

**De Saint Lambert - "Les principes du clavecin", The First Treatise
on Clavichord**

دي سانت لامبيرت – "مبادئ آلة الكلافيسين"، الرسالة الأولى في آلة الكلافيكورد

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Received: (9/5/2012), Accepted: (17/3/2013)

Abstract

The objective and purpose of this article is the idea of introducing "Les Principes du Clavecin" by De Saint Lambert like the first textbook for clavichord, which is not well known among most of the contemporary musicians. For this purpose it was used as primary, the translation from Old French of "Les Principes du Clavecin" by Saint Lambert from Yavor Konov to Bulgarian language. Firstly this research presents the case methods, used by Saint Lambert in his teaching process. Secondly the researcher will focus his attention at differences that appear in the way of pedagogical point of view or meaning of Saint Lambert and other Baroque theoretic over some terms and practices in process of teaching clavier. Thirdly, the researcher wants to point that De Saint Lambert presented an integral and complete methodology of teaching music and the playing of the clavichord and as a result of all listed above, to the Researcher; Lambert's works has a modern ring even in our time. And finally the researcher wants to show in the present study that the work "Les Principes du Clavecin" by De Saint Lambert could be judged to deservedly take its top place in the science of teaching the playing of the clavichord instrument.

ملخص

تهدف الدراسة إلى تقديم نبذة عن "مبادئ آلة الكلافيسين" كأول مدرسة لتعليم آلة الكلافيكورد للموسيقي الفرنسي دي سانت لامبيرت آنذاك، ولهذه الغاية اعتمدت الدراسة مرجعا قديما بعنوان "مبادئ آلة الكلافيسين" للامبيرت والمترجم من اللغة الفرنسية إلى اللغة البلغارية بواسطة يوفور كونوف كمرجع أساسي لإعدادها. وتتناول الدراسة الجوانب التالية: أولا: أساليب التدريس المستخدمة من قبل "سانت لامبيرت". ثانيا: الاختلاف في وجهات النظر المنهجية بين دي سانت لامبيرت وآخرون من عصر الباروك فيما يتعلق ببعض الأساليب المتبعة في عملية تدريس آلة الكلافير. ثالثا: توضيح مدى شمولية منهجية "دي سانت لامبيرت" في التعليم الموسيقي والعزف على آلة الكلافيكورد، ومدى فاعلية أعماله إذا ما ارتبطت بالتعليم الموسيقي في العصر الحالي.

وأخيرا توضح الدراسة أن "مبادئ آلة الكلافيسين" دي سانت لامبيرت يمكن أن تأخذ موقعا رياديا في تعليم العزف على آلة الكلافيكورد.

Introduction

In Lambert's time, the art of Baroque has been experiencing a true Renaissance. It is a fact that interest of contemporary Musicians' has been directed to those years not only because the kind of "revival" of the creative work and performing practices in the period, but also because the emergence of newly found or "re-discovered" works, written in the form of handbooks or guidebooks for training in instrument performing or composition. Naturally, in the works, musicologist's interest has found fields for investigation on the level of pedagogy, comparison and philosophy, based on the fact that these have been the first known theoretical works, dedicated to the art of performance. A Significant and influential work in its time. Moreover, the book sheds light on aspects of French baroque theory, notably tonality, enharmonic, and notation⁽¹⁾. Because of the empirical nature of music training, many pedestals lost or profaned over the time, had left their imprint on the ideas, theses and development of art in the subsequent ages. In this connection certain interest has arisen not only in the information concerning the art of performance and creation of that time, but also in the theoretical

(1) Mattax, Ch. (1996). "Monsieur de Saint Lambert: A New Treatise on Accompaniment". Performance Practice Review, Claremont Colleges. 201.

formulations and principles, making up the foundations of the culture and art in the Baroque period. To us, musicians, traditionally fundamental have been: the two treatises of Jean Philip Rameau “Observations sur la methode d’accompagnement pour le clavecin” 1730, and “Nouveau system de musique theorique” 1726: as well as Francesco Gasparini “L’Armonico Practico al Chembalo”, Venice, 1708/R 1969; Banchieri A. “Conclusioni nel suono dell’organo”, Bologna, 1698; .Sabbatini L. “Regola facile e bene per sonare sopra il basso continuo nell’organo, manarcordo, o altro simile stromento”, Venice, 1728; Penna L. “Li primi albori musicali per li principanti della musica figurate”, Bologna, 1672; d’Anglebert J.H. “Principes de l’accompagnement”, Paris, 1689; F.Couperin’s “Regles pour l’accompagnement”, Paris, 1698; de M.B.Torres’ “Reglas generales de acompanar en organo, clavicordio y harpa”, Madrid, 1702; and the first known French Music Dictionary “Dictionnaire de musique, contenant une explication des termes grecs, italiens, latin”, edition - Ballard, Paris, 1705 by Sebastian de Brossard, published almost simultaneously with the treatise by De Saint Lambert the Researcher has been interested in.

The listed works or, let the Researcher rather call them textbooks; discuss compositional techniques rather than any principles of teaching how to play an instrument. (The Researcher wants to emphasize here, that the author of the actual study chose specially to use the word "play", than the assumed "performing". This is subject to the fact that at the time discussed, this term was in practise.) Hence also the idea to familiarize the musical community with the creative work and ideas of De Saint Lambert, who has definitely remained in the periphery of musicological interest and for that matter, has been unknown to most of us. The idea, underlying the selection of the subject in this article has been to consider the stipulations, approaches and essentials of the principles, used by Lambert, because their substance is an intriguing and fruitful field in his work, not only from a historical point of view, but also from an up-to-date methodological point. Researcher has been guided by the principle to rehabilitate De Saint Lambert as the first musician to have written and published a textbook, which is wide-ranging and thorough, dedicated

essentially to the problems, associated with teaching an instrument. And as such, this has been, from a historical point of view, the first methodological work on musical training in keyboard instrumental playing. The main idea of the present study is to comment and present principles and ways of Seint Lamber’s pedagogic approaches. This can be named like main purpose of the present research as well as introducing this textbook to the public, as it is not included in most of the books concerning piano teaching. Presenting the textbook of Saint Lambert, shown as first study in methodology of basic clavier education, can help in understanding the bases of performing art as well as enriching the knowledge of ancient baroque music terminology and practical comprehension.

The Researcher will allow himself to stop and point over many interesting details connected with music theory, their relations or comparison in understanding of Baroque teacher and nowadays theoretic. In same time the Researcher will underline the very advanced methods of approach of Lambert in many areas of music education, which sound fresh and modern even up to date. These ideas will be named, so every reader can see clearly the need of presenting such a textbook, which passed over many centuries, still keeps same contemporary vision even for today’s musicians.

This research is based on thoughts, ideas and expressions, produced on the researcher from the book: “The first treatise of harpsichord "Les Principes du Clavecin" by Saint Lambert” from Yavor Konov, Sofia 1998, publisher Music Society “Vasil Stefanov”. The same topic has the PhD dissertation of Yavor Konov, earlier, presented at September 1997 at Bulgarian State Academy. Dissertation and the book contain a complete translation of the original work of Lambert from Old French to Bulgarian language and who the Researcher of the present study will use as basic of the ideas and conclusions which will be presented here after. The researcher can afford to use translated text, since the study is not directly related to strictly literary or philosophical inclinations, but with Pedagogical and comparative ones, and therefore, the exact meaning of the original text, is not such a significant matter.

De Saint Lambert as musician named in music educational books and his Time

The sources, mentioning Lambert, are more than scanty. Sebastian de Brossard had been the first to mention the name of De Saint Lambert in his Dictionary⁽¹⁾. In most of the specialized literature, addressed to Baroque time (“Britannica Book of Music”, “Histoire de la musique”, “The Concise Oxford History of Music” “Dictionary of Musicians from the Earliest Times” etc.), his name is absent at all, in other books there is a cursory mention of him: (“The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians”, 1980, and “Larousse de la Musique”, Paris, 1957). Even there, his treatise “Nouveau traite de l’accompagnement du clavecin de l’orgue et des autre instruments”, Paris, 1707, publisher Christophe Ballard (later edition Geneva “Minkoff Reprint” 1972), is quoted as his fundamental work, whereas “Les principes du clavecin” is absent. Saint Lambert’s writings were also known to German theorists - Johan David Nainichen’s, George Buelow, and Jacob Adlung. Given the extent to which his theoretical works were known and discussed, it is strange that relatively little information survives on the life and career of Saint Lambert⁽²⁾.

One can read about the work of Tomas de Santa Maria “Arte de faner fantasia”, 1565, Madrid, as the first known textbook about the study of a keyboard instrument, but the Researcher must point out straightaway that this is not a treatise, covering a wide range of most varied spheres in the art of learning how to play the clavichord, as we can find in Lambert. Another work, which has also been repeatedly mentioned in the specialized encyclopedias, has been “A Choice Collection of Lessons for Harpsichord or Spinet”, by Purcell, 1696, also including individual problems of the training in clavichord. It should be added here, that it is still disputable whether this was a work by Purcell, because its

(1) De Brossard, S. (Hilversum 1965). “Dictionnaire de musique, contenant une explication des termes grecs, italiens, latins”. Paris. 1705. 352.

(2) Powell, J. (2010) “A New Treatise on accompaniment, with the harpsichord, the organ & with other instruments by Monsieur de Saint Lambert”. Indiana University. Press. 10.

publication came a year after his death and had been the work of his wife. All these listed treatises are, for the Researcher, textbooks directed to different arias of the musical education, but none of them presents an integral study, dedicated to the different problems of the art of keyboard performing and, for that reason, cannot be construed as musicological studies on the problems of the art of performance and of teaching, in the sphere of the keyboard instrumental music. Then why his name and his book, was not popular? Hence the conclusion is that in his time, Lambert had not been known among the circles of musicians and in the court, as other music theorists of his time had been. It is noteworthy that by some reasons, which seem unexplainable to the Researcher, the Baroque musicians themselves had omitted to note his treatises and his presence had remained a mystery for a long time. So, regardless of the fact that “Les principes du clavecin”, published in 1702, had been the first actually known treatise on clavichord in musical history, the first place had been occupied by Francois Couperin’s treatise “The Art of Playing the Clavichord” published 1716, Paris. According to Petis, Saint Lambert first published the *Nouveau traite* in 1680, and then he came out with a second edition in 1707, also Petis states that *Las Principes du clavecin* was published first in 1697 and then later in 1702⁽¹⁾.

During the 17th century, numerous treatises were published on topics of composition and instrumental performing, (which already have been mentioned), as well as such like A.Agazzari, “*Del sonare sopra il basso*” 1607, Siena; A.Banchieri, “*Conclusioni nel suono dell’ organo*” Bologna, 1608; M.Locke “*Melothesia or Certain General Rules for Playing upon a Continued-bass*” London, 1673; J.H.Anglebert, “*Principes de l’accompagnement*” Paris, 1689; F.Couperin “*Regals pour l’accompagnement*” 1716 Paris⁽²⁾. But there is one fact, viz. that “*Les principes du clavecin*” by Saint Lambert, published in 1702 by Ballard, Paris (later undergoing a second edition, together with Lambert’s second

(1) Powell, J. (2010). “A New Treatise on accompaniment, with the harpsichord, the organ & with other instruments by Monsieur de Saint Lambert”. Indiana University Press. 11.

(2) Konov, Y. (1988). “The First Treatise on Clavichord”. Sofia. 195.

treatise, by Minkoff Reprint, 1974, in Geneva) turns out to be the first theoretical work, methodologically and practically directed essentially at the teaching of an clavier instrument. The historical dating shows that Lambert had been the first known theoretician, describing the principles of teaching the performance on a keyboard instrument, covering wide range of problems, before the first publication of the officially acknowledged to be the first treatise on clavichord by Couperin.

Honegger, in “Dictionnaire encyclopedique de la musique. Les homes et leurs oeuvres”⁽¹⁾ mentions the existence of Lambert’s work about the clavichord, but at the same time informs that there had been no information about his life, while his treatise on the clavichord had been lost.

“The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians”, for its part, presents Lambert solely as a teacher, performer and theorist.

The name of De Saint Lambert, itself, arouses a big question mark. “De” in Old French denoted a nobility status. In most of the publications, carrying a short biography of Lambert, this has not been noted, moreover any information about his origin is lacking at all, which leads to the conclusion that he probably came from a small family of the nobility.

De Brossard⁽²⁾, for his part, puts down the name of Lambert in his dictionary as “Le Sr.”, i.e. Mr., automatically precluding the presence of “de”, or the nobleman’s pedigree.

Several publications like Grove Dictionary and Donington R., “Baroque Music: Style and Performance”⁽³⁾ mention the first name of Lambert – Michel, whereas most encyclopedias do not accept this name, referring to the fact that there is no known evidence either about his biography or about his name and his family. Therefore, what only

(1) Honegger, M. (1986). “Dictionnaire encyclopedique de la musique. Les homes et leurs oeuvres”. Paris. 124.

(2) De Brossard. (1965). “Dictionnaire de musique, contrnant une explication des terms grecs, italiens, latins”. 1705/R. 352.

(3) Donington, R. “Baroque music: style & performance. A handbook”. London, 1992. 27.

remains as historically confirmed is his family name. Hence the Researcher’s decision to use it alone, so as to avoid any slips, which could be historically refuted in future.

The time of Lambert had been the period of absolute monarchy, the reign of Louis XIV, who remained on the throne for 72 years and united France, turning it into the most powerful country in Europe. He stimulated and supported the army, the navy, and agriculture, but he also helped the flowering of the arts. Some of the most outstanding names in art lived and worked in his time: Jean Racine, Jean Pierre Batist, Moliere, Pierre Corneille – in the theatre; Jean de La Fontaine – in poetry; Blaise Pascal – in philosophy; Charles De Brun, Nicolas Poussin – in the fine arts; Andre Le Notre – in architecture. This was also the time of the flowering of instrumental music: Jacques Champion de Chambonnières, Louis Couperin; Francois Couperin; Jean Philippe Rameau; and Jean Baptiste Lully, in the opera and ballet theatre.

In the period of the 17th and early 18th century, music became one of the mainstays of European general culture. Members of high society, as well as big merchants had their children trained in the art of playing an instrument by all means. Every well brought up person had to be able to play, sing and dance, which had been an indicator of his/her rank in society and the quality of his/her education. Precisely for that reason, the appearance of textbooks in self-instruction or aides was of enormous importance, and one of these was “Les principes du clavecin”.

In that historical and intellectual atmosphere, Lambert’s work has been a huge innovational contribution to modern pedagogy and musicology by its contents, clear structure of the material presented, systematic arrangement and grading of the problems in it.

Now the Researcher shall take the liberty of dwelling in greater detail on this work by Saint Lambert, proceeding from the actual fact that it has not been familiar and this has essentially been due to the few editions, which it had undergone, as well as to the fact that it had basically been disseminated as a version in Old French and for that matter had remains unknown to most of the musicians.

Like already mentioned in Researcher's investigations, he has relied on the magnificent translation into Bulgarian from Old French of "Les principes du clavecin", book, made by Yavor Konov and published in Sofia in 1998.

About "Les principes du clavecin"

It becomes clear from the very title of the work "Principles of the Clavichord" that the basic goal of the author had been the systematic presentation of an art, fairly new for his time – the art of performance at clavichord. While in *Les Principes du clavecin* we meet Saint Lambert the pedagogue, the maitre du clavecin, in the *Nouveau traite* we have a better sense of Saint Lambert the performer⁽¹⁾. The treatise discussed is characterized by extreme clarity and, as it has been pointed out in the foreword by the author, "It seemed to me that a work of this nature would be useless, if no clarity reigned in it. This is the main idea and the postulate, which have completely been observed in this work, resting on the idea of a teach-yourself-book in Music"⁽²⁾. This remains the main principle, guiding the author all through the text. The material has been clearly, tersely presented in gradual gradation to more complicated ideas, culminating in harmonization and refinement of the ornaments, technically difficult for the time.

In the Foreword again, the author writes: "I have read my Method to Personalities, who had no idea whatever as to what Music was about, in order to see whether I have succeeded in outlining what I have been trying to make them understand... and they reassured me.... they easily understood"⁽³⁾. Even in our own times, when there is so much most varied literature, which could perform a correcting and suggestive role for the authors, this approach is worthy of admiration. In view of the indisputable fact that Lambert had been writing for the first time a

(1) Powell, J. (2010). "A New Treatise on accompaniment, with the harpsichord, the organ & with other instruments by Monsieur de Saint Lambert". Indiana University Press. 7.

(2) Konov, Y. (1988). "The First Treatise on Clavichord". Sofia. 199.

(3) Konov, Y. (1988). "The First Treatise on Clavichord". Sofia. 7.

textbook for the mastering of a musical instrument, he did not feel ashamed to seek the assistance of different people, both professionals and people not familiar with music, who were to give their views and recommendations. This kind of creative modesty and self-exigency could be instructive to a great number of present-day musicologists and music teachers.

Several basic parts can be distinguished as the mainstays of the treatise and the Researcher shall dwell now on the more interesting ones from a contemporary point of view.

Basic Elements of Music

As in most of the contemporary textbooks on the teaching instrument, Lambert began with familiarization with the musical notation: notes, clefs, keyboard, duration of notes, dotted notes, ligature, liaison, ties (liaison – the meaning found in dictionaries is of legato in music, whereas Lambert seeks it in the meaning of a slurred chord of consecutively written notes, united by a slur, where by this sign they are denoted as slurred notes), the signs showing the measure, the voices, the rests (the word figure has been used here in the text as an image, a musical symbol, in this case generally translated as figure, as well as by the word character or distinctive sign, feature, character. I.e. what is at hand is a wide-ranging concept, but combined, with the term “garder le tacet” – keep quiet, in the meaning of a rest symbol, a musical pause); the double bar and the accidentals, are generally defined here by the term “des feintes”.

In introducing the musical notation, Lambert applies a comprehensive approach: “When you shall not hesitate to name the Note Symbols, which are on the lines, by the same Method you shall also learn those, which are in space”⁽¹⁾ That is to say that Lambert does not require blind repetition of the symbols or elementary grading; he rather presents a way of remembering, whereby the student initially relies on the music symbols, placed on the lines, while subsequently he also studies those,

(1) Konov, Y. (1988). “The First Treatise on Clavichord”. Sofia. 18.

which are between the lines. This is an interesting approach, which can be found in Nikolaevna, and Kodaly a few centuries later. The author uses a graphic circle as an aide, in which he places the basic seven grades, whereby he visually presents their repetitiveness. This is an interesting approach, probably based on the quantum-quantum method of Pythagorus¹ and the “terza circles”, invented by Zarlino and Fogliano⁽²⁾, widespread during the 16th century. (Example 1).

The researcher thinks is important to emphasize is that de Saint Lambert specified the music notes as graphic symbols and did not consider them etymologically, as they had essentially been considered during his time.

Lambert wrote the music notes as rhomboid shapes, and this was due to the printing facilities, used in his time. It was only in 1754 that Breitkopf had worked out a movable analytical font with separate note-heads, stems and tails⁽³⁾. Wherever there are chords, written in the treatise (and it had not been possible to use the rhomboid notes), they were probably written by hand and for that reason were round in shape. (Examples 2 & 3).

Indicative of the specificity of the age is the fact that existing in the treatise are solely notes up to a third ledger line. No more were used during the time of the author.

As an aftereffect of the practices from the time of the Baroque, again, the rhythmical figures were shown as music notes reaching sixteenth notes, which were the fastest ones existing in the writing of music notes.

The dotted notes were called notes of composite value by Saint Lambert. About them he said: “The sixteenth should never be dotted”⁽⁴⁾, i.e. he marked the absence of a double dotted note. That was again an aftereffect of the principles of performance in the Baroque Time.

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- (1) “New Grove Dictionary of Music & Musicians”. (1980). London. 754-56.
 - (2) Fogliano. “Musica theorica”. (Venice 1529). New York .1969. 2nd chapter.
 - (3) “The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Music”. (1990). 317.
 - (4) Konov, Y. (1988). “The First Treatise on Clavichord”. Sofia. 23.

It is interesting that the accidentals were basically presented as C, F, G sharps and up to three flats, which was probably due to the temperament of the tone rows and the logic of the musical systems in Lambert's age.

Lambert demanded from his students to gradually learn the different clefs, whereby one clef was mastered first and then the mastering of others was undertaken⁽¹⁾.

At the beginning of his work, all the music notes, belonging to each one of the clefs – C, F, G, are presented in detail with complex explanations as to their application on the keyboard. In this part De Saint Lambert presented a new idea about a reform of the system of clefs, which consisted in their restriction to one G, one F and one C.

“I have not insisted on the idea of this reform itself; a few years ago I wanted to make an attempt with it. I was called to the country to teach several Personalities of Qualities, who wanted to have a teacher from Paris. As I had to teach children, who had no knowledge whatever about Music, I intended to give them a new tablature, to test whether they would not learn it faster, and I had the pleasure to see that it brought them exceptional easiness”⁽²⁾. Subsequently, years after his ideas of restricting the clefs, the European musicians were to come to the same idea of limiting the used clefs for clavichord to two – one for F and one for G clef.

Lambert mentioned about the so-called *notes inegales*, a practice originating in the 16th century, whereby rows of notes of equal length were performed unevenly or with acceleration, depending on the character and the tempo of the piece of music. The general principle can be defined in this way: in a two-two time or *alla breve*, the eighth notes can be treated as such notes. In a four-four time such are the sixteenth notes. For a two-four time and a three-four time there is a dispute between the different authors as to, more precisely, which of the two

(1) Konov, Y. (1988). “The First Treatise on Clavichord”. Sofia. 17.

(2) Konov, Y. (1988). “The First Treatise on Clavichord”. Sofia. 71.

kinds – sixteenths or eighths can be treated as *notes inegales*. Some theorists associate this motion with just a gradual row of notes, whereas others do not abide by this rule. According to Lambert, if the number of the consecutive notes is even, there is a gradual motion and the *notes inegales* can alternate as long-short, whereas in the case of the odd number there will be the opposite motion. The main rule remains that the eighth is always short. In this connection Lambert emphasized: “In the performance of these Figures, the Performer must always conform to the good taste”⁽¹⁾, which, when translated into contemporary language, means “performance style”. This is likewise the most correct solution for contemporary performing practice and performance style. The music piece nature and the effect, sought by the performer, should be leading in the choice of the technique and approach of performing.

Basic Parameters in the Process of Teaching

De Saint Lambert dwells in detail on the skills of student and teacher. He pays attention to the skills of student as an indicator of future success in the process of training. It should be emphasized strongly here that much earlier than Jean Jacques Rousseau and Pestalozzi, De Saint Lambert pointed out the skills of the student as a main catalyst in the attaining of results in the training.

Two basic abilities, which Lambert discusses, are the “ear for music” and the physiology of the hand.

As far as the ear for music goes, he talks about the need of a true intonation and a sense of rhythm, harmony and character of the music. “The precision of the ear regarding the Intonationis a Gift, given to almost all the people, as Vision and Speech. Because very few are those who do not sing, do not dance, by nature...”⁽²⁾ At the same time Lambert points out that the ear for music this is the main gift, needed for the development of the musician, and continues “Let them (the teachers) check whether they (the students) enjoy the Melody, the Harmony of the

(1) Konov, Y. (1988). “The First Treatise on Clavichord”. Sofia. 37.

(2) Konov, Y. (1988). “The First Treatise on Clavichord”. Sofia. 8.

Pieces of Music. Whether they get into the Cadence of the Arias. Whether they feel involuntarily carried away in following the time. Whether they follow the measure, without having an intention to do so, by head or by any other way. These are the true predispositions, making up the Music”⁽¹⁾.

Of great interest is the fact that Lambert considered the women better suited to be taught to play the clavichord. “Moreover, the advantages of the Ladies can be discussed, who, by the natural delicacy of their gender, even at thirty have a better predisposition of the hand, than men at fifteen or sixteen”⁽²⁾.

Lambert comments the most suitable time, in his view, for starting training in clavichord as “...the late childhood, i.e. before ten”⁽³⁾. Modern music teaching has come to the same conclusion. By way of practicing, the theory has been refuted of the too early stage of training, beginning at the age of three and four, because small children do not acknowledge always the teaching processes, connected with long term concentration and emotional pressure, the “gravity” of the educational process. The twentieth century has brought an agreement on the topical subject of defining the suitable age for starting the musical education, and it has been set at the period between six and nine years. Of course, the children of extraordinary music abilities have not been included here, who can and must start training earlier.

The Researcher likes to pay attention, whereby De Saint Lambert turns the axis of the educational process not only to its form of assimilating knowledge, but to its empirical pivot, viz. he looks for it in its form of a symbiotic process, which is undoubtedly created by the two sides. These were extremely progressive ideas of its time, bearing in mind that it had been only in the 20th century that the sciences of pedagogy paid serious attention to this element. In that platform, Lambert defines two basic qualities, necessary for the teacher: the requisite

(1) Konov, Y. (1988). “The First Treatise on Clavichord”. Sofia. 8

(2) Konov, Y. (1988). “The First Treatise on Clavichord”. Sofia. 9.

(3) Konov, Y. (1988). “The First Treatise on Clavichord”. Sofia. 9.

professionalism and the wish to transfer experience. “The Teacher must have two qualities in order to be good: KNOWLEDGE and DECENCY, because in order that a good Teacher may be created, two predispositions in the Teacher are absolutely necessary: TO BE ABLE TO and TO WANT”⁽¹⁾. Honesty and the desire to transfer experience have been explicitly emphasized.

“He (the teacher) teaches the Students, also Females, who have a better predisposition of the hand than himself, to play better than Himself”⁽²⁾. The natural striving of every true teacher is to transfer the best of himself to his students and the greatest testimony of his qualities is the fact that his students can outdo and outpace his own standard.

Lambert also dwells on some fundamental problems, which might crop up in case of unprofessional training. As such he determines the wrong positioning of the hand and the unwillingness to convey the knowledge on the part of the teacher. Lambert emphasizes that the wrong fingering, acquired at the initial stage is incorrigible.

Lambert also says: “Music cannot be easily taught in writing, because what concerns the Performance almost absolutely requires that it be shown by voice and by hand”⁽³⁾, i.e. he emphasizes the practical expressiveness and the live aspect of the process of performance, unconditionally denoting and self-denoting the art of music as a practical discipline. This clearly makes reference to the qualities of the teacher, which are crucial for the results in the process.

In terms of pedagogy, the author rightfully formulates that the teacher should be capable of following a clear-cut succession of the processes, the gradual mastering of the essential knowledge and gradation in the complexity of the knowledge and experience conveyed. Lambert also talks about the talent and the skill of correctly showing, of conforming the educational process to the individual capacities of the students. He emphasizes repeatedly the need of working out of different

(1) Konov, Y. (1988). “The First Treatise on Clavichord”. Sofia. 9.

(2) Konov, Y. (1988). “The First Treatise on Clavichord”. Sofia. 9.

(3) Konov, Y. (1988). “The First Treatise on Clavichord”. Sofia. 13.

methods, appropriate to the individuality of every student; of paying special attention to every student and, in tune with his possibilities and merits, applying different approaches. “As many different methods are worked out as are also the different talents you are guiding”⁽¹⁾. The author requires that the most suitable piece of music or technical exercise be selected for the physical specification of each hand, the abilities and the natural inclinations of every individual student. This thesis is again considered extremely progressive, having attained its final formulation only during the 20th century in the creative work of music teachers Alexiev, Neigauz, Marteno and Corto.

In “Les principes du clavecin” there is yet one more amazing truth for its time that Lambert reached. “There is one peculiar Secret of making the Students enjoy the Training. For the Teachers, training Children, this Talent is the most necessary ... to deal with Them in such a way that they could enjoy their little Exercises finding in them pleasure, or at least dealing with them with courage and persistence”⁽²⁾. Is this not reminiscent of contemporary “the game play theory” in the teaching of instrument playing reached by 20th Century musicians?

On Chords and Harmony

The researcher would like to dwell on Lambert’s definition of the chord. He talks that a chord is made up of several notes, played simultaneously by one hand⁽³⁾. The natural question arises, how would then the simultaneous performance of notes of different pitch, distributed between the two hands be called? The researcher come to the conclusion that in Baroque art the consonant performance of a chord, regardless of whether it may be distributed in one or in two hands, had been referred to as a chord.

Lambert gives an explanation about a perfect and an imperfect chord, whereby a great number of rules immediately follow regarding the

(1) Konov, Y. (1988). “The First Treatise on Clavichord”. Sofia. 9.

(2) Konov, Y. (1988). “The First Treatise on Clavichord”. Sofia. 10.

(3) Konov, Y. (1988). “The First Treatise on Clavichord”. Sofia. 51.

correct and expedient fingering in performance and in distribution between the two hands.

The superiority of the melody and of the basso is emphasized over the harmonious structure in the medium voices, which was a basic rule for the time and for basso continuo. The treatise pays serious attention to the voices, situated on the two staves, of double tails in their writing down. "Once Music has not been Such as it is practiced today. It had been just a Song, adapted to the feeling, a cadence of the poems, which were sung; the instruments on which it had been performed also played in one Voice. Now, however, a great number of Voices are coordinated, i.e. many sounds together"⁽¹⁾. The number of the Voices in Music is not restricted. Music pieces may be composed for six, seven, eight voices and even more. Nevertheless, they are usually reduced to four, to which the following names are given. The lowest is called Bass; the highest pitch – dessus-soprano; the closest to the highest – haute-contre – is alto, and the one closest to the basso taille – tenor.

The researchers bound to note that in the treatise music is studied mostly as homophony, as this had been the accepted way during the time of Lambert. Saint Lambert reduces number of chords the accompanist must learn, by grouping together those that share the same right hand accompaniment⁽²⁾.

Basic Methodological Principles

At the beginning of this paper the researcher has repeatedly emphasized the greatest strength of this work, its extreme clarity and precision of the knowledge presented. It is offered gradually, without speeding or omitting any stages of the process. The definitions are clear, terse and very often combined with associations. For instance, in the definition of measure and the duration of the notes there is one superb comparison, which has to be quoted. "I compare one round Note with a

(1) Konov, Y. (1988). "The First Treatise on Clavichord". Sofia. 35.

(2) Mattax, Ch. (1996). "Monsieur de Saint Lambert: A New Treatise on Accompaniment". Performance Practice Review, Claremont Colleges. 202.

monstrous giant, which by one step would cover as much of the time as a dwarf would take in sixteen steps. If two people with such a difference in their size should walk together, the dwarf should have to run to the best of his ability, whereas the others would walk slowly, still others – by moderate speed, so that all could get, however, to the same target, i.e. to the end of the Music Piece, at one and the same time”⁽¹⁾.

At many places of the treatise the explanations are figurative and clear; so that to the students it could be easily explained and imaginatively presented precisely how to perceive and imagine logically the processes in music. This is to say that Lambert freely applied the associative presentation of the material in the process of education. The treatise has theoretical as well as practical value. In his discussion of the rudiments of the music, Saint Lambert presents for the first time concepts or usages now commonly accepted ⁽²⁾.

The approach, selected in the study of a new piece of music, is again highly interesting. Lambert enumerates several basic points, to which attention should be paid at the very beginning: the clefs at the staves, whether the clefs do not change in the course of the piece, whether the alterations do not change from the beginning and more specifically the tonality; what sign stands at the beginning of the piece of music – the measure and the tempo, whether it does not change anywhere in the music piece, what are the notes for the two hands, at what place these notes are played, whether there are no chords or intervals which have to be performed simultaneously, whether the hands play together or separately. Attention should be paid to the ornaments, the ligatures and the dotted notes, the pauses, the repetitions, as well as to the application.

The basic consideration in determining the application, according to Lambert is “to select the Fingers, which will ensure the minimum motion for the Hand”⁽³⁾ by “learning to look a few Bars ahead, in order to place

(1) Konov, Y. (1988). “The First Treatise on Clavichord”. Sofia. 21.

(2) Mattax, Ch. (1996). “Monsieur de Saint Lambert: A New Treatise on Accompaniment”. Performance Practice Review. Claremont Colleges. 204.

(3) Konov, Y. (1988). “The First Treatise on Clavichord”. Sofia. 53.

the Hand in the position in which it must be in order to press all the Keys comfortably and easily”⁽¹⁾. It should be noted again that this theory is reminiscent of others, which were developed considerably later in the works of Aleksiev and Neigaus or well known nowadays practice of “Playing while looking ahead”⁽²⁾.

The position of the hand is described in the following way: “in playing the clavichord, nothing is as free as the Position of the fingers. Each one looks just for its convenience and directness”⁽³⁾. Noteworthy is the presence of deliberately sought freedom, which is to be subsequently combined with expediency, convenience and harmony.

The kinds of fingerings, presented by Lambert, are mostly expounded in the chapter on the chords, where fingerings have been put forward for the left and for the right hand, with variants for hands of different structures. Attention has been paid to the change of the fingering, should alterations occur, which naturally reflects on the form and position of the hand. The situation of the hands, sought by Lambert, is with rounded fingers. “The fingers, curved, all arranged on one and the same level, taken according to the length of the Thumb”⁽⁴⁾. This position is definitely connected with the technical features of the clavichord, in which the keys were of different length than nowadays piano. The author notes that the fingers should not be raised high, but the minimum bow should be used, and emphasizes the deceleration and the fatigue of the hand, proceeding from such kind of technique. “We should choose the Fingers, which will ensure the minimum movement of the Hand”⁽⁵⁾...”learning how to look a few Bars ahead, to place your Hand first of all in the Position, in which it should be to press all the Keys comfortably and easily”.

(1) Konov, Y. (1988). “The First Treatise on Clavichord”. Sofia. 53.

(2) “Masters of Soviet Union Piano School”. (1954). Moscow. 22-23.

(3) Konov, Y. (1988). “The First Treatise on Clavichord”. Sofia. 51.

(4) Konov, Y. (1988). “The First Treatise on Clavichord”. Sofia. 53.

(5) Konov, Y. (1988). “The First Treatise on Clavichord”. Sofia. 53.

In the performance of the scale-like passages, Lambert avoids the theory, familiar in his time – interpretation of the measures of the bar as good and bad, strong and weak and their respective combining with weak or strong fingers.

In “Les principes du clavecin” Lambert listed the rules of application he knew and added directly afterwards: “In any other case use the Fingers as you judge fit ... well or ill, depending on your assessment and on your sense. The comfort of the player is the first rule, which must be followed; easiness is the second”⁽¹⁾. These thoughts are striking for the lack of conservatism, common in the Baroque time. An innovation is the suggestion that the first finger be used in the scale-like passages, provided that in Lambert’s time that figure had traditionally been performed by the second and the third finger. In the theory of the art of performance it has been considered (no doubt wrongly), that J.S.Bach had been the first one to apply the first finger in the performance of the scale-like passages. Unfortunately, this widespread delusion still remains a parasitic version on the matter, regardless of the fact that it had been many times refuted by quotations from works by: Tomas de Santa Maria “Arte de taner”, 1565; F.Marpurg “Die Kunst des Klavier zur Spielen”, 1750 and Niccolo Pasquali “The Art of Fingering the Harpsichord”, 1758. Saint Lambert, just like Tomas de Santa Maria had recognized and used the first finger long before Bach. In conclusion, let me say that the use of the first finger is no innovation of De Saint Lambert, but comes to show his sense of looking for convenience and anticipating the new trends in the development of clavier music.

His method of presenting the exceptions in music is also very progressive and the Researches will stress on. “One general Rule is taught, as if it is without Exceptions, awaiting for the emergence of a case, when there will be discussion of the Exception, because it would be well received then”⁽²⁾.

(1) Konov, Y. (1988). “The First Treatise on Clavichord”. Sofia. 53.

(2) Konov, Y. (1988). “The First Treatise on Clavichord”. Sofia. 18.

License portique in the interpretation. De Saint Lambert repeatedly stands out as a teacher and a musician who does not follow unconditionally the familiar rules, but looks for freedom in the interpretation for the sake of the beautiful. “Every Man of the Profession, who performs a Piece of Music, composed by someone else, endeavors not so much to give to the Music the movement that the Author had wanted to note through the sign, placed by him at the beginning, as to present a movement, which satisfies his taste. He is led to it by his conviction that no matter what diligence he may put in, he could only by chance happen to meet the true intention of the Author”⁽¹⁾, as well as “I conclude from all that since we are so little precise in observing the Rules of the signs in Music ... the person, leading here the principles of the Clavichord, should not much stick on everything I had said on this matter; that he may use the privilege of the musicians to lend the pieces of music such a movement that he would like, assigning too little importance to the sign marking it, as long as he does not choose a movement for the piece of music, directly opposite to the required by the sign, something which would deprive the piece of music of the exquisiteness; what he would choose has to fit it, to lend it freedom”⁽²⁾. What can be found here is the theoretician’s distancing himself from the rules and giving freedom in the choice at means of expression with the only objective - attaining beauty, and exquisiteness in art. That is to say that as far as the interpretation goes, Lambert talks freely, giving rights to the performers to violate the rules for the sake of good performance, repeatedly emphasizing in his work over the subjective principle in performance, on the recreation of the measures and on the character, leaving the matter to each performer to search for them independently.

Comparative Study of the Terminological Apparatus

Music – *musique*. The notion of music has not been discussed anywhere in the treatise, but the term is encountered in different definitions. It is usually in meaning of tonal music, in the aspect of

(1) Konov, Y. (1988). “The First Treatise on Clavichord”. Sofia. 35.

(2) Konov, Y. (1988). “The First Treatise on Clavichord”. Sofia. 37.

teaching and performing, or, to sum it up – on a general scale. For instance, “The main music Symbols of the Tablature are those, referred to as Notes. They mark the Melody, the Chords in the Pieces of Music and are actually the Music itself”⁽¹⁾.

Tablature, this was the earliest form of notation for instrumental music. Systems of tablature were used as far back as in the 14th century, respectively applied to the instrument for which music was written. This is a special way of putting down the notes by special symbols in a graphic figuration, usually for many-voices instruments: organ, clavichord, and cittern. Whereas the linear system strives to depict specifically one symbol with its features – pitch, duration – in the tablature notation the symbol requires a specific sound with specific height for a specific instrument. The linear notation, notwithstanding that initially it existed under the form and up to 12 lines, subsequently was simplified and ousted the tablature⁽²⁾. Lambert extensively used the concept tablature, actually meaning and showing a typical keyboard music score, as we know it today. The “main Musical Symbols of the Tablature are those which we call Notes”⁽³⁾. And “the Tablature is a collection of musical Symbols or letters, serving to write Music”⁽⁴⁾. Naturally there are some differences from the present-day linear system and those are the absence of bracketed together staves – *accolada*, and a bar line to unite the two staves, whereas Lambert had used separate lines for each staff.

For Lambert the *clavier* is a totality of Keys, “whereby sounds are produced”.

The signs marking the *mouvement*, *movimento* are for Lambert actually the measures, the tempo and movement speed. Lambert notes that for every performer terms like slow and fast carry different

(1) Konov, Y. (1988). “The First Treatise on Clavichord”. Sofia. 13.

(2) Chertikov, S. (1979). “Music term dictionary”. Sofia. 321.

(3) Konov, Y. (1988). “The First Treatise on Clavichord”. Sofia. 13.

(4) Konov, Y. (1988) “The First Treatise on Clavichord”. Sofia. 13.

emotional meaning and for that reason should be discussed in their emotional and logical aspect⁽¹⁾.

Characteristic of the treatise is the interchangeable use of the words *son*, *sound* and *note*, *nota*. In the theory of music today the term *sound* denotes, most generally, every noise that the ear can catch. In Lambert the two words are used in their meaning of a “musical tone”.

The term for sound in Lambert – *suono*, *son*, is “the main and true object of Music and all the Rules concerning it are that the Sounds be heard pleasantlywhat is called a Melody, or one with others, all together, which is called Harmony”⁽²⁾.

Speaking about *tono*, *tonus*, Lambert means sound and timbre, intonation, emotion, the character of speaking, singing, playing, individual tones and modes.

The researcher reckons that both terms are used in the meaning of a musical tone.

It is noteworthy that throughout his work Lambert does not use “*melodie*” [melody] but only the word “*chant*” - singing, aria, melody. This seems to point out the strong presence of the vocal principle and the tie-up of music with speech. “The melody is the effect which a few ordered Sounds produce, placed, sung one after the other in a way agreeable to the ear”⁽³⁾. Understandably, “*chant*” is the preferred term, because of the coverage of its meaning, which could also be construed as melody. Therefore it is not strange that Lambert does not use the word “*melody*”, and this proves to be his terminological and existential choice.

Repetitions and Ornamentations

Lambert talks especially about *ranvoy* – the sign of repetition and this is due to its widespread use during the 17th century.

(1) Konov, Y. (1988). “The First Treatise on Clavichord”. Sofia. 36-37.

(2) Konov, Y. (1988). “The First Treatise on Clavichord”. Sofia. 13.

(3) Konov, Y. (1988). “The First Treatise on Clavichord”. Sofia. 26.

Guidon – the sign, placed at the end of a stave to show with what note the following stave begins – has not been omitted either, because of the practice in music writing of the age.

Special attention has been paid to the ornaments – *tremblement* (example 4), *pince*, (example 5), *harpege* (example 6), *coule* (example 7). The different kinds of ornaments are extensively covered, as the ways of their performance have duly been shown in tables. The deciphering is not only graphically presented; also the use of different fingers in their performance is shown. For instance: “Since the Keys you are striking are neighboring, the fingers pressing them should also be neighboring.... The fingers, which are used in Tremblement (mordent/turn) in the right hand are 3rd and 2nd or 4th and 3rd, while in the left hand – the 1st and the 2nd or the 2nd and the 3rd.”⁽¹⁾ The need has been emphasized that the ornaments be mastered by different fingerings, depending on the point at which they appear in the fabric of the music.

Lambert criticizes the small number of variants of the application, existing in his time, and adheres to the idea that all fingers should be practiced in the performance of ornaments. Naturally, not all fingers can equally skillfully perform the ornaments for objective physiological reasons, but his idea of training each one of the fingers of the hands is understandable, which in the 19th century was already widely practiced in the exercises of Brahms and other composers. Lambert gives also attention to the tempo of performance of the ornaments, as well as the time in which they are performed. His work put imprints in future musicology. Of the French Clavecinists that supposedly determined Bach’s clavier ornamentation, Klotz lists only two: D’Anglebert and Saint Lambert⁽²⁾.

(1) Konov, Y. (1988). “The First Treatise on Clavichord”. Sofia. 55.

(2) Neumann, F. (1988). “Interpretation Problems of Ornament Symbols & Two Recent Case Histories: Hanz Klotz on Bach, Faye Ferguson on Mozart”. Performance Practice Review Claremont Colleges.

Conclusion

“Les Principes du Clavecin” by De Saint Lambert has been the first textbook for clavichord. It is unjust and wrong historically to quote Francois Couperin’s “The Art of Playing the Clavichord” as the first textbook on clavichord. It is the place here to emphasize that the textbook, written by Lambert, covers an extremely wide range of problems: general theoretical, specialized, musicological, methodological, pedagogical and purely practical, whereas Couperin’s work is basically spearheaded at the improvement of already acquired knowledge and contains more guidelines in the sphere of education, ornamentation and interpretation. This is to say that Couperin develops the details in teaching an instrument playing rather than the initial educational steps in teaching an instrument playing. In confirmation of this the Researcher shall quote him: “My work is directed to already skilled players of clavichord”⁽¹⁾. Although Couperin, discusses the fingering, the application and position of the hand, he pays much greater attention to the technical problems, the formation of the sound and the skill in the performance.

In Lambert’s treatise one can read between the lines that the author does not consider himself to be one of the experts among the musicians of his time; that he had worked among petty noblemen; he had accepted to travel out of Paris in order to teach and that he agreed to receive advice from more knowledgeable than himself, and, as he mentioned, that there would be more worthy guidebooks than his. All this comes to show clearly that he had judged his social position and had not relied on becoming famous and accepted in high society, as Couperin had been. A logical consequence is the actual oblivion in which he has remained. When speaking about the substance and contribution of his work, however, one can immediately point out his achievements in it as more than worthy, as well as the fact that Lambert had obviously been a superb teacher and author, systematically and analytically approaching the material he had worked on.

(1) Couperin, Fr. (1976). “L’art de toucher le Clavecin”. 1933 / Sofia. 5.

In conclusion, De Saint Lambert presented an integral and complete methodology of teaching music and playing at the clavichord. There are innovations in it like the moralistic principle of looking for the responsibility of the teacher; a sensitive attitude to the individual abilities of the students, the novel system of the clefs, the use of the thumb/first finger in the scale-like passages, etc. Saint Lambert is progressive in the area of notation reform. He advocates such changes as (1) including a full complement of flats in minor-mode keys, (2) reducing the number of clef signs use, and (3) accurately placing continuo figures horizontally relative to the base line so as to reflect where changes of harmony occur⁽¹⁾. What is particularly important for the researcher is that in the time of strict canons, Lambert looked for freedom and did not dogmatized his ideas and solutions; he did not look for rules and norms. He rather offered new ways and opportunities of searching for new ideas and facilitations. As a result of all listed above, to the researcher, Lambert's works has a modern ring even in our time and has a great value from point of performing and teaching art. That's why the need of looking carefully at his textbook and its introduction to the public is required.

As far as the analytical and comparative method of expression goes, it is noteworthy that Lambert used integrating concepts, which served to bring together terms and conceptions. This has been noticed with regard to the terms melody, sound and movement. The presumption of this unification and mixing up of the concepts has been sought in the overflowing of the meaningful abstracts from one into another concept, which has been noted as characteristic in the elusiveness of the musical processes.

As far as methodology goes, researcher points out that Lambert brought to the forefront the figure of the student in advance of the ideas invested in the works of Russeau and Pestalozzi.

(1) Powell, J. (2010). “A New Treatise on accompaniment, with the harpsichord, the organ & with other instruments by Monsieur de Saint Lambert”. Indiana University Press. 12.

De Saint Lambert violated the traditionalism common for the period 300 years ago in theory and practice; he put forward new, fresh ideas, which had been duly tested in his personal practice as a teacher. For the adequacy of ideas and its practical orientation, for the integration processes in the terminological apparatus and the adaptability with respect to every separately discussed problem, the work “Les Principes du Clavecin” by De Saint Lambert could be judged to deservedly take its top place in the science of teaching the playing of the clavichord instrument, as well as to be a worthily developed and defended theoretical work in the form of self-instruction and a method of training in a clavier instrument, which can be properly used even in our days. That was the main reason of observing and presenting his work in this particular research.

Examples

Example No.1



Example No.5

The first staff of music shows three measures. The first measure is labeled "Pincé", the second "Autre", and the third "Chutte¹⁴¹ & Pincé¹⁴²". The second staff shows three measures. The first measure is labeled "Pincé.", the second "Autre", and the third "Chutte & Pincé.".

Example No.6

The first staff of music shows five measures of music with complex guitar techniques. The second staff shows five measures of music with complex guitar techniques.

Example No.7



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