

## Review Article

# Elements of piano education and the evolution of piano pedagogy

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### Abstract

Learning to play the piano is a systematic process in which initial training is fundamental to further developing musical abilities and improving playing technique. The inherent abilities of students vary greatly. Some students can distinguish between different musical genres, understand counting, have a notion of rhythm, and some are even familiar with notes. Others encounter the instrument for the first time and do not possess any previously mentioned attributes. Thus, the first months of instruction are so significant in revealing both approaches to education and the discovery of the student's abilities. Presently, we have many methods that target different ages, and abilities and focus on different goals. However, this was not always the case. The expansive process that brought musicians to the present pedagogical actuality evolved from more general indications of the distant past to the specific and detailed guidelines of today's pedagogical methods. In this article, I have described the main tasks that the teacher faces during the initial piano learning period and gave a brief overview of the history of teaching methods in order to show how teaching methods have developed and changed over several centuries.

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## Introduction

A large number of studies have been devoted to piano pedagogy. The most famous pedagogues and methodologists have written many books based on their many years of pedagogical experience and depending on the prevailing trends. Over time, pedagogical trends have shifted emphasis from performance technique to musicality, then performance, and finally to complete freedom of interpretation of a musical work.

Today one can distinguish between classical and modern approaches to music education. Classical piano education is represented by the works of Busoni, Kogan, Neuhaus, Hoffmann, Steinghausen, Breithaupt, and Deppe. The works of Suzuki, Kodaly, Agai, Bastian, and Aaron, represent the more modern methods. In addition to these, many teachers have contributed to novel pedagogical approaches that focus on learning that considers students' psychological comfort in combination with musical and social development. With such an array of possible choices, it is easy for a novice teacher to be confounded. The new teacher should however remember that he or she has much to contribute. In the words of preeminent pedagogue H. Neuhaus: "In order to speak and have the right to be heard, one must not only be able to speak but also have something to say" (Neuhaus, 1958: pp. 13).

To create a comprehensible pedagogical context to help young novice teachers understand the evolution of pedagogical information, a brief overview of the history of piano education is provided. The reason for this is that there are not many studies on the history of classical piano education from the Middle Ages to the present day. This is

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significant in that it provides a complete and comprehensive picture that articulates the sequence and logic behind the inception and development of a multitude of pedagogical ideas.

### **Fundamental Requirements in Initial Learning.**

To understand how a complete teaching methodology can work, it behooves one to identify the essentials required to cast the foundations of a solid pianistic education. Just as significant are the pitfalls one may encounter if the initial steps are not successfully worked through.

Generally speaking, the main tasks for teachers in the initial period of training are the following:

- Identification of individual characteristics of the student: talent, musicality, rhythm, analytical skills, learning ability, perseverance.
- Study of musical exercises and pieces aimed at developing a variety of techniques as well as fostering musicality.
- Selection of pieces that simultaneously correspond to a training program most suited to the individual student.

In the articles of many modern piano pedagogues, much attention is paid to the individual abilities of the student and the individual selection of the program. For example, in her article “The initial stage of learning to play the piano”, V. A. Shulankina writes: “The main tasks that a teacher should set at the beginning of training is the development of the student’s musical and performing abilities.” (Shulankina, 2015: pp. 1) This notion is so significant that it is constantly reinforced by teachers such as Artemyeva T.S. who sets the same task for the teacher in the expressed in her article “Features of the initial period of learning to play the piano.” She points out the development of individual and musical abilities as one of the main goals of primary education. (Artemyeva, 2014: pp. 4) At the initial stage of training, the teacher faces the fundamental responsibility of correctly laying the foundations of playing the piano, using and developing the individual characteristics of the student as well as helping him or her to master and develop skills that he may not naturally have. Temchenko I. in his methodology proposes to draw up a description for each student and develop an individual work plan, and at the end of the academic year, compare progress with what was planned in order to further adjust the training. (Temchenko, 2002)

Technically speaking, the fundamentals required are the following:

- Correct seating position – comfortable but ready position of the body in front of the instrument.
- Hand position – natural, relaxed, and maximally comfortable position of fingers, hand, and wrist in relation to the instrument.
- Mastering musical notation – recording and reading notes of different lengths and pitches.
- Correct rhythm – rhythmically accurate reading and reproduction of musical text.
- Sight-reading – the ability to quickly and accurately parse a musical piece.
- Hand(s)/eye coordination.
- Aural Skills – the ability to hear in order to correct mistakes.
- Musical memory – the musician’s ability to memorize musical scores.
- Finger fluency – precise movements of the fingers to achieve timely depression and release of keys.
- Musicality – internal perception of music, the ability to reproduce emotions through sound production.
- Development of fine motor skills – fine technique, finger control

Despite the above-mentioned, every teacher must focus on what he/she considers most important. Radvogina M. in her work “The specifics of work at the initial stage of training” considers the setting of hands to be the main task. (Radvogina, 2018: pp. 6) Jordan E. in the article “Mastering musical notation at the initial stage of learning to play the piano” writes that the initial task is to familiarize the student with notes. (Jordan, 2017) Oorzhak S. in the article “Methods of teaching the piano to children of primary school age” highlights four points: familiarity with the

keyboard, hand placement, ear development, and the basics of musical notation. (Oorzhak, 2015) As demonstrated, perspectives on this fundamental issue vary greatly but are all great significance.

Mistakes made in the initial stage of learning and training are difficult to correct at a later time. Most children have a more flexible and receptive mind than do adults. In their formative years, children tend to absorb and memorize all information in a more lasting and indelible manner which becomes difficult to eradicate or modify. It is a well-known fact that foreign languages, for example, are more easily learned in childhood and as such, rarely forgotten.

Some of the most common technical and learning problems that arise from erroneous inception are:

- Incorrect seating leads to tension in the neck, shoulders, and arms. This normally translates to stiffness that impedes natural movement.
- Incorrect positioning of the hand where playing occurs with flat fingers. This may cause tension in the wrist which affects sound quality and technique.
- The substitution of note reading with finger numbers. If finger numbers are always given, the students learn the musical patterns through tactile memory rather than note identification.
- Emphasis on the keys of the middle octave. If from the very beginning the student plays only in the middle octave, his idea of the piano keyboard is restricted. This creates a restricted mental and physical space making it difficult to experience different locations on the larger keyboard.
- Insufficient exercise of sight-reading. The ability to develop hand/eye coordination is often neglected to the point that playing ability is far more advanced than reading ability. This makes it difficult for the apprehension of new materials.
- Too much reliance on the student's aural abilities. If the teacher plays the music before the student learns it, the student is apt to use aural memory rather than reading skills to learn the piece.

Kant R. in the article "The Essential Characteristics of Effective Teaching" describes more than thirty mistakes, including incorrect rhythm, playing along the outer edge of the keys, poor posture, too complex pieces and vice versa too light, holding the breath, incorrect position of the fingers (straight or clenched) (Kant, 2012) Teachers tend to list student mistakes based on personal observations. Some mistakes are common, (characteristic of almost everyone) others are individual. Alekseev A. wrote about this best of all in his book "Methods of Learning to Play the Piano". "One should beware of freedom of execution, another of tightness, one likes to speed up the pace, the other to slow it down, so it is important that the student himself knows what mistakes he most often makes in order to control them." (Alekseev, 1970)

### **Aspects of Pedagogy were Presented in the Early Treatises from the 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> Centuries**

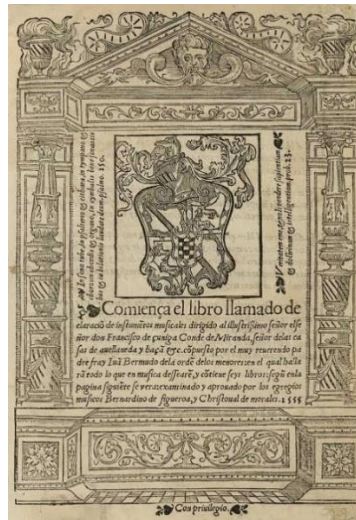
The first authors of ancient treatises<sup>2</sup> on music, devoted to the issues of creativity and performance, were musicians-monks. Performing at that time was not yet a separate profession and therefore these books were devoted to the theory of music, composition, and improvisation. The texts contained methodologies for learning the harpsichord and clavichord<sup>3</sup>, as the piano had not yet been invented. The book "Declaration de instrumentos musicales" (Discourses on musical instruments) of 1555, by the Franciscan monk from Andalusia Juan Bermudo (1510-1565), was one of the first where the author raised the issue of performance. He wrote a chapter on performing problems called "Some Tips for Performers." It deals with the principles of teaching such as sitting at the instrument, correct fingering, positioning of hands, and the performance of melismas.<sup>4</sup> (Bermudo, 1995).

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<sup>2</sup> Scientific essay devoted to the study of any issue

<sup>3</sup> Keyboard string shock-clamping musical instrument. A prototype of the modern piano.

<sup>4</sup> Various melodic ornaments of sound that do not change the tempo and rhythmic pattern of the melody.



**Picture 1**  
 Bermudo, J. *Clarification of Musical Instruments*

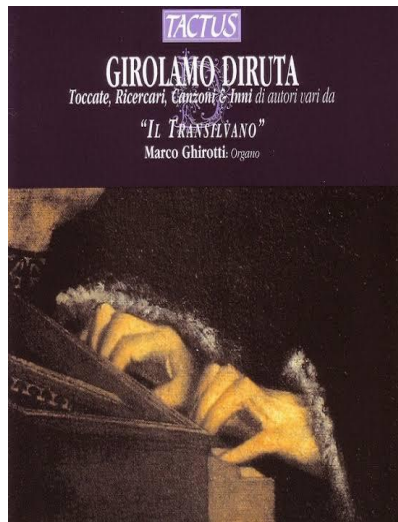
In Spain, the leading role was assigned to the organ. And since the techniques of touching the harpsichord, clavichord and organ are different - the organ requires a stronger keystroke - the techniques for mastering these instruments have also distinguished themselves.

"Arte de taner Fantasia" (The Art of Fantasy) published ten years later (1565) by the organist monk Thomas de Sancto Maria (1510 - 1570) from the Monastery of Santa Maria in Valladolid, contains descriptive titles such as "On the setting of hands", "On a good stroke", "On clean and distinct playing", "On how to hold hands when playing scales", "On correct fingering", "On trills", and "On artistic taste when playing". This is clear evidence that the whole concept of keyboard pedagogy had taken a strong foothold and was seen as an independent subject (Moiseeva, 2010).



**Picture 2**  
 Thomas de Sancto Maria. *Arte de taner Fantasia*

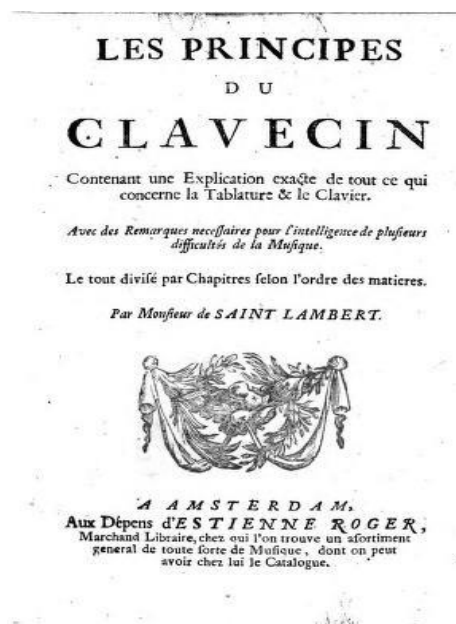
The end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century saw the publication of "Transilvano" (Transilvanian) by Girolamo Diruta (1554 – 1610). In this work, the author talks about playing the organ and the harpsichord, emphasizing the difference in the methods of sound production on these instruments (Alekseev, 1974).



**Picture 3**

*Girolamo Diruta. Transilvano.*

Keyboard pedagogy was elevated to an entirely new level by the virtuoso French composer/harpsichordists of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. M. Sei-Lambert - author of treatises on playing the harpsichord "Les principes du clavecin" (Harpsichord principles.1702) expounds on the importance of good hearing, good hands, and the teacher's ability to interest students in their studies. His work "Basics of the Harpsichord" is the first textbook on playing the harpsichord, published 14 years before the famous "L'art de toucher le clavecin" by Francois Couperin. (Nikolaev, 1980)



**Picture 4**

*M. Sei-Lambert. Les principes du clavecin*

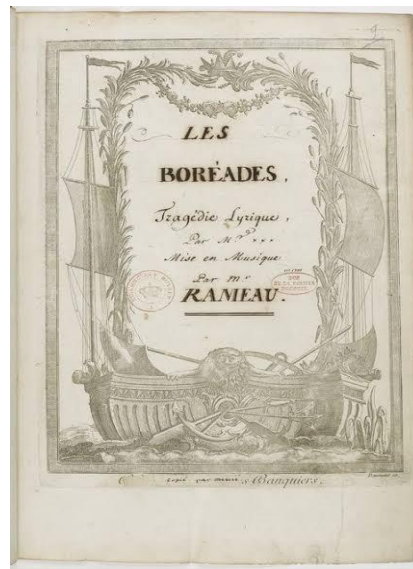


**Picture 5**

*Francois Couperin. L'art de toucher le clavecin.*

Perhaps the most famous of the French harpsichordists, François Couperin (1668 – 1733) published the foremost treatise (1716) on the subject. "L'art de toucher le clavecin" (The Art of Playing the Harpsichord) touches on the issues of seating at the instrument, fingering, and decoding melismas. He writes: "The elbow, hand, and fingers should be at the same level, so you need to find a suitable chair and use a footrest for the children. When playing the harpsichord, the body should be slightly tilted to the right, the knees should not be too squeezed, the legs should be on the same level, but the right leg should be turned outward. One should not allow your face to reflect any experience associated with the performance of music. You can get rid of grimaces yourself by placing a mirror in front of you" It is clear from this text that the level of detail now contained in these pedagogical works had reached the highest levels of description. This treatise was followed closely by that of compatriot Rameau. (Couperin, 1973)

The "Metode pour la mecanique des doigts" (The Method of the Finger Technique) by Jean-Bernard Rameau (1683 – 1764) is devoted to the development of the student's technical skills. Rameau was an opera composer, theorist, educator, and performer. In his methodology, he wrote about seating at the instrument, fingering, exercises necessary to develop the flexibility of the wrist, and the freedom of movement of the fingers. "Fingers should fall on the keys, and not hit them, moreover, they should, as it were, flow sequentially one after the other." He further states that "one needs to make sure that the finger that has pressed the key releases it at the very moment when the other finger presses the other, since removing one finger from the keys and touching them with the other must occur simultaneously. Never burden a finger strike with hand pressure; better to let the hand, supporting the fingers, make their strike easier - this is of great importance. The movements of the fingers should be very even, as this gives the necessary lightness and speed. When you feel that the arm has formed, start to gradually reduce the height of the seat until the elbows are slightly below the level of the keyboard; as a result, the hand will seem to stick to the keys, which will add coherence to the performance " This passage denotes yet a new development in that the idea of keyboard pedagogy now encompassed several specializations, the foremost being keyboard technique. (Aleksiev, 1988)



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### Picture 6

Jean-Bernard Rameau. *Metode pour la mecanique des doigts*

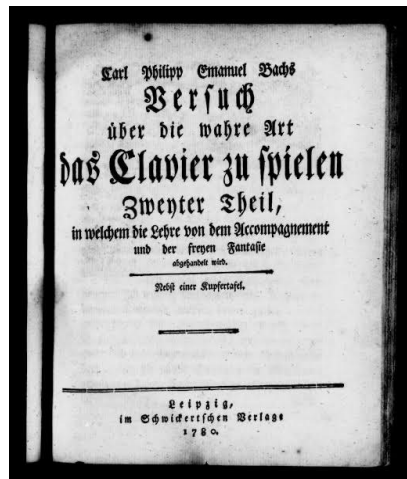
It must not be forgotten that the instructions of the aforementioned authors refer not to the piano, but to the harpsichord, which does not require much force when pressing the keys. The reason for this is that the energy required to depress a key of the modern piano far exceeds that required for a harpsichord. The French harpsichordists mentioned above gave specific playing instruction because of the stylistic demands Rococo<sup>5</sup> style manifested in their work. (Alekseev, 1988)

As can be seen, pedagogical evolution over the aforementioned period includes an ever-increasing number of playing aspects as well as an increasing level of detail. However, the aspect of a graded system of increasing complexity did not exist. While it is understood that teachers must have chosen repertoire commensurate with student abilities, we do not have a pedagogical methodology in which all the aspects are sequenced in the way found in modern teaching methods. We know that composers had by this time become more aware of early keyboard development in that they began to compose a greater number of easier pieces for the young. A prime example is J.S. Bach's Anna Magdalena book and his set of Three-part inventions. While these are a lot easier than the vast majority of his other keyboard works, the writer assumes that the student is already fairly advanced and not a complete novice.

### Developments in the Classical and Romantic Eras in Piano Pedagogy.

One of the most famous methods of the second half of the 18th century is the treatise by Philipp Emmanuel Bach (1714-1788) "Versuch uber die wahre Art das Klavier zu Spielen" (Experience of the true art of playing the clavier) (1753/1762). C.P.E. Bach writes: "The true art of playing the clavier predominantly presupposes correct fingering, good 'manners' (that is, melismas), and good performance". Speaking about fingering, C.P.E. Bach emphasizes the importance of using the first, "most important" finger, which "gives the key to all kinds of fingering and helps to play easily, without tension." He also believes that mastering the playing technique does not yet provide good performance, which consists of "the ability to convey to the listener the true content of the music." "You cannot play like a trained bird. - music performance should come from the heart" (Sukhova, 2005)

<sup>5</sup> Style in art and architecture of the 17-18 centuries

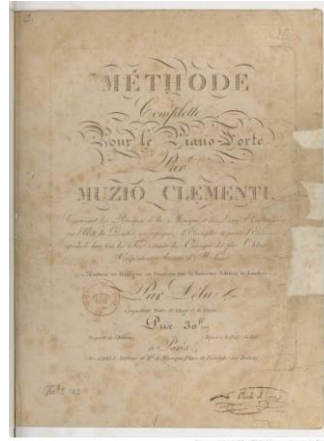


**Picture 7**

C.P.E. Bach. Versuch über die wahre Art das Klavier zu Spielen

In the second half of the 18th century, a new instrument entered musical life - the piano, that greatly differed from the harpsichord in the mechanics of sound production. The action of the hammer makes it possible to produce sounds of varying dynamic levels and, as a result, the gradation of sound. This is not possible on the harpsichord. Immediately following its advent, three piano schools became dominant London, Vienna, and Paris.

One of the most famous representatives of the London school is Muzio Clementi (1752 - 1832). He wrote methodological explanations for the piano school for beginners "Methode pour le Piano-Forte" (1801), was the author of the first technical exercises and etudes in the history of the piano. These include collections: "Preludes and exercises in all keys of major and minor", "Exercises for the thumb", a collection of octave etudes, etc.



**Picture 8**

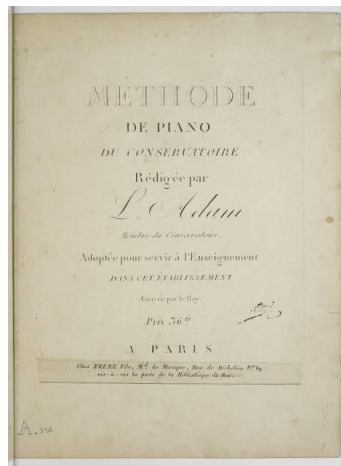
Muzio Clementi. Methode pour le Piano-Forte

His collection "Gradus ad Parnassum" (Step to Parnassus. 1817-1826) included 100 different works - etudes, preludes, fugues, canons, pieces in sonata form, and other samples of compositions for piano. Clementi is an innovator and representative of the London school of piano playing - in addition to finger passages, he used double notes, octaves, chord structures, repetitions, and other techniques that add brilliance and variety. "The Clementi's school gave rise to certain traditions in piano pedagogy: the principle of many hours of technical exercises, playing with" isolated "hammer-like fingers with a motionless hand, strict rhythm and contrasting dynamics."

Louis Adam (1758 - 1848) is considered the father of the Parisian school. His "School of piano playing" "Methode de piano a passage de classes de piano de Conservatoire" (1805) was an obligatory textbook for students of the conservatory. In addition to the repertoire and exercises, Adam formulated his methodological principles: musical development, taste, and expressiveness of performance. He considered the main purpose of music to awaken the senses of the listener and technique was for him, a means of achieving the ideal sound. He advised playing scales and arpeggios



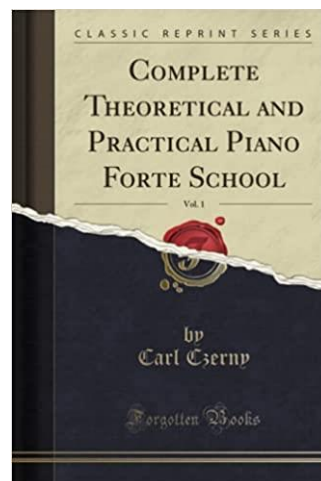
using crescendo<sup>6</sup> and diminuendo<sup>7</sup>, and paid attention to legato<sup>8</sup>, melodiousness, phrasing, and fingering. Adam did not accept mechanical finger training without the ultimate goal of musicality.



**Picture 9**

*Louis Adam. Methode de piano a passage de classes de piano de Conservatoire*

Representative of the Viennese school, K. Czerny (1791 - 1857) - the author of numerous studies, technical pieces, and exercises that are widely used in music education today. These are "Selected Etudes", "Daily Exercises", "The Art of Finger Dexterity", "School of finger fluency" and many others. His exercises successfully developed finger fluency and free and flexible movement of the hand and forearm. He used a new technique of playing, where, instead of placing the first finger with a motionless hand, he turned his forearm and hand in the direction of the movement of the passage. In his method "Theoretical and Practical Piano Forte School" (1846) Czerny pays special attention to nuance and touch. He suggesting to play scales, passages, and exercises at different tempos and with different sounds, using crescendo and diminuendo and a variety of methods. (Kulikov, 2015) His unique technical approach to playing focuses on musicality. Mechanism of thinking - assimilation of text, overcoming technical difficulties, and studying performance mastering go hand in hand with problems of musical interpretation (Alekseev, 1988).



**Picture 10**

*K. Czerny. Theoretical and Practical Piano Forte School*

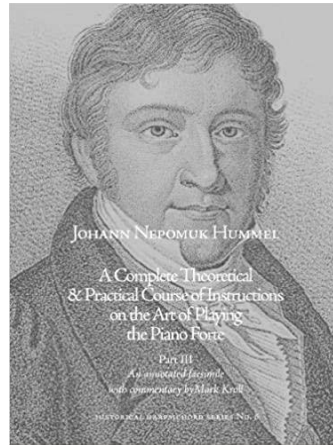
Mozart's student Johann Nepomuk Hummel (1778 - 1837) enjoyed great fame in Vienna in the early 19th century. He is the author of "A Complete Theoretical & Practical Course of Instructions the Art of Playing the Piano Forte"

<sup>6</sup> Gradual increase in sound

<sup>7</sup> A gradual decrease in sound

<sup>8</sup> Coherent performance of sounds

(1828). The book consisted of three parts - basic training, fingering, embellishment (melismas), and performance. The first part of the book was devoted to initial training, the second to fingering, and the third to embellishment and performance. In addition, the book had a section on instrument tuning and improvisation.



**Picture 11**

*N. Hummel. A Complete Theoretical & Practical Course of Instructions the Art of Playing the Piano Forte.*

It was at that time that various devices were invented for mechanical training of the fingers, such as the "chiroplast" by Jean-Bernard Logier (1816), and the "dactylion" by Henri Hertz (1835). The idea behind such inventions was that fingers inserted into suspended rings were mechanically raised and lowered. In 1840, Casimir Martin invented the Chiro-gymnast, a device for stretching the fingers. Of particular interest was the hand driver "Guide main", invented by F. Kalkbrenner in 1831. - Above the keyboard, a bar was installed with rings sliding over it, into which a hand was threaded, which could only move parallel to the keyboard, allowing the fingers to freely move the keys. Kalkbrenner recommended reading the book while playing the exercises so that the mind does not interfere with the work of the fingers. (Nikolaev, 1980)

In the same years, the system of collective lessons for teaching piano techniques gained recognition in Paris. Students developed their fingers by playing on mute keyboards. Thus, we see that the method of teaching was based on technique and the main task was the desire to develop the strength and fluency of the fingers. But at the same time, in the first half of the 19th century, many performers, most of them students of Clementi, Adam, Cerny, Field, developed new techniques for piano playing, achieving the power of the instrument's sound, the brightness, and brilliance of complex passages. Of particular importance in the texture of their works were chord structures, octaves, double notes, repetitions, hand-shifting techniques, and other effects requiring the participation of the whole hand (Nikolaev, 1980)

The works of romantics - Schumann, Chopin, Liszt - reflected the features of the new piano style. Their music required a search for a new texture, new sounds, richness, and a variety of colors. This was connected with the discovery of new methods of playing among the greatest composers-pianists of the late 19th and 20th centuries.

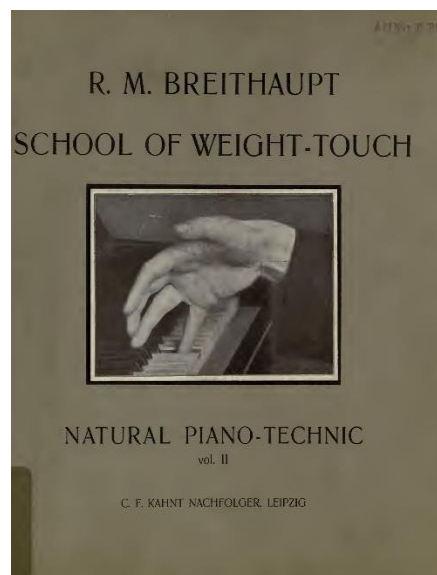
Chopin, for example, attached great importance to freedom of arms and flexible movements of the hand, wrist, and forearm. He proposed using the natural differences of the fingers following the phrasing and intonational expressiveness of the musical pattern, entrusting strong fingers with reference sounds, and weak ones with soft endings of melodic phrases. Liszt, like Chopin, demanded from the pianist complete freedom of movement, playing with the whole arm from the shoulder, using the span and weight of the arm in fortissimo<sup>9</sup> to achieve maximum sonority. Both of them believed that technique should be entirely subordinate to the artistic tasks of performance. (Sovetova, 2006)

<sup>9</sup> Very loud performance of sounds.

### **Pedagogical Innovations of the 20th century in Piano Playing.**

The first stage in the formation of the theory of pianism was called the physiological school of piano playing and was based on the development of the anatomy and physiology of the pianist. The founder of this theory was the German teacher, pianist, conductor, and composer Ludwig Deppe (1828-1890). Deppe developed a system for the development of pianistic skills based on a sense of freedom of movement and playing with the whole hand with the participation of the shoulder, forearm, and hand and published a work called "Pianists Hand Disorders." His technique became known after his death when his students published his works. Deppe advised freeing the hands from muscle tension, to avoid stiffness among beginners learning to play the piano. To do this, he suggested, as a preliminary exercise, raising the freehand from the shoulder and gently lowering it onto the closed lid of the piano, and in the future with the same movement on the keyboard.

The next well-known representative of the physiological direction in the theory of pianism was Rudolf Breithaupt, the author of a two-volume book on the theory of pianism "Natural Piano Technique"(1905/1906). Analyzing the movements according to the type of active and passive, he concluded that the leading role in playing the piano should belong to the shoulder, and all other parts of the hand, especially the hand and fingers, should participate in the movement more or less passively. At the same time, virtuosity for him is "the art of passive movement of the hand." He sought to explain from the standpoint of anatomy and physiology the fallacy of the traditions of the old school, based on the game of "isolated" fingers, without the participation of the whole hand.



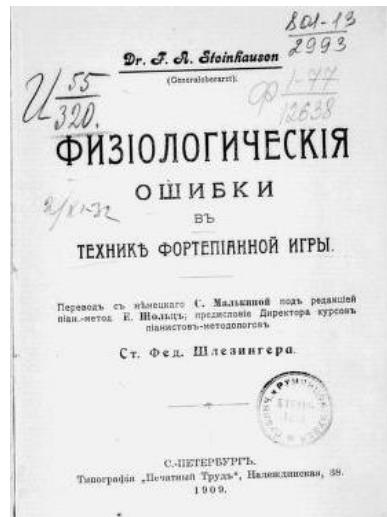
**Picture 12**

*R. M. Breithaupt Natural Piano Technique.*

In the formation of the physiological direction in the theory of pianism, an important role belongs to Dr. Friedrich Adolf Steinhausen, the author of the book "Physiological errors in the technique of playing the piano and the transformation of this technique." (1905)

Defining the essence of the exercise, Steinhausen writes:

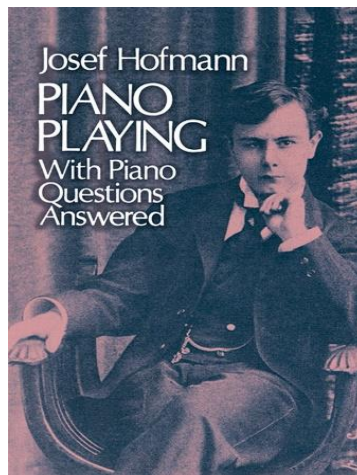
"Since the movement comes from the central nervous system, the exercise primarily affects the brain and spinal cord, being thus primarily a mental process, processing, replenishment of the experience accumulated in the body, memory." (Nikolaev, 1980)



**Picture 13**

F. A. Steinhausen. *Physiological Errors in the Technic of Playing the Piano and the Transformation of this Technique*

In the first decades of the 20th century, in parallel with the anatomical and physiological doctrine, another direction developed, the founders of which were the largest performers-musicians - Joseph Hoffman and Ferruccio Busoni. Josef Hofmann, a Rubinstein student, is the author of the well-known book *Piano Playing*. (1907). The main place in his methodology was occupied by mental work. Hoffmann was against mechanical training of the fingers and the development of any kind of universal movements. The fundamental principle is a thorough study of the musical text to more fully reveal the composer's intention. Hoffmann believed that no matter how precisely the pianist played the musical text, he still would not reach the performance that the author had heard. Hoffman focuses on the activation of the performer's internal auditory ideas. This manifested itself in the formulation of the problem of learning musical works, which was new for that time, namely, in the definition of four possible types of it: With a piano with notes, without a piano with notes, with a piano without notes, without a piano and notes. (Goffman, 1961)



**Picture 14**

*J. Hofmann. Piano Playing*

Ferruccio Busoni played an outstanding role in the formation of the pianistic school of the 20th century. He emphasized that he sought to simplify the piano playing mechanism and reduce it to the least amount of movement and effort. To achieve this and develop a technique, in his opinion, it was possible to a lesser extent through physical exercises and to a greater extent through the spiritual comprehension of the task. He contrasted the traditional “three-fingered” with “five-fingered”, based on the alternation of hand positions. This fingering replaced the frequent insertion of the first finger by throwing the hand over and moving the second and third fingers over the fourth or fifth. Busoni also widely used the distribution of passages between the hands. His method was a fixed composure of the

playing apparatus, in particular, the vertical and horizontal movements of the forearm, interpreted as a whole with a stiff, stable wrist.

One of the representatives of the direction, in many respects close to Busoni, was the German teacher and theorist of pianism V. Bardas, whose small book "The Psychology of Piano Playing Technique" was published in 1920. Bardas's book is not a systematized textbook of piano playing. Rather, it is a methodological manual derived from the author's pedagogical practice, designed to direct the attention of performers and teachers to several significant issues of piano technique.

Among the works devoted to the issues of the performing skills of the pianist, one should mention the book by Karl Leimer "Modern Piano Playing". Leimer writes that one of the main tasks of the teacher is to teach the student to exercise rationally, to concentrate his attention intensively, to play what is learned at the slowest pace, without making mistakes. Speaking about technical problems, using the terminology of Hoffmann, he writes: "Working on technics is mental work."



**Picture 15**

K. Leimer. Modern Piano Playing.

Finishing the review of the so-called psycho-technical direction in the theory of Western European pianism of the XX century, it is necessary to dwell on the fundamental work of the prominent German pianist-teacher Carl Adolf Martienssen (1881-1955) "Individual piano technique based on sound creative will." In 1937, seven years after its first edition, practical addition to it was published under the title "Methods of Individual Piano Teaching".



**Picture 16**

C. A. Martienssen. *Methods of Individual Piano Teaching*

The main place in his teaching is occupied by the idea of the leading role of hearing in the education of a musician.

The educational process should be structured in such a way that the auditory presentation precedes the extraction of sound. Revealing this problem, Martinsen is correct - he points out that a different system has taken root in piano pedagogy, in which a sound is first extracted, and then on this basis, an auditory representation is born. By itself, this idea is not original (it was put forward in the 18th century by Leopold Mozart), but Martinsen gave it a detailed scientific basis and indicated the way of developing an active ear for music. Martinsen rightly points out that piano teaching is oriented towards a student with average musical skills. The process of educating a pianist begins with motor skills, with an explanation of the required movements and the corresponding exercises. Along the way, the student gets acquainted with the keyboard, musical literacy, and reading notes. Such primary motor education leads to the fact that the student reads what is written in the musical text, translates it onto the keyboard, using the learned playing techniques, and, finally, hears the sounds that he has made on the instrument. All this can be expressed in a short diagram: I see - I play - I hear. That is why he contrasts the usual teaching method with his system, based on the "prodigy complex." Explaining this idea, he cites as an example the history of the musical development of Mozart. As it is known Mozart began to study music in the fourth year of his life, and at the age of five, he was already composing little pieces, which he played to his father so that he would record them. Mozart also began to play the violin and organ by ear, not yet knowing any rules and techniques for playing these instruments. Scheme: to see - to hear - to play.

Concluding the review of the works of several representatives of the foreign theory of pianism of the first half of the XX century, we can draw the following conclusions. The largest, progressive-minded musicians of this time, guided by their experience of outstanding performers, approached the problem of mastering the pianistic skill in a new way. Rejecting the orientation of piano pedagogy towards physiology as a science that provides an objective basis for the development of ideal technique, they brought to the fore the mental, analytical work, the role of the psychological factor in solving pianistic problems, subordinating all this to the main goal - the development of what Martinsen called "sound-creating will".

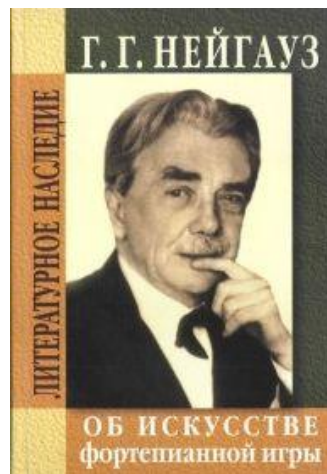
Each of them, following his own pianistic experience, contributed a lot of value to the questions of the pianist's work. But, perhaps, it was Martinsen who, in his major research, gave the most complete analysis of the path of development of the art of piano and pedagogy.

The principles of the so-called psycho-technical school are reflected in the works of prominent teachers in many countries. This direction played a significant role in the formation of the theory of pianism and teaching methods. In general, the entire 20th century was characterized by significant shifts in and discoveries of piano pedagogy.

Gradually, musicians concluded that playing the piano is not a mechanical, but a psychophysical process. The ideas of expediency, economy, and musical justification of the playing movement were put forward and resulted in significant changes in pedagogical methods. The G. Neuhaus school is rightfully considered one of the best schools of the 20th century. The main principle of the school of G. Neuhaus is the dominance of the content of the studied work over its technique. "To speak and have the right to be listened to, one must not only be able to speak but above all have something to say." (Neuhaus, 1958)

Heinrich Neuhaus believed that work on a piece should begin with the presentation of its ideal sound. To this end, it is necessary to listen to the work in several good performances, so as not to copy someone else's. In addition, he believed that a student playing a work of a certain composer should familiarize himself with his other works, this will help to better understand the work on which he is working. One of his techniques was the development of imagination and hearing: he forced students to learn works by sheet music, without using a grand piano.

Neuhaus believed that the content, musicality, and meaning of the work helped to master it technically: "A few words about technique. The clearer the goal, the better it dictates the means to achieve it." (Neuhaus, 1958)



**Picture 17**

*H. Neuhaus. On the art of piano playing. Notes of a teacher*

The second half of the XX century saw the formation of new centers of musical education and culture in Paris, Vienna, Leipzig, Cologne, Weimar, Boston, New York, Tokyo. The twentieth century is characterized by the emergence of various systems of early and accelerated music education. These are the systems of Zoltan Kodaly, Bela Bartok, Karl Orff, and Shinichi Suzuki. Their appearance is due to discoveries of doctors and psychologists related to the development of children.

Zoltan Kodaly, a Hungarian composer, musician, and theorist, argued that there are no unmusical people whose musicality could not have been developed in childhood. Kodaly singled out four features of a musical person: a developed ear, a developed intellect, developed feelings, and, developed hands. Thanks to him, music became a compulsory everyday subject in Hungarian schools and his method in which choral singing is the basis, spread in many countries.

German composer Karl Orff created a system of a musical education system designed for all children with varying levels of skill and musical abilities. Its essence concerns the development of creative imagination and group playing. He preferred group lessons to individual ones, These lessons focus on movement and dance.

The author of the School of Piano and Microcosmos, Bela Bartok, paid great attention to polyphonic development, hearing, singing, as well as the technique of wrist and finger strikes. His compositions are based on intonational and rhythmic techniques of folk music that help to develop musicality, encourage a sense of rhythm in the student and increase musical horizons. (Manyakin, 2016) Bartók's six volumes of Mikrokosmos constitute perhaps the first and most comprehensive piano method that takes the student from the most elementary level through to an advanced one in a specifically-designed sequence that includes all aspects of piano playing and musical learning.

Shinichi Suzuki created a unique method based on the belief that a child can learn musical literacy from childhood as a language, copying what he sees and hears. The essence of the Suzuki technique is to surround the child with music as early as possible and teach him to repeat notes, musical phrases, and then whole works on a musical instrument by ear.

### Conclusion

Presently, piano instructors have a vast array of piano methods and pedagogical materials at their disposal. These range from traditional methodologies that rely on the transfer of classical knowledge and experience to the modern, more focused on the personality, development, psychological and emotional needs of the young student. It is, therefore, possible to make pedagogical choices based on the individual abilities of the child and depending on the goal, one may choose the exact method that will be ideal for any one particular case. At the same time, it is not necessary to be limited by a single method. An integrated approach can contribute to the faster and more versatile development of a child's

musical talents. “Each author was looking for and believed that he had found some correct and, moreover, the only correct system of techniques suitable for everyone.” (Martinsen, 1966: pp. 44)

A method may be considered as an assistant on the way to the goal - mastering the playing of the instrument. The main task is shared by teacher and student alike. Only their joint work can give a positive result. The work of a teacher depends on the ability to understand which particular method will be the best for a given child as well as the ability to find and develop the student's strengths and correct weaknesses. It is perhaps more beneficial not to present the student with seemingly difficult obstacles but rather to maintain interest in him or her. The student's work consists of systematic study without which no method will yield positive results. It is just as important to stimulate a host of other properties that lie outside of strict mechanics and pedagogy. In addition to learning how to play the piano, “One cannot do without a sense of form, style, the virtue of good taste and originality.” (Busoni, 1962: pp. 155) It is only in the presence of all these components that it becomes possible to have a versatile and correct musical development.

While much has been written about classical and modern methods of teaching piano, there seems to be a lack of literature that proposes how these two separate and often mutually exclusive schools of thought may be integrated to create a synthesis. The task of teachers is much the same as that of scholars of pedagogy in that they too might find a way to balance the directives of the old and new schools to achieve a new pedagogical perspective where technique and musicality are one and one may not distinguish between the lesson and the game.

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