered that the performer should indeed follow the score as closely as possible. 'We should treat the great composers with reverence, we should treasure every word that comes down to us from that distant age when their creative genius was alive, and we should closely examine the meaning of their personal instructions.'¹¹² In fact, Russian pianists often go beyond the determinants of the score,¹¹³ regarding the score as only approximate.¹¹⁴

Along with Goldenweiser, Konstantin Igumnov was another eminent student of Pabst. Igumnov's teaching activity lasted almost fifty years and his pedagogical principle was very similar to Anton Rubinstein's, that is, he placed the individuality of his pupils before anything else. Because he was determined that his students should in fact, develop their creative ideas, Igumnov, like Anton, did not impose his interpretative thoughts on his students. Unlike Anton, Igumnov demonstrated frequently to his students. In his view, teacher demonstration is the only way of correcting mistakes and of understanding the difficulty of the student.¹¹⁵ A modest musician, Igumnov would postpone teaching a piece when it was unfamiliar to him, stating to the pupil that he would prefer first learn it himself before teaching.¹¹⁶

As a pianist, he also placed much attention on tone and technique. He disliked pianists' fingers springing up off the keyboard when playing *staccato* notes.¹¹⁷ Instead, in his

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 23.

¹¹³ Samuel Feinberg and A Vichinsky 'O Muzyke I O sebe' Vichinsky. *Pianisti Rasskazyvayut 1* (Sokolov: Sovietyky Kompozitor: 1984), 208.

¹¹⁴ Gennadi Tsipin. *Soviet no Mei Pianist*. (Moscow : Muzika, 1992), 134.

¹¹⁵ Yakov Milshtein. '*K. Igumnov I voprosy fortepiannnoj pedagogiki*' *Voprosy fortepiannogo ispolnitel'stva*. Mikhail Sokolov (ed.) Vol.1 (Moscow: Muzyka, 1965), 147.

¹¹⁶ Konstantin Igumnov. *Obolin to Flier no Taiwa ni Miru Soviet Piano Kyouikusha*. (Musicanova: 1975) September, 98.

¹¹⁷ Pianists raise the finger then lower it; and Igumnov wondered why pianists should separately raise one finger and lower it.

opinion, one downward sweep of the finger would be more efficient.¹¹⁸ In order to produce a better tone, Igumnov observed that the ‘hand should remain calm without any movement; it touches the key but without any sudden sharp jolt. You should lift the hand immediately before the sound, and not in advance. The weight and fall of the hand plays an important part.’ He further stated that tone production not only depends on the fingers, but also on somewhere in our back.¹¹⁹

While the previous three were educated at the Moscow Conservatory, Heinrich Neuhaus (1888-1964) did not receive any formal training. He studied briefly with his uncle, Felix Blumenfeld¹²⁰ and later Leopold Godowsky. Besides being a notable pianist in his own right, Neuhaus’s long-standing fame and achievements were recognized through his work as a teacher.

The central approach in Neuhaus’s teaching was that he incorporated philosophy, creativity, literature, as well as poetry and painting into all his lessons. This allowed the students to re-consider arts in another context, and in consequence, encouraged the students to think about music in a broader sense. He considered every part of music playing must come from the arts.¹²¹

Neuhaus too, was particularly fond of this idea of image before sound; working on the ‘artistic image’ ‘can be successful only if it is the result of the pupil’s continuous development musically, intellectually and artistically and consequently also pianistically; without this there can be no “implementation”, no “embodiment”’.¹²²

¹¹⁸ Barnes. *op. cit.*, 79.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁰ A Russian composer, pianist and teacher who studied composition with Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov and piano with Fedor Stein at the St Petersburg Conservatory; Professor of Piano at Moscow Conservatory from 1922 until his death. His pupils included Maria Yudina, Maria Grinberg and Vladimir Horowitz.

¹²¹ Heinrich Neuhaus, *The Art of Piano Playing* (London: Kahn & Averill, 1993), 122.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 20.

Neuhaus's rich creativity enabled him to explain his ideas through a manner different from the other three figures of the Soviet School. This 'artistic image' idea can be seen as an expansion of Anton Rubinstein's tradition when Rubinstein asked Hofmann to direct his mental thoughts before beginning the first note.¹²³

Neuhaus was aware of his unique teaching method at the time if compared with the other three major figures, but in fact in his own words, 'all of us said the same in different expressions';¹²⁴ and his colleague Feinberg echoed his statement: 'all proceeded to realise the same aim in different ways.'¹²⁵ Considering all their individualities, these four Soviet pedagogues had much in common in piano performance and teaching methodologies. Elena Nazarova drew the common features of Soviet pianism together:¹²⁶

- a) Profound knowledge of music, broad cultural outlook, artistic taste, and love of the profession.
- b) High expectations imposed on both the master and the pupil.
- c) Main aim was to nurture and refine both the innate qualities of the musician and the person through the formation of his/her attitude, spirituality, and personal qualities as an artist.
- d) A constant focus on sound production.

¹²³ Hofmann recalled how Rubinstein taught him in one lesson 'Before your fingers touch the keys you must begin the piece mentally – that is, you must have settled in your mind the tempo, the manner of touch, and above all, the attack of the first notes, before your actual playing begins.' See Hofmann, 60-61.

¹²⁴ M Sokolov, 'Vydayushchieya Pianisty – Pedagogi o Fortepiannom Obuchenii' *Trudy Kafedry Obushevo Fortepianno po Metodike Istorii I Teorii Ispolnitelstva* (Moskva: 1991), 12.

¹²⁵ Feinberg and Vichinsky 1979.

¹²⁶ Elena Nazarova, "Osnovnye printsipy obucheniia pianist v istorii otechestvennoi fortepiannoi pedagogiki," *Fortepiannoe iskusstvo Istoriia I sovremennost: problem tvorchestva ispolnitel'stva, pedagogiki* (St. Petersburg: Izd-vo RGPU im. A.I. Gertsena, 2004), 44.

- e) Technique was aimed at realizing a profound interpretation; project the right sound, through the comfort and natural movement of the hands.
- f) An engagement with high-art repertoire.
- g) Understood the mission of arts in the formation of the artist and the broader community.

In summary, the four giants in the last century: Goldenweiser, Feinberg, Igumnov, and Neuhaus; all of them made a significance contribution to the development of Soviet piano playing and teaching, most important of all, they continued the tradition from the Rubinstein brothers, preserved their legacy and passed it onto the next generation of Russian pianists. We shall see in detail in section 2.2.2 and through examples in subsequent chapters the features of style that came to define Russian playing. Judging by the testimony reported here, it seems reasonable to suppose that features already emphasised by the Rubinsteins' generation included the ability to sing on the piano. Despite the fact that Rustem Hayroudinoff made an interesting observation on connection between this particular feature and Russian playing:

‘There are certain important traces of the Russian Piano School which were lost to some degree. We were strongly reminded what was lost when Horowitz came back from concert in 1986. That was the missing link [between Soviet and Russian School], that’s how Russian pianist used to play. What was the difference? The very singing and vocal like with long lines and beautiful phrasings. It was in the Russian playing – a very vocal element. If you listen to Rachmaninov, Lhévinne, Sofronitsky or Igumnov – they have a beautiful tone colour. Richter for example, was not so obsessed with a beautiful tone, especially when he was younger, his tone was quite hard. Neuhaus had a beautiful tone colour and a very vocal way to shape the phrase.’¹²⁷

¹²⁷ Interview with Rustem Hayroudinoff.

Hayroutdinoff seems to make a clear distinction between the two performing schools, and believe that the vocal element is a feature of the ‘Russian School’ but absent in the ‘Soviet School’. He admitted that Richter was a towering figure in the world of music in Russia, but would never consider him as a typical Russian pianist. As he stated:

‘He didn’t have a gorgeous singing tone. When you listen to Richter playing Rachmaninov, you can hear that he is not from the Russian School, especially in slower passages. He doesn’t have the elasticity, flexibility, the singing quality and colour. It is a totally different school.’¹²⁸

Hayroutdinoff’s differentiation of Soviet and Russian Schools is somewhat different to other contemporary Russian pianists. To him, it is the performing features that matter the most, rather than differentiating the Schools on the basis of their political contexts.

2.2 Russian Pianism at Present

2.2.1 The Globalisation Effect

During the Soviet Union, the nation was still based on the single-party state, a closely united union of multiple republics. Outgoing information such as music literature or teaching methodologies were not easily accessible by foreigners. In contrast, incoming knowledge or data continually found its way into the country even during the Soviet period. On a theoretical layer, Polish-born pianist and scholar, Jan Holcman (1922-1963) made an important observation in 1959:

‘Current Western trends also keenly interest the Russian music scholars. While the West generally remains aloof from the Soviet piano methods, the Soviets closely follow the West at the keyboard, at times giving the impression that New York is closer to Moscow than Moscow to New York. Every significant bit of material from the West finds its way to the library of

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

the Soviet conservatory. There it is carefully studied by experts with the view to assimilating useful ideas.’¹²⁹

In a practical sense, Pavel Nersessian (1964-), piano professor at Moscow Conservatory, also states that during the Soviet time:

‘Russian teachers were fully aware of what happened in the West and in America. Glenn Gould, for instance, was invited to the Soviet Union in the 1950s for a recital in Moscow. The people who heard his recital were shocked and there was a turn in [performance] priorities. Russians started to understand that there were other ways to play the same music they knew.’¹³⁰

Both Holcman and Nersessian noted the effect of external forces during the Soviet period, and those occasions made the visions of Soviet musicians focus on new aspects of piano performance.

Political Considerations & Shift of Priorities

It is fair to assume too, that the musical priorities of Russian performers experienced a dramatic change during the Soviet period which can largely be ascribed to the country’s political system. As early as in 1927, the Soviet Union started sending their musicians to international competitions,¹³¹ and with increasing frequency to Western competition after their first victory in Poland. Russian pianist Boris Berman (1948-), the head of piano department and professor at Yale University, noted that ‘the mentality of “you are going to win” or “you are representing your country and you owe it to your country” was drummed in Soviet competitors, then they began to play as if their life depended on it, because it did.’¹³² Selected Soviet competitors were not only given ‘the’ chance of glory, but also the one and only chance of going to the

¹²⁹ Jan Holcman, ‘Keyboard Left to Right’, *Saturday Review*, 25 July 1959, 33.

¹³⁰ Interview with Pavel Nersessian.

¹³¹ Lev Oborin (1907-1974) was the first Soviet pianist who won the Chopin International Piano Competition in Warsaw, Poland.

¹³² Interview with Boris Berman.

West – a luxury in the eyes of Soviet pianists.¹³³ Their school of pianism started to depend on the quality of life issue – this is how, in contrast to the West where recording was a more powerful factor, the kind of ‘note perfect style’ developed.¹³⁴

In spite of these external factors, the political situation had yet another noticeable influence on the Soviet Piano School during 1991-1992. The collapse of Soviet Union, and the newly-formed Russian government, made it easier for musicians to travel abroad. Since then European and Asian music institutions have invited Russian professors for permanent teaching positions across the world. Being musically isolated for a long period of time, Russian pianists are still of great interest to Western pianists for their performance approaches, teaching methodologies or pianistic traditions. This phenomenon remains in the West up to the present day. At the same time, Russian pianists’ receptivity to new ideas and values continue to shape the Russian School. Elena Kuznetsova (1950-), former Dean of Piano Faculty and a professor at Moscow Conservatory, acknowledged that she may make use of these ‘new ideas’ from other piano schools, and integrate them into her teaching, if such ideas are interesting or inspiring; in those cases, she would ‘understand that it is not from the Russian School.’¹³⁵ This equilibrium process neutralises the distinctions between Russia and the West; furthermore, it unifies their style, artistic values and even interpretations. Kuznetsova’s account also reflects a substantial issue: a major figure of the Russian School has deliberately decided to combine external influences

¹³³ Travelling to the West was restricted for most Russian citizens; therefore participating in competitions was a way of gaining access to Western consumers’ products. See Vladimir Ashkenazy & Jasper Parrott. *Beyond Frontiers* (London: William Collins Sons & Co., 1984), for a detailed account of participating in Western competitions during the Soviet era.

¹³⁴ One should remember that participating in competitions were not restricted for Western pianists. As Berman recalls, ‘Unlike the West, where everybody can apply for the competition; in Russia there was a [pre-] selection and if you were selected, your ticket was paid and you were given, for instance the participants of the Tchaikovsky competition are given a series of concerts to play through their program. These selected participants were sent for special treats where they could practise.’ Interview with Boris Berman.

¹³⁵ Interview with Elena Kuznetsova.

into the Russian tradition. Although Kuznetsova is consciously aware of the combination, this equilibrium process only takes place within her; and her students are unable to identify which style of teaching and playing belongs to Russia without being informed. As the studies progress, the habit of combining Russian and non-Russian elements will become a natural daily routine. Kuznetsova's attitude also contradicts the past, where Russian pianists' were against any outer influences; the present Russian School, to an extent, does not go against any outer influences but in fact, they are opening themselves to foreign artistic influences.¹³⁶ Given the Russian-to-Western and Western-to-Russian exchange process are blending both ways, the overall results at both ends will still be quite varied. This is due to different level of influence in one direction or another, and the prescribed education curriculum in the native country. Instances of these blendings will emerge in subsequent chapters.

Competitions

Without a doubt, the change of attitude among Russian pianists is a major cause of the waning distinctiveness of the Russian tradition; still the impact of international competitions on Russian musical development is undeniable. Competitions have become a crucial ingredient in establishing a career for Russian pianists; the younger generation have adjusted their performance manner accordingly. Alexander Mndoyants (1949-), laureate of the V International Van Cliburn Competition and a professor at the Moscow Conservatory, commented on this present phenomenon in Russia:

‘In my time, we didn’t have to be exactly correct – in terms of notes. But right now, pianists are worried of being kicked out of competitions; they are much

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*

more focused on technical aspects. They don't necessary have any inspiration in their playing, comparing to the way we used to play.'¹³⁷

Mndoyants's statement contradicts Berman's earlier comment. The latter highlighted the importance of 'note perfect' playing and saw that this mentality as embedded in every Soviet competitor. On the other hand, Mndoyants, who represented the Soviet Union in the Van Cliburn competition, did not feel notes had to be perfect. If we were to understand Mndoyant's intention, it is reasonable to assume that notes are important, but sound projection seems to be a more significant aspect. As he further stated:

'Although they [Western pianists] play everything correctly, the sound does not reach far enough to the audience...They [Western and young Russian pianists] are often worried that their sound is too harsh and hard. No one needs to worry about the hard sound if one knows how to press the key. The key should be played as if it is pulled towards you – but never directly to the keyboard.'¹³⁸

In fact, the mentality of 'sound before note' is subtlety expressed in Berman's response:

'The quality of sound and the quality of touch were stressed from the very beginning of studies. Until now, when I play, I am very mindful of the sound quality – the most important element...when we talk about the general texture, we are talking about good balance, and the balance of chords – ensuring that the melody is always heard.'¹³⁹

Together with Mndoyants as a professor at Moscow Conservatory, Natalia Trull (1956-) was a prize-winner of the Tchaikovsky Competition in 1986. When comparing Russian pianism at present with her time as a student, she felt the younger

¹³⁷ Interview with Alexander Mndoyants.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹ Interview with Boris Berman.

generation of Russian pianists are much ‘more chained inside’. Although they achieve a very high level of performance in general, sometimes they are rather empty.¹⁴⁰

Elena Kuznetsova echoed both of her colleagues, and pointed out that young pianists nowadays quite often lose their personality and their own voice in the music. She considers competitions a sort of globalisation, and that they are a common problem for every teacher in the world.¹⁴¹

Although competitions may have affected the musical world as a whole, the effect of globalisation has caused anxiety to Russian teachers, and subsequently called into question the continuing existence of the ‘Russian School’. Under the assimilation process, the Russian tradition loses its impact on the next generation without exception. It seems reasonable to suppose that this unification has only affected the younger generation; nevertheless, elder generations have also expressed a sense of instability of the Russian School – a concern of losing the Russian tradition. Russian pianist Tatiana Sarkissova, a professor at Royal Academy of Music in London, has resided in the West for over twenty years. She perceived this issue:

‘I would very much regret if it [Russian Piano School] will disappear – the old tradition that we definitely had there, maybe they still have. I just wish it will continue. I don’t know why it is disappearing. But I feel there is something missing, something might be missing.’¹⁴²

The perception Sarkissova depicted is a transformation of the ‘Russian School’. Indeed, Sarkissova and other Russian-trained pianists are currently experiencing the globalisation process within themselves. Thus, members of the ‘Russian School’ are aware of their tradition being replaced by external influences. Although Russian

¹⁴⁰ Interview with Natalia Trull.

¹⁴¹ Interview with Elena Kuznetsova.

¹⁴² Interview with Tatiana Sarkissova.

pianist Dimitri Alexeev (1947-)¹⁴³ admits the Western influence, he suggested the contrary saying that ‘the tradition of Russian Piano School is still rich and strong. It will develop, exist and live for many generations to come.’¹⁴⁴ However, this raises important issues: If the Russian tradition is incredibly valuable in the eyes of Russian pianists, how do we carry on the tradition despite the impact of globalisation? Perhaps it is not possible to resist the nature of unification, but identifying the principles of its pianism, and further understanding the tradition will inevitably strengthen the Russian School. Through the procedure of identification we are able to reveal the characteristics of Russian pianism, and it is in this way that the tradition of Russian School piano playing can be preserved.

2.2.2 Principles of the Russian School of playing

Dimitri Alexeev recalls one of his identification processes:

‘I can identify the Russian School of piano playing. Sometimes when I hear performances I recognised “Oh yes, that is Russian or close to Russian Piano School” It doesn’t mean it is always good, but it is closer to the Russian School than normal. It doesn’t matter if he or she had Russian masterclasses; sometimes it doesn’t go through in a few lessons or even a couple of years. It is much more profound and deeper.’¹⁴⁵

Dimitri Alexeev highlighted a typical encounter of many pianists: Russian tradition can be ‘sensed’ in performances. Thus, their tradition must have identifiable principles that musicians who understand them will recognise; and at least some products of the ‘Russian School’ must still carry these principles in their playing. There are three methodologies to examine these principles: written documents,

¹⁴³ Dimitri Alexeev – professor of piano at Royal College of Music; prize-winner of Moscow Tchaikovsky International Piano Competition in 1974 and Leeds International Piano Competitions in 1975, among others.

¹⁴⁴ Interview with Dimitri Alexeev.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

interviews, and recording analysis. Whilst documents written by leading Soviet pianists and teachers will enable us to sketch the fundamental principles of their playing; interviews with living pianists who received their education in the Soviet Union will not only provide us with first-hand perspectives on their performance aesthetics, but can also assure these principles are still valued in the Russian School of piano playing. Ultimately, analysing recordings will allow us to testify whether those principles are applied in practice.

Strong Technical Foundation

Russian pianists are famed for their technical ability and it has always remained one of the central components in Russian pianism. They believe technical proficiency should be one of the first acquisitions of the student who would become a fine pianist;¹⁴⁶ and therefore the foundation should be built not upon sands, but upon rock.¹⁴⁷ Conservatory studies extended to eight or nine years in 1879 and students were supposed to build their technical foundation in the first five years.¹⁴⁸ These five years were mostly spent on the mechanical side of technique, such as exercises, scales and arpeggios – a backbone of the ‘Russian School’.¹⁴⁹ Although students converted them to become more difficult, varied or rapid as their studies went on, they were never omitted from daily work.¹⁵⁰ Sergei Rachmaninov reinforces this in an interview:

‘In the music schools of Russia great stress is laid upon technic. Technic – is at first made a matter of paramount importance. All students must become

¹⁴⁶ See James Francis Cooke. *Great Pianists on Piano Playing* (Philadelphia: Theodore Presser Co., 1917), 50.

¹⁴⁷ Russian pianist Josef Lhévinne (1874-1944) stated that students are examined first upon technique in the Conservatory examinations; students who failed to pass the technical examination are not even asked to perform pieces. See Cooke, *op.cit.*, 42.

¹⁴⁸ Barnes. *op.cit.*, xvii.

¹⁴⁹ Cooke. *op.cit.*, 42.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

technically proficient. None are excused...I believe this matter of insisting upon a thorough technical knowledge is a very vital one.'¹⁵¹

Although Rachmaninov further revealed that the studies by Hanon were used extensively in conservatoires during his time as a student, Elena Kuznetsova pointed out that Hanon is not material that is still widely used at conservatoires, but instead is a prerequisite for conservatoire, material only for the music schools.¹⁵² Despite the change of materials over time, the objective of establishing a solid technical foundation for Russian pianists is still unshakable.

Full Sound and Long-Lasting Singing Tone

Technical exercises undoubtedly played an essential role in Russian pianism. However, Vasily Safonov (1852-1918)¹⁵³ was strongly cautioned against mechanical repetition of technical studies: 'Vividness of tone is the only condition of fruitful study.'¹⁵⁴ Indeed, the most valued criterion for the 'Russian Piano School' is a deep and singing tone quality. As early as the establishment of Moscow Conservatory, the vocal element has always been a primary concern of the Russian School of playing.¹⁵⁵ The Polish pianist, Theodor Leschetizky (1830-1915),¹⁵⁶ a contemporary of Anton Rubinstein and a major influential figure of Russian pianism, was super-conscious of

¹⁵¹ In Rachmaninov's opinion, technique is 'possibly one of the reasons why Russian pianists have been favourably received in recent years.' *Ibid.*, 50-51.

¹⁵² Interview with Elena Kuznetsova.

¹⁵³ Professor of Piano at Moscow Conservatory in 1885; Became Director of Conservatory in 1889; teacher of Alexander Scriabin, Nikolai Medtner, Josef Lhévinne and Rosina Lhévinne.

¹⁵⁴ Vasily Safonov. *New Formula for the Piano Teacher and Student* English Edition (London: J. & W. Chester Ltd., 1915), 5.

¹⁵⁵ See Bowen, 19-20, 30.

¹⁵⁶ On an invitation from Anton Rubinstein, Leschetizky became the first head of the piano department at the St Petersburg Conservatory. According to Artur Schnabel, Leschetizkys' pupils numbered nearly 1,800 including: Anna Esipova, Ignaz Friedman, Benno Moiseiwitsch, Artur Schnabel, Ignaz Paderewski, John Powell, among others. See Artur Schnabel. *My life and Music, with Reflections on Music* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1963), 24.

tone, and his teaching was largely focused on the quality of sound to be produced.¹⁵⁷

Although Leschetizky denied any form of teaching methods throughout his teaching career, he once declared his principles in an interview:

‘Of course, in the beginning I have a method. A knowledge of correct hand position and of the many different qualities of touch which I use and which give a never-ending variety to the tone must be learned before one can go very far. The fingers must have acquired an unyielding firmness and the wrist, at the same time, an easy pliability in order to avoid hardness of tone. Besides this, there are the rules for singing, which apply to melody playing on the piano to just as great an extent as to melody singing in the voice.’¹⁵⁸

Musicians from the Soviet period, not only stressed the great importance of tonal quality in publications, but also left us many detailed accounts of the method of Russians’ tone production in relation to different parts of body weight. Josef Lhévinne claimed, for example, that Rubinstein and all of the ‘Russian School’ place emphasis on thinking moods into the fingers and arms, and that in order to produce a beautiful singing tone, sound must first be conceived mentally. He further explained the process of tone production:

‘The richness and singing quality of the one depends very largely 1) upon the amount of key surface covered with the well-cushioned part of the finger and 2) upon the natural ‘spring’ which accompanies the loose wrist.’¹⁵⁹

Besides considering this principle from a historical context, Russian pianists in the twenty-first century still recognize singing tone as a founding principle of their

¹⁵⁷ See Mark Hambourg comments on the teaching of Leschetizky. Schonberg, *op. cit.*, 300 and Ignaz Paderewski remarks on the method of Leschetizky. *Musical Courier*, 15th February 1893, Vol. XVI, No. 7, 11.

¹⁵⁸ Edwin Hughes. ‘Theodor Leschetizky on Modern Pianoforte Study’, *The Etude*, April 1909, 227.

¹⁵⁹ Josef Lhévinne. *Basic Principles in Pianoforte Playing* (Philadelphia: Theo. Presser Company, 1924), 25.

tradition. According to Elena Kuznetsova, the late Victor Merzhanov (1919-2012)¹⁶⁰ often claimed ‘the specific trace of the Russian Piano School was using the weight of the shoulder and of the back to produce a singing sound.’¹⁶¹ As pointed out earlier, Boris Berman recalls the training for ‘quality of sound’ was ‘stressed from the very beginning of studies’ and that a refined quality should be ‘a full, long lasting singing tone.’¹⁶² It is unmistakable that for pianists from the ‘Russian School’, whether it was during the Soviet period or Russia at present, singing tone has always been of special artistic value in their performance.

Long Melodic Line

Whilst the singing tone quality was largely derived from ideas about singing, the long melodic line in Russian pianism was cultivated from Russian music as early as Glinka. Subsequent Russian composers such as Sergei Taneyev, Pyotr Tchaikovsky, and Sergei Rachmaninov all championed this kind of musical quality in their compositions.¹⁶³ Rachmaninov, in particular, had the same quality in his playing. Elena Kuznetsova ascribed this idea of ‘long melodic line’ to Russian music and the nature of the country:

‘Long legato line is common in Russian music in general. It also reflects Russian nature which is usually presented by long steppes or fields, or perhaps forest; that is enormous and expandable. Russian culture is based on long melodic lines, for example in Russian music – one page of music can base on

¹⁶⁰ Victor Merzhanov (1919-2012): a Professor of Piano at Moscow Conservatory from 1947; became one of the Chairs of the Piano Department until his death; prize-winner at All-Soviet-Union Piano Competition, where he shared the first prize with Sviatoslav Richter.

¹⁶¹ Interview with Elena Kuznetsova.

¹⁶² Interview with Boris Berman.

¹⁶³ For instance, Taneyev’s Symphony No. 4, Op. 12; Tchaikovsky’s Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 35; Rachmaninov’s Piano Concerto No.2 in C minor, Op. 18.

one long melodic line. And of course, we pay a great attention to the melody line.’¹⁶⁴

Russian pianist Sofya Gulyak (1979-), the first female pianist to win the Leeds International Piano Competition and a professor of piano at the Royal College of Music, reinforced her predecessor and considers this a natural element in piano playing:

‘We always have to think about a very long line. For me it is so natural that I don’t define it as something special – the line should be very long that we have to have this perspective...One should always want to continue sound and connect each sound – like a chain.’¹⁶⁵

Dimitri Alexeev pointed out that this feature can be heard among many great pianists and therefore Russian pianists are not exceptional in this case. However, the Russian School ‘places more emphasis on legato cantabile and the ability to produce melody.’¹⁶⁶ Pavel Nersessian offers another perspective on the long melodic line of Russian pianism:

‘Long line is not the only sign of Russian School; it might be the sign of Rachmaninov’s music, but maybe not in playing. If you listen to his long lines, they are often based on the very hectic change of rubato – in *accelerando* point of rubato and *ritardando*. He keeps it up and then goes down so he makes rubato move constantly in one long line. Is it a long line? It is difficult to say.’¹⁶⁷

The descriptions provided by Kuznetsova, Gulyak, Alexeev and Nersessian about the long melodic line are not identical. For the former three, this principle simply came from the nature of Russia or its musical composition; for Pavel Nersessian, it is a

¹⁶⁴ Interview with Eleanor Kuznetsova.

¹⁶⁵ Interview with Sofya Gulyak.

¹⁶⁶ Interview with Dimitri Alexeev.

¹⁶⁷ Interview with Pavel Nersessian.

pianistic approach of Rachmaninov. However, all of them agree that the ‘quality of long line’ is an immediately recognisable sign of Russian pianism.

2.2.3 Self-perceptions and the limitations of the Russian School of Piano Playing

Modern Russian pianists coincide with their predecessors on principles of Russian piano playing, but at the same time, they have vastly different teaching and performing styles. As we have seen, in its historical context, two of the Soviet giants, Henrich Neuhaus and Alexander Goldenweiser were dramatically different; nevertheless they shared many artistic philosophies. As pointed out in Chapter 1:

‘I have read Neuhaus’s book [*The Art of Piano Playing*]. Its style is objectionable to me. But many of the ideas in it are proper and valuable. It is amazing – with such a drastic difference in style, so much, in essence, coincides with my thoughts.’¹⁶⁸

In its modern context, it is interesting to notice that many contemporary Russian pianists not only have contrasting musical objectives, but also a different perception of the Russian School of playing and teaching. Diverse opinions on the founder of the Russian School, for example, were particularly striking. Anton Rubinstein, Nikolai Rubinstein and Theodor Leschetizky are considered as the founders of the Russian Piano School – largely due to the fact that the former two founded the Moscow and St Petersburg Conservatoires respectively; and the latter, being the first professor of piano and head of department at St Petersburg, left his legacy as a teacher of many Russian pianists. In Alexander Mndoyants’s perception, the ‘Russian Piano School’ derives from Franz Liszt and Beethoven, as well as from Germany.¹⁶⁹ Whilst Dimitri Alexeev acknowledges Anton Rubinstein as the founder of their School; he considers

¹⁶⁸ From the diary of Alexander Borisovich Goldenweiser (24 February 1954).

¹⁶⁹ Interview with Alexander Mndoyants.

Franz Liszt as one of the founders of Russian piano tradition.¹⁷⁰ Further, Alexeev rejects the idea of Leschetizky being a founder of the School:

‘Leschetizky is not quite the founder of the school – despite he worked at St. Petersburg. As far as I know, he was a representative of the Viennese Piano School mostly. It is something not quite popular in Russia. The “Leschetizky Method” for example, is somewhat different from what you normally associate with Russian Piano School.’¹⁷¹

Although it is not simple to identify ‘who established this tradition’, Dimitri Alexeev’s beliefs demolished some assumptions from the West and suggested further inquiry into the ‘Leschetizky Method’ – a teaching methodology that influenced many pianists in Russia and across Europe.

For Russian pianists, solid technical foundation, a refined singing tone, and long melodic line were implanted into their pianism at an early age. Those emphases were stressed throughout their studies as a pianist. Due to the political and sociocultural design of the country, Russian pianists during the Soviet period were not inclined to reject instructions from higher authorities – pianists must adopt those principles in their playing without question. The Russian School’s principles attracted wide appreciation and recognition from Western audiences. Applying fundamental principles to all their repertoire seems natural to Russian pianists. Dimitri Alexeev admitted that ‘Mozart and Schubert are not much associated with Russian Piano School’ and that ‘the general mentalities of Russian pianists did not emphasis Mozart.’¹⁷² Natalia Trull echoed her colleague and stated that the misunderstandings

¹⁷⁰ Alexeev pointed out Moscow Conservatory had ‘a handful of ex-students of Liszt [on the faculty], and therefore Liszt was definitely one of the founders of Russian Piano School.’ Interview with Dimitri Alexeev. See also Konstantin Zenkin. *The Liszt Tradition at the Moscow Conservatoire* (Franz Liszt and Advanced Musical Education in Europe: International Conference), 1/2 (2001), 42.

¹⁷¹ Interview with Dimitri Alexeev.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*

of Mozart were different between Moscow and St Petersburg School; ‘Because St Petersburg pianists seem to have a better understanding of small motifs and staged operas.’¹⁷³ Sofya Gulyak ascribed this weakness to their limited understanding of stylistic differences:

‘I was taught in a certain way, and when I took part in competitions outside Russia when I was young I thought I received strange comments at the beginning, but then I understood what the juries meant. Because in Russia, nobody told me things that were strange in Bach – I cannot remember, but perhaps my playing was too romantic. Again with the respect to style, that is probably a disadvantage. Russians do not make a lot of difference between styles; because they love beautiful sound, passion – these stuffs are good, but only in a certain way.’¹⁷⁴

Although Russians were not as ‘historically informed’ as in the West, with a distinguished history of piano training Russian pianists were very proud of their tradition. Vladimir Horowitz (1903-1989), for example, was very proud to belong to the tradition founded by Rubinstein and liked to refer to himself as a spiritual grandson of Rubinstein.¹⁷⁵ After the Soviet Union collapsed, less capable pianists were able to travel to the West, and performers associated with the term ‘Russian Piano School’ were not as positively received by the Russian pianists as they were in the West. Dimitri Alexeev pointed out that ‘performances associated with the term Russian Piano School doesn’t mean it’s always good; sometimes it is the other way round.’¹⁷⁶ Pavel Nerssesian made an interesting observation:

‘For me, when I hear the word “Russian” it does not mean the best. You have to represent your personal values much more than you belong to a school. If one goes on with the best features of the Russian piano playing, they end up

¹⁷³ Interview with Natalia Trull.

¹⁷⁴ Interview with Sofya Gulyak.

¹⁷⁵ Rustem Hayroudinoff. ‘What is the Russian School?’ *Classical Piano* March/April (1997), 20.

¹⁷⁶ Interview with Dimitri Alexeev.

too emotional, bad taste, too romantic, over pedal and without discipline. If one goes to the end of this process, it will not be a pleasant playing...the Russian School exists but most important is the person; performers are more important than the School.’¹⁷⁷

Alexeev’s and Nersessian’s perspective on the Russian School contradicts that of their predecessors, though it should be remembered that they could not safely have said anything similar in public during the Soviet period at a time when state propaganda necessarily overrode personal expression. In particular, Nersessian’s perception of ‘performers before School’ is a clear transformation of artistic values and pianistic principles in the Russian School since the fall of the Soviet Union.

2.3 The meaning of ‘Russian Piano School’

Russian Piano School is a term that has been misused since the last century to describe Russian pianists. The term, however, does not have a clear meaning and definition. A fundamental question that requires re-evaluation is: What is the ‘Russian Piano School’? The answer to this question is not as simple as many scholars would have liked to believe. For an insight into the subject one must examine this concept from a scholarly point of view, and include a practical perspective from Russian pianists. This will set an appropriate background before presenting my final argument, which will lead to the discussion in the next chapter.

2.3.1 Understanding from Researchers

In the era before globalisation, performing schools were more distinctive and researchers could distinguish one school of playing from another more easily. As time has gone on, musicologists have begun to doubt the existence of performing schools. In 2001 Janet Ritterman pointed out how Carl Czerny distinguished six school of

¹⁷⁷ Interview with Pavel Nersessian.

playing, and suggested that the concept of national schools from mid-nineteenth century onwards was used to ‘differentiate contemporary trends in performing and teaching’. However, she further questioned the existence of performing schools and claimed that ‘by the beginning of the twentieth century, relatively few of the leading performer-teachers could be neatly categorised as representatives of a particular national school.’¹⁷⁸ Ritterman’s remark may seem reasonable at first: it is true that representatives of a national school were less identifiable during the twentieth century. But if we were to consider the sociocultural aspect during the Soviet period,¹⁷⁹ and apply her statement into the Russian context, her conclusion seems over-generalised. In a more comprehensive account, Robert Philip compared the differences in performing style between products of the Russian School. He drew on the recordings of Leschetizky’s pupils and analysed their balance of sound proportion between the melody and the accompaniment part. Philip also indicates the dislocation of bass and treble in Leschetizky’s own recording; however, none of his pupils played with much rhythmic dislocation apart from Paderewski. Due to the fact that there were many differences within the ‘Russian School’, he concluded that the concept of school is merely a ‘teacher-pupil’ relationship. He further claimed that ‘the distinctions between their styles of playing were not clear-cut, and the differences between pupils of the same teacher were, in some cases, as great as their similarities.’¹⁸⁰ If differences are as great as the similarities only in some cases, it may be rather arbitrary to neglect the similarities just by looking at differences. On the other hand, if we were to look at

¹⁷⁸ Janet Ritterman. ‘On teaching Performance’ *Musical Performance: A Guide to Understanding* ed. John Rink (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 80-81.

¹⁷⁹ Sociocultural factors played an important role in developing performing schools. Here I mean the political and travel barriers, limited communication with other artists or performing schools in the West. See Vladimir Ashkenazy & Jasper Parrott. *Beyond Frontiers* (London: William Collins Sons & Co., 1984) for detailed accounts of limited communication with Western countries during the mid-twentieth century.

¹⁸⁰ Robert Philip. *Performing Music in the Age of Recording* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 185, 191.

their similarities rather than just differences, are we not able to conclude that they belong to a school? It is worth noting that performing schools existed to the extent that performers were aware of being one of a group that shares identifiable performing principles. As we identified in the previous section, Russian pianists who have common principles of pianistic values have tended to be associated with a Russian School, which that collection of performance features defines for as long as enough of those features, or their combination, remains unique to Russian-trained pianists. According to Kenneth Hamilton, national schools were first associated with pianists in early nineteenth century, but pianistic styles were adapted to suit different pianos.¹⁸¹ As the differences between pianos began to diminish, national schools became ‘a matter of collective taste rather than a practical response to differing instruments.’ He hesitated to believe a great tradition such as the Russian School can be unified: ‘Russian musicians may not fit into the “national style” and they often draw a sharp distinction between the styles of Moscow and St. Petersburg.’¹⁸² Hamilton reflected on some of his personal experiences and concluded that a national school is a collective style. Together with Janet Ritterman and Robert Philip, Kenneth Hamilton has also mistakenly considered performing tradition as a kind of performing style or habit. As Samuel Feinberg outlines a crucial point on the subject:

‘We frequently confuse tradition with mere habit, and there is a dangerous pitfall in this. The inertia of habit runs quite counter to living tradition. There is a vital creative impulse in tradition, whereas habit is founded only on lifeless inertia. Not every interpretive method to which our ears may get accustomed can rightfully be described as tradition. Year after year we teachers are used to hearing juvenile performances of the classics. And

¹⁸¹ For instance, the style of English school pianists was suited to the heavier London pianos, contrasting with the lighter actions in Viennese pianos.

¹⁸² Kenneth Hamilton. *After the Golden Age: Romantic Pianism and Modern Performance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 11-12.

although many students do play well, nevertheless we are used to hearing performances that are frequently devoid of any real artistic initiative or genuine aesthetic tension. And without realizing it, we ourselves are guilty of turning mere habit into a tradition...If by tradition we understand some preconceived ideas about style, if we link tradition with some particular approach only because it has hardened into habit, we can easily fall into error.’¹⁸³

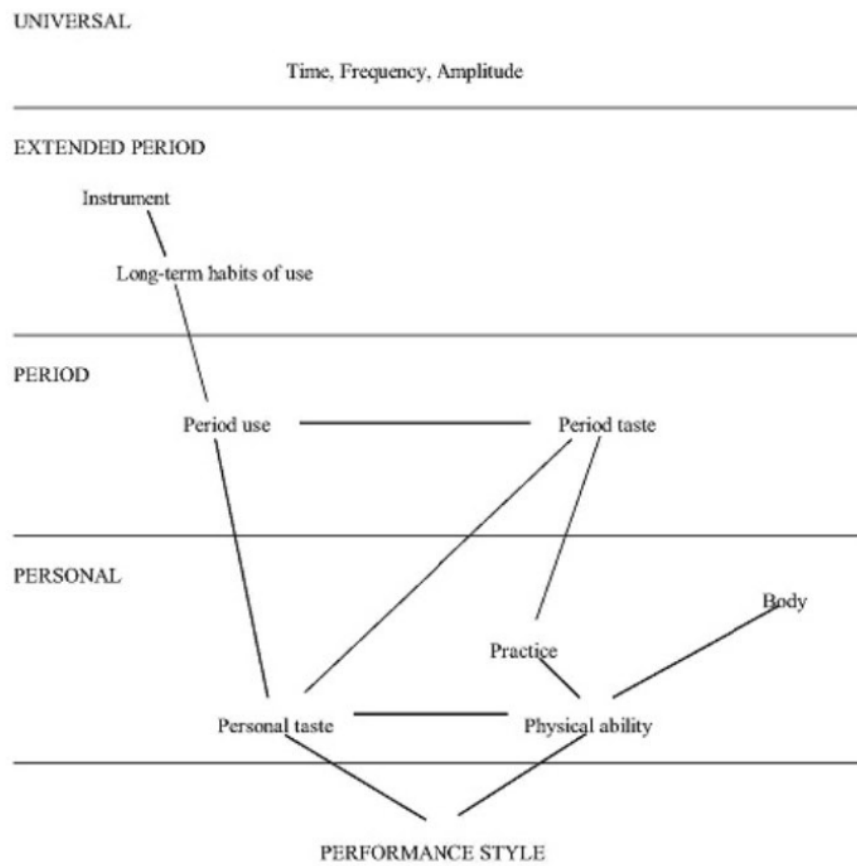
Although Feinberg pointed out that tradition and style are not identical, he was unable to explain clearly where the distinction lies. In sum, as Feinberg claimed, style can be treated as habit. Sergei Prokofiev, for instance, maintained his stylistic features throughout the transformations of his musical language, but at the same time, the traditional Russian approach can also be found among his works.¹⁸⁴ The style of Prokofiev is drastically different from Dmitri Shostakovich; however, this does not mean the Russian compositional tradition does not appear in the works of both.¹⁸⁵ If we were to apply this logic in the case of Kenneth Hamilton, his conclusion seems to rest on the examination of individual pianistic styles but not the national tradition of Russia.

Instead of differentiating tradition and style, Daniel Leech-Wilkinson argues that there are in fact different levels of performance style and that they change at different rates. The diagram below is a rough map of what performers do:

¹⁸³ Samuel Feinberg. ‘The Road to Artistry’, in Christopher Barnes (ed.), *The Russian Piano School: Russian Pianists & Moscow Conservatoire Professors on the Art of the Piano*, (London: Kahn & Averill, 2008), 38-39.

¹⁸⁴ For Prokofiev’s self-perceptions of his composition style. See Sergei Prokofiev, Sergei Shlifshtein (ed.) *Autobiography, Articles, Reminiscences*. Rose Prokofiev (trans.) (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1956), 36-37.

¹⁸⁵ Prokofiev’s music is usually based on a firm sense of tonality. According to Oleg Prokofiev, the composer’s younger son, Prokofiev first writes the music before ‘Prokofievizes’ it. See Jonathan Kramer. *Listen to the Music: A Self-Guided Tour Through the Orchestral Repertoire* (New York: Schirmer, 1988), 518. Russian compositional tradition emphasises on fairy-tale imagery, Russian melodic themes. These can also be found in Prokofiev’s predecessors – Rimsky-Korsakov, Lyadov, and Medtner.



Ex 2.1 Some determinants of performance style¹⁸⁶

As Leech-Wilkinson pointed out:

‘According to this model, a performer’s style is defined by an interaction of the properties of their instrument (potential sound and the ways it can be produced), what they can physically do, and what they choose to do. The sound of the instrument, however, results also from an interaction of potential plus period preferences for sound production. What performers can physically do, is a mix of the mechanics of their body plus practice, the way they have taught their body to make music; and practice is shaped by period and personal taste (especially by current ideas about what kinds of sounds and sequences of sounds are musical and appropriate), encouraging the

¹⁸⁶ Borrowed from Daniel Leech-Wilkinson. *The Changing Sound of Music: Approaches to Studying Recorded Musical Performances* (London: CHARM, 2009) Chapter 7: Style Change: causes and effects., paragraph 1 <http://www.charm.kcl.ac.uk/studies/chapters/chap7.html> [Assessed on 14 May 2016].

development of certain habitual physical movements, for example particular kinds of phrasing and the fingering, bowing or breathing that produce those movements. What performers do by conscious choice is an interaction between their physical ability (as just defined), period taste and personal taste.’¹⁸⁷

Indeed, Leech-Wilkinson’s comprehensive model will apply to both Western and Russian styles of playing, although the changing rate is likely to be drastically different due to political isolation. In particular, the changing rate of Russian’s period taste and personal taste. This is supported by the findings in Chapters 5 and 6 (Section 5.2 and Section 6.2). As we will see later on, when we compare the recordings of Russian and Western performers, as well as different generations of Russian pianists, Russian style of playing is still identifiable in most of the Russian recordings examined in this thesis.

2.3.2 Understanding from Contemporary Russian Performers

Besides the various objections from researchers, some Russian pianists also seem to doubt the existence of their Piano School at present. Alexander Mndoyants stated that ‘there is no specific Russian School, German School or American School; Artur Schnabel once said “there are only good teachers or bad teachers” after all it does not depend on the nationality.’ He further pointed out that ‘all schools are currently mixed.’¹⁸⁸ Dimitri Alexeev admitted that he is uncertain as to what the Russian Piano School is:

‘I don’t know the answer. It’s not one word definition it’s a very complex system – a system with many aspects. Besides, which pianist belongs to the Russian School? The Russian School is diversified. I can name one pianist or another, totally different in everything and they still belong to the same school.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.* Chapter 7: Style change: causes and effects., paragraph 2.

<http://www.charm.kcl.ac.uk/studies/chapters/chap7.html> [Assessed on 14 May 2016].

¹⁸⁸ Interview with Alexander Mndoyants. He gave an example of Rosina Lhévinne and Van Cliburn, who lived in America, but in his classification they are also ‘Russian School’.

The Russian Piano School today is based on the tradition – a tradition that is almost 200 years old.’¹⁸⁹

Alexeev reinforced the distinction of individual style and national tradition. Further, his commentary implies different pianistic style can still be under a unified tradition. However, Natalia Trull contradicts Alexeev, expressing disbelief in the existence of a Russian School ‘I think we have no school. I ask myself: “Do we have a school or not?” Because sometime I listen to examinations or competitions; Russian or non-Russian, German or Russian-German – it is already global.’ It is impossible to pronounce a judgement of the ‘Russian School’ in this case when Trull’s and Alexeev’s accounts seem irreconcilable. Both accounts evaluate the ‘Russian School’ on the performance aspect, but their responses have a drastic difference. Alexeev seems to believe pianists from the ‘Russian School’ can still be distinguished by their playing at present, while Trull is unable to identify the ‘Russian School’ just based on performances. The situation becomes more complicated when one reads of the apparent contradiction between Trull’s conception and Sarkissova’s. As the globalisation effect is more noticeable in the twenty-first century, Russian pianists have begun to see a mixture of different performance traditions. In particular, Natalia Trull has begun to question whether the ‘Russian Piano School’ is only an ideology.¹⁹⁰ Tatiana Sarkissova rejected this conception immediately:

‘Of course it is wrong to think it is only an ideology. The Russian School was based on the great musicians. That’s why it became a school actually; because it was based on the great musicians who gave their experience and knowledge to younger ones.’¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁹ Interview with Dimitri Alexeev.

¹⁹⁰ Interview with Natalia Trull.

¹⁹¹ Interview with Tatiana Sarkissova.

Not only did Sarkissova refuse it as mere ideology, she claims that the ‘Russian School’ was indeed, based on tradition and its musicians. According to Elena Kuznetsova, the main methodology for current Russian musicians is trying to understand the work that their predecessors had been doing for over 150 years, in another words, understanding their historical tradition. Although there are many directions and streams within the ‘Russian School’, what united all musicians is the substrate of Russian culture such as theatre, literature, painting and philosophy. These were seen as ‘food’ for mind, and creativity of personalities in the soul.¹⁹² The most important aspect for all musicians during the Soviet period was to acquire a thorough knowledge of culture. It was seen as an embarrassment if there were any gaps in those areas.¹⁹³ To this end, it is reasonable to assume the ‘Russian School’ should not only be a description of a performance tradition, but that the term also implies a common understanding of Russia’s cultural knowledge and other forms of art. Contrary to the past, Trull thinks students in Russia are not interested in music, or the studies of general culture.¹⁹⁴ In this respect, a comparison of the Soviet period and present time typically reveals this contradiction. Pavel Nersessian, for instance, tried comparing the historical context with the present day:

‘Piano Schools were based on the fact that musicians would not find many opportunities to go abroad. This situation was applicable to all other schools before the time of jets. It was precisely a situation where ‘Russian Piano School’ was based on – its own root, values and priorities. I grew up during that period, when there were some real values and priorities about the Russian Piano School. But now it is not the same...For me, this is kind of a past thing.’¹⁹⁵

¹⁹² Interview with Elena Kuznetsova.

¹⁹³ Interview with Natalia Trull.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁵ Interview with Pavel Nersessian.

As Nersessian pointed out, the root of the ‘Russian School’ has changed with the availability of travel. If we were to analyse the other two changes from his comment – values and priorities – the primary reasons for those changes seem to be the limitation of technology and the openness towards new objects. The weight of the evidence is certainly on the side of openness, especially considering how the Russian-Western and Western-Russian performance and teaching exchange are currently blending. This open approach to new objects allows Russian pianists to replace their priorities from the School with Western ideas. All this undoubtedly affects the values of the ‘Russian Piano School’ today.

2.3.3 Understanding Russian Piano School as a Process

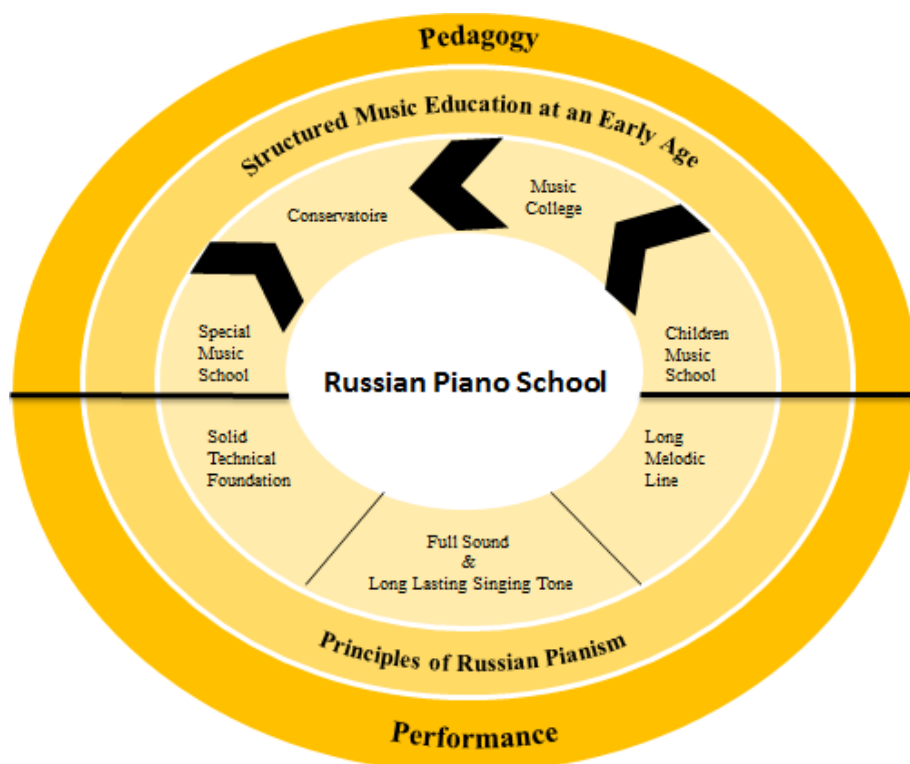
If we were to draw all the previous points together, and define the concepts underlying the ‘Russian Piano School’ from the views of previous researchers we would conclude that it is difficult, almost impossible, to define this term through Russian performances. By contrast, according to Russian performers, firstly, the ‘Russian Piano School’ is not simply ideology; secondly, it is something that existed and still exists; and finally, it is based on traditions, on experience handed down from their predecessors. The strength of a research approach to the question is that one can provide a thorough analysis of performances by Russian pianists, as well as examining the Russian piano playing and teaching in an objective capacity. The major weakness, though, is that so far researchers (like Ritterman, Philip and Hamilton above) have focused only on the performance aspect, neglecting a crucial aspect – the pedagogical. If performers determine their performance approach and interpretations largely on how they were taught and their educational surroundings, findings as to what constitutes the ‘Russian Piano School’ can hardly be persuasive if the pedagogical element is not included in the discussion. As Natalia Trull explains:

‘Russian Piano School was founded by a very high international level of education, because we start from a very young age. The system for children is very strong and professional. From a young age, we teach them about the sound and touch, as well as how we use our muscle. We start very early and because of this, students at the conservatoire are already mature with the piano, for instance, how to communicate and be together with the piano. This is a very important aspect in Russian Piano School.’¹⁹⁶

Thus, the definition of the term is disputed among performers and insufficient among researchers. Trull’s view rests on the assumption that ‘Russian Piano School’ literally means the education system, the schooling. This also tallies with the explanations by other Russian pianists – it is something that exists; it is based on tradition, and experience by their predecessors.

It is fair to consider the likelihood, therefore, that the Russian music education system and Russian teachers’ teaching methodologies represents a vital strand in Russian piano playing. In defining what the ‘Russian Piano School’ might represent, it is possible to group and categorise all the perspectives in the above-mentioned conclusion under two labels.

¹⁹⁶ Interview with Natalia Trull.



Ex 2.2 Classification of Russian Piano School into Pedagogy and Performance

In this way it becomes more apparent that both elements have their place within the ‘Russian Piano School’. And while both can be seen as equally important; early music education in the Russian pedagogical system is in fact the causing factor, and a starting point of the process; the performance part is purely a final product of the ‘Russian Piano School’ – the result of a process.

As we identified those principles of the ‘Russian Piano School’, and the impact of globalisation on their pianism, it is possible to trace those qualities in the ‘products of the Russian School’ at present – solid technical foundation, long lasting singing tone, and long melodic line; these are all characteristics of their school of playing. The causing factor – Russian pedagogical system – is regarded as the essence of Russian tradition.¹⁹⁷ Therefore, the subsequent chapter will be focused on the pedagogical

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

components; examining the current teaching approaches by Russian teachers, and their methodologies employed to address their pianistic principles.

Chapter 3

THE MODERN EDUCATION SYSTEM & INSTRUMENTAL PEDAGOGIES

The principles of Russian pianism are transmitted to pianists through the process of study. This process can be classified into two levels: the education system, and instrumental teaching. On the micro level, the system of modern Russian music education is almost identical with the curriculum established in nineteenth century, but instrumental pedagogy, the macro level, has evolved considerably. Whilst the latter makes a direct impact on the student and the former is an indirect influence, both levels have substantially formulated the performance outcome. Although these two levels will be explored in depth, instrumental pedagogy will remain the central issue in the chapter, as it is the ‘crossing point’ where exchanges of musical ideas take place. In order to form a complete and clear picture as to how Russian performers are trained, we need to examine their education system with as much detail and evidence as possible. Dimitri Alexeev states, ‘the Russian system of music education is more professional than other countries, as we start educating child at an early age, and in a professional manner. This system still exists in Russia.’¹⁹⁸ Thus, it is essential to outline this system and subsequently demonstrate its interaction with instrumental pedagogy in the classroom.

3.1 The Russian Music Education System

The Soviet government centralised control of all the schools in the country in the twentieth century, believing that the music education system could ‘solidify the

¹⁹⁸ Interview with Dimitri Alexeev.

masses in nationalistic and political feelings’¹⁹⁹ In applying this attitude, the Russian government imposed learning material, the education policy, as well as schools’ curriculums – all to be managed under the ministries of education and culture. It is in this way that students had their freedom of choice restricted and their creative thoughts suppressed.²⁰⁰ In this sense, one could compare this approach to the athletes’ training in China. The primary goal is to represent the country at international competitions, and subsequently to win reasonable achievements. Accordingly, pianists will then be in a position to represent the country and further enhance the reputation of the nation. However, Boris Berman claimed, ‘the programme of studies was very well conceived and thought through, it could be implemented efficiently only in a society where it is directed by the government.’²⁰¹ Berman’s remark seems to imply that politics is the key in establishing the Russian music education system. His statement is understandable, as all tuition fees are still paid by the Ministries of Education and Culture – giving the government the right to manage all the conservatoires in Russia. Although the ‘government-run management’ will be examined at the end of this section, Berman’s claim has also provoked an issue as to whether Russia’s programme of studies is matched equally efficiently in other capitalist societies. Before discussing this management style in a greater depth, it would be useful to understand the system first.

Despite the excessive domination by the government, and the limitation of creativity, the Russian music education system continues today. This longstanding system is categorised into four types: Children’s Music School; Music College; Specialist

¹⁹⁹ Abraham Schwadron, ‘Music in Soviet Education’ *Music Educators Journal* 53.8 (April, 1967), 87.

²⁰⁰ Ashkenazy & Parrot, *op. cit.*, 60.

²⁰¹ Interview with Boris Berman.

Music School; and Conservatory. Each has a different function, and the duration of their courses also varies.

3.1.1 Children's Music Schools

Children's Music Schools provide the first stage of music training in Russia, and are designed for children from the age of seven until the age of fourteen.²⁰² These seven-year schools require part-time attendance, and therefore students attend a full-time school for academic studies simultaneously. Although these music schools offer a basic level of training, lessons aim to provide an all-round education in music. Classes include sight-reading, harmonic structures, theory, music dictation, choir, ensemble, solfeggio, and rhythmika.²⁰³ The integral part of music education – the instrumental lesson – is provided twice a week; five years of piano study is also a compulsory module for non-pianists. Despite students being admitted without any audition requirement, the piano curriculum is comparable with specialist schools in the West. Thus, upon completion of studies, students will receive a recognisable qualification for enrolling into a senior level of music training. In summary, these Children's Music Schools allow the student to establish a basic foundation in music studies; and as a matter of fact, music education at an early age is essential in becoming a performing musician.²⁰⁴

²⁰² There were over six thousand Children's Music Schools during the Soviet period; the first was created by the Gnessin sisters in 1895 (not to be confused with Gnessin School of Music). Institutions similar to Children's Music Schools are very common across Russia, and can be found in other disciplines, for instance, drama, and sports.

²⁰³ Rhythmika – a type of class at Children Music School and Specialist Music School; learning music through movements, similar to the Dalcroze Eurhythmics or the Kodály Method in further West.

²⁰⁴ See Gordon Cox, *A History of Music Education in England, 1872-1928* (Hampshire: Scholar Press, 1993); Gordon Cox 'Musical Education of the Under 12s (MEUT) 1949-1983: some aspects of the history of post-war primary music education' from *British Journal of Music Education* 15(3), 239-253. Cheung-Shing Yeh, 'China' from *Musical Development and Learning, an international perspective*, (eds.) David Hargreaves and Adrian North, (Continuum, 2001), 27-39.

3.1.2 Music Colleges

After seven years of studies at Children's Music Schools, and a successful outcome at the entrance audition,²⁰⁵ students can then enrol at Music Colleges – an extra four years of music education.²⁰⁶ Unlike Children's Music Schools, these colleges offer a combination of music training and general academic education. Students are awarded a music teaching diploma,²⁰⁷ together with a national diploma of music education – a government approved qualification. It is therefore not at all surprising that the entire curriculum is under the government control. In this respect, teachers are instructed to develop students' love for folk music, and in particular, love for Russian classical music as well as the works of Soviet composers. Not only are specific aims of music education prescribed in the curriculum for piano study, but also the musicians' attitude expected from the government:

‘He [The teacher] must further his [the student's] love for music and his understanding of the important role of art in society. He must guide his pianistic and general musical development; he must deepen his historical and theoretical knowledge of music in connection with the work in special class; he must constantly foster the sense of responsibility, of conscious discipline, of will and dedication to truth and other qualities which are indispensable to a Soviet specialist.’²⁰⁸

Although the curriculum was intended for the teachers during the Soviet period, the prescribed teachers' expectation can still be found in instrumental lessons today.²⁰⁹

Further, the government lays out a lesson format for teachers to follow. Teachers are

²⁰⁵ Piano students are required to perform one polyphonic composition; two études; one composition in sonata form; a piece of lyrical character. It is worth noting within those chosen repertoire, student must include compositions by classic Russian and Soviet composers. In addition to instrumental audition, rigorous entrance requirements included tests of ear training, rhythm, memory, theory, and sight reading.

²⁰⁶ There were over two hundred Music Colleges during the Soviet period.

²⁰⁷ A qualification required for music teaching at ordinary schools and Children Music Schools.

²⁰⁸ Walter Robert, ‘Piano Study in Soviet-Russian Schools of Music’, *Journal of Research in Music Education* (Fall 1964: Vol. 12 No. 3), 200.

²⁰⁹ Lesson Observation from Elena Kuznetsova (2EK0.1; 3EK0.3).

suggested to listen to ‘the assigned piece and then to give the necessary criticism’, and demonstration by the teacher together with ‘verbal explanations of a composition is the best way of teaching.’²¹⁰ In this sense, one can see that those disciplines for teachers and students are extremely constrained – such control in lesson format necessarily suppress creativities in teaching methodologies.

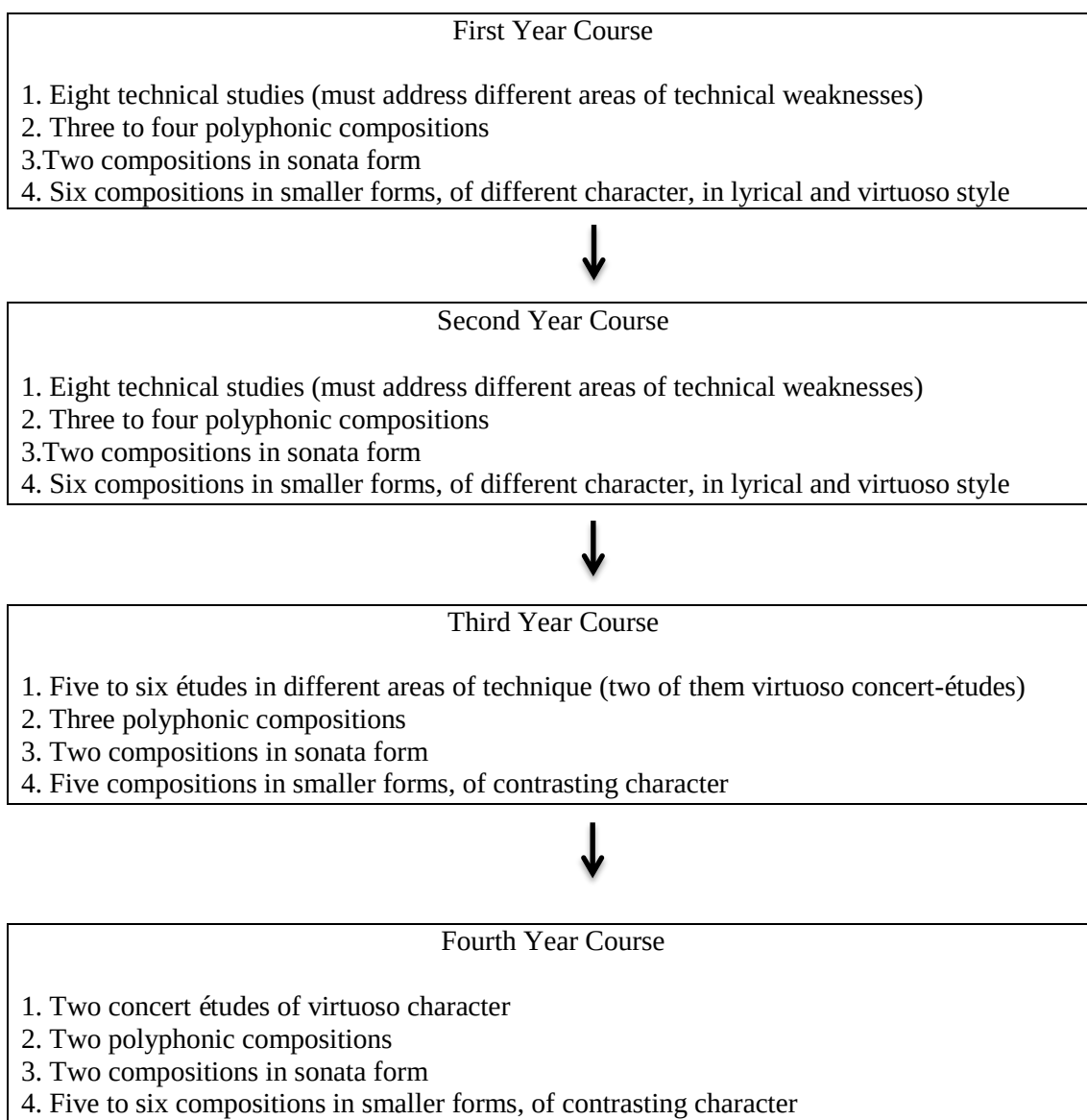
At a Music College level, students are also expected to develop the ability of independence. Thus, students are assigned a challenging composition to be studied independently at least once a year. Teachers are instructed, too, that a review of the independent study should be carried out systematically once or twice a year, in a group performance class. Although the government intended to promote the student to learn independently,²¹¹ their detailed instructions are, in some ways, a contradiction. These instructions include ways of ensuring students are practising correctly; materials for analysis and sight reading training; choice of repertoire. Due to the role and purpose of Music Colleges, the government imposes demanding examination requirements, and this enables Colleges to reduce the number of students in each year group – only selecting the best to proceed. The requirement is similar to those in the West, but one striking difference is the demands made in the technical component. For instance, first year students, at the age of fourteen, are required to perform eight technical studies and four polyphonic compositions at examinations.²¹² These studies must also address different aspects of technical areas. The Colleges’ examination requirements continue to challenge their students throughout their training at these institutions, and as such, this heavy emphasis on technique has a tremendous impact

²¹⁰ Robert, *op.cit.*, 201.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*

²¹² Together with eight technical studies and four polyphonic compositions, students are also required to present two compositions in sonata form and six other works in smaller forms of different character, in both lyrical and virtuoso style.

on Russian pianism in general. The table below shows the examination requirements at the college level across Russia.²¹³



Whilst there are a large number of technical studies to be mastered during the time at Music College, it is not only the quantity that matters; the quality of work seems far more important. Thus, students' executions of such technical assignments are to be

²¹³ Borrowed and enhanced from *Syllabus of Special Classes in Piano for Music Schools*, published by the Ministry of Culture.

supervised by their teacher regularly.²¹⁴ In reality, rather than the quantity of studies, teachers are more concerned with the type of technical work given to students. As Natalia Trull points out, ‘It is possible to give a Liszt study at the age of ten and to kill all technical mastery at the beginning.’²¹⁵ The government’s instructions for Music Colleges have also echoed this concern, and have carefully selected an appropriate list of repertoire for a suitable year group. It can be seen from Trull’s statement that technical standard and choice of repertoire are highly connected. Despite a preponderance of Russian composers, the list of suggested repertoire strongly emphasises nineteenth-century piano compositions.²¹⁶ There is a limited choice of atonal repertoire, or French music. However, the narrow selection of repertoire does not hinder the all-round development of students. As the Ministry of Education claims:

‘The whole range of the repertoire listed in the syllabus should be sampled and the need [from teachers] for pointing out the style characteristics of the different schools should be kept in mind. The repertoire of the student should include works differing in content, form, style and texture.’²¹⁷

However, contemporary Russian pianists tend to perform Romantic repertoire, as well as compositions by a selected number of Baroque and Classical composers. This is largely due to the fact that the repertoire outside their given frame was not available to them when they were students. Atonal repertoire and French music, for instance, were all forbidden works during the Soviet period. Even when such repertoire became available, Russian pianists were simply not taught how to handle the music aesthetics

²¹⁴ Robert, *op. cit.*, 200.

²¹⁵ Interview with Natalia Trull.

²¹⁶ Such as Tchaikovsky, Chopin, Schumann, Schubert, Liszt, Grieg are all on the list. See Robert, *op. cit.*, 206-210. Robert further pointed out in the fourth year, for instance, ‘the repertoire lists a total of one hundred and eighteen composers. Of these, seventy are of Russian origin; forty-eight belong to other nations.’ See Robert, 211.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 202.

of French compositions. As a result, performances of those compositions by Russian musicians do not receive much acclaim from Western audiences.

3.1.3 Specialist Music Schools

It may seem difficult enough for young students to complete a large amount of work at Music Colleges, but the methods of training at Specialist Music Schools are far more sophisticated than Music Colleges. The total duration for Specialist Music Schools is twelve years,²¹⁸ and the first education establishment of its kind was implanted into the Russian music education hierarchy in 1931 in Moscow – now known as the Central Music School. Although Specialist Music Schools operate independently, they are affiliated to their regional conservatoires and have therefore adopted the conservatoires' system within the schools. The concept of a Specialist Music School is that the Russian government can draw the best children across their nation together and select the finest first-class students to receive professional training as early as possible. Due to the excessive number of applicants, the Central Music School in particular has a 'very hard and tough selection'. It can be compared with a pyramid – where a high number of students are at the bottom, selecting students as they progress.²¹⁹ Their training programme is unparalleled by any other music education establishments in Russia, or to an extent, by any Western specialist schools. Natalia Trull states:

‘The training programme in Russia is much stronger; especially when you are a kid, you have to learn and memorise in a very short time. If one only plays four or five pieces during the year, he or she will be out of the Central Music School – as it is not enough to mature as a growing pianist. One has to play

²¹⁸ The Central Music School in Moscow, for instance, consists of two levels: Junior (first ten years) and Senior (the remaining two years).

²¹⁹ Interview with Dimitri Alexeev.

minimum of two classical sonatas, three works by Bach. I personally prefer too, for example, my students to go through two concertos every year – one classical and another from a different period. This is on top of twenty to twenty-five studies per year. Each study is played and practised for around two to three weeks and they move on to the next.’²²⁰

The quantity of compositions to be studied and the required practice time are in proportion. Sofya Gulyak and Dimitri Alexeev both pointed out the amount of practice is much greater than one may expect in the West. At the age of twelve, for instance, students are expected to practice five to six hours a day.²²¹

Since Specialist Music Schools are a division of conservatoires, conservatory professors are, at the same time, teachers in such Specialist schools. This ensures the quality of training at an early age – professionalism and consistency of education. Dimitri Paperno, who studied at Central Music School during the 1940s, describes in his book:

‘A spirit of high professionalism was implanted in us from early childhood. A strong team of teachers managed to make the theory and music history lessons, and later on elementary harmony and analysis, lively and interesting for children. We were never bored with singing and solfeggio, writing dictations, and making simple musical analyses.’²²²

Besides intensive music education, general academic subjects are part of their education at Specialist school. However, all curricula are only dedicated to one purpose – music.²²³ Students will receive two piano lessons per week directly from

²²⁰ Interview with Natali Trull.

²²¹ Interview with Sofya Gulyak and Dimitri Alexeev.

²²² Paperno, *op. cit.*, 26.

²²³ Pavel Nersessian recalls his time at the Central Music School, ‘Our focus was not on academic subjects. I remember that everybody closed their eyes, so the knowledge is universal but not much.’ Interview with Pavel Nersessian.

their assigned professor,²²⁴ and on top of instrumental lesson students are required to study history of music, polyphonic theory as well as harmony studies, music literature, solfeggio and ritmicka over approximately five to six years. This twelve years complex training and a systematic foundation in these subjects provides students with some substance to rest on. Specialist Music School is seen as a stepping stone to become a professional pianist. There is no alternative option other than becoming a musician; graduates from Specialist Music School constantly express this being the one and only aim during their studies.²²⁵ Whilst Boris Berman pointed out that all students at Specialist schools were ‘expected to become professional musicians’ and ‘many of them did at the end’,²²⁶ Dimitri Alexeev reinforced Berman’s statement and claimed, ‘everybody who I was studying [alongside] at the same time, became professional pianists.’²²⁷ Before entering any higher education institutions, Specialist Music School is also seen as a preparation prior to conservatory studies. Although students from Music Colleges would apply for conservatory studies, the majority of students are from these Specialist schools. Not only are those students familiar with their professors,²²⁸ they are also equipped with the necessary knowledge to pass the conservatory auditions. As Elena Kuznetsova, former Dean of Piano Faculty at Moscow Conservatory stated:

‘Students who didn’t attend Specialist school would probably not enter the conservatory, as the entrance for conservatoires are quite straight – students

²²⁴ Students at Specialist Music School only receive lessons from professors rather than from teaching assistants; a different system is employed at conservatory.

²²⁵ ‘There was no turning back. Entering the Central School of Music made you a musician until your dying day.’ See Paperno, *op.cit.*, 25.

²²⁶ Interview with Boris Berman. Berman studied at Gnessin School of Music for gifted children – a division of Gnessin Russian Academy of Music in Moscow.

²²⁷ Interview with Dimitri Alexeev. Alexeev studied in Moscow at the Central Music School – a division of Moscow Conservatory.

²²⁸ ‘Teachers at the [Central Music] School often begin to get the professors from the Conservatoire to take an interest in the development of particularly gifted students long before they are ready to graduate, and some pupils are even officially registered in those professors’ classes, so that they can be heard every month or so.’ See Ashkenazy & Parrot, *op. cit.*, 35.

are not only examined in piano playing, but also writing a two-voice dictation, solfeggio and harmony as well as to talk about music literature in general. With the harmony exam, one has to write a two- to three-hour paper. Unless you really have passed through this curriculum in specialist music school, you are not likely to pass through this examination.’²²⁹

On the contrary, students who did not attend Specialist school were expected to prepare themselves before the audition; however, the entrance audition is not an examination one can prepare in two months.²³⁰ Vladimir Ashkenazy (1937-) summarised the close affiliation of Specialist Music Schools and Conservatoires:

‘This system may well help to account for the fact that so many Soviet performers are, at least in their technical and musical preparation, extraordinarily secure and self-confident...these talented children face up to the challenges and stimulus of conservatoire-level teaching with the sure foundation of a thorough and consistent preparation under expert guidance; in addition, they have lived in a truly musical environment from an early age with the obvious advantage of daily contact with other children of similar talent and motivation.’²³¹

3.1.4 Conservatoires

Owing to the close relationship with Specialist Music School, conservatory training is the most obvious and natural progression for students. The undergraduate course is five years in length and it is unified with all instruments.²³² According to Christopher Barnes, with a rich history and tradition in piano studies, the Moscow Conservatory in particular has received ‘international recognition in modern piano playing.’²³³ As a

²²⁹ Interview with Elena Kuznetsova.

²³⁰ Interview with Elena Kuznetsova. For instance, Sviatoslav Richter (1915-1997) did not attend a Specialist Music School before entering Moscow Conservatory in 1937.

²³¹ Ashkenazy & Parrott, *op. cit.*, 28. Ashkenazy himself remained at the Central Music School for ten years from the age of eight to nearly eighteen.

²³² All courses for instrumentalists lasted six years initially; it was then extended to nine years for pianists, violinists and cellists in 1879.

²³³ Barnes, *op. cit.*, ix.

consequence, the piano faculty has always been the backbone of the Moscow Conservatory. The conservatory consists of three piano departments; each piano department is headed by a senior professor.²³⁴ These departments have about fifteen to twenty teaching professors, and a number of teaching assistants on average.²³⁵ All teachers and departments are under the supervision of the piano faculty. The population of piano students is relatively high. However, while the number has increased year by year, the standard has declined. During the Soviet period, Conservatoires' learning environment among young pianists was extremely competitive. In this respect, it expedited students' growth and maturity.²³⁶ However, international recognition of the piano faculty has increased the number of foreign students; these students in turns are required to pay relatively high university fees for their education. In this way, their fees allow a sustainability to maintain the Conservatory administrations and other necessary expenses. But as a result of foreign students, professors are unable to maintain the consistency of training, and are incapable of keeping to the expectations from the Central Music School to Moscow Conservatory.²³⁷ After the intensive five-year studies at an undergraduate level, very few students are able to progress onto the *Aspirantura* course.²³⁸ The course is two years in length, and is entirely focused on performance, with minor concentration on teaching. At the highest level, those chosen students must be able to demonstrate

²³⁴ Current heads of departments are: Sergei Dorensky (1931-), Mikhail Voskresensky (1935-). Moscow Conservatory had four piano departments throughout its entire history until one of its heads of department, Victor Merzhanov (1919-2012) passed away; the conservatory closed down one department then. Vera Gornostayeva (1929-2015) chaired the fourth piano department until her death in 2015; and likewise, her department is also terminated.

²³⁵ According to Russian pianist, Natalia Ruchkina (1982-), Teaching Assistant is a junior teaching post at conservatory. They are required to fulfil teaching duties when professors are unavailable i.e. concert tours or masterclasses. These teaching assistants are often an established pianist, and are assigned under a regular professor.

²³⁶ Interview with Pavel Nersessian.

²³⁷ Interview with Natalia Trull.

²³⁸ *Aspirantura*: Postgraduate studies. Candidates for the *Aspirantura* course are required to be recommended by the department, before receiving an audition invitation. See Paperno, *op. cit.*, 73. Ashkenazy gave a rough calculation 'about twenty-five graduates each year, probably only three or four are accepted.' See Ashkenazy & Parrott, *op. cit.*, 37.

outstanding potential and the highest degree of accomplishment in their instrument. *Aspirantura* graduates are entitled to teach music in any education establishment in Russia. This is also a path in becoming a professor at a conservatory.

Since students receive an all-round technical training in their early education, conservatoires are unlikely to provide any programme in that area at any level. Those technical issues are rather for the Specialist Music Schools or Music Colleges.²³⁹ Former Vice-Rector at the Moscow Conservatory, Alexander Nikolaev, reinforced this statement and admitted, ‘We do not have a special technical programme of examinations since any pianist or student of piano entering the conservatory is extremely well prepared in piano technique which he receives in any middle-education institution prior to entering the conservatory.’²⁴⁰ This allows the professors to focus on expanding students’ repertoires, developing students’ personalities, as well as enhancing their musicality.

3.1.5 Russian Music Education Overview

The current Russian music education system is undoubtedly a combined invention of the Soviet Union and pre-Soviet, and has remained a strong influence on sociocultural development in Russia today.²⁴¹ Although since 1989 education reform has swept across Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union; the attempts to dismantle this Russian tradition were unsuccessful.²⁴² The collapse of Soviet Union also shook Russia’s economic situation during the 1990s and culture was the first aspect to

²³⁹ Interview with Elena Kuznetsova.

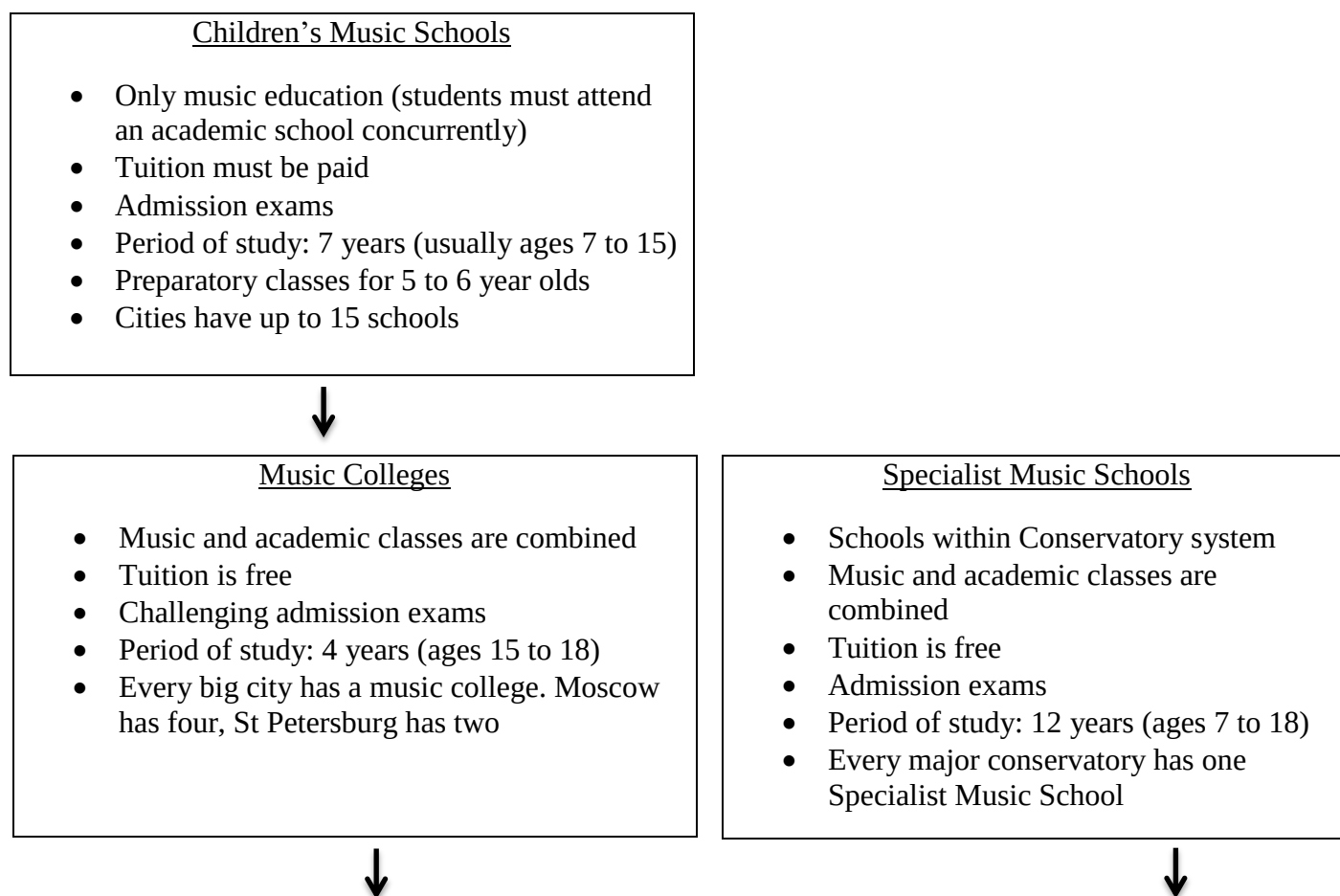
²⁴⁰ Gerig, *op. cit.*, 310.

²⁴¹ It is a Russian invention because the Soviet government assisted Anton Rubinstein in establishing the education system in 1860s. It is also a Soviet invention, since Alexander Goldenweiser and Stanislav Shatsky (Rector of Moscow Conservatory from 1932-1934) refined the system by founding the Specialist Music School in 1932.

²⁴² Maria Bucur & Ben Eklof, ‘Russia and Eastern Europe’, in Robert Arnova and Carlos Torres (eds.), *Comparative Education: The Dialectic of the Global and the Local* (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publications, 2007), 333.

suffer.²⁴³ With the establishment of the Central Music School in 1932,²⁴⁴ Russian education tradition continues its formation today.

The table below provides a summary of the music education hierarchical structure in Russia.²⁴⁵



²⁴³ Interview with Sofya Gulyak.

²⁴⁴ Alexander Goldenweiser and Stanislav Shatsky first organized a special children's group for gifted children in 1932; the USSR government issued a decree on establishment of the Central Music School in 1935.

²⁴⁵ Borrowed and enhanced from Irena Kofman, 'The History of the Russian Piano School: Individuals and Traditions'. (DMA Dissertation, University of Miami, 2001), 102.

Conservatoires

- Music and academic classes are combined
- Tuition is free
- Challenging admission exams
- Period of study: 5 years (ages 19 to 23)
- Every major city has a conservatory. Moscow has two: Tchaikovsky State Conservatory and the Gnessin Russian Academy of Music (or Gnessin Institute). St. Petersburg has one conservatory: the Rimsky-Korsakov State Conservatory.

The Political Involvement

Having understood how the Russian music education system works, one is still left with speculation whether this system is worth preserving or needs any adjustment in the fast-changing twenty-first century musical world. As Boris Berman pointed out at the beginning of this section, this system can only be efficiently implemented in a ‘government-run management’ format. If we were to deconstruct his statement, one should understand the arts in Russia as fully funded and supported by the government. Therefore when a student studies at the Moscow Conservatory, it is not because s/he can afford the tuition fee, but primarily because of the potential of the student. This in fact allows the teachers, the Conservatory, and even the government to be in control. Instead of creating as a ‘customer’ relationship with students, authorities could impose disciplines for the student to obey.²⁴⁶

From a political point of view, economic crises have remained the government’s main concern. Russia’s Ministers of Education and Culture have therefore proposed recent plans to ‘terminate this education system’, as professor at Moscow Conservatory, Alexander Mndoyants claimed. He ascribed the successful music training to this

²⁴⁶ Based on my observation and experience as a member of the Board of Governors at a UK conservatoire, and a visiting lecturer at London universities, institutions that require tuition fee are not as strict as ‘free’ institutions.

sophisticated system they have in the country, and the decision of closing down the Central Music School, for instance, is a serious issue as it will eternally damage the essence of the Russian Piano School.²⁴⁷ Elena Kuznetsova also echoes strongly her colleague's view:

‘In Russian we have a proverb - От добра добра не ищут; meaning “Do not improve something that is working”. As long as there is no one who is going to make obstacles for us in our work, it is probably going to be the best for us. Our musical education does not really want an improvement, except for letting us alone. The word conservatory actually comes from the word “conserve”.’²⁴⁸

Although Russian musicians are inclined to continue the current system, it does not imply there are no negative aspects of this longstanding tradition. The Russian education system depends on the changes of politics and society, for instance, to the one-party system – where everything is controlled centrally. As a consequence, intellectual development and artistic thoughts during the student period have tended to be conservative and restrictive. Russian education institutions and their teachers are therefore rather careful about students' development, especially at an early age. They ensure that young students are kept on the right track as well as in the correct direction – to an extent that there is often no room for compromise or freedom.²⁴⁹ In this respect, they may seem too restricted with the advancement of a growing artist. In addition, the Russian music education system has initiated another social issue. This thorough and consistent preparation in the music profession equips young students with all necessary foundation; beginning with Specialist Music School then progressing into the Conservatory – all dedicated to music studies. However, students at the age of sixteen or eighteen began to raise concerns about their chosen career; for

²⁴⁷ Interview with Alexander Mndoyants.

²⁴⁸ Interview with Elena Kuznetsova.

²⁴⁹ Interview with Tatiana Sarkissova.

instance concerning the level of talent among peers, the quantity of dedicated musicians or the number of successful performers in concert halls. These psychological problems have obliged a large number of students to choose another career. Having spent over a decade in a specialist route, they are unable to move into another field that is as accessible to them as it is to other students who were educated through ordinary schooling.²⁵⁰ While the Russian government supports their music education system with a considerable amount of funding, wages for professors at conservatory are remarkably low.²⁵¹ It is reasonable to assume that this will result in losing gifted teachers, and as a consequence, the level of teaching will decrease. Further, the lack of wages will demotivate the next generation of pianists in taking music as a profession. Accordingly, the Russian government foresees that student intake will decline in music institutions, and this induced the closure of music colleges within the system.

3.1.6 Education System: East Meets West

If, according to Berman, the Russian music education system cannot be implemented efficiently without centralised control from the government, what other systems are in use in other societies, for instance, in the United Kingdom? And how do those compare with the Russian music education system?

²⁵⁰ Interview with Natalia Trull.

²⁵¹ According to Sofya Gulyak, salaries at all institutions in Russia are in line and there are only minor salary difference between Assistant Professors and Associate Professors. For instance, for Teaching Assistants or accompanists the salary is approximately 100 euros per month. For an Associate Professor who teaches 24 hours a week; the salary is approximately 400 euros per month (100 euros per week). Before the year of 2009, the salary for Professors at St Petersburg Conservatory was approximately 1000 euros per month. The Russian government supplies budgets to the Ministries of Culture and Education; those departments then estimate all necessary expenses before passing funds onto all conservatoires in Russia. Gulyak gave a brief comparison of the music teaching profession before the Soviet Union collapsed and the current attitudes: 'The political situation was not better, but from another point of view, it was better; professors were more secured and had more guarantee. Their job as a professor was a prestigious thing; they were highly paid and lived well. After it collapsed, we had terrible economic situations and it took some years for the profession to improve.' Interview with Sofya Gulyak.

All UK Conservatoires operate independently and they solidly rely on students' tuition fees. Each of these Conservatoires also runs a Junior Department, aimed at children from the age of eight to eighteen. Junior Departments only operate on Saturdays, and a typical study day would consist of instrumental class (one hour), theory and harmony (forty-five minutes), aural and sight singing (forty-five minutes), ensemble coaching (forty-five minutes) and one of two-hour optional studies including brass band, orchestral training, and vocal ensemble. In addition, talented students may choose to attend one of the UK Specialist Music Schools, which offer a more thorough training in music education. Students at these Specialist Music Schools study music and academic subjects concurrently, but music training remains their primary focus.

However, Dimitri Alexeev questioned the idea of the music education system in the UK, 'I wouldn't say there is a system here – in a sense how we understand it. It is something different; here it is something looser and freer, without any pressure on students, which may be good, but it doesn't produce the same result.'²⁵² In this sense, Alexeev does not seem to consider the progression from Specialist Music Schools or Junior Conservatoire, to Senior Conservatoires in the West as a system. While Alexeev depicted the learning attitude in the UK unfavourably, his conclusion may not be entirely fair. He argues convincingly that in a freer or less competitive environment, students could have positive musical development but it seems hard to conclude British Conservatoires do not produce pianists or the same rank.²⁵³ It can be understood, however, that Alexeev is suggesting that the level of musical ability is

²⁵² Interview with Dimitri Alexeev.

²⁵³ For instance: Myra Hess, Denis Matthews, Tobias Matthay, and Sir Clifford Curzon all studied at the Royal Academy of Music; Peter Donohoe, John Ogden, Stephen Hough, and Vovka Ashkenazy all trained at the Royal Northern College of Music; John Lill, Barry Douglas, Howard Shelley, and Melvyn Tan all graduated from the Royal College of Music.

incomparable. Elena Kuznetsova elaborates further on the difference at the Conservatoire level:

‘There are many music conservatoires or universities which produce Bachelors and Masters in music but usually people can enter such conservatoires without having any prior specific musical education. Prior to entering these conservatoires, pianists can take private lessons from professors of course. But quite probably they do not have a systematic music education before entering the conservatory. Systematic music education does not only mean piano playing but history of music, polyphonic, theory as well as harmony studies. We have solfeggio and ritmicka as well as education on music literature for five to six years. Because already having 12 years training of complex and systematic foundation of all these subjects, students will already have something to base on.’²⁵⁴

It is noticeable that Kuznetsova has stressed the importance of an all-round music education. This is achieved through different music subjects, for example, the intonation from solfeggio training or learning legato playing through body gestures and movements. One can judge the different emphases being placed: the Western system only places emphasis on instrumental playing, while the Russian system seeks comprehensive study of all subjects within music. Kuznetsova has emphasised that this training happens prior entering at the Conservatoire level; on the other hand, Western students have automatically assumed these trainings should take place at Conservatoires; this is how they conceptualise the career of a professional musician should develop. Russian pianist Rustem Hayroudinoff, professor at the Royal Academy of Music, corrected this misconception right away:

‘There is the myth that the Moscow Conservatoire has given the world greatest pianists. It is not the Moscow Conservatoire; it is those schools before Moscow Conservatoire. This is the different in approach. In the West, when

²⁵⁴ Interview with Elena Kuznetsova.

you come to the Conservatoire level, people will think: “I want to study there so that I can become a good pianist.” In Russia, if you are not a good pianist, you would not enter those schools.²⁵⁵ I think 99.9 percent that they [non-Specialist Music School students] would not stand a chance even at Conservatoires’ entrance audition. Piano playing, harmony, analyses and solfeggio were all tested at the entrance audition. In the West, these things are not even taken into account when you enter. It was treated as something that is bonus that you have studied it. I started playing at the age of three and didn’t like the piano, but still I went to the Specialist Music School when I was seven, where I studied harmony, solfeggio, history etc. for eleven years before I went to Moscow. If you just play the piano a little bit, how can you compete? In the UK, talented people come from all walks of life; some of them had proper education, while some had none. I think that is the problem – it is not the fact that they are not gifted, but it is what they have been doing in the ten to fifteen year, prior to coming to the Conservatoire. If you just play the piano, it is rather doubtful that they would become musicians. They have missed too much. The train has left and they are not on board.²⁵⁶

In summarising comparisons by Alexeev, Kuznetsova and Hayroudinoff, one can perceive piano playing itself is merely a practical subject in music studies in the view of Russian pianists, but as far as the Russian music education system is concerned, thorough music training should be a combination of all theoretical and practical components. Further, in order to be a professional musician, it is necessary to receive music training as early as possible; the role of a conservatoire is only an extension for those professional performers who possess unique musical abilities.

Apart from the difference in the educational system, one-to-one instrumental lessons seem to differ between Russia and the West. Due to the language barrier, much of the Russian literature is not accessible. Of those that are available, Hayroudinoff’s article

²⁵⁵ Schools here meaning: Specialist Music Schools and Music College – the level prior to Conservatoire.

²⁵⁶ Interview with Rustem Hayroudinoff.

(2013) is particularly useful. Not only does he outline his educational training from Kazan to Moscow, but he also discusses some of the teaching and learning process in one-to-one lesson whilst at the conservatory. There are two aspects, for instance, which are immediately striking: firstly, the process and the role of one-to-one teaching. According to Hayroudinoff, nothing other than interpretation was discussed during the teaching process, as he states:

‘Needless to say, no professor of the conservatory spent time teaching students’ technical rudiments – it was taken for granted that you were good enough to deal with the technical side on your own or otherwise would not have been accepted in the first place. Only interpretation was discussed in the lessons.’²⁵⁷

Although students in Russia would not have the opportunity to discuss the technical aspect with their teacher, they are supposed to seek advice from teaching assistants.²⁵⁸

In addition to the content of the one-to-one lesson, the teaching structure is also different from the West. As suggested by interview participants and Hayroudinoff, students receive lessons from the teaching assistants in addition to the weekly lessons (two lessons a week) with their main professor.²⁵⁹

The second aspect that is immediately striking is the process of learning. At the weekly lessons, students are not only expected to play to their main professor, but also to the students who are observing the lesson. In fact, the format is somewhat closer to a ‘masterclass’. Through this process of learning, students would benefit from their own lessons, as well as by observing other students working on different

²⁵⁷ Rustem Hayroudinoff, ‘The Agony and the Ecstasy: My Musical Training in Soviet Russia’, Gramophone Features (2 April 2013).

²⁵⁸ These advices from Teaching Assistances were also on matters such as interpretations and pianistic issues. *Ibid.*

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.* Also from conversations with Natalia Ruchkina; interviews with Natalia Trull, and Elena Kuznetsova.

repertoires.²⁶⁰ It also allows the students to perform consistently in front of ‘an audience’ – preparing them for public performances.

The instrumental lesson in the West greatly differs from that in Russia, in a sense that a one-to-one lesson in the West literally involves only the teacher and the student. Contemporary researchers have attempted to unpack this teaching and learning process in the West. In particular, the subject of ‘creativity’ is widely discussed in Western literature, and as we will see in the next chapter, it is one of the teaching strategies that Russian-emigrant teachers tend to employ.

In the Western literature, for instance, Andrea Creech and Susan Hallam suggested that ‘teacher-student collaboration and the quality of interpersonal interactions in one-to-one lessons influence the achievements of young pupils’.²⁶¹ One of the teaching strategies (under the category of ‘creativity’) that were revealed through observed lesson was the use of metaphors. It occurred in the lessons of both Russian and Russian-emigrant teachers. Although none of the Russian literature suggested that this is an effective teaching strategy, Jessika Karlsson and Patrik N. Juslin showed in an observational study that it can ‘enhance expression’. Further, the use of metaphors tended to occur when ‘lessons were dominated by verbal instructions or outcome feedback and mostly addressed technical aspects followed by notation’.²⁶²

According to Beth Hennessey and Teresa Amabile, ‘Western classical music performance seems to be viewed less in terms of the performer’s creative input and

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁶¹ Creech, A. & S. Hallam, ‘Learning a musical instrument: The influence of interpersonal interaction on outcomes for school-aged pupils’ in *Psychology of Music* 39, (2011), 1, 102.

²⁶² Karlsson, K & P.N. Juslin, ‘Musical expression: An observational study of instrumental teaching’ in *Psychology of Music* 36, (2008), 3, 328.

more as a matter of reproduction.’²⁶³ Andreas Lehmann argues that ‘the interpretation of the notated music in a way that is perceived as different, fresh or “inspired” may reflect the creative skills of a performer’.²⁶⁴ Italian pianist Ferruccio Busoni went further and claimed that ‘every performance of this inevitably inexact notation is, like it or not, a further transcription’.²⁶⁵ Western researchers seem to agree that whether ‘a product of any kind is recognised and evaluated as “creative” depends on the values and judgements of the social and cultural system in which it was produced’.²⁶⁶

3.2 Current Pedagogical Approach in Practice

Having examined the micro level in the previous section, this section will look closely at the macro level – the direct influence. As stated at the beginning of this chapter, in addition to the Russian music education system, instrumental teaching also has a strong influence in the process of studies. Piano lessons with Russian teachers are essentially a multi-dimensional experience which determines and shapes the students’ interpretation, technical approach, and sometimes the teaching manner of the student. Two principal questions arise: how do Russian teachers transfer their knowledge to their students, and, given the Russian-to-Western and Western-to-Russian exchange process are blending both ways, how different are their teaching methodologies?

²⁶³ Beth A Hennessy & Teresa Amabile, ‘The conditions of creativity’ in R. J. Sternberg (ed.), *The nature of creativity: Contemporary psychological perspectives*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988, 11-38.

²⁶⁴ Andreas Lehmann, ‘Expression and Interpretation’ in *Psychology for Musicians: Understanding and acquiring the skills*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2007, 85-106.

²⁶⁵ Ferruccio Busoni, *Wesen und Einheit der Musik*, 1956, 125.

²⁶⁶ Mirjam James, Karen Wise & John Rink, ‘Exploring creativity in musical performance through lesson observation with video-recall interviews’ in *Scientia Paedagogica Experimentalis* 47(2), 2010, 222. See also Margaret Boden, ‘What is Creativity?’ in M. Boden (ed.) *Dimensions of Creativity*, MA: MIT Press, 1994, 75-117; Beth Hennessey & Teresa Amabile, ‘Creativity’ in *Annual Review of Psychology* 61, 2010, 569-598; Aaron Williamson, Sam Thompson, Tania Lisboa & Charles Wiffen, ‘Creativity, originality, and value in music performance’, in Irène Deliège and Geraint Wiggins (ed.), *Musical creativity: multidisciplinary research in theory and practice*, Hove: Psychology Press, 2006.

In order to explore the Russian teaching process in depth, systematic observations were conducted. Observations of piano lessons were carried out with nine Russian teachers at the Moscow Conservatoire in Russia, the Yale School of Music in the United States, the Royal Academy of Music and the Royal College of Music in the United Kingdom – five teachers reside in Russia and four others currently live outside Russia. It is worth emphasising that this research is the first study that compares Russian and Russian emigrant teaching directly – highlighting some teaching methodologies that has not previously been noted. All piano lessons were observed in a usual music room setting at conservatoires, with a second piano available for the teachers. As far as the selection of teachers is concerned, they are invited to take part in this research based on their extensive years of teaching and their directorate position held at conservatoires. Teachers' communications, behaviour and teaching methodologies were noted during lessons, video/audio equipment were also in used for this research. Details were marked in fifteen-minute blocks, within an hour; and teachers' behaviour was encoded in different categories.²⁶⁷ A questionnaire was sent to random selected students of these Russian teachers to enquire about their learning process.²⁶⁸ Fifty five hours of observation data were collected with eight questionnaires returned from the randomly-selected students.

²⁶⁷ See Appendix 4 for the Observation coding.

²⁶⁸ See Appendix 5 for the sample questionnaire.

Here are the selected teachers that were examined for the Russian teaching process:

<i>Location</i>	<i>Teachers</i>	<i>Institution</i>	<i>Position Held</i>
Outside Russia (Russian Emigrant Teachers)	Dimitri Alexeev	Royal College of Music	Professor of Advanced Piano
	Boris Berman	Yale School of Music	Head of Piano Department
	Dina Parakhina	Royal College of Music	Professor of Piano
	Tatiana Sarkissova	Royal Academy of Music	Professor of Piano
Russia (Russian Teachers)	Elena Kuznetsova	Moscow Conservatoire	Former Dean of Piano Faculty
	Alexander Mndoyants	Moscow Conservatoire	Professor of Piano
	Pavel Nersessian	Moscow Conservatoire	Professor of Piano
	Irina Plotnikova	Moscow Conservatoire	Head of Piano at Central Music School
	Natalia Trull	Moscow Conservatoire	Professor of Piano

Table 3.1 List of Teachers from lesson observations

The table above categorises teachers who currently reside either in Russia or outside Russia;²⁶⁹ it is worth noting, too, that all these teachers are highly experienced. All of them have taught for at least twenty years, and some possess nearly forty years of teaching experience. Before presenting the findings, a brief discussion of music memorisation would provide an appropriate context for Russian teachers' requirement in the lessons observed. As noted from observations, Russian teachers from both categories automatically expected students to memorise the music before attending the lesson. This requirement was expected right from the beginning of the learning process, for instance, the first time when the student presents a new composition to the teacher. As mentioned in the previous chapter, memorisation is one of Goldenweiser's teaching principles – a requirement which continues to the present

²⁶⁹ For the sake of clarity in the rest of the chapter, the term 'Russian teachers' is used to define Russian teachers who currently reside in Russia; whilst 'Russian emigrant teachers' is used to define Russian teachers who currently based in the West.

day among Russian teachers. It may appear that memorising the music at the beginning of the learning process is a natural condition for all students around the world; however, this is not true, especially in comparison with the teaching attitudes in Western society. While Russian teachers demand students to memorise in time for the first lesson, Western teachers allow students to attend, at least in the first lesson, along with the music score.

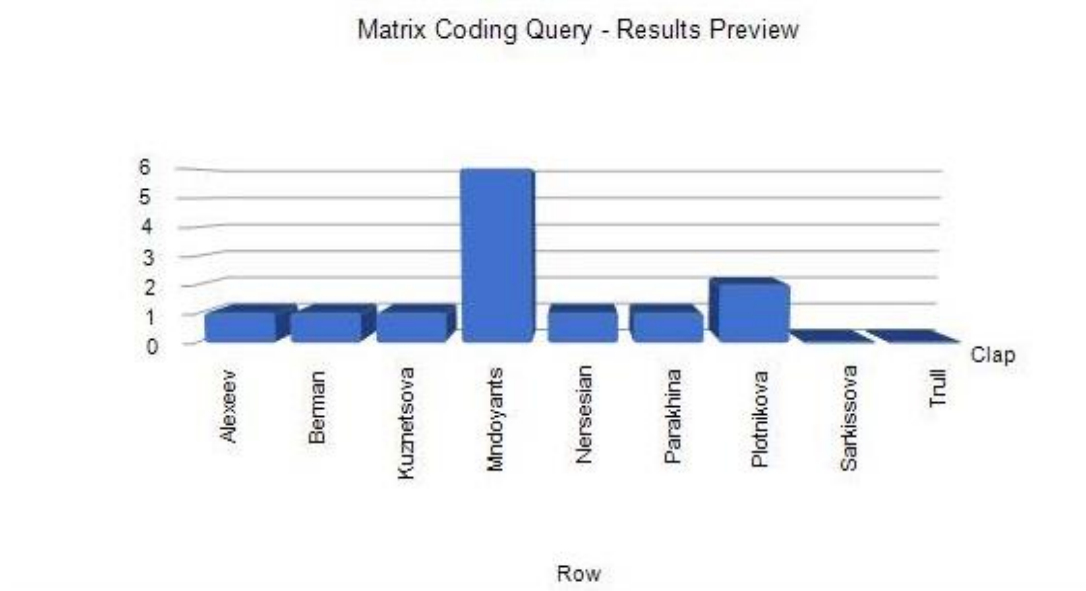
In the following sections, I shall discuss the findings systematically, according to the coded categories.

3.2.1 Expression & Communication

Clap (C)

The communication manners of Russian teachers are not limited only to verbalisation, and clapping (or tapping) is another way of expressing their thoughts. There are three distinct differences to the use of clapping: first, the purpose of rhythm; second, the aim to be in tempo; and third, in drawing students' attention. The first tends to occur when the student is unable to play the correct rhythm on the piano, and therefore clapping serves as a rhythmic demonstration. After rhythmic demonstration by the teacher, they often request a clapping response from the student – either through playing or clapping imitation. This is to ensure that the student can capture the exact musical rhythm. The second clapping strategy – clapping the pulse; tends to appear when there are new tempo indications in the music, or when there are excessive uses of *rubato* in the students' playing. In this respect, students are compelled to follow the tempo specified by the teachers. While the former two clapping methodologies relate to the matter of time, the last strategy only applies to stop the student from playing and to catch their attention. This occurs especially to prevent students continuing and

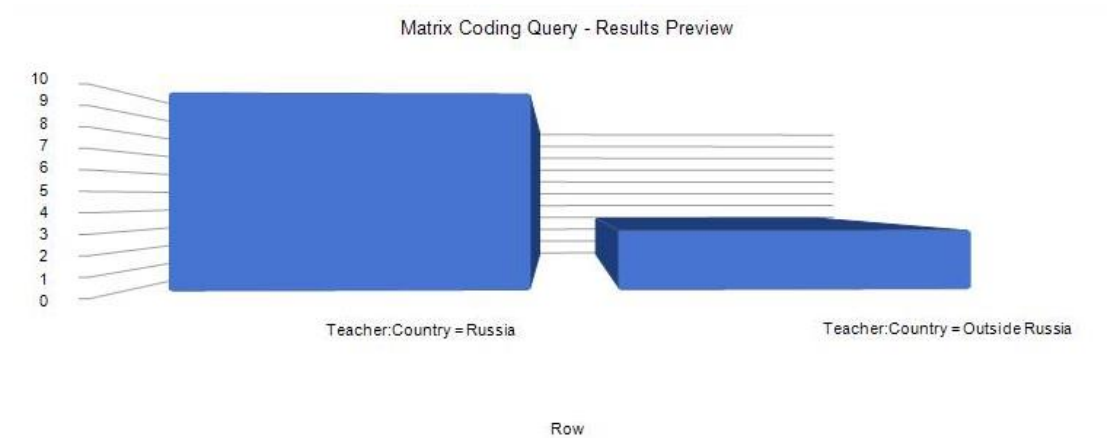
to allow them to hear comments made by the teacher. The chart below shows the number of times clapping and tapping occurred during the lesson observations among Russian teachers:



Ex 3.2 Clapping - Results for number of time it occurs amongst Russian teachers

Most Russian teachers clap occasionally during lessons, with the exception of Trull and Sarkisova. In the case of Mndoyants, he uses clapping much more frequently than his colleagues; however, his purpose mostly lies within the first two categories, and only occasionally in the third category. For instance, one clapping occurred when Mndoyants requested the student to play in a slow-practice tempo. As the tempo was unstable, he used clapping to remind the student that a slow tempo is being established.²⁷⁰ On the other hand, the clapping usage of Plotnikova generally lies in the third category, where she uses clapping as a tool to discontinue students' playing.

²⁷⁰ Lesson observation from Alexander Mndoyants (2AM2.4).



Ex 3.3 Comparison between teachers residing in Russia and in the West

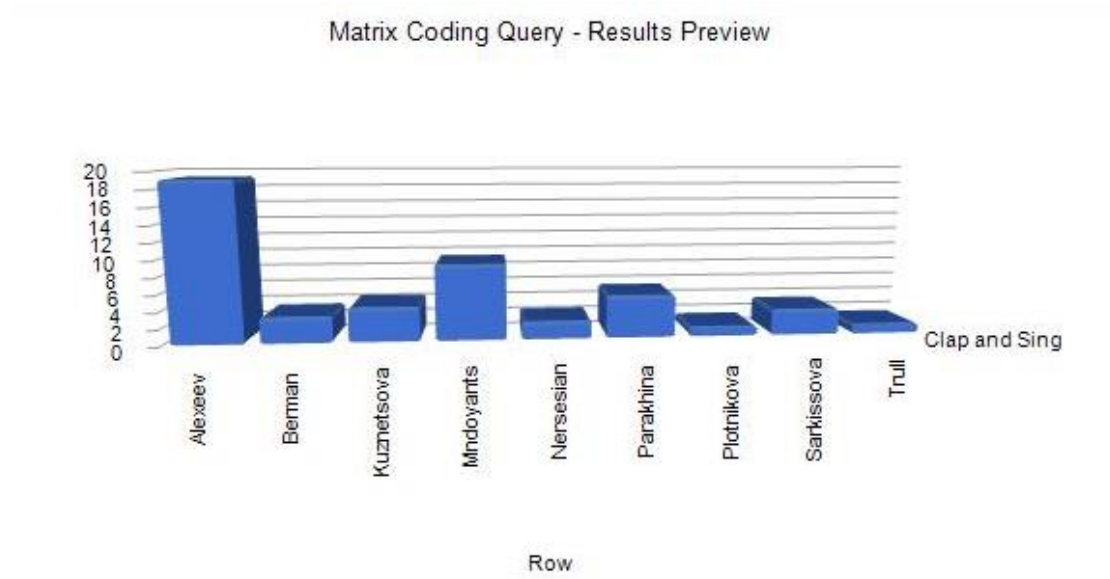
The above comparison shows the Russian teachers tend to clap much more than Russian teachers who reside elsewhere and the difference is significant. This implies that clapping is considered a more effective tool from the Russian teachers' perspective. Students have also expressed their positive learning experience from teachers' clapping. For instance, a student commented on the impact of teachers' clapping movement: 'It allows me to feel the vitality of metre or rhythm.'²⁷¹

Clap and Sing (CS)

After considering the clapping movement alone, it would be useful to examine another closely related method – clap and sing. This coded category includes clapping with any verbalisation. It is evident from the observation data that 'clap and sing' appears more frequently than just clapping alone.²⁷² This appears to be the alternative option for those teachers who rarely use the 'clapping' strategy during their lessons.

²⁷¹ Student Questionnaire 6, Question 3.

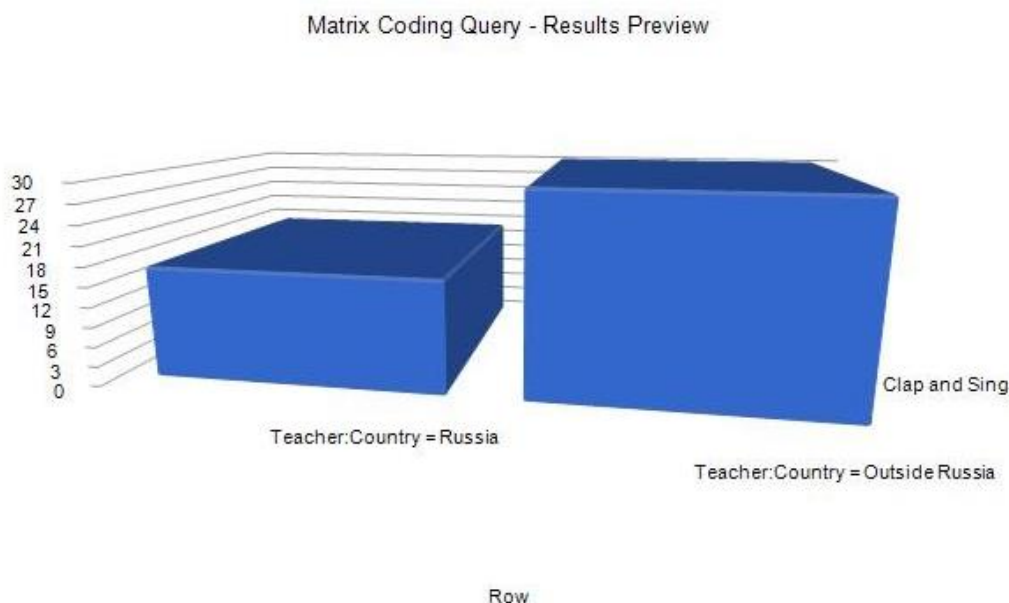
²⁷² 47 times of 'Clap and Sing' movement were recorded, while the 'Clap' category recorded 13 times only.



Ex 3.4 Clap and Sing - Results for number of times it occurs amongst Russian teachers

In the case of Mndoyants, he is the highest-record user of ‘clap’; and at the same time, his uses of ‘clap and sing’ are also notably high.²⁷³ If we were to compare the data on these two strategies – ‘clap’ and ‘clap and sing’, all Russian teachers seem to prefer the use of the latter. The primary reason is that the ‘clap and sing’ strategy has included two important areas: tempo (clap) as well as pitch (sing). Through the use of ‘clap and sing’, Russian teachers often employ this strategy as a substitute for instrumental demonstration. On this point, ‘clap and sing’ enables Russian teachers to demonstrate, and observe students’ playing simultaneously. In addition to instrumental demonstration, Russian teachers have also used the ‘clap and sing’ strategy in the following ways: clap and verbal pulse counting; sing to imitate the playing and clap only on accent notes. For instance, Alexeev has the highest ‘clap and sing’ recorded, with 19 instances during his lesson. Of these, 10 were recorded in the ‘clap and verbal pulse’ category, 6 were for demonstration purposes, and 3 times he used ‘clap and sing’ for accenting notes in the music.

²⁷³ Please note the scales bars in the charts between ‘Clap’ and ‘Clap and Sing’ are different.



Ex 3.5 Comparison between teachers residing in Russia and in the West

Although Russian teachers were reasonably frequent in using ‘clapping’, the proportion of ‘clap and sing’, in comparison with Russian emigrant teachers, was very low. The aim therefore is to understand why Russian emigrant teachers who didn’t use clapping during their lesson often used ‘clap and sing’. It is fair to assume that this method will provide much flexibility and is the easiest way of communicating the message to the student. A student of a Russian emigrant teacher pointed out that this ‘clap and sing’ strategy ‘encourages expression (Sing), and makes me control myself (Clap)’.²⁷⁴ While another student stated that this methodology ‘makes me understand better what the teacher means’.²⁷⁵

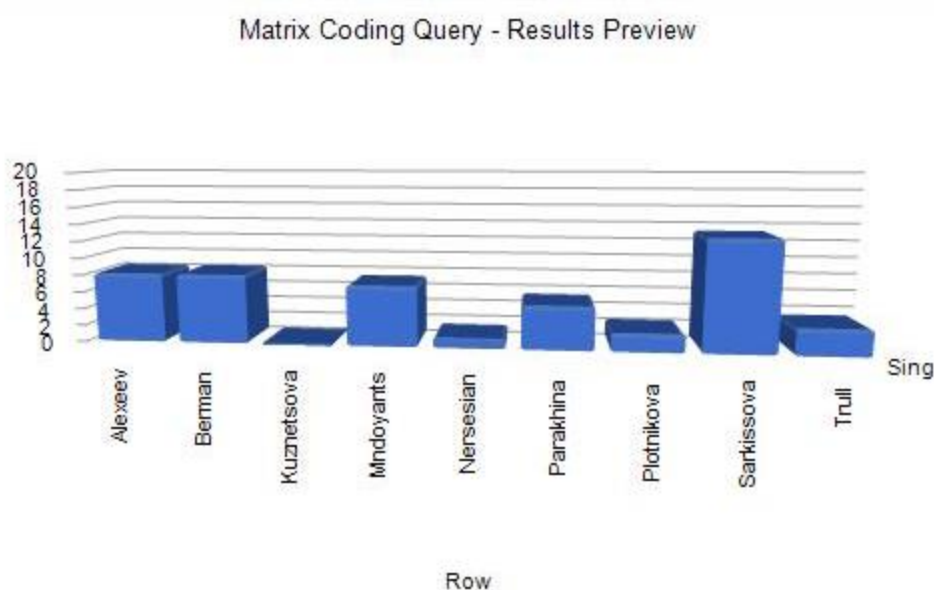
Sing (S)

The singing teaching strategy is used for a number of purposes: to illustrate the phrasing; to provide students with a sense of direction; to show emotional expression; and for character stimulation. Russian teachers sing the melodic line in all recorded

²⁷⁴ Student Questionnaire 3, Question 3.

²⁷⁵ Student Questionnaire 7, Question 3.

observations, but occasionally other voice parts in a contrapuntal texture, and almost all Russian teachers involved singing in the lesson with the exception of Kuznetsova.



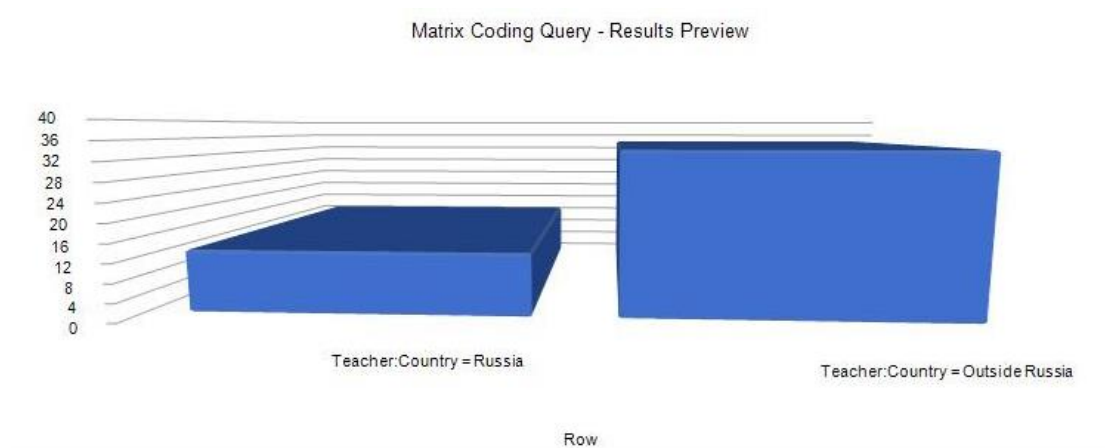
Ex 3.6 Sing - Results for number of time it occurs amongst Russian teachers

Despite the inconsistent usage of the singing strategy by different Russian teachers, most teachers used singing for encouraging emotional expression, which is a typical methodology for those students who are unable to capture the musical image of the composition. Occasionally, the singing strategy was also used when the student wasn't producing the kind of expressivity that the teacher wanted to hear. It is essential to understand not only how students perceive the 'singing' strategy, but also how this strategy helps them to form the emotional link with the composition, and how this manifests in students' performance. This singing approach seems to allow students to 'hear the intonation and accents in transferring the ideas to the sound on the piano'.²⁷⁶ Although students generally find the singing of their teachers 'expressive, and that it is easier to understand the musical idea the teacher is trying to

²⁷⁶ Student Questionnaire 6, Question 3a.

convey’; the singing, on the other hand, ‘prevents the students from hearing the sound they have produced’.²⁷⁷ However, if we were to analysis that particular recorded observation, it was perhaps the incorrect moment to focus on sound production when the teacher’s principal intention was to transfer his musical idea to the student. After all, Russian teachers tend to solve the sound production issue with instrumental demonstration rather than by singing.

Another recognisable purpose for the singing strategy is to convey phrasing. Russian emigrant teachers such as Parakhina, Berman, and Sarkissova have all commented on the idea of phrasing in relation to breathing during their lessons. Singing is both powerful and practical as an approach, and provides a direct example of where the phrase starts and ends. Sarkissova in particular often uses singing in connection with phrasing direction. She questions students, too, as to where the musical direction goes; Sarkissova’s singing strategy seems to resolve all phrasing direction issues for students who are uncertain.



Ex 3.7 Singing - Comparison between teachers residing in Russia and in the West

²⁷⁷ Student Questionnaire 2, Question 3a.

Observing the comparison between Russian and Russian emigrant teachers, the latter is by far the dominant group, making up around 72% of the overall singing strategy recorded from observation. The singing strategy may therefore be a methodology 'borrowed' from the West, which Russian emigrant teachers have adopted in their teaching, perhaps having observed this methodology among their Western colleagues and found it persuasive. Moreover, among the Russian teachers, 28% of the singing observed during lesson was from Mndoyants. According to Mndoyants, he had travelled consistently to the West and had given classes along with other teachers from the West before taking part in this research, and therefore it is likely that Western teaching has had some impact on him.

Demonstration (D)

All Russian teachers from the research observation use demonstration as a tool for communication, highlighting the level of 'demonstration' involved in Russian teaching methodology that has not previously been noted. Despite the fact that students would perhaps simply imitate the teachers' demonstration, there is a tendency for the demonstration to happen simultaneously with the students' playing. However, it is clear that some Russian teachers were unaware of the student's need for explanation, and simply employ the demonstration strategy without any further verbal explanation as to what and where the issues were. This issue was rather apparent in one of Berman's lessons, where after two demonstration attempts; the student struggled to follow the phrasing indications. It was not until the third demonstration that the student finally understood how that particular musical phrase should be executed. Between these three demonstration attempts, there were no verbal

explanations. Thus, it was unclear whether the student had in fact understood his teacher's intention, or simply achieved what the teacher asked for by chance.²⁷⁸

As to the role demonstration plays in Russian teachers' lessons, over a half (67.3%) of the demonstrations during lessons were simply showing how the teacher intended the music to sound. This suggests that Russian teachers considered demonstration as the most direct approach in explaining musical points. However, of these 67.3% demonstration usages, many occasions were simply a 'copy and paste' – the teacher demonstrates; the student then copies and produces the identical musical result. This finding is considerably high and is contrary to the pedagogical concept occur in the late nineteenth-century, where teachers were extremely mindful of performance imitation, i.e. student who attempted to 'copy' any kind of performance model. As stated in Chapter 2 by the German critic, Eduard Hanslick:

‘Young virtuosi must beware of imitating the excesses of [Anton] Rubinstein's playing, rather learning from him to play with expression, keeping strict watch over the tempo...’²⁷⁹

Based on Hanslick's statement, it is not difficult to sense the powerful impact Anton Rubinstein made on the younger generation during the late nineteenth-century, let alone his students. His intention is understandable, since performances could then be as diversified as possible; on the other hand, if demonstration is treated merely as a kind of 'copy and paste' exercise, it is reasonable to assume that this teaching strategy will only strengthen the assimilation process – leading to a unified interpretative approach.

²⁷⁸ Lesson observation from Berman (1BB1.4).

²⁷⁹ Bowen, *op. cit.*, 290.

Demonstration as an example	67.3%
Demonstrate simultaneously with the student	19.1%
Only melody/ right hand demonstration	10.4%
Only bass/ left hand demonstration	2.6%

Ex 3.8 The usage breakdown of the demonstration strategy

Although this ‘copy and paste’ provides the most direct approach for students to follow, this demonstration suppresses students’ interpretation and creative thoughts. As students are asked to model themselves upon the exact manner of their teachers’ playing, students’ performance will mostly comprise teachers’ interpretation and only a fraction of that of the student. On the other hand, in an interview study, Western music psychologist Robert Woody has reported that 61% of the students indicated expressivity was taught via verbally, whilst 39% of the students said it was taught through modelling i.e. ‘copy and paste’.²⁸⁰

Yet despite a high level of modelling within the 67.3% using demonstration, some Russian teachers consider their demonstration is merely to provide another interpretative option for the student. They demonstrate two different ways of playing the same musical passages and either ask the student to observe the differences, or ask the student’s preference, following with a series of questions on choice of interpretation.²⁸¹ In addition, other uses of demonstration within the 67.3% include the following aspects: addressing the articulation, pedal, sound, dynamic, tempo, character and sometimes highlighting hidden melodies for the student. It would

²⁸⁰ See Robert H Woody, ‘Learning expressivity in music performance: An exploratory study’ in *Research Studies in Music Education* 14, 2000, 14-23.

²⁸¹ Examples can be found in many lessons observed: Alexeev (1DA2.3; 2DA1.2), Berman (1BB1.4; 2BB1.4), Kuznetsova (3EK1.4), Nersissian (1PN1.2), Plotnikova (1IP1.2, 1IP2.2), Sarkissova (1TS1.4, 1TS2.2; 2TS1.4, 2TS2.3), Trull (1NT1.2).

perhaps be beneficial for the student to hear how the same musical passage is demonstrated by the teacher. However, instead of demonstrating the same passage that the student was struggling with, Boris Berman used another composition to illustrate his point. This enables the student to realise that the same performing approach can be applied in other similar musical passages.

The purpose of demonstration is for ‘learners to not only duplicate the task, but to recognize how to problem-solve when unexpected obstacles or problems arise’.²⁸² In order to achieve this goal, teachers ‘perform the tasks step-by-step so that the learner will eventually be able to complete the same task independently’, but after the demonstration, ‘the teacher’s role becomes supporting students in their attempts, providing guidance and feedback, and offering suggestions for alternative approaches’.²⁸³ In this respect, the teacher has two roles: firstly, ‘leading’; and secondly, ‘supporting’. In all lesson observations, most of the teachers who used this ‘demonstration’ strategy in lessons follow this ‘leading’ and ‘supporting’ pattern. One of the examples was Boris Berman where the student had problem playing the left hand part of Chopin’s Étude in C, Op. 10 No. 1:

²⁸² Eley, M. & Norton, P. “The Structing of Initial Descriptions or Demonstrations in the Teaching of Procedures”, *International Journal of Math Education, Science, and Technology*. 2004, 35 (6), 844.

²⁸³ *Ibid.*



Ex 3.9 Opening of Chopin's Étude in C, Op. 10 No. 1

Although the opening left hand octave may look simple at first, the student was not able to play with the sound that Berman desired. Berman then first demonstrated how the octaves should sound, requesting the student to model on his movement and sound. Initially, Berman purely demonstrated without any verbal explanation, but after two unsuccessful attempts, he then pointed out that the use of arm weight plays an important role in achieving a deeper sound. As Berman suggests, the opening octave, for example, require the pianist to turn his elbow away from his body. At that point, Berman entered the second part of the demonstration process – the ‘supporting’ role. The student attempted to copy the same movement as his teacher in order to produce the same result. Berman then commented on how the result can be refined and suggested an alternative approach.

What does it mean to the student when the teacher demonstrates? Is it purely a ‘copy and paste’ experience? When gathering all the data from the student questionnaires, it becomes clear that the ‘demonstration’ strategy is also a way of communication. One student commented that teacher’s demonstration allow him/her to ‘understand what

she is asking...sometimes it is an inspiration for a better performance of mine'.²⁸⁴ Another student commented that the teacher's demonstration 'helps me in understanding his intentions; it's easier to catch suggestions quickly'.²⁸⁵ Both of the students' responses suggested a certain degree of communication, and this depends on two aspects: firstly, the level of students' awareness (whether they are able to catch the teacher's intention without any verbal explanation); and secondly, the quality of demonstration (whether the teacher is able to demonstrate his/her intention when they are not familiar with the music). Indeed, all teachers observed here are experienced educators, but there are bound to be repertoires that they have not come across. This, however, does not hinder their determination to demonstrate in lessons. Berman, for example, demonstrated another passage which is similar to the piece that the student was learning in order to communicate his intention. After all, a student suggested that demonstration in fact is 'a crucial part of the lesson. Even if the teacher doesn't know the piece well, his/her intentions come out clearly through the playing'.²⁸⁶ In summarising all the response from the students, it becomes clear that it is the teacher's intention that students are after, and not necessarily the quality of demonstration. Most importantly, the data suggests that students consider the 'demonstration' strategy an effective way of communication in one-to-one instrumental teaching.

Apart from communication, demonstration also involves a level of analysis in the student learning process. As mentioned previously, demonstration should educate the student so that they can learn to tackle the task independently. This is achieved through analysing the teacher's demonstration and applying the observed elements

²⁸⁴ Student Questionnaire 3, Question 4.

²⁸⁵ Student Questionnaire 5, Question 4.

²⁸⁶ Student Questionnaire 7, Question 4.

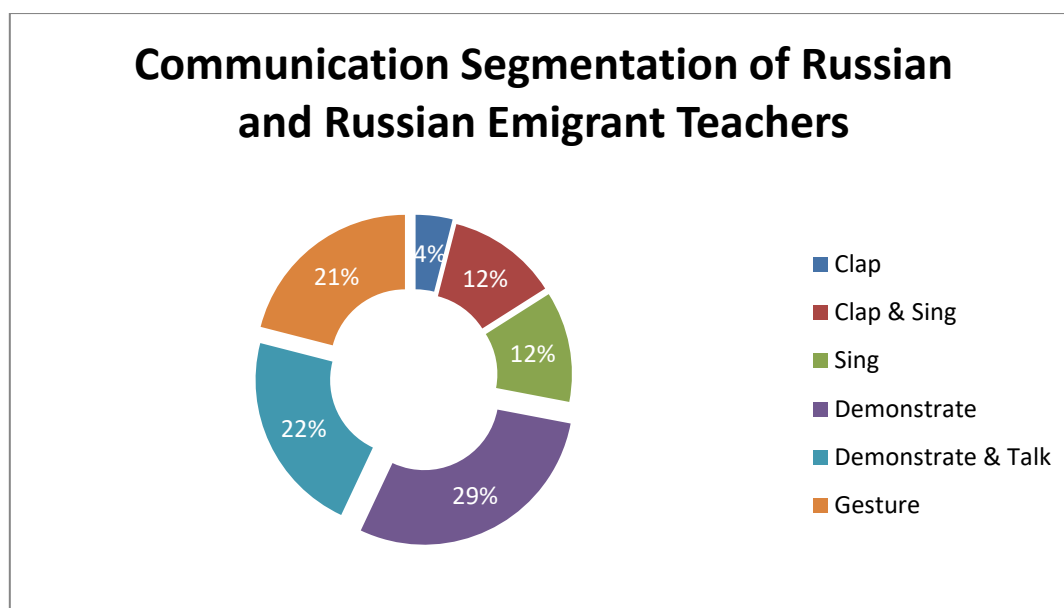
into the student's own playing. These observed elements may include but are not limited to movements, sound, as well as the teacher's intention. Furthermore, a student pointed out that it is the sensational effect that he seeks to reproduce: 'To observe and replicate to a certain degree of the demonstration, what "parts" are involved to produce the specific sound and analyse how to reproduce the sensational effect.'²⁸⁷ Another interesting issue from his statement is that he did not intend to imitate the entire demonstration – only parts of it. This is somewhat like playing a puzzle game: the teacher's demonstration provides a full picture of the puzzle, whilst the student analyses the full picture of the puzzle, find the necessary 'parts', and puts the puzzle together.

Analysing the demonstration usage exclusively allows us to consider further how this strategy is employed by Russian and Russian emigrant teachers during their teaching; the usage breakdown illustrates that only a small section of the demonstration is categorised as 'playing simultaneously' (19.1%). Although 'simultaneous playing' rarely happens, it prevents student and teacher hearing themselves independently. Further, it does not encourage student to play differently from the teacher.

As has been previously mentioned, the number of times that Russian teachers demonstrate during their lessons was unexpectedly high – making up almost a third (29%) of the communication method. This contrasts with the practice of Anton Rubinstein, who he was reluctant to demonstrate, fearing students would simply imitate his approach to playing.²⁸⁸

²⁸⁷ Student Questionnaire 6, Question 4.

²⁸⁸ Not only Anton Rubinstein was reluctant to demonstrate, but he also refused to explain any technical difficulties. He referred student to solve such issues through trial and error. See Jordan Krassimira, 'The Legacy of Anton Rubinstein', *Clavier* 31 (December 1992), 25.



Ex 3.9 Communication Segmentation of Russian and Russian Emigrant Teachers

Before we explore the last two strategies (Demonstration & Talk; Gesture) in the communication section, it would be useful to discuss the concern Anton Rubinstein had from a contemporary prospective. Russian and Russian emigrant teachers have constantly used demonstration as a strategy during their lessons, notwithstanding Rubinstein's opposition. His opposition is an important source to consider and would naturally occur to many Russian teachers, since all teaching practices which are still in place today were first established by Anton Rubinstein.²⁸⁹ It is somewhat difficult to understand why this particular pedagogical approach (the avoidance of demonstration) is not passed on in modern Russian teaching practice when all other practices are still embedded in Russian music education. Furthermore, the name of Anton Rubinstein appeared in all interviews conducted in this research, particularly when discussing pre-Soviet's pedagogical influences. Thus, this also confirms the eminent position Rubinstein still holds among Russian pianists. It would be more

²⁸⁹ These practices include the *Aspirantura* system, special technical programme, and rigours solfeggio training.

appropriate to conclude that Anton Rubinstein still has an irreplaceable position ideologically, but his pedagogical impact has begun to diminish in reality. Anton Rubinstein's apprehension (demonstration leads to performance unification) is no longer applicable in the twenty-first century. From the teachers' perspective, their demonstration would surely affect students' interpretative approaches; but even if demonstration does not occur in any teaching activity, other resources (such as recorded music and concert activities) would also expedite the process of performance unification.

Despite all the negative sides of the demonstration strategy, students of Russian emigrant teachers have a different view at present. Many students have stated the importance of their teacher's demonstration, and that it should be a crucial part of the lesson.²⁹⁰ One student pointed out that demonstration allows her 'to observe and replicate a certain degree of the demonstration.'²⁹¹ While another student suggested demonstration makes it 'easier to understand the kind of sound he [the teacher] requires.'²⁹² Besides providing a direct example to students, teachers' demonstration can be seen as an inspiration for students. It is also a more persuasive and convincing approach in implementing musical or technical changes. Thus, it allows the students to understand those new changes are in fact practical adjustments, rather than changes that are 'easier said than done'. At this point, if we were to draw all previous students' remarks, it seems to imply that their teachers' interpretative view or sound production is 'the' only way of playing the piece, and that it is an indispensable aspect in teaching. To conclude, demonstration is likely to be found in all lessons by Russian or Russian emigrant teachers; it is mainly through this strategy that both groups of

²⁹⁰ Student Questionnaire 7, Question 4.

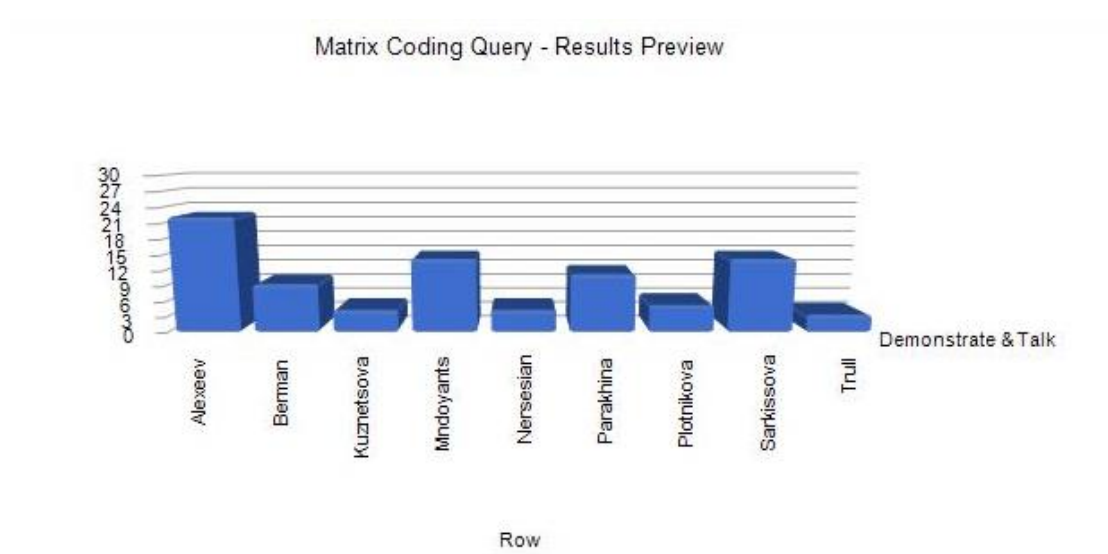
²⁹¹ Student Questionnaire 6, Question 4.

²⁹² Student Questionnaire 1, Question 4.

Russian teachers can inculcate and communicate their musical knowledge and thoughts to their students.

Demonstration and Talk (DT)

Another coding closely related to the previous category is ‘Demonstrate and Talk’. This category includes any type of verbalisation while the teacher demonstrates on the piano. Although ‘Demonstrate’ and ‘Demonstrate and Talk’ are similar, the latter usage is not as consistent as the former.

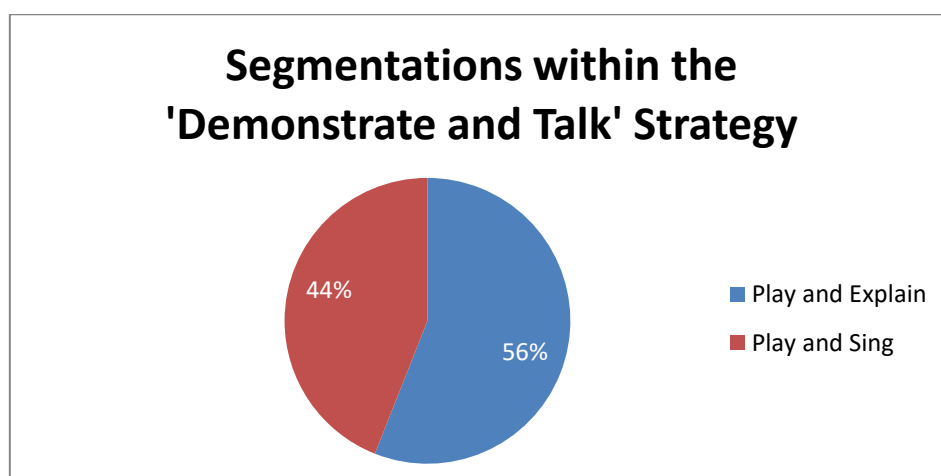


Ex 3.10 Demonstrate and Talk – occurrences amongst Russian teachers

Across the range of different Russian teachers observed, more than twenty instances (25%) of ‘Demonstrate and Talk’ came from Alexeev. It is worth mentioning that Alexeev is also the highest recorded teacher for ‘Demonstrate’. Thus, it is reasonable to assume that demonstration is what Alexeev considers the most effective strategy, and therefore he is constantly employing this method in his teaching activities. In contrast, there is only a slight indication (3%) of this strategy in Trull’s lesson, and it is by far the lowest in the group. In achieving the same aim as demonstration, Trull provided much of the verbal communication and explanation. It is somewhat surprising that, by using verbal explanation most of the time, Trull’s students were

able to understand and achieve the changes she requested. In this respect, it can be seen that the same result can be achieved through different approaches. In Trull's case, however, some of the students observed were between the aged of 15 to 18, whilst other students in her class were beyond 18; this is different from all the other observed teachers, as all other observed students were beyond 18. Trull mainly employed verbal communication only to younger students and demonstration for older ones, who are, of course, much better and are able to copy her exactly.

There are differences in terms of both the use of 'Demonstrate and Talk' and 'Demonstrate' that are likely to be more effective for some students than others. In view of the 'Demonstrate and Talk' coding, it is important to note the ways in which Russian teachers have used this strategy.



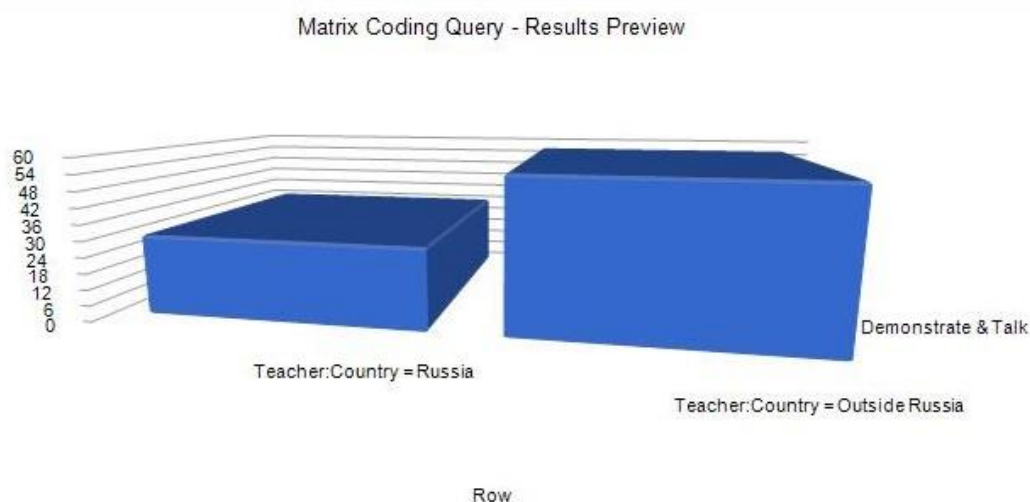
Ex 3.11 Segmentations within the 'Demonstrate and Talk' Strategy

Within the 'Demonstrate and Talk' strategy, there are two identifiable segments that are generally used by Russian teachers: first, play and explain; second, play and sing. As previously mentioned, a minority of Russian teachers occasionally demonstrate without providing any verbal explanation – leaving the student with questions unresolved. However, the 'Play and explain' segment is a proactive methodology to

address this particular issue and will enable the teacher to explain what s/he is doing while providing a practical demonstration simultaneously. This will allow the student to understand what to look for whilst listening to the teacher's demonstration. To this end, it is worth mentioning one of the examples from Mndoyants: at first, the student was unable to understand the changes suggested by the teacher. After the use of the 'Demonstration' strategy, the student however, still failed to understand Mndoyants's point. Thus, Mndoyants combined the two – 'Play and Explain'; the student was then able to understand where the changes apply at the first attempt. Observing from Mndoyants's teaching activities, there is a clear identifiable pattern: first, verbal explanation; second, demonstration; and finally, 'Play and Explain' segment from the 'Demonstrate and Talk' strategy. This recurring pattern occurs frequently, and often arises when Mndoyants is unsatisfied with a particular passage or a musical interpretation. It is only in a number of exceptional cases where he departed from this normal pattern. In those exceptional cases, he alternates the second and third strategies ('Demonstration' and 'Play and Explain'); in this way, his students still understand his intention and adopt the changes accordingly. In sum, the flexibility of Mndoyants's teaching strategies has positive responses and he only makes minor adjustments for different students.

Although the intention for the second segment – 'Play and Sing' is not as clear as the first, it is reasonable to assume that singing the melody will emphasise the importance of the melodic element and draw students' attention to refining balance in the sound. It is clear that this segment will reinforce one of the principles of Russian pianism – the melodic line. It is also apparent that 'play and sing' enables the teacher to highlight any hidden melody line for the student. In a contrapuntal composition, for instance, Parakhina used the 'play and sing' methodology and in particular she

highlighted an inner line with her singing. The student, who had previously failed to identify the line, understood immediately that the inner line is where he should focus. In conclusion, this ‘play and sing’ diminished the confusion between the teacher and student. It provides a ‘playing’ demonstration example and highlights melody through ‘singing’ at the same time.



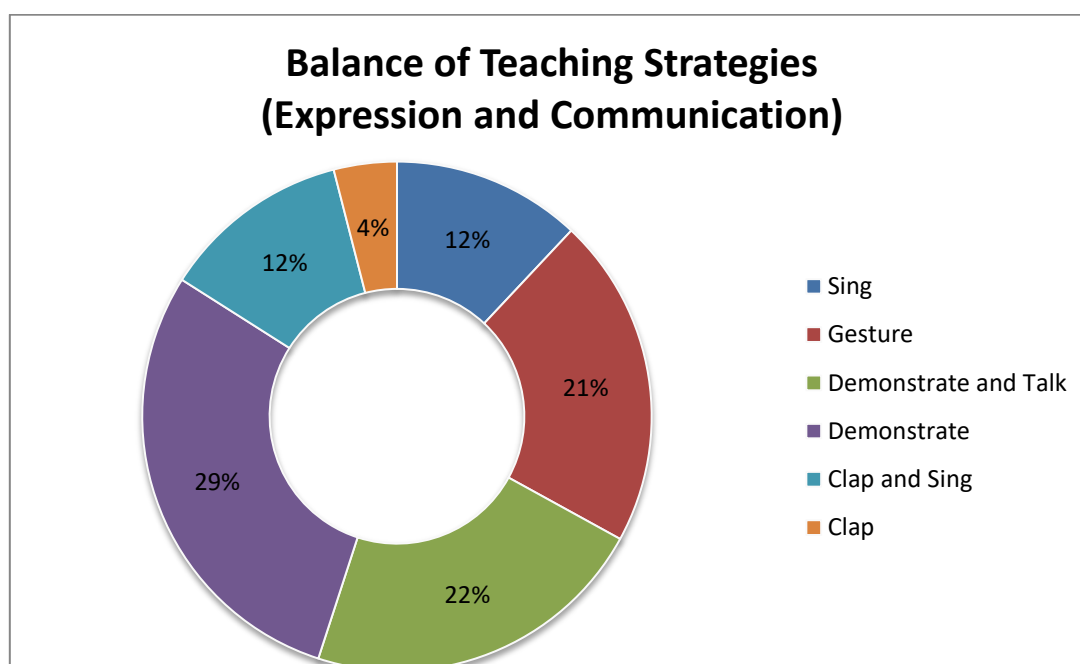
Ex 3.12 Comparison between teachers residing in Russia and in the West

In an overall comparison, the average of ‘demonstrate and talk’ per each Russian emigrant teacher was 14 times. This is twice as much as Russian teachers (only 6 times per Russian teacher). It is possible to explain the low rate of Russian teachers through analysis and evaluation from their lesson observations. They tend to use one strategy at a time rather than mixing one with another – either demonstrate or sing, and not ‘demonstrate and sing’. It still allows them to achieve the same purpose and result. Russian emigrant teachers tend to communicate through two different levels: on the macro-level, they provide an overall impression of the area concerned through demonstration; on the micro-level, they draw their student’s attention to details with ‘sing or explain’ – singing or explaining only where the issue was raised. Russian teachers, however, are often direct and systematic in their purpose. For instance,

rhythmic and tempo issues are likely to be solved only with clapping, while Russian emigrant teachers will likely be mixing demonstration with clapping together.

Gestures (G)

Russian teachers' communication methods are not limited to verbalisation and demonstration; body gestures also play an important role in communicating their expression to the students. The 'Gestures' category includes any conducting gestures by the teacher, or any other body movement related to the compositions. Under the expression and communication section, gesture is the third highest recorded category, after 'Demonstrate' and 'Demonstrate and Talk'.



Ex 3.13 Overall balance of different teaching strategies used during lessons

The figure is relatively high compared to other strategies: for example, 'Sing' is 12%, 12% again for 'Clap and Sing' and only 4% for 'Clap'. This represents a significant message in using gesture to teach. 22% of the gesture category has included conducting or any artistic gesture as well as other body movements, which translates

into more than 80 times during lesson observations. As mentioned above, this ‘gestures’ category can be divided into three main segments: conducting gestures, artistic gestures and body movement.

Artistic Gestures (46%)	Conducting Gestures (34%)	Body Movements Gestures (17%)
Gestures related to expressive or artistic aspects	Gestures related to tempo conducting	Gestures related to non-musical movements

Ex 3.14 Breakdown of ‘Gestures’ into Artistic, Conducting and Body Movement

Whilst over a third of Russian teachers’ gestures are for conducting purposes, it is clear that this segment has a direct influence on students’ tempo. Russian teachers often apply the conducting gestures when the student is not in time. There are some cases when Russian teachers use a mixture of teaching strategies. For instance, two Russian emigrant teachers – Alexeev and Berman – have frequently combined conducting with singing: conducting the tempo while singing the melody line. In other cases, however, some Russian teachers conduct while the student is focused on playing; thus, the purpose of conducting is somewhat diminished. Conducting, a non-verbal communication; is to be seen and not to be heard. The student who is focused on the piano cannot visualise the conducting gesture at the same time; and as a consequence, the conducting gestures does not actually make an impact on the student. We need to understand, therefore, whether conducting only helps the teacher to establish a stable tempo for themselves, or can it still assist the student despite the student not looking at the conducting movements?

Teachers’ conducting gestures will undoubtedly provide tempo stability for the student, but on the basis that the student is aware of the gesture. It is likely that teachers think the student is playing the tempo according to their conducting gestures,

but in reality teachers are often only conducting by themselves. Thus, their conducting gestures are in fact, not communicating or teaching in any way, but rather they are only superfluous movements.

The ‘Artistic Gestures’ segment is the highest of the three (46%), and it tends to be a conventional strategy among Russian teachers. This segment involves a variety of musical devices and each movement is related to only one specific purpose.

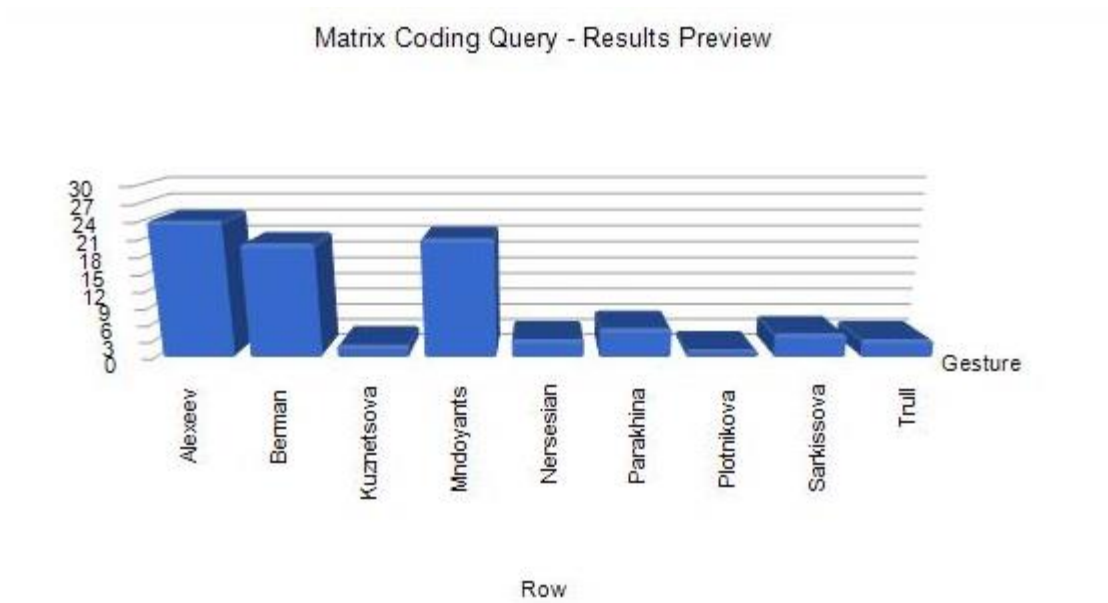
Purposes of Movement	Gestures
Create a longer phrase	Drawing a big curve from left to right
Crescendo	One hand going upwards direction
Diminuendo	One hand going downwards direction
Legato	Drawing a big line from inwards to outwards
Staccato	Short and quick upwards movements using the wrist
Create a violin pizzicato sound	Pizzicato gestures
Sense of direction	Lean forward (in motion) towards the student; then biggest gesture at the climax point
Sound imitation (Orchestral Instruments)	Playing gestures of those orchestral instruments

Ex 3.15 ‘Artistic Gestures’ – number of purposes and gestures

The table above shows the nature and purpose of movement used within the ‘Artistic Gestures’ segment. While each movement is used separately in most cases, some Russian teachers have occasionally combined singing and gestures for phrasing and direction issues, as well as sound imitation. It is understandable that sound imitation would require a degree of verbal imitation, but it is not clear why the other two purposes require the combination of singing and gesture. If other purposes can be achieved by gestures alone, it is reasonable to assume that gestures are not as powerful and effective when dealing with phrasing and direction issues. Singing,

therefore, is a vital tool assisting in providing an audio learning experience for the student. It is useful to bear in mind that singing gives an audio image of the phrase, and gestures provide a visual image of the line.

The last segment in the ‘Gestures’ strategy is body-movement gestures. While the other two segments involve music conducting, this segment includes gestures that do not necessary relate to music. However, this segment in the category has influenced the behaviour of the students, therefore it is important to deconstruct the messages in some of these gestures from the Russian teachers. In the case of Kuznetsova, she drew a number of circles in the air with her right hand without any verbal communication; as a consequence, the student sped up the tempo in her playing. In this respect, Kuznetsova’s ‘circle’ movement indicates a degree of *accelerando* to her students.

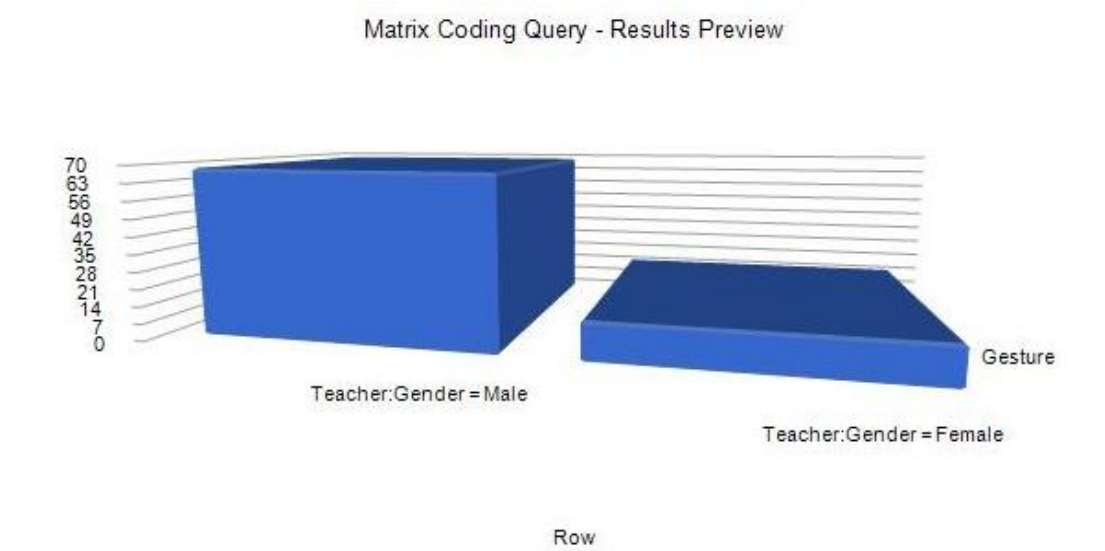


Ex 3.16 Gestures – Results for number of time it occurs amongst Russian teachers

Most of Mndoyants’s gestures – the second most frequent Russian teacher in the chart above – fall in this ‘body movement gestures’ segment most of the time. He has a high record of using body movement to communicate his musical thoughts to his

student. For instance, in order for the student to capture the musical image, he demonstrated different types of dances. This provided a dancing image visually and at the same time, programmed the idea of dance into the student's imagination. Similarly, the highest scoring Russian teacher in this respect – Alexeev – employed body movement (again drawing circles) to indicate some of his creative ideas: wave and wind. Although verbal explanation was involved in Alexeev's case, the body movements (drawing circles) are identical between Kuznetsova and Alexeev; however they have a different meaning. To Kuznetsova's student it represents a tempo indication; while the same movement represents a creative idea to Alexeev's student.

Although Russian emigrant teachers have a higher record of gesture usage (64%) comparing with Russian teachers (36%), it is somewhat surprising that most gestures occurred during lessons from a male teacher.



Ex 3.17 Gestures – Result comparison between Genders

The chart above highlights that this teaching strategy is much preferred by one gender. Whilst eight in ten (82%) gestures came from a male Russian teacher, only two (18%)

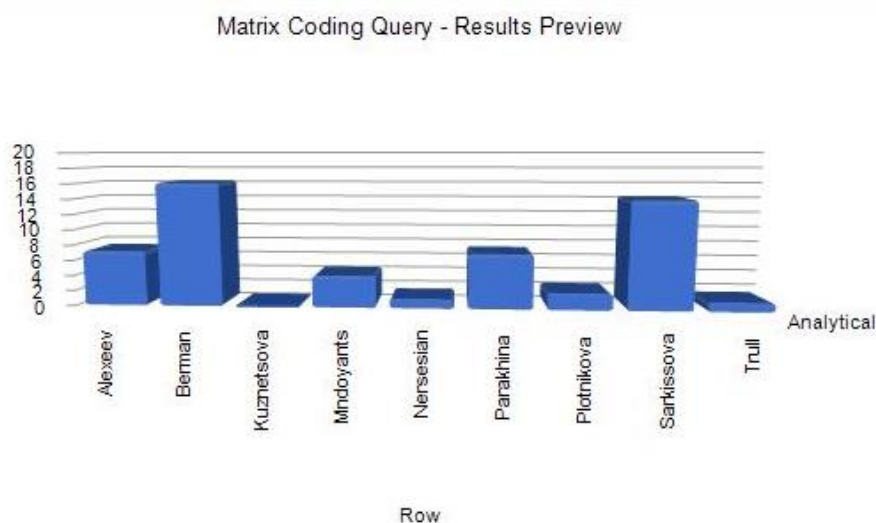
were from a female. On a micro-level, this shows a strong implication as to how gesture is used by male teachers alongside verbal communication; this should be seen as one of their essential expressions in instrumental teaching. It should be remembered, as indicated in Ex 3.9, ‘Gesture’ is the third highest category in Russian teaching methodologies, after ‘Demonstrate’ (29%) and slightly below ‘Demonstrate and Talk’ (22%). This does not imply, however, that all gestures were effective; and some gestures may not even make any impact on their students. For Russian teachers, gestures seem to be an emotional transformation. Indeed, as we understood from the role of a conductor, emotion and communication can be transferred through movements. Thus, it is fair to assume that Russian teachers considered the role as a teacher is similar that of a conductor.

3.2.2 The Intellectual Process

Analytical

An analytical approach is often used to deconstruct a musical composition, both from a performer’s viewpoint and a teacher’s perspective. In addition, as discussed in the previous section, teachers also have to consider the different ways of communicating their musical ideas. For teachers it is essential to understand not only how the composition should be played, but also why it should be played in a certain way – both are considered before even communicating to the student. After a series of analytical processes, teachers are likely to propose a number of reasons and evidence to support their choice of interpretation. Thus, this analytical category includes the number of times that Russian teachers attempt to analyse the harmony, structure, and texture of the composition; or any other musical analysis involved during the observations. By deconstructing their analytical process, we will understand the way

in which Russian teachers analyse the score, and their intentions for such interpretative decisions.



Ex 3.18 Analytical – Results for number of time it occurs amongst Russian teachers

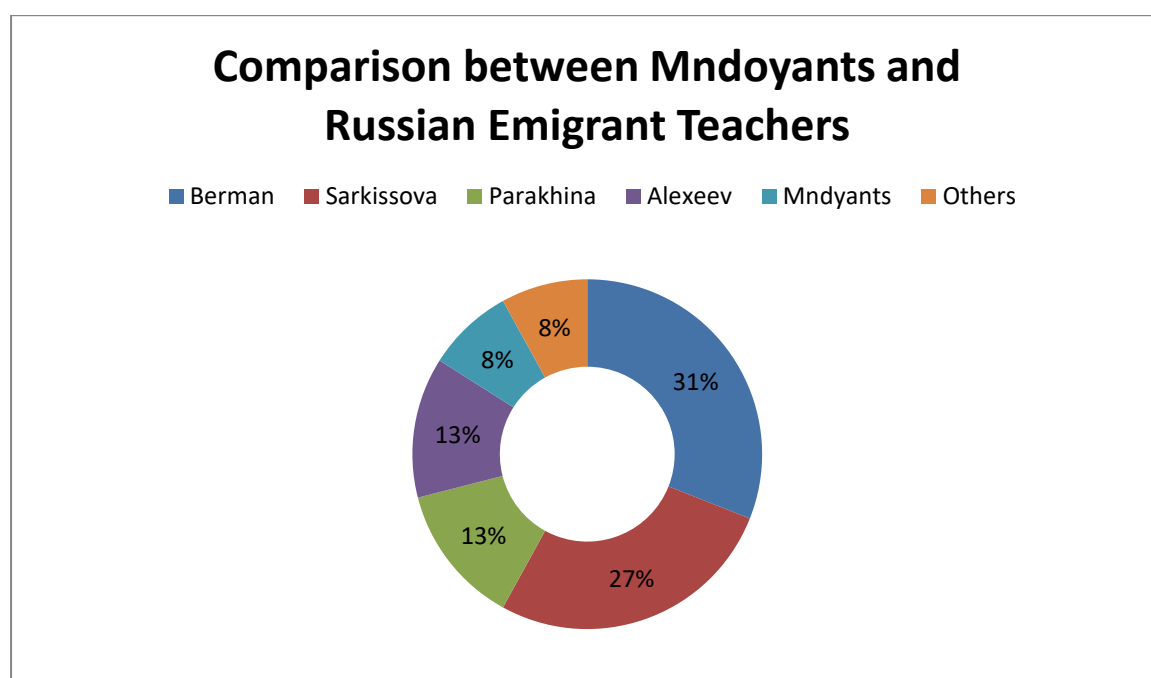
Russian teachers greatly vary in using the analytical approach. Ex 3.18 shows that Berman is by far the most analytical teacher, making up 31% of the overall teachers' result. The areas Berman focuses on are wide-ranging; besides the expected areas listed specifically in the coding (harmony, structure and texture), he frequently analyses the composition through orchestral instrumentation.²⁹³ As such, instrumentation has a direct implication on sound production. Berman also analyses the relationship between different motifs, for instance, where did the same motif appear in the first place? How do different motifs echo each other? In addition, he looks closely at voice leading which has an association with shaping the melodic line. From a more pianistic viewpoint, Berman takes the initiative to analyse students' hand positions on the keyboard and compare to Berman's preference. He then tests

²⁹³ Lesson Observation from Boris Berman (1BB0.2).

out various positions with the student before arriving to the final choice – a hand position which he claims to be the most convenient one.

In reviewing the chart from Ex 3.18, the most striking result is that all analytical discussion came from Russian emigrant teachers except Mndoyants, who made some analytical comments but resides in Russia. However, initial findings indicate only that Mndoyants and all Russian emigrant teachers use one level of analytical comment in lessons – the surface level. It is vital at this point to discuss deeper levels and decode some of their analytical methodology in depth.

When we look specifically at Mndoyants’s lessons for ‘analytical’ strategy, the result is very low, with only 8% of his lessons included analyse activities. This figure is high compared to other Russian colleagues, but relatively low compared to other Russian emigrant colleagues; for example, Berman is 31%, Sarkissova is 27% and 13% for Parakhina and Alexeev respectively.



Ex 3.19 Comparison between Mndoyants and Russian Emigrant Teachers

There are common features among Mndoyants and Russian emigrant teachers. For instance, they consistently analyse the melodic line and highlight the hidden melody. As previously mentioned, it has a direct implication in melodic projection and balance of sound. However, one feature that differentiates Mndoyants and other Russian emigrant colleagues is that he analyses and discusses the length of students' fingers with the student before making a decision in piano fingering.²⁹⁴ Although this type of analysis for fingering purposes seldom happened in Mndoyants's lessons, Mndoyants's approach contrasts with Russian emigrant teachers where the latter consider that piano fingering should be 'given' to the student to follow rather than to analyse and discuss.

Based on the data in Ex 3.18, it is interesting to point out that Mndoyants's analytical result is equal to four other Russian teachers added together. Although this data is only a fraction of the samples, this suggests that his pedagogical methodology is drastically different from that of his colleagues in Russia, and that a certain level of Western influence has started to take shape in his teaching activities already. Rustem Hayroudinoff observed the analytical approach in the West and pointed out Western musicians 'seem to be much more concerned with the logistics of the composition – carrying analyses.' In comparing the Western and Russian approaches, he summarised that 'Russian musicians ask why (why did he compose this?); and Western musicians ask how (how did he compose it?).'²⁹⁵ Although analysis is part of the music education curriculum in Russia, it is fair to assume that it is not part of the instrumental teaching, at least not to the extent that it is in the West. Before the rise of analysis, during the twentieth century, it would also seem likely to find the 'why' element (why did the composer write the composition?) in both Russia and in the

²⁹⁴ Lesson Observation from Alexander Mndoyants (2AM2.3)

²⁹⁵ Interview with Rustem Hayroudinoff.

West. Russia, however, had it preserved intact in the absence of a pedagogical tradition of Western analysis.²⁹⁶

In addition to Berman, Sarkissova shows a high level of analytical activity in her lesson. Although the objects analysed by Berman and Sarkissova were not identical, analysing students' hand position constantly occurs in Sarkissova's lesson.²⁹⁷ Apart from analysing the hand position, all Sarkissova's analytical activities were focused on musical compositions rather than pianistic issues. These composition analyses included comments on text and character, composition structure, style, rhythm, and thematic working. Whilst Parakhina and Alexeev both have the same level of analytical activities statistically, the areas on which they focused were similar. Unlike Sarkissova, Parakhina and Alexeev focus equally analysis on composition and pianistic issues. For example, in trying to understand an unexpected change of harmony, Parakhina would analyse is the chord vertically and horizontally: vertically to examine the chord, but also horizontally to analyse the preceding and subsequent chords.

Despite all the differences, if we were to summarise the approaches of Berman, Sarkissova, Parakhina and Alexeev we would see that there is a common feature among these Russian emigrant teachers – melodic analysis. These Russian emigrant teachers seem to place their focus on analysing the composition's texture, seeking to identify and project the melodic elements. Indeed, there might be textures where the melodic line cannot be easily analysed and identified. In those cases, Russian emigrant teachers incline to reverse the procedure; instead of identifying the 'most

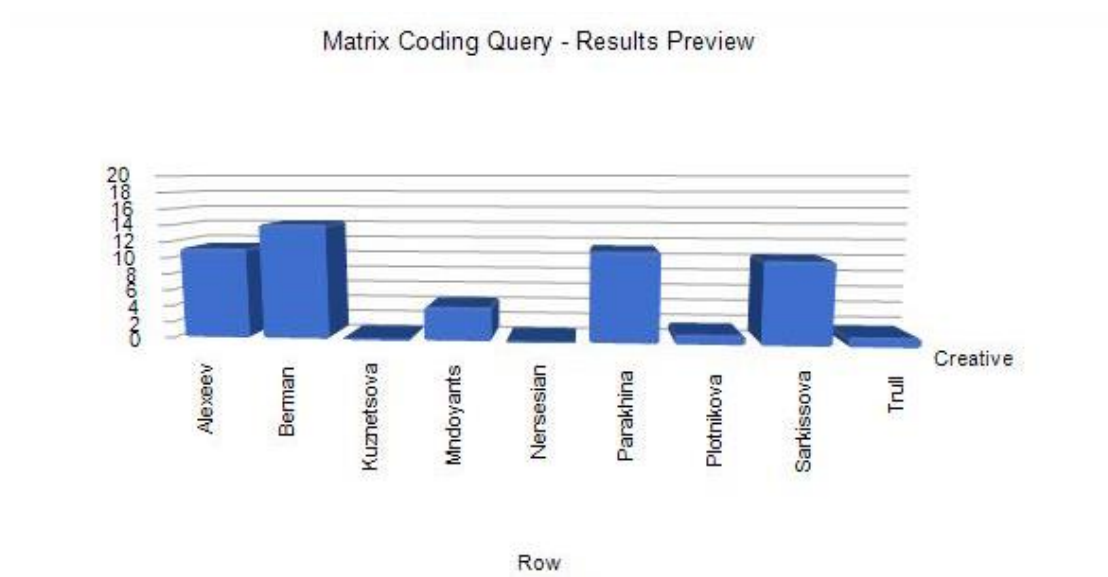
²⁹⁶ See Karen Taylor (1988-05) *Alfred Cortot: His Interpretive Art and Teachings*, where she pointed out that Alfred Cortot in his syllabus for his Ecole Normale, insisted on the importance of students knowing about why a composer wrote a piece of music – a norm in the early 20th century.

²⁹⁷ Lesson Observation from Tatiana Sarkissova (2TS2.3).

important' part (melodic line) they would identify the 'less important' first (non-melodic elements). These 'less important' parts will then become elements that should be under-projected, while the rest would become 'most important' part – the melodic line.

Creativeness (Cr)

When students are unable to capture a musical idea in the composition, teachers often use creative examples to illustrate it. Through a series of metaphors, students have a clearer and closer connection with the musical idea. Although these musical ideas are only ideas from the teachers, creating relevant examples undoubtedly provides creative guidance for the students who are not necessarily imaginative in performance. This category includes any creative examples and metaphor used during lesson observation.



Ex 3.20 Creative – Results for number of time it occurs amongst Russian teachers

Berman (27%) is the highest scored Russian teacher in the creative category; Alexeev and Parakhina are only slightly behind – an equal amount of 21% creativity, while

Sarkissova is almost equalled to Alexeev and Parakhina (19%). There are limited creative activities from Mndoyants (8%), and the creativity usage from Trull and Plotnikova are next to nothing (2%).

Despite the high level of creativity among Russian teachers, it is essential to decode this 'Creative' strategy and understand the way in which Russian teachers have used it in their lessons. All creative strategy employed during lesson observations was based around metaphors. These metaphors were used to address two simple areas: pianistic and musical. The first area – pianistic – includes metaphors that made a direct impact on pianistic performance. For instance, in one of Sarkissova's lessons, in explaining the use of body weight for better tone projection, Sarkissova illustrated an artistic image with a tiger in motion. As a predator, a tiger would hunt for its prey by using all of its muscle and strength. When the tiger is in motion, the muscles of its back are similar to the back of a pianist. This muscular movement shares the same principle with piano playing when a big sound is required.²⁹⁸ Another example can be seen in Alexeev's lesson, where he used different sizes of hammers to describe the level of sound required in the left hand – the bigger the sound the bigger hammer the student would need.²⁹⁹

The second area – musical, includes metaphors that shape the student's interpretation directly with examples. For instance, Mndoyants used a tram as an example to illustrate his point that tempo should be stable.³⁰⁰ While Parakhina used an 'innocent child singing' to describe the opening of the second movement of a piano sonata by

²⁹⁸ Lesson Observation from Tatiana Sarkissova (1TS1.3).

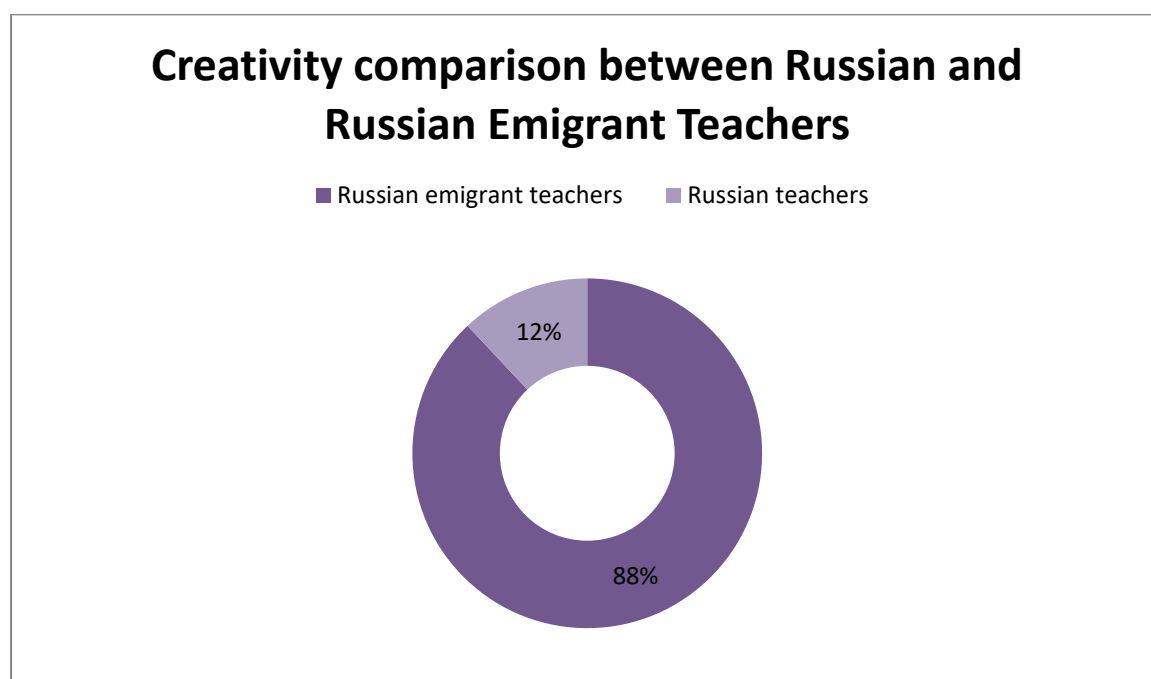
²⁹⁹ Lesson Observation from Dimitri Alexeev (2DA2.4).

³⁰⁰ Lesson Observation from Alexander Mndoyants (2AM2.4).

Haydn,³⁰¹ Berman, the highest recorded Russian teacher for creativeness, used ‘Alice in Wonderland’ to depict the atmosphere of a composition.³⁰²

As observed and analysed from the chart above (Ex 3.20), the creativity strategy is largely dominated by Russian emigrant teachers. Despite some variation in the figures, the results for creative and analytical strategies are almost identical.

It is fair to assume that there are some internal analyses in the mind of Russian teachers, before they make any metaphorical suggestions. However, creativity did not seem to occur in all Russian teachers. The comparison below shows a clear disproportionate balance between the two groups of teachers – Russian and Russian emigrant teachers.



Ex 3.21 Creative – Comparison between Russian and Russian Emigrant Teachers

³⁰¹ Lesson Observation from Dina Parakhina (1DP3.1).

³⁰² Lesson Observation from Boris Berman (3BB1.4).

In this sense it is possible to conclude that a ‘Creative’ strategy may have been a methodology recently introduced in the teaching process. Russian teachers have not shown a great level of ‘Creative’ usage, but on the contrary, Russian emigrant teachers who have resided in the West for over twenty years have demonstrated a significant habit in using this approach, and it is likely that their teaching process has been ‘Westernised’. To assume that their teaching has been ‘Westernised’ helps to explain why ‘creative’ and ‘analytical’ strategies can only be found in Russian emigrant teachers, not in their colleagues in Russia.

Conclusions

From the preceding examination of the Russian music education system, along with a detailed investigation of systematic observation in the teaching room, one can tentatively formulate some common pedagogical strategies in Russia. Demonstration is certainly one of the key aspects in Russian pedagogy. In revealing what role the ‘demonstration’ strategy plays in Russian pedagogy, Natalia Trull stressed its importance:

‘I cannot imagine in the past time, any [Russian] teachers who didn’t demonstrate themselves. Most of the teachers were great pianists, some of them didn’t perform a lot but it doesn’t matter. They knew by their hands how the music goes, not only theoretically.’³⁰³

As Trull remarked, demonstration seems to be a way of understanding the music. In fact, Trull’s concept of a Russian teacher teaching a piece is not only limited to the theoretical aspect, but practical demonstration seems far more important. This pedagogical approach can be found among many Russian teachers today, and is completely antithetical to that of the founder of the Russian Piano School, Anton

³⁰³ Interview with Natalia Trull.

Rubinstein, who was reluctant to demonstrate to his students. Notwithstanding that some Russian teachers are unable to demonstrate, ‘Clap and Sing’ strategy is considered the second option to achieve the same purpose. This is not merely because ‘Clap and Sing’ can provide a rhythmic and pitch demonstration simultaneously, but Russian teachers can focus on the students’ playing while providing an effective demonstration.³⁰⁴ In addition to demonstrations, Russian teachers incorporate a wide range of gestures in their teaching activities; they believe gestures are means of communication, and this allows them to express musical emotions more easily. Russian teachers, whether it is Russian or Russian emigrant teachers, have very similar ways of delivering this non-verbal communication. All other teaching strategies are based on audio learning, and it is only through gestures that Russian teachers are able to direct and communicate from the visual perspective.

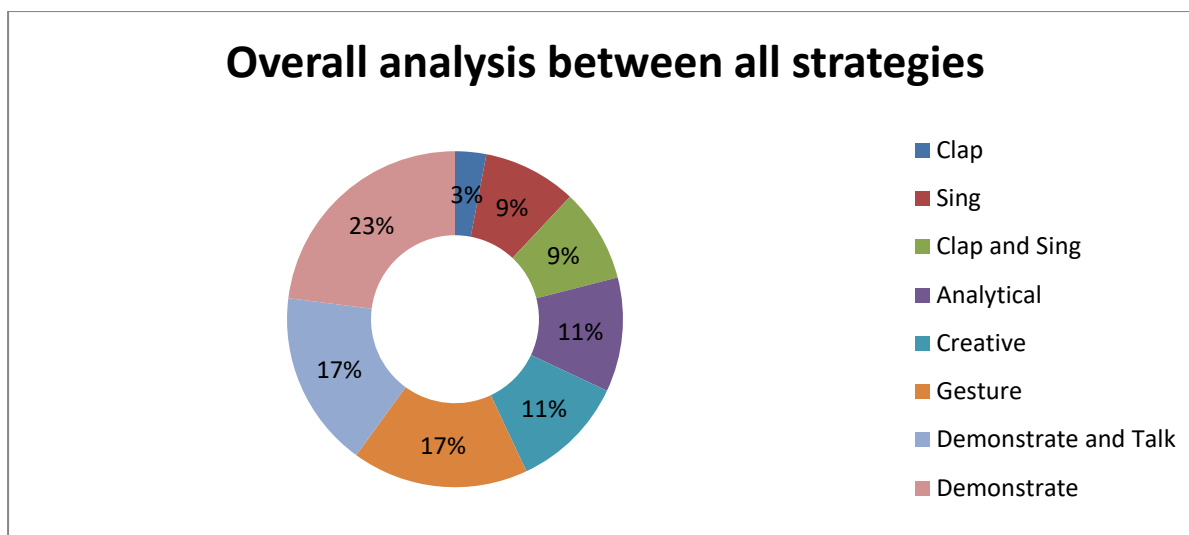
Although there was some room for discussion in areas such as interpretation and fingering, all lessons observed were instructional rather than in the format of collaboration or discussion. The balance of a lesson is largely dominated by the teacher and students were simply given a task to complete. This phenomenon occurred in all the teachers observed. Despite various influential teaching strategies adopted from the West, the format and structure of lessons still remains the same. Both groups’ understanding of ‘lessons’ remain similar to Anton Rubinstein’s, as the latter considered ‘lessons are not to be given but only to be directed.’³⁰⁵

³⁰⁴ This is particularly useful when the teacher is only familiar with the music theoretically. Instead of attempting to provide a satisfactory demonstration for the student, they can demonstrate through ‘clap and sing’ and place their attention in evaluating the student performance.

³⁰⁵ Rubinstein understood the lesson as a way of directing a student – merely following what the teacher says. Once the student is on the correct track, it is only then the student could start developing his/her independence. Anton Rubinstein. *Korob myslei* (St. Petersburg: Sovetskii Kompozitor, 1975), 39.

In analysing all strategies, it is clear that both ‘analytical’ and ‘creative’ categories are not favoured by Russian teachers. Perhaps there were more analytical and creative elements involved mentally in the teachers’ minds during observations than the figures show, but there was no evidence that the teacher attempted to transfer or deliver those self-analyses to the student. On the other hand, ‘analytical’ and ‘creative’ strategies can be found among Russian emigrant teachers. It is fair to conclude that these original teaching strategies from the West have already had a significant influence on the Russian teachers in the West.

In concluding the research questions proposed at the start of this section, one can assume the teaching methodologies in which Russian teachers transfer their existing knowledge still remain similar. Indeed, there are exceptional cases but these musicians share identifiable performing principles and teaching methodologies. However, as pointed out previously, the similarities between Russian teachers will diminish as the time goes on. With drastic difference in two of the investigated strategies (analytical and creative) as examples, one can predict that Russian teachers will soon follow the steps of their Russian colleagues in the West. It is worth mentioning though; these two particular strategies have not yet formed a huge part of the overall lessons, but as time goes on, it is likely that these strategies will increase their importance in the diagram.



Ex 3.22 Overall analysis between all strategies

‘Demonstrate’, ‘Demonstrate and Talk’ and ‘Gesture’ are still clearly dominating the teaching processes, making over a half of the diagram (57%). This translates as almost three hundred times where Russian teachers have employed these three strategies in fifty-five hours of observation.

Having understood how contemporary Russian teachers have transferred their musical knowledge to their students, we have yet to investigate how the principles of Russian Piano School – solid technical foundation, long lasting singing tone, and long melodic line; are addressed during lessons. Therefore, the subsequent three chapters will be focused on each of these principles individually, and will explore how Russian teachers at present have used their teaching methodologies in ‘making’ a Russian performance.

CHAPTER 4

TECHNIQUE AS AN ART

Expanding and developing from the previous two chapters, this chapter will embark on further investigation on one of the characteristics of the Russian school of piano playing – technique. Technical ability can be seen as the fundamental foundation of music making; whether it is balancing the sound within a chord, executing complicated passages (such as double thirds, sixths or octaves), or playing a musical excerpt with different tone colour – all of which require a certain kind of piano technique. Thus, it is not surprising that Russian pianists pay much of their attention to the subject in the first place. As pointed out in Chapter 2, Rachmaninov summarised his experience of technical training in Russia in an interview:

‘In the music schools of Russia great stress is laid upon technique... Technique is at first made a matter of paramount importance. All students must become technically proficient. None are excused.’³⁰⁶

His colleague, Josef Lhévinne also echoes Rachmaninov’s experience in stating that technique is the aspect that all Russian conservatoires first examine, and ‘if one fails to pass the technical examination, he is not even asked to perform his pieces.’ He further added, ‘lack of proficiency in technique is taken as an indication of lack of the right preparation and study, just as the lack of the ability to speak simple phrases correctly would be taken as a lack of preparation in the case of the actor.’³⁰⁷ Lhévinne did not simply end there; instead he made an important observation on why Russian pianists are famed for technique:

³⁰⁶ Cooke (1930). *op. cit.*, 50.

³⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 42.

‘The Russian pianist is always famed for his technical ability. Even the mediocre artists possess that. The great artists realise that the mechanical side of piano playing is the basis, but they would no sooner think of trying to do without that basis than they would of dispensing with the beautiful artistic temples which they build upon the substantial foundation which technique gives to them. The Russia pianists have earned fame for their technical grasp because they give adequate study to the matter. Everything is done in the most solid, substantial manner possible.’³⁰⁸

Thus, this may provide an impression that their technique is somewhat unique and different. Indeed, the mechanical side of Russian piano playing has often been labelled as ‘Russian technique’. Equally, cultural makeup will be reflected to a considerable degree in interpretation at the keyboard; and according to Schnabel (as we saw briefly above in p.9), a different type of technique is impossible:

‘I cannot accept that there is anything specifically Russian about playing with straight and flat fingers. I lived for thirty years in Germany and even so I would not be able to say what the “German technique” is. For in Germany all kinds of piano techniques were taught – flat or round fingers, stretched out or drawn in, elbows fixed or waving, glued to the hips or far out, like a washerwoman’s. Some put the tip of their nose on the keys, other looked at the ceiling. Which one was the “German technique”? ...There is only one good technique, whether you ride a bicycle or swim or whatever else you do, and that is to attain a maximum of achievement with a minimum of effort. That applies to all physical activity.’³⁰⁹

Despite there being lively debate on the subject in the literature and in interviews, Heinrich Neuhaus stressed an essential point:

‘Many who play the piano take the word “technique” to mean only velocity, evenness, bravura – sometimes meaning “flashing and bashing” – in another words, separate elements of technique and not technique as a whole, as it was

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁹ Schnabel (1988). *op. cit.*, 197-198.

understood by the Greeks...the word “technique” comes from the Greek word Τεχνη and that Τεχνη means art.’³¹⁰

Indeed, if technique should be treated as an art, it would be useful to investigate how Russian pianists strengthen this ‘art’ throughout their learning period. The progression in which Russian pianists develop their technical ability can be divided into three stages: firstly, as a beginner; secondly, as a student at specialist music schools; and finally, as a student at conservatoires. Although each stage uses different methods or approaches, this chapter will attempt to examine the teaching materials and syllabus at each, and analyse these documents from all perspectives, i.e. pace, use of scales, études, as well as technical exercises. Since this material is not well-known in the West, and since it explains much about the technical foundations of Russian pianism, it is important to devote this chapter to looking in detail at the practical syllabus used in Russia through the last century.

4.1 Beginner

The *Russian School of Piano Playing* (Школа фортепианной игры) was the method book officially recommended for use in Children’s Music Schools throughout the Soviet Union from the late 1970s. Pianists such as Dina Parakhina (1956-), Sofya Gulyak (1979-) and cellist Alexander Ivashkin (1948-2014) all pointed out that this method book is still widely use in Russia today.³¹¹ According to the *Russian School of Piano Playing*, the general educational principle is that ‘teachers must instil in the pupil a love of music as an art and the ability to portray its different feelings, moods and emotion experiences associated with everyday life.’³¹² Thus, this method is

³¹⁰ Neuhaus (1958). *op. cit.*, 2-3.

³¹¹ Interview with Sofya Gulyak. Personal conversation with Dina Parakhina and Alexander Ivashkin.

³¹² Alexander Nikolaev, *The Russian School of Piano Playing* (London: Boosey & Hawkes. 1978) 3. The edition used here was translated and published by the Boosey & Hawkes in 1978; this edition is almost identical to the Russian edition – with only a small number of modifications. These

written based on the educational principle specified by the government of the Soviet Union. With a unified educational purpose, this method book is divided into three separate volumes: book 1 part 1 (1A), book 1 part 2 (1B), and book 2. The following section will attempt to analyse these three volumes separately.

4.1.1 Book 1 – Part 1

The first part of this method book is devoted to the elementary stages of piano playing, namely the first year of piano studies. There are three noticeable purposes in this method book: 1) singing and learning melodies by ear, 2) understanding the keyboard, 3) reading the score. These three aims should be achieved before attempting to master fundamental aspects of piano playing. It is worth pointing out that all learning and teaching instructions are prescribed either in the editor foreword or as the ‘author’s note’. The sequence of the pieces was also carefully selected – not only according to the musical content and interpretative issues, but also the level of technical difficulty. These pieces were prepared so that ‘every aspect of technique that the beginner is likely to require in the first few years’ is covered. As observed in Chapter 3 above, the excessive domination by the government and the limitation of teacher or student creativity continues today. Thus, it may not be a surprise to understand why this method book also includes a system to introduce each finger at the beginning. This system instructed the teachers to introduce each finger one at a time, starting with the third finger, followed by second, fourth, and then finally thumb and fifth together. According to Parakhina, this finger system allows students to control their fingers one at a time, making it somewhat easier. The purpose of introducing the thumb and the

fifth fingers together is to avoid a technical difficulty in later years.³¹³ The example below is the first two exercises from Book 1. Beginners should apply the above fingering pattern into the exercises below. For instance, in the first place, students should only employ the third finger in these exercises.



Ex 4.1: Exercise 1, 2 and 3 from Book 1

It is not until exercise 24 that the method book introduces all five fingers in a single exercise.



Ex 4.2: Exercise 24 from Book 1 Part 1

It is apparent that these exercises do not provide any articulation indication, particularly at the early stages – from Exercises 1 to 33. However, *non-legato*

³¹³ In explaining this technical mishap, Parakhina pointed out that younger students have difficulty in playing two notes at once. This learning system greatly reduces the possibility of not ‘sounding together’. Personal conversation with Dina Parakhina.

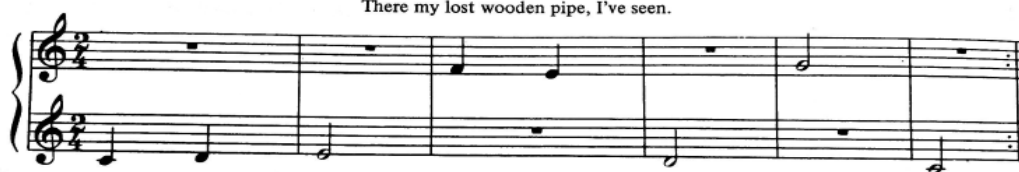
(*portamento*) playing should be applied to these exercises,³¹⁴ since it is an easier articulation for the beginners to command. While *legato* is introduced in Exercise 33, *staccato* only appears from Exercise 54 onwards. Parakhina pointed out that this careful planning helps to build a fundamental foundation in technique, and most importantly, ‘*staccato* playing creates tension in the forearm; young students and beginners struggle to release these tensions in almost all of the cases.’³¹⁵

Unlike the method books from the West, this Russian method book emphasis on student’s hand coordination in the early stages. The first hand coordination instruction appears in Exercise 13. In this exercise, for instance, notes are in stepwise motion and student could easily employ different fingering. However, a side note stated clearly below Exercise 14 that they should be played with only one finger. This undoubtedly allows the student to focus on one technical task at a time, and in this example – hand coordination.

Melodies written on two staves are played with two hands – those on the upper stave with the right hand, those on the lower stave with the left hand.

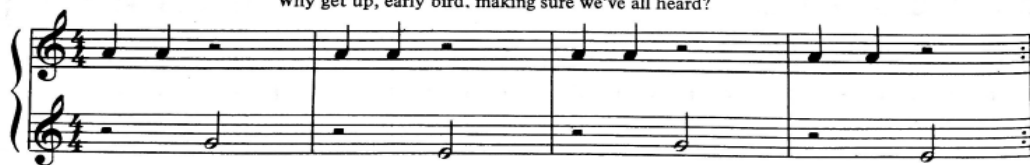
13. The Green Meadow

As I walked through the grass so green
There my lost wooden pipe, I’ve seen.



14. Cockerel

Cock’re!l bold, Cock’re!l bold, with your comb bright as gold,
Why get up, early bird, making sure we’ve all heard?



Examples 12, 13 and 14 are played with one finger of each hand (2nd, 3rd or 4th).

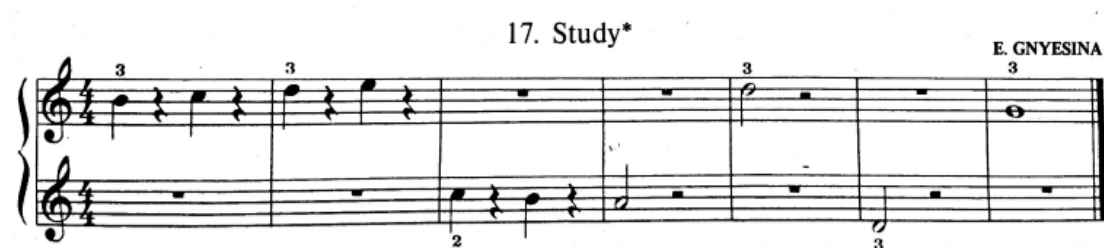
Ex 4.3 Exercise 13 and 14 from Book 1 Part 1

³¹⁴ Nikolaev (1978). *op. cit.*, 5.

³¹⁵ Personal conversation with Dina Parakhina.

Études

There are 89 musical compositions in Book 1, and over 20% (18 exercises and studies) of these compositions are for technical purposes – presented either as an exercises or études. No. 17 is the first piece in the book that is named ‘study’; but instead of strengthening students’ physical piano technique, the purpose of this exercise is to allow students to be familiar with different lengths of notes.



Ex 4.4 Exercise 17 from Book 1 Part 1

The expectation in Book 1 is rather high. As mentioned earlier, there are 18 studies in total; if we were to compare the first and the last studies this argument is more apparent.

With movement 88. Study N. LYUBARSKY

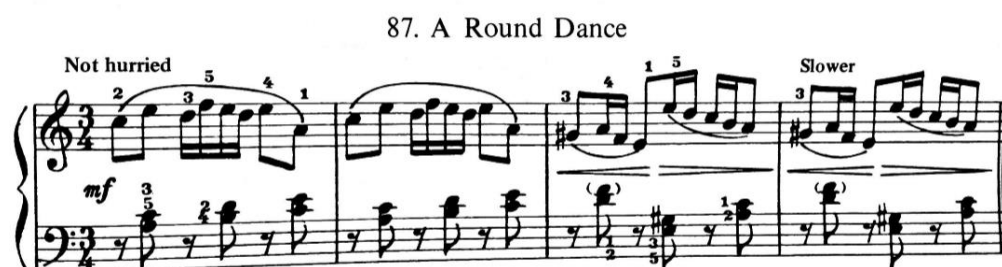
Ex 4.5 Exercise 88 from Book 1 Part 1

This study has eight bars and can be summarised and analysed in the following ways:

Area	Summary & Analysis
Rhythm	Semi-quavers; quavers; crotchets; minims
Phrase	4 x 2 bar phrases
Hand Position	major sixth stretch in the right hand
Coordination	Similar motion
Fingering	‘slicing’ technique in bar 6
Tempo	Quick and lively tempo i.e. semi-quaver movement in 2/4

Ex 4.6 Summary and Analysis of Exercise 88

In addition, it is noticeable that this method book has a rather quick pace. Exercise 87 is the last solo composition. Although it is only a four bar exercise, the finger technique in the right hand and syncopated rhythm in the left hand are the main purposes of this exercise. It is worth remembering that this is designed for students who have been learning the piano for less than a year.



Ex 4.7 Exercise 87 in Book 1 Part 1

Scales

Scales are seen as a fundamental exercise for piano technique, and Russian pianists treat them so. Rachmaninov stated that not only scale (in any given key) is tested, but also students were expected to play at certain rates of speed, i.e. an E-flat major scale with the metronome at 120 (4 notes to a beat).³¹⁶ Josef Hofmann also pointed out, ‘I can only say that the study of scales is more than necessary – it is indispensable. The pedagogical experts of the world are practically unanimous upon this subject...too often [scales] are “practised” without being studied.’³¹⁷ Indeed, at the end of Book 1, there are detailed instructions as to how scales should be studied:

‘During the first stage of learning scale (approximately from the second half of the first year of study), the pupil can learn several major scales in two octaves direct and contrary motion and one or two minor scales (melodic and harmonic) in keys he knows from pieces. Scales should be studied in an order of ascending fifths, starting with C. All scales should be played initially hands separately, first one octave, then two. When starting to play scales hands together, the first scales are best played in contrary motion (starting from the same note) as the fingers are then symmetrically disposed on the keyboard, and only later in parallel motion.’³¹⁸

Unlike the scale learning approach in the UK,³¹⁹ this Russian method book emphasises that scales should be learnt with contrary motion first, before studying in parallel movement. There are seven scales introduced in Book 1: C major, A minor (melodic and harmonic), G major, D major, A major, F major, and D minor (melodic and harmonic). These are all the keys that have been introduced earlier in the method book. Thus, it is not surprising to expect the students to work on these scale exercises

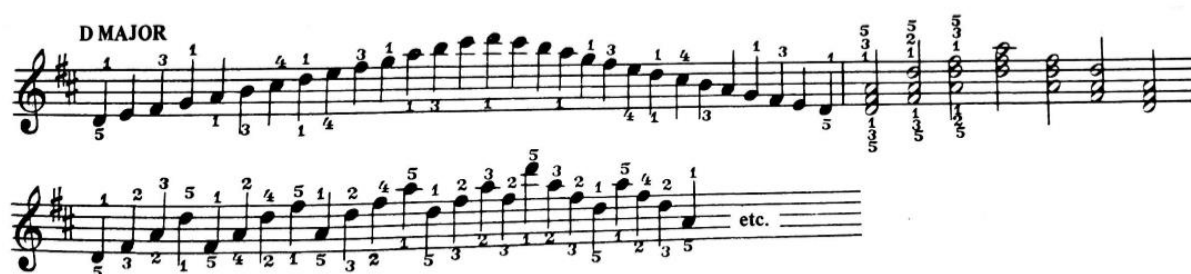
³¹⁶ Cooke (1923). *op. cit.*, 51.

³¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 39.

³¹⁸ Nikolaev (1978). *op. cit.*, 40.

³¹⁹ Scale learning approach in the UK here means the ABRSM grading system.

throughout the course of the year. Not only do the explanatory notes include ways of executing these scales, but also the desired outcome of scale studies. For instance, the sound-quality – dynamic and rhythmic evenness in tone.³²⁰ Further, scales should be played ‘with calm and supple movements of the arms and fingers. Special attention should be paid to the passage of the thumb, which should be executed in good time and with a supple movement, and to the smooth transfer of the hand from one position to another.’³²¹



Ex 4.8 D major example from Book 1 Part 1

It is unusual to include three-note chords (triads) at the end of scales. Ex 4.8 is one of the examples taken from the scale exercise. It is clear that, in the view of Russian musicians, students should be taught how triads should be played – as part of technical training exercise at an elementary level. ‘It is very important that the pupil when playing chords does not throw his hand, but lowers it softly and freely, as if immersing the fingers in the keyboard right to the bottom of the key.’³²²

³²⁰ Here dynamic evenness means sound should be produced with the same dynamic level (or with same amount of weight); whilst rhythmic evenness means sound should be sustained i.e. the duration of sound should be identical rather than one note decay more quickly than the other.

³²¹ Nikolaev (1978). *op. cit.*, 40.

³²² *Ibid.*

4.1.2 Book 1 – Part 2

Book 1 Part 2 presents issues that are more complex in both technical and musical aspects. It attempts to consolidate and further develop the skill already acquired from the first year of study. Besides building on those fundamental areas, Book 1 Part 2 starts to include more Italian musical terms from the beginning.

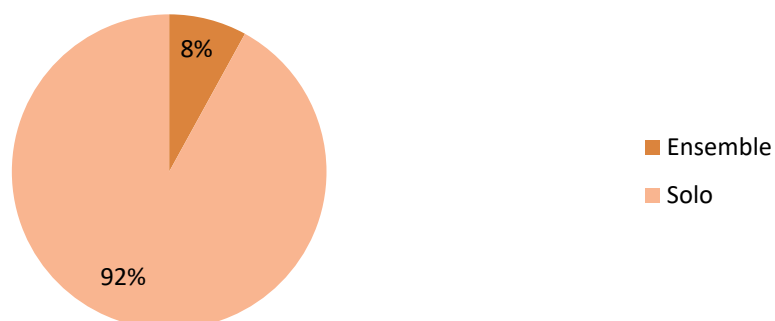
The image shows a musical score for Exercise 90, titled '90. The Shepherd Plays' by T. Salyutrinskaya. The score is written for piano and includes the following details:

- Tempo/Character:** 'Calm, singing' at the top left.
- Time Signature:** 2/4.
- Dynamic Range:** The piece starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic in bar 1, moves to a forte (*f*) dynamic in bar 3, and ends with a pianissimo (*ppp*) dynamic in bar 12.
- Italian Musical Terms:** 'cresc.' (crescendo) is used in bar 5, and 'slowing down' is written above the staff in bar 10.
- Structure:** The exercise consists of 12 bars. Bars 1-4 are in the right hand, and bars 5-12 are in the left hand.
- Technical Markings:** Fingerings (1-5) and articulation marks (accents, slurs) are present throughout the score.

Ex 4.9 Exercise 90 from Book 1 Part 2

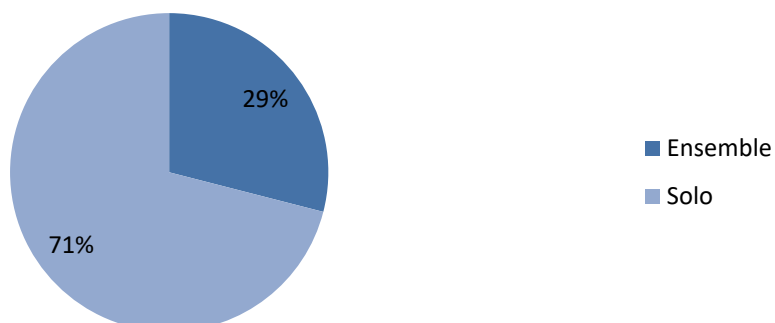
The above example is the first exercise from Book 1 Part 2, and is the first exercise that includes simple Italian musical terms. It should be noted that those Italian terms are only selective – *crescendo* is used in bar 5, but 'slowing down' is used instead of *rallentando* or *ritardando*. Further, it is interesting to notice the huge range of dynamic level indicated in this 12-bar exercise – from *ppp* to *f*. Thus, it is reasonable to assume that sound quality is the primary aim of this exercise. Whilst Part 2 is slightly more challenging than Part 1, this method book has smoothed the increase in difficulty by inserting more ensemble pieces. These ensemble pieces require the student to play along with the teacher, allowing the student to be familiar with the new technical area, whilst strengthening their listening skill. Below are the breakdowns of the ensemble and solo pieces in Part 1 and Part 2:

Breakdown between solo and ensemble pieces in Book 1 Part 1



Ex 4.10 Breakdown between solo and ensemble pieces in Book 1 Part 1

Breakdown between solo and ensemble pieces in Book 1 Part 2



Ex 4.11 Breakdown between solo and ensemble pieces in Book 1 Part 2

Based on the analysis above, it is apparent that the proportion in ensemble composition has increased dramatically in the second year of studies (Book 1 Part 2). The majority of these ensemble pieces are slightly easier than the solo ones, and both hands are generally in unison, an octave apart, i.e. Exercise 118, 126, 156. In other

cases, these ensemble pieces contain only simple melodies with accompaniment, and the music is often repeated, i.e. Exercise 102, 152, 160.

Études

The studies and exercises in Book 1 Part 2 attempt to strengthen more advanced technical areas. To a second-year student, accomplishing these studies may seem rather complex. But in fact, these studies often included an additional step, ensuring that the student is able to achieve the technical task. The exercise below serves as a fine example:



Ex 4.12 Exercise 131 from Book 1 Part 2

The study above focuses on the finger technique in the right hand, and develops smoother playing; in particular, it concentrates on the smooth passage of the thumb under the hand in scalar passages. In order to overcome this technical aspect, an exercise is designed for the student to practise and to ensure that this can be achieved in a quicker tempo.

132. Exercise

152. Exercise

Play with the right hand.

Play with the left hand.

Play with the left hand.

Ex 4.13 Exercise 132 from Book 1 Part 2

Another advanced piano technique can be found in a further example in the book:

142. Study

Not fast

E. GNYESINA

 $m f$

P

10

1

-f

slower

my

Ex 4.14 Exercise 142 from Book 1 Part 2

This piano technique occurs in bar 3 of this study: the silent substitution of fingers on the keyboard. It is a technique that often occurs in polyphonic music. This study also states its aim: ‘in order to develop this aspect of the pupil’s technique, he should at this stage be given the following exercise, which should be played with fingerings: (2 – 1, 4 – 3, 5 – 4).’³²³



Ex 4.15 ‘silent substitution’ exercise from Book 1 Part 2

This exercise renders finger movement that is more flexible, supple, and allows the student to produce a smoother *legato* technique.

Scales

Among those scales from the previous book, Part 2 has included five additional scales: B-flat major, E minor, G minor, B minor, F-sharp minor. Below is a summary of all the scales learnt at this point of study:

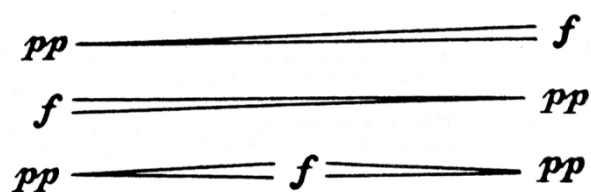
Major Scale	Minor Scale
C major	D minor
D major	E minor
F major	G minor
G major	A minor

³²³ *Ibid.* Book 1 Part 2, 35.

A major	B minor
B-flat major	F-sharp minor

Ex 4.16 Table of Summary (Scale studied from Book 1 Part 1 & 2)

All minor scales indicated are learnt in both melodic and harmonic patterns. Indeed, in the second year of study, the requirement and expectation in scales are higher. Thus, it is not surprising to add various supplements in scale studies. For instance, students are asked to play scales with varied dynamics and different articulations.



Ex 4.17 dynamic suggestion in scales from Book 1 Part 2

These suggestions are undoubtedly a difficult task, particularly for a second year student; but it is certain that it can further develop student's technical foundation. In addition to scales, broken chords have also increased its difficulty by placing an accent at various places.



Ex 4.18 Added accents in broken chords from Book 1 Part 2

This is particularly difficult for a young student, since the accented note occurs in every finger, requiring additional weight from the finger only. Taking the ascending

motion as an example: in the first set, first and fifth fingers are accented; in the second set, the fourth finger is accented; in the third set, the second finger is accented; and in the last set, the first and fifth fingers again.

4.1.3 Book 2

Book 2 is designed for the third year of studies and is presented with more complicated tasks. Firstly, Book 2 contains different genres, and styles, as well as characters. The compositions can be grouped under four different categories: pieces, sonatinas & variations, studies, and ensembles.³²⁴ It will be appropriate to discuss these categories separately and examine how each of these can refine students' technical ability.

Pieces

Most of the compositions in this category are devoted to two-voice exercises, i.e. they are polyphonic in nature. These polyphonic compositions challenge different technical aspects, one of which is sustaining voices; and in particular, this will improve students' finger independence. The right hand in the exercises below serves as a fine example:



Ex 4.19 two-voice example from Book 2

³²⁴ 'Pieces' is a category title provided by the method book.

One should not forget the ‘silent substitution’ (see Ex 4.15) training in the previous book. It is reasonable to assume Ex 4.15 indicated above is a preparation step for these two-voice polyphonic compositions. There are also pieces that require a more cantabile sound, where the melodies are distinguished by greater rhythmic complication and flexibility of line, and at the same time the accompaniment (two-voiced or chordal) needs a certain technical maturity. For instance, it could be that a certain melodic voice needs to be brought out in two-part writing or emphasised within a chordal progression. These compositions, therefore, require a corresponding delicacy of nuance and control of tone-colour.³²⁵

In addition to polyphonic works, pieces with dance-like character are largely presented including folk-dances, polkas, and minuets. These forms of dance require strict rhythm. Further, since these compositions are with dance nature, it requires students to play with light and graceful touch; in other words, another form of technique – delicate playing.



Ex 4.20 Opening bars of Haydn’s Minuet from Book 2

³²⁵ *Ibid.* Book 2, 6.

The above example is taken from the last composition in the ‘Pieces’ category. Beside a strict rhythm, it requires a rather even touch with the semiquavers motif –  Further, the left hand in bars 4-5 also presents another technical difficulty – finger independence with double thirds. Not to mention that the fifth finger is sustained, the 1-3 to 2-4 fingering is difficult enough in a moderate tempo for a third-year student.

Sonatinas & Variations

The second category, Sonatinas & Variations, included more advanced compositions; even the easiest ones in the category can only be given to pupils who have already mastered fluent finger movement in brisk tempo. However, it should be noted that the challenge does not only lie in the technical aspect, but also in how the pupil would understand the form of a composition. These compositions, particularly Sonatinas, are on a much larger scale than all previous material studied, although a Sonatina is technically more elementary than a standard Sonata.

Unlike the Western tutor books, where one usually finds only one movement of any particular Sonatina, this Russian method book includes all movements of each work. This allows the pupil to understand the structure of the Sonatinas at an early stage, and prepare him/her with the use of corresponding terminologies (exposition, development, and recapitulation/ slow movement/ rondo).

2. Sonatina M. CLEMENTI

Allegro (Fast)

Ex 4.21 Opening bars of the Clementi's Sonatina (2nd composition from Book 2)

The example above (Ex 4.21) is the second composition from this category, and the opening bars already consist of various technical difficulties. First, hand coordination in bar 4: left hand matching right hand on the descending G major scale. Secondly, *legato* playing in the left hand, *staccato* playing in the right in bar 6-7. This is a technique that was first introduced in Book 1 Part 2.³²⁶ Although these musical markings (*staccato*, *legato*, phrasings) may seem obvious to a professional musician, it is interesting to note that great stress is placed upon a correct execution of these performance indications. As the explanatory notes state: ‘during the first stages of learning the text it is essential to see that the pupil follows exactly any markings or interpretative indications, so that at a later stage he is not obliged to alter and relearn any incorrect movements.’³²⁷ It is not difficult to imagine that this learning attitude and principle is also applied in students’ technical development. As Sarkissova revealed:

‘We were taught by very straight observation of all technical things from the very young age, i.e. how we put our hands on the piano; how we shall use our fingers, and in what way; how to do things and what not to do – all these. This

³²⁶ See Exercise 122 from Book 1 Part 2.

³²⁷ *Ibid.*, Book 2, 33.

helps us and allows us not to be occupied with basic things later on, when we are ready to deal with real big repertoire and great music.’³²⁸

Within the ‘Sonatina & Variations’ category, compositions varied greatly in style and character. It is apparent too that a large number of these works are by Soviet and Russian composers. According to the explanatory note, the absence of more sonatinas by Beethoven, Clementi and other Western composers is due to the fact that their compositions are of greater technical difficulty. Those compositions were intended for more advanced players.³²⁹ Below is the breakdown between Western and Soviet composers:

Soviet Composers	Western Composers
Goedike	Clementi
Zhilinskis	Beethoven
Kabalevsky	
Berkovick	

Ex 4.22 Breakdown between Western and Soviet Composers in Book 2 (Sonatina & Variation)

According to the method book, the reason that fewer Western composers were selected in this category (Sonatina & Variation) was merely because the level of difficulty. However, this statement is not entirely accurate. The composition by Clementi in this category, for example, is Op. 36 no. 1. There are six sonatinas within Op. 36, and other five sonatinas are more or less on the same level. Similarly,

³²⁸ Interview with Tatiana Sarkissova.

³²⁹ *The Russian School of Piano Playing*. Book 2, 33.

Beethoven's Sonatina selected here is on the same level of technical difficulty with the other compositions within the set (F major, Anh 5).³³⁰ Therefore, it is fair to assume that level of difficulty is not the primary reason.

Studies

Following on from the previous two method books, it is clear that this series of books has devoted much to the systematic learning of technical studies. It should be noted that playing studies is not simply rendering the musical text with a technically clean performance in a fast tempo. Instead, other elements, such as phrasing and quality of sound should not be discarded. To this end, Trull pointed out a more important fact:

‘The solid technique is typical Russian School because it depends on how you choose the repertoire; for example, how many technical studies and what kind of studies; because it is possible to give a Liszt study at the age of ten and to kill all technical mastery at the beginning.’³³¹

Indeed, the choice of study for each pupil is of no less importance. When choosing a study for the student, the development of technique, pianistic and musical senses should be taken into account. Further, each of the studies selected should focus on different aspects of technique.

The studies selected in this method book are ‘designed to develop finger agility, and with this aim the compilers have selected studies which should lead to mastery of short scalar passages in stepping sequence, consisting of uniform semiquaver groups, trills and other constructions found in pieces, sonatinas and variations from the

³³⁰ See Clementi's Sonatina op. 36 No. 2-6; Beethoven's Sonatina in F major Anh 5.

³³¹ Interview with Natalia Trull.

repertoire for second to third year.³³² Compared to the previous two books, it is unusual to have such a clear technical purpose and focus. Therefore, in the views of Russian pianists, those technical areas mentioned above could be seen as some of the most fundamental issues that need addressing at an early stage of learning.



Ex 4.23 Study 2 from Book 2 (short scalic passage)

The example above is the second study in the book and focuses on the scalic passage and, most important of all, on the left hand.

Ex 4.24 Study 4 from Book 2 (short scalic passage)

³³² *Ibid.* Book 2., 47.

The trill study follows a different pattern, however, by combining trills for both hands. Whilst the trills in the right hand focus on the strongest fingers (1-2 in bars 1 and 3; 2-3 in bars 2 and 4), the trills in the left hand concentrate on different finger patterns, 2-1 in bar 6, and the weakest fingers (5-4) in bar 5.



Ex 4.27 Study 10 from Book 2 (trills)

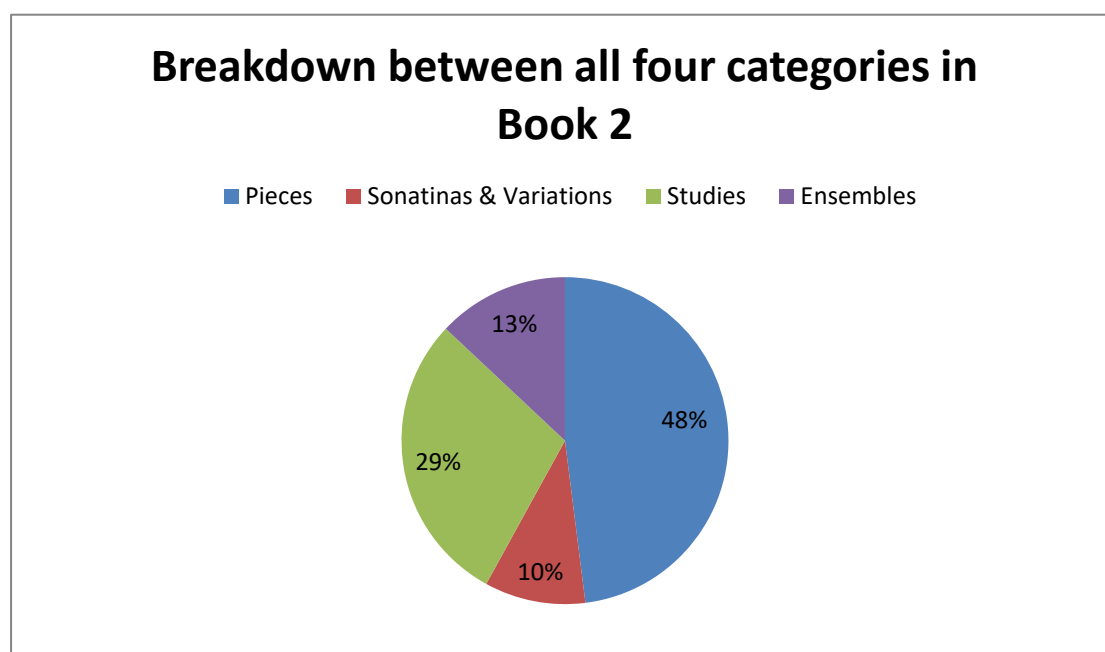
All these studies should be played with a slow tempo before executing the accurate tempo. As the explanatory note stated, ‘Excessive speed should be avoided as this leads to an inaccurate rendering of the text and stiffness of movement.’³³³ In addition to slow tempo, there are further directions which allow students to perfect their technical ability. For example, varying the dynamic level by playing the study *pianissimo*, or with a brighter sound but without excessive forcing. The studies in this

³³³ *Ibid.*

book are in simple keys (C major or G major); but students can also transpose the studies and perform the studies while retaining the original fingering.³³⁴

Ensembles

In comparing with the previous two parts, Book 2 has a greater proportion of ensemble pieces. The pupil is deliberately given a very simple part, so that s/he can direct her/his attention to ensemble playing. These parts are simple enough for the students to play at sight. Instead of presenting a breakdown between solo and ensemble pieces, it would be useful to understand how compositions are distributed in Book 2.



Ex 4.28 Breakdown between all composition categories in Book 2

Whilst a large proportion is devoted into pieces, studies also accounted for one third of the book. However, besides studies, one should not forget that scales also play an important role in technical development. To this end, it would be appropriate to

³³⁴ *Ibid.*

consider how scales and arpeggios are used as technical tools in students' learning progress.

Scales

According to Trull, scales and arpeggios are mainly the tools for the younger students: 'students play a lot of Czerny and Moszkowski along with a lot of scales until the age of sixteen'.³³⁵ Hayroutdinoff also echoes his predecessor:

'Once you are out of the Specialist Music School and enter the Conservatoire, I would never expect my teacher to help me technically. I recalled a conversation between my teacher and another student "What? You want me to show you how to play scales? Then you should not be here in the first place. We only work on music."' ³³⁶

Before studying at the conservatoire, students in Russia employ scales and arpeggios in their studies in all different formats. According to Boris Berman, scales and arpeggios were regarded as 'the secret weapon' of the Russian school during the Soviet period,³³⁷ presumably in the sense that the exceptional rigour with which they had to be studied underlay the technical supremacy of Russian pianists. And so it is vital to analyse how scales evolved from the original formats in Russia. In addition to the original formats,³³⁸ scales and arpeggios appear in six different formats. The first format: thirds (a), sixths (b), and tenths (c) – playing these over four octaves in ascending and descending motion with both hands.

³³⁵ Interview with Natalia Trull.

³³⁶ Interview with Rustem Hayroutdinoff.

³³⁷ Berman. *op. cit.*, 48.

³³⁸ Original form: major or minor scales that are in similar motion, with an octave apart.



Ex 4.29 scales in thirds, sixths, and tenths (diatonic) – both hands

Scales in thirds, sixths, and tenths not only appear in diatonic but also in chromatic form – the second format:



Ex 4.30 scales in thirds, sixths, and tenths (chromatic) – both hands

The third format contains double thirds, and an important aspect that should be noted here is the fingering requirement.

Ex 4.31 double thirds with different fingering requirement – one hand

The major third fingering indicated above (on the left) is recommended by Anna Esipova – a noted piano professor at the St. Petersburg Conservatoire and the second wife of Leschetizky.³³⁹ In terms of the minor third (on the right), Chopin fingering is

³³⁹ Anna Esipova was a prominent Russian pianist and teacher; her pupil included Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953), Maria Yudina (1899-1970), and Isabelle Vengerova (1877-1956). For Esipova's major third fingering, see Nikolai Bertenson, *Anna Nikolaevna Esipova* (Leningrad: Gosudarstvennoye Muzykalnoye Izdatelstvo, 1960), 109.

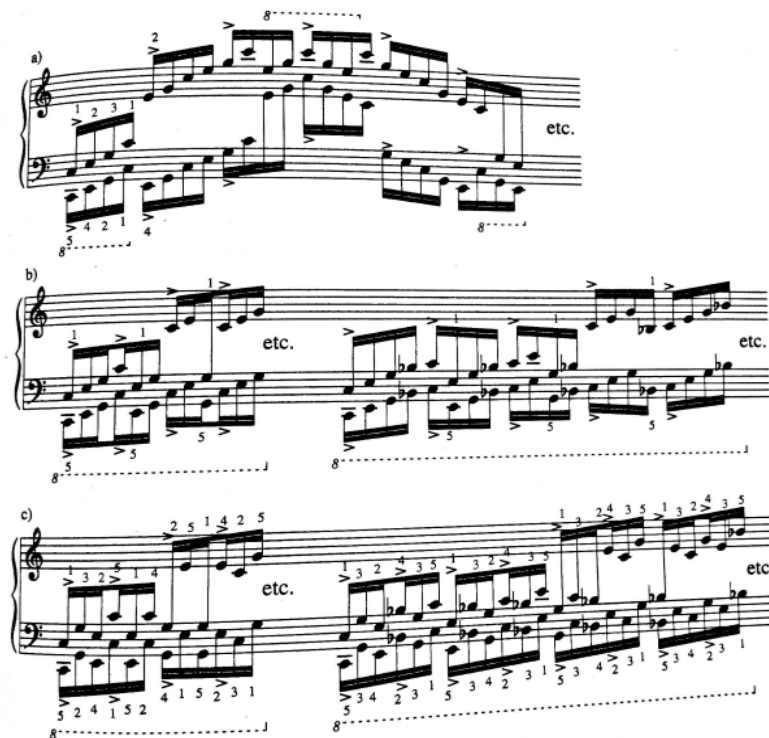
indicated here – a fingering from the nineteenth century to incorporate glissando of the second finger.³⁴⁰

The fourth, fifth, and sixth formats are based on a pattern of eleven chords:



Ex 4.32 Pattern of eleven chords

These eleven chords are: major triad, minor triad, major sixth chord, minor sixth chord, major six-four, minor six-four, dominant seventh in root position and in three inversions, and diminished seventh chord. Russian pianists apply these eleven chords into the fourth, fifth and sixth formats, and these formats are as follows:



Ex 4.33 fourth, fifth, and sixth formats

³⁴⁰ Berman, *op. cit.* 50.

For instance, the first chord from the ‘pattern of eleven chords’ – the C major triad – could be applied to the three formats above. The fourth format, indicated as figure A in the example above, is original arpeggio in parallel motion; fifth format, as figure B, is broken chords; sixth format, as figure C, is original arpeggio but with a skipped note. Russian students should also be cautioned that there are accents on the first and fourth notes in each of the semiquaver group. The purpose of this is to strengthen each finger. Further, these scales and arpeggios should also vary with different tempos, different dynamics, and different articulation.

In sum, these six formats are developed from the original form of scales and arpeggios, and are only used later on in the learning process, i.e. at music schools. As Berman recalled his time as a student in Moscow:

‘I studied at a Specialist Music School. We were expected to become professional musicians, and in fact, most of my schoolmates did become one. For instance, I remember that in 7th grade, we had technical tests, where we should be able to play fluent, quickly and cleanly any scales that the committee would ask. It was proceeding by the years of studying, we went through this and that scales. By the way, scales were present and it was a weekly assignment to play and the scales business culminated in 7th grade. We were expected to have the complete mastery of all the scales and arpeggios.’³⁴¹

If Berman’s statement is accurate, it would be important to examine the Specialist Music School’s syllabus, which includes various technical studies. Further, it will provide an indication of Russian’s technical preparation and expectation for different year groups.

³⁴¹ Interview with Boris Berman.

4.2 Specialist Music School

As mentioned in Chapter 3, piano students spend twelve years at a Specialist Music School before studying at a conservatoire. Each year, piano students are required to select pieces from the syllabus. The syllabus is divided into four different categories: 1) Polyphony; 2) Technical Studies; 3) Long Forms; 4) Pieces.³⁴² For the purpose of this chapter, this section will only examine the technical studies category in each year group.

The syllabus examined here is taken from the Central Music School, a division of the Moscow Conservatory.³⁴³ According to Berman, it can be assured that a similar study was included in other Specialist Music Schools during the Soviet period. ‘One could be assured that a certain type of the technical study, if not exactly the same piece, is played, say, in the fifth year of education all over Soviet Union.’³⁴⁴ This phenomenon can still be found among all Specialist Music Schools in Russia.³⁴⁵ In order to structure the discussion, the following section is in three stages: Junior (Year 1-4); Intermediate (Year 5-8); Senior (Year 8-12).

4.2.1 Junior (Year 1-4)

The list of études required in the first four years of study is rather similar to those analysed in the Russian method books. However, the level of difficulty has increased. Indeed, this is understandable since the students have now moved on to a professional training school. The studies are similar because they are from more or less the same composers; but at the same time, they are different because of their level of difficulty.

³⁴² These are my personal translations from the Central Music School’s syllabus: полифония (Polyphonic); этюды (Étude); крупная форма (Long Forms); пьесы (Pieces).

³⁴³ See Appendix 6 for the complete syllabus.

³⁴⁴ Interview with Boris Berman.

³⁴⁵ Interview with Sofya Gulyak.

Études by Berkovich, Gnyesina, Maikapar continue to dominate in the list, while Czerny's studies have increased its proportion compared to the Russian method book. These studies are not randomly selected: each study has precise technical areas that the Specialist Music School expects the student to address at an early stage. Below is the list of studies by Czerny included in the first year:

Op. 139	No. 7, 11, 25, 29, 30, 32
Op. 261	No. 25, 50, 52, 53, 58
Op. 599	No. 33, 49, 50
Op. 821	Étude No. 7

Ex 4.34 List of Czerny's studies in the first year

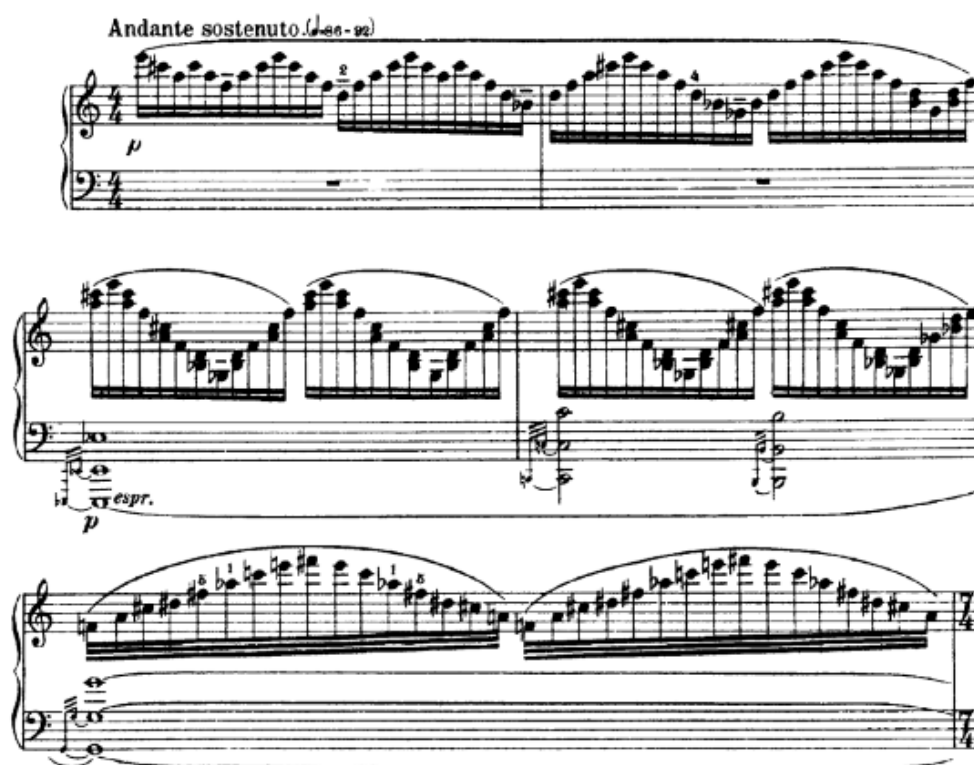
Taking Op. 139 no. 30 as an example, there are a number of technical aspects that should be highlighted here.



Ex 4.35 Czerny's Étude Op. 139 No. 30

The main emphasis here is the dotted rhythm: this dotted rhythm also allows the students to apply this rhythmic pattern in students' usual practice when they encounter

only difficulty for this étude, but there are more subtle aspects. On the lower level, the hand position and key span are other two areas that should be of concern.



Ex 4.37 Opening bars from Bartók's Étude Op. 18 No. 2

First, the notes are grouped with over an octave span. This means the student will have an awkward hand position to commence, i.e. crossing the hand over the thumb on the third beat in bar 1 (see Ex 4.38).



Ex 4.38 Crossing the hand over the thumb in bar 1

Secondly, the left hand unison is spread over two octaves. It requires a large jump and quick shifting movement on the unison notes (see Ex 4.39).



Ex 4.39 Two octaves unison span in the left hand in bar 3

One should not forget that this étude is designed for Year 3 students at Specialist Music School – only aged seven. Their hands at that age would not have developed fully and the exercise would certainly present a technical challenge.

4.2.2 Intermediate (Year 5-8)

In the Intermediate years (Year 5-8), there are more composers introduced including Bertini, Berens, Geller, Cramer, and Arensky. Besides all these composers, Moszkowski is another composer being added onto the list. His works included here are a number of studies from two different sets: Op. 18 No. 3; Op. 91 No. 2, 3, 5, 6. Similarly to studies in previous books, each étude is focused on one distinctive objective. In order cover the objective in both hands, the études would need to be learned in pairs. For instance, Op. 91 No. 2 (Ex 4.40) concentrates on the right hand, while Op. 91 No. 3 (Ex 4.41) focuses on the left.



Ex 4.40 Moszkowski's Étude Op. 91 No. 2



Ex 4.41 Moszkowski's Étude Op. 91 No. 3

Both hands have similar grouping patterns, almost like a mirror, i.e. left hand and right hand reflecting each other. Thus, one could in fact integrate right hand from Op. 91 No. 2 and left hand from Op. 91 No. 3 in one study. To this end, it is interesting to point out a similar technical exercise developed by Samuel Feinberg. Feinberg believes this mirror exercise allows both hands to ‘exchange experience’ and that one hand can help train the other. In devising such exercises there is no need to require total, mirror-like symmetry, since this cannot always be achieved. But Feinberg stressed that it is vital to observe the same fingering in both right and left hands.³⁴⁶ Feinberg took Chopin's Prelude Op. 28 No. 3 as an example:

³⁴⁶ Maria Eschenko. ‘Chopin's Études’, in Christopher Barnes (ed.), *The Russian Piano School: Russian Pianists & Moscow Conservatoire Professors on the Art of the Piano*, (London: Kahn & Averill, 2008), 135-137.



Ex 4.42 Chopin's Prelude Op. 28 No. 3 (Original)



Ex 4.43 Feinberg's Mirror Exercise on Chopin's Prelude Op. 28 No. 3 (Modified)

When analysing the intermediate level, it is obvious that Czerny's studies play a more important role at this level than at the junior level. This is due to the fact that the quantity of his études has increased dramatically from 57 (junior level) to 88 (intermediate level). Whilst the quantity of Czerny's studies has risen, these études are also longer. At a junior level, the studies tend to be 8–15 bars long; and on this level, the studies are at least 30–40 bars.

It is impossible to examine all the studies in this section, and therefore it would be useful to provide a brief summary of one of Czerny's study sets (Op. 740) from the list:

No. 1	Action of the fingers – playing scale quietly
No. 2	The passing under the thumb in the right hand

No. 4	Light motion in quiet staccato playing
No. 6	Clearness in broken chords playing
No. 8	Light action of the left hand
No. 10	Exercise in thirds in the right hand
No. 11	Readiness in changing the fingers
No. 12	Flexibility of the left hand with demi-semiquavers
No. 13	The utmost velocity – quick passagework in the right hand
No. 14	Chord passage – breaking chords into passages
No. 16	Changing the fingers in rapid playing
No. 17	Minor scales in rapid tempo in the right hand
No. 18	Crossing the hands quietly and with delicate touch
No. 21	The same movement in each hand
No. 23	Light touch in the fingers of the left hand
No. 24	Using the thumb on the black keys; controlling the hand in quiet dynamics
No. 25	Clearness in running passages
No. 41	Action of the fingers of the left hand

Ex 4.44 A Summary of Czerny's Études Op. 740 from Year 8

Based on the analysis above, it is apparent that light playing, delicate touch and flexibility are the key areas of development for Year 8 students. There are a lot of Czerny's studies at both junior and intermediate levels, and this is not a coincidence.

According to Trull, Czerny's studies are very simple, and she further stated:

‘The material is easier to play in a quicker tempo, and allow the student to understand how to touch the keyboard physically, i.e. to understand how to get it up to a fast tempo in some awkward fingering. When you play Chopin's studies, you are obliged first to follow the melody and to make this phrase, and therefore you will have no time; you are a little bit chained by the music. In Czerny you are free because the music is simple.’³⁴⁷

4.2.3 Senior (Year 9-12)

On this level, the technical studies are much more difficult and the list includes some popular composers: Blumenfeld, Mendelssohn, Clementi, Leschetizky. In particular, composers such as Debussy, Liszt, Paganini-Liszt, Prokofiev, Rachmaninov, Chopin, and Stravinsky all appear in both Year 11 and Year 12. This level does not have such precision as junior or intermediate levels, since there is a huge flexibility in choosing any study. For instance, the list does not indicate a specific *étude* by Paganini-Liszt, but on the other hand, a particular *étude* is always specified in the previous two levels. As Kuznetsova pointed out, ‘Czerny or Clementi *études* are adopted for the younger ones; then in fifth, sixth or seventh grade, they usually play Op. 740 by Czerny. If they are already good at that age, they can start touching Chopin, Liszt or Rachmaninov.’³⁴⁸ If we were to analyse the technical list along with Trull's and Kuznetsova's perspectives, there seems to be a understanding that Chopin or Liszt *études* should not be given to the student before studying Czerny or Clementi *études*.

³⁴⁷ Interview with Natalia Trull.

³⁴⁸ Interview with Elena Kuznetsova.

Besides a structured and systematic approach, it is worth noting that not only studies have included on the list at this level. For instance, Schumann's Toccata Op. 7 is included on the technical list in Year 12. This composition requires both advanced technical command, and a mature musical interpretation. It would be useful to deconstruct the composition and understand why it deserves its place on the technical list.



Ex 4.45 Opening of Schumann's Toccata

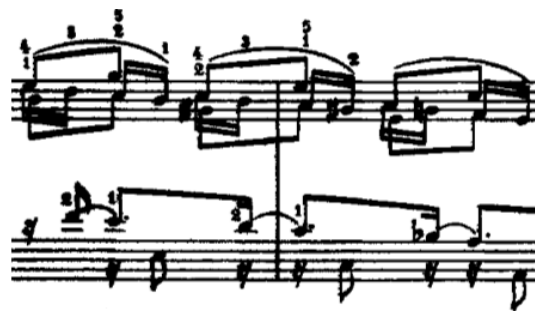
The opening of the toccata already presents a great challenge – the opening quaver jump in the first bar; the 5-4 fingering alternation in the right hand in bar 3; a ninth span in the left hand – all these should be achieved in a quick tempo. Taking the first challenge as an example; it would be of interest to recall a personal experience with my former Russian teacher, who explained a systemic step in tackling the jumps – a practice that is widely acknowledged in Russia, according to her.



Ex 4.46 The left hand jump in bar 1

There are four stages for this technical exercise: first, the student should be comfortable finding his/her finger position on the keys whilst the forearm has no tension (playing these two chords in slow tempo); second, the student should then employ the fifth finger only (playing only bottom G note in the first chord; jumping it to bottom D note in the second chord); third, identical to the second step but this time with the thumb (playing only the top G note in the first chord; jumping it to the top D note in the second chord); fourth, only playing the first chord and making the jump with closed eyes.

In addition to difficult jumps and large spans in both hands, the polyphonic texture and complex rhythm also present enormous challenges.

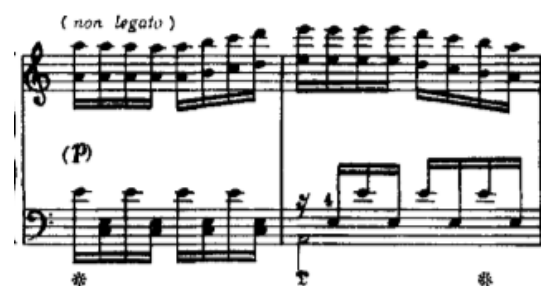


Ex 4.47 Polyphonic voices and complex rhythms

Besides all the above mentioned challenges, the standard double thirds, and octaves are not absent in this toccata.



Ex 4.48 Double thirds



Ex 4.49 Octaves

With all these in mind, it is not difficult to imagine that this toccata would act as a technical training tool for the student, since it has all the fundamental technical elements – polyphonic, thirds, octaves, sixth, scalar running passages, jumps, and complex rhythmic patterns. Although this composition is not treated as a technical study in the West, it is only given to advanced students (most likely postgraduate students) at conservatoires.

One may ask however, if such a composition is given to the students at Specialist Music School already, what might be the technical training programme for students at the conservatoire? Alexander Nikolaev, a pro-rector at the Moscow Conservatory wrote: ‘We do not have a special technical programme of examinations since any pianist or student of piano entering the conservatory is extremely well prepared in piano technique which he receives in any middle-education institution prior to entering the conservatory.’³⁴⁹ Although Rachmaninov claimed Hanon was part of the study and exam at conservatory level,³⁵⁰ Elena Kuznetsova, former Dean of Piano Faculty at Moscow Conservatory, has confirmed (as mentioned above in p.79) that this is not accurate.

‘In the conservatory, we do not really face Hanon, études or things like this, because we already taught students how to play them earlier – it is for the music schools rather. It was probably Liszt, back in 150 years ago, who was giving Hanon or study of that kind to his female students. They may not be particular brilliant in technique. But not at the moment in Russia, we usually give Czerny, Clementi or Moszkowski in music colleges.’³⁵¹

³⁴⁹ See Reginald Gerig, *Famous Pianists and Their Technique* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1974), 310.

³⁵⁰ Cooke (1923). *op.cit.*, 50.

³⁵¹ Interview with Elena Kuznetsova (c.f. to section 2.2.2). However, according to the Liszt specialist Leslie Howard, Liszt never referred the study of Hanon to his student; nor did he suggest any technical books to his students in his entire teaching career.

Her comment on female students studying Hanon is somewhat surprising, despite the various observations made by Rachmaninov.³⁵² Of course, this statement clearly does not reflect the pianistic world today, since male students are also required to study Hanon. It depends on the technical needs of the student, rather than their ostensible gender.³⁵³ On the subject of Hanon, even Kuznetsova's predecessor Samuil Feinberg noted, 'Nowadays, students are not forced to play through Hanon, although in our day we spent hundreds of hours systematically ploughing through the exercises in that celebrated volume.'³⁵⁴ Dimitri Alexeev also echoes Kuznetsova, and stated that different material is given to the student: 'It [Hanon] was too old fashioned and even in my time, we didn't use it much. We used studies by Czerny, Cramer and Clementi. All these are given to the student before Chopin and Liszt; as well as scales such as double notes.'³⁵⁵ His successor, Sofya Gulyak also agrees, 'We mainly use études, but only a few used Hanon. I personally never liked it [Hanon].'³⁵⁶ It is not only the material that is of concern; Natalia Trull pointed out that study time is crucial for conservatoire students and they should not be spending time on these fundamental technical elements: 'Later, one will not have time for Czerny. I remember from my

³⁵² Rachmaninov and Hofmann claimed that they studied Hanon whilst at conservatory. In particularly, Rachmaninov gave a detail account on using Hanon as a technical exercise book: 'During the first five years the student gets most of his technical instruction from a book of studies by Hanon, which is used very extensively in the conservatoires. In fact, this is practically the only book of strictly technical studies employed. All of the studies are in the key of "C". They include scales, arpeggios, and other forms of exercises in special technical designs. At the end of the fifth year an examination takes place. This examination is twofold. The pupil is examined first for proficiency in technic, and later for proficiency in artistic playing pieces, studies, etc. However, if the pupil fails to pass the technical examination he is not permitted to go ahead. He knows the exercises in the book of studies by Hanon so well that he knows each study by number, and the examiner may ask him, for instance, to play study 17, or 28, or 32, etc. the student at once sits at the keyboard and plays.' See Cooke, *op.cit.*, 50.

³⁵³ Though, it is interesting to note, according to Dina Parakhina, female students at Central Music School are given études with octaves, whilst male students are given études with tenth. Personal Conservation with Dina Parakhina.

³⁵⁴ Barnes, *op. cit.*, 25.

³⁵⁵ Interview with Dimitri Alexeev.

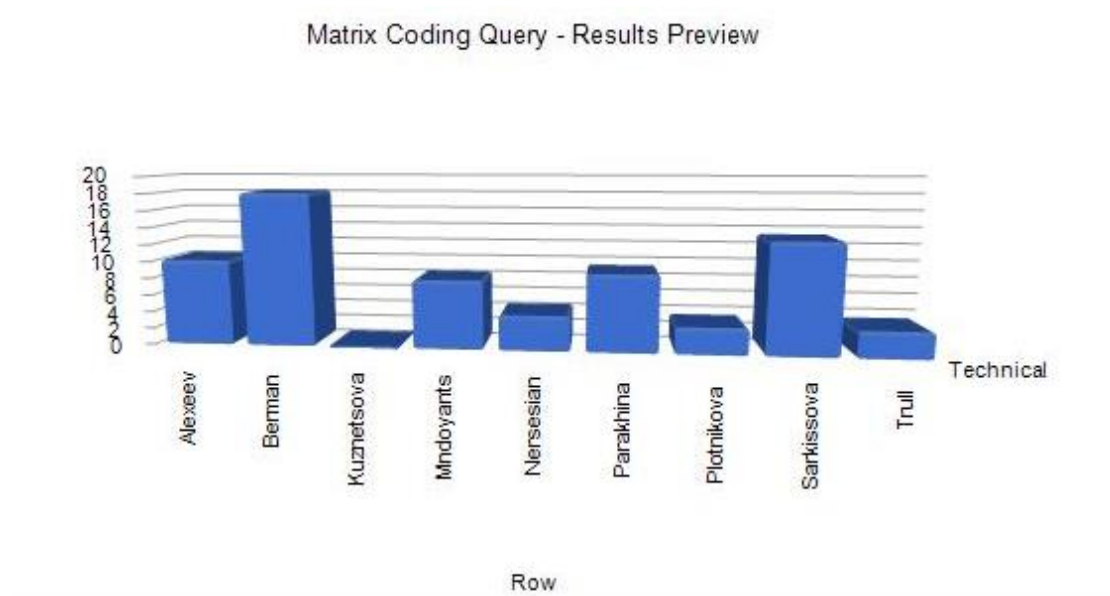
³⁵⁶ Interview with Sofya Gulyak.

childhood and even when I was in my 20s, I only went back to Czerny when I felt there was something wrong.³⁵⁷

4.3 Technique as an Art: On Teaching a ‘Russian’ Performance

If, according to Russian pianists, technique is addressed prior to conservatoire study; it is vital to investigate whether it is accurate to say that it is not addressed at conservatory. Further, it would be interesting to compare the technical teaching in Russia and in the West.

The ‘technique’ category includes comment on any technical aspect during lessons. This may include correcting notes, fingering, pedalling, and developing technical exercise.



Ex 4.50 Technique – Results for number of time it occurs amongst Russian teachers

³⁵⁷ Interview with Natalia Trull.

Based on the analysis and lesson observations, eighteen instances (26%) of ‘technical’ discussion came from Berman. Within these eighteen times, over half of these discussions were on pedalling. It is vital to understand not only how Russian pianists deliver their technical ideas, but also why Russian pianists considered such a technical adjustment was necessary. Most of the pedalling issues occurred during lessons were because of improper use of the device. For instance, Berman required the student to employ different fingering to accommodate better legato technique; only using the pedal as a colouring effect.³⁵⁸ Besides the question of pedalling, Berman also pointed out how finger movements relate to technical limitation on a number of occasions, e.g. excessive hand movement simply disturbed the scalic passages. In Berman’s view, scalic passages do not require more than finger technique; and according to him, this is what he labelled as the ‘economy principle’ in piano technique.³⁵⁹ As the second highest recorded Russian emigrant teacher, Sarkisova offered two interesting perspectives on technique: keyboard technique, and hand position. Similar to Berman’s view, Sarkisova advised the student that he ‘needed a sense of deep touch in big chords; and a closer attack to the key to minimise the movement’, when the student overused his body parts.³⁶⁰ In addition to keyboard technique, Sarkisova recommended a plausible hand position for the opening of Schumann’s Concerto Op. 54.

³⁵⁸ Lesson Observation from Boris Berman (1BB0.2).

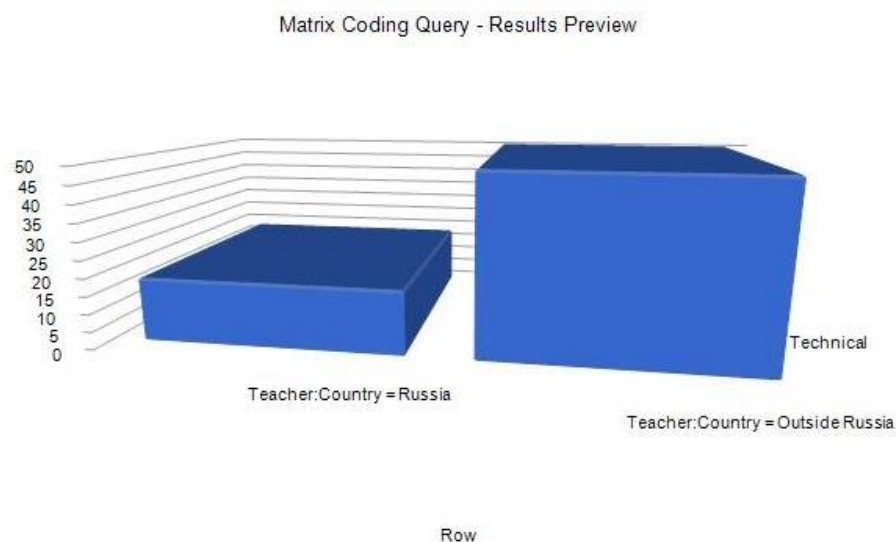
³⁵⁹ According to Berman, two pillars form the foundation of good piano technique: the ‘economy principle’ and the ‘extension principle’. The former requires pianists to be economical in their movements, not to use a bigger part of their body – finger, hand, forearm, arm – when a smaller one will suffice; the latter requires the pianist to regard each of the various segments of piano-playing anatomy (finger, hand, forearm, arm) as the continuation of the adjacent parts, with each individual unit always ready to support and share the work with the others. Collaboration among these divisions is the key to effortless technique. See Berman (2000). *op. cit.*, 28.

³⁶⁰ Lesson Observation from Tatiana Sarkisova (1TS1.2).



Ex 4.51 Opening of the Schumann's Piano Concerto Op. 54

Due to the fact that the opening of the concerto has a similar chord pattern, Sarkissova asked the student to think through, prepare, and establish a firm hand position in order to overcome the technical difficulty (rapid Lombard rhythm). Establishing a firm hand position is understandable – after all, position is where the difficulty lies. However, her advice was not precise enough. Indeed, establishing and preparing a firm hand position undoubtedly helps; but employing a lighter touch on the semiquaver chords will resolve this technical issue. In this sense, a lighter touch allows the pianist to move quickly to the quaver chord.



Ex 4.52 Comparison between Russian Teachers and Russian Emigrant Teachers

It is apparent that the discussion of technique tends to occur mostly in the lessons of Russian emigrant teachers (74% instances came from Russian emigrant teachers). This phenomenon is supported by the fact that technique is addressed throughout the musical studies in the West; whilst Russia emphasises this area of focus prior to conservatoire studies. However, it is incorrect to assume that piano technique is not a matter of concern at conservatoires in Russia. Although such activity is low, the graph above (Ex 4.52) suggests that technical issues are, in fact, covered in conservatoire teaching. The majority of these instances from Russian teachers can be categorised into themes: fingering adjustments and pedalling issues. Below is the breakdown between these two themes.

Fingering Adjustments	Pedalling Adjustments
50%	50%

Ex 4.53 Breakdown between the two themes in Russian teachers' pedagogy activity

Eighteen instances were recorded from observations (Russian teachers); and there is an equal distribution between these two categories. Whilst the finger adjustments help to improve either legato playing or a clear sense of phrasing,³⁶¹ the pedalling adjustments help to refine the clarity of the music.³⁶² Both of these categories were taught via demonstration with minimal verbal explanation.

³⁶¹ Lesson Observation from Pavel Nersessian (1PN0.1; 1PN0.3; 1PN0.4; 1PN0.5); Lesson Observation from Irina Plotnikova (1IP0.3; 1IP0.4); Lesson Observation from Alexander Mndoyants (1AM1.3; 2AM0.4; 2AM2.3; 4AM0.1).

³⁶² Lesson Observation from Pavel Nersessian (1PN0.3); Lesson Observation from Irina Plotnikova (1IP1.1); Lesson Observation from Alexander Mndoyants (2AM0.2; 2AM0.3; 2AM2.4; 2AM2.2; 3AM0.2); Lesson Observation from Natalia Trull (1NT0.1; 1NT0.2).

4.3.1 Observation & Performance

Up to this point in the chapter, we have examined the technical issue individually, and have provided an in-depth analysis of the usage and approaches in teaching technique-related issues. Further, we have segmented all the data by teachers' residency in order to yield useful information and noticeable patterns in their teaching activity. However, an interesting question arises immediately: how are the technical issues discussed in lessons audible, and perhaps visualised, in a 'Russian' performance?

According to the Soviet pianist and music scholar Vitaly Neuman, Isabelle Vengerova (1877-1956) regarded the position of the hands as most important in piano technique.³⁶³ Jacob Lateiner, who studied with Vengerova also pointed out that one of her main concerns, was to develop the need for playing deeply into the key with strong fingers – which all of her students incorporated into their technique.³⁶⁴ On the topic of technique, Elena Kuznetsova also stated that:

‘The late Victor Merzhanov used to say that the specific trace of ‘Russian Piano School’ was using the weight of the shoulder and of the back... ‘Russian School’ is always using the back and the shoulder and all these complexes.’³⁶⁵

In gathering all the information above, it is clear that there are three distinctive areas of technique that worth exploring: firstly, the fingers; secondly, the arm and shoulder; and finally, the back. One may argue that non-Russian pianists also employ these parts of technique when playing the piano, and therefore it cannot solely claim it a unique Russian feature. However, it should be noted that it is not these individual parts that contribute to the 'Russian' technique, but a combination of all these areas. Referring to some of the observations and relating them to Russian performances, the following section will discuss briefly each areas of technique.

³⁶³ Gerig, *op. cit.*, 312-313.

³⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁵ Interview with Elena Kuznetsova.

1) Finger Technique

There are two types of finger technique that Russian pianists employ: rounded and flatted finger technique. Indeed, each finger position has its own purpose. For instance, rounded fingers produce a brilliant tone quality, and flat fingers will result in a velvety quality of sound. For the sake of technique, we will focus on the first type of finger technique – rounded.

Whether the pianists play with arm technique or shoulder, Russian pianists believe that fingers must always be active.³⁶⁶ Russian composer and pianist Sergei Prokofiev was known to have a serious problem with this type of finger technique. According to Reinhold Glière, Prokofiev's earliest piano teacher:

‘He [Prokofiev] played carelessly and he did not hold his hands properly on the keyboard. His long fingers seemed very clumsy...at other times he could not play a simple scale or an ordinary arpeggio...he was rather obstinate and did not always take my advice in the matter of finger technique.’³⁶⁷

Despite the fact that Prokofiev was not able to play with the rounded finger technique, he was first accepted into the class of Alexander Winkler at the St. Petersburg Conservatory in 1905. Prokofiev recalled that:

‘Winkler said that for some two weeks I would have to play only exercises aimed to strengthen the fingers and to develop the wrist...At last, I have been harnessed: until then I played everything but did it rather carelessly, holding my fingers straight, like sticks. Winkler insisted on my playing accurately, holding my fingers in the rounded shape and putting them down with precision.’³⁶⁸

However, it was not until 1909, when Prokofiev entered the class of Anna Essipova, that his finger technique began to change. Essipova was renowned for strict

³⁶⁶ Berman, *op.cit.*,30.

³⁶⁷ Sergei Prokofiev, *Autobiography, Articles, Reminiscences*. Compiled, edited and notes by S. Shlifstein. Translated from the Russian by Rose Prokofieva. Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1954, 146-147.

³⁶⁸ S. Prokofiev, *Avtobiografia* [Autobiography], ed. M.G. Kozlova. Moscow: Sovetskiy kompozitor, 237.

disciplines and one of her methods for training this type of finger technique was to place a silver coin on the back of the pianist's hand whilst playing a Czerny study with active fingers.³⁶⁹ Contemporary Russian pianist Boris Berman disagrees with this approach: 'We no longer play this way because, in addition to producing dry and inflexible sound, it could lead to muscular strain and even injury.'³⁷⁰ How, then, do modern Russian pianists teach active finger technique? In a lesson observation, a student of Natalia Trull was studying the third piano concerto by Beethoven. However, Trull was unsatisfied with the playing of the opening part:



Ex 4.54 Opening of the piano part in Beethoven's C minor Piano Concerto

After several attempts, Trull pointed out that these opening scales were 'clumsy' and that the sound was too 'unclear'.³⁷¹ She asked the student to play these passages slowly with forte, but most importantly, picking up each finger before striking the keys. In this particular observation example, Trull demonstrated on the piano and explained verbally that this exercise required the student to 'open up' his fingers – reminding the student that his fingertips must remain active. In another observation example, Berman's student failed to produce a clear sound when playing softly, instead it was, in his opinion, a 'fuzzy sound'. He then asked the student to play a scale with a continuous diminuendo. This helped the student to focus his attention on

³⁶⁹ See Schnabel. *op. cit.*, 11.

³⁷⁰ Berman. *op. cit.*, 25.

³⁷¹ Lesson Observation from Natalia Trull (1NT0.2).

sensitive finger technique even at soft playing.³⁷² Both of these observation examples led to one purpose – an active finger technique. It was clear from both of these cases that it is not necessarily the strong fingers that they desire; rather, it was sensitive quality that they seek from this rounded finger technique.

Arm Technique

Although there is an in-depth discussion of the arm weight technique in Chapter 6 (see section 6.1.1 *Use of weight*), it would be useful to shed some further light on the subject at this point. There were two instances in lesson observations where the teacher requested the student include the arm technique. In the first example, Alexeev asked the student to produce a sound that is fuller and louder.³⁷³ Instead of just playing louder with his fingers, Alexeev demonstrated how the arm should be included in a chord such as the opening of the Tchaikovsky's B flat minor piano concerto.



Ex 4.55 Opening of the piano part in Tchaikovsky's B flat minor Piano Concerto

His interesting comment was that one would not be able to play this passage with just fingers. Indeed, these chords are playable from a theoretical standpoint, but from a

³⁷² Lesson Observation from Boris Berman (2BB0.1).

³⁷³ Lesson Observation from Dimitri Alexeev (2DA1.3).

pianistic point of view, it is unplayable with fingers alone, not to mention the required dynamic level. The second observation that involved arm technique, however, did not intend to produce a louder sound, but instead a smoother transition between musical passages. Mndoyants requested the student to push his forearm away from his torso, so that his arm is leading the legato playing.³⁷⁴ A connection that draws both of these observations is that Alexeev and Mndoyants coincidentally reminded their student that fingers will have to be active even when using the arm technique.³⁷⁵

Back Technique

The use of the back technique is often discussed among Russian pianists. Besides the abovementioned quote from Elena Kuznetsova, my previous Russian teacher pointed out the importance on many occasion. As she suggested, ‘there should be a wire connecting your back, transferring the weight from that part of the body through your arm to your fingertips.’³⁷⁶ Boris Berman also stresses the idea on two occasions; the first in writing where he stated: ‘...another useful image is that of a “long neck” to help feel uninterrupted succession of muscles from behind one’s ear to the neck, to the upper arm and so forth down to the fingertip.’³⁷⁷ The second occasion was in a lesson observation where he made a similar comment when the student did not have ‘enough sound’ in his playing.³⁷⁸

Based on the observations and all related comments on the back technique, there are two noticeable aspects: firstly, this technique requires a high level of consciousness. Back muscles are not often employed, thus, the degree of sensitivity is not as high as other body parts. As Mndoyants stated to his student, ‘Through contain concentration

³⁷⁴ Lesson Observation from Alexander Mndoyants (2AM0.2).

³⁷⁵ Lesson Observation from Dimitri Alexeev (2DA1.3) and Alexander Mndoyants (2AM0.2).

³⁷⁶ Personal experience with Dina Parakhina.

³⁷⁷ Berman. *op. cit.*, 11.

³⁷⁸ Lesson Observation from Boris Berman (3BB1.4).

and consciousness, you will use the back as though you are using your fingers.’³⁷⁹ The second aspect is that the use of back technique requires artistic imagination, with examples such as ‘wire connecting from the back’, ‘uninterrupted succession of muscles from behind’, or ‘sound flowing from the back through the neck’ – all of which require some sort of cognition. This contrasts with the other two techniques mentioned earlier (finger and arm), which they can be achieved mostly through physical practice.

Summary

Having identified these areas through literature and observation, it is important to understand how these techniques are audible in performances. The major reason why Russian pianists employ all these areas together is that these combined areas provide a thicker and a fuller sound than merely playing with one body part. Indeed, not all musical passages and repertoires will require such thick and full tone quality, and occasionally Russian pianists will only use what is required. If we were to compare the same musical passage but with two different approaches (one with all parts; the other with merely one part), it is apparent that Russian pianists deliver a thicker sound. As we will see in a later chapter (Chapter 6), Marguerite Long was an advocate of the ‘finger only’ technique. In the opening octave of the Chopin’s Barcarolle, Marguerite Long’s sound quality is elegant and mellow. On the other hand her Russian colleague, Horowitz has a deeper, thicker sound. Further, Long’s sound does not linger as long as Horowitz’s opening octave.³⁸⁰

³⁷⁹ Lesson Observation from Alexander Mndoyants (2AM0.2).

³⁸⁰ For Long’s recording, see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s8zwZ-DfooY>; for Horowitz’s recording, see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8JKv2FyvJ8I>. [Accessed on 1 April 2017]



Ex 4.56 Opening of the Chopin's Barcarolle, op. 60

Another noticeable example is in the end few chords of Chopin's F minor Ballade.



Ex 4.57 Ending of the Chopin's F minor Ballade, op. 52

Josef Hoffmann, who was once a pupil of Anton Rubinstein, demonstrated the use of the combined body parts. His recording clearly shows a fuller and thicker sound in those chords than his French colleague, Alfred Cortot.³⁸¹ Although Hoffmann's chords were powerful, they were not harsh. This was due to the fact that his arm technique enabled him to release the weight – pushing his elbow away from his torso. Cortot, however, has a very direct approach to sound in these four chords, and are somewhat delicate, brilliant in terms of the quality.

It should be noted once again that one should not infer that only Russian pianists would ever use these techniques in their piano playing; rather, it is the overall

³⁸¹ For Hofmann's live recording, see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fqPN4gXy834>; and Cortot's recording at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xA9NYhAbUYg>. [Accessed on 1 April 2017]

combination of these technique that contribute to a Russian performance. In any case, it should be remembered that a combination of these techniques only contributes to one of the performing aesthetics of the ‘Russian School’. The exploration process above attempts to outline how modern Russian pianists demonstrate these areas of technique in lessons, and suggests a few performance examples where these Russian features are clearly audible.

4.3.2 Chapter Conclusion

In analysing the Russian Method Books and the Specialist Music School’s syllabus, there was a clear emphasis on the subject of technique in each of their respective lists. Contrary to Rachmaninov and Lhévinne, contemporary Russian pianists have denied the use of Hanon’s exercises – material that is now considered as ‘out-dated’. This implies that the process of the Russian Piano School is constantly evolving, and that members of the Russian school are aware of the needs in changing their technical focus. Further, the observation revealed that conservatoire teaching involves a certain level of technical discussion. This observation outcome is contrary to Russian pianists’ perceptions, where, in their view, conservatoire teaching should only involve discussion of musical interpretation.³⁸² Having noticed the difference between perception and reality on the subject of technique, it would be reasonable to explore and examine the other performing aesthetic of the Russian Piano School – a long melody line. Therefore, the following chapter will analyse the importance of the long melody line from three different perspectives: theoretical, practical, and pedagogical.

³⁸² See Alexander Nikolaev’s comments in Gerig (1974). *op. cit.*, 310.; Interviews with Elena Kuznetsova, Natalia Trull. Personal Conversations with Dina Parakhina.

CHAPTER 5

THE ENDLESS MELODIC LINE

Developing from the conclusions framed in Chapter 2, we can see that an endless melodic line is believed to be another recognisable sign of Russian pianism. The question that arises here, however, is how can we be assured that Russian-trained pianists create a longer melodic line than other pianists? If we were to assume that Russian-trained pianists create a longer melodic line than other, how far do these long lines go, and does that mean Russian pianists often depart from the printed text? Perhaps most essential of all, with regard to the modern Russian pianism, is whether this principle still features in recordings made by the younger generation of Russian pianists.

This chapter will expand on the notion of long melodic phrases and begin the investigation on the theoretical level – an exploration of how Russian pianists have valued this principle in literature and at interview. On the practical level, an in-depth examination of recordings by Russian pianists and European pianists will be outlined and representative recordings compared. In addition, further comparison of older and contemporary recordings made by Russian pianists will also be made.³⁸³

5.1 The Long Phrase: A Theoretical Consideration

Unlike other musicians, pianists have a fundamental concern to address on their chosen instrument – the idea of the piano being a percussive instrument. Despite the nature of the instrument, pianists are often required to phrase musical passages. As defined by John White, a phrase is ‘the smallest musical unit that conveys a more or

³⁸³ Recordings made before the year of 1995 are categorised for these purposes as ‘older’, in/after 1995 as ‘contemporary’.

less complete musical thought. Phrases vary in length and are terminated at a point of full or partial repose, which is called a *cadence*.³⁸⁴ Contemporary musicologists have argued that musicians should understand the term ‘phrasing’ as a more complex concept – more than just relating the term to the grouping of notes. For instance, in his *Translating Musical Meaning: The Nineteenth-Century Performer as Narrator*, John Rink suggests that it is the performer who ‘determines the music’s essential “narrative” content...by shaping the unfolding tale on the spur of the moment in an expressively appropriate manner’.³⁸⁵ By doing this, performer is in fact creating a ‘*grande ligne*’ i.e. linking all the parts and forming the performance into a ‘rhythmically activated synthesis’. Mine Doğantan-Dack’s article titled ‘*Phrasing – the Very Life of Music*’: *Performing the Music and Nineteenth-Century Performance Theory* discusses the use of the terminology during the eighteenth- and nineteenth-centuries, and most importantly, she pointed out that phrasing is closely related to sound.³⁸⁶ Like various places in the article, this notion can once again be seen in her description of phrasing execution:

‘...Proper phrasing in performance is based on the performer’s response to the incitement of the active tonal material, to his recognition of the attractional forces shaping the course of the phrase. Crucially, it is not sufficient to set off the boundaries of musical phrases through accentuation and punctuation in phrasing, since the performer also has to direct each phrase towards its point of repose, thus shaping its inner structure in accordance with musical logic and sustaining the dynamic impulse till the point of repose.’³⁸⁷

³⁸⁴ John White, *The Analysis of Music* (The Scarecrow Press, 1984), 43-44.

³⁸⁵ John Rink, ‘Translating Musical Meaning: The Nineteenth-Century Performer as Narrator’, in *Rethinking Music*, ed. Nicholas Cook and Mark Everist (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 217-218.

³⁸⁶ See Mine Doğantan-Dack, “‘Phrasing – the Very Life of Music’: Performing the Music and Nineteenth-Century Performance Theory” in *Nineteenth-Century Music Review*, 9 (2012), 18, 21, 27.

³⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 21.

Likewise, Hugo Riemann claims that phrasings are perceived ‘as an actual covering of the intervals between the notes’, but the space between the last note of the phrase and the first note of the next phrase ‘may thus be called “dead” intervals.’³⁸⁸

Based on the discussion above, phrasing can be seen in at least three different layers – the top part: the *grande ligne*; the middle part: the phrase itself; the bottom part: inside shaping of the phrase. In particular, the inside shaping of the phrase provides a sense of psychological direction for the performer. As we will see in a lesson observation later on (2DA2.4), one of Alexeev’s comments – ‘not to play every single note, because it is one long line’ is a precise example of an ‘inside shaping’. Not only does this statement concern the psychological direction, but it also suggests that not every note or pitch has the equal musical weight. Indeed, the importance of musical pitches varies, and the way in which the pianist connects those ‘more important’ notes depends on two aspects: firstly, his/her technical proficiency; and secondly the sound projection of the ‘more important’ notes. In any case, it is worth pointing out that the emphasis of the discussion here is not how pianist executes a long line, nor is it the type of long line (whether it is top, middle or bottom part) that they intend to produce; rather, as we will see in the next section, it is the notion of the long line that they have in mind that deserves more attention.

It is a truism that instrumentalists often refer to ideas of singing when learning how phrasing should be constructed. To this end, it is worth remembering that the founder of the Russian Piano School, Anton Rubinstein, tried to use as a model of tone

³⁸⁸ Hugo Riemann, *System der musikalischen Rhythmik und Metrik* (Breitkopf & Härtel, 1903): 14, quoted from Lohmann, ‘Hugo Riemann’, 263.

production the opera singer – Giovanni Rubini.³⁸⁹ Rubinstein noted in his autobiography:

‘Rubini too made a very similar impression on me. The charm of his voice was quite beyond conception, and his power of overcoming difficulties was really marvellous. He carried his listeners by storm. Suffice it to say that when the best voices in the Italian opera were invited from Paris to St Petersburg, Rubini’s singing brought tears to the eyes of – guess whom? Emperor Nicholas himself! Fancy Emperor Nicholas shedding tears! Rubini’s singing produced so powerful an effect on my senses that I strove to imitate the sound of his voice in my playing.’³⁹⁰

Not only did Rubini make an impact on Rubinstein’s playing, but also on his teaching. It is clear that Rubinstein encouraged his students strongly to study singing, and this can be shown by the advice he offered them:

‘Sing the melody! Sing it aloud! Then you will see for yourself how to phrase – where to breathe. That is the trouble with all of you. I tell you to enter the singing classes and learn to sing – and you come to me with certificates from the doctor that you cannot sing! That is why you cannot play even the simplest melody.’³⁹¹

Rubinstein’s remarks illustrated an essential point: before learning how to phrase, one should learn how to breathe in order to identify the phrase length, as if one were singing it. Indeed, understanding the way in which singers breathe can assist pianists, allowing them to develop a better awareness of melodic phrases. However, Rubinstein did not simply require his students to apply breathing in phrasing but also adopted this phrasing method in his own performances.³⁹² Leschetizky greatly appreciated the long phrases produced by Rubinstein, and was intrigued as to how these long phrases were

³⁸⁹ Bowen. *op. cit.*, 30.

³⁹⁰ Rubinstein. *op. cit.*, 20-21.

³⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 306.

³⁹² ‘Breathing phrasing’ in this chapter means phrasing on the piano, rather than breathing with lungs.

produced. Through observation, Leschetizky noticed that Rubinstein often drew deep breaths at the beginning of long phrases.³⁹³ He also depicted this phrasing methodology to one of his students, Ethel Newcomb, who recorded their conversation in her memoir:

‘...what deep breaths Rubinstein used to take at the beginning of long phrases, and also what repose he had and what dramatic pauses. “There is more rhythm between the notes than in the notes themselves.” He [Leschetizky] reminded me that Liszt used to say this. “Paula Szalit is the only one who ever asked me to tell how Rubinstein breathed. No one else ever seemed interested to know.”’³⁹⁴

If Newcomb’s account was accurate, not only did Leschetizky state where Rubinstein breathed, but she also illustrated the effect of breathing on the musical phrase. Some details of Rubinstein’s breathing phrasing in the account above are particularly important: for example, Szalit and Leschetizky seemed to be the only pianists who were interested in, or perhaps even noticed, Rubinstein’s long phrases. This suggested that the breathing phrasing method Rubinstein employed for longer phrasing seems not to have been widely discussed, or perhaps even noticed until that point. However, it should be remembered that Rubinstein was also an admirer of Liszt, and was deeply impressed by the playing of the master.³⁹⁵ As I pointed out in Chapter 2, Rubinstein adopted Liszt’s free use of arm weight, elastic wrist and flexible body movement. This in fact ‘led to a new method of phrasing, which was distinguished by a “broader breathing”’.³⁹⁶ However, if Rubinstein had borrowed this method of phrasing from Liszt, it is somewhat surprising that Rubinstein did not mention it at all in his autobiography, since he was trying to imitate Liszt from all aspects:

³⁹³ *Ibid.*, 336.

³⁹⁴ Ethel Newcomb, *Leschetizky as I knew Him*, (New York: D. Appleton, 1921), 194.

³⁹⁵ Rubinstein. *op. cit.*, 20.

³⁹⁶ Zenkin. *op. cit.*, 97.

‘At that time I was a devoted imitator of Liszt, of his manners, and movements, his trick of tossing back his hair, his way of holding his hands, of all the peculiar movements of his playing, which naturally called forth a smile from those who had heard Liszt, and perhaps also increased the interest felt in the boy-virtuoso.’³⁹⁷

As mentioned earlier, Rubinstein suggested his students attend singing classes, and emphasised that understanding where to breathe is the key aspect in phrasing.

It is unfortunate that Rubinstein did not make any recordings, and therefore we are unable to investigate his breathing method in relation to phrasing from a first-hand perspective. It is fortunate however, that Leschetizky, who first noticed and appreciated this method of phrasing, made some early recordings in 1906. If Leschetizky was impressed by this ‘breathing phrasing’, it is hard to imagine he did not attempt to include it in his playing. After hearing the Bohemian pianist, Julius Schulhoff (1825-1898) in 1850 in Vienna, Leschetizky was deeply impressed by his tone production and wrote:

‘Under his hands the piano seemed like another instrument... I began to foresee a new style of playing. That melody standing out in bold relief, that wonderful sonority – all this must be due to a new and entirely different touch. And that cantabile, a legato such as I had not dreamed possible on the piano, a human voice rising above the sustaining harmonies! Schulhoff’s playing was a revelation to me. From that day I tried to find that touch. I thought of it constantly, and studied the five fingers diligently to learn the method of production. I practiced incessantly, sometimes even on the table-top, striving to attain firm finger-tips and a light wrist, which I felt to be the means to my end. I kept that beautiful sound well in my mind, and it made the driest work

³⁹⁷ Rubinstein. *op. cit.*, 19.

interesting...In the meantime, Schulhoff had conquered Vienna. Heard in a large hall, his playing produced the proper effect.³⁹⁸

Through this instance, one could obtain a clear view that Leschetizky constantly applied other methods of playing into his own pianism. Further, his comment stressed the importance of touch. Although the issue of touch will be addressed in the next chapter, it would be useful to highlight the connection between touch and long phrasing at this point. In order to produce a longer phrase, a lighter touch is crucial at the beginning of the phrase; this will provide an opportunity for the phrase to drive to its climax point, where at that point, a deeper touch is needed.

As mentioned earlier, Rubinstein insisted his students learn phrasing from breathing; it is also difficult to conceive that Josef Hofmann did not receive such advice from Rubinstein. Whilst Hofmann briefly mentioned methods of breathing in his publication,³⁹⁹ the breathing phrasing association was absent. When suggesting his approach to phrasing, Hofmann noted:

‘Phrasing is a rational division and subdivision of musical sentences, and serves to make them intelligible. It corresponds closely with punctuation in literature and its recitation. Find out the start, the end, and the culminating point of your phrase. The last-named is usually to be found upon the highest note of the phrase, while the former are usually indicated by phrasing slurs. Generally speaking, the rising of the melody is combined with an increase of strength up to the point of culmination, where, in keeping with the note design, the decrease of strength sets in. For artistic phrasing it is of the utmost importance properly to recognize the principal mood of the piece, for this must, naturally, influence the rendition of every detail in it. A phrase occurring in an

³⁹⁸ See Countesse Angèle Potocka, *Theodore Leschetizky, An Intimate Study of the Man and the Musician* (New York: The Century Co., 1903), 89-91.

³⁹⁹ ‘Breathing is as important in piano playing as in all physical exertion, and more so when we speak of pieces that entail the use of great muscular force; for this causes a quickening in the action of the heart; respiration naturally keeps step with it, and the result is often a forcible breathing through the mouth...I recommend breathing through the nose as long as possible...’ See Hofmann, *op. cit.*, 55-56.

agitated movement, for instance, will have to be rendered very differently from a similar-looking phrase in a slow, dreamy movement.’⁴⁰⁰

Michel Blavet (1700-1768), a composer and a virtuoso flautist, was particularly interested in clarifying musical phrasing. His interest led him to several publications on flute music. As Lewis E. Peterman, Jr. pointed out, several of Blavet’s publications, including three collections of instrumental arrangements (*Recueils de pieces*) and his six sonatas for flute (Op. 2) – contain hundreds of carefully notated breathing marks, designating precisely where musical phrases occur.⁴⁰¹ In his *Avertissement* for Op. 2, for instance, Blavet discloses his rationale for including these notated breathing marks – an altogether unusual procedure for his time:

‘I have always noticed in pupils a difficulty in taking breath at the correct place, which makes them often confuse one phrase with the next, or interrupt a melody which should be expressed in one breath. In order to avoid this confusion, I have decided to put the letter “h” [*halein*, i.e. breath] in the places where one should breathe, especially in pieces such as *Rondeaux* and other little character pieces where gracefulness depends on the arrangement of the phrases, clarity, and precision which comes with breathing easily and in the correct place.’⁴⁰²

Based on Blavet’s descriptions, phrasing should be expressed in one breath. He seemed to believe that lung breathing and phrasing are interrelated. This theory is undoubtedly true in flute playing, and pianists also seem to consider breathing and phrasing are indispensable elements, as mentioned above with Leschetizky’s

⁴⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 98-99.

⁴⁰¹ See Lewis E. Peterman Jr., ‘Michel Blavet’s Breathing Marks: A rare Source of Musical Phrasing in Eighteenth-Century France’, *Performance Review* 4 (1991), 186-98.

⁴⁰² Michel Blavet, *Sonatas Melées de Pieces Pour la Flûte-traversiere, avec la Basse*, op. 2.

description on Rubinstein's playing.⁴⁰³ Shirley Kirsten, a noted teacher and a recording artist, also provided a detailed observation on lung breathing and phrasing:

‘Over the years I’ve crystallized my thoughts about phrasing and breathing. I know that the pace of the breath and an ability to inhale deeply and relaxingly release air at various phrase intervals create beautiful lines. Music must breathe—notes cannot be crowded even in rapid succession. If the breath is flowing naturally, replenished by a wholesome intake of air to synchronize with cadences, resolutions, and even at the very beginning of a composition, expressive playing will be sustained. In addition, the supple flow of the wrists, with arms and elbows relaxed, complete the breathing ensemble. The breath underlies coordinated, graceful movement of the whole body as it merges with the music...Singers rely on the breath and its control. The vocal model is certainly a reference for pianists.’⁴⁰⁴

Although there will be an in depth examination of recordings later on in the chapter, it would be helpful to outline some initial analysis from the recordings of Leschetizky and Hofmann. Taking Chopin's Nocturne in D flat major, Op. 27 No. 2 as an example; compare the phrase length and observe whether Leschetizky and Hofmann have similar phrase structure under the influence of Rubinstein's method of phrasing.⁴⁰⁵ Whilst both had different levels of influence from Rubinstein, Leschetizky and Hofmann only have a slight difference in phrasing the music. One of the examples is the opening melody:

⁴⁰³ C.f. p. 204 (see footnote 331).

⁴⁰⁴ Shirley Kirsten, ‘The Art of piano playing is about breathing and phrasing’ (2011) <https://arioso7.wordpress.com/2011/10/06/the-art-of-piano-playing-is-about-breathing-and-phrasing-videos/> [Accessed 1 May 2016]. See also <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A5Wx5SH7yf4> [Accessed 1 May 2016], where she gave a video demonstrate on how lung breathing and phrasing are closely related.

⁴⁰⁵ Theodor Leschetizky – *Theodor Leschetizky: The Welte Mignon Mystery Vol. XIII CD* 1194; Josef Hofmann – *Josef Hofmann plays Chopin* (Nimbus Grand Piano: 1942) NI8803.



Ex 5.1 Chopin's Nocturne Op. 27 No. 2, bars 1-6

Leschetizky and Hofmann began the melodic phrase in the second bar; but Hofmann ends the phrase on the B flat note (at the beginning of bar 6), whilst Leschetizky ends the same phrase with the D flat semiquaver (at the end of bar 4), and begins a new phrase with the A natural. Their length of phrasing is more apparent between bars 10-14, when Leschetizky separates the melodic phrase with the first note of the semiquaver group in the left hand, breaking the melodic line into small, half-bar units. Instead of breaking into small units, Hofmann takes the whole phrase in one breath.



Ex 5.2 Chopin's Nocturne Op. 27 No. 2, bars 10-18

Although it was not possible to hear Hofmann's own breathing in the recording, one important indication in his recording was the tension in sustaining notes and between the notes. Hofmann's longer notes sustain for a longer duration, as if the notes had momentum and continued to last, giving an impression of an endless melodic line. This also tallies with the depiction by Leschetizky that 'there are more rhythms between the notes than in the notes themselves'.⁴⁰⁶ Although the length of their phrases is not drastically different, Hofmann always has a longer line in comparison with Leschetizky. Joseph Banowetz made an essential performance suggestion in phrasing when playing romantic repertoires:

'Long phrases are extremely important in this [romantic] music; indeed, most great interpreters of the Romantic repertory tend to think in long melodic lines much like a singer who does not have to breathe in short gasps.'⁴⁰⁷

Having examined recordings of Anton Rubinstein's student (Hofmann) and one of his contemporaries (Leschetizky), one may still have uncertainties as to whether Hofmann and Leschetizky were the only ones who had such long phrasing in mind. To this end, another recording from the same period, but by an artist of a different nationality, was selected to include in this discussion. Polish pianist, Raoul Koczalski (1884-1948) recorded his performance of this score in 1924.⁴⁰⁸ Like Hofmann, Koczalski begins the phrase in bar 2 and ends it on the B-flat note in bar 6. However, Koczalski's performance does not contain as many long phrases as Hofmann's performance. Based on the limited sample examined here, it would seem that the long phrasing was uncommon across Eastern Europe in the early twenty century.

⁴⁰⁶ Newcomb. *op. cit.*, 194.

⁴⁰⁷ Joseph Banowetz. *Anton Rubinstein: Piano Music* (New York: Dover, 2001), V.

⁴⁰⁸ Raoul Von Koczalski – *The Complete Raoul Von Koczalski Vol 1 Polydor Recordings 1924-1928* (Marston: 1924) 52063.

At this point, it will be useful to explore whether the notion of a long melodic line has been implanted in Rubinstein's successors, in other words, in contemporary Russian pianists. However, before launching into the discussion, I shall draw on my learning experience as a pianist, and illustrate a 'breathing phrasing' example that I encountered in the ensuing discussion. Whilst preparing for an extensive recital tour in Asia, I requested some extra lessons with a prominent Asian teacher. Lessons were equally inspiring as with Russian teachers, but it was her method of phrasing that immediately caught my attention. In creating a longer line, she insisted that I breathe in whilst playing the phrase, continue to inhale until the peak of the phrase; and subsequently, on reaching the top of the phrase, breathe out (exhale) until the end of the phrase. She explained further that this breathing phrasing method is largely to do with listening ability, just as in someone who fully concentrates in listening to what others are saying quietly; one would hold one's breath, and focus predominantly on listening. Certainly this Asian teacher studied in Europe and did not have any Russian influence. Nevertheless, this personal encounter reflects two central points: first, it is the listening element that the pianist should be aware of; secondly, this 'breathing phrasing' method is not found exclusively among modern Russian pianists. At this point, the primary question is: do contemporary Russian pianists play with long melodic lines?

As pointed out in Chapter 2, one can readily see how modern Russian pianists still value the notion of a long musical phrase in piano playing. In comparing with pianists from other nationalities, Sofya Gulyak suggested that the concept of a long line is not necessary implanted in all pianists: 'When I teach in London or elsewhere in a masterclass, I have to explain what a long line is, and how to continue a sound.'⁴⁰⁹ If

⁴⁰⁹ Interview with Sofya Gulyak.

we were to analyse Gulyak's statement, she seems to imply that student pianists outside Russia do not necessarily understand the purpose of a long line. Although it may seem necessary to have long phrase from the Russian perspective, whether it should be included in all repertoires are debatable. Pavel Nersessian admits that pieces by Mozart 'do not need so many long lines', and for him 'the main priority is phrasing; because this is the only element which starts in the past and moves music into the future. That is why good phrasing is a key to interesting playing.'⁴¹⁰ Taking into account those three characteristics attributed to the Russian Piano School – solid technical foundation, long-line phrasing, long lasting tone production – it is clear that Nersessian values phrasing more than the other two. However, for Nersessian, this phrasing does not necessarily have to be long-line. This contradicts with his predecessors, where long-line phrasing was seen as a vital aspect of decent performance in Russia during the twentieth century. Boris Berman even suggested that long melody line appears with the rise of Russian music, before the twentieth century. As he claimed,

'I think it's a little bit like chicken or egg – how to say which is before? It [long melody line] has been cultivated both in Russian performing school and in Russian music. The quality of a Russian long lasting line is extremely important and immediately recognisable.'⁴¹¹

On the other hand, Elena Kuzentsova agreed with Nersessian and commented:

'It is probably a stereotype that Russian pianists try to make a long line out of all music. It is not entirely true. There are Russian pianists, for example, Eliso Virsaladze or Alexei Lubimov, who probably play Mozart or Haydn better than some great Western pianists.'⁴¹²

⁴¹⁰ Interview with Pavel Nersessian.

⁴¹¹ Interview with Boris Berman.

⁴¹² Interview with Elean Kuznetsova.

For Kuznetsova, Eliso Virsaladze (1942-) and Alexei Lubimov (1944-) are two of the exceptional pianists for Mozart or Haydn.⁴¹³ In order to understand why Virsaladze, from Kuznetsova's point of view, is better than some Western pianists, Virsaladze's recording is used as one of the examples in the next section in order to further explore her phrase-lengths in Mozart. However, at this point, it will be useful to conduct an initial analysis on Lubimov's performance. In order to provide a coherent example, the recording selected here is the Mozart's Piano Sonata in F major, KV 332 – a musical example that is used throughout Chapters 5 and 6.



Ex 5.3 Mozart's Piano Sonata in F, K 332, bars 1-12

It is clear that Lubimov performs this Sonata with short phrases, despite the fact that he has a tendency to connect bar 5-6 together. Because of his clear phrasing, it is not difficult to identify various musical sections (exposition, first theme) within the first

⁴¹³ Eliso Virsaladze was born in 1942 and trained in Georgian SSR. She completed her postgraduate training at Moscow Conservatoire with Yakov Zak and Heinrich Neuhaus. Technically speaking, Virsaladze is considered as a Georgian pianist, rather than Russian pianist. She won the third prize at Tchaikovsky International Piano Competition in 1962, then the first prize at the Schumann Competition in Zwickau in 1966. Virsaladze has taught at the Moscow Conservatoire since 1967; her students include: Boris Berezovsky, Elena Voskresenskaya.

Alexi Lubimov, pianist, fortepianist, and harpsichordist, was born in 1944 and studied at the Moscow Conservatoire with Henirich Neuhaus and Lev Naumov. He is one of the first Russian musicians to work on the period instruments.

movement, without following the score. According to Lubimov, learning classical music on modern instrument restricted his feeling, as he stated:

‘I can’t get a feeling of it [Beethoven] at all on modern instruments. I am tired of trying, and there is always something missing – colour, articulation, texture...Mozart is somehow easier. In his music I can get a different vision on different instruments. When playing Mozart I try to use all the possibilities of the modern piano but still respecting Classical structures, with a rhetorical and not a singing way of making the music. I want to perform him as a contemporary composer.’⁴¹⁴

Lubimov’s statement pointed out an important point – he does not allow Mozart’s music to sing, at least, not to the extent that Russian pianists would sing with an endless long line. This mentality is the key component as to why Lubimov’s performance is closer to Western interpretation than many Russian pianists, as we will see later on in this chapter. It is reasonable to assume that Lubimov had learnt this historical informed approach when he entirely forsook the piano for three years (1979-1982) in order to study harpsichord and fortepiano, which needed ‘entirely new learning of acoustic and touch’.⁴¹⁵ It is worth pointing out that the study of historical informed performance was not as widely acknowledged during the Soviet period as it is now in the West. Even at present, the concept of ‘authentic’ performance cannot be found in teaching activities at the Moscow Conservatoire. We will see later on in this chapter, Irina Plotnikova insisting that her pupil create a longer line at the opening of this Mozart sonata.⁴¹⁶ It is perhaps the case that Russian pianists tended to think they create a historical informed performance, as concert pianist Leslie Howard pointed

⁴¹⁴ <http://www.gramophone.co.uk/feature/restless-traveller-an-exclusive-interview-with-pianist-alexei-lubimov> [assessed 8 May 2016].

⁴¹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴¹⁶ See p. 241, c.f. Ex 5.32 from Chapter 5.

out, so that Russian editions in fact specify a long line at the opening of this Mozart's sonata, as shown below:



Ex 5.4 Opening phrase in Russian Editions

Despite the fact that Kuznetsova and Nersessian both agree that long-line phrasing is not necessarily applicable in all repertoires, Sofya Gulyak emphasises the importance of the long line to such an extreme that ‘it [long-line] should be included even in a scale, you have to think about lines.’⁴¹⁷ The only valuable aspect of Gulyak’s statement is her thoughts of lines within scales. It is worth noting there are no phrasing indications in scales, but it can be seen that Russian pianists apply phrasing even without any signs. Scales can also be seen as a tool for Russian pianists to practise their long-line phrasing. It is also precisely the kind of attitude that Gulyak has towards phrasing that enables Russian pianists to play musical passages with long phrasing automatically, and unconsciously. In addition, Gulyak further pointed out, ‘we always have to think about a very long line. For me it is so natural that I don’t define it as something special.’⁴¹⁸

Having considered various contemporary views on phrasing, it is surprising that none of these recent Russian pianists pointed out the ‘breathing phrasing’ method. Thus, it is reasonable to assume the breathing method for long phrasing had not been passed

⁴¹⁷ Interview with Sofya Gulyak.

⁴¹⁸ *Ibid.*

on to the next generation of Russian pianists. Instead, a similar breathing phrasing method is found outside Russia – indicating that this method may have lost its connection with Russia but have found its way into Europe during the mid-twentieth century. If this is as close as we can get to a conclusion at this point, it remains on a theoretical level, until we examine this characteristic in the performances of contemporary Russian pianists in the following section.

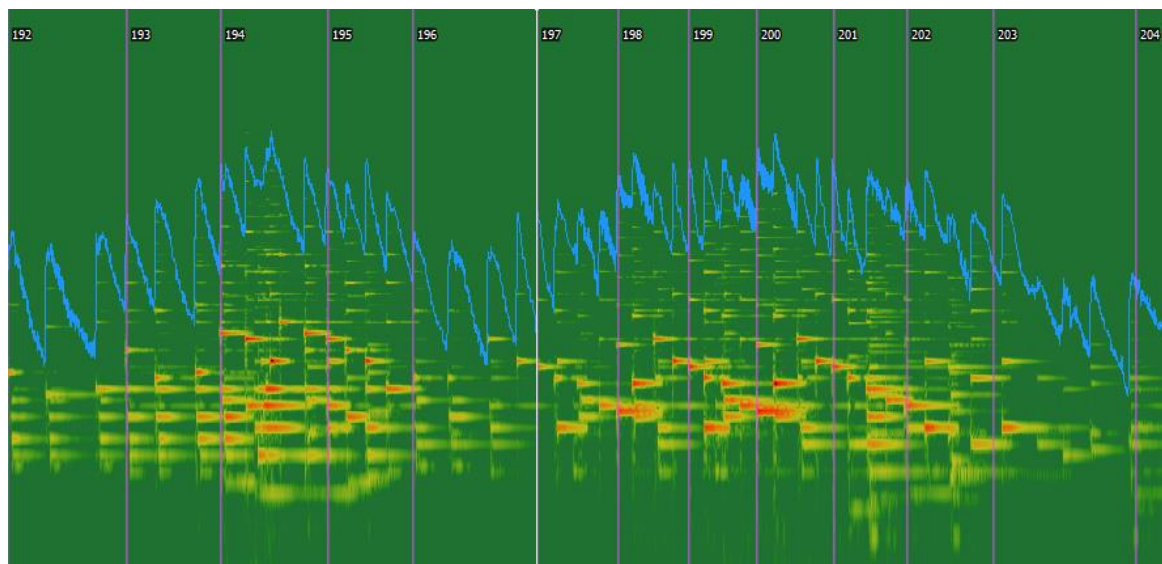
5.2 The Long Phrase: An Analysis of Performances

Building on the conclusion framed above, the following section will analyse and compare a series of audio recordings made by Russian and Western pianists. In particular, this section will aim to address in practice the concerns raised at the beginning of this chapter; for example, do Russian pianists create longer lines than Western pianists in their performances? If they do, how ‘long’ are these long lines? Or perhaps it is the case that long lines are only a myth among Russian pianists, not necessarily employed in their performances. Most important of all: is there supporting evidence to support this theoretical assumption?

At this point, it will be appropriate to use a musical passage from Tchaikovsky’s Piano Concerto in B flat minor, Op. 23 as a case study. This particular passage is taken from bar 192 to bar 204. Tchaikovsky provided a number of dynamic and performance indications, and there is only a handful of phrasing directions. Thus, we are able to compare Western and Russian pianists’ creation of lines more clearly – through their natural instance and reaction to the musical text.



Ex 5.5 Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto in B flat minor, Op. 23, bars 192 – 204

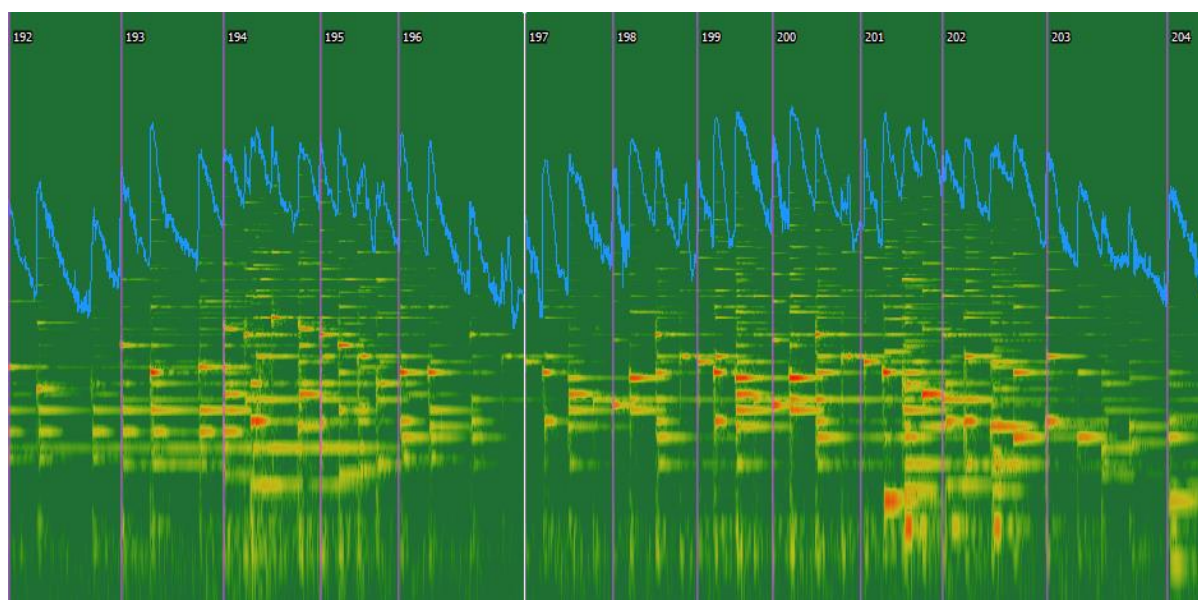


Ex 5.6 Recorded Performance by Kissin (1988) in Sonic Visualiser

As pointed out earlier, if Russian pianists truly value long lines as much as they expressed in documents and interviews, it should be easily distinguishable in recordings. Indeed, the recording of Evgeny Kissin (1971-) provides an example of this long line characteristic. Despite the fact that there were only a number of short lines marked in the score, it clearly shows Kissin only create two long lines. He aims to reach the musical climax in bar 194, and creates another line at the end of bar 196.

It is worth pointing out the Sonic Visualiser graph displayed here is made up of two noticeable components, with the purple line as bar lines – dividing the excerpt into twelve bars. Each graph has a power curve, generated by a programme written by Craig Sapp for the Mazurka Project.⁴¹⁹ This power curve is indicated as the blue shape in the graph, while the each sounding frequency in this excerpt is represented by the colour according to the power of the notes. These graded colours tone can be divided in three major categories: quieter (green), moderate (yellow-red) and louder (black) flames. Examples 5.7 – 5.27 are all laid out in the same format, with some variation from examples 5.20 – 5.27.

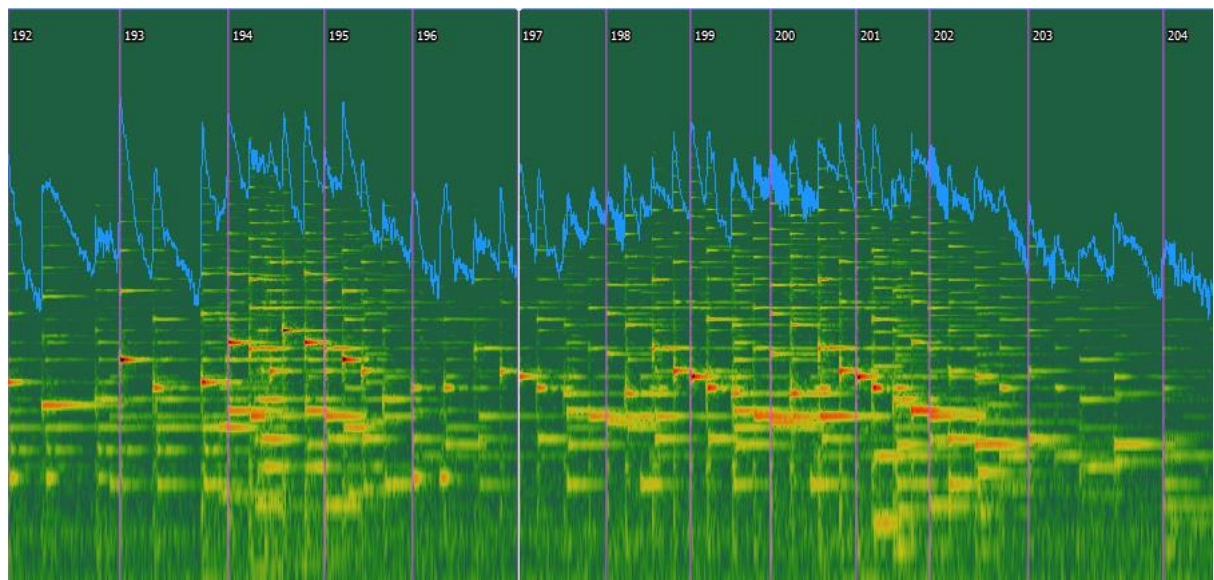
A similar phrasing approach is found in the performance of his fellow pianist, Nikolai Lugansky (1972-) in Example 5.8. Although Kissin and Lugansky ended the first phrase somehow differently, the overall shape of two distinguishable lines are still clearly shown.



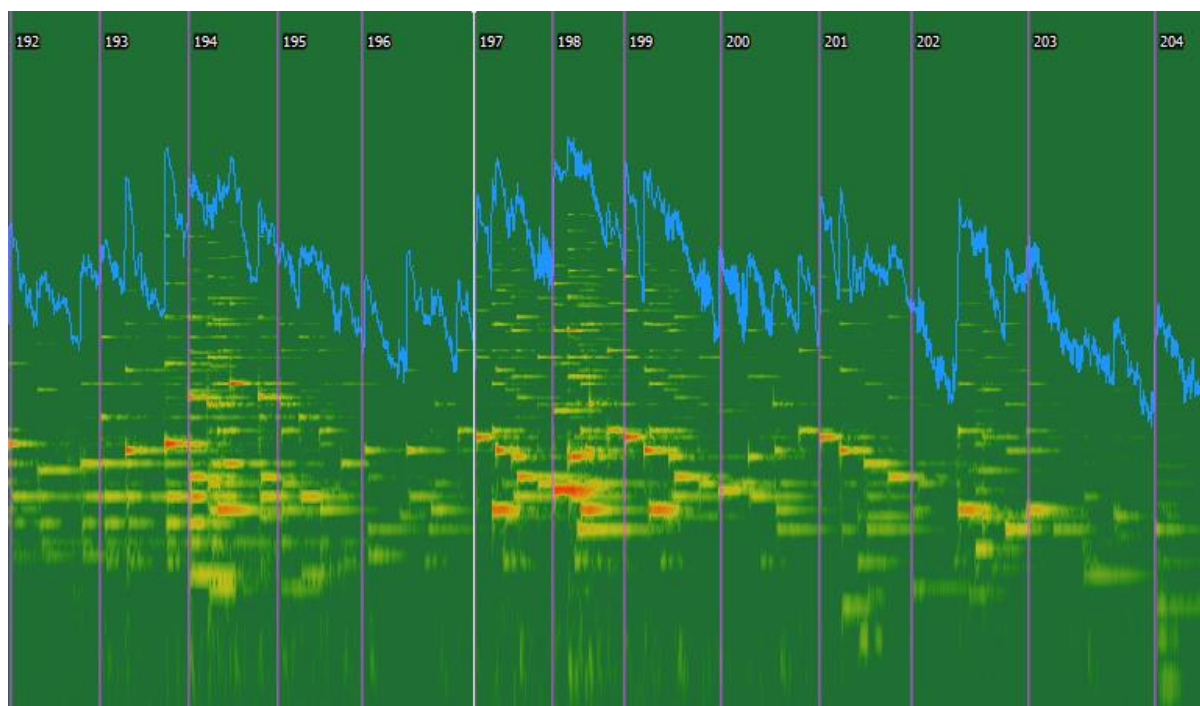
Ex 5.7 Recorded Performance by Lugansky (2013) in Sonic Visualiser

⁴¹⁹ <http://www.mazurka.org.uk/software/sv/plugin/MzPowerCurve/> [Accessed 7 April 2016].

Since Kissin and Lugansky are both of the same generation, it could be that they have a similar performance approach through period performance style. So it is vital to examine some of the recordings made by their predecessors. To this end, three Russian pianists from a similar background have been chosen for this analysis: Andrei Gavrilov (1955-), Mikhail Pletnev (1957-) and Ivo Pogorelich (1958-). Gavrilov's recording from 1974, Pletnev's recording from 1991, and Pogorelich's recording from 1987 all demonstrate a different way of playing long lines, in comparison with the recordings by Kissin and Lugansky.

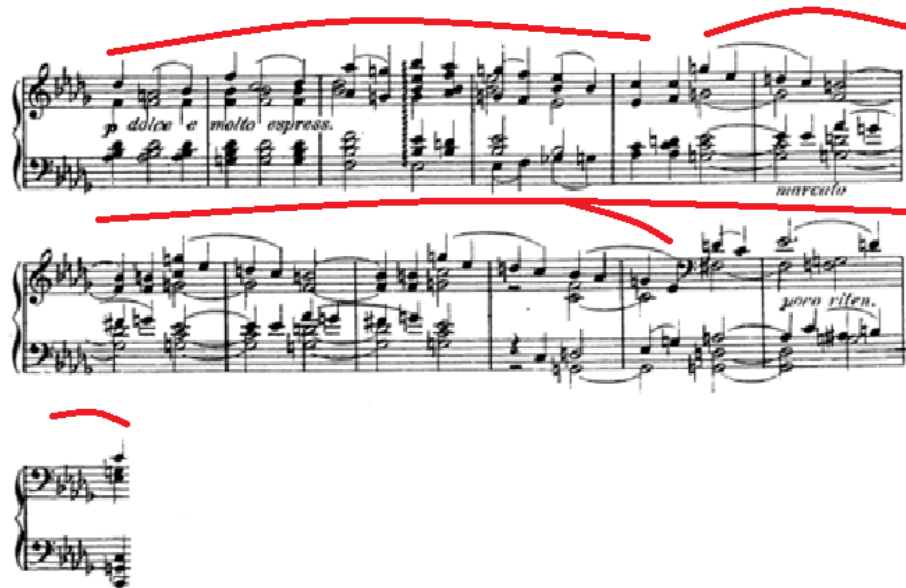


Ex 5.8 Recorded Performance by Gavrilov (1974) in Sonic Visualiser



Ex 5.9 Recorded Performance by Pletnev (1991) in Sonic Visualiser

If we were to analyse the performances by Gavrilov and Pletnev, it is clear that the overall shapes of two long lines are still identifiable. Although Pletnev's performance is similar to Gavrilov's, there is one major difference. In the second phrase, for example, Pletnev intended to end his second phrase earlier; instead of ending the phrase on the C minor chord in bar 204, he attempts to finish the line on the second beat of bar 202 before finally ending the line in bar 204. Pletnev's phrasing is indicated below in red:



Ex 5.10 Recorded Performance by Pletnev (1991) – phrase reproduction in text

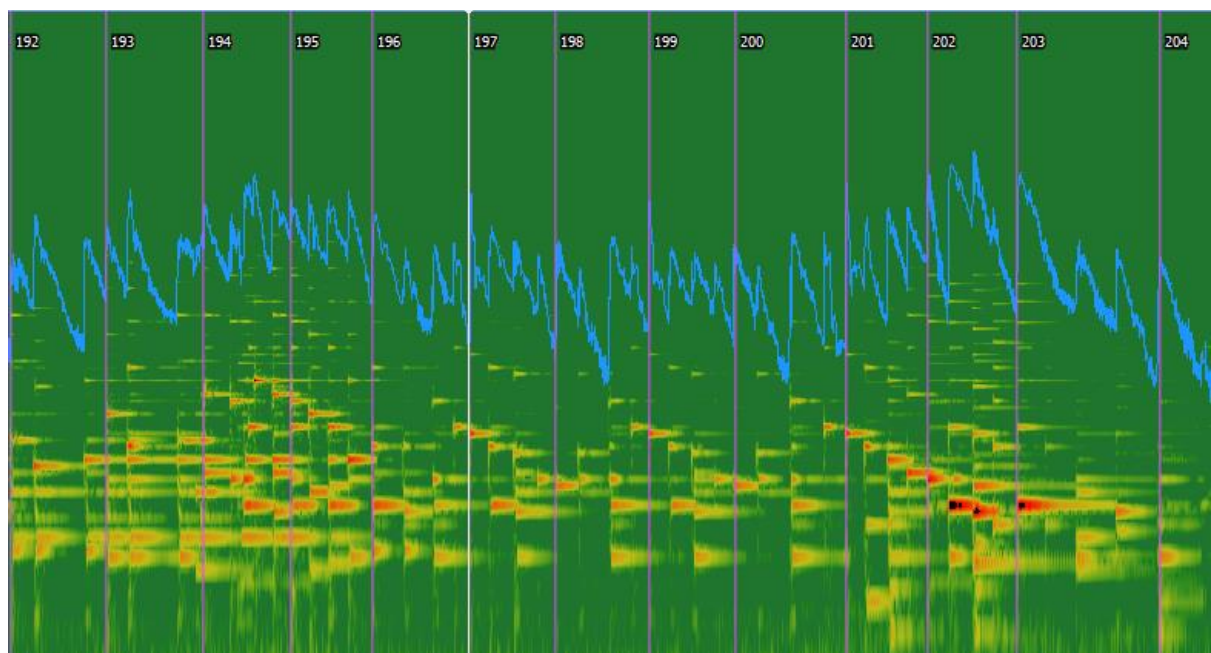
The phrasing junction in bar 202 is somewhat surprising, since the perfect cadence is located in the first beat of bar 204. Pletnev did not ultimately end the phrase in bar 202, instead he only took an almost unnoticeable gap between the second and third beat. He maintained the long phrase by playing the rest of the phrase (from the third beat in bar 202 until bar 204) in a diminuendo approach.⁴²⁰ According to Yuan-Pu Chiao, this “Russia diminuendo singing phrase” is a kind of performing habit or preference commonly heard in the playing of (early) Russian pianists. They [Russian pianists] have a tendency to sing in diminuendo lines instead of in an Italian, arch-like, *bel canto* way at the piano.⁴²¹

Having investigated Gavrilov’s and Pletnev’s phrasing style, it would be useful to compare this phrasing pattern with their colleague, Pogorelich. This long phrasing method is also presented in Pogorelich’s performance from 1987. Although it is not as

⁴²⁰ Diminuendo approach – gently getting softer and softer when rounding off a phrase. According to Bella Davidovich, Rustem Hayroudinoff and Dang Thai Son, this phrasing method is a typical ‘Russian’ habit of phrase ending. See Yuan-Pu Chiao, *The Changing Style of Playing Rachmaninoff’s Piano Music*, (Unpublished PhD dissertation, King’s College London, University of London, 2012), 101-103.

⁴²¹ *Ibid.*, 117.

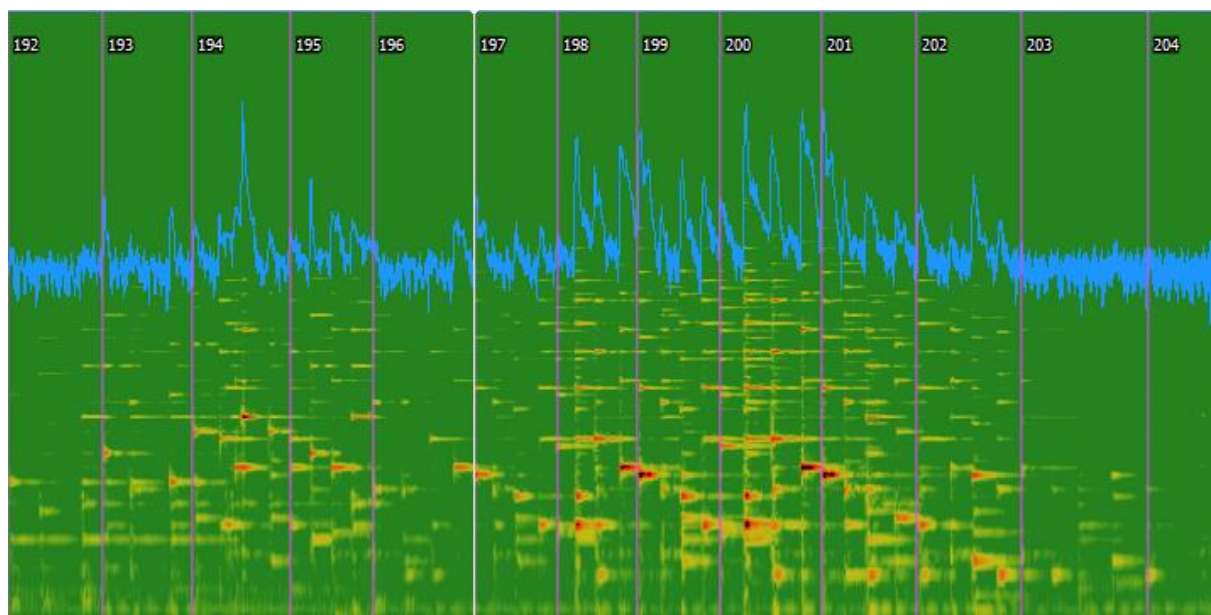
explicit as Gavrilov and Pletnev, the general shape and phrase ending are still noticeable. While one can conclude that all Russian pianists discussed above have phrasing habits that are almost identical, Pogorelich seems to make a different choice of phrasing point. For instance, Kissin, Lugansky, Gavrilov, and Pletnev all ended their first line in bar 195, but Pogorelich clearly considered the line as ending in bar 198. The two climax points in Pogorelich's performance, located in bar 194 and bar 202, are also not as obvious as in other Russian pianists.



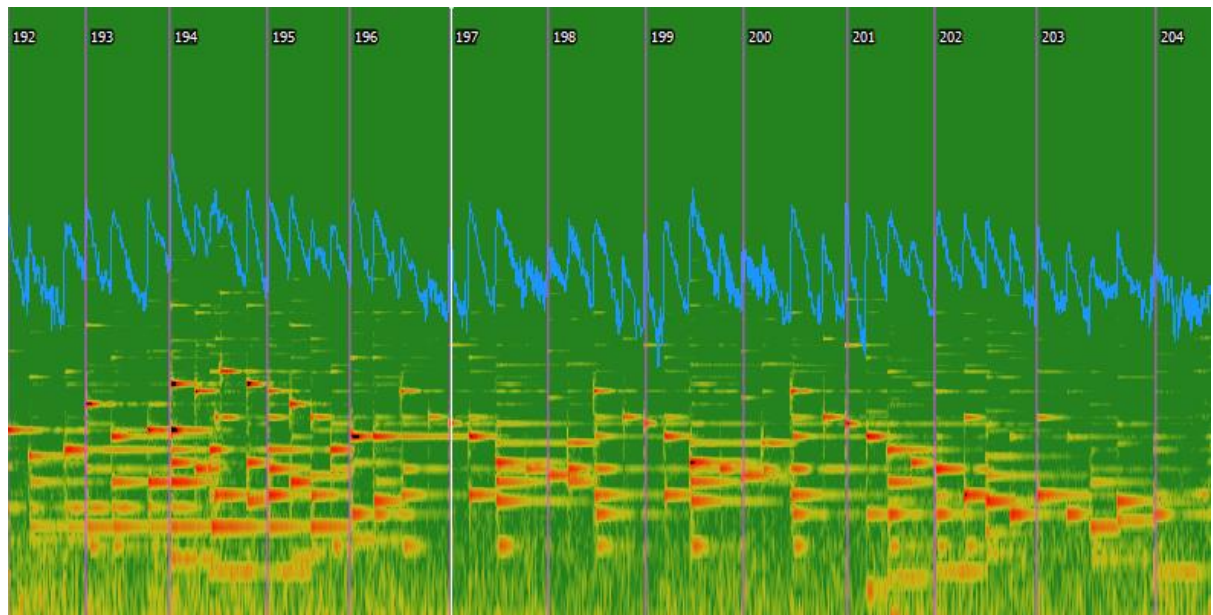
Ex 5.11 Recorded Performance by Pogorelich (1987) in Sonic Visualiser

Based on the analysis above, it is clear that Russian pianists from different generations have played this excerpt with a similar approach to phrasing. In addition, they have the tendency to create lines that do not necessarily exist in the printed text. In the case of Pogorelich, he has different ending and climax points comparing with other Russian pianists, and this resulted in a varied phrase length. Although Pogorelich's performance is slightly varied, in that he presented another kind of phrasing style the long line is still recognisable in his performance. As pointed out in

Chapter 2, it is worth remembering that performing schools existed due to the fact that performers in the group share identifiable performing principles. To this end, in order to strengthen the argument, it will be helpful to examine recordings made by non-Russian pianists, so as to explore whether this performing principle (long line) also features in their performances. As far as the selection of recordings is concerned, I tried to collect recordings by pianists with a wide-range of nationalities and generations: Poland, Hungary, Germany-Japan, Israel, and China. Indeed, the performances of Polish pianist Arthur Rubinstein (1887-1982), Hungarian pianist Georges Cziffra (1921-1994), German-Japanese pianist Alice Sara Ott (1988-), Israeli pianist Ilana Vered (1943-), and Chinese pianist Lang Lang (1982-), are all dramatically different from the Russian pianists compared above.

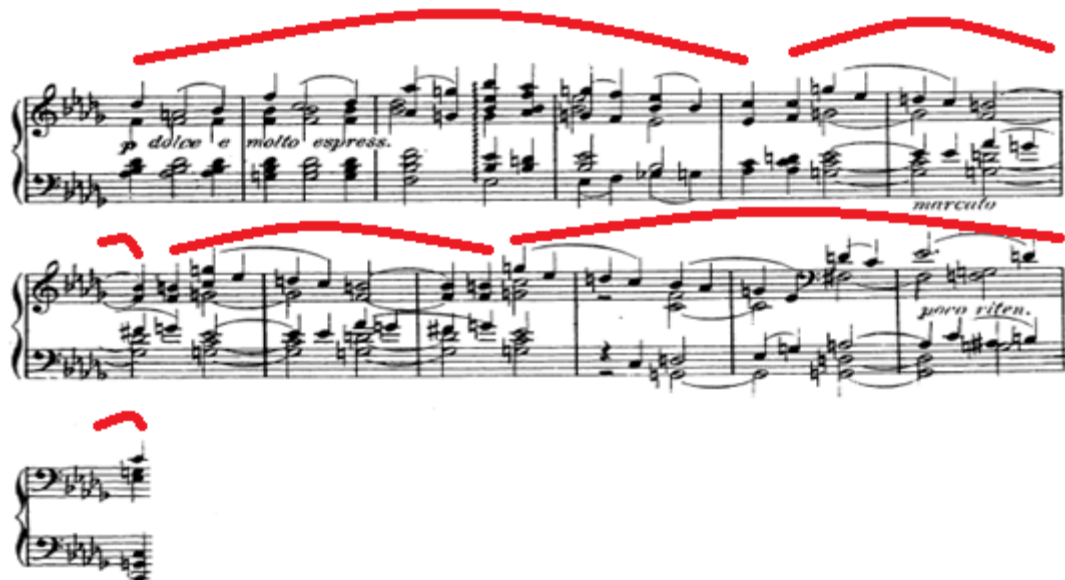


Ex 5.12 Recorded Performance by Arthur Rubinstein (1954) in Sonic Visualiser



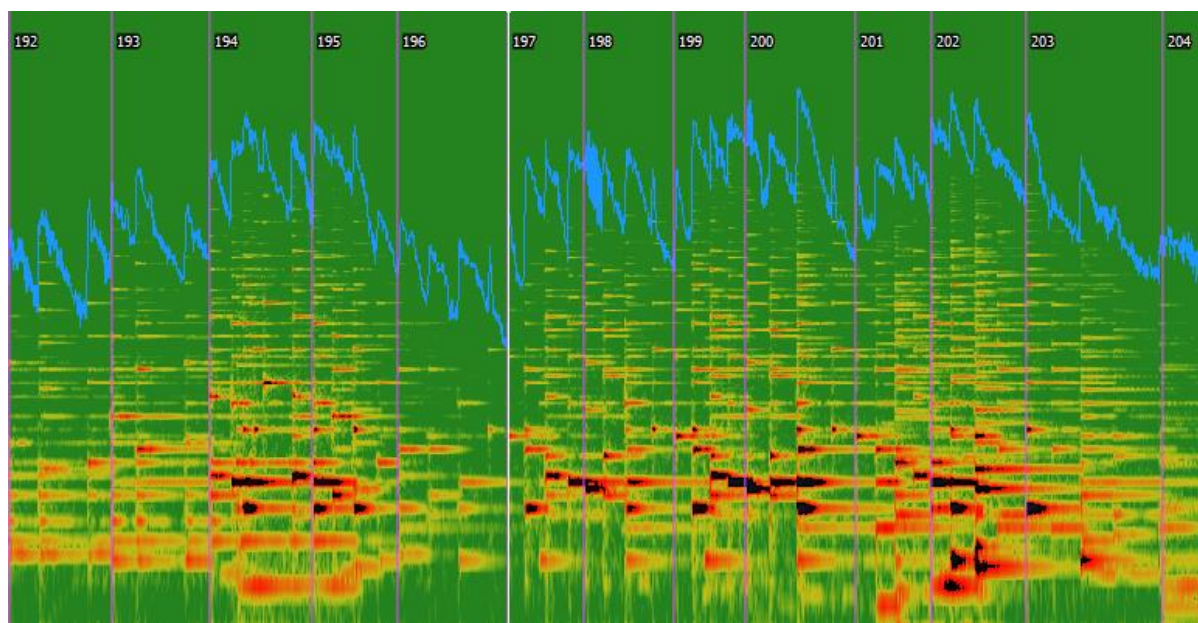
Ex 5.13 Recorded Performance by Cziffra (1964) in Sonic Visualiser

Whilst a unified phrasing pattern appears in all the performances from the Russian pianists, any sign of such phrasing is clearly absent in the performances of all the non-Russian pianists. For instance, in the recording of Arthur Rubinstein from 1954, he plays the passage with a rather flat line. From the Sonic Visualiser exhibit in Ex 5.12, it is evident that Rubinstein followed the musical text and performed the excerpt without any further phrasing. In a slightly later generation, neither does Cziffra show a clear line in his performance (Ex 5.13), but instead, there are a number of lines: first phrase, bar 192 to bar 196; second phrase, bar 196 to bar 198; third phrase, bar 198 to bar 200; fourth phrase, bar 200 to 204. His phrasing is indicated below:

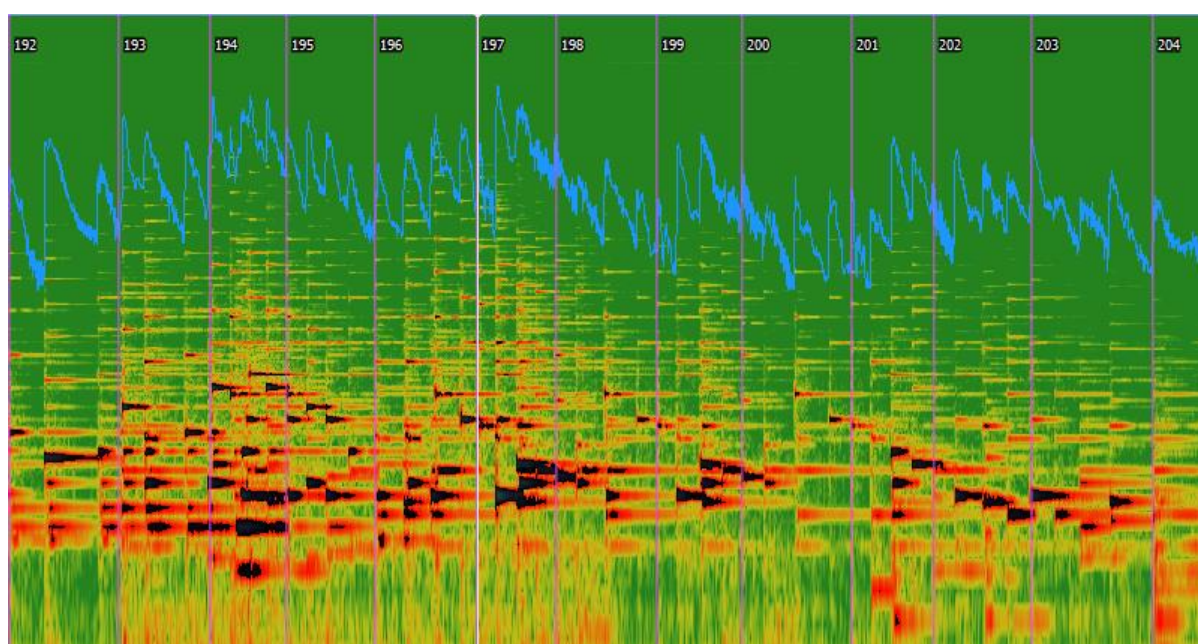


Ex 5.14 Recorded Performance by Cziffra (1964) – phrase reproduction in text

Although Cziffra's performance consists of a number of phrases, it is not expressed as clearly as in his successors'. For instance, Lang Lang and Ott both have a similar phrasing pattern; Lang Lang's performance has an identical phrase length with Cziffra, except that the former has a clearer projection in terms of sound and a more obvious shape in terms of phrase. On another hand, Ott has a rather complicated phrasing structure: her performance of this excerpt consists of five phrases: first phrase, bar 192 to bar 195; second phrase, bar 196 to bar 199; third phrase, bar 199 to bar 200; fourth phrase, bar 200 to 202; fifth phrase, bar 202 to 204.



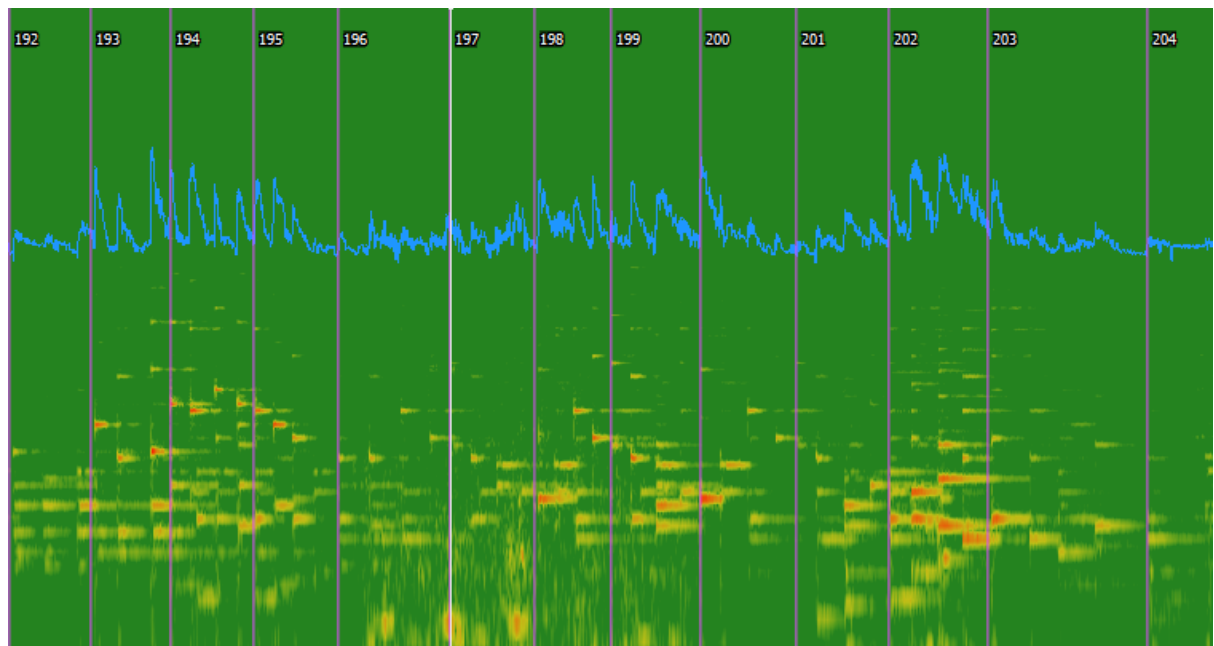
Ex 5.15 Recorded Performance by Lang Lang (2003) in Sonic Visualiser



Ex 5.16 Recorded Performance by Ott (2005) in Sonic Visualiser

Similarly to Rubinstein's performance, Vered's performance of the same excerpt has only one single phrase, and the overall shape appears to be rather horizontal.

Although there are peak points in her performance, the frequency range generally lies between -42dB to -49dB.⁴²²



Ex 5.17 Recorded Performance by Vered (1976) in Sonic Visualiser

In performances by non-Russian pianists, especially those from an earlier generation examined in this chapter (Rubinstein, Cziffra and Vered), the phrasing approach to this excerpt is quite standardised – a flat line without any climax points. Comparing Russian pianists with the non-Russian pianists, the former group has a habit that is commonly identifiable through their performances. They have the tendency to create long lines even when the composer did not provide any such indication, whilst the latter group executed the excerpt, as Tchaikovsky notated, without any phrasing pattern.⁴²³

⁴²² dB: decibels.

⁴²³ It is important to note that loudnesses shown in the Sonic Visualiser are those of the recording, not the pianist alone. The recordings used in the thesis are all from after the introduction of electrical recording; therefore it could in theory be adjusted by the sound engineer, although in practice adjusting levels throughout the recording only became commonplace with the invention of the mixing desk in the 1950s.

Before concluding this section of the chapter, it is worth using another example to illustrate this performing habit and strengthen the initial conclusion. There are two key reasons: firstly, the previous excerpt by Tchaikovsky is a typical Romantic concerto, and therefore it could be that Russian pianists play with long lines only in Romantic music, since long lines generally only appear in Romantic compositions; secondly, if we were to assure the initial conclusion that Russian pianists play with long lines in all of their performances, classical compositions would be a more obvious example to examine further, as classical works commonly consist of shorter phrases indicated by the composer.

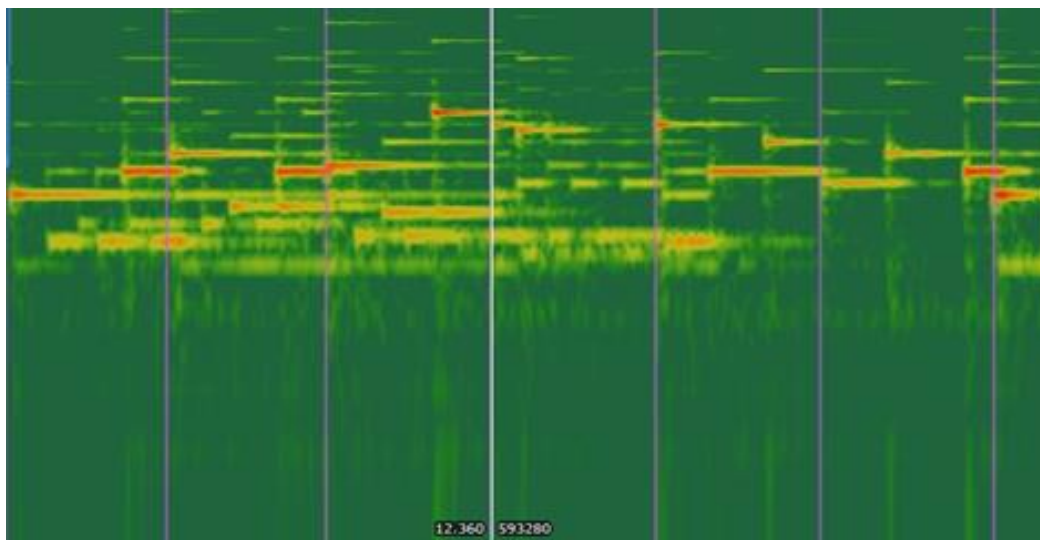
In essence, it is understood that the ending of a musical phrase should be softer than the peak of the phrase. Although this is a normal practice in both Western and Russian musical performances, it would be worthwhile to examine whether Russian pianists follow the musical text when phrases are quite short. Using Mozart's Piano Sonata in F major, KV 332 as a case study, this excerpt is taken from the first seven bars from the sonata, where each bar consists of two or three notes. This example is particularly beneficial because this excerpt is phrased in either two or three notes that are clearly indicated by Mozart:



Ex 5.18 Mozart's Piano Sonata in F major, KV 332, bars 1-6

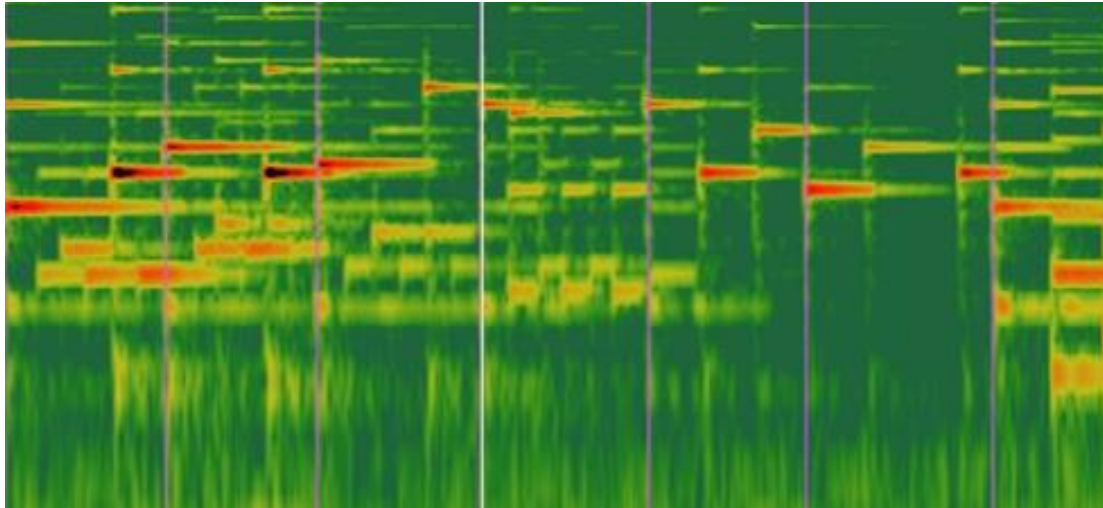
According to the phrasing indication, the second note should be softer than the previous note in order to create the phrasing effect. These 'softer' notes are indicated

as figure A, figure B, and figure C in the example above. In contrast, if these three notes are stronger than the previous note, it can be seen as a sign for sustaining a longer line. Playing louder on these three notes gives an impression of continuity, or a longer phrase, since the softening note, in principle, should only be heard at the end of the phrase. This phrasing should be shown Sonic Visualiser: the louder the note, the redder the colour indicated on the graph analysis. The first Russian example is a recording by Elisabeth Leonskaja (1945-), but the analysis is somewhat different to the phrasing indication on the score:



Ex 5.19 Recorded Performance by Leonskaja (1999) in Sonic Visualiser

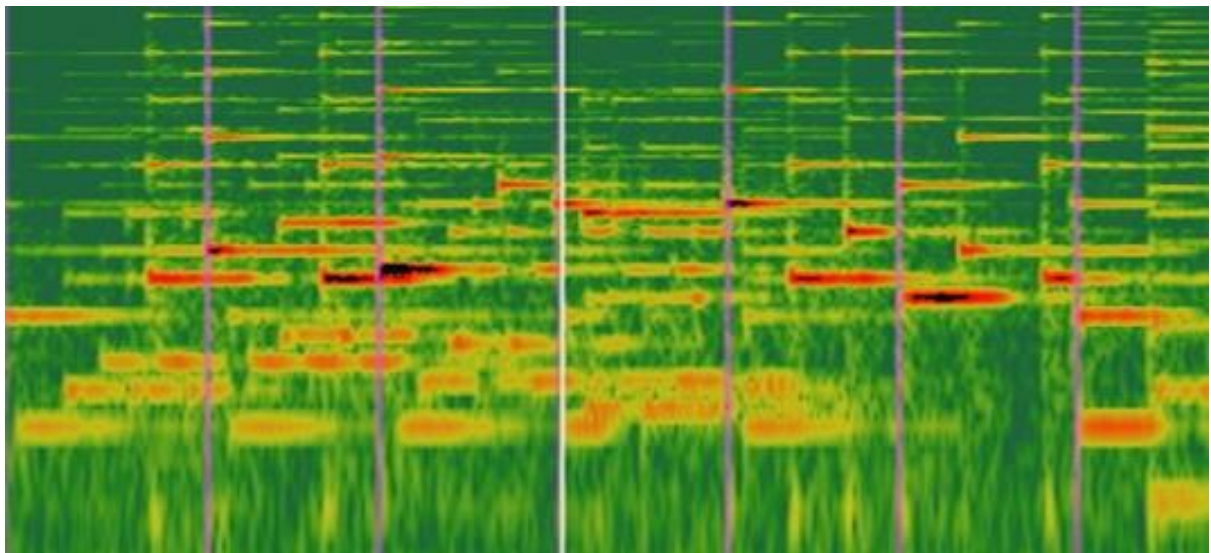
Each bar is separated by the purple line; notes are shown in three different colours: green (quietest), yellow-red (louder), and black (loudest). For example, the first bar contains two notes – first note is in yellow-red and the second in red. This implies the first note is played lighter and softer than the second. It is not difficult to realise this phrasing approach occurs in the next two bars too.



Ex 5.20 Recorded Performance by Pletnev (2006) in Sonic Visualiser

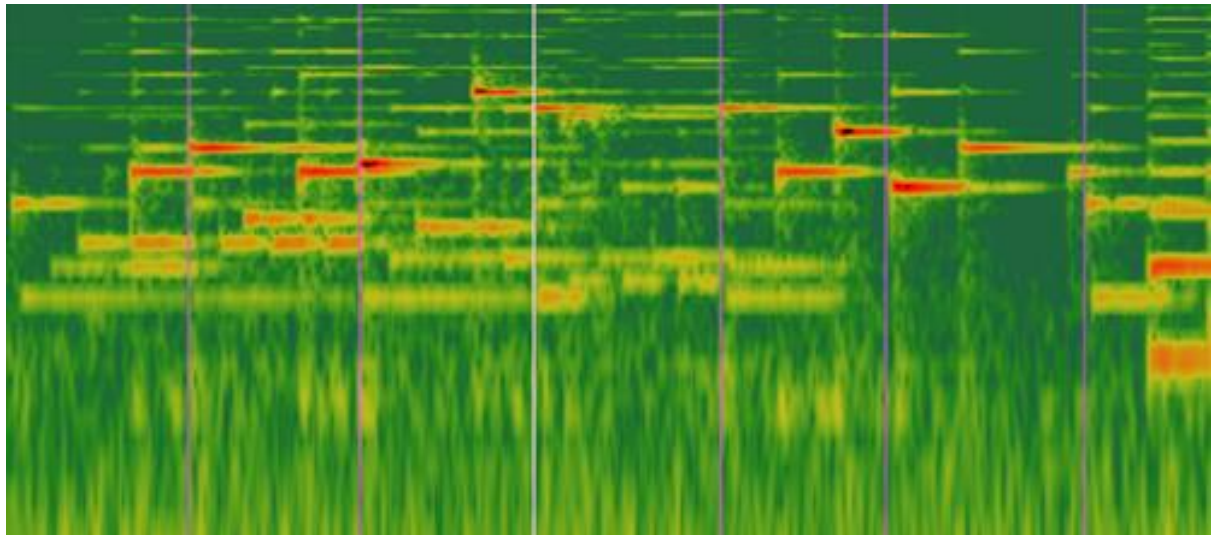
In the second example above, Mikhail Pletnev's recording in 2006 also shows a similar phrasing pattern. He particularly stresses the second note of the first three bars, and emphasises these notes much more heavily than the first.⁴²⁴

Similarly, it can be found in both Eliso Virsaladze's (1942-) recording in 2013, and Grigory Sokolov's (1950-) performance in 2008:



Ex 5.21 Recorded Performance by Virsaladze (2013) in Sonic Visualiser

⁴²⁴ The Sonic Visualiser in Pletnev's example shows most of the loudest colour category, black; this implies his second notes are even louder than the three categories originally proposed at the beginning of this discussion.



Ex 5.22 Recorded Performance by Sokolov (2008) in Sonic Visualiser

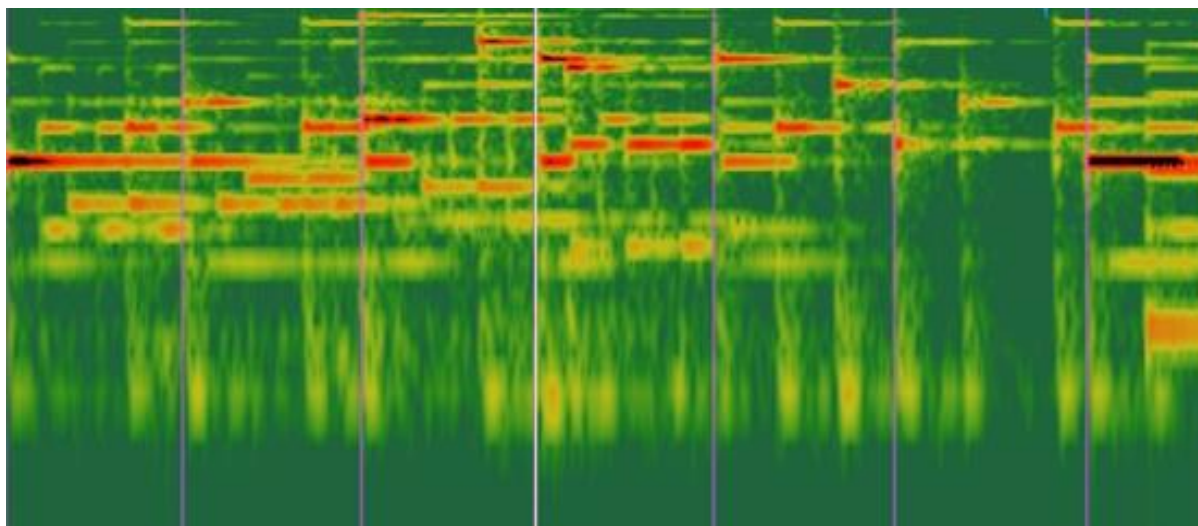
All four performances by these Russian pianists have a common habit: the second note at the end of the phrase ('softer' note) is played louder than the first note. In particular, the recording by Eliso Virsaladze is vital to examine here, since Elena Kuznetsova pointed out earlier in the chapter that 'Virsaladze or Alexei Lubimov, who probably play Mozart or Haydn better than some great Western pianists'.⁴²⁵ Thus, it would be valuable to inspect how Virsaladze interprets Mozart's composition, and her lengths of phrases. From the example above, Virsaladze's recording shows that she stresses the second note in the first two bars and ends the phrase in bar 4. If we were to identify where the phrase ends for other three Russian pianists, it becomes clear that they have all located the end of the phrase in bar 4, where the colour is lighter in the Sonic Visualiser plot. Their phrasing is re-produced below:

⁴²⁵ Interview with Elena Kuznetsova.



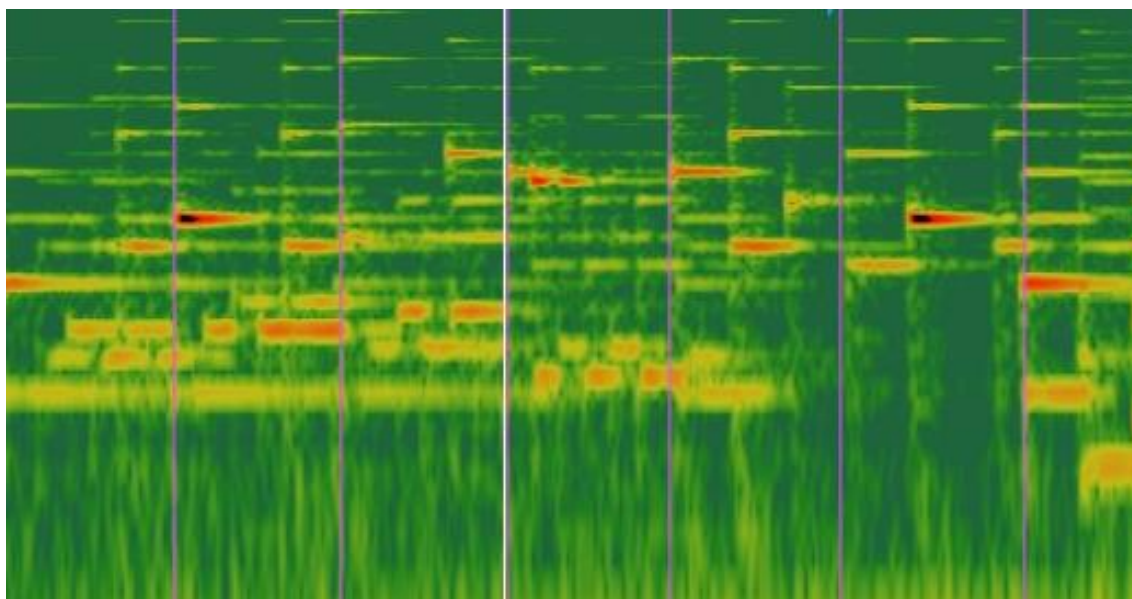
Ex 5.23 Phrase Re-production of Russian performances⁴²⁶

Comparing ‘Russian’ ways of phrasing to pianists in the West, the latter group all play with short phrasing as Mozart indicated. Again, as far as the selection of recordings is concern, I tried to collect performance of pianists of different nationalities. Despite the different national and educational backgrounds, the recordings of German pianist Christoph Eschenbach (1940-), Hungarian pianist András Schiff (1953-), and Japanese pianist Mitsuko Uchida (1948-), all show a similar phrasing approach in this excerpt.



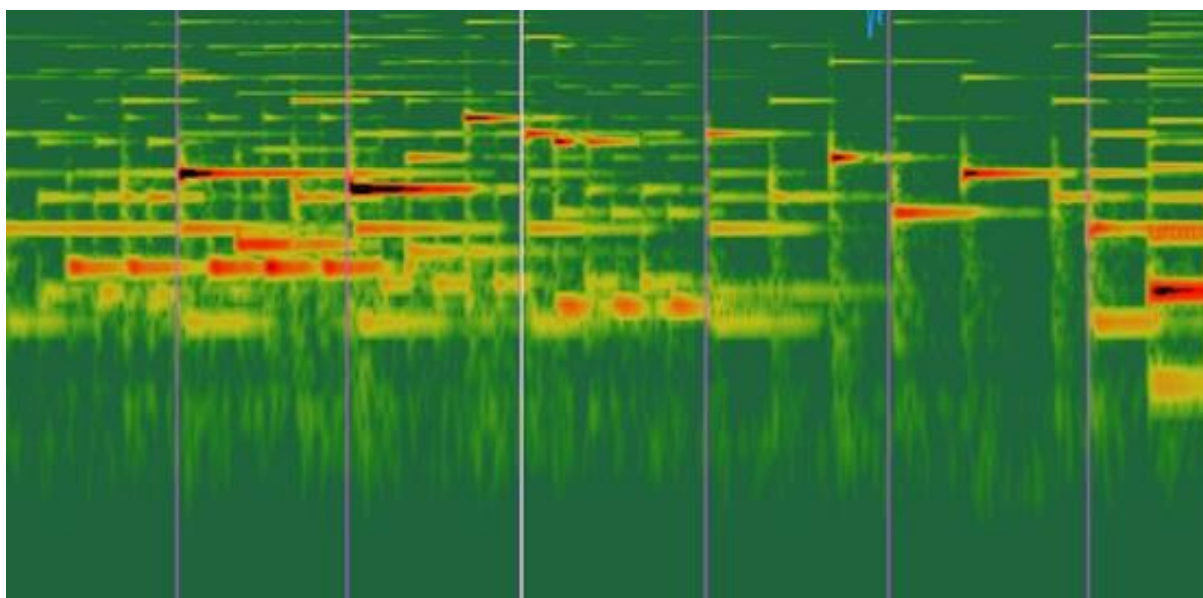
Ex 5.24 Recorded Performance by Eschenbach (1999) in Sonic Visualiser

⁴²⁶ According to Leslie Howard, this phrasing is what Russian editions of the piece look like.



Ex 5.25 Recorded Performance by Schiff (2005) in Sonic Visualiser

Uchida's recording from 2001 shows a typical Mozart's phrasing, where the first note in the first three bars shows a heavy accent:



Ex 5.26 Recorded Performance by Uchida (2001) in Sonic Visualiser

Based on the Tchaikovsky and Mozart cases above, it would be too bold to claim that only Russian pianists play with a long-line approach; nor does it demonstrate that

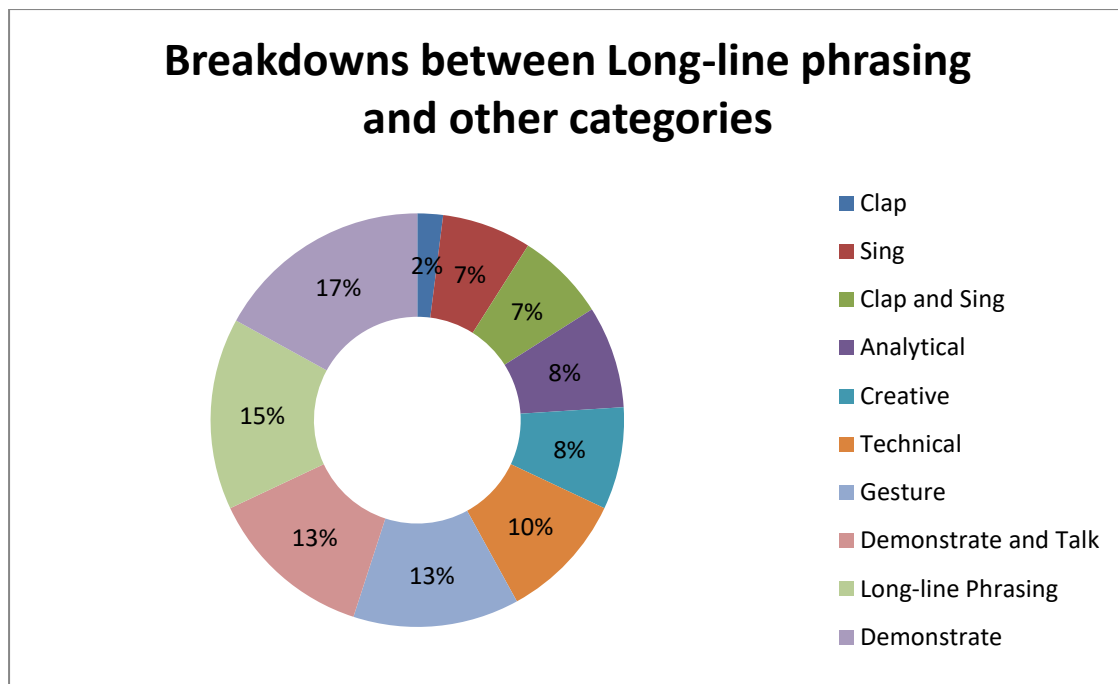
Western pianists only play in either short phrasing (in the case of Mozart) or without any direction where there is none in the score (in the case of Tchaikovsky). Instead, the analysis above attempts to validate the hypothesis that playing with long lines is a performing habit that Russian pianists adopted, whether in Romantic music or in Classical compositions, despite the inappropriate phrasing style.

5.3 The Long Phrase: On Teaching a ‘Russian’ Performance

Having considered the idea of long-line phrasing both theoretically and practically, it is essential to examine the ‘making-of’ process; for instance, how do contemporary Russian pianists deliver the idea of long line to their students during their teaching? Or perhaps it is the case that, as Elena Kuznetsova suggested, modern Russian pianists do not ask their students to create unnecessary long lines? As previously mentioned in the first section of this chapter, the ‘breathing phrasing’ method cannot be found in interviews or in recent written documents by Russian pianists. Through teaching observation, it would also be beneficial to verify this initial assumption formed in the first section – and again to test whether or not contemporary Russian pianists are aware of this ‘breathing phrasing’ method.⁴²⁷

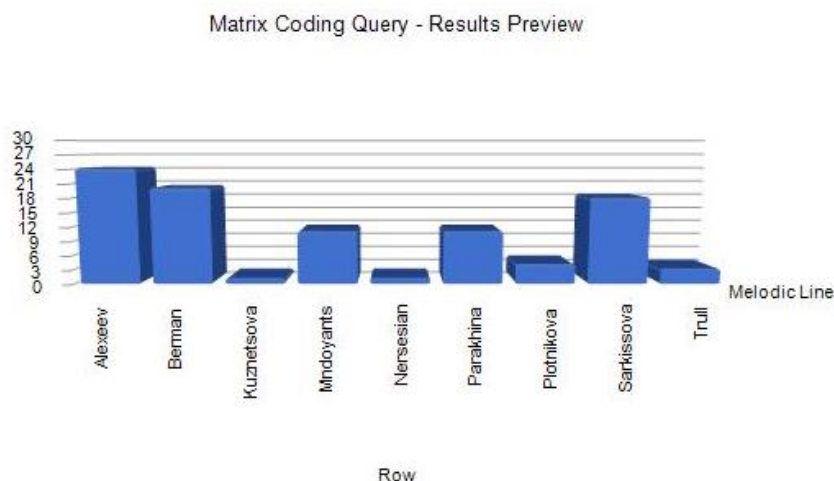
When comparing ‘long-line’ phrasing with other categories that were previously mentioned in this thesis, it is apparent that ‘long-line’ phrasing is the second highest (15%) among the categories that occur frequently during observation.

⁴²⁷ See Appendix 2 for name of teachers observed, venues and dates that these observations took places.



Ex 5.27 – Break downs between Long-line phrasing and other categories

It may appear that the long-line phrasing category only has 15% in the comparison above, but the figure represents ninety-eight long-line related comments which were noted during the fifty-five hours of lesson observation; almost the total of the ‘analytical’ and ‘creative’ categories added together. Having such a high recorded usage of ‘long-line phrasing’, it is essential to break down the result and carry out further analysis as to where these usages occur and what these figures may represent. The chart below shows the number of times ‘long-line phrasing’ occurs during lesson observations:



Ex 5.28 Long-line Phrasing – Results for number of time it occurs during observations

By placing all observed teachers in a chart, it becomes rather clear that Alexeev, Berman and Sarkissova all have a high numbers of comments related to ‘long-line’ phrasing. Within the ninety-eight times that occurred during observation, twenty-four (26%) came from Alexeev, twenty (20%) from Berman, and eighteen (19%) from Sarkissova. Alexeev, in particular, has high expectations of a long line from his students; this is not only by the numerical consideration, but also the level of phrasing analysis involved during lessons. For instance, there are number of times where Alexeev required his students to ‘locate the phrase climax’ and ‘identify where the phrase begins’.⁴²⁸ Indeed, those can be commonly found among other teachers; but what is unusual here, on one occasion for example, is that Alexeev asks the student ‘not to play every single note, because it is one long line’.⁴²⁹ It makes no sense to understand this statement in a literal sense, and miss out notes in the musical passage. It is, however, more logical if by ‘long line’, Alexeev implies the meaning of a musical direction. In fact, the student did not take Alexeev’s expression in the literal

⁴²⁸ Examples can be found in many lessons observed: Alexeev (1DA2.3, 1DA2.4; 2DA1.3).

⁴²⁹ Lesson observation from Dimitri Alexeev (2DA2.4).

sense; instead, he rephrased the passage smoothly without singling out any note. This was clearly not the first time that such an expression had occurred during lessons, as the student instantly understood, and produced a long line, without needing any further explanation.⁴³⁰ Alexeev's instance reflects two important aspects: first, as suggested earlier, the long line concept may also embrace the meaning of musical direction; and secondly, Alexeev's statement seems to imply that creating a long line is more important than attending in detail to every single note. As pointed out in Chapter 3, Alexeev has the tendency to use metaphors to illustrate his ideas. It is plausible to assume this is one of his uses of 'creative' methodology – imagine connecting every note as a line. Although Alexeev did not need any further explanation on the occasion outlined above, he used various teaching methods to deliver the notion of a long line on other occasions. These included the use of gesture (drawing a half circle; pointing to the peak of a phrase), additional verbal explanation, and instrumental demonstration.

Along with Alexeev's, Berman's remarks during lesson observations frequently refer to phrasing. However, Berman's comments tend to be more practical compared with Alexeev's: he inclines to explain the physical approach for long-line phrasing. For instance, Berman greatly emphasised finger legato during one observation, and subsequently demonstrated how it leads to intensive phrasing, stressing finger legato in relation to the wrist and the way in which 'fingers and wrist combined can give a special quality to the phrasing'.⁴³¹ Further, Berman often requires his student to create a long-line phrasing without using the pedal. Having considered how Berman teaches in the cases above, it is still very unclear where this practical advice can be applied in

⁴³⁰ Alexeev made a similar account in another lesson, where he commented 'Don't think in small units – in one phrase'. In this occasion, Alexeev demonstrated the phrasing approach to the student at the piano. Lesson Observation from Dimitri Alexeev (2DA2.3).

⁴³¹ Lesson Observation from Boris Berman (1BB3.1).

music, as these practical examples vary enormously, and depends on the passage and the style of the composition. At this point, it would be useful to draw a musical example from one of Berman's observations, and explore where in the music does a Russian pianist requires long lines from a student. Here, for example, the approach to long-line phrasing is quite apparent in the Chopin's Étude Op. 10 No.1:

The image shows the first nine bars of Chopin's Étude Op. 10 No. 1. The music is in C major and 4/4 time, marked 'Allegro' and 'legato'. The right hand has a highly technical melody with many sixteenth and thirty-second notes, while the left hand provides a rhythmic accompaniment with eighth and sixteenth notes. Red boxes are placed around several notes in both hands, highlighting specific technical or phrasing points. The score is divided into three systems, each with a first ending bracket labeled '1'.

Ex 5.29 Chopin's Étude in C major Op. 10 No. 1, bars 1-9

Berman insisted on creating a line in the left hand, along with another line in the right hand independently: both lines are phrased differently. In addition to those lines, as Berman stated, an extra line should also have its place in the mind of the pianist – the line in connecting the bass and the top note. These notes are marked in red in the

example. It is worth noting that what Berman requires here are not simply accents on particular notes, but an interlocking melodic line that connects the two parts. Unaccented notes help to phrase the melodic line more easily, but a dynamic readjustment and a different touch can also assist the phrasing immensely. Although not indicated in the score, Berman suggested a softer touch after the semibreve in the left hand of bar 17 and bar 19:

The image displays a musical score for Chopin's Étude in C major Op. 10 No. 1, specifically bars 17-21. The score is presented in two systems. The top system is a close-up of the right hand, showing a complex melodic line with many sixteenth and thirty-second notes. The bottom system shows both the right and left hands. The left hand has a simpler accompaniment pattern. Red and blue curved lines are drawn under the notes to indicate different phrasing interpretations. The red lines indicate two phrases, and the blue lines indicate a single phrase. The score includes fingerings and a dynamic marking of *ff* (fortissimo) at the beginning of bar 17.

Ex 5.30 Chopin's Étude in C major Op. 10 No. 1, bars 17-21

Playing the first minims in bar 18 and bar 20 lighter helps to provide a better shaping line in the left hand. Berman's intention here is to phrase the left hand in two phrases (indicated in red), rather than all in one single phrase (indicated in blue). In fact, it was not surprising that Berman suggested the 'red' phrasing instead of the 'blue'. Based on the responses from Russian pianists, it is natural for Russian pianists to choose to play the melodic line in one phrase (the 'blue' phrasing); but for Berman – a

Russian emigrant pianist who has resided in the West for over forty years – it seems more reasonable to highlight the sequence in bars 18-19 and bars 20-21.

In the case of Sarkissova, the third highest teacher for ‘long-line’ phrasing in observations, her comments are also of considerable interest. One was her statement to her student who played Mozart in a lesson: ‘The first intention is to make a longer line in music’.⁴³² In this respect, one could understand how much emphasis is placed on long-line phrasing from a Russian perspective. Although there was no long line indicated on the score, this longer-line should be ‘imagined’ by the performer and the aim of this longer-line is to give a sense of direction in the music. Alexander Mndoyants echoes his colleague and asked his students for ‘a long line, even if the music is grouped in small motifs’.⁴³³ As to how one should create a long-line, two teachers in particular provided non-technical advice for their students during observations that are almost identical to Rubinstein. Sarkissova interestingly requested the student to ‘make a line with a breath before’;⁴³⁴ in another case, Parakhina also made a similar expression: ‘breath between phrases’.⁴³⁵ To this end, it is worth concluding that this ‘breathing phrasing’ method can be found in some Russian emigrant teachers at present, but not yet from Russian teachers of an intermediate generation.

When we look specifically at Plotnikova’s lesson for ‘long-line’ phrasing, the result is relatively low (four times). The numerical result may not seem interesting to investigate, but there is an important example here that is worth pointing out. One of

⁴³² Lesson Observation from Tatiana Sarkissova (1TS2.1).

⁴³³ Lesson Observation from Alexander Mndoyants (2AM2.2).

⁴³⁴ Lesson Observation from Tatiana Sarkissova (1TS2.1; 2TS3.1).

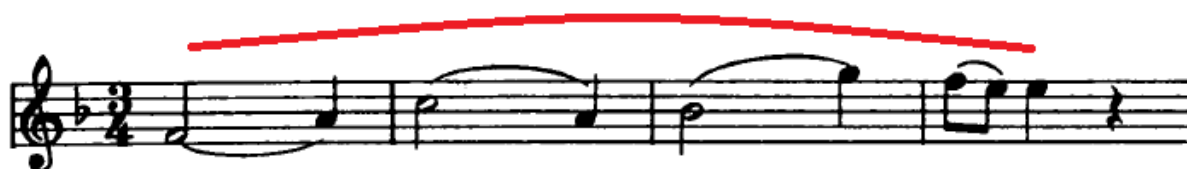
⁴³⁵ Lesson Observation from Dina Parakhina (1DP0.3).

her students played Mozart's Sonata in F, K332, of which the opening bars are shown again below:



Ex 5.31 Mozart's Piano Sonata in F, K 332, bars 1-12

The phrasing and slurs indicated in the score are fairly short; none is over a bar long. Nevertheless, Plotnikova demanded of her students to create a longer line in order to shape the music.⁴³⁶ Her instruction was as follows:



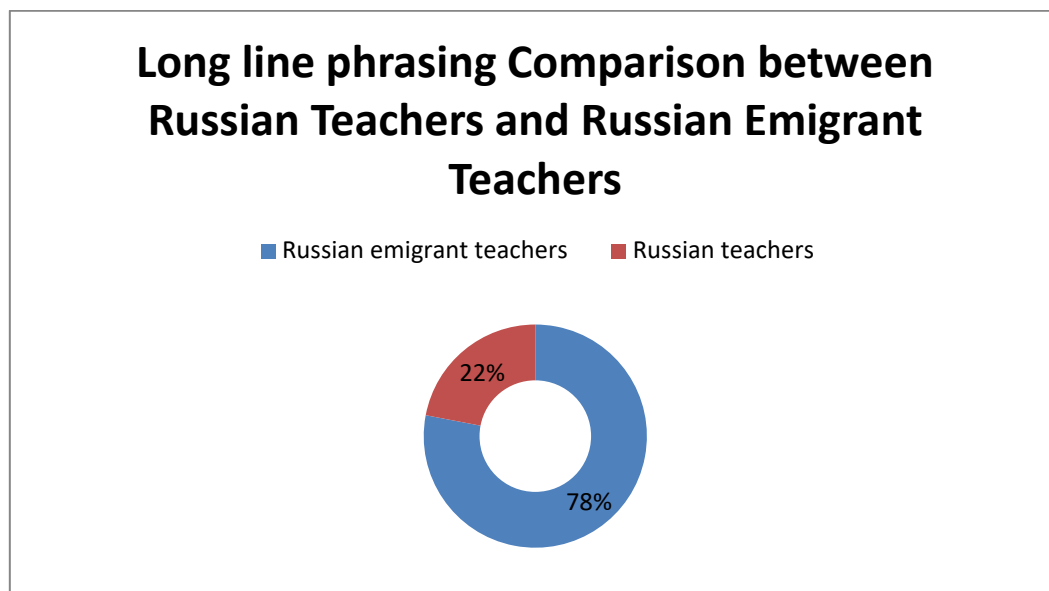
Ex 5.32 Mozart's Piano Sonata in F, K 332, bars 1-4 (Right Hand)

From Plotnikova's perspective, this kind of 'created' long line should continue in the rest of the composition. It is apparent that this is not a coincidence, as she kept demanding longer lines even though phrasings are indicated separately. This particular example echoes the findings from the previous section that Russians play in a straight long line in this passage. To Plotnikova, it is clear that these shorter indications do not necessarily play an important role; on the other hand, this characteristic from the Russian School is an indispensable element in piano playing. It

⁴³⁶ Lesson Observation from Irina Plotnikova (1IP0.4).

should be noted, for instance, that the findings of Elisabeth Leonskaja's performance (Ex 4.21) and Plotnikova's teaching method on this phrasing are identical.⁴³⁷

Having considered how Russian teachers have applied long lines and, subsequently, where these long lines should be applied in music, it would be useful to compare whether the comments on long-line phrasing tend to come from either Russian teachers or Russian emigrant teachers. The comparison between shows a clear disproportionate balance between the two groups of teachers.



Ex 5.33 Long line Phrasing – Result comparison between Russian and Russian Emigrant Teachers

The chart above indicates that most of the 'long-line' phrasing category is dominated by the Russian emigrant teachers. Whilst seventy-three instances of the comments (78%) came from Russian emigrant teachers, only twenty (22%) came from Russian teachers. Although the result may seem surprising at first, it should be remembered, as pointed out in the first section of Chapter 3, that this characteristic is already implanted in the minds of young Russian pianists. Since observations on Russian

⁴³⁷ See Sonic Visualiser analysis from the previous section – Elisabeth Leonskaja's performance (Ex 5.19) and Plotnikova's phrasing reproduction (Ex 5.32) in her teaching activity.

teachers that were carried out in Russia, most of the observed students at the Moscow Conservatory were already equipped with this characteristic before studying at the conservatory. Those twenty-two percent of ‘long-line’ comments from Russian teachers were either for international students – pianists who did not undergo the early Russian music education process – or for young Russian pianists at the Central Music School in Moscow, who have not yet embedded this particular issue in their playing. The seventy-eight percent from Russian emigrant teachers, on the other hand, reflects the level of ‘long-line’ playing that is missing in students’ performances at Conservatoires outside Russia. Unlike students in Russia, the idea of ‘long-line’ in music is not embedded in these students and therefore it is understandable that more comments on ‘long-line’ were noted from Russian emigrant teachers than in the lessons of Russian pianists.

After investigating long phrasing in both Russian and Western performances from three possible perspectives – theoretical, practical, and pedagogical – it is clear that this performing aesthetic can be commonly found in performances by Russian pianists. Further, there is a strong indication that the idea of long phrasing also occurs in teaching today in Russia and among Russian emigrant teachers in the West, suggesting how it may be spreading anew among younger generation of international pianists. As pointed out in Chapter 3, with an increased number of foreign students, one can assume this performing habit is now also embedded in pianists from other nationalities.⁴³⁸ Having understood and identified the importance of a long melodic line in Russian performing aesthetic, it would be useful to carry out the same analysis with tone production. Thus, in the next chapter, the discussion will be focused on how Russian pianists produce their ‘singing tone’ in relation to the use of body weight. In

⁴³⁸ For example, the student who played Mozart’s Sonata in F KV 332 in Plotnikova’s lesson was a student from Japan.

particular, it will also examine the different level of chord balance, and tonal projection.

CHAPTER 6

A SINGING TONE

Following on from the previous two chapters, Chapter 6 will focus on the last noticeable feature of the Russian pianism – a singing tone. Tone is the sound quality that a pianist produces, and Russian pianists often consider a beautiful tone should be accompanied by a singing effect. According to Pavel Nersessian, ‘Russian piano school is based on the singing or speaking quality of the piano – from a communicative stand point’.⁴³⁹ Berman also states ‘when I play I am very mindful of the sound quality...when I talk about the sound, we are talking about a full, long lasting singing tone in the melodic line’.⁴⁴⁰ The notion of ‘singing tone’ was present in the mind of their predecessors. For instance, Horowitz pointed out in an interview that ‘the finger must sing’ and that scales must also have a singing quality, rather than treating scales merely as technical exercises.⁴⁴¹

The way in which Russian pianists construct their tonal layers at different levels can be studied in depth and can be examined from three different perspectives: a) theoretical – exploring Russian pianists’ point of view in literature and at interviews; b) practical – examining recordings of Russian pianists as well as European pianists, and compare how these two groups of pianists differ in terms of their tone projection; c) pedagogical – investigating contemporary Russian teachers and Russian emigrant teachers as to how these groups of teachers deliver this performing principle in instrumental teaching.

⁴³⁹ Interview with Pavel Nersessian.

⁴⁴⁰ Interview with Boris Berman.

⁴⁴¹ Jan Holcman, ‘An interview with Horowitz’ *Saturday Review of Literature*, Vol. XLIII No.18 (30 April 1960), 60.

Before launching into the discussion, there is a fundamental question that needs addressing – what is a ‘singing tone’? There is a large amount of literature on the subject written by performers and researchers, and it would be useful to examine briefly some of their thoughts from artistic as well as scientific perspectives. A ‘singing tone’, in the literal sense, means a long-lasting sound that is comparable to the singing of a vocalist.⁴⁴² In defining tone, Neuhaus explains:

‘By depressing a key too slowly and softly...it is not yet a tone; if I let my hand fall on the key too fast and with too much force (the forbidden excessive “v” and “h”), I get a noise; it is no longer a tone. Between these limits lie all the possible graduations of tone.’⁴⁴³

The above explanation can only be applied to tone, regardless whether it is a singing one or not. Since we are attempting to define a ‘singing tone’, it is fair to add that the space between the tones should also be considered alongside Neuhaus’s explanation. C.P.E Bach, for instance, expressed his dissatisfaction in 1753 that the clavichord was unable to ‘sustain notes and to decrease or increase the volume of a tone...’ Furthermore, he was unable to ‘give a singing performance of an adagio without creating too much empty space and a consequent monotony due to a lack of sonority...’⁴⁴⁴ With the invention of the modern piano, it is not until the mid-nineteenth century that pianists began to ‘obsess with a singing tone’.⁴⁴⁵ Composers also started writing piano music with the vocal-like melody, one of whom was Chopin, where the vocal-like melody can be found throughout his music. His piano students, too, were encouraged by the composer to imitate the vocal quality of opera singers and reproduce it on the keyboard.⁴⁴⁶ From a scientific standpoint, ‘singing tone’ can be

⁴⁴² Berman, *op. cit.*, 4.

⁴⁴³ Symbol “v” means velocity, whilst “h” implies height. See Neuhaus, *op. cit.*, 58.

⁴⁴⁴ C.P.E Bach, *op. cit.*, 150.

⁴⁴⁵ Kenneth Hamilton, ‘The Virtuoso Tradition’ in David Rowland (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to the Piano* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 69.

⁴⁴⁶ Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger, *Chopin: Pianist and Teacher as Seen by His Pupils*. Trans. N. Shohet, K. Osostowicz, and R. Howat (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 42-46.

analysed on two levels: macro and micro levels. On the micro level, Mine Doğantan-Dack offers a valuable insight:

‘The cantabile manner of playing on the modern piano has a discernible kinaesthetic-tactile dynamic quality,⁴⁴⁷ and involves creating the impression...of a *temporal shape* out of separate notes. Although the basic criterion of cantabile performance on earlier keyboard instruments, namely continuity of sound, remains important, this no longer refers merely to the absence of silence, of an acoustical gap between successive tones. More significantly, continuity in pianistic cantabile practice is a function of a kinaesthetic morphology that draws consecutive finger movements, and the ensuing sounds, into a higher order unity. This requires activating the larger muscles of the upper arm, which subordinate finger movements, and controlling the dynamics and the depth of the piano keys so as to achieve constancy of touch and continuity of pressure within a given unit.⁴⁴⁸

The account above provides an insight as to how kinaesthetic, movements, and dynamic are all closely related. On the macro level, Kenneth Hamilton believes that in order to produce a singing tone, romantic musicians deliberately avoided ‘playing the hands, or individual notes in the texture, exactly together.’⁴⁴⁹ Malwine Brée, a pupil of Leschetizky, noted:

‘The fundamental bass note and the melody note must also not always be taken at the same time; rather, the melody note should be struck quite shortly after the bass, by which method the melody rings out more clearly and sounds softer...The melody note must be brought in so quickly after the bass that this is hardly noticeable for lay listeners...’⁴⁵⁰

In understanding Brée’s statement, it is reasonable to assume that singing tone can be identified aurally if ‘the melody rings out more clearly’.⁴⁵¹ If we analyse the modern instrument mechanically, it becomes clear how the note could sing. Should the bass note be played with an open pedal, the (delayed) melody note will vibrate

⁴⁴⁷ As Doğantan-Dack stated, ‘While expert pianists will not attend to this dynamic quality in every episode of cantabile playing, once they choose to attend to it they can bring its particular kinaesthetically felt dynamic to the fore.’

⁴⁴⁸ ‘In cantabile playing, continuity of pressure involves smoothly changing, rather than identical, key pressure across a given musical unit.’ See Mine Doğantan-Dack, *op. cit.*, 177.

⁴⁴⁹ Hamilton, *op. cit.*, 142.

⁴⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 144.

⁴⁵¹ Josef Lhévinne, in his publication (1924), also describes singing tone as ringing. See Lhévinne, *op. cit.*, 18-19.

harmoniously, and more effectively, above the bass. Indeed, this is more of a matter physics and mechanical effect on sonority than a pianistic myth.

Some researchers believe it is more to do with the psychological aspect than the physical element. For instance, George Kochevsky, in his publication *The Art of Piano Playing: A Scientific Approach*, suggests that movement, or pressure placed on the keys are only second considerations when discussing ‘singing tone’; tone ‘mainly depends on his mental conception, his inward imagination of the tone.’⁴⁵² According to Kochevsky, ‘the ability for inward conception of a tone, of several tones develops in the process of realizing this inner conception...the inner conception guides the pianist’s playing apparatus in finding its means for realizing this conception.’⁴⁵³ Although we will analyse the practical aspect (the pianistic movement, the tone and touch relationship, and the use of weight) in greater detail in the next section; Kochevsky stresses that pianists should listen rather to look at the playing hands of a great pianist. German pianist Walter Giesecking echoes that and states:

‘It is useless to look for the reason of the beautiful tone in some particular finger position or hand position; I am convinced that the only way to learn to produce beautiful tone is systematic ear training.’⁴⁵⁴

Josef Lhévine also agrees with Kochevsky and Giesecking; he explains that:

‘Every piano student who aspires to acquire a beautiful tone must have a mental concept of what a beautiful tone is. Some people are born with a sense of the beautiful in sound. They do not need to be told. It is like the finely balanced sense of colour possessed by some, in contrast to those who are colour blind...If you do not have it [the sense of tonal beauty], do not despair, because by hard work and experience in listening to pianists who do possess a

⁴⁵² George Kochevitsky, *The Art of Piano Playing: A Scientific Approach*, Illinois: Summy-Birchard Music, 1967, 38.

⁴⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵⁴ Walter Giesecking. ‘Moderne Anschlagsprobleme’ *So wurde ich Pianist*. Wiesbaden: F. A. Brockhaus, 1963, 90.

beautiful tone, you may develop it...if you are tonally deaf to lovely sound qualities there is very little hope for you.⁴⁵⁵

Along with Kochevitsky and Giesecking, it is clear that Lhévinne also considers that mental conception is the main element in producing a singing tone. It is only when the pianist possesses, in the words of Lhévinne, ‘a tonal sense’, that they can then work on the practical matters.⁴⁵⁶

Assuming that the pianist is not tonally deaf, as Lhévinne describes, how is ‘singing tone’ physically achieved? Indeed, we have briefly examined some of the literature in the above section, but it would be useful to explore further the connection between tone and touch in piano playing, as well as the use of arm weight by Russian pianists.

6.1 A Singing Tone: A Theoretical Consideration

The issue of tone has been widely discussed in piano literature and in Russian pianists’ autobiographies; whether it is by Anton Rubinstein or his successors, the topic of tone or sound has not escaped their discourses. For instance, Catherine Drinker Bowen, Rubinstein’s first biographer, noted that pupils of Rubinstein asked about Rubinstein’s tone; the master admitted that ‘his heavy, padded finger tips had something to do with it [tone]’, and further claimed:

‘I have spent thousands of hours to find this tone and that...ever since I can remember; I have been working at the problem. Genius is soon forgotten, but the worker, the true worker, can always make himself known to the world’.⁴⁵⁷

Alexander Goldenweiser, one of the four giants of the Russian piano school in the twentieth century, also stated that ‘when the right hand is playing a melody, the

⁴⁵⁵ Lhévinne (1923), *op. cit.*, 17.

⁴⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 18.

⁴⁵⁷ Bowen (1939), *op. cit.*, 307.

extreme top notes are highly important...'⁴⁵⁸ According to the Russian education regulations outlined in 1960, 'controlling the quality of sound' should be taught in the first place along with other requirements.⁴⁵⁹ To this end, it should be noted that different tone is possible to achieve by different touches. Russian pianists believed tones can be adjusted by different touches, and some Russian pianists have shared their systematic approach to tone production. For instance, Ossip Gabrilowitsch (1878-1936), a pupil of Anton Rubinstein and Theodor Leschetizky, pointed out in an interview with James Francis Cooke:

'Touch is the distinguishing characteristic which makes one player's music sound different from that of another, for it is touch that dominates the player's means of producing dynamic shading or tone quality. I know that many authorities contend that the quality of tone depends upon the instrument rather than upon the performer. Nevertheless, I am reasonably confident that if I were to hear a number of pianists play in succession upon the same instrument behind a screen and one of these performers were to be my friend, Harold Bauer, I could at once identify his playing by his peculiarly individual touch. In fact, the trained ear can identify different individual characteristics with almost the same accuracy that we identify different voices. One could never forget Leschetizky's touch, or that of many another contemporary pianist.'⁴⁶⁰

Gabrilowitsch's comment suggested that there was some opposition to the idea that touch could be heard as tone. In fact, there is only a very limited amount of literature on this opposition; rather, the majority of writings favoured this touch and tone connection. Indeed, touch is an essential component in determining the quality of tone, but it is not the only component. As mentioned previously, many Russian pianists shared their methods of how a 'good' tone should be produced. These methods and

⁴⁵⁸ Alexander Goldenweiser, 'Sovety pedagoga-pianista' *Pianisty rasskazyvayut*, ed. M.G. Sokolov, No.1, 2nd edition. (Moscow: Muzyka, 1990), 119-132.

⁴⁵⁹ Other requirements included 'controlling the rhythmic, coloristic and dynamic aspects of his performance'. See Robert (1960). *op. cit.*, 200.

⁴⁶⁰ Cooke (1923). *op. cit.*, 30.

components included a combination of muscular activity and weight. Further, tone has a close association with the physical technique of the pianist. Joseph Lhévinne, pointed out in an article that ‘One of the most practical things to be acquired by the pianist, is a knowledge of the principle of relaxation and how to apply it to touch and tone...There must be hand-firmness, or there is no power, exactness, or control. There must be finger-firmness also, or there is no accuracy, and consequently no good tone.’⁴⁶¹ Although hand-firmness can produce a powerful tone, it needs to balance with relaxation. At this point, it is worth mentioning a personal learning experience in dealing with tone. When working on a chord with my former Russian teacher, she insisted that my chord did not have a firm tone, only a harsh sound. According to her, the reason was that I did not have relaxed wrists, since the pianist’s wrists should act as a car’s shock absorber does. After a few adjustments, I was able to produce a rich, nuanced tone with the flexible wrists. The idea of shock absorber can also be seen in her predecessor,⁴⁶² and Lhévinne further stressed the importance of wrist and arm relaxation in 1932:

‘Where does relaxation come in? In the wrist and arm principally, though the secret of its use and application is to use it in the right place, and not in other places where it would prevent the production of firm, elastic, vibrant tone. That kind of a tone is not produced by flabby, relaxed fingers. We must have firmness and relaxation at one and the same time, but not in the same place. There must generally be resistance in the finger, no matter how loose wrists and arms may be.’⁴⁶³

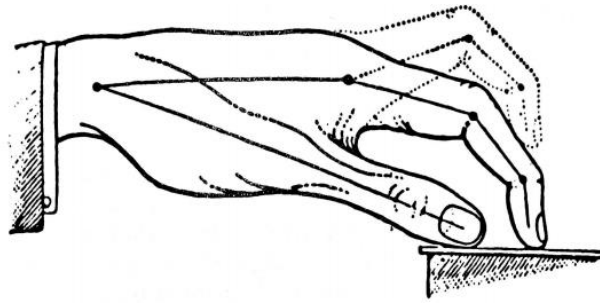
Not only firmness of fingers has to balance with relaxation, but the position of the wrist has to balance with the position of the fingers. There should be a high level of flexibility in the position of the wrist – either with a high or a low wrist; whilst the

⁴⁶¹ Joseph Lhévinne, ‘Good tone is born in the player’s mind’, *The Music*, July 1923, Vol. 28, 7.

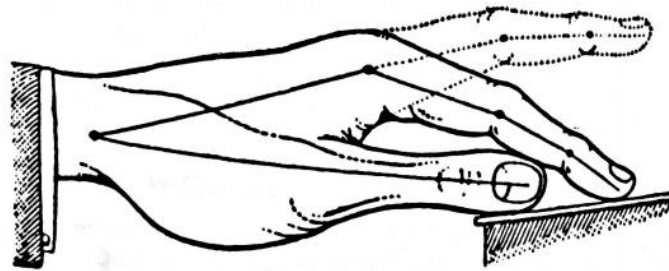
⁴⁶² Lhévinne. 19.

⁴⁶³ Lhévinne (1923). *op. cit.*, 7.

pianist can play with a different position of fingers – either playing on the tips of the fingers (rounded fingers) or playing on the ‘cushion’ part of the finger (flat fingers).⁴⁶⁴



Ex 6.1 Playing with the ‘rounded’ finger



Ex 6.2 Playing with the ‘flat’ finger⁴⁶⁵

In fact, each finger position has its own purpose. For instance, rounded fingers produce a brilliant tone quality, and flat fingers will result in a velvety quality of sound. On recalling the learning experience with my former Russian teacher, rounded fingers are more suitable for quick passage work with bright tone colour; on the other hand, if a passage requires a mellow tone or a particular voice needs more projection, flat fingers are more favourable. Pianists who play with flattened fingers are not often seen, even among Russian pianists. However, Vladimir Horowitz was an exceptional case: he was the pianist who played with flat fingers with a low wrist, and had an unusual hand position in which the palm was often below the level of the key surface.

⁴⁶⁴ ‘Cushion’ part of the fingers: playing with more surface area of the finger. See diagram example 5.2.

⁴⁶⁵ These diagrams are borrowed from Boris Berman. *Notes from the Pianist’s bench* (2000).

According to Harold C. Schonberg, Horowitz had a rather special technique and hand position:

‘He [Horowitz] had worked out his own technique, one that ran counter to established traditions of hand and arm. His hands were turned out; he used a low wrist and flat fingers; the little finger of his right hand was always curled tight until it had to strike a note. When it did, it was like the strike of a cobra. Professionals never could figure it out.’⁴⁶⁶

Horowitz’s approach was somewhat unusual; as Alexander Griner, a Steinway specialist, recalled, ‘he played against all the rules and regulations of piano playing we were taught – but with him it works.’⁴⁶⁷ Lhévinne also provided a detailed comparison between these two finger positions:

‘These two touches, namely: high finger action with well-rounded fingers, and low action with flatter fingers, are produced in entirely opposite fashion, and naturally effect the tone, although we may say the instrument producing this is mechanical. We know of a certainty that if we strike a quick blow on the key, we get a sharp, brilliant tone; if we caress the key with extended or flat fingers, we evoke a sweet mellow tone.’⁴⁶⁸

Not only does a particular pianistic technique change the quality of sound, but the shape of the hand also seems to convince Leschetizky that it has a bearing on tone. According to Leschetizky’s pupil Mark Hambourg (1879-1960), ‘Leschetizky had observed pianists with fat hands, such as those of Rubinstein, had the most beautiful tone.’⁴⁶⁹ He had also observed that for brilliance and lightness, the thin, agile hands of Liszt were best. Thus, Leschetizky came to the conclusion that the thin hand had to use considerable key pressure, whereas the fat and heavy hand had to be trained to

⁴⁶⁶ Schonberg (1992), *op. cit.*, 436.

⁴⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶⁸ Lhévinne (1923), *op. cit.*, 7.

⁴⁶⁹ Schonberg (1992), *op. cit.*, 300.

play with the least amount of pressure.⁴⁷⁰ Indeed, hand shape or sense of touch has a bearing on the singing tone quality. From a scientific standpoint, along with the piano, these are the two variables that constitute a pianistic singing tone. Doğantan-Dack pointed out that the hand itself is not merely the ‘anatomical part between the wrist and the fingertips, but the entire biomechanical structure including the whole arm as well [as] the muscles of the neck and the chest that allows this part to function.’⁴⁷¹ This is supported by the fact that when in action, the brain considers the hand as a continuous part of the arm, according to a scientific research.⁴⁷² Since the brain and the hand are working continuously – forming a reciprocal unity Doğantan-Dack depicted this as a ‘feed-forward/feed-back process’. When one discusses the sense of touch, we could analyse it from two levels – macro and micro levels. The micro level, as suggested in preceding discourse, contains different kinds of touches; but the ‘round’ and ‘flat’ types are the two most discussed amongst Russian pianists. The macro level, however, in a sense contradicts the micro level. This level does not concern the cutaneous contact of the fingertip with the surface of the keys; rather, sense of touch should be understood along with the body movement. Matthew Ratcliffe claims that sense of touch is ‘phenomenologically intertwined with a sense of bodily position and movement’;⁴⁷³ thus, it is already embedded within our

⁴⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷¹ Doğantan-Dack (2015), *op. cit.*, 178.

⁴⁷² Gallagher, S. ‘The Enactive Hand’ in Z. Radman (ed.), *The Hand: An Organ of the Mind. What the Manual Tells the Mental*. Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 2013, 212. See also De Vignemont, F., Majid, A., Jola, C., and Haggard, P. ‘Segmenting the Body into Parts: Evidence from Biases in Tactile Perception’, *Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology* 62, 2009, 500-512.

⁴⁷³ Since it is important to understand how touch is intertwined with position and movement, it would be useful to elaborate Ratcliffe’s argument further. ‘Most of the properties that we are said to perceive through touch would be imperceptible without a sense of bodily movement, and it is not simply ‘movement’ that counts. Specific styles of movement are important; different kinds of movement are associated with the perception of different properties...So touch is phenomenologically intertwined with a sense of bodily position and movement. Separating it from them would leave us with an impoverished abstraction from tactual experience, consisting of little more than bare, non-localised sensation, perhaps with some degree of valence.’ See Matthew Ratcliffe, *Touch and the Sense of Reality*, 2013. Available at: https://www.academia.edu/458984/Touch_and_the_Sense_of_Reality [Accessed 3 February 2017].

kinaesthetic system of the arm or hand movements. These movements then allow pianists to transfer the muscular power to the piano strings via the keys.

6.1.1 The Use of Weight

In addition to muscular activity such as the position of the hand and the position of the fingers, weight is another fundamental element that determines the quality of tone. As Goldenweiser noted, ‘our manner of hearing and listening is such that we perceive the upper notes as most important. However, these notes are invariably played by the fifth or little finger, i.e. the weakest finger of all.’⁴⁷⁴ When these melody notes are played by the weakest fingers, the primary question is how one can project these notes clearly with a ‘singing tone’. This is where weight plays an important part; because of the nature of the hand, more weight will need to be employed on the weakest fingers. The more interesting question here surely is which part of the body could add additional weight to the key. In any case, fingers must be involved with the sound production; but in order to have different tonal quality, there are a number of body part combinations that may be used. For instance, sound can be produced merely with fingers alone, or fingers together with the hand, or fingers together with the hand supported by the forearm, or fingers together with the hand supported by the forearm plus the upper arm. In practice, the more joints that are participating, the fuller the sound one can get. In addition to the four approaches above, Russian pianists believe that playing with the back is another way of producing a powerful tone:

‘The late Victor Merzhanov used to say that the specific trace of Russian piano school was using the weight of the shoulder and of the back. Not just banging from the elbow, but a singing touch. Russian school is always using

⁴⁷⁴ Alexander Goldenweiser. ‘Advice from a Pianist and Teacher’, in Christopher Barnes (ed.), *The Russian Piano School: Russian Pianists & Moscow Conservatoire Professors on the Art of the Piano*, (London: Kahn & Averill, 2008), 56.

the back and the shoulder and all these complexes. Maria Yudina used to say that the sound is always flowing through the neck, through the arm and legs. It is artistic images of course but it helps us to imagine how we treat the image of the sound.’⁴⁷⁵

Russian pianists consider the finger as the point of contact with the instrument; and the back as the other point of contact with the pianist, as if there were a wire connecting these two points. Alexander Mndoyants also echoes the idea of flowing sound within the body, saying that ‘pianists should sit straight and our sound can then flow from our shoulder or back. Having said that, we should also have freedom in our hands, arms as well as fingers – that is why sound can be produced from our back.’⁴⁷⁶ Gabrilowitsch is reported as saying that ‘the amount of pressure brought to bear upon the keys depends upon the amount of arm weight and upon the quickness with which the muscles of the hand, forearm, full-arm and back permit the key to be struck.’⁴⁷⁷ Alongside with Goldenweiser, Konstantin Igumnov also emphasised the use of back as connected with tone production: ‘Tone production depends not just on the fingers. The source of tone is somewhere here in our back.’⁴⁷⁸

Besides the use of back muscle, Russian pianists also tend to employ arm-weight. The notion of using ‘arm-weight’ first appeared in piano literature as early as 1903 – a publication written by the English pianist Tobias Matthay. Although the writing was difficult to understand, it provided some thought-provoking suggestions on using the

⁴⁷⁵ Interview with Elena Kuznetsova.

⁴⁷⁶ Interview with Alexander Mndoyants.

⁴⁷⁷ Cooke (1923), *op. cit.*, 29.

⁴⁷⁸ Konstantin Igumnov, ‘Some remarks on technique’ in *The Russian Piano School: Russian Pianists & Moscow Conservatoire Professors on the Art of the Piano*, (London: Kahn & Averill, 2008), 78.

arm at the time.⁴⁷⁹ For instance, Matthay emphasises the importance of arm involvement when dealing with weight and tone production. As he states,

‘We may optionally employ movement either of the arm, hand, or the finger...the weight form of muscular-combination is the only form that will allow us to obtain the full measure of good tone.’⁴⁸⁰

Matthay’s notion of using the arm was an innovative approach in piano playing in the early twentieth-century. Prior to the arm approach was the ‘active fingers method’ where student pianists were instructed to hold the hand in a fixed position, raising the fingers to a high angle and strike the keys with the fingers.⁴⁸¹ Even Liszt – an innovative and influential pianist – did not emphasise the use of arm in his playing, nor did he allow his students to play from the arms.⁴⁸² Not long after Matthay’s work, German pianist Rudolf Breithaupt (1873-1945) issued a two-volume publication in 1909 – *Natural Piano Technic*. Its title, however, does not accurately reflect the content. Breithaupt’s publications focused more on the use of arms rather than purely on technique or weight. Thus, it is not surprising that Arnold Schultz suggests that Breithaupt’s work may have been more accurately named ‘School of Arm-Touch’.⁴⁸³

On the subject of the arm-weight, Breithaupt noted:

‘The full utilization of the massive weight of the arm (which differs as to quantity and quality with each individual), when combined with the elastic muscular tension of the whole physical apparatus set in motion (shoulder,

⁴⁷⁹ Ambrose Coveillo later published a book, *What Matthay Meant: His musical and technical teachings clearly explained and self-indexed* to clarify some of the meaning in Matthay’s writing.

⁴⁸⁰ Tobias Matthay, *The Act of Touch in all its diversity: an analysis and synthesis of pianoforte of Tone Production*, Bosworth & Co. Ltd., London, 1903, 217-219.

⁴⁸¹ See Boris Berman’s *Notes from the Pianist’s Bench*, 2000, where he provides a practice method for this ‘finger only’ approach.

⁴⁸² ‘One must never play from the arms and the shoulders. He [Liszt] insists very much on these points’. In another occasion, a student noted: ‘One must play from the wrist, using what is called “la main morte” (dead hand) without interference from the arm, the hand falling onto the keys in a motion of total elasticity.’ See William Mason, *Memories of a Musical Life*, New York: The Century Co., 1901. Reprint. New York: Da Capo Press, 1970, 17-18.

⁴⁸³ Though, Schultz’s suggested title would not have been early so popular, since the word “weight” was more ‘attractive’ during Breithaupt’s era. See Arnold Schultz, *The Riddle of the Pianist’s Finger*. Carl Fisher: Second printing edition, 1949, 289.

upper- and fore-arm, hand, fingers), constitutes the fundamental elements of piano-technic.’⁴⁸⁴

Indeed, Breithaupt already considered ‘the arm as one of the fundamental elements’ as early as 1909, when some of his colleagues (such as Marguerite Long) still considered ‘finger action only’ to be the ‘only approach’.⁴⁸⁵

Since Breithaupt was a leading practitioner in the field of arm-weight, it would be useful to discuss his work in a more detailed manner. In chapters three, four, five and eight of the *School of Weight-Touch*, he proposes four primary actions in piano playing: 1) The longitudinal oscillation of the arm; 2) the extension of the fore-arm; 3) the rolling of the fore-arm; and 4) the free oscillation of the fingers. For the time being, we will only focus on the first and the third areas.

The longitudinal oscillation of the arm

In order to achieve the longitudinal oscillation of the arm, Breithaupt suggests the student must first practise a ‘supported swing’ exercise, practising only with a single note:

‘Set the weighted arm, supported by the middle-finger upon the middle C... Count sharply and with marked precision: 1-2-3-4, discharging the arm with lightning rapidity on 4, swing it off the key, dropping it with its full weight upon the next key D, and so on, *always on the third finger*.’⁴⁸⁶

He further suggests that each finger should be practised in the same manner throughout major scale. In addition to the above, he explains that:

‘The arm – one suspended mass – must descend with the swing of a massive iron hammer, this being the *martellato form of the non-legato touch*...It is the sudden, unexpected unconscious descent that begets what we may call the “brazen rhythmic tread” of the physical organs set in free motion.’⁴⁸⁷

⁴⁸⁴ Rudolf Breithaupt, *Natural Piano Technic*, C.F. Kahnt Nachfolger, Leipzig: 1909, 11.

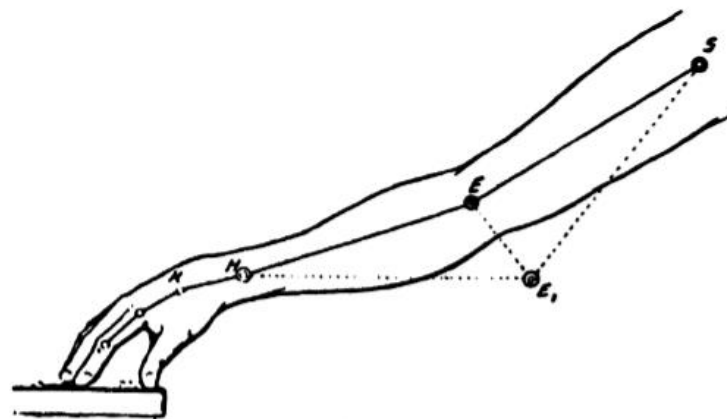
⁴⁸⁵ See Marguerite Long, *Le Piano* (Paris: Salabert, 1959), 2-4.

⁴⁸⁶ Breithaupt, *op. cit.*, 19.

⁴⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

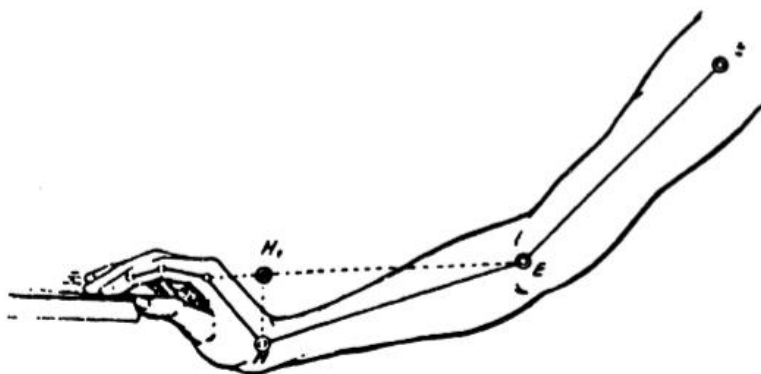
Breithaupt's proposed exercise should be familiar to many Russian pianists, since this is the identical learning pattern in the current Russian system prescribed in their method books.⁴⁸⁸ It is worth pointing out again that this is the first exercise that a young Russian pianist would come across in piano playing.

According to Breithaupt, the low-fall and high-fall actions are at the heart of longitudinal oscillation of the arm. Through stepwise motion with the use of successive fingers, these down and up motions of the arm are the key of a 'singing tone' production:⁴⁸⁹



S: shoulder. E: elbow. H: wrist.

High-Fall



S: shoulder. E: elbow. H: wrist.

Low-Fall

⁴⁸⁸ See again Chapter 4 (Section 4.1.1).

⁴⁸⁹ The diagram is borrowed from Breithaupt, *op. cit.*, 21.

Breithaupt describes further:

“‘High-fall’ characterised by the projection of the weight of the arm from below upward, in which the hand and arm, passing from the low position, below the keyboard, to the high position, execute a sort of recoil. In the “low-fall” the hand is straightened out (balancing posture), in the high-fall it is curved (curved position), suspended passively. The movements in the high-fall are merely the inversion of those in the low-fall.’⁴⁹⁰

Here, Breithaupt’s statement is inaccurate. The “high-fall” is not merely an inversion of the “low-fall”; there is the gravity element with the “high-fall” movement, but not for the “low-fall” movement, which makes these arm-weight movements two entirely different actions.

The rolling of the fore-arm

As the title suggests, this chapter focusses on ‘rolling’. However, the second part of this chapter deserves more attention than it has been given. Breithaupt deconstructs the ‘rolling’ movement of the arm into steps and addresses a fundamental issue: how arm-weight technique relates to the long line in piano playing. He stresses the importance of ‘rotary motion combined with extension of the fore-arm’ and proposes a series of movements, using only C to G:

- 1) The fall of the arm upon the thumb: C.
- 2) The transmission by rotation of the weight from the thumb to the other fingers: 2-3-4-5-: D-E-F-G (from key-bed to key-bed, without raising the fingers).
- 3) A short, jerked extension of the fore-arm towards the 5th finger.
- 4) The light rise and swing of the arm r of the hand on to the 5th finger preparatory to its again falling on to the thumb: D, etc.

‘The transmission of the weight from one finger to another by means of five successive attacks,...now becomes one single rotary action. Instead of executing 5 swinging and falling movements or 5 rises and 5 falls, *one* rotation (as if driving a gimlet) of the fore-arm in the elbow-joint suffices to cause the weight of hand and arm to bear, or rock upon the *five* participating fingers, or upon the five keys.

⁴⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

The fingers themselves do not take any essential, active part, for the time being...The simple rotation of the fore-arm in one single rotary action renders the other actions superfluous.⁴⁹¹

Breithaupt's idea may first sound comprehensive, but a deeper thought would understand that it can only remain on a conceptual level, particularly when playing at a slow tempo. It also draws a rejection from Reginald Gerig, where he comments:

'If no finger action is used in playing a stepwise five note roulade, all keys must be played while the fore-arm rotates in a mere 3/8 inch arc, the distance of the key depression. And this must be done very quickly; experimentation will show that at even a moderate rate of rotation no sound can be achieved at all.'⁴⁹²

Indeed, finger action is inevitable in piano playing, even when the arm is involved; the concern is in fact the level of finger involvement when playing together with other body parts. At any rate, the more interesting question here surely is the purpose of such approach. As Breithaupt rightly points out:

'Viewed physiologically, *legato* is the result of fore- and upper-arm rolling combined. The connecting of the various tones of a consecutive series proceeds, properly speaking, from the rolling of the fore-arm. The natural transfer of the weight from key to key, the finger-tips remaining constantly and closely in contact with the same, produces of itself a natural legato. And yet the legato thus obtained rather constitutes a rapid non-legato, a relative legato.'⁴⁹³

He continues in detail, as to how long-line legato is executed by using the arm:

'A strict connecting – absolute legato, necessitates a further movement: the inward or outward rolling of the upper-arm, i.e. the rolling of upper or fore-arm combined with the extension (straightening-out) of upper and fore-arm...The arm, as it were, rolls the weight, or its own weight, before it, thus suggesting the handle of a roller (the hand), rolling or unrolling, as it is pushed or drawn. The arm pushes a scale (downwards) and draws it out (ascending). This rolling and unrolling or gliding of the hand by means of rotary action of the fore- and upper-arm, constitutes the fundamental principle in connecting a series of tones. Real *legato*, and legato aesthetically and technically perfect, depends upon the equality and the purling, smooth flow of the series of tones to be played, and is obtained with the aid of the movement in question, i.e. by

⁴⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 34.

⁴⁹² Gerig, *op. cit.*, 350.

⁴⁹³ Breithaupt, *op. cit.*, 49.

the rotary action of upper- and fore-arm, combined with the extension of upper- and fore-arm. We must reject the idea of connecting the tones by independent finger-action consisting in pressure and over-stretching – which is wrong.⁴⁹⁴

Using the combination of upper- and fore-arm would certainly help to create a long line. In addition, it results in a greater sonority with less effort and a more easily obtained freedom. Though, it should be emphasised again that no matter how arm-weight is engaged, the involvement of finger is indispensable. Throughout Breithaupt's publication, much of the focus is placed on arm involvement, to a degree that he suggests students must abolish 'all mechanical finger-exercises', 'all scales and exercises' etc.⁴⁹⁵ In fact, by using only the full arm and by abolishing exercises for finger independence would result great problems in velocity, dexterity, tone production, and legato playing. Breithaupt was certainly an influential figure on the pedagogical aspect, and was highly successful in encouraging arm-weight participation in piano playing. To some extent, it is reasonable to assume that Breithaupt's notion of arm-weight playing influenced the Russian School of piano playing; and as mentioned above, some his pedagogical exercises can be found in the Russian method books today. In order to provide an example of how Breithaupt blindly supports his 'arm-weight' approach, and to conclude the preceding section, it would be interesting to include Maria Levinskaya's reflection on her encounter with Breithaupt:

'After having received my diploma at the then Imperial Moscow Conservatoire, under Safonoff, I came to Berlin with the intention of finding a music teacher for "finishing lessons!" I paid a visit, amongst others, to MR. Breithaupt, who at our first interview, whilst developing his theories, approached the piano and showed a few passages. I am sure he will forgive me when I say that on hearing his version of correct passage playing it was so far removed from my own ideal that at once I decided to study with Godowsky. It is only now [1930], in the light of my analysis of Breithaupt's theories in print,

⁴⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 49-50.

⁴⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 98.

that I can fully understand why such an impression was inevitable, for in playing he evidently tried to follow his own precepts, and avoid all precise finger articulation. Possibly he was never actually a master of it, for having once realised the sense of control it creates, it seems too great a sacrifice even for the purpose of proving one's theories to voluntarily renounce so wonderful an asset.'⁴⁹⁶

This encounter was vital; not only does it reveal that the early Russian School was not a supporter of 'arm' only approach at the time, but also this encounter was likely to have influenced Levinskaya's impression of the 'old' and 'new' methods, resulting, as we will see later on in the chapter, in the 'Levinskaya system'.

Arm-weight: Co-articulation

Western researchers have long been aware of 'co-articulation' – a phenomenon in speech in which certain sounds are produced differently depending on the sounds that come before or after them. Scientist Martha Flanders suggests that piano playing involves co-articulation, and that a pianist 'exhibits co-articulation in their finger movement while playing. Her research shows that the way in which pianists strike the keys depend on the nature of keystrokes that occurred before and after.'⁴⁹⁷ Shinichi Furuya and Eckart Altenmüller echo Flanders, and point out that this co-articulation phenomenon is particularly 'evident when the hand posture changes dynamically.'

They further state:

'The fingers and wrist initiated preparatory motions 500 ms prior to the thumb-under maneuver, which facilitated the subsequent horizontal translation of the hand. Finger muscular activity also provided evidence supportive for co-articulation in piano playing. The balance of burst amplitudes across multiple muscles depended on the characteristics of the preceding and

⁴⁹⁶ Maria Levinskaya. *The Levinskaya System of Pianoforte Technique and Tone-Colour through Mental and Muscular Control*. (London and Toronot: J.M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1930), 56.

⁴⁹⁷ See Martha Flanders et. al., 'Patterns of muscle activity for digital co-articulation' in *Journal of Neurophysiology* 17 April 2013 Vol: DOI 10.1152/jn.00973.2012.

subsequent keypresses, forming neuromuscular co-articulation throughout the time course of sequential finger movements.’⁴⁹⁸

Indeed, body parts (finger, hand, and arm) move in anticipation to facilitate ‘production of upcoming acoustic events.’⁴⁹⁹ This anticipatory modification of the movements (co-articulation) serves as a mechanism that allows smooth succession of sequential movements. Particularly when using arm-weight, it assists the pianist to connect several notes on a single movement – transferring the arm-weight from one finger to another. As a result, it provides a smooth transition between notes – creating an illusion of a long legato line. When playing with arm-weight, the pianist is in fact pushing him/herself away from the keyboard, as opposed to simply lifting up each finger and lowering it towards the keyboard. As pointed out earlier on, the more joints that are involved, the more weight that will apply to the key; the more weight that is applied to the key, the fuller and deeper the sound one will get on the piano. Even though when the arm is not used it should be engaged in any case, as Boris Berman claims, ‘...even while using the small joints only, the pianist must develop the sense of silent support given by bigger joints to the smaller ones...’⁵⁰⁰ They are engaged, in the sense that they must never be tensed, and that they should be in an ‘active relaxation mode’. This ‘active relaxation mode’ of the arm provides an opportunity to release tension, and subsequently, it then allows the pianist to create a natural ‘singing’ sound. Apart from the positive implication of using arm-weight, Berman suggests that relying too much on the arm will result in ‘unwanted thickness and heaviness of playing.’⁵⁰¹ In other words, too much ‘singing’ tone quality.

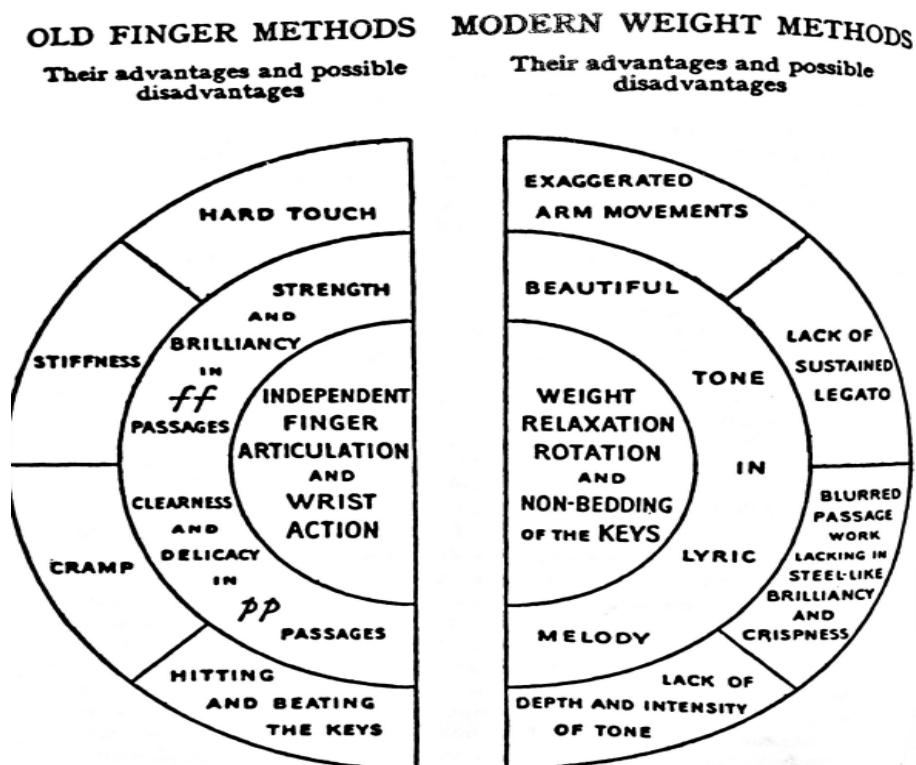
⁴⁹⁸ See Shinichi Furuya and Eckart Altenmüller, ‘Flexibility of movement organization in piano performance’ in *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience*. Published online 2013 Jul 16. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3712142/#> [Accessed 21 February 2017].

⁴⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰⁰ Berman, *op. cit.*, 25.

⁵⁰¹ *Ibid.*

The notion of employing different parts of the body weight can be commonly found in the playing of Russian pianists. However if we compare this idea with other Western pianism, for instance, the French piano school, the difference is more apparent. The French pianist Marguerite Long (1874-1966) was strongly opposed to the idea of using weight, and clearly expressed as much in her publication *Le Piano*.⁵⁰² Whilst Long was against using weight in piano playing, Maria Levinskaya noticed that her teacher, Vassily Safonov (1852-1918), combined the use of fingers and weight in his playing. She felt that Safonov was making ‘a connecting link between active finger technique and weight methods.’⁵⁰³ Based on her experience with Safonov, Levinskaya incorporated the features between finger method and the weight approach, and developed a tonal system:

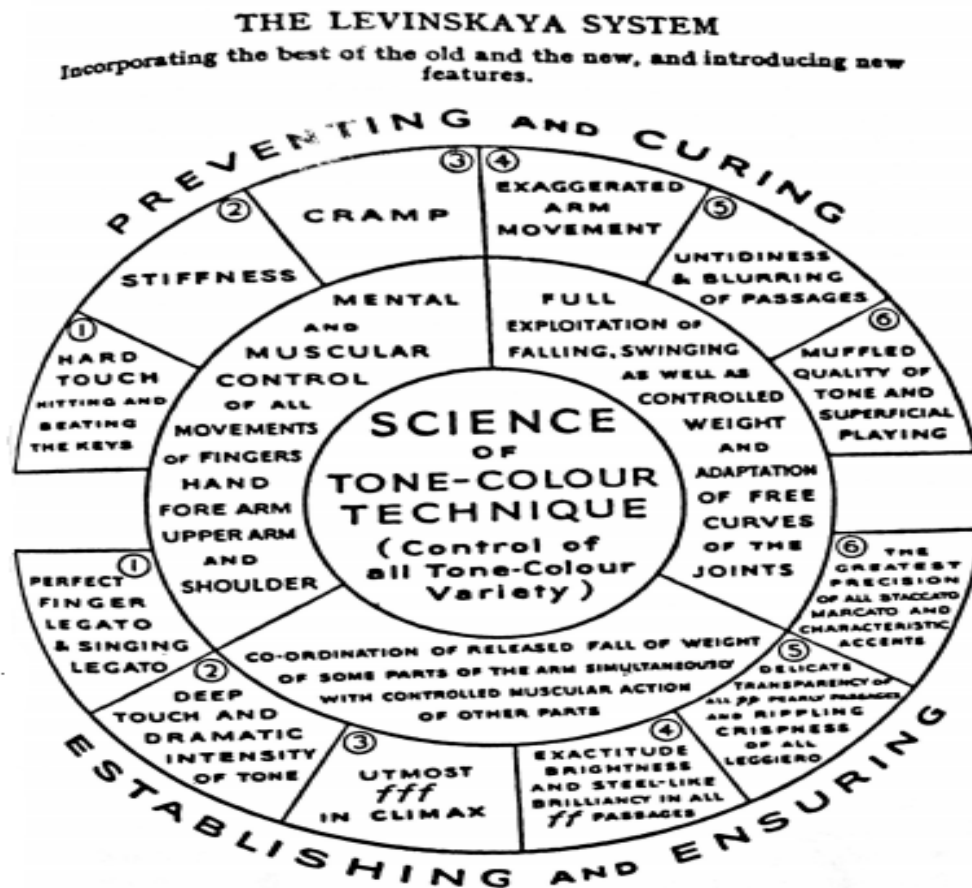


Ex 6.3 ‘Old’ and ‘New’ Method by Levinskaya

⁵⁰² See Marguerite Long, *Le Piano* (Paris: Salabert, 1959), 2-4.

⁵⁰³ Maria Levinskaya. *The Levinskaya System of Pianoforte Technique and Tone-Colour through Mental and Muscular Control*. (London and Toront: J.M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1930), 42.

According to the description of the diagram, these semi-circles are intended to represent the two halves (the old and the new methods) of the complete art of piano playing.⁵⁰⁴



Ex 6.4 The Levinskaya System

The Levinskaya System has combined the advantages of both old and new methods, with added features: it embodies the tonal control of piano playing.⁵⁰⁵ One added feature in the Levinskaya system is the emphasis on mental and muscular control; in particular, these areas of control are located in the inner band of her system –

⁵⁰⁴ Inset: the leading principles on which each is based. Inner band: the outstanding qualities of each. Outer band: the frequent failings through lack of scientific knowledge. See Levinskaya (1930), *op. cit.*, 72.

⁵⁰⁵ Inset: it indicates the aesthetic discrimination of any tone colour through which vista the whole art of piano playing is analysed and synthesised. Inner band: the leading principles on which the system is based. Outer band: the upper half shows faults eliminated, while the lower half shows the artistic qualities acquired. See Levinskaya (1930), *op. cit.*, 72.

principles on which her system is based. According to Lhévinne, like Rubinstein and all of the Russian school, ‘the emphasis is on thinking moods into the fingers and arms. A beautiful singing tone must first be conceived mentally.’⁵⁰⁶ Rosina Lhévinne also frequently stated to her students, ‘You imagine the sound you wish to produce, and then you produce it.’⁵⁰⁷ For Russian pianists, it is essential to capture the sound they wanted to produce mentally, before making such an attempt on the instrument physically. At this point, it should be remembered that one should not infer that only Russian pianists would ever play with an ‘imagining before playing’ approach, or that all Russians must always play in that performance fashion. The discussion here rather attempts to outline the fact that ‘imagining before playing’ characteristically plays a key role in the mind of Russian pianists.

6.1.2 Self-perceptions on a ‘Russian’ sound

Even though pianists from both Moscow and St Petersburg had a unified method of tone production, Goldenweiser noticed that pianists from St Petersburg produced excessive full tone and sometime brought a hitting element into piano tone. He further ascribed this to a transition from high-finger method to the natural weight method.⁵⁰⁸ Goldenweiser’s statement suggests that the value placed on sound by Moscow and St Petersburg was somewhat different. At this point, it should be noted that the definition of tone includes a singing, sustainable quality, and fluidity. This is recognised by the majority of Russian pianists, as can be seen from the literature and interviews,⁵⁰⁹ apart

⁵⁰⁶ Lhévinne (1924), *op. cit.*, 26.

⁵⁰⁷ According to Sargeant, this comment is frequently heard over and over again among her students. See Winthrop Sargeant. ‘The Leaves of a Tree’, *The New Yorker*. 12 January 1963, Vol. XXXVIII, No. 47, 52.

⁵⁰⁸ Alexander Goldenweiser. *Sovety Pedagoga-Pianista Pianisti Rasskazyvayut 1*. Sokolov: Soviety Kompozitor: 1979, 159-176.

⁵⁰⁹ The reason why ‘Russian’ tone must have a singing quality is that Russian teachers consider that the voice is the most natural instrument. Interview with Natalia Trull. In addition, see ‘Who’s who of pianists – Dimitri Alexeev talks to Malcolm Troup’ *EPTA Piano Journal* (UK: 2003) 7; Josef Lhévinne,

from Goldenweiser, who shows a different perspective on the singing tone produced by St Petersburg-trained pianists. Contemporary Russian pianist Rustem Hayroudinoff seems to disagree with a number of towering figures of the Russian piano school, one of which is Sviatoslav Richter (1915-1997):

‘If you listen to Rachmaninov’s playing, the very singing and vocal like [sound], with long lines and beautiful phrasings. It was in the Russian playing – a very vocal-like element. Richter, for example, was not so obsessed with a beautiful tone; especially when he was younger, his tone was quite hard...when you compare Richter’s and Rachmaninov’s, you can hear that he [Richter] is not from the Russian School, especially in slower passages. He doesn’t have the elasticity, flexibility, the singing quality and colour. It is a totally different school.’⁵¹⁰

Russian pianist Alexander Mndoyants agrees that, although tone is one of the performing principles of Russian schools, not every modern Russian pianist has a projected sound. Mndoyants depicted an artistic image in how he was taught:

‘My teacher always told me “Look! There is a woman out there in the balcony and so please play it so that she can hear you from the balcony.” Although pianists in the West play everything correctly, the sound does not reach far enough to the audience. Unfortunately, the young Russian pianists now, they are also playing in this “Western” style. They are often worried that their sound is too harsh and hard.’⁵¹¹

The metaphor above helps Russian pianists to imagine sound projection. Further, Mndoyants implies that this Russian performing aesthetic of tone is now less commonly found in young Russian pianists. This is a signal of the Western to Russian

‘Good tone is born in the player’s mind’, Harriette Brower (trans.), *The Music*, July 1923, Vol. 28, 7; Boris Berman. *Notes from the Pianist’s Bench* (New Haven, Yale: 2000), 30.

⁵¹⁰ Interview with Rustem Hayroudinoff.

⁵¹¹ Interview with Alexander Mndoyants.

and Russian to Western equilibrium process that evens out the distinctions between Russian and Western pianists.

Not only did eminent Russian pianists begin to sense Western influence in the next generation of Russian pianists, but Russian-emigrant pianists also began to question the unified tone quality that Russian pianists produce. Boris Berman pointed out a disadvantage of this Russian performing aesthetic:

‘The quality which I find less positive is that Russian pianists tended to evolved only one kind of sound – very full, long lasting fat sound, which suits some styles better than others. For this reason, it has been observed in many occasions that many Russian pianists have relatively less success with classical style. In part, because of this full fat sound – very often makes Russian performers insensitive to small motivic units, which is so important in baroque and classical style.’⁵¹²

Baroque and classical music require light touch as well as a thin singing sound. Berman’s statement suggested the ‘Russian’ sound is not necessarily suitable for all repertoires. Further, it implies that the majority of Russian pianists play with a thick and full sound, regardless of the repertoire.

At this point, it would be useful to examine this Russian performing aesthetic in recorded performances, and explore the sound projection of both Russian pianists and Western pianists. In particular, the following section will compare recordings from two different generations in both Russian and Western pianist categories.

6.2 A Singing Tone: An Analysis of Performances

Following on from the analysis above, this section will analyse and compare recorded performances made by Russian pianists and Western pianists. Further, it will attempt

⁵¹² Interview with Boris Berman.

to explore the musical assimilation process between Russian to Western and Western to Russian influence by examining recordings from different generations. It is seen as an assimilation process since Russian pianists have come to see themselves as part of a larger national family. To this end, it would be useful to restate an observation pointed out in Chapter 2 by Tatiana Sarkissova:

‘I would very much regret if it [Russian Piano School] will disappear – the old tradition that we definitely had there, maybe they still have. I just wish it will continue. I don’t know why it is disappearing. But I feel there is something missing, something might be missing.’⁵¹³

Although the discussion in the previous section was focused on the subject of touch, it has an indispensable relationship with singing tone. Thus, it would be useful to deconstruct how tone is achieved as the ‘final product’. Similarly, the tone production process for pianists can be deconstructed into three major stages: first, ‘preparation’ – this stage involves imagining the tone psychologically and hearing the sound in the ear, before making any attempts on the keyboard. Whilst practitioners such as Neuhaus consistently reminded his students that ‘one cannot produce a beautiful singing tone if his/her ear does not detect the tonal range’,⁵¹⁴ scholars such as Daniel Leech-Wilkinson and Helen Prior also noted that the sound production process involves ‘how particular musical configurations (notes, combinations, sequences) feel as one listens and how it feels to make music with one’s instrument that feels like that. It then becomes easy in performance to draw on that link to make music that feels right, by imagining how the next sound should feel and then using one’s experience to generate a sound that feels that way.’⁵¹⁵ In this connection, Russian pianist Vassily

⁵¹³ Interview with Tatiana Sarkissova.

⁵¹⁴ Neuhaus (1958). *op. cit.*, 80.

⁵¹⁵ For a detail account on the subject, see Daniel Leech-Wilkinson and Helen M. Prior, ‘Heuristics for expressive performance’, in ed. Dorottya Fabian, Emery Schubert and Renee Timmers, *Expressiveness*

Safonov made an important observation on this ‘preparation’ stage of Rubinstein’s playing:

‘...the chord must be ready in the thought of the player before the hand opens. This was the secret of the incomparable beauty of sound in the chords of Anton Rubinstein...’⁵¹⁶

Secondly, ‘execution’ – this stage involves physical action and muscular movements. These physical involvements depend on the tonal range required from the composition. Besides the usual dynamic indication, ranging from pianissimo to fortissimo, there are extreme levels such as *pppp* or *ffff* (in the case of Tchaikovsky). In attempting to produce the softest possible tone, it is possible that the key is depressed too slowly i.e. when the hammer rises but does not strike the string. Neuhaus described this phenomenon as ‘not yet tone’; but on the other hand, he pointed out, ‘by gradually increasing the force of the action, and the height at which the hand is raised, we come to the upper limit of volume (*ffff*), after which we get not tone but noise, since the mechanical arrangement of the piano does not allow excessive speed coupled with an excessive mass, and especially not combination of these two excesses.’ To conclude, Neuhaus commented on the possible range of tone: ‘By depressing a key too slowly and softly, I get nothing, zero; it is not yet a tone; if I let my hand fall on the key too fast and with too much force, I get a noise; it is no longer a tone. Between these limits lie all the possible gradations of tone.’⁵¹⁷ If we were to summarise the possible elements that contribute to the subject of touch under

in *Music Performance: Empirical approaches across styles and cultures* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 36.

⁵¹⁶ One should not forget Safonov was a distinguished pianist and educator; Alexander Scriabin, Nikolai Medtner, Josef Lhévinne were among his students. He was the Director of Moscow Conservatory from 1889-1905. See Vassily Safonov. *New formula for the Piano Teacher and Piano Student* (J.W. Chester, 1915), 25.

⁵¹⁷ Neuhaus (1958). *op. cit.*, 58.

this second category, there are three identifiable areas: a) force; b) height; c) speed.⁵¹⁸

These elements would have a bearing on touch and subsequently, would determine the singing tone produced by the pianist. In addition to touch, Mine Doğantan-Dack suggests singing tone is achieved through a particular pianistic gesture that is congruent with the gestures used in the vocal tract when singing.⁵¹⁹

Lastly, ‘continuation’ – this stage involves the gestures that continue after the chord sounded, in other words, rounding the sound off after the tone is produced. There are two directions: ‘up’ or ‘down’. The upwards direction requires the pianist to draw the sound out of the instrument by lifting his/her wrists and arms as s/he plays the chord. This method is similar to the movement of a percussionist when playing the cymbals, or the gesture of a golf player when hitting the golf ball; hence the following-on gesture from both of these activities. The downward direction requires the pianist to ‘sit’ on the sound by setting down his/her wrists and arms as s/he plays the chord.

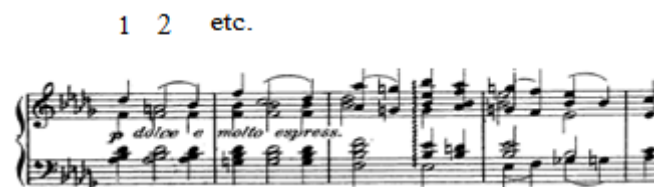
At this point, it would be useful to analyse the recordings for Russian and Western pianists, placing much of the emphasis on singing tone. In order to maintain the analytical consistency, the musical examples of Tchaikovsky and Mozart from the previous chapter will be employed again in this chapter, and the pianists’ recordings selected in this section are identical to those selected in Chapter 5. The following analysis is broken down into two parts. The first part will use the same excerpt from the Tchaikovsky’s concerto, and investigate whether Russian pianists have a more projected singing tone than Western pianists; while the second part will focus on the

⁵¹⁸ a) force: the force of the hand; b) height: the height at which the hand is raised; c) speed: the speed that the hand is fell on the keys.

⁵¹⁹ See Mine Doğantan-Dack. ‘In the beginning was gesture: piano touch and an introduction to a phenomenology of the performing body’, Anthony Gritten and Elaine King (eds.), *New Perspectives on Music and Gesture* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2011), 243-66.

Mozart sonata, and examine whether there are any noticeable patterns from different generations of Russian pianists.

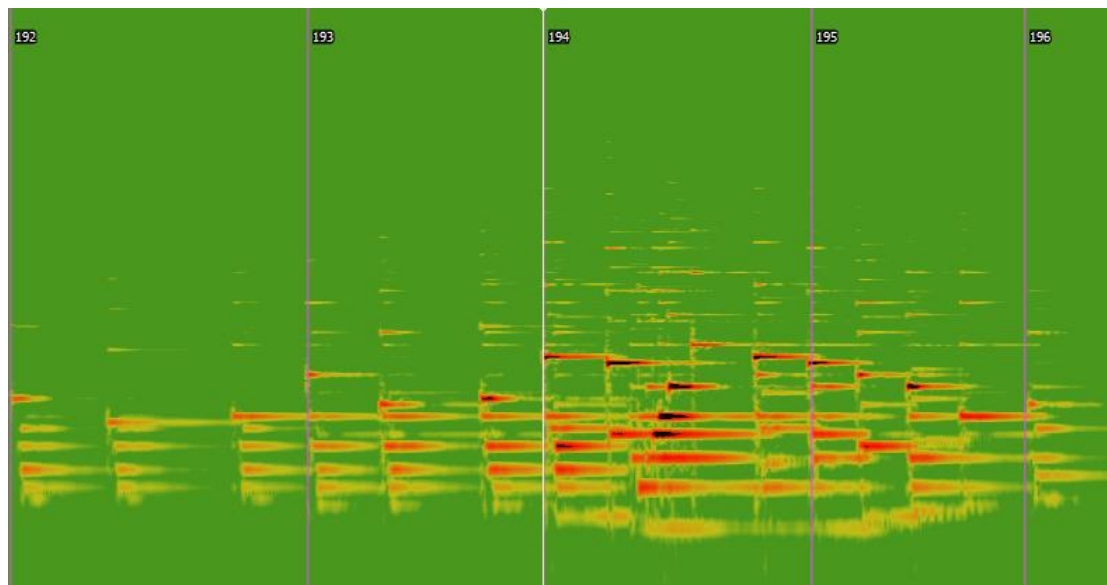
Again, the musical excerpt is taken from Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto in B flat minor, op 23. This particular excerpt is taken from bar 192 to bar 196 – taking only the first opening phrase of the excerpt. All fifteen notes are labelled as in Ex 6.5. Besides continuing from the previous chapter, this excerpt is chosen was because it is a typical example of melodic voice with accompaniment. Therefore, it is possible to compare Russian and Western pianists' voice projection more clearly.



Ex 6.5 Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto in B flat minor, Op. 23, bars 192 – 196

Before looking at the Sonic Visualiser graphs, it is vital to understand the layout of the graphs. Once again, each graph is made up of two aspects: bar lines, which are indicated in purple; and the projection of each note, indicated by colour. Each sound projection is represented by the colour according to the power of the notes. These graded colours tone can be divided in three major categories: quieter (green), moderate (yellow-red), and louder (black) flames. Examples 6.6 – 6.25 are all laid out in the same format. In order to be as accurate as possible, all loudness projections are measured with the decibel (dB) readout. All decibel measurements are taken from the fundamental frequency as it appears on screen in the Sonic Visualiser program. The 'singing' quality occurs between the notes. In order to measure the changing intensity between notes and the degree of smoothness of these changes, all decibel

measurements are therefore taken just after the start of the note, and just before the start of the next note. We will then compare the changes and assess the singing quality.



Ex 6.6 Recorded Performance by Kissin (1988) in Sonic Visualiser

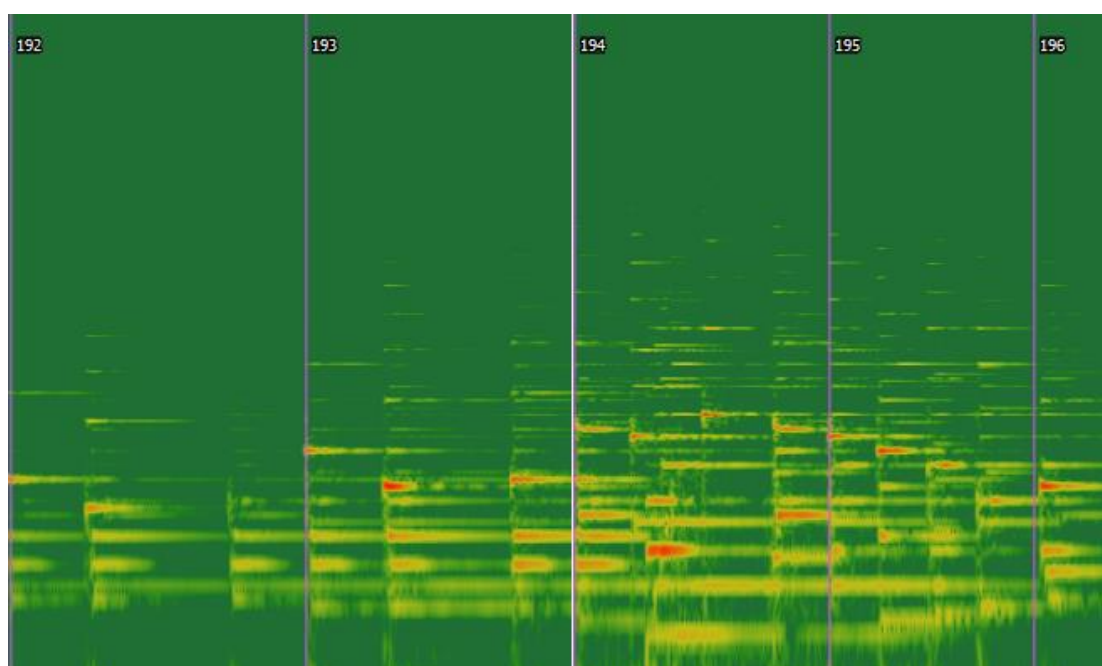
The recording of Evgeny Kissin (1971-) is a typical example of a singing tone projection. From the Sonic Visualiser graph above, the melody note is played with the volume of the fundamentals around dB -26 at the beginning of the note, changing to dB -33 at the end of the note in *Note 1*. *Notes 7, 8, 9, and 10* in Bar 194 are slightly different because of the spread chord; although the whole chord should be spread evenly as indicated on the score, Kissin preferred to ‘sing’ the upper voices more than the rest of the spread chord.⁵²⁰ Below is a detailed breakdown of the changing intensity between notes:

⁵²⁰ The top note of the spread chord (*Note 9*) is indicated with dB -20, whilst the rest of the harmonic notes are with the range of dB -25 to -28.

Note	Beginning	End	Note	Beginning	End
1	-26	-33	9	-20	-30
2	-28	-35	10	-33	-40
3	-26	-30	11	-24	-27
4	-24	-34	12	-24	-35
5	-23	-33	13	-19	-36
6	-22	-34	14	-23	-29
7	-21	-32	15	-30	-33
8	-20	-27	<i>Average</i>	-24	-33

Ex 6.7 Breakdown in Changing Intensity (Kissin)

A slightly different pattern emerged from the performance of his fellow pianist, Nikolai Lugansky (1972-). Lugansky's melodic projection is similar to Kissin's in bars 192 to 196. It is worth noting that the position of the microphone would have a bearing on the note projection seen in the Sonic Visualiser graph.



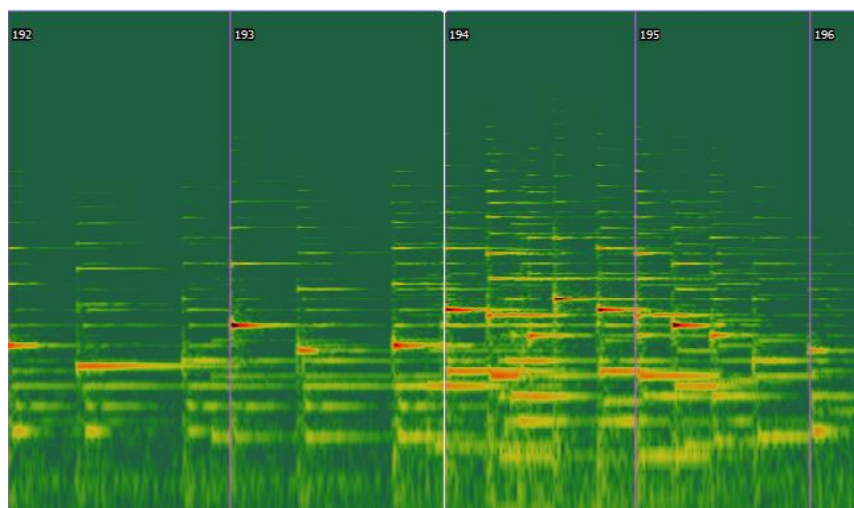
Ex 6.8 Recorded Performance by Lugansky (2013) in Sonic Visualiser

Note	Beginning	End	Note	Beginning	End
1	-24	-33	9	-22	-40
2	-24	-39	10	-26	-33
3	-34	-37	11	-22	-39
4	-26	-34	12	-23	-31
5	-19	-39	13	-27	-31
6	-23	-29	14	-26	-28
7	-28	-35	15	-22	-29
8	-23	-28	<i>Average</i>	-25	-34

Ex 6.9 Breakdown in Changing Intensity (Lugansky)

Based on the two analyses and table breakdown, it is clear that both Russian pianists are very similar in terms of singing tone projection. There is only minor difference in their average range for the beginning (dB -24 and -25) and ending (dB -34 and -35) notes.

After looking at the performances of two Russian pianists from the same generation, it would be appropriate to investigate further by examining the performances of their predecessors. To this end, the performances of three Russian pianists who were born in the 1950s are chosen again from Chapter 5: Andrei Gavrilov (1955-), Mikhail Pletnev (1957-) and Ivo Pogorelich (1958-).

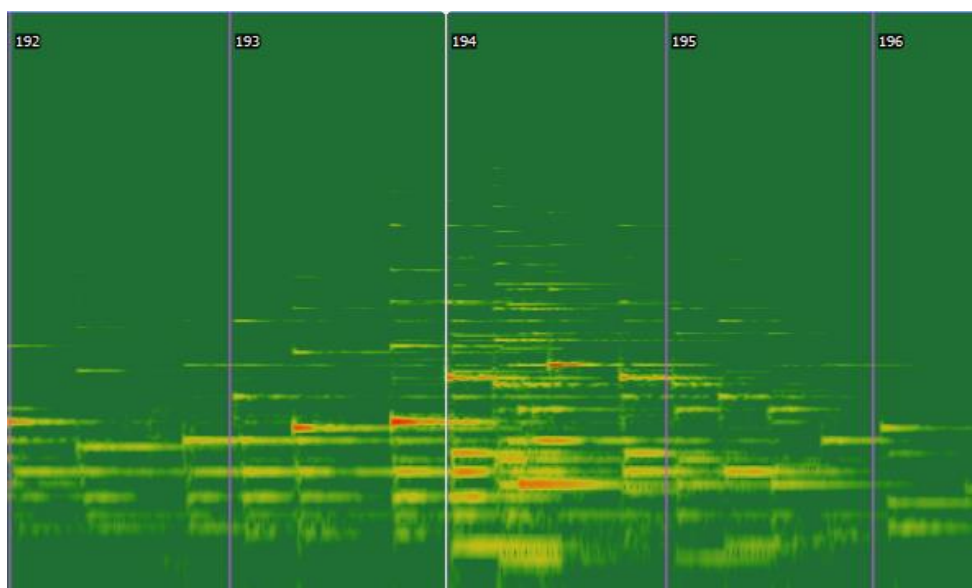


Ex 6.10 Recorded Performance by Gavrilov (1974) in Sonic Visualiser

The performance of Gavrilov is very different from Kissin's and Lugansky's. In Gavrilov's performance, the top melody note is more projected than Kissin and Lugansky. Although Gavrilov's sound is more projected, it does not necessarily mean that his melody note has a more singing quality. If we were to look at the breakdown table below (Ex6.10), it is apparent that some of Gavrilov's tone projection declines at a much faster rate than some of his other notes, and quicker than those of Kissin's and Lugansky's. For instance, *Note 4*, where the measurement was at dB -16 at the beginning of the note, dropped significantly to dB -31 at the end of the note. This indicates that the abruptness of the intensity changes, suggesting that sound was not sustained. This applies to *Note 9* too, where the drop was even greater (from dB -16 to dB -36), and perhaps *Note 1* (from dB -20 to dB -32). Based on the breakdown, these three notes in particular, could hardly be called a 'singing' tone. In comparing Gavrilov's singing tone, it is clear the changing intensities between notes are not as consistent as Kissin or Lugansky.

Note	Beginning	End	Note	Beginning	End
1	-20	-32	9	-16	-36
2	-19	-25	10	-20	-28
3	-28	-27	11	-27	-21
4	-16	-31	12	-18	-28
5	-24	-33	13	-21	-29
6	-18	-24	14	-25	-37
7	-26	-31	15	-28	-30
8	-25	-23	<i>Average</i>	-22	-29

Ex 6.11 Breakdown in Changing Intensity (Gavrilov)



Ex 6.12 Recorded Performance by Pletnev (1991) in Sonic Visualiser

Pletnev's singing tone tends to be very consistent. Up to this point in this chapter, he is the only pianist examined here that has the closest average decibel measurement between the starting and ending sound. What this implies is that these fifteen notes in Pletnev's playing have a 'singing' quality that allows the note to sustain, and that his singing tone overall are also highly consistent. There is only a noticeable decay as one would find in other examples – *Note 11*. Similarly, this sudden decay of sound is also found in Lugansky's example at an identical spot.

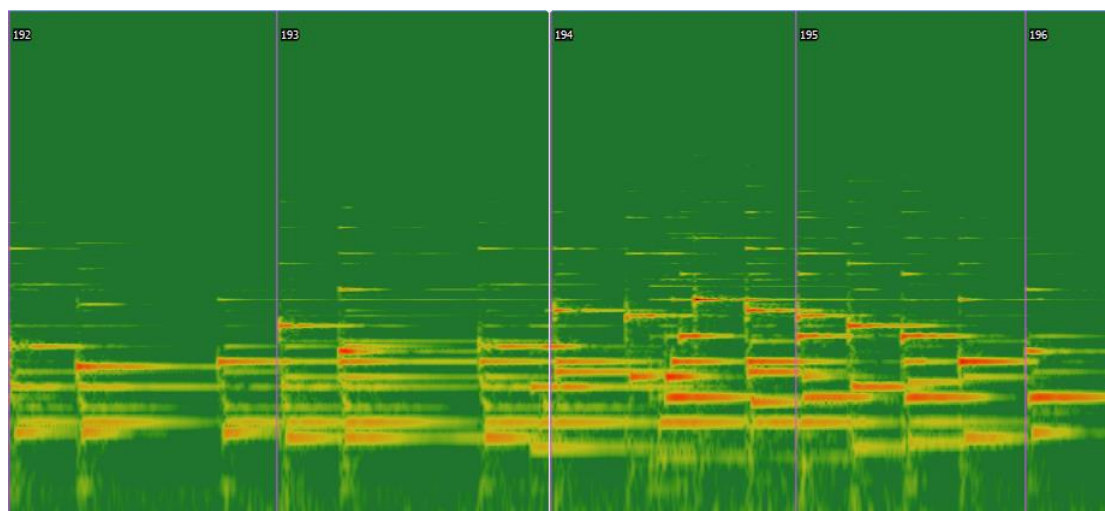
Note	Beginning	End	Note	Beginning	End
1	-24	-32	9	-27	-35
2	-29	-33	10	-32	-38
3	-26	-30	11	-33	-44
4	-31	-36	12	-35	-38
5	-22	-30	13	-29	-34
6	-19	-24	14	-28	-31
7	-22	-25	15	-29	-37
8	-29	-30	Average	-27	-33

Ex 6.13 Breakdown in Changing Intensity (Pletnev)

Another aspect worth discussing is Pletnev's musical intention; if we were to analyse the first six notes in the excerpt, there are two short slurs on *Note 2* and *Note 5*. In

short slurs, as Sandra Rosenblum points out, ‘the note over which the slur begins is very gently (almost imperceptibly) accented’.⁵²¹ In that sense, *Notes 2* and *5* should be slightly emphasised. Contrary to this principle, those two notes are played softer than the subsequent notes (*Note 3* and *Note 6*) in Pletnev’s recording.

The last pianist considered in this part of the analysis is Ivo Pogorelich (1958-):



Ex 6.14 Recorded Performance by Pogorelich (1987) in Sonic Visualiser

The majority of the melody notes in Pogorelich’s performance lie between dB -21 to dB -30 (beginning of note). His performance is rather similar to his fellow pianist, Gavrilov, but Pogorelich’s singing tone and its changing intensity are more stable. Whilst Gavrilov’s average range lies between dB -22 to -29, Pogorelich has a closer range – dB -25 to -30. Pogorelich’s changing intensity table is indicated as below:

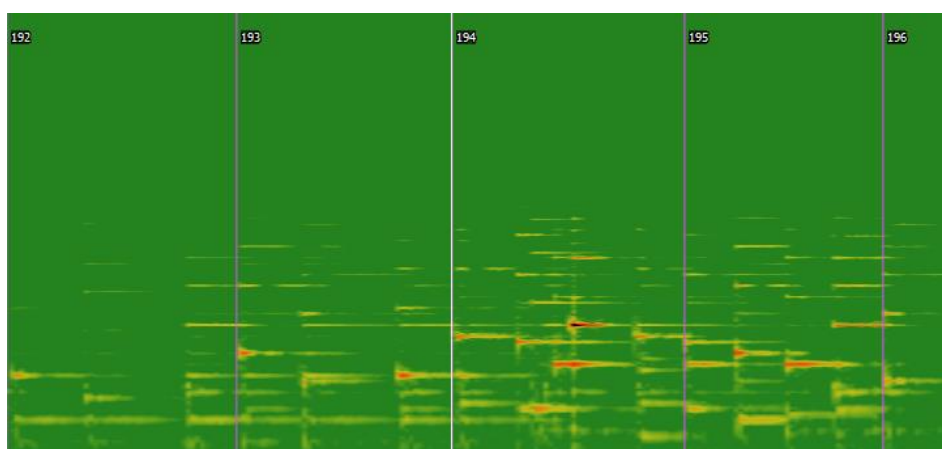
⁵²¹ Sandra Rosenblum, *Performance Practices in Classic Piano Music*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988, 158. See section ‘The Language of the Slur: the expressivity of short slurs’.

Note	Beginning	End	Note	Beginning	End
1	-27	-29	9	-23	-25
2	-21	-31	10	-23	-27
3	-22	-26	11	-29	-30
4	-23	-29	12	-26	-31
5	-26	-33	13	-22	-29
6	-30	-38	14	-20	-26
7	-27	-30	15	-24	-33
8	-30	-36	<i>Average</i>	-25	-30

Ex 6.15 Breakdown in Changing Intensity (Pogorelich)

If we were to analyse all the data in the changing intensity for these fifteen chords, it is clear that the singing tone from the younger generation, Kissin's and Lugansky's, decline at a slightly faster rate than the older generation, the ones of Gavrilov's, Pletnev's, and Pogorelich. This data suggests that these three Russian pianists examined here tend to produce sound that is more sustainable, and contains more of a singing element.

After investigating the recordings of Russian pianists, it would be sensible to examine recordings made by Western pianists, and explore whether this performing principle (singing tone) also features in their performances. As stated earlier on in the chapter, in order to maintain consistency in the analysis, the same performances of Western pianists are selected from the previous chapter.



Ex 6.16 Recorded Performance by Arthur Rubinstein (1954) in Sonic Visualiser

One may think projecting the melody is the first priority in piano playing. But the performance of Arthur Rubinstein shows a rather different approach to singing tone in compared to Russian pianists. This Sonic Visualiser graph above indicates Arthur Rubinstein did not pay much attention to the melody, since these melodic notes are not much different from the other harmony notes. Before even measuring whether the melody has any singing tone quality, the melody requires more projection the rest of the chord.

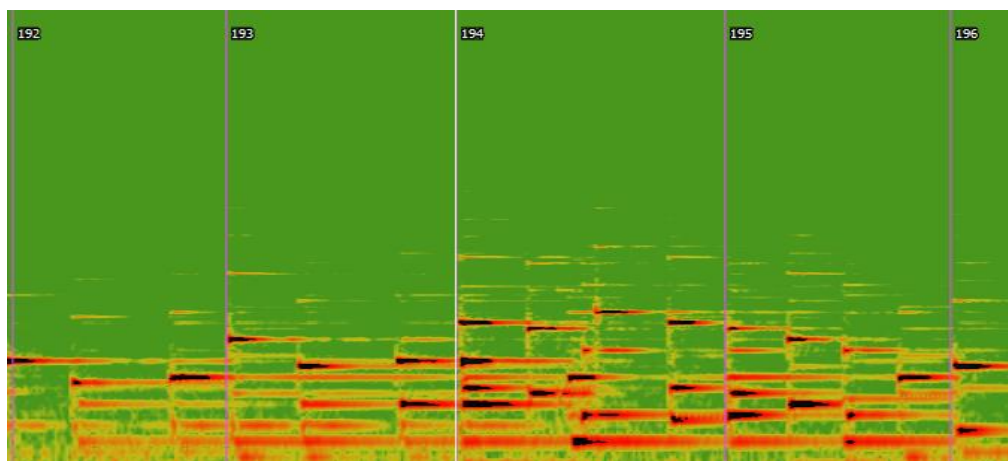
Note	Beginning	End	Note	Beginning	End
1	-27	-35	9	-29	-39
2	-34	-36	10	-32	-38
3	-34	-37	11	-30	-33
4	-26	-36	12	-24	-39
5	-31	-40	13	-24	-29
6	-24	-33	14	-29	-30
7	-34	-38	15	-30	-36
8	-28	-32	<i>Average</i>	-29	-35

Ex 6.17 Breakdown in Changing Intensity (Rubinstein)

The above table indicates that Rubinstein has a smooth changing intensity in his tone quality. His average range lies between dB -29 to -35. When one compares his changing intensity (the beginning of the note) with other previously examined Russian pianists, it is clear that Rubinstein's projection begins with a much softer sound. However, it is worth remembering that the singing tone quality in piano playing also depends on the sound distribution of the chord. As Sarkissova pointed out on the subject of singing tone, 'Nothing has to come close to the melody. Melody should not come close with others in terms of priority – there should be a complete distance.'⁵²² In sum, the changing intensity of Rubinstein's performance is closely matched with some of Russian pianists, but the singing tone balance within the chord is very much the opposite.

⁵²² Lesson Observation from Tatiana Sarkissova (1TS0.4).

On the other hand, the Hungarian pianist Georges Cziffra (1921-1994) is similar to the performance of Russian pianists. For instance, the chords are well balanced with a clear singing tone on the top melody line. Most of the black flames shown in the graph are the melody notes, with the exception of a number of chords. i.e. first, third, and fourth beat in bar 194, as well as the first beat in bar 195.



Ex 6.18 Recorded Performance by Cziffra (1964) in Sonic Visualiser

One of the most obvious differences between these chords and others is that the melody note is very close to other harmonic notes within the chord. This presents a challenging task for the pianist because harmonic and melodic notes are all played within one hand, and in a quick tempo. Besides, as pointed out earlier in the chapter by Goldenweiser, ‘these notes are invariably played by the fifth or little finger, i.e. the weakest finger of all’.⁵²³ Not only is the chord balance in Cziffra’s performance very similar to the Russian pianists, but also the changing intensity in his sound. This is indicated as below:

⁵²³ Goldenweiser (2008). *op. cit.*, 56.

Note	Beginning	End	Note	Beginning	End
1	-21	-28	9	-25	-30
2	-25	-36	10	-20	-34
3	-22	-26	11	-24	-30
4	-24	-27	12	-21	-32
5	-21	-29	13	-24	-30
6	-25	-31	14	-22	-21
7	-23	-28	15	-20	-20
8	-25	-32	<i>Average</i>	-23	-29

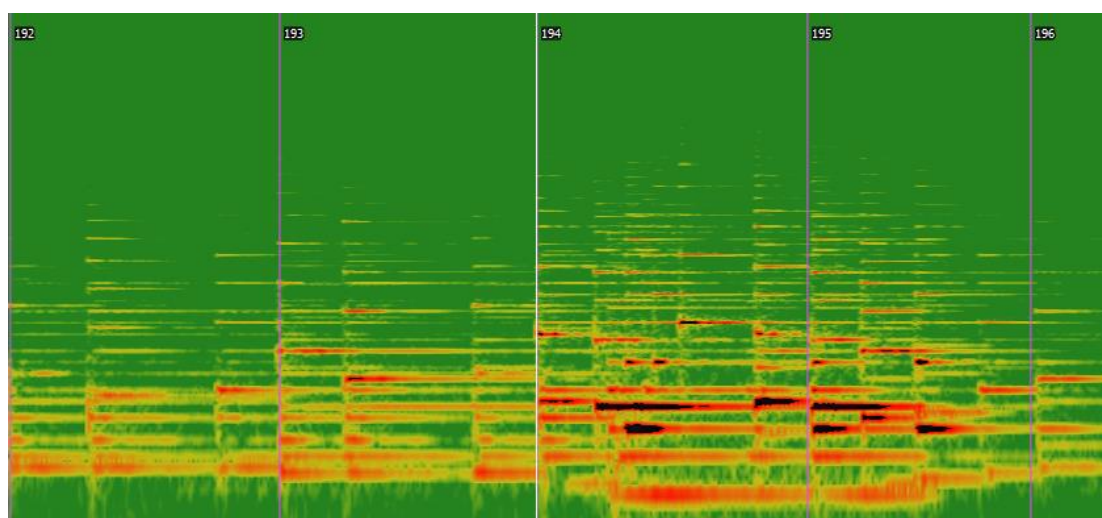
Ex 6.19 Breakdown in Changing Intensity (Cziffra)

Although Cziffra's performance contains some characteristics of the Russian school, melodic singing tone is not an element that can be easily found from the performances of his successors, such as Lang Lang. His performance consists of clear sound projection, and notes are generally in the black flames category.

However, another important aspect to consider is where those black flames appear in the graph. In the case of Lang Lang, that black threshold is generally crossed in the harmony in bars 194-195 (in the lower part of those chords), rather than appearing only in melody notes. Indeed, while it is interesting to point out where those black flames appear, a critical and subtle aspect is how much quieter are these melodic notes. In the performance of Lang Lang, the most 'un-singing' note is *Note 5*, a sharp drop from dB -19 to -31. His singing tone is also unstable, often lying in the range of dB -19 to -32 (beginning of the sound), but surprisingly his harmonic notes are at a much louder level (dB -16 to -19).

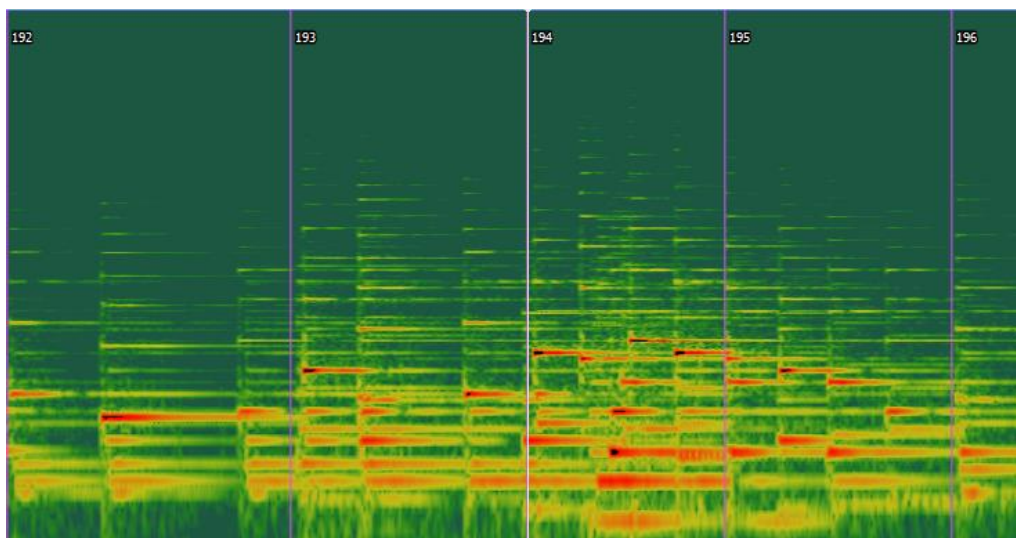
Note	Beginning	End	Note	Beginning	End
1	-32	-35	9	-22	-29
2	-29	-32	10	-23	-34
3	-26	-28	11	-29	-30
4	-23	-26	12	-22	-25
5	-19	-31	13	-19	-30
6	-25	-28	14	-25	-27
7	-27	-31	15	-25	-30
8	-22	-28	<i>Average</i>	-25	-30

Ex 6.20 Breakdown in Changing Intensity (Lang)



Ex 6.21 Recorded Performance by Lang Lang (2003) in Sonic Visualiser

Although from the same generation as Lang Lang, the performance of Ott (Ex 6.21) contains many of the Russian characteristics. If we were to only look at a higher level, Ex 6.21 shows that Ott creates a distance between melody and harmonic notes. On a lower level, Ex 6.22 shows the changing intensity in her singing tone. It indicates that Ott's singing tone declines at a slower rate than any of the pianists (both Russian and non-Russian) examined here.

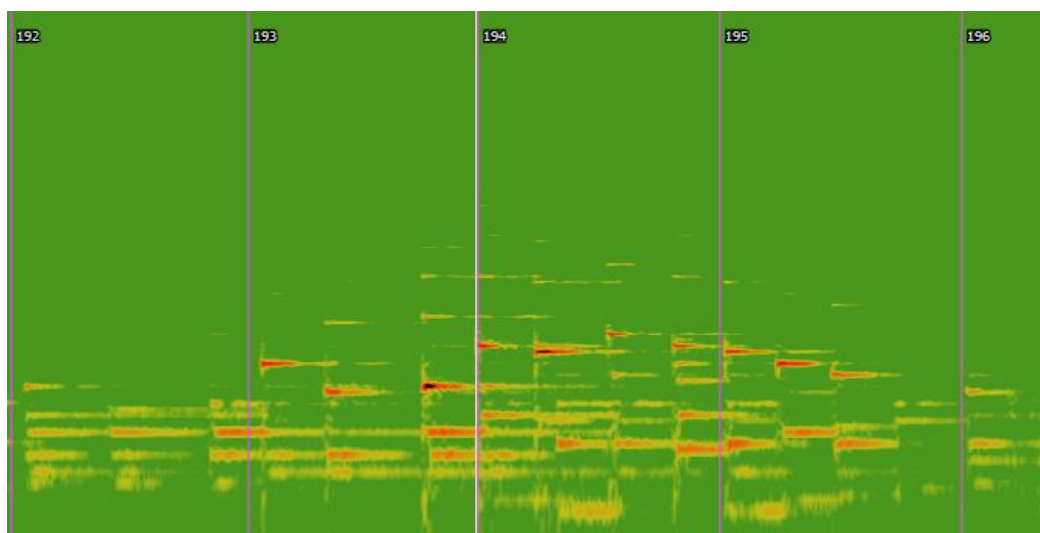


Ex 6.22 Recorded Performance by Ott (2005) in Sonic Visualiser

Note	Beginning	End	Note	Beginning	End
1	-16	-25	9	-14	-14
2	-19	-21	10	-16	-16
3	-16	-24	11	-17	-17
4	-16	-19	12	-18	-18
5	-18	-26	13	-11	-11
6	-19	-23	14	-18	-18
7	-15	-18	15	-23	-23
8	-15	-21	<i>Average</i>	-17	-20

Ex 6.23 Breakdown in Changing Intensity (Ott)

Another non-Russian pianist examined here is Ilana Vered. Vered's performance is slightly different to Rubinstein's. For instance, the recorded performance of Vered makes a slight distinction between the harmonic and melody notes, although not as obvious as other Russian pianists examined in this chapter. This conclusion is supported by the decibel measurement from the Sonic Visualiser; harmonic notes generally lie in the range of dB -27 to -31, whilst the melody notes are at dB -22 to -24.



Ex 6.24 Recorded Performance by Vered (1976) in Sonic Visualiser

It is worth pointing out once again that singing tone does not only depend on the sound balance between melodic and harmonic notes (the grading colour in the Sonic Visualiser), but also the changing intensity on the melodic notes (the changing intensity table). When we combine these two components and analyse further, it is clear that Russian pianists still have marginal unity in their singing tone quality at present. Indeed, the Sonic Visualiser graph shows that the melodic line is more projected in the performances of Russian pianists, but the table for the changing intensity between the melodic notes indicates a similar degree of smoothness. This suggests that some non-Russian pianists' playing has a singing tone quality, but their difference in melodic and harmonic notes is not as obvious as Russian pianists. For instance, the difference between the average changing intensity in Pogorelich's performance is dB -5, but the difference in melody and harmony is not as easy to identify as other Russian pianists. In another example, Lugansky's difference between melodic notes can be easily recognized, but his degree of smoothness between the melodic notes is one of the greatest we can see from our analysis.

The non-Russian pianist group does not seem to project the melody as much as the Russian group, with the exception of Cziffra and Ott. A noticeable projection pattern can be found in Cziffra's performance, and is rather similar to the performances of Russian pianists examined in this chapter. An interesting observation from the singing tone examination is that Ott's performance produces more singing tone quality than all the Russian pianists examined here. However, this does not imply that Ott's performance is similar to Russian performance (or even claim to be part of the Russian School). This merely suggests that Ott has one of the few Russian aesthetics in her playing.

It may be a coincidence that Russian pianists play with a 'singing tone' in Romantic repertoires. Thus, it would be plausible to examine Classical repertoire; since, according to Berman, it requires less tonal projection than romantic music.⁵²⁴ In the second part of the performance analysis, we shall examine whether singing tone has diminished its influential position in Russian pianism from generation to generation.

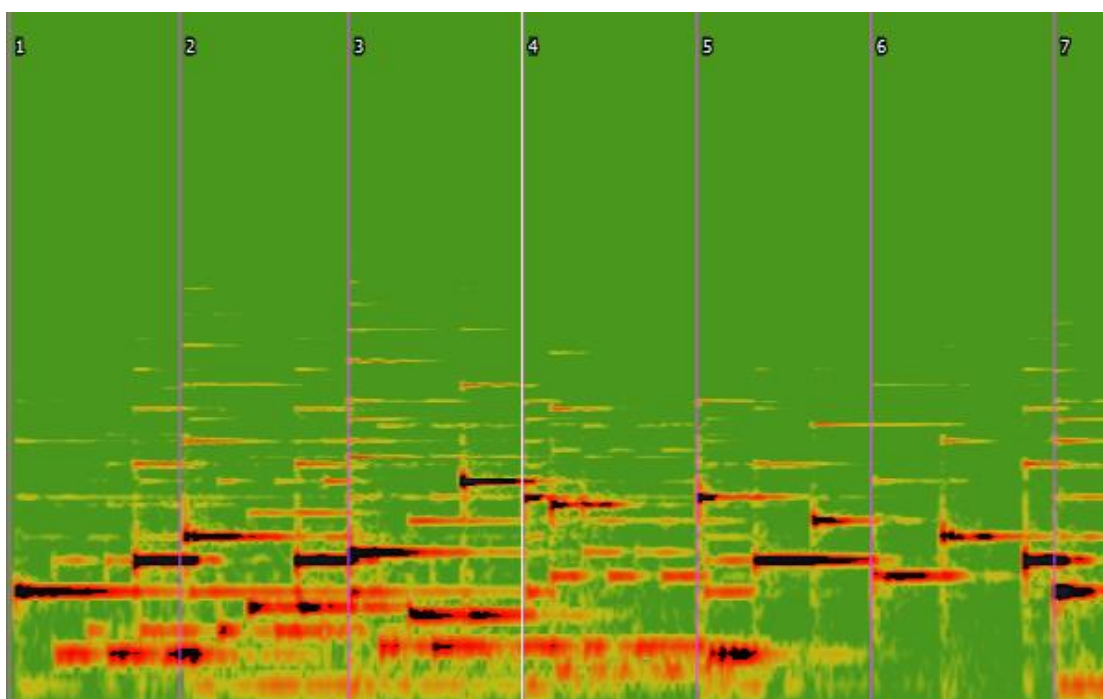
Taking Mozart's Piano Sonata in F major KV 332 from the previous chapter as an example, this part of the analysis will look at performances of Russian pianists from four different generations: Elisabeth Leonskaja (b. 1940s), Grigory Sokolov (b. 1950s), Denis Evstuhin (b. 1980s), and Juan Lazaro (b. 1990s).



Ex 6.25 Mozart's Piano Sonata in F major, KV 332, bars 1-6

⁵²⁴ Interview with Boris Berman.

The performance of Leonskaja is a typical example of the Russian school, where melodic singing tone is on a much higher projection level (dB -19 to -22) than the rest of the accompaniment (dB -24 to -26). There is a clear distance between melody and accompaniment. Although there are some occasional accents in the accompaniment, they are not consistent throughout the excerpt. Another important aspect to observe is that her average changing intensity between notes is minimal. This is indicated below in Ex 6.26.

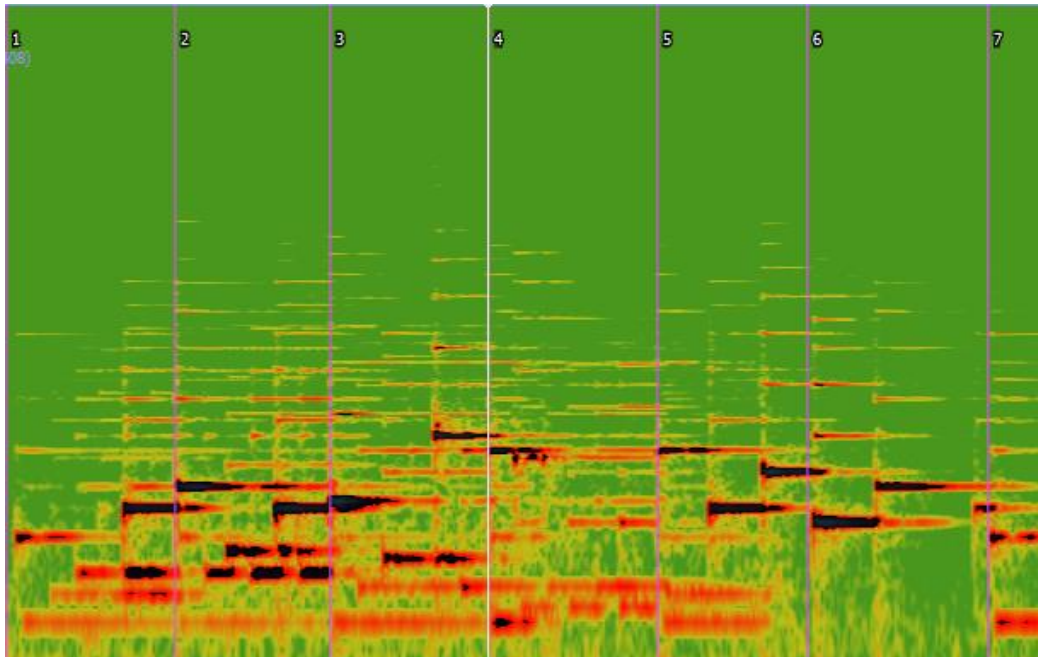


Ex 6.26 Recorded Performance by Leonskaja (1999) in Sonic Visualiser

Note	Beginning	End	Note	Beginning	End
1	-19	-24	9	-24	-27
2	-19	-19	10	-20	-20
3	-22	-27	11	-21	-27
4	-19	-20	12	-23	-25
5	-20	-28	13	-23	-31
6	-20	-26	14	-18	-18
7	-21	-24	15	-17	-26
8	-23	-24	<i>Average</i>	-21	-24

Ex 6.27 Breakdown in Changing Intensity (Leonskaja)

The recording from Sokolov also shows a similar pattern – singing tone in the melody and low projection in accompaniment. In sum, there is not much difference between his performance and the performance of Leonskaja, though Sokolov’s singing tone is more sustained than Leonskaja’s.

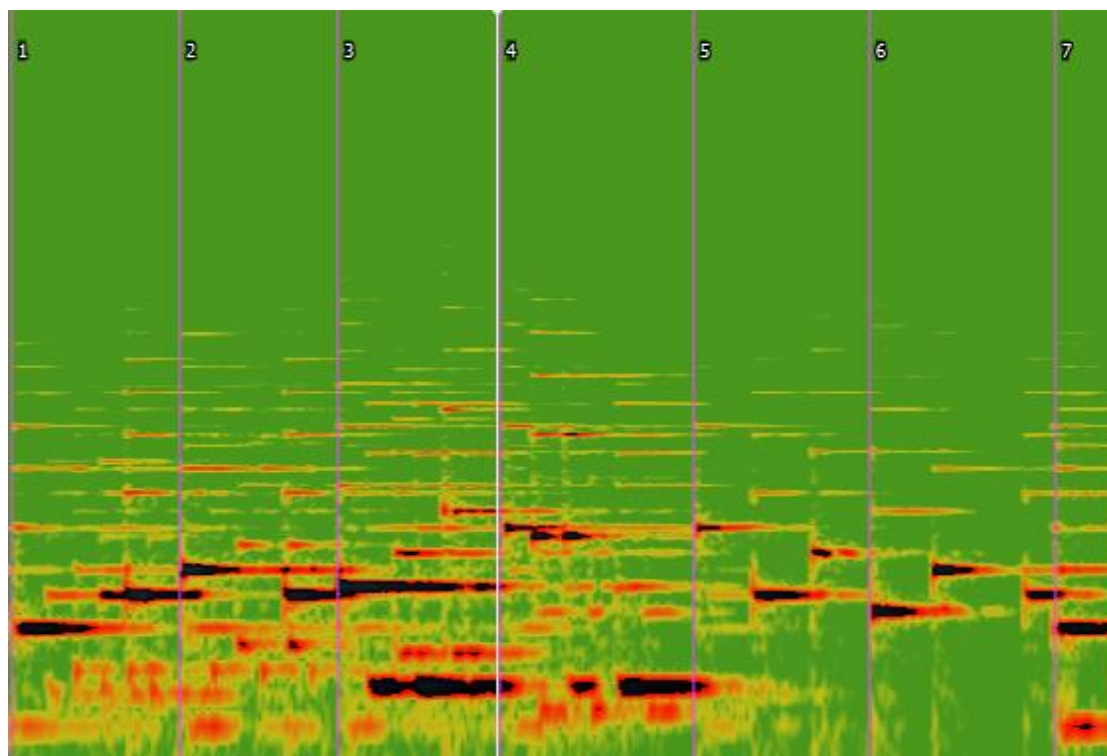


Ex 6.28 Recorded Performance by Sokolov (2008) in Sonic Visualiser

Note	Beginning	End	Note	Beginning	End
1	-23	-29	9	-24	-26
2	-18	-18	10	-22	-23
3	-20	-22	11	-18	-19
4	-20	-19	12	-15	-19
5	-17	-26	13	-23	-26
6	-16	-22	14	-19	-23
7	-21	-24	15	-24	-25
8	-28	-29	<i>Average</i>	-18	-23

Ex 6.29 Breakdown in Changing Intensity (Sokolov)

The performer selected here from the 1980s generation is Denis Evstuhin, who was born and trained in Russia, and has been a prize-winner in a number of international piano competitions. One may expect that there is a major difference between Evstuhin's performance and the performance of his predecessors (Leonskaja and Sokolov); but in fact, Evstuhin's performance consists of those characteristics that we identified earlier in the recordings of other Russian pianists. Further, there is a clear distance between the melody and harmonic projection in Evstuhin's performance.

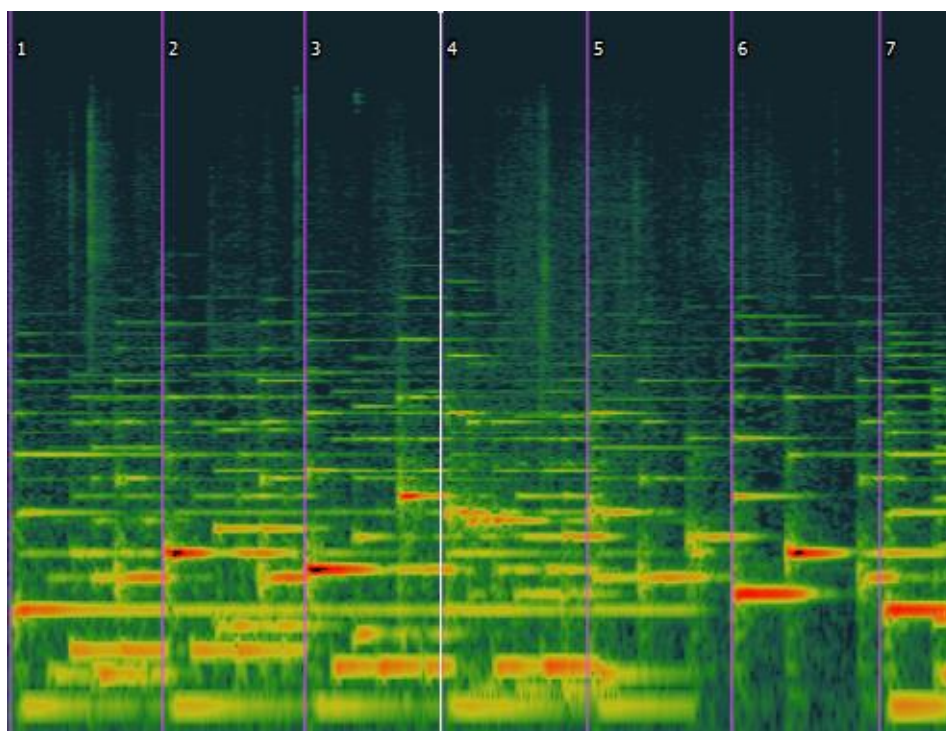


Ex 6.30 Recorded Performance by Evstuhin (2012) in Sonic Visualiser

Note	Beginning	End	Note	Beginning	End
1	-24	-29	9	-20	-28
2	-22	-21	10	-23	-27
3	-16	-24	11	-20	-23
4	-18	-20	12	-25	-29
5	-17	-20	13	-20	-26
6	-28	-29	14	-19	-27
7	-21	-23	15	-20	-22
8	-18	-21	<i>Average</i>	-21	-24

Ex 6.31 Breakdown in Changing Intensity (Evstuhin)

However, the recording selected here from the 1990s generation shows a completely different approach to singing tone. The example selected here is a Russian-born pianist Juan Lazaro (1991-). The performance is rather unclear with the melody and harmony notes, since they are both produced with more or less the same amount of loudness and sound projection. In the first bar, for instance, melodic notes are in the range of dB -10 to -15, whilst the accompaniment notes are in the range of dB -14 to -16. Occasionally, the bass accompaniment in Lazaro's performance is markedly darker than the melody note in the Sonic Visualiser graph, i.e. at the end of bar 4. This implies that the accompaniment (dB -11) is played louder than the melody (dB -14). The other singing tone examination was the changing intensity between melodic notes. Although the average range is dB -4, most of Lazaro's singing tones decline at a faster rate than any Russian pianists. For instance, note 3 (from -6 to -12); note 5 (from -6 to -15); note 14 (from -8 to -25). Thus, both of the analyses do not show the usual performing habit one finds in other Russian performances examined in this chapter.



Ex 6.32 Recorded Performance by Lazaro (2012) in Sonic Visualiser

Note	Beginning	End	Note	Beginning	End
1	-12	-17	9	-14	-18
2	-12	-13	10	-17	-20
3	-6	-12	11	-13	-14
4	-11	-11	12	-16	-17
5	-6	-15	13	-9	-11
6	-10	-14	14	-8	-25
7	-12	-13	15	-15	-19
8	-14	-18	<i>Average</i>	-12	-16

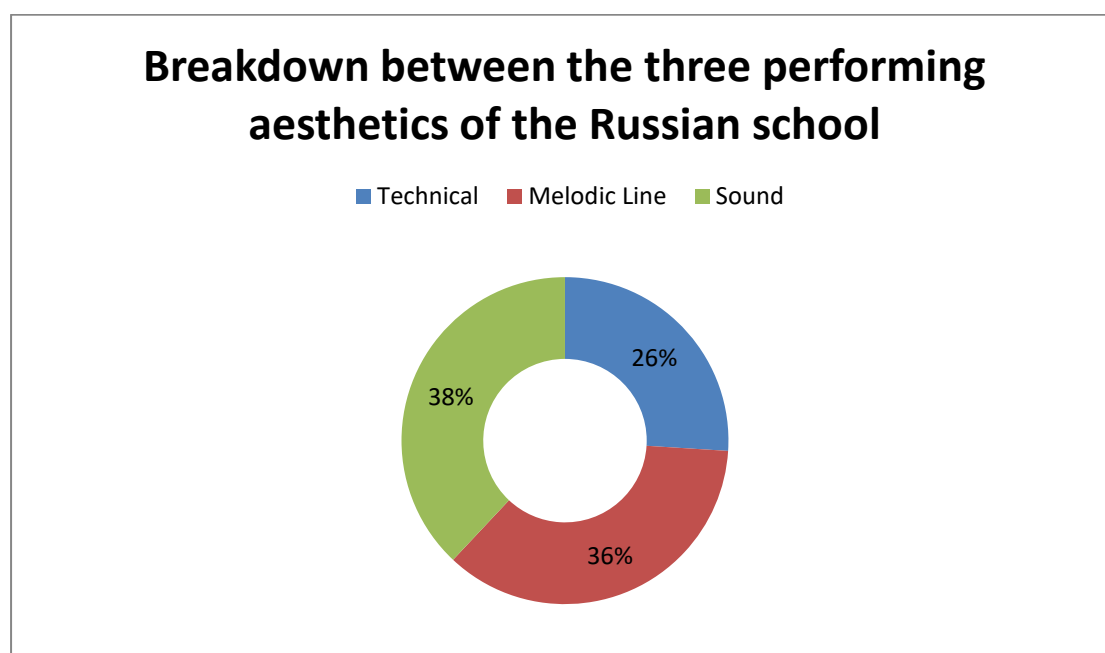
Ex 6.33 Breakdown in Changing Intensity (Lazaro)

Having analysed the recordings above, we can observe here that it is not only Russian pianists who employ singing tone in their performances; nor does the analysis reveal that Western pianists do not project the melody (in the case of Tchaikovsky). However, the analysis above does seem to verify that playing with a singing tone is a performing habit that can be found in the performances of Russian pianists. Further, the analysis demonstrated that the performance of a Russian pianist (Juan Lazaro) from the 1990s has fewer Russian characteristics than his predecessors examined here.

6.3 A Singing Tone: On Teaching a ‘Russian’ Performance

Having considered the singing tone on both theoretical and practical levels, it will be useful to explore the ways in which the Russian teachers and Russian emigrant teachers deliver their ideas to their students.

The ‘Sound’ category includes any comment made by the teacher on the tone production, sound projection, orchestral imitation, and balance of sound. Since sound is closely related to weight, they will be jointly considered in the section. But first, if we were to compare the three performing aesthetics of the Russian school, sound is the highest recorded category.



Ex 6.34 Breakdown between the performing aesthetics of the Russian School

38% of the sound category has included comments on expressive singing sound, orchestra imitation, tone colour, balance of chords and sound, as well as discussion on the relationship between sound and weight; this translates into more than ninety occurrences during lesson observations. This ‘Sound’ category can be divided into

three broad segments: balance of sound or chord, orchestral imitation, and sound-weight relation.

Balance of sound (53%)	Orchestral imitation (26%)	Sound-weight relation (21%)
Comments related to singing tone or balance of sound	Comments related to orchestral sound imitation	Comments related to how sound and weight are related to each other

Ex 6.35 Breakdown of ‘Sound’ into Balance of sound or chord, orchestral imitation and sound weight relation

Most comment recorded in the sound category is made up of the ‘balance of sound’ segment (53%). To this end, it is interesting to note that the majority of Russian teachers observed here, used either ‘*cantabile*’ or ‘*espressivo*’ when describing the sound they are after. The word, ‘*espressivo*’ is not only used in simple ‘melody plus accompaniment’ excerpts, but it also needs to be achieved in octave passages. On the other hand, ‘*cantabile*’ is used more broadly. For instance, Alexeev suggested to his student that *cantabile* sound will help to indicate a hidden voice in a complicated texture.⁵²⁵ Despite the fact that in all of the observed lessons, students were able to satisfy the teacher by playing with a more ‘*espressivo*’ sound; Robert Woody pointed out in an interview study that there are ‘other influences on their [students] expressivity, both musical, such as performances of other musicians and non-musical’. Thus, he suggests that learning to play with ‘*espressivo*’ is a ‘complex process that may take place in many situations other than one-to-one teaching’.⁵²⁶ In a later study, however, Woody showed that ‘different instructional conditions within lessons influenced students’ expressivity’.⁵²⁷

⁵²⁵ Lesson Observation from Dimitri Alexeev (2DA2.4).

⁵²⁶ Woody (2000), *op. cit.*, 14-23.

⁵²⁷ Robert H Woody, ‘The Effect of Various Instructional Conditions on Expressive Music Performance’ in *Journal of Research in Music Education* 54, (2006), 1, 21-36.

In addition to a singing tone, Russian teachers seem to maintain a high interest in the balance of voice and hands. This is often taught by teachers' demonstrations, after a verbal explanation on the issue of balance. In balancing the sound, Sarkissova offers an interesting insight during one lesson: 'Nothing has to come close to the melody. Melody should not come close with others in terms of priority – there should be a complete distance.'⁵²⁸ Occasionally, there are long notes in the music, and in order to maintain a longer sound, Parakhina advised the student to 'slow down the *attacca* into the key for a longer sound'.⁵²⁹

In addition to the 'balance of sound' segment, the topic of orchestral imitation was widely discussed during lessons. Despite the fact that the music did not instruct an orchestral imitation, this notion assisted the pianist to produce a similar kind of sound. For instance, Boris Berman requested the student to have a 'bowing sound from the violin',⁵³⁰ while Alexander Mndoyants suggested 'a vibrato sound from the string instruments'.⁵³¹ These suggestions are sometimes recommended based on the composers' instrumental preference in orchestral compositions. In Prokofiev's fifth sonata Op.38, for example, Parakhina advised the student to consider imitating the sound of a Bassoon at the opening passage, since Prokofiev frequently employs the instrument in his orchestral compositions.⁵³²

The sound-weight relation segment is the lowest of the three, but it is commonly found among Russian teachers, and the number recorded was spread across most of the Russian teachers observed. Sarkissova, in particular, pointed out to her student that 'when a darker sound is required, one would need more weight in the bass.' This

⁵²⁸ Lesson Observation from Tatiana Sarkissova (1TS0.4).

⁵²⁹ Lesson Observation from Dina Parakhina (1DP1.3).

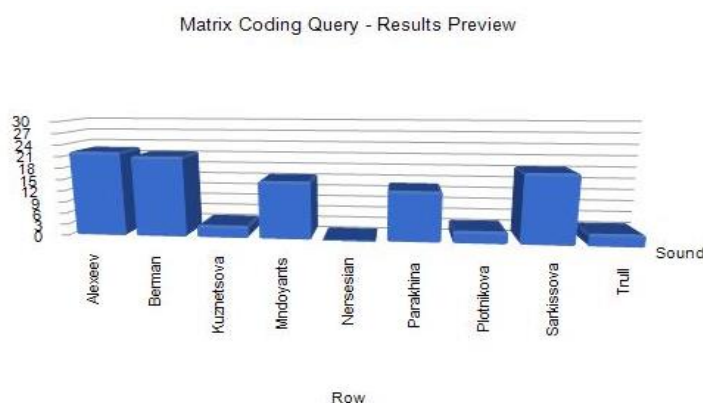
⁵³⁰ Lesson Observation from Boris Berman (3BB2.1).

⁵³¹ Lesson Observation from Alexander Mndoyants (1AM0.2).

⁵³² Lesson Observation from Dina Parakhina (1DP2.4).

is similar to a statement made by Kuznetsova, when her student made a rather ‘hard’ sound: ‘sound and weight should go into the piano’.⁵³³

If we were to analysis the observation data and segmenting the data by teachers, it would provide a different perspective:



Ex 6.36 Sound – Results for number of time it occurs amongst Russian teachers

Across the range of different Russian teachers observed, twenty instances (20%) of ‘Sound’ came from Alexeev. The same result can be found among Berman’s teaching activity (20%). It is worth mentioning that Berman is also the highest recorded teacher for ‘weight’. Based on the observation notes, it is evident that the discussion of weight and the issue of sound were closely related in Berman’s lessons. Further, Berman frequently analysed the music and requested the student to ‘produce a different sound and colour when the same music appears’.⁵³⁴ Another interesting insight from Berman is how the length of pedalling can affect the sound produced. In an example where the student played a Mazurka by Chopin, Berman pointed out to his student that a ‘special touch and sound is required if one has a long pedal to execute’.⁵³⁵ His comment is

⁵³³ Lesson Observation from Elena Kuznetsova (1EK0.1).

⁵³⁴ Lesson Observation from Boris Berman (3BB1.4).

⁵³⁵ Lesson Observation from Boris Berman (1BB1.3).

understandable; this is because when the pedal is employed the sonority and the sound of the piano differ enormously.

In contrast, Kuznetsova's, Poltnikova's and Trull's discussions on sound during lessons were relatively low (3%). In the case of Kuznetsova, she advised the student to produce 'another type of sound by using a different touch'.⁵³⁶ Although comments on 'Sound' did not appear relatively high in the teaching activity of Kuznetsova, Poltnikova and Trull, it does not mean they do not pay much attention to it psychologically. Through series of interviews, it becomes clear that Kuznetsova and Trull are mindful of how sound should be treated in performances. For instance, Kuznetsova admits, in her view, 'all Russian professors are thinking and teaching about obtaining the sound – a subject that we always think about'.⁵³⁷

It may be a coincidence that these Russia-based teachers had a low record of discussing sound, but this is not the case with Alexander Mndoyants. Most of the Mndoyants's comments on sound fall in the second category (Orchestral imitation from example 6.27). For instance, he recommended the sound of the cello in the lower passages, and suggested capturing the sound of the cello by listening to the recordings of Mstislav Rostropovich (1927-2007). Similarly, Berman made an identical comment to his student (again listening to the playing of Rostropovich), but in different music.

When identifying the melodic element, there was a noticeable phenomenon – all Russian emigrant teachers observed in this research tended to analyse the texture of the composition, before projecting the melodic elements. As pointed out in Chapter 3, Russian emigrant teachers incline to reverse the procedure when the melodic line cannot be easily analysed or identified. Rather than identifying the 'most important'

⁵³⁶ Lesson Observation from Elena Kuznetsova (1EK0.1).

⁵³⁷ Interview with Elena Kuznetsova.

part, the melodic line, they would first identify the ‘less important’ part within a chord. These ‘less important’ parts will become areas that should be under-projected, whilst allowing the rest of the chord, the ‘most important’ part, is projected.

Based on the recording analysis, as well as a detailed exploration of systematic observation in the teaching room, one will have an overall image of how important sound is for Russian pianists and teachers. Balance of sound or chord is certainly one of the key aspects in singing tone quality. In revealing the role ‘singing tone’ plays in Russian pianism, Natalia Trull pointed out:

‘From the young age, we teach them about the sound and touch, as well as how to use our muscle. We start very early and because of this, when we talk about the conservatoire period, they are already mature with the piano and how to communicate and be together with the piano. In my view, this is very important thing in Russian piano school.’⁵³⁸

According to Trull, sound seems to be one of the first aspects that young pianists should understand. To this end, one should not forget that the concept of sound is not only found in literature or interviews, but also in teaching and performance activities. A special attention to sound can be found among many Russian teachers and pianists, and it echoes an earlier generation of Russian pianists, where they left many detailed accounts of sound imagination. As pointed out earlier in this chapter, Russian pianists often hear the sound and imagine the sound before attempting to produce the sound. Trull attempted to depict this sound imagination process:

‘When I play I imagine the sound and before I play I can feel the process of producing the sound. For students, it might be new, but physically, they should follow the sound.’⁵³⁹

⁵³⁸ Interview with Natalia Trull.

⁵³⁹ *Ibid.*

It is interesting to note that Trull could sense the process of sound production before she plays. Besides weight, physical movement seems to have a bearing on sound. These physical movements are not the preparation for sound, but gestures after the sound is produced.

In analysing the balance of the lesson, there was collaboration and discussion on the subject of interpretation, but the subject of sound was undoubtedly not a matter for discussion. Instead of discovering what the student preferred in terms of sound imagination, all comments related to sound production were instructional – whether from Russian teachers or Russian emigrant teachers. In light of the preceding discussion and the question of whether Russian pianists are mindful of melodic singing tone; it is now clear that projective singing tone is not merely a conjecture. To conclude, it should be noted that the majority of Russian pianists and teachers examined in this chapter are attentive in producing a singing tone. As stated at the beginning of this chapter by Nersessian, ‘Russian piano school is based on the singing quality’.⁵⁴⁰ However, based on the analysis, it is now clear that singing quality is not necessarily found among the performance and teaching activities of all Russian pianists today.

⁵⁴⁰ Interview with Pavel Nersessian.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION & FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Based on what has been presented in the preceding chapters, we can return to the two queries we had at beginning of the thesis: a) what does the Russian Piano School mean to the modern day Russian pianists; and b) does it still exist given that Russia is now heavily globalised? The answer to these questions is now more apparent. Instead of understanding the Russian Piano School as a style of performance, the validity of the concept seems to rest on two components. First, the structured music educational system in Russia, developing out of a tradition laid down in the late nineteenth century by the Rubinstein brothers. Secondly, a collection of performing aesthetics that remains unique to Russian pianists.

One should not underestimate the powerful impact Anton Rubinstein made on Russian musical culture, especially his legacy as a teacher and as a performer. Although as a teacher he was reluctant to demonstrate to his students,⁵⁴¹ and although his pedagogical approach may not have survived intact to this day, his performance aesthetics can still be found amongst modern Russian pianists. Along with these aesthetics, one of the most recognisable achievements is undoubtedly the establishment of the St Petersburg conservatoire. During the course of this enquiry into beliefs about the nature of the Russian Piano School, the name of Anton Rubinstein was mentioned in all interviews except by Alexander Mnydoants. For Mnydoants, Liszt played a greater part in the Russian education establishment than Rubinstein. And his perspective is understandable. Indeed, Rubinstein founded the

⁵⁴¹ See Jordan Krassimira. 'The legacy of Anton Rubinstein' *Clavier* 31.10 (December 1992), 20-27.

conservatoire in St Petersburg, but the majority of the advice he received was from Liszt. This included teacher selection, study programme, and policies.⁵⁴² Other interviewees emphasised that the success of the Russian Piano School can largely be ascribed to Anton Rubinstein, or more precisely, the educational system which Rubinstein established. This is certainly an area that needs more scholarly attention than its current status earns within discussion of the Russian Piano School. The education system, along with the performance aesthetics, contributes very significantly to the umbrella concept. As pointed out in Chapter 2, this could be seen as a process.⁵⁴³ Russian pianists enter this process when they begin their studies at the Central Music School, and subsequently at the conservatoires in Russia. Through training, they inevitably acquire a collection of Russian aesthetics: an exceptionally solid technical foundation; a tendency to create long melodic lines which takes precedence even over indications in scores; the projection of a ‘singing’ tone which leads perceived melodic voice to be given exceptional prominence.

As the time went on, the educational system was refined by Alexander Goldenweiser and Stanislav Shatsky, where they jointly founded Moscow’s Central Music School in the early twentieth century. This educational model was duplicated throughout the Soviet Union, i.e. each major city had one specialist school. The introduction of this specialist school model gave the Soviet authorities the opportunity to educate their pianists at an early age, and to select their most talented musicians to progress within the system.⁵⁴⁴ It is precisely this system, which is still in place today, that gives an international advantage (in competitions and in influence) to characteristics of

⁵⁴² See Konstantin Zenkin. *The Liszt Tradition at the Moscow Conservatoire* (Franz Liszt and Advanced Musical Education in Europe: International Conference) 42. 1/2 (2001).

⁵⁴³ This process can also be seen as causation. The educational system being the ‘cause’ element, the aesthetics being the ‘effect’ element.

⁵⁴⁴ The Soviet authorities here mean both the government and the conservatoires of the Soviet Union.

Russian musical culture. The basis for this in training is the key. As pointed out in Chapter 2 by Rustem Hayroudinoff:

‘It is not the fact that they [UK students] are not gifted, but it is what they have been doing in the ten to fifteen year, prior to come to the Conservatoire. If you just play the piano, it is rather doubtful that they would become musicians. They have missed too much. The train has left and they are not on board.’⁵⁴⁵

His statement is supported by the findings suggested in Chapter 4, where we saw most technical areas addressed prior to conservatory studies. Despite the observation revealed here that there nonetheless were technical discussions at the conservatoire level, they were somewhat limited including a) fingering adjustments, b) solving pedalling issues, c) finding a new hand position.

One other noticeable feature exposed through the process of this research concerned the perceptions of Russian pianists. After the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, Russia began to experience significant cultural and musical influence from the West. This can be shown in three instances here: first, Kuznetsova, a major figure of the Russian School, acknowledged that she integrated new teaching ideas from other schools into her current teaching activities.⁵⁴⁶ Secondly, Sarkissova depicted how she, as part of the Russian Piano School, felt that the tradition is ‘disappearing’ and that there is ‘something missing’ from the current school.⁵⁴⁷ Thirdly, Nersessian rejected the notion that Russian playing style is the best and claimed the performer should be more important than school.⁵⁴⁸

All of these instances reflected the fact that the current Russian Piano School is being transformed, and is assimilating and simultaneously being assimilated by Western

⁵⁴⁵ Interview with Rustem Hayroudinoff.

⁵⁴⁶ Interview with Elena Kuznetsova.

⁵⁴⁷ Interview with Tatiana Sarkissova.

⁵⁴⁸ Interview with Pavel Nersessian.

musical culture. In the case of Kuznetsova, she does not resist Western influences as one might have expected from musicians during the Soviet period. And for Sarkissova, she senses the Western-to-Russian assimilation process, and that the school is no longer in the same form that she knew. In any case, all of them have emphasised, in their own way, the importance of external influences or personal expressions other than those of the Russian nation. It is clear that all three pianists could not safely have made similar comments during the Soviet period.

Not only have Russian perceptions changed over the years, but some pedagogical approaches of Russian emigrant teachers also seem to have been altered by Western influences. As shown in Chapter 3, Russian emigrant teachers favoured a number of approaches: Clap and Sing, Singing, Demonstration and Talk, Creativeness; whilst Russian teachers, who have remained teaching in Russia throughout their lives, prefer using the Clapping strategy. The observation results from three different categories are particularly striking: Demonstration, Gesture, and Creativeness. During the course of the observation, it was obvious that both groups of teachers intended to use the ‘demonstration’ strategy to illustrate their points. Russian teachers find demonstration the most effective way to convey their ideas to students. However, the question that is provoked by this pedagogical method is whether demonstration can be seen as ‘teaching’. When the teacher demonstrates during lesson, s/he is only providing an example for the student to imitate. It could be seen in fact, as a ‘copy and paste’ activity.⁵⁴⁹ One may argue, however, that demonstration is merely a starting point. It allows the students to take an idea or certain technical approach from the teacher, and to evolve these ideas and approaches away from the lesson. In this sense, the teacher is only planting a seed in the students’ learning progress. The more important factor is

⁵⁴⁹ Copy and paste activity: the student copies what the teacher does and attempts to reproduce the same performance as the teacher.

that students should take these demonstrated ideas and apply them into other similar work. In this way, ‘demonstration’ can then be seen (or should be seen) as part of the teaching and learning process.

Evidently, Gesture is also another pedagogical strategy that needs further exploration. An interesting phenomenon highlighted in Chapter 3 was that male teachers tended to use more gesture during lessons than female. With this research finding in mind, it seems clear that male teachers may consider gesture as a more powerful means of communicating musical ideas than female teachers. Although this tendency in the data was very high, there were instances when these gestures did not serve their purpose. Instead of looking at these conducting gestures, students often focused on their playing. As a result, these communicative gestures then became impractical. Perhaps it is more appropriate to consider these conducting gestures as a matter of directing the lesson – teachers with a sense of command. It echoes the findings shown in both the students’ questionnaires and in the observations that lessons are – in the style that Anton Rubinstein highly preferred⁵⁵⁰ – more instruction-based than discussions.

Whilst the Russian pedagogical approach underwent major changes, their performing aesthetics only evolved marginally. In Chapters 4, 5, and 6, we saw each strand in Russian aesthetic analysed respectively. As one would expect, these aesthetics were found in the recordings by Russian pianists. However, the analysis of the recorded performances already revealed some noticeable changes. In the comparison between Russian and Western performances, the Russian recordings examined in this thesis have a similar pattern – all contain long lines with a projective melodic tone. In the generational comparison, however, fewer elements of the Russian School were found

⁵⁵⁰ As Anton Rubinstein stated, ‘lessons are not to be given but only to be directed’. See Anton Rubinstein. *Korob myslei* (St. Petersburg: Sovetskii Kompozitor, 1975), 39.

among the younger players. This result emphasises that the current Russian Piano School still has its own distinctive elements inherited from the previous generation. It does not necessarily mean that these characteristics will remain any longer only with Russian pianists; but at present, it is clear that the Russian Piano School will not persist long until it is seriously endangered. As I proposed in Chapter 2, the Russian tradition, as we now understand, embraces the Russian music education system and the three characteristics of Russian pianism. It is incredibly valuable in the eyes of Russian pianists; and by identifying these characteristics as well as further understanding their music educational system; it can strengthen the Russian School. The question of *what* to preserve is not a difficult one, the more interesting one surely is *how* this educational system and characteristics of Russian pianism can be preserved. The preservation of the current educational system in Russia depends on two elements: firstly, the financial support from the Russian government;⁵⁵¹ secondly, the belief of Russian musicians. Russian pianists seem to believe that the success of the Russian School largely depends on their educational system.⁵⁵² It is clear that such an educational system still has its irreplaceable position among their generation. Indeed, their competition results might be the reason why these Russian pianists have ascribed their success to the system; but it could also be the fact that the Soviet and Russian government had consistently used music as a propaganda tool – indoctrinating their citizen that the Russian educational system was an unprecedented success of Russian's invention. In preserving such an educational system, government inculcation is necessary; but what is more important is the impact that this system has

⁵⁵¹ According to Alexander Mndoyants, the Russian government have discussed plans of closing down the Central Music School in Moscow in recent years. The Central Music School is consistently suffering a heavy financial loss, and this leads Russian politicians to question whether such tradition should still be persevered. Interview with Alexander Mndoyants.

⁵⁵² Interviews with Alexander Mndoyants; Tatiana Sarkisova; Boris Berman; Elena Kuznetsova; Natalia Trull.

made on Russian pianists, and the result that it could lead to. The characteristics of Russian pianism, on the other hand, should not be fully preserved. These performing principles of the Russian School are in fact a kind of performing model that Russian pianists have followed for generations. In order to encourage different interpretation, or at least, not for the young generation to sound the same in their performance, there is a need to develop more performing models. By including some characteristics of the Russian School in the performance, a new model of the Russian tradition could be developed as a variety of historically informed performance.

This thesis is the first research that highlights the teaching methodologies of Russian and Russian emigrant teaching which have not previously been explored. It is also the first study to compare ‘long phrasing’ as well as ‘singing tone’ from recordings of contemporary Russian and non-Russian pianists. Of course, it cannot cover such a vast field of study as to cover Russian pianism from every angle, and there are many obvious limitations. One of these is the discussion of Russian pedagogical methods, an area that Russian musicologists have researched extensively. These researches include detailed accounts of technical and musical development in Russian keyboard studies. In addition to these writings, there are bodies of literature on Russian historical musicology. However, these Russian writings and literature did not gain the world’s full attention due to the poor credibility of Russian musicology.⁵⁵³ In any case, an investigation of the piano faculty at the Moscow Conservatoire, and the career development of its performing artists are areas still to be explored. It would be of

⁵⁵³ Richard Taruskin pointed out the limitations of Russian musicology; he ascribed these limitations to a number of reasons such as false construction of history, deliberate withholding of evidence, and ideological issues. See Richard Taruskin. ‘Some Thoughts on the History and Historiography of Russian Music’, *The Journal of Musicology* 3.4 (Autumn, 1984), 337-338. There are a number of instances too, where my level of Russian language is not sufficient to understand the text. For instance, the publication by Barenboim (1959), where I needed a language assistant to help with the translation; the article by Berezovski (1928) involved advanced musical terminologies, where language assistants were unable to provide a thorough translation.

interest to examine how the Soviet Union's political and sociocultural requirement changed artists' decisions in their career development, as well as their musical interpretations.

In advancing and expanding from this current research, there is a topic that needs urgent attention and exploration. The history of Soviet pianism as a whole will require the same level of examination and research as those investigated in this work. Whilst never wishing to claim that it is 'the' answer, I hope this thesis has reconsidered the meaning of the Russian Piano School from a contemporary perspective, and has made a humble contribution to a thorny topic that is widely discussed in Western music society.

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DISCOGRAPHY

1) *Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 1 in B flat minor, Op. 23*

Russian Pianist

Pianist	Year of Recording	Record Label	Recording Information
V. Feltsman	2013	NA	NA (YouTube)
A. Gavrilov	1974	Melodiya	M 36693
E. Gilels	1959	EMI	EMI 49201259
E. Kissin	1988	DG	DG 0289 427 4852
N. Lugansky	2013	NA	NA (YouTube)
D. Matsuev	2011	NA	NA (YouTube)
T. Nikolayeva	1959	Berlin Classics	0021342BC
M. Pletnev	1991	Virgin Classics	VBD 5614632
I. Pogorelich	1987	DG	DG 0289 415 1222
S. Richter	1962	DG	LPM 18 822
I. Pogorelich	1986	DG	DG 415122-2
V. Horowitz	1943	ARCHIPEL	7640104006572
A. Volodos	2002	SONY	SH93067
D. Trifonov	2012	Mariinsky	MAR 0530
Y. Bronfman	2007	SONY	SH 77718
L. Berman	1976	DG	2530677
V. Ashkenazy	1963	DECCA	4606532
B. Berezovsky	1990	Warner Classics	22284059
V. Ovchinnikov	2015	Live Performance	NA (YouTube)
E. Virsaladze	2014	Live Performance	NA (YouTube)
L. Zilberstein	1985	Live Performance	NA (YouTube)
A. Sultanov	1989	Warner Classics	13602596

Non-Russian Pianist

Pianist	Year of Recording	Record Label	Recording Information
M. Argerich	1975	DG	DG 0289 415 0622
C. Arrau	1979	Decca	Decca 478 569
G. Cziffra	1964	King International	KKC2043
P. Donohoe	1988	EMI	CDC 7 49667
S. W. Kim	2009	NA	NA (YouTube)
L. Lang	2003	DG	DG 0289 474 2912
A.S. Ott	2005	DG	DG 0289 477 8779
A. Rubinstein	1954	RCA	LM 2681
Solomon	1949	Testament	SBT 1440
I. Vered	1976	Decca	PFS 4362
M. Hambourg	1926	HMV	D 1130/3
A. Weissenberg	1972	DG	044007214114
A. Rubinstein	1950	SONY	88697911362
V. Cliburn	1961	Live Recording	LP0095940
W. Hass	1970	Philips	000201302
S. Tiempo	2011	Avanti Classic	00632Q152
S. Hough	2010	Hyperion	CDA67711/2
B. Douglas	1990	BBC	B7569/3
S. Cherkassky	1969	World Record	World Record 796
B. Abduraimov	2014	Decca	4785360
G. Anda	1958	ICA Classics	0335507
B. Moiseiwitsch	2001	Naxos	8110655

2) *Mozart's Piano Sonata in F major, KV 332*

Russian Pianist

Pianist	Year of Recording	Record Label	Recording Information
M. Pletnev	2005	DG	CD 0289 477 5788
G. Sokolov	2008	DG	LP 0289 479 4390
E. Virsaladze	2013	Moscow	Live Recording
A. Lubimov	1991	Erato	2292 45619 2
M. Grinberg	1967	Denon	COCQ 83974

Non-Russian Pianist

Pianist	Year of Recording	Record Label	Recording Information
M. Uchida	2001	Philips	4221152
C. Eschenbach	1999	DG	B00002DEH1
A. Schiff	2000	Decca	B0000041K8
W. Backhaus	1967	Decca	SXL 6301
L. Kraus	1933-1958	Warner	ERATO 825646242238

3) *Chopin's Nocturne in D flat major, Op. 27 no. 2*

Pianist	Year of Recording	Record Label	Recording Information
T. Leschetizky	1906	Welte Mignon Piano Roll	1194
J. Hofmann	1942	Nimbus Grand Piano	NI8803
R. Koczalski	1924	Polydor Recordings	52063

4) *Beethoven's Sonata in C sharp minor, Op. 27 no. 2*

Pianist	Year of Recording	Record Label	Recording Information
A. Goldenweiser	1940-1950	Moscow Conservatoire	ID: SMCCD0115
J. Hofmann	1942	Nimbus Grand Piano	NI8803

Appendix 1

Research Interview Questions

1. How would you define the 'Russian Piano School' today?
2. What, if anything, is the distinctive feature of the Russian Piano Training?
3. How does the Russian piano training programme compare to the ones you have seen in other countries?
4. How could the Russian piano pedagogy system be improved?
5. What would you say are the advantages and disadvantages of being trained pianists in Russia?
6. In terms of performance, what things can you observe about the Russian pianists that are different now from when you first started in Russia?
7. Is there anything else you would like to say about the Russian Piano School that was not covered in these questions?

Appendix 2

Details of Interviews

Russian pianist	Venue	Date
Dimitri Alexeev	Royal College of Music London	10 th October 2014
Boris Berman	Yale School of Music New Haven	4 th April 2014
Sofya Gulyak	Royal College of Music London	22 nd November 2014
Rustem Hayroudinoff	Royal Academy of Music London	22 nd January 2015
Elena Kuznetsova	Moscow Conservatoire Moscow	28 th October 2014
Alexander Mndoyants	Moscow Conservatoire Moscow	30 th October 2014
Pavel Nersessian	Moscow Conservatoire Moscow	31 st October 2014
Tatiana Sarkissova	Royal Academy of Music London	9 th October 2014
Natalia Trull	Moscow Conservatoire Moscow	29 th October 2014

Appendix 3

Research Observation

Teacher Observed: _____ Date: _____ Institution: _____

	Checklist (Yes/ No)	Remarks
Clap (C)		
Sing (S)		
Clap and Sing (CS)		
Demonstrate (D)		
Demonstrate & Talk (DT)		
Gesture (G)		
Analytical (A)		
Creative (Cr)		
Technical (T)		
Weight (W)		
Melodic Line (ML)		
Sound (S)		

Appendix 4

Research Observation – Checklist Coding

Communication

- Clap (C): The teacher claps or taps for demonstration purposes.
- Sing (S): The teacher sings, or counts for demonstration purposes.
- Clap and Sing (CS): The teacher claps or taps with any type of verbalization.
- Demonstrate (D): The teacher demonstrates on the piano/ plays along with the student.
- Demonstrate and Talk (DT): The teacher plays and talks at the same time, including any type of teacher verbalization while playing on the piano.
- Gestures (G): The teacher makes conducting gestures while the student plays.

Intellectual

- Analytical (A): The teacher analyses the task to be performed. This may include analyses of harmony, structure and texture.
- Creative (Cr): The teacher uses daily and relevant examples to illustrate musical points.

Teaching a Russian Performance

- Technical (T): The teacher comments on the technical aspect of the task to be performed. This may include correcting notes, fingering suggestion, pedalling issue, and developing technical exercises.
- Weight (W): The teacher makes a comment on the weight, in relation to the sound.
- Melodic Line (ML): The teacher makes a remark on the melodic line. This may include longer legato line and phrasing.
- Sound (S): The teacher makes a comment about the sound. This may include tone production, orchestral imitation, and balance of sound.

Appendix 5

Research Observation – Lesson Coding

Dimitri Alexeev (DA)

	Day 1	Day 2
0 minutes	1DA0.1	2DA0.1
15 minutes	1DA0.2	2DA0.2
30 minutes	1DA0.3	2DA0.3
45 minutes	1DA0.4	2DA0.4
1 st hour	1DA1.1	2DA1.1
1 st hour and 15 minutes	1DA1.2	2DA1.2
1 st hour and 30 minutes	1DA1.3	2DA1.3
1 st hour and 45 minutes	1DA1.4	2DA1.4
2 nd hour	1DA2.1	2DA2.1
2 nd hour and 15 minutes	1DA2.2	2DA2.2
2 nd hour and 30 minutes	1DA2.3	2DA2.3
2 nd hour and 45 minutes	1DA2.4	2DA2.4
3 rd hour	1DA3.1	2DA3.1
3 rd hour and 15 minutes	1DA3.2	2DA3.2
3 rd hour and 30 minutes	1DA3.3	2DA3.3
3 rd hour and 45 minutes	1DA3.4	2DA3.4
4 th hour	1DA4.1	2DA4.1
4 th hour and 15 minutes	1DA4.2	2DA4.2
4 th hour and 30 minutes	1DA4.3	2DA4.3
4 th hour and 45 minutes	1DA4.4	2DA4.4

Boris Berman (BB)

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
0 minutes	1BB0.1	2BB0.1	3BB0.1
15 minutes	1BB0.2	2BB0.2	3BB0.2
30 minutes	1BB0.3	2BB0.3	3BB0.3
45 minutes	1BB0.4	2BB0.4	3BB0.4
1 st hour	1BB1.1		3BB1.1
1 st hour and 15 minutes	1BB1.2		3BB1.2
1 st hour and 30 minutes	1BB1.3		3BB1.3
1 st hour and 45 minutes	1BB1.4		3BB1.4
2 nd hour	1BB2.1		3BB2.1
2 nd hour and 15 minutes	1BB2.2		3BB2.2

Elena Kuznetsova (EK)

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
0 minutes	1EK0.1	2EK0.1	3EK0.1
15 minutes	1EK0.2		3EK0.2
30 minutes	1EK0.3		3EK0.3
45 minutes	1EK0.4		3EK0.4
1 st hour			3EK1.1
1 st hour and 15 minutes			3EK1.2
1 st hour and 30 minutes			3EK1.3
1 st hour and 45 minutes			3EK1.4
2 nd hour			3EK2.1
2 nd hour and 15 minutes			3EK2.2

Alexander Mndyants (AM)

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
0 minutes	1AM0.1	2AM0.1	3AM0.1	4AM0.1
15 minutes	1AM0.2	2AM0.2	3AM0.2	4AM0.2
30 minutes	1AM0.3	2AM0.3	3AM0.3	4AM0.3
45 minutes	1AM0.4	2AM0.4	3AM0.4	4AM0.4
1 st hour	1AM1.1	2AM1.1	3AM1.1	
1 st hour and 15 minutes	1AM1.2	2AM1.2		
1 st hour and 30 minutes	1AM1.3	2AM1.3		
1 st hour and 45 minutes	1AM1.4	2AM1.4		
2 nd hour		2AM2.1		
2 nd hour and 15 minutes		2AM2.2		
2 nd hour and 30 minutes		2AM2.3		
2 nd hour and 45 minutes		2AM2.4		

Pavel Nersessian (PN)

	Day 1
0 minutes	1PN0.1
15 minutes	1PN0.2
30 minutes	1PN0.3
45 minutes	1PN0.4
1 st hour	1PN1.1
1 st hour and 15 minutes	1PN1.2
1 st hour and 30 minutes	1PN1.3
1 st hour and 45 minutes	1PN1.4

Dina Parakhina (DP)

	Day 1
0 minutes	1DP0.1
15 minutes	1DP0.2
30 minutes	1DP0.3
45 minutes	1DP0.4
1 st hour	1DP1.1
1 st hour and 15 minutes	1DP1.2
1 st hour and 30 minutes	1DP1.3
1 st hour and 45 minutes	1DP1.4
2 nd hour	1DP2.1
2 nd hour and 15 minutes	1DP2.2
2 nd hour and 30 minutes	1DP2.3
2 nd hour and 45 minutes	1DP2.4
3 rd hour	1DP3.1

Irina Plotnikova (IP)

	Day 1
0 minutes	1IP0.1
15 minutes	1IP0.2
30 minutes	1IP0.3
45 minutes	1IP0.4
1 st hour	1IP1.1
1 st hour and 15 minutes	1IP1.2
1 st hour and 30 minutes	1IP1.3
1 st hour and 45 minutes	1IP1.4
2 nd hour	1IP2.1
2 nd hour and 15 minutes	1IP2.2

Tatiana Sarkissova (TS)

	Day 1	Day 2
0 minutes	1TS0.1	2TS0.1
15 minutes	1TS0.2	2TS0.2
30 minutes	1TS0.3	2TS0.3
45 minutes	1TS0.4	2TS0.4
1 st hour	1TS1.1	2TS1.1
1 st hour and 15 minutes	1TS1.2	2TS1.2
1 st hour and 30 minutes	1TS1.3	2TS1.3
1 st hour and 45 minutes	1TS1.4	2TS1.4
2 nd hour	1TS2.1	2TS2.1
2 nd hour and 15 minutes	1TS2.2	2TS2.2
2 nd hour and 30 minutes	1TS2.3	2TS2.3
2 nd hour and 45 minutes	1TS2.4	2TS2.4
3 rd hour	1TS3.1	2TS3.1

Natalia Trull (NT)

	Day 1
0 minutes	1NT0.1
15 minutes	1NT0.2
30 minutes	1NT0.3
45 minutes	1NT0.4
1 st hour	1NT1.1
1 st hour and 15 minutes	1NT1.2
1 st hour and 30 minutes	1NT1.3
1 st hour and 45 minutes	1NT1.4

Appendix 6

Questionnaire

Continue on another sheet if necessary

Question 1: How many years have you studied with a Russian teacher?

.....

Question 2: When learning a new piece of music, your Russian teacher requires you to memorize the music, by `the ... lesson (Please circle your answer.)

0	1	2	3	4	5 or more
Never	First	Second	Third	Forth	Fifth or more

Question 3: What impact does it make on you when your Russian teacher sings or taps along while you play?

Sing:

.....

Tap:

.....

Question 4: What impact does it make on you when your teacher demonstrates on the piano?

.....

.....

.....

.....

Question 5: How often does your Russian teacher comment on a full, projective sound? (Please circle your answer.)

0	1	2	3	4	5
Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Usually	All the time

Question 6: How did your Russian teacher teach you to have a full, projective sound?

.....

.....

.....

Question 7: How often does your teacher ask for a 'singing' tone? (Please circle your answer.)

0	1	2	3	4	5
Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Usually	All the time

Question 8: How did your Russian teacher teach you to have a singing tone?

.....

.....

.....

.....

Question 9: What knowledge or experience did you get from your teacher on relaxation in relation to singing tone?

.....

.....

.....

.....

Question 10: What was the most important change which you observed in yourself since you study with your Russian teacher?

.....

.....

.....

.....

Question 11: At the beginning of your study with your Russian teacher, what technical exercises did your teacher assign to you? Scales/ arpeggios/ études / exercises (please specify with name of composers and the pieces)

.....

Question 12: With regarded to the teaching approach, what can you observe from a Russian teacher that is different from others?

.....

Question 13: Most of the time your Russian teacher leads the lesson through: (Please circle your answer)

Collaboration and Discussion	Instruction	Others (please specify below)

Question 14: Based on your lesson experience with your Russian teacher, what would you say is the distinctive feature of the Russian piano training?

.....

Question 15: Would you consider yourself as part of the Russian piano tradition? Please explain.

.....

Question 16: Please add anything you think would help someone wanting to understand what is distinctively Russian in piano playing today.

.....

– The End –

Thank you for your participation.

Appendix 7

Примерный репертуар

1 класс

Полифония

Бах И.С.- Нотная тетрадь А.М. Бах (по выбору)	Маленькие прелюдии и фуги (легкие)
Перселл Г.	Двухголосные инвенция (наиболее легкие) (данный репертуар для детей разного уровня подготовки)
Моцарт Л.	Ария (избранные произведения композиторов XVII, XVIII, XIX вв., ред. Н.Кувшинникова)
	Менуэт ре минор.
	Бурре ре минор.
	Марш
Свиридов Г.	Инвенция (из «Семи маленьких пьес»)
Скарлатти Д.	Соната ре минор (Ария) L.366, K.32

Этюды

Беренс Т.	ор.70 «50 маленьких фортепианных пьес без октав»: № 8, 12, 15, 16, 24-29, 31-34, 37, 41, 43, 44, 50
Беркович И.	Маленькие этюды: № 10-19, 20-32, 37, 38, 44, 45, 50
Бертини А.	ор.100 Этюды № 2, 7, 12, 22
Гедике А.	ор. 32 «Сорок мелодических этюдов» I т.: №7, 11, 12, 13, 16-18, ор. 36 I-II тт., ор. 46 №9, 27; ор. 47 № 2, 7, 15; ор.58 Этюды «Ровность и беглость»
Гнесина Е.	Этюды для начинающих
Лак Т.	Этюды ор.24
Лемуан А.	ор. 37 «Пятьдесят характерных и прогрессивных этюдов»: №7, 7, 10, 17, 24, 27
Лешгори К.А.	ор. 65 «Этюды для начинающих»: № 3, 5, 6, 9, 21, 24, 27, 36, 37
Майкапар С.	«20 педальных прелюдий»
Черни К.	I тетрадь: №13-16, 18, 24
(ред. Гермера)	
Черни К.	ор. 139 № 7,11,25,29, 30, 32
	ор.261 № 25, 50, 52, 53, 58
	ор. 599 № 33, 49, 50.
	ор. 821 этюд №7
Шитте Л.	ор. 108 «25 маленьких этюдов» № 10, 11, 16, 19, 21, 23-25
	ор. 160 «25 легких этюдов» № 23-25

Крупная форма

Гендель Г.Ф.	Концерт фа мажор.
	Сарабанда с вариациями ре минор.
Глиэр Р.	Рондо ор. 43
Бетховен Л.	Сонатина фа мажор.
	Сонатина соль мажор.
Клементи М.	любые сонатины
Кулау Ф.	Сонатина до мажор. №6
	Сонатина соль мажор.
Чимароза Д.	Сонатина соль минор.
	Соната ре минор.

Мелартин	Соната соль минор.
Моцарт В.А.	Вариации на тему из опера «Волшебная флейта»
	Шесть легких сонатин
Кабалевский Д.	Вариации соль мажор на тему украинской народной песни
Грациоли Дж.	Сонатина соль мажор I ч.
Дуссек Ф.К.	Сонатины
Бенда И.	Сонатины
Андрэ А.	Сонатина I ч.
Беркович И.	Концерт №2 до мажор.
Майкапар А.	Вариации на русскую тему ор.14 №8 фа минор.
Роули	миниатюрный концерт

Пьесы

Пьесы из «Нотной тетради Вольфганга Моцарта». М., 1963г.	
Барток Б.	«Вечер в деревне» из цикла «10 легких фортепианных пьес»
Бетховен Л.	Семь народных танцев (лендлеров) ре мажор.
Гедике А.	Пьеса до мажор, ор.6 №19 в сб.: Гедике А. Избранные пьесы, М-Л, 1959
Кабалевский Д.	«Драматический фрагмент». Новелла из ор.27
Лютославский В.	«Курпиевский вальс» в сб.: «От простого к сложному». Вып.1. Сост. и пед. ред. Ю.Левина. М., 1971
Майкапар С.	Токката «На катке», ор.28 №23
Прокофьев С.	«Прогулка», «Сказочка», Марш, «Вечер» из цикла «Детская музыка»
Пуленк Ф.	Тирольский вальс, Стаккато, Полька из цикла «Сельские сцены» в сб.: Ф. Пуленк, Ж. Орик, А. Жоливе. Пьесы для ф-п. Сост. Е.Тюхтяева. Л., 1978
Раков Н.	«Белая лилия». В сб.: Раков Н. «24 пьесы во всех тональностях». М., 1963
Хачатурян А.	Андантино
Чайковский П.	«Игра в лошадки», Вальс, Камаринская, Полька, из «Детского альбома»
Шостакович Д.	Гавот, Романс, Полька-шарманка из цикла «Танцы кукол»
Шуман Р.	«Смелый наездник», «Сицилийская песенка» и «Альбом для юношества»

2 класс

Полифония

Бах И.С.	2-хголосные инвенции
	Три менуэта соль мажор. BWV 841, соль минор. BWV 342, соль мажор. BWV 843
	Легкие пьесы из Французских сюит
Барток Б.	Хроматическая инвенция
Вебер К.М.	Шесть фугетт (по выбору), ор.1
Гендель Г.	Менуэт ре минор.
	Пассакалья из Сюиты соль минор.
Перселл Г.	Клавирная музыка: Менуэт, Гавот, Аллеманда, Ария.-
Мяковский Н.	Фуга, ор.78 №1 и №3
	«Охотничья переключка»

Этюды

Беренс Т.	ор. 70 Эпод №47
Беркович И.	«Маленькие этюды» № 37, 38, 44, 45, 50
Бертини А.	ор. 100 № 2, 7, 12, 22
Гедике	ор. 32 «40 мелодических этюдов для начинающих»: №19, 23, 29, 31, 32, 40, 44
	ор. 47 «30 легких этюдов» № 10, 16, 18, 21
	ор. 58 «Ровность и беглость» (по выбору)
Геллер С.	ор. 47 № 3, 8, 11
Лак Т.	ор. 172, № 1, 2-6, 8
Лекуни Э.	ор. 24 № 12, 14, 16, 17, 19
Лемуан А.	ор. 37 № 4, 5, 8, 11, 12, 15, 16, 20-23, 32, 35, 37, 39
Лешгорн К.А.	ор. 65 Этюды для начинающих №8, 15, 19, 26, 28, 29, 31, 32, 37, 39, 42
Черни К.(ред. Гермера)	II тетр.
Черни К.	ор. 139 № 53, 54
	ор. 261 № 17, 106, 111, 113
	ор. 599 № 70, 85, 98, 96
	ор. 821 № 8, 28, 30, 38, 46, 84, 87, 96, 98, 99
Шигте Л.	ор. 68 «25 этюдов» № 2, 6

Крупная форма

Бетховен Л.	Сонатина ми-бемоль мажор. Соната №19 соль минор. Легкие вариации соль мажор на шесть восьмых Вариации фа мажор на швейцарскую тему
Моцарт В.А.	Вариации фа мажор из сонаты Сонатина №6 до мажор.
Гайди Й.	Дивертисменты (сонаты) Соната соль мажор. XVI 11 Соната соль мажор. XVI 27 Вариации соль мажор.
Клементи М.	Сонатина №6 ре мажор.
Чимароза Д.	Соната си-бемоль мажор.
Вебер К.М.	Анданте с вариациями соль мажор. Сонатина до мажор.
Фоглер Г.Й.	Концерт до мажор.
Дуссек Я.Л.	Сонатина ор. 20 №5 до мажор. Сонатина ми-бемоль мажор.
Диабелли А.	Сонатина ор. 151
Кабалевский Д.	Вариации на словацкую тему Вариации на украинскую тему

Пьесы

Барток Б.	Багатель №4
Бетховен Л.	«Весело – грустно», Багатель до минор, ор.119 №5
Гедике А.	миниатюра ре минор, ор.8 №2
Глинка М.	Мазурка ля минор, Мелодический вальс ми-бемоль мажор.
Григ Э.	Вальс ля минор, «Песня сторожа», Листок из альбома ми минор из

Люлли Ж.	ор.12 Гавот ре минор. в сб.: «Альбом для домашнего музицирования», М., 1989
Манэн К.	«Марионетка» в сб.: Пьесы современных французских композиторов для ф-но. Л., 1981
Мусоргский М.	«Раздумье»
Прокофьев С.	«Шествие кузнециков» из цикла «Детская музыка»
Санкан П.	«Принцесса Греза» В сб.: Детские пьесы современных французских композиторов для ф-но. М., 1973
Хачатурян А.	«Ритмическая гимнастика», «В народном стиле» из «Детского альбома»
Чайковский П.	«Сладкая греза», «Новая кукла», «В церкви» из «Детского альбома». Вальс, Мазурка
Шостакович Д.	Лирический вальс, Вальс-шутка, полька ля минор, Танец ре мажор из цикла «Танцы кукол»
Шуман Р.	«Дед-Мороз», Пьеса до мажор, ор.68 №21, Пьеса фа мажор, ор.68 №26 из «Альбома для юношества»

3 класс

Полифония

Бах И.С.	3-х голосные инвенции (наиболее легкие) Скерцо ре минор. BWV 844 Французские сюиты (отдельные части)
Мяковский Н.	Фуга «В старинном стиле», ор.43 Фуга си минор, ор.78 №4
Хачатурян А.	Инвенция
Лядов А.	Канон, ор.34 №2
Глинка М.	Фуги: ля минор, до мажор (сборник полифонических пьес русских композиторов под ред. Руббаха)

Этюды

Аренский А.	ор. 74 №1,2
Барток Б.	Этюд до мажор.
Беренс Т.	32 избранных этюда № 13, 14, 15, 21, 23, 24, 28, 30
Бертини А.	28 избранных этюдов № 23, 24, 25, 28 ор. 29 №12 ор. 100 № 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 17, 19-21
Гедике А.	ор. 32 «40 мелодических этюдов для начинающих» №22, 30, 37 ор. 47 «30 легких этюдов» № 8, 20, 26
Геллер С.	«Избранные этюды» № 2-5, 7-9, 15, 16, 18
Лак Т.	«Избранные этюды» № 9, 17, 19, 20 ор. 41 «Маленькие романтические этюды» № 2, 6, 10, 11 ор. 172 № 23, 24
Лемуан А.	ор. 37 № 28, 29, 33, 36, 41, 42, 44, 48, 60
Лешгорн К.А.	ор. 38 №6 ор. 66 № 14, 15, 17-21, 23, 24, 30 ор. 136 «Школа беглости» №2-5, 7-10, 12
Лукомский Л.	«Три этюда для одной левой руки» №2
Раков Н.	Этюд «Двойные ноты»
Хачатурян А.	Этюд до мажор.

Черни К.(ред. Гермера) Черни К.	Наиболее трудные этюды из II тетради ор. 299 (№ 1-6,11,12,14,17,29,30) ор. 636 № 3, 5, 9 ор. 718 Этюды для левой руки № 5, 6, 7, 10 ор. 849 № 14, 16, 21
Шитте Л. Щедрин Р.	ор. 68 № 5, 7, 11, 12, 14-16, 18-20, 23 Этюд ля минор.

Крупная форма

Бах И.С. Гайдн Й.	Концерт фа минор. Концерт ре мажор. Соната ми минор XVI 34 Соната до мажор XVI 35 Соната фа мажор XVI 23 Соната соль мажор XVI 39 Вариации до мажор.
Глинка М. Бетховен Л.	Вариации на тему русской народной темы «Среди долины ровныя» Соната № 20 соль мажор. Вариации соль мажор.
Бортнянский Д. Моцарт В.А.	Соната до мажор. Соната до мажор. К 545 Фантазия ре минор. Вариации до мажор, ре мажор. Рондо ре мажор.
Шуман Р.	Детская соната соль мажор ор. 118

Пьесы

Барток Б. Бетховен Л. Глинка М. Глиэр Р. Гречанинов Григ Э.	«Петрушка» («Микрокосмос» №139) «К Элизе», Багатели, ор.119 №1, №2 до мажор, №9 ля минор. Мазурка до минор. Прелюдия ре-бемоль мажор, ор.43 №1 «День ребенка» (цикл пьес) Поэтическая картинка ми минор, ор.3 №1, «Родной напев», ор.12 №5, Вальс ми минор, ор.38 №7, «Одинокый странник», ор.42 №2
Дандрие Ф.	Рондо «Вихри», «Огорченная». В сб.: «Французская клавишинная музыка для ф-но». Сост. Л. Рощина. М., 1974
Дебюсси К. Казелла А.	«Маленький негритенок» Полька-галоп. В сб.: ДМШ, 5 кл. Хрестоматия для ф-но. Пьесы. Вып.1. М., 1991
Лист Ф. Лядов А. Мендельсон Ф.	Этюд ля-бемоль мажор, ор.1 №9 Мазурка фа минор, ор.57 №3, Вальс фа-диез минор, ор.9 №1 Детская пьеса соль минор, ор.72 №5, Песни без слов №12 фа-диез минор. и до мажор. №45
Миндоянц Н. Прокофьев С. Рамо Ж. Рахманинов С. – Зилоти А. Свиридов Г.	Маленькая сюита «Насекомые» «Тарантелла», «Раскаянье», Вальс из цикла «Детская музыка» Жига в форме рондо ми минор. Итальянская полька Альбом пьес для детей, Семь маленьких пьес

Соре А.	«Мотоциклисты». В сб.: Детские пьесы современных французских композиторов для ф-но. М.1973
Фильд Д.	Ноктюрн си-бемоль мажор.
Хачатурян А.	«Траурное шествие», Токката из «Детского альбома» Этюд фа минор.
Чайковский П.	«Неаполитанская песенка», «Баба-Яга» из «Детского альбома», «Март» (Песнь жаворонка) из цикла «Времена года»
Шопен Ф.	Ноктюрн до минор (юношеский), Ноктюрн до-диез минор (посмертный), Полонез ля-бемоль мажор (юношеский)
Шостакович Д.	фантастические танцы, ор.5 №1, 2
Шуберт Ф.	Избранные вальсы из ор.9
Шуман Р.	«Всадник», ор.68 №23 и «Воспоминание, ор.68 №28 из «Детского альбома», Вальс ля минор, ор.124 №4 и Колыбельная соль мажор, ор.124 №6 из цикла «Листки из альбома»
Щедрин Р.	Этюд в ля из «Тетради для юношества»

5 класс

Полифония

Бах И.С.	3-х голосные инвенции Прелюдия и fuga ля мажор. BWV 896 Прелюдии и фуги из ХТК (наиболее простые)*
Гендель Г.	Сюиты: соль мажор, ре минор.
Римский-Корсаков Н.	Фуга, ор.17 №6

Этюды

Александров А.	«6 пьес средней трудности» Этюд фа мажор.
Аренский А.	Этюд ор. 19 №1 си минор.
Беренс Т.	32 избранных этюда № 1-10, 25-27, 31, 32 ор. 88 Этюд №10 ор. 89 «Этюд для одной левой руки» №18, 23
Бертини А.	28 избранных этюдов № 6, 9-14, 16, 17, 20
Гедике А.	Этюд ре минор.
Геллер С.	«Избранные этюды» № 6, 12, 17, 20, 24, 25, 27, 30, 33, 34
Кабалевский Д.	ор. 27 № 3, 24, 26
Крамер И.	Этюд фа минор.
Лак Т.	«20 избранных этюдов» № 1,3,4,10,12,13,15,16
Лешгорн К.А.	ор. 38 № 2,5,10 ор. 66 № 2,4,5,7,9,12,18,25,28 ор. 136 «Школа беглости» № 6,7,15,22
Лукомский Л.	«Светлячки» (этюд) «Три этюда для одной левой руки» №3
Майкапар С.	ор. 33 «Бурный поток»
Мак-Дауэлл Э	ор. 39 из «12 этюдов» №4
Мошковский М.	ор. 91 №1,2, 16, 19
Смирнова Т.	ор.13 Этюды-пьесы на русские темы II т. №10
Сорокин К.	Концертный этюд ля минор.
Черни К.	ор. 299 «Школа беглости» № 7, 10, 19, 21-28, 31-33, 35

* К ХТК рекомендуется обращаться после того, как будут пройдены 18 – 20 инвенций.

Шитте Л.	ор. 399 №4, 6
Эшпай А.	ор. 636 № 3, 5, 9
	ор. 718 Этюды для левой руки № 15, 16, 20, 22
	ор. 68 Этюд №10, 25
	Этюд ля минор.

Крупная форма

Бетховен Л.	Соната №1
Раков Н.	Концерт №1, I ч.
Кабалевский Д.	Концерт
Прокофьев С.	одна из сонатин
Вивальди-Бах	Концерты соль мажор, ре мажор.
Рамо Ж.Ф.	Гавот с вариациями ля минор.
	Вариации ре мажор.
Куперен Ф.	Пассакалия си минор.
Гендель Г.Ф.	Чакона фа мажор.
	фантазия до мажор.
Разоренов С.	Сонатина фа мажор I ч.
Скарлатти Д.	Сонаты (по выбору)
Марчелло-Бах	Концерт ре минор.
Шуберт Ф.	Сонатина ор. 42 №1
Барток Б.	Вариации из цикла «Микрокосмос»
Гайди Й.	Сонаты XVI 33 ре мажор.
	XVI 32 си минор.
	XVI 41 си-бемоль мажор.
Шостакович Д.	Концерт №2
Шопен Ф.	Блестящие вариации
Моцарт В.А.	Концерт №1 фа мажор.
	Концерт №4 соль мажор.
	Концерт №8 до мажор.
	Концерт-рондо №28
	Соната фа мажор I ч. К.332
	Соната соль мажор. К. 283
	Соната си-бемоль мажор (поздняя) К.570
	6 вариаций фа мажор на тему из оперы Д. Паизиелло «Мнимые философы»

Пьесы

Бетховен Л.	Экосезы ми-бемоль мажор, Багатели фа мажор, ор.33 №3 и ре мажор, ор.33 №6
Бородин А.	«Маленькая сюита»
Бриттен Б.	Вальс ми минор. в сб.: Бриттен Б. Пьесы для ф-но. М. 1979
Григ Э.	«Бабочка», ор.43 №1, «Птичка», ор.43 №4, «На родине», ор.43 №3, Ноктюрн, ор.54 №4
Дакэн Л.	«Кукушка»
Дебюсси К.	«Маленький пастушок», «Кукольный кэк-уок» из цикла «Детский уголок»
Кабалевский Д.	Прелюдия си минор, ор.38 №6
Куперен Ф.	«Тростники»

Лист Ф.	Этюды* ре минор, ор.1 №4, си-бемоль мажор, ор.1 №5, си-бемоль минор, ор.1 №12, Утешения ми мажор. №2 и ре-бемоль мажор. №3
Лядов А.	Прелюдия ре-бемоль мажор, ор.10 №1, Прелюдии до минор, ор.39 №2, ре минор, ор.40 №3
Мендельсон Ф.	Песни без слов №14 до минор, №31 ми-бемоль мажор.
Моцарт В.	Романс ля бемоль мажор. KV Anh.205
Прокофьев С.	«мимолетности» №5,10,11,15,16, Гавот фа-диез минор, ор.32 №3, Легенда, ор.12 №6, Прелюдия до мажор, ор.12 №7, «Сказка старой бабушки», ор.31
Пуленк Ф.	Экспромты до мажор, соль мажор. в сб.: Произведения зарубежных композиторов для ф-но. М., 1986
Рамо Ж.	«Перекликанье птиц»
Рахманинов С.	Пьеса-фантазия соль минор.
Рябов В.	Маленькая детская сюита ор. 25
Скрябин А.	Мазурка до-диез минор, ор.3 №6
Чайковский П.	Апрель (Подснежник), Май (Белые ночи) из цикла «Времена года», Грустная песенка, ор.40 №6 из цикла «12 пьес средней трудности»
Шопен Ф.	Экосезы, Юношеские вальсы
Шуберт Ф.	Избранные лендлеры
Шуман Р.	«Фантастический танец», ор.124 №5 и «Эльф», ор.124 №7 из сб. «Листики из альбома»
Щедрин Р.	Юмореска, «Девичий хоровод», «Играем оперу Россини», Тетрадь для юношества

6 класс

Полифония

Бах И.С.	ХТК (не самые трудные: до минор. I том, фа минор. II том, фа-диез мажор I том, ми мажор I том и т.п.) Французские сюиты Английские сюиты Партита си-бемоль мажор.
Шостакович Д.	Прелюдии и фуги до мажор, ре мажор.
Гендель Г.	Сюита ми минор.

Этюды

Беренс Т.	32 избранных этюда № 10,11,12,16,26,27
Бертини А.	28 избранных этюдов № 15, 18, 19, 22, 26
Гедике А.	ор. 89 №12 ор. 101 «12 мелодических этюдов» №9
Геллер С.	«Избранные этюды» № 10, 14, 21, 26, 36, 37
Герд С.	ор. 179 № 3, 4, 5

* Поскольку в учебных планах учащихся существуют инструктивные этюды Черни, Клементи, Мошковского и др. (т.е. до 10 класса включительно), этюды Шопена, Листа, Скрябина, Прокофьева и других считаются пьесами.

Зиринг Б.	Хроматический этюд ор. 31 №3
Кабалевский Д.	ор. 27 №14
Калькбреннер Ф.	Токката (618)
Крамер И. Ф.	ор. 60 № 1-8, 10, 3
Лак Т.	«Избранные этюды» № 9, 17, 19, 20
Лешгорн К.А.	ор. 38 №6
	ор. 66 № 14, 15, 17-21, 23, 24, 30
	ор. 136 «Школа беглости»
Лядов В.	ор. 37 Этюд фа мажор.
Мошелев М.	ор. 70 «Избранные этюды» № 1-3, 7, 8
Мошковский М.	ор. 18 №3
	ор. 91 № 2, 3, 5, 6
Мушель Т.	Токката
Черни К.	ор. 299 «Школа беглости» №16, 20, 34
	ор. 636 № 1,2,10-15, 18, 19, 22, 24
	ор. 718 «Избранные этюды» № 3, 13, 21
	ор. 748 №23
	ор. 849 № 9, 15, 21, 23
Шитте Л.	ор. 75 №5

Крупная форма

Аренский А.	Фантазия на темы Рябинина
Бах И.С.	Итальянский концерт
Бах И.С.	Концерт ре минор.
Бетховен Л.	Концерт №1, II-III чч.
	Соната №9
	Рондо до мажор ор. 51 №1
Вебер К.М.	Блестящее рондо ми-бемоль мажор.
Гайди Й.	Сонаты ля-бемоль мажор. XVI 46
	ми мажор. XVII 31
	до мажор. XVI 48
Глинка М.	Вариации на тему романса Алябьева «Соловей»
Мендельсон Ф.	Концерт соль минор.
Моцарт В.А.	Вариации на тему Дюпора
	Концерт ля мажор. №12
	Концерт № 15 си бемоль мажор I часть
	Концерт №23 ля мажор.
	Сонаты К.332, 280
Пирумов	Концерт-вариации
Шопен Ф.	Рондо №1 до минор.
Эшпай А.	Сонатина

Пьесы

Барток Б.	6 румынских танцев
Бетховен Л.	Багатели ми-бемоль мажор, ор.33 №1, ля мажор, ор.33 №4
Вебер К.	Приглашение к танцу, ор.65
Вила-Лобос Э.	«Лорелея», «Полишинель»
Глинка М. –	«Жаворонок»
Балакирев М.	
Дебюсси К.	«Доктор», «Градус ад Парнассум» из цикла «Детский уголок»,
	Арабеска №1 ми мажор

Лист Ф.	Этюд до минор, ор.1 №8, Ноктюрн ми мажор.
Лядов А.	Прелюдия си минор, ор.11 №1, ре-бемоль мажор ор. 57
Мендельсон Ф.	Песни без слов №10 фа-диез минор, №18 ля-бемоль мажор, №30 ля мажор, 3 каприза, ор.16, этюд фа минор.
Мийо Д.	Три рэг-каприччио
Мидоянц Н.	«Перепелочка»
Прокофьев С.	«Мимолетности» № 7,14,20, Этюд до минор, ор.2 №4, «Джюльетта-девочка», «Патер Лоренцо» из ор.75
Рамо Ж.	«Цыганка»
Рахманинов С.	Прелюдия до-диез минор, Мелодия ми мажор, Серенада из ор.3, Баркарола, Вальс, Юмореска из ор.10, Прелюдия соль-диез минор, ор.32 №12
Скрябин А.	Прелюдия для левой руки до-диез минор, ор.9 №1, Прелюдии ми минор, ре мажор, си минор из ор.11
Чайковский П.	Ноктюрны фа минор, ор.5, фа мажор, ор.10 №1, до-диез минор, ор.19 №4, Вальсы ля-бемоль мажор, фа-диез минор, «Русская пляска» из цикла «12 пьес средней трудности», ор.40, Январь (У камелька), из цикла «Времена года», «Нежные упреки», ор.72 №3
Черепнин Н.	Багатель до минор, ор.5 №10
Шопен Ф.	Ноктюрн ми-бемоль мажор, ор.9 №2, Вальсы ля-бемоль мажор, ор.69 №1, ми минор (посмертный), фантазия экспромт до-диез минор, Экспромт ля-бемоль мажор.
Шопен Ф. – Лист Ф.	«Перстень», «Пирушка» из цикла «Польские песни»
Шостакович Д.	Прелюдии до мажор, соль мажор, ре мажор, ре минор, ор.34
Шуберт Ф.	Музыкальные моменты до мажор, ор.94 №1, фа минор, ор.94 №5, ля бемоль мажор, ор.94 №6, Экспромт ля-бемоль мажор, ор.142 №2, Аллегretto до минор.
Шуман Р.	«Одинокие цветы», «Ночлег» из цикла «Лесные сцены», ор.82, пьесы из цикла «Пестрые листки», ор.99 №3 0 5, «Детские сцены, ор.15
Щедрин Р.	Двухголосная инвенция, «Тройка»

7 класс

Полифония

Бах И.С.	ХТК (не самые трудные) Английские сюиты Партиты си-бемоль мажор, соль мажор.
Гендель Г.	Сюиты №9, 16
Лядов А.	Фуги, ор.3 №3, ор. 41 №1, 2 Сарабанда ор. 51
Мяковский Н.	Фуга си минор, ор.78
Римский-Корсаков Н.	Фуга, ор.17 №1
Шостакович Д.	Прелюдии и фуги (наиболее легкие)

Этюды

Александров А.	ор. 33 Этюда ми минор, ля минор.
Аренский А.	ор.41 №1 ор.74 №1,2
Беренс Т.	32 избранных этюда № 13, 14, 15

Бертини А.	28 избранных этюдов № 23, 24, 25, 28
Бизе Ж.	ор. 22 «Волчок»
Геллер С.	ор. 15 № 13 Токкатина (этюд)
Герц Г.	ор. 179 Этюд №11
Годар Б.	ор. 107 Концертный этюд «Гирлянды»
Гуммель И.	ор. 125 № 1, 8, 11
Зиринг В.	ор. 14 Два октавных этюда
	ор. 31 №3 Хроматический этюд
Крамер И. И.	«60 избранных этюдов» № 1-8, 10, 13, 16, 18-21, 23, 24, 28, 41
Лак Т.	ор. 122 № 20
Лев И.	ор. 281 Октавные этюды № 1, 2, 3, 4
Лешгорн К.А.	ор. 38 № 13, 29
	ор. 66 № 25, 27, 29, 32
	ор. 136 «Школа беглости» № 11, 13, 15-19, 20-22
Мак-Дауэлл	ор. 46 №2 «Вечное движение»
Мошелес М.	ор. 70 «Избранные этюды № 1-3, 7, 8
Мошковский М.	ор. 18 № 3, 8, 10
	ор. 91 № 1, 7, 10
	ор. 72 № 2, 5, 6, 11
Пахульский Г.	ор. 28 №2
Черни К.	ор. 299 № 37, 38, 39
	ор. 399 № 4,6
	ор. 553 Октавные этюды № 1, 2
	ор. 718 № 17
	ор. 740 № 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, 10-14, 16-18, 21, 23-25, 41
	ор. 822 №3
	ор. 834 №2
	ор. 849 №14

Крупная форма

Гайди Й.	Вариации фа минор.
	Рондо соль мажор.
Григ Э.	Соната ми минор.
Моцарт В.А.	Вариации си-бемоль мажор, соль мажор.
	Концерт №17
	Концерт №23
	Концерт-рондо ре мажор.
Шуман Р.	Вариации на тему Abegg
Прокофьев С.	Сонатина ми минор ор. 54
Бетховен Л.	Соната №1, II-IV чч.
	Соната №5
	Соната №6
	Соната №9
	Концерт №1, II-III чч.
	Концерт №2

Пьесы

Аренский А.	Бассо остинато, ор.5 №5, Лесной ручей, ор.36 №11, Элегия соль минор, ор.36 №16, цикл «У моря», ор.52
Барток Б.	Румынский танец №1, ор.8/а
Бетховен Л.	Багатели до мажор, ор.33 №5, ля бемоль мажор, ор.33 №7, Рондо

Вебер К.	соль мажор, ор.129
Дебюсси К.	Блестящее рондо, ор.62 «Лунный свет» (Бергамасская сюита, №3), Прелюдия «Девушка с волосами цвета льна», Очень медленный вальс
Лист Ф.	Ноктюрн №3 ля-бемоль мажор, «На берегу ручья» из цикла «Годы странствий», Год 1, Венгерская рапсодия №3 си-бемоль минор.
Лядов А.	Три прелюдии ор. 36 Четыре прелюдии ор. 39
Мендельсон Ф.	Рондо-каприччиозо, ор.14, Песни без слов, Скерцо ми минор.
Моцарт В.	Адажио си минор, KV 540
Прокофьев С.	Танец, ор.32 №1, «Монтекки и Капулетти» из ор.75, Вальс си минор из оперы «Война и мир»
Рахманинов С.	Музыкальный момент ре-бемоль мажор, ор.16 №5, Прелюдии ми-бемоль мажор, ор.23, соль мажор, ор.32
Скрябин А.	Ноктюрн, ор.5 №1, Избранные прелюдии, ор.11, ор.16
Хачатурян А.	Токката
Чайковский П.	Похоронный марш, ор.21 №4, Скерцо, ор.21 №6, Февраль (Масленица) из цикла «Времена года», Вальс-скерцо, ор.7 ми мажор, Экспромт, ор.72 №1 си-бемоль минор, Диалог, ор.72 №8
Шопен Ф.	Ноктюрны си мажор, ор.32 №1, фа минор, ор.55 №1, Этюды, ор.25 №1,2, Полонезы до-диез минор, ор.26 №1, ля мажор, ор.40 №1, ре минор, ор.71 №1
Шопен Ф. – Лист Ф.	«Желание», «Жених» из цикла «Польские песни»
Шуберт Ф.	Экспромты, ор.40 №2 ми-бемоль мажор, ор.142 №2 ля-бемоль мажор, ор.142 №4 фа минор, Музыкальные моменты, ор.94 №2 ля-бемоль мажор, ор.94 №4 до-диез минор.
Шуман Р.	«Вечером», «Порыв» из цикла «фантастические пьесы», ор.13, Вещая птица», «Прощание» из цикла «Лесные сцены», ор.82, Пьесы, ор.99 № 1, 2 10 из цикла «Пестрые листки», Арабески ор.18

8 класс

Полифония

Бах И.С.	ХТК (не самые трудные) Английские сюиты Партиты (не самые трудные) Токкаты ми минор, ре минор.
Римский-Корсаков Н.	Фуга, ор.15
Шостакович Д.	Прелюдии и фуги (не самые трудные)
Щедрин Р.	Прелюдии и фуги (не самые трудные)

Этюды

Александров А.	Этюд ор. 75 №4
Аренский А.	ор. 74 № 6, 7, 9
Берене Т.	ор. 61 II-IV тт.
Гуммель И.	ор. 125 № 5, 8, 11, 15, 16
Зиринг В.	ор. 10 Октавный этюд №3 ор. 26 Октавный этюд №1 ор. 27 Этюд в терциях №1
Кесслер Л.	№ 3, 9, ор.100

Клементи М. (Таузиг)	«Ступень к Парнасу № 17, 19
Кобылянский А.	6 октавных этюдов
Крамер И. И.	60 избранных этюдов № 12, 17, 22, 26, 27, 29, 31, 33-35, 37-41
Куллак Т.	ор. 48 Октавные этюды № 1, 7
Лешгорн К.А.	ор. 67 III т. № 13, 14
	ор. 136 II-III т.
Майкапар С.	ор. 13 Октавные интермеццо
Метнер Н.	Этюд средней трудности
Мошелес М.	ор. 70 № 4, 5, 10, 12, 13
Мошковский М.	ор. 6 «Искры»
	ор. 36 «Осенью»
	ор. 57 №1 «Нетерпение»
	ор. 72 № 3, 8, 12, 14
	ор. 75 №11 «Беглость»
Николаев Л.	Этюд «Осенью»
Пахульский Г.	ор. 28 Октавный этюд
Раков Н.	Этюд ля минор.
Стравинский И.	ор. 7 №4
Чайковский П.	ор. 40 №1
Черни К.	ор. 299 № 36, 40
	ор. 335 №12, 21, 46
	ор. 553 Октавные этюды № 4, 5
	ор. 740 № 3, 4, 8, 10, 12, 13, 17-19, 20, 23-26, 31, 32, 38, 40, 48, 49
	ор. 365 № 19
	ор. 409 № 15, 18, 22
	ор. 822 № 5, 11
	ор. 834 № 5, 15, 23, 29
	ор. 838 № 3, 16

Крупная форма

Балакирев М.	Концерт фа-диез минор.
Бах И.С.	«Ария, варьированная в итальянском стиле»
Бетховен Л.	Соната №10
	Рондо соль мажор ор. 51 №2
	Рондо соль мажор ор. 126 («Ярость по поводу утерянного гроша»)
Гайдин Й.	любая соната, кроме
	ми-бемоль мажор (обеих),
	до мажор.
Глинка М.	Вариации на шотландскую тему
	Вариации на тему Моцарта
Григ Э.	Концерт I ч.
Мендельсон Ф.	Концерт ре минор. I ч.
	Концерт №2 соль минор.
	Блестящее каприччио
Метнер К.	Вариации до-диез минор.
Моцарт В.А.	Сонаты, кроме минорных
	Вариации ми-бемоль мажор. «La belle française»
Мяковский Н.	Сонаты
	Вариации
Прокофьев С.	Соната №1
	Соната №3
Сен-Санс К.	Концерт соль минор.

Шопен Ф.	Рондо a la masurka №2 фа мажор.
Шостакович Д.	Концерт №2
Шуберт Ф.	Вариации на тему Хюттенбреннера ля минор.

Пьесы

Бах И. – Бузони Ф.	Хоральная прелюдия фа минор.
Бетховен Л.	Багатели соль мажор, ор.126 №1, си минор, ор.126 №4, ми-бемоль мажор, ор.126 №6
Глазунов А.	прелюдия ре мажор, ор.25 №1
Дебюсси К.	«Бергамасская сюита», Прелюдии «Менестрели», «Вереск», «Вечер в Гренаде» (Эстампы) №2)
Кабалевский Д.	Рондо ля минор, ор.59
Лист Ф.	Концертные этюды ре-бемоль мажор («Un sospiro»), «Шум леса», «Женевские колокола» («Годы странствий, Год первый), Сонет Петрарки №123 ля-бемоль мажор («Годы странствий, Год второй), Кипарисы виллы д'Эсте №1, Фонтаны виллы д'Эсте («Годы странствий», год третий), Венгерские рапсодии №11, 13, Экспромт фа-диез мажор.
Метнер Н.	Сказка си-бемоль минор, ор.20 №1, ми бемоль мажор, ор.26 №1, 2 фа минор, ор.26 №3
Мусоргский М.- Рахманинов С. Прокофьев С.	Гопак «Ромео и Джульетта перед разлукой», ор.75 №10, 4 феи из балета «Золушка», ор.97, Вальс ми минор из балета «Золушка», ор.102 №2
Равель М.	Менуэт из цикла «Гробница Куперена», Менуэт на имя ГАЙДН, «печальные птицы» («Отражения» №2)
Рахманинов С.	Прелюдии ре минор, ре мажор, до минор, ор.23, ля минор, ор.32, Музыкальные моменты си-бемоль минор, си минор, ми минор, ор.16, Этюды-картины соль минор, ми-бемоль мажор, ми-бемоль минор, ор.33
Римский-Корсаков Н. – Рахманинов С. Рябов В. Скрябин А.	Полет шмеля Три фрагмента к портрету Г.Лорки ор. 28 Ноктюрн для левой руки, ор.9 №2, Этюды до-диез минор, ор.2 №1, фа-диез минор, си минор, ля-бемоль мажор, ор.8, фа-диез мажор, ор.42 №3,4, мазурка фа минор, ор.25 №1, ми минор, ор.25 №3
Чайковский П.	«Думка», ор.59, Размышление, ор.72 №5, Концертный полонез, ор.72 №7, «Страстное признание»
Шопен Ф.	Экспромт №1 ля-бемоль мажор, Ноктюрны ля-бемоль мажор, ор.32 №2, фа-диез минор, ор.48 №2, Полонез ми-бемоль минор, ор.26 №2, Этюды, ор.10 №3,5, ор.25 №9, Тарантелла ор.43
Шуберт Ф.	Экспромты соль-бемоль мажор, ор.90 №3 и ля-бемоль мажор, ор.90 №4
Шуберт Ф. – Лист Ф.	Серенада, Мельник и ручей, Гретхен за прялкой, Вальс-каприз («Венские вечера» №5)
Шуман Р.	Ночью, Сновидения из цикла «фантастические пьесы», ор.13, Пьесы, ор.32, Романс фа-диез мажор, ор.28 №2
Шуман-Лист	«Посвящение»
Щедрин Р.	Подражание Альбенису, Бассо остинато

9 класс

Полифония

Бах И.С.	ХТК Итальянский концерт Английские сюиты Партиты Токкаты
Гольденвейзер А.	Прелюдия и fuga
Чайковский П.	Прелюдия и fuga, op.21
Шостакович Д.	Прелюдии и fugи
Щедрин Р.	Прелюдии и fugи

Этюды

Аренский А.	op. 36 Этюд фа-диез мажор. op. 41 Этюд ля минор.
Блюменфельд Ф.	op. 3 №2
Гедике А.	op. 22 Этюд ми мажор.
Гензельт А.	op. 5 № 7 до мажор, №9 ля мажор.
Кесслер Л. И.	op. 20 №7, 8
Клементи М.	№6, 12, 13, 18, 23, 24
Куллак Т.	Октавные этюды: фа мажор, ля-бемоль мажор, ми-бемоль мажор.
Мендельсон Ф.	op. 104: фа мажор, си-бемоль минор, ля минор.
Мошковский М.	op. 72 № 1, 7, 9, 15 op. 24 №3
Пахульский Т.	Октавный этюд соль-бемоль мажор.
Римский-Корсаков Н.	op. 11 №4
Черни К.	op. 299 № 36, 40 op. 409 №15 op. 740 № 3, 5, 50, 14, 15, 28 op. 834 №29

Крупная форма

Бетховен Л.	Соната №2 Соната №8 Соната №10 Соната №13 Соната №15 Соната №22 Соната №24
Вебер К.М.	Концертштюк
Гайдн Й.	Любая соната
Григ Э.	Концерт
Лядов А.	Вариации на польскую тему op.51
Мендельсон Ф.	Серьезные вариации
Метнер Н.	Соната-воспоминание Соната-элегия Импровизация №1 соль-диез минор.
Моцарт В.А.	Любая соната (кроме минорных)

Прокофьев С.	Концерты (кроме №23, №27) Соната №2 Соната №4 Соната №5
Равель М.	Сонатина
Римский-Корсаков Н.	Концерт
Рубинштейн	Концерт №4
Сен-Санс К.	Концерт №5
Чайковский П.	Соната до-диез минор.
Шопен Ф.	Вариации на темы из оперы Моцарта "Дон-Жуан" Рондо №3 ми-бемоль мажор.
Шуберт Ф.	Вариации фа мажор.
Шуман Р.	Венский карнавал Соната №2 соль минор.

Пьесы

Барток Б.	15 венгерских крестьянских песен
Бах И. – Бузони Ф.	Хоральные прелюдии соль минор, соль мажор.
Бетховен Л.	Анданте фавори фа мажор.
Брамс И.	Рапсодия соль минор, ор.79 №2
Верди Дж. – Лист Ф.	«Риголетто»
Дебюсси К.	Прелюдия из сюиты «Pour le piano», «Сады под дождем» («Эстампы» №3), Прелюдии Дельфийские танцовщицы, Ветер на равнине, Что видел западный ветер, прерванная серенада
Лист Ф.	Этюды: «В гневе», фа минор («Хроматический»), «Хоровод гномов», «Вечерние гармонии» (трансцендентный), Венгерская рапсодия №8, «Гроза» («Годы странствий, год первый»), «Обручение», Сонет Петрарки №104 ми мажор, «Венеция и Неаполь» («Годы странствий, год второй).
Метнер Н.	Сказка до-диез минор, ор.35 №4, Первая импровизация, ор.31 №1, Траурный марш, ор.31 №2, Канцона и серенада
Прокофьев С.	«Сарказмы», Скерцо, ор.12 №10
Равель М.	Павана, Игра воды, Ригодон и Токката из сюиты «Гробницы Куперена»
Рамо Ж. – Годовский Л.	Элегия
Рахманинов С.	Музыкальные моменты ми бемоль минор, до мажор, ор.16, сирень, прелюдии си-бемоль мажор, соль минор, ор.23, до мажор, фа минор, ре минор, ор.32, Этюды-картины до диез минор, ор.33, ля минор, ор.39 № 2, 6
Скрябин А.	Этюды соль-диез минор, ор.8 №9, си-бемоль минор, ор.8 №11, 2 поэмы, ор.32
Хиндемит П.	Сюита 1922
Чайковский П.	Русское скерцо, ор.1
Чайковский П. –	«Колыбельная»
Рахманинов С.	
Шопен Ф.	Экспромт №2 фа-диез мажор, Скерцо №2 си-бемоль минор, Баллада №3 ля-бемоль мажор, Ноктюрн ре-бемоль мажор, ор.27 №2
Шуберт Ф.	Экспромты до минор, ор.90 №1, фа минор, ор.142 №1

Шуман Р. Романсы, ор.28 №1,3, Три фантастических отрывка, ор.111, Новелетты №1 фа мажор, №7 ми мажор.

10 класс

Полифония

Бах И.С.	ХТК (по выбору) Партиты (по выбору) Английские сюиты (наиболее трудные) Токкаты Итальянский концерт
Гендель Г.	Сюиты (по выбору)
Мендельсон Ф.	Прелюдия и fuga фа минор.
Моцарт В.А.	Фантазия и fuga до мажор.

Этюды

Аренский А.	ор. 41 Этюд ми-бемоль мажор. №1, Этюд ля минор. №4 ор. 42 фа мажор. ор. 74 ре минор.
Вебер К.М.	ор. 24 «Вечное движение» (Рондо) из сонаты до мажор.
Витоль	ор. 30 №3 Прелюд
Гензельт А.	ор. 2 №5
Зауэр Э.	Этюд ми мажор.
Зиринг В.	Октавный этюд ре-бемоль мажор.
Кесслер Л. И.	Этюды ор. 30 №6, 9, 10
Клементи М.	№21, 26
Крамер И. Н.	Этюды IV тему (наиболее трудные)
Куллак Т.	Октавные этюды ор. 48 №4, 15
Лешетицкий Т.	ор. 44 №4 Интермеццо
Лядов А.	ор. 40 до-диез минор.
Мошковский М.	ор. 72 №9, 13, 15 ор.24 №3 ор. 75 №2 Этюд в двойных нотах
Пахульский Г.	Этюд соль-бемоль мажор.
Раков Н.	Этюд ми минор.
Рубинштейн	ор. 23 №2 Этюд до мажор.
Сен-Санс К.	Токката ор. 72 №3
Тальберг С. С.	Этюд ор. 26 №1 фа-диез минор.
Черни К.	ор. 365 №19 ор. 740 №33, 36, 38, 39 ор. 92 Токката ор. 834 №28
Шлёцер П.	Этюд ля-бемоль мажор.

Крупная форма

Бетховен Л.	Концерт №3 Соната №2

	Соната №4
	Соната №7
	Соната №8
	Соната №11
	Соната №18
Гайдн Й.	любая соната
	Анданте с вариациями фа минор.
Клементи М.	Сонаты ми-бемоль мажор, ор.12 №4; соль мажор ор. 25 №2
Лист Ф.	Концерт №2
	Вариации на тему Баха
Лядов А.	Вариации на тему Глинки ор.35
Мендельсон Ф.	фантазия
	Вариации си-бемоль мажор.
Метнер Н.	Трагическая соната
	Соната ля минор ор. 30
Моцарт В.А.	любая соната
	фантазии до минор.
	любой концерт, кроме №24, 27
Прокофьев С.	Концерт №1
	Соната №2
Рахманинов С.	Концерт №1
	Концерт №2 I ч.
Франк Ц.	Прелюдия, хорал и fuga
Шопен Ф.	Концерт №2
	Баллада №1
	Andante spianato и Большой блестящий полонез
Шостакович Д.	Концерт №1
Шуберт Ф.	Соната ля мажор ор. 120
	Соната ля минор ор. 164
	Соната ля минор ор. 143
Шуман Р.	Соната соль минор.
	Аллегро

Пьесы

Барток Б.	«На вольном воздухе» - цикл пьес, 3 этюда, ор.18
Бах И.С. – Бузони Ф.	Чакона
Брамс И.	Равсодии ор.79 №1, 2
	Баллада ор.10 №1
Дебюсси К.	«Образы» 1-ая тетрадь, «Остров радости», Прелюдии «Ундина», «Чередующиеся терции», «Фейерверк», Эстампы
Лист Ф.	«Погребальное шествие», Равсодия №10
	Этюды по Паганини: ми мажор («Охота»), ми мажор, Этюд «Лезгинка»
Ляпунов С.	Этюд «Лезгинка»
Метнер Н.	Сказка ми минор, ор.14 №2
Прокофьев С.	Токката ор.11
Равель М.	«Лодка среди океана», «Долина звонов», «Печальные птицы»
Рахманинов С.	Прелюдии ля-бемоль мажор, ор.23, си-бемоль минор, фа мажор, ре-бемоль мажор, ор.32, Этюды-картины, ор.39
Рябов В.	Отзвук «Мефисто-вальса» ор. 42-bis
Скрябин А.	Трагическая поэма, ор.34, Вальс, ор.38
Шопен Ф.	Скерцо №1 си минор, №3 до-диез минор, Баллада №2 фа мажор,

Шуман Р.	Ноктюрны си мажор, ор.9 №3, ми-бемоль мажор, ор.55 №7, Экспромт №3 соль-бемоль мажор, ор.51, Полонез ля-бемоль мажор, ор.53, Этюды, ор.10 и ор.25, Полонез фа-диез минор, Ноктюрн до-диез минор ор. 27 №1 Вариации на тему Клары Вик, Новеллетта ре мажор, ор.21 №2 Blümenstück ор.19

11 класс

Полифония

Бах И.С.	ХТК (по выбору) Партиты Токкаты Хроматическая фантазия и фуга
Бах И.С.– Лист Ф.	Органная прелюдия ля минор.
Гендель Г.	Сюиты
Глазунов А.	Прелюдия и фуга ми минор, ре минор.
Мендельсон Ф.	Прелюдия и фуга ми минор.
Шостакович Д.	Прелюдии и фуги
Щедрин Р.	Прелюдии и фуги

Этюды

Гензельт А.	Этюды
Дебюсси К.	Этюды
Кесслер Л. И.	ор. 100 Этюды тт. II,III,IV
Клементи М.	Этюды (наиболее трудные)
Лешетицкий Т. Г.	Октавное интермеццо соль-бемоль мажор.
Лядов А.	ор. 5 Этюд ля-бемоль мажор. ор. 40 Этюд до-диез минор.
Ляпунов С.	Этюды высшей трудности
Мошковский М.	ор. 48 Этюды ре мажор, до мажор.
Паганини-Лист	Этюды
Паганини-Шуман	Этюды
Рахманинов С.	Этюды-картины ор. 33, ор. 39
Стравинский И.	ор. 7 Этюд фа-диез минор.
Прокофьев С.	ор. 2 Этюды
Шимановский К.	ор. 4 Этюды
Шопен Ф.	Этюды ор. 10, 25

Крупная форма

Бетховен Л.	Соната №3
	Соната №4
	Соната №12
	Соната №16
	Соната №17
	Соната №18
	Соната №21
	Соната №26
	Соната №27

Брамс И.	Вариации на тему Шумана
Клементи М.	Соната фа-диез минор ор. 26 №2; ре мажор ор. 26 №3
Лист Ф.	Концерт №1 Соната-фантазия «По прочтении Данте» фантазия и fuga на тему ВАСН
Моцарт В.А.	Любой концерт, кроме: до минор.
Прокофьев С.	Концерт №3
Равель	Концерт соль мажор.
Рахманинов С.	Концерт №2 II-III чч. Концерт №4 Равсодия на тему Паганини
Скрябин А.	Соната №1 Соната №2 Соната №3 Соната №4 Концерт
Франк Ц.	симфонические вариации
Чайковский П.	Оригинальная тема с вариациями фа мажор.
Шопен Ф.	Концерт №1
Шостакович Д.	Сонаты
Шуман Р.	Концерт Соната фа минор. симфонические этюды Танцы Давидсбюндлеров

Пьесы

Альбенис И.	«Триана»
Балакирев М.	«Исламей»
Брамс И.	3 интермеццо, ор.117, 4 пьесы, ор.119
Вагнер Р. – Лист Ф.	«Смерть Изольды»
Гуно-Лист	Парафраз на тему вальса из оперы «Фауст»
Дебюсси К.	«Образы», 2-ая тетрадь
Крейслер Ф. –	Радость любви
Рахманинов С.	
Лист Ф.	Венгерские рапсодии №2, 9, 12, 14, 15, «Раздумье о мертвых», «Благословение бога в одиночестве» из цикла «Поэтические и религиозные гармонии», Мефисто-вальсы № 1, 2 «Трансцендентные» этюды Этюды по Паганини: «Кампанелла», ля минор. «Долина Обермана»
Мендельсон Ф. –	Скерцо
Рахманинов С.	
Мндоянц Н.	Вариации на собственную тему
Чайковский П. –	Концертная сюита «Щелкунчик»
Плетнев М.	
Шимановский К.	«Серенада Дон-Жуана» из цикла «Маски», ор.34, 2 мазурки, ор.62
Шопен Ф.	Скерцо №3,4, Баллада №1 соль минор, Ноктюрны, ор.62, избранные мазурки, Анданте спиянато и большой блестящий полонез
Шуман Р.	Новеллетта фа-диез минор, ор.21 №8, Токката, ор.7,

фантастические пьесы

12 класс

Полифония

Бах И.С.	ХТК Партиты Токкаты Хроматическая фантазия и фуга Французская увертюра
Гендель Г.	Сюиты
Танеев С.	Прелюдия и фуга
Шостакович Д.	Прелюдии и фуги
Хиндемит П.	“Ludus tonalis”

Этюды

Дебюсси К.	12 этюдов
Лист Ф.	Этюды (по выбору)
Ляпунов С.	Этюды высшей трудности (по выбору)
Паганини-Лист	Этюды
Паганини-Шуман	Этюды
Прокофьев С.	Этюды ор.2, Этюд ор.52 №3
Рахманинов С.	Этюды-картины ор. 39 (по выбору)
Рубинштейн А.	ор. 23 Этюды до мажор, фа мажор. ор. 61 Этюды фа минор, ля мажор.
Сен-Санс К.	Этюды
Скрябин А.	Этюды (по выбору)
Стравинский И.	Этюды (по выбору)
Шимановский К.	Этюды ор. 4 (по выбору)
Шопен Ф.	Этюды ор. 10, 25
Шуман Р.	Токката ор. 7

Крупная форма

Бетховен Л.	Соната №23 Соната №31
Брамс И.	Концерт №1 Соната фа минор. Вариации на тему Паганини (две тетради)
Брамс И.	Вариации на тему Паганини I-II тт.
Прокофьев С.	Концерт №2 Соната №6 Соната №7 Соната №8
Равель	«Ночной Гаспар»
Рахманинов С.	Концерт №3 Соната №2 Вариации на тему Шопена Вариации на тему Корелли
Скрябин А.	Соната №5

Хинастера	Соната
Чайковский П.	Концерт №1
	Концерт №2
	Сонаты
Шуман Р.	Карнавал
	Крейслериана
Щедрин Р.	Соната
	Концерты № 1,2,3

Пьесы

Брамс И.	Пьесы из циклов, ор. 10, 76, 116, 117, 118, 119
Дебюсси К.	«Остров радости», несколько прелюдий, этюдов, пьес из цикла «Образы», цикл «Pour le piano»
Лист Ф.	Любая из Венгерских рапсодий фантазия и fuga на тему ВАСН Скерцо и марш, Баллада №2 си минор, Мефисто-вальсы № 1, 2 Испанская рапсодия
Мессиан О.	Пьесы из циклов «Прелюдии» и «20 взглядов на младенца Иисуса»
Моцарт-Лист	«Дон-Жуан»
Равель М.	Отдельные пьесы или циклы пьес «Отражения», «Ночной Гаспар», «Гробница Куперена», «Альборада»
Россини – Гинзбург	Каватина Фигаро
Скрябин А.	«Трагическая», «Сатаническая» поэты, 2 танца, ор.73, Прелюдии, ор.74, Поэма «К пламени»
Стравинский А.	3 фрагмента из балета «Петрушка»
Шимановский К.	«Маски», ор.34
Шопен Ф.	Любое развернутое сочинение: Баллада, Скерцо, Фантазия фа минор, Концертное аллегро
Шуман Р.	Одна из Новелетт, ор.21

В составлении программы
принимали участие преподаватели фортепианного отделения
Центральной музыкальной школы
при Московской государственной консерватории
им.П.И.Чайковского (колледжа):

Ермаков В.И.,
Канделаки М.В.,
Макарова Н.Н., заслуженный работник культуры РФ
Марченко М.А.,
Мндоянц А.А., заслуженный артист России, доцент
Нуризаде Ф.И.,
Пясецкий В.В., заслуженный артист России, доцент,
заведующий фортепианным отделением,
Шашкина К.А., заслуженный деятель искусств Татарстана

Appendix 8



Research Ethics Office
King's College London
Rm 5.2 FNB (Waterloo Bridge Wing)
Stamford Street
London
SE1 9NH

17th September 2014
TO: Blano Wen
SUBJECT: Approval of ethics application

Dear Blano,

REP14/15-1 – 'Contemporary Russian Piano School: Pedagogy and Performance'

I am pleased to inform you that full approval for your project has been granted by the A&H Research Ethics Panel. Any specific conditions of approval are laid out at the end of this letter which should be followed in addition to the standard terms and conditions of approval, to be overseen by your Supervisor:

- o Ethical approval is granted until 17/09/17. You will not receive a reminder that your approval is about to lapse so it is your responsibility to apply for an extension prior to the project lapsing if you need one (see below for instructions).
- o You should report any untoward events or unforeseen ethical problems arising from the project to the panel Chairman within a week of the occurrence. Information about the panel may be accessed at:
<http://www.kcl.ac.uk/innovation/research/support/ethics/committees/ash/rep/index.aspx>
- o If you wish to change your project or request an extension of approval, please complete the Modification Proforma. A signed hard copy of this should be submitted to the Research Ethics Office, along with an electronic version to arec-lowrisk@kcl.ac.uk. Please be sure to quote your low risk reference number on all correspondence. Details of how to fill a modification request can be found at:
<http://www.kcl.ac.uk/innovation/research/support/ethics/applications/modifications.aspx>
- o All research should be conducted in accordance with the King's College London Guidelines on Good Practice in Academic Research available at:
<http://www.kcl.ac.uk/innovation/research/office/help/Assets/good20practice20Sept200920FINAL.pdf>

If you require signed confirmation of your approval please email arec-lowrisk@kcl.ac.uk indicating why it is required and the address you would like it to be sent to.

Please would you also note that we may, for the purposes of audit, contact you from time to time to ascertain the status of your research.

We wish you every success with this work.

With best wishes

Dan Butcher – Senior Research Ethics Officer
On behalf of
A&H REP Reviewer