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Basic Conditions of Performing Freedom in Teaching Methods by F. Liszt and N. K. Medtner in the Aspect of Romantic View of the World

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Abstract

Ideas on the relationship between the notes of the gamma scale were perceived from the time of antiquity to the Enlightenment as a key to understanding the structure of the universe with a characteristic analytic component. Disclosure emphasis of the human in culture determined the higher ideals associated with the self-knowledge of man, with the overcoming of the constraining conventions of being. The change in the musical form of the work in the era of Romanticism is largely due to the invention of the modern setting, known as a uniform temperament, the acceptance of it was made hard primarily by mathematical and philosophical discourse over the centuries. The change in the musical system in combination with the accepted ideals of the Romantic era determined the appearance of music by romantic composers. Improving of the piano mechanics and the keyboard system significantly expanded the range of expressive means and predetermined the further development of the piano playing technique. Teaching activities by F. Liszt and N.K. Medtner is associated with the development of the ideas of romanticism and the basic principles of the performing arts of romantics. Music teachers give special attention to an analysis of the pianistic apparatus, which is of great importance in improving the performing arts of playing the piano. Continuity of students in the sphere of basic principles of performing freedom determines the relevance of techniques based on key features of the pianist performing arts of romantics.

Keywords: Romanticism, performing art, Piano, Teaching method, Temperament, Franz Liszt, Nikolai K. Medtner, Performer's freedom.

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Introduction

The musical form of the work and its boundaries essentially depend on the type of temperament of the musical work. The creation of a modern uniformly tempered system dominating in the European professional classical music became possible with the development of the method of "listening to an even sequence of beats throughout the entire chromatic range" [6, p.230] by 1880s. Of course, such a method was heavily needed by philosophical and mathematical discourse over the centuries and to some extent became the philosophical ideal of overcoming the constraining conventions of being. But the final phase of justifying the "correctness" and the necessity (agitation) of such a system, owed to Jean-Philippe Rameau, the composer and music theorist. D'Alembert, popularizing Rameau's ideas of harmony in his book *Elements of Theoretical and Practical Music in Accordance with the Principles of Mr. Rameau* (1752), noted the merits of the composer and theorist in simplifying the performance of music, which allowed musicians to logically use analogies. This made it possible not only to make music a science worthy of study by philosophers, but also to embody aspirations for the expressiveness of the deepest ideas of the Romantic era. Due to the book, the composer's ideas became even more widely known to the general public, however, for the sake of justice, we note that Rameau, who was not young, did not like the simplified view on his ideas, which was subsequently reflected in well-known polemic with D'Alembert.

Of course, improving the piano mechanics and the keyboard system significantly expands the possibilities of the instrument and causes the search for new expressive means, the development and improvement of the piano performance techniques. By this time for more than half a century, Romance composers have tried to fully express the wealth of the inner world of man by means of music. And many works could not exist in other temperaments, in particular by F. Liszt, we see his works as the most fulfilled with inner form. In addition, the type of temperament plays a role in the choice of tones with which, as is known, certain characteristics are associated. The subjective perception of a musical work begins with a pre-predicative level, but already in it through music and it is "in music ... we see our common tendency to abstract" [11, p.318] of the pure qualities of the subject. For example, a spiritual lift or sadness, inspired by music is not a property of the object, but the essence of it [11, p.298]. At the same time, intentionality itself is not identical with awareness, because many states are not always realized. Thus, the knowledge of the pure quality of objects and the continuous flow of being intertwined in the musical view of the world.

Unfortunately, composers sometimes have to transpose their works for technical reasons, departing from the original design, both because of the complexity of the performance, and for better perception of the music by the audience. It is "unfortunately" because there are more in the meanings than in contemplation: the sensory consciousness has the logic order. In a musical work, like any other piece of art, "the main thing is, first of all, the degree of its design" [11, p.302]. The technical difficulties of performance, for example, were caused by works in the tones of F-sharp minor and F-sharp major due to the "extreme" arrangement in temperament. Nevertheless, we note that the tonality of F-sharp minor was often used in the works of Liszt, Schubert and other romanticists. A F-sharp major was more used by Haydn, Beethoven and Chopin. In this regard, the interpretation of tonal characteristics related to subjective perception of acoustic differences, differing from classical samples, has undergone changes. In addition, the themes of romantic music are largely autobiographical and bear the imprint of the author's individuality and, due to the musical quality's program, cause individual associations. And here there are the language properties, not the text, that are emphasized, because each person has his/her own "text". In this regard, we note that "the students ... do not have enough information about the style ... of the author, his own performing style" [9, p.202]. Such was the general vision of the musical text in the era of Romanticism.

At the heart of any vision is the principle of perception, playing the role of an institution in the formation of the emotional mood of the individual. Undoubtedly, romance was not only an impulse to the freedom of the human spirit, but also contained an attitude toward ideas that elevated man. Many researchers identify freedom as the most significant category of Romanticism. F. Schlegel wrote: "To be free is to be a man" [16, p.235]. However, human freedom manifests itself in the ability to dream, and one can only dream about the sublime, because only the object of the sublime promises happiness. Man is born free, but to seek for happiness, which is his/her cherished aspiration of all life. This romantic ideal can not be rationally formulated and embraces the entire inner world of man. Thus, the intention of romantics is primary in relation to language, that is, the Romanticism itself and its philosophy is derived from the intentionality of romantics. Therefore, artistic musical images bear the synthetic function of the mind, overcoming the scholastic rationality in the work of a musical composition / performance. This is the opposite of the enthusiasm of the "analytical characteristic of European culture from the 17th century ... turning ... to oblivion of the main goal of any activity - the discovery of the human in the space of culture ..." [8, p. 87]. Therefore, the highest ideal of man is the harmony of thought and feeling as the two areas of consciousness. But in this sense, romantics make sense not in possessing the truth, but in "being in the truth", carried out in a permanent reflexivity in relation to the last mystery of being, incomprehensible only by the intellect. Awareness of this leads to an understanding that instrumental music can not, and *should not* clarify its secret in words. This is directly hinted by Schiller, convincing us that only the beauty can harmonize the inner world of man [14]. First of all, he sees the highest manifestation of freedom in it. Thus, the aspiration to the ideal is a necessary condition for the affirmative nature of personal experience: "people's activities increasingly take place in a very complex world created by them, where it is impossible to draw clear distinctions between subjective and objective" [5, p.3]. Such a romantics' aspiration [17, pp.7-43] determines the subjective meaning-making components of the being-existence of man and represents the self-knowledge of the individual as a kind of horizon that is essentially unattainable, but embraced as a whole in his worldview, in the construction of his own self. In a new aspect of spiritual understanding, the world is not reduced to the additive properties of the natural and social: man is capable of perfection through the creation of other worlds that do not exist in reality. This reaction was to the rationalism of this epoch, the disappointment in the ideals of the Enlightenment (the principles of bourgeois practicality), which led to a contradictory approach to understanding culture as an intersubjective human life.

Following the well-known principle of the unity of music and speech, put on a certain form of phoneme sounds (united in word-signs), we note that the word becomes a derivative (form) of ordering the intersubjective life of a person, represented in pre-anticipative structures of everyday life. However, the musical sound itself is already "an existing abstraction, if taken from an integral musical piece" [11, p.320], allowing mentally to be weakened from the disastrous irrationality of the senses. Such a distraction in the phonetic component, oriented still to the emotional aspect, sets us not on an explanation, but on understanding: to feel the meaning that we see in the relations, the relationships between events and their expressions "[4, p.231]. At the same time, researchers note that even at a higher level of abstraction, which are expressed in categories of artistic thinking, "including the musical image, unlike form, are not actually recognized as structural categories and refer to the field of the ideal as not amenable to textual analysis" [15, p.32].

Discussion

In the era of Romanticism, we note the growing interest in the piano playing, the piano has become firmly in fashion and the number of those wishing to master this instrument has increased significantly. For the sake of justice, we note that the vast majority of music professionals did not have a special intellectual

level. This was due, above all, to the specifics of the methodological principles that guided the teachers of the piano game. Many hours of automatic remembering took away almost all free time. For such automatic trainings with endless play of gammas and exercises, "mechanical adaptations - the Laurier's hiroplast, the Calbrenner's "arm guide", the Hertz dactylon" were used successfully [1, p.4]. The exception, perhaps, were made by the well-known personalities who combined their concert activities with pedagogical practice. Such an exception, in particular, was F. Liszt, who was not only a performing virtuoso, but also a composer, teacher, conductor. Truthfully, Liszt is a propagandist of higher art, a representative of Romanticism in music. The ideas about his pedagogical principles we draw from the records made by Constantza Boissier. After reading the notes about Liszt's lessons, one gets the impression that teaching for him in the degree of its implementation possessed that specificity, the mental need, which we find in Pygmalion's well-known description. In addition, Liszt was generously endowed with a mass of personal merits. There is a sufficient amount of biographical and memorial literature, which allows us to be not alone in this thought. Indeed, "if the teacher is meaningful for the students and emotionally attractive, then in this case they ... yield to the personalizing (transforming) influence of the teacher, show readiness to work on themselves, to develop, to show creative initiative. It can be argued that the "importance" of the teacher is one of the strongest stimulating factors of involvement in art ..." [2, p. 1409].

Despite the fact that Liszt's teaching activities were to some extent an inevitable necessity for replenishing his means of livelihood, the musician taught many of his students absolutely for free. Of course F. Liszt himself did not only improve his technique of performance, but paid great attention to mental development. Perhaps this was one of the reasons why works included in his concerts did not always find a response in the tastes of the general public [10, p.67]. Liszt's own understanding of music could not help but affect the manner of performing musical works. At the same time, his own views determined the tasks of the performing arts, introducing a certain novelty in the methodology of performing practice. The idea *to depict something*, the necessity *to study something properly* form the canvas of the basic principles of the naturalness of expression. This naturalness of performance was achieved in the implementation of two pedagogical principles, professed by Liszt: emotional impact on the student and appeal to the student's mind (understanding, control). This is the path of meaningfulness in teaching, coupled with attention and concentration. After all, according to Liszt's understanding, it is only possible to express the artistic idea of a musical work in full, embodied as a composer's idea. Technically this is achieved by expanding the nuance palette, the ability to polyvariate the dynamic tuning of the music performance. There are special difficulties in mastering any performance technique, which is necessary for the first-class piano playing. The initial difficulties are so called purely technical, and they can be gradually overcome. In the future, difficulties are manifested in the ability of the performer to recreate the overall concept of the musical work in larger proportions. Without overcoming these stages, it is almost impossible to arrange a composition in the artistic manner that would be characteristic of the author himself. Liszt thought that to overcome technical difficulties one should successively implement the following *formulas*: 1) octaves and chords, 2) rehearsals and trills, 3) double notes (thirds, sixths), 4) gammas, arpeggios. Here Liszt first of all spoke of that sequence of mastering technique, which allows to move from *large-scale technique* to a more detailed, *shallow technique*. Freedom expressed in the naturalness of performance is one of the characteristic signs of a first-class piano playing. Technically it is impossible to achieve such a manner of performance without completely releasing one's hands. It was F. Liszt who was convinced of this, Liszt who quite clearly showed his pupils how to play octave scales. One should note that *large-scale technique* (cascades of chord and octave passages, etc.) appears precisely in the period of romanticism. Indeed, in the classical era when playing the piano, the pianist applied the so-called *shallow technique* (gamma-like passages, arpeggios). A distinctive feature of this technique is that the performance involved mainly mani phalanges. Special methods of performing from the shoulder, with

the whole hand free are applied while playing romantic music in connection with the emergence of a new class of artistic tasks, as we have noticed. The very formulation of such pedagogical tasks was a response to the demands of that time, but this technique of piano play is still relevant these days. Thus, Liszt practically, shrewdly embodied the method, which is based not only on the purely technical aspect of the recommendation for performing practice, but also on the whole principle (knowledge in a collapsed view), *philosophy in a collapsed view* of romanticism. The words of the well-known Soviet pedagogue, pianist Y. Milstein are very relevant to this: "in one brief indication of such a genius as Liszt, there is more truth and practical value than in the thick volumes of piano methodologists" [12, p.185].

The relevance of the basic pedagogical principles of romantic piano art is confirmed by continuity in the field of basic principles of performing freedom. One of Liszt's students was Pavel Augustovich Pabst, who taught since 1878 at the Moscow Conservatory. N.K. Medtner – an outstanding composer and pianist, later a professor at the Moscow Conservatory was his student in the Moscow Conservatory in his turn. The continuity of Medtner in relation to Liszt in pedagogical instructions can be traced because of the fact that Medtner used to record his thoughts during classes (composition, piano playing) [13]. The specificity of concert performances, the elaboration of individual elements of piano playing, the exercises (which the pianist must do every day), the preparation for recording, is an incomplete list of the various aspects of the pianist's work, which Medtner's notes tell us in a thoughtful and informative way. As well as Liszt, Medtner with surprisingly emotional colouring reveals the basic pedagogical principles of romantics. In particular, we read the following lines about the hands that should be set free: "The hand must have physical pleasure and convenience during work, just as hearing should experience aesthetic pleasure all the time" [12, p.21], "Lower your shoulders, breathe freely! Lower your insides, follow your fingers less! Less accents, tremors and in general any mechanical energy. Never force anything! Let go what goes!" [12, p.35]. Not only the mechanics of the instrument, but the understanding of their own pianist mechanics, is important, therefore, following the basic principles of art of piano playing, Medtner gives special attention to the elbows and hands: "The elbows reflect the smaller lines of movement trajectory than the body and the hands reflect even less. But still these are lines, that are groups of notes, and not individual notes whose movements are reflected only in the fingers, that is, in the smallest and therefore most mobile member of the entire pianistic apparatus" [12, p.46]. Here we can see the direction of the biomechanical action, which begins with the elaboration of high-amplitude movements starting from the body, the shoulders and further to the elbows and hands. This allows, according to Medtner, "to string as many notes on one movement as possible". In this case, special attention is paid to the development of those muscles, due to which the finger of the hand is not the initiator, but the conductor of the blow. An interesting analogy in this connection is the concept of a *finger guide* in Chinese (we will not specify) martial arts, in which the effectiveness of the finger-conductor (stroke) is due to a specific technique associated with certain mystical ideas about the five elements. Perhaps in Western culture this philosophy may appear in the future, but at the moment we see no serious grounds for any reductions. Further, during the performance in shallow technique, regardless of whether a pianist plays piano or forte (slowly or quickly), the position of the free hand should remain unchanged. From the side, of course, there should not be any "special" swings that are intuitively perceived by the public as a vulgarization of high art. Medtner advises to teach the octaves by the first finger. In this case, the hands should be lowered below the normal position. In double notes, the so-called internal fingers, should be set free. As for trills, it is necessary to teach by triplets. That is, while jumps are taken smoothly, no jerks are allowed. Thus, Medtner's notes apparently contain capacious as "keys", concise statements, but nevertheless, compelling us to think over many practical knowledge of performing skills contained in these keys. We can say that the main credo, the quintessence of this approach is the saying: "Down with any tension!" [12, p.54].

Conclusion

The performance of music in the spirit of the basic principles of romantic performing arts must turn into a process, as a result of which the listener has, first of all, an integral artistic impression harmoniously combining the thoughts and ideas of the composer. Understanding and experiencing the artistic design of a romantic musical work is able to give us that high sense of unity with such ideals as truth, beauty, harmony, which in its power is not inferior to the cathartic. After all, the sense of transcendence, going beyond the ordinary consciousness can become that foundation and support in everyday life, which makes our life qualitatively better. But for the performance of such a high mission of romantic music, the necessary condition is that the technical difficulties do not interfere with the performing process. This was understood and given to this most direct attention by such artists as F. Liszt and N.K. Medtner, rightfully revered by us as devotees of service to truth and beauty in art. In conclusion, the missionary role of music, especially evident in the era of Romanticism can be described by words of Max Handl, a well-known Christian mystic who anticipated the future in his prophecies: "Music will be the main factor in the realization of this [spiritual development], for on the wings of music a harmonious soul can fly to the very throne of God, which the ordinary intellect can not reach" [3].

Footnotes

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