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DEMON OR PHILOSOPHER: THE ARTIST AND TEACHER TIBOR VARGA

Katherine Lukey

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of requirements for the degree of MASTER OF MUSIC (Performance)

Sydney Conservatorium of Music

University of Sydney
2011
I declare that the research presented here is my own original work and has not been submitted to any other institution for the award of a degree.

Signed: …………………………………………………………………………

Date: …………………………………………………………………………
The Hungarian violinist and pedagogue Tibor Varga (1921–2003) was a performer of formidable technical ability whose playing was characterised by a vibrant and powerful tone and a unique approach to phrasing. He is rarely acknowledged among the great violinists of the twentieth century notwithstanding his legacy of compositions, recordings and teaching which indicates that the field of violin performance and education may have much to gain from his approach to playing and teaching. At this point, there is no comprehensive presentation of his contribution to violin playing and teaching. This research project presents and analyses Tibor Varga’s approach to performance and pedagogy and places it in the context of violin pedagogy from the seventeenth century to today. Significant influences are identified and the advantages and disadvantages of his technical conceptions, approach to practice, performance, and his psychology of teaching are discussed critically. Significant violin pedagogical literature, journal articles about Varga, interviews, literature on psychology in music education and direct information gathered in lessons is used to inform this investigation. Varga’s original contributions to the development of violin playing are presented and unique approaches to practice and performance are highlighted. The concept of an ‘old school’ of playing and teaching and its place in contemporary teaching that is the result of scientific research in the twentieth century is discussed. Encouraging students to think for themselves is identified as fundamental to a successful didactic approach and revealed as central to Tibor Varga’s philosophy of teaching.
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INTRODUCTION

In 2002 I attended the entrance audition for the University of Music and Dramatic Arts, Graz, in Austria. I had planned to study at this institution for many years as numerous renowned and successful violin performers and pedagogues were members of the string faculty. At the time of the audition I was unaware that the distinguished violinist and pedagogue Tibor Varga was commencing as Guest Professor in Graz and I was positively overwhelmed to be accepted into his class. Upon discovering his achievements as a soloist and pedagogue, I was excited about the prospect of what I was to learn and master in the near future.

Sadly, Tibor Varga died unexpectedly in September 2003. Despite the brevity of my study with him this time remains the most significant twelve months in my journey as a violinist and it inspired me to investigate Varga’s approach to violin teaching as the topic for this thesis.

In order to gain a clear view of Tibor Varga’s pedagogical approach it will be necessary to present his biographical information in Chapter 1. Chapter 2 will outline the historical development of violin teaching to contextualise which schools and individuals may have influenced his methods and ideas.

A large proportion of the technical advice and philosophical reflections outlined in this thesis are based on my personal observation which I documented following lessons with Tibor Varga during my twelve-month study with him. Varga was as devoted to his teaching as he was to performing resulting in a demanding schedule and leading him to a laconic attitude towards his own use of time: “I don’t sleep more than five hours a night. I can sleep when I’m dead.”¹ He would often spend his nocturnal hours composing exercises and etudes for his

¹ Tibor Varga, verbal comment to author, 2002/03.
students. It is these individually conceived exercises and Varga’s methods for their application in practice that will be presented and discussed in Chapter 3. Whether these compositions are original and entirely his own innovations or whether they are derived from ideas of his own teachers or previous schools of pedagogy will need to be discussed. Chapter 3 will also outline Varga’s approach to studying and interpreting repertoire and influences may be found here. In this section the advantages and disadvantages of Varga’s technical principles, his approach to practice and approach to musical interpretation will be discussed. This discussion is based on relevant pedagogical literature and will also make reference to my own, personal experience as a student of Tibor Varga.

In researching the development of schools of violin playing and teaching and the approach of individual pedagogues I have reflected much on what may now be classified as an ‘old school’ of teaching. Which elements of violin pedagogy and teaching philosophy from the first half of the twentieth century may no longer be appropriate or successful in the twenty first century as a result of social and cultural developments? Chapter 4 of this paper will attempt to discuss this question and the validity of some of Varga’s teaching principles that could be classified as ‘old school’ as well as his guileless manner of teaching. I am curious to research and understand whether such an approach can indeed foster success in present day violin teaching.

In summary, I hope to articulate and analyse the important characteristics that defined Tibor Varga’s playing, psychology and personality as well as his approach to teaching. I will establish which of these aspects remain contingent on my personal and aesthetic preference, and where we may indeed find genuine advancement of pedagogical knowledge that deserves to be preserved. To conclude, I would like to show why Tibor Varga may deservedly be considered equal to other violinists of the so called ‘golden era’ as a performer and pedagogue.
CHAPTER 1

BIOGRAPHY

Tibor Varga was born in 1921 in Győr, a small town in western Hungary which - as Tully Potter states in his article in *The Strad* (2000) - “was the cradle of the Hungarian, German and Russian schools of violin playing.”\(^2\) In this article Varga proudly stated that “Joachim, Flesch and Auer came from nearby, and I was born in the same street as the great conductor Hans Richter.”\(^3\) Varga began to play the violin aged four under the instruction of his father, a violin maker. Two years later he commenced formal training in the music school of his native town.\(^4\) From the age of seven Varga frequently performed for Carl Flesch in Budapest, however when Flesch departed for Berlin his parents decided Varga was too young to follow him.\(^5\) Varga made his debut performing the Mendelssohn concerto aged ten. Not long afterwards he entered the Liszt Ferenc Academy in Budapest at the wish of its director Jenő Hubay. Varga was too young to be a formal student of Hubay, and received instruction from a former pupil – Franz Gabriel. He was to finish his studies with Hubay, however, this did not eventuate due to Hubay’s death in 1937. Varga won the Artist Diploma aged sixteen and was already winning prizes at international violin competitions and concertizing as a soloist by this stage.

Bronislaw Huberman was Varga’s third great influence. Varga performed for him at a scholarship audition and Huberman became fond of him, allowing Varga to accompany him to concerts and observe his practice.\(^6\) The outbreak of the Second World War interrupted Varga’s performing career and during this period he studied philosophy and some medicine at

\(^3\) Ibid.
\(^5\) Ibid, 181.
\(^6\) Ibid, 185.
the University of Budapest. Fortunately he returned to the stage following the war and went on to perform with many of the world’s leading orchestras collaborating with numerous renowned conductors including Furtwängler, Böhm, Solti and Boulez. Shortly after the Second World War Varga was invited at short notice to give the Viennese premiere of Alban Berg’s Violin Concerto. His successful rendition of the concerto became a career turning point and Varga received numerous invitations to perform this work and others in Europe and abroad. Arnold Schönberg was impressed with Varga’s performance of the Berg concerto and invited him to give the first European performance of the Schönberg violin concerto in 1949.

In the chapter on Tibor Varga in Samuel Applebaum and Henry Roth’s *The Way They Play* chronicler Eric Shumsky comments to Varga that he is one of “probably only a handful of violinists in the world who have the equipment, the sheer technique that you have.” As Chapter 3 will reveal, Varga promoted, and therefore probably himself practiced, physically demanding technical exercises that build tremendous stamina and technical prowess to perform the most virtuosic and technically demanding repertoire. A reviewer for the London Daily Telegram referred to Varga’s technique as “seemingly infallible” that “tossed off ... violinistic difficulties with studied nonchalance and aplomb.” According to Tully Potter, Varga’s playing “had all the virtues of the Hungarian School and very little of its main vice, the slow vibrato.” Varga’s recordings reveal a brilliant and vigorous sound characterised with a fast singing vibrato. The recordings also reveal an approach to Mozart and Bach characterised by a similar bravura sound (e.g. fast vibrato and sostenuto bowing) that was present in his performances of romantic, twentieth-century and contemporary repertoire.

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9 Numerous sources refer to Varga’s Viennese premiere of the Berg Violin Concerto as highly successful but don’t state why. Unfortunately he never recorded the work.
11 Applebaum & Roth, book 10, 204.
12 Ibid, 206.
13 Tully Potter, “A Fiery Philosopher,” 385
Varga made his first recording in 1935 for Radiola of Hubay’s *Zephyr*. Following the war he made his Wigmore Hall debut and recorded for Columbia (including with the LPO) and EMI which gained him significant recognition in England. His most notable recording is Béla Bartók’s second violin concerto with the Berlin Philharmonic under Ferenc Fricsay (1951), which according to Tully Potter ranks with Zoltan Szekely’s performance as the most authentic. Whilst Varga studied at the academy in Budapest, Bartók was teaching piano and Varga commented that his presence was an inspiration. As personally experienced in the demands of Varga’s teaching, this mature interpretation reflects Varga’s devotion to phrasing and shaping of every detail. A highlight is his skill with voicing in double stops in the cadenza. This interpretation reflects Varga’s preference for approaching expression by experimenting with timbre and character of the four strings of the violin rather than exploring colours with varying vibrato and point of contact. This is a process he may have inherited through the influence of his Franco-Belgian trained teachers. Chapter 2 will discuss the phenomenon of individual string character which was first discussed in detail by Pierre Baillot. Of course, these aural perceptions of Varga’s recording of Bartók’s second violin concerto may be obscured by the less advanced standards in recording technology in the 1950’s. Every nuance in the recording points to a deep understanding of Hungarian folk idiom. In his teaching Varga often spoke of creating tension and release in performance through logical consideration of tempo, rubato and dynamics. Varga infuses the beginnings and ends of phrases and sections in the concerto with these moments of tension. The opening theme of the concerto is executed with Varga’s fast oscillating vibrato which creates bulges in many notes. Although musicians have a tendency to criticise bulging, in Varga’s case the phrasing is so well thought out that the bulging does not disrupt the melodic flow, instead it

16 Potter, 385.
17 Ibid, 380.
adds an idiomatic flavour to the music. Varga’s use of continuous fast oscillating vibrato was probably influenced by Carl Flesch who advocated the use of Fritz Kreisler’s ‘uninterrupted’ vibrato that captivated many violinists, including Varga, during the first half of the twentieth century: 18

I remember the first violinist who really made an impression on me. It was Kreisler ... (The Concert) was an exceptional experience, seeing Kreisler at such close range. I remember listening to the first half and was so excited that I couldn’t sit still any longer. I ran home, took up my violin and tried to reproduce what I had heard and seen. I remember it was about 1:00 A.M when I felt that now I could at last control my vibrato the way I wanted. 19

Among Varga’s recordings we find many of his own cadenzas including for Paganini’s first concerto and numerous Mozart works. He also played the viola in numerous works. 20 Appendix 1 lists all of Varga’s recordings according to the Discopaedia of the Violin. 21

Passionate about music education, Varga established the first music academy for advanced students in his home town of Győr in the early 1940s. In 1949 he was invited to become a professor at the newly established academy in Detmold, Germany. Varga pursued his interest in conducting because he had not only been inspired by performances in which he performed under Furtwangler and Solti but because he felt lesser known conductors were difficult to play and communicate with. 22 This inspired the foundation of the Tibor Varga Chamber Orchestra in Detmold which gave some seventy concerts a year and released many recordings. 23 After more than thirty-five years in Detmold, Tibor Varga founded the Ecole

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20 Ibid, 385.  
Supérieure de Musique in Sion (Valais, Switzerland), now Conservatoire Supérieur et Académie de musique Tibor Varga. In 1963 Varga established a Summer Festival and Academy (masterclasses) in Sion, and in 1967 he founded the Tibor Varga International Violin Competition which still thrives as a prestigious competition today. Many of his students have gone onto illustrious playing and teaching careers including German soloist Mirijam Contzen, leader and soloist of the Orchestra del Teatro alla Scala Francesco De Angelis, Swiss violinist/violist Madeleine Carruzzo who was the first female to join the Berlin Philharmonic and Gyula Stuller - concertmaster of the Lausanne Chamber Orchestra and also Varga’s assistant in Sion.

In 2002 Varga became a guest professor at the University of Music and Dramatic Arts in Graz, Austria; he passed away in September 2003.

25 Noltensmeier, Geiger von Beruf, 64.
CHAPTER 2

HISTORICAL AND PEDAGOGICAL CONTEXT

This chapter will present a detailed account of the historical development of violin teaching from significant individuals who influenced the field to prominent schools of violin playing. The chapter will briefly discuss the concept of ‘school’ to be able to place these significant violin pedagogues including Pierre Baillot, Carl Flesch and Ivan Galamian in clear context and establish which features are relevant and influential to Varga’s teaching approach. A chronological outline of the development of violin pedagogy will indicate how this field has developed into a complex and specialist field of expertise in the twenty-first century. In addition, this chapter will show how pedagogical development in violin playing has contributed to the advancement of violin technique, musical interpretation, and therefore overall artistic standards since the seventeenth century. Most importantly this historical analysis will enable me to logically proceed to an analysis of Varga’s pedagogical methods and teaching material and to identify the technical, artistic and philosophical roots that influenced his training, playing and teaching methods in order to answer the research question: “What characterises Tibor Varga’s approach to violin teaching?”

As the definition of ‘school’ can be sometimes restricted to a style of instruction bound by geographical borders, from herein the term will be employed in the context of the definition according to the Oxford English Dictionary:

The body of persons that are or have been taught by a particular master (in philosophy, science, art, etc.); hence, in wider sense, a body or succession of persons who in some department of speculation or practice are disciples of the same master, or who are united by a general similarity of principles and methods. Sometimes (e.g. in Roman, Venetian, Tuscan School; British, French, Flemish School; with reference to painting), the term denotes in the first place those whose training was obtained in the same
locality; but in the main this local association is understood to imply more or less community of doctrines or style.\textsuperscript{26}

The Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries

According to Simon McVeigh in the \textit{Cambridge Companion to the Violin} the first documented instruction books devoted to the violin appeared in the seventeenth century, John Lenton’s \textit{The Gentleman’s Diversion} (1693) credited as the first tutor published by an individual and intended for amateur users.\textsuperscript{27} In Northern Italy, Corelli (1653 – 1713), through his compositions, was the first to significantly influence the development of violin technique.\textsuperscript{28} McVeigh suggests Corelli’s \textit{Roman School} was the first major school of violin playing - perhaps in the sense of the dictionary definition above - as Geminiani (1687 – 1762), Veracini (1690 – 1768) & Locatelli (1695 – 1764) were all students of Corelli and all united in their will to reach new heights of virtuosity. \textsuperscript{29} Geminiani’s \textit{The Art of Playing on the Violin} (London, 1751) was the first treatise intended for advanced ‘professional’ practice, although still intended for use with a teacher. He concisely outlined technical principles with examples and compositions for their mastery.\textsuperscript{30} In Germany, Leopold Mozart’s \textit{A Treatise on the Fundamental Principles of Violin Playing} (1756) became the most influential instruction manual for the violin in the eighteenth century and today remains a vital source for stylistic interpretation of repertoire from this epoch. In the preface Alfred Einstein states that the

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Robin Stowell, ed., \textit{The Cambridge Companion to the Violin}, 50 – 51.
\item Ibid, 225.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
treatise is directed at the teacher, far more than a mere instruction in technique it is a guide to
good performance in general and violin playing as an art.  

After the death of Corelli, developments in violin playing technique in Italy shifted to
Piedemont. Here Pugnani (1731 – 1798), student of Somis (1676 – 1763) who was a student
of Corelli, was responsible for training Giovanni Battista Viotti (1755 – 1824) who laid the
foundations for the French Classical School of Violin playing which was to dominate an
entire generation of violinists. Viotti developed highly virtuosic techniques and was known
for his noble tone and very advanced techniques for handling the bow such as “Viotti’s Flying
Bow.” Among his students and disciples were the French trio; Pierre Rode (1774 – 1830),
Pierre Baillot (1771 – 1852) and Rodolphe Kreutzer (1766 – 1831). In 1801 the three were
given the task of setting down the principles of violin instruction at the Conservatoire,
published as the treatise Methode de Violon in 1803, which remained unchallenged as the
standard violin instruction guide for advanced performers for some thirty years. In 1811 the
Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung described the principles of the French Classical (or Viotti)
School:

A large, strong, full tone is the first; the combination of this with a powerful,
penetrating, singing legato is the second; as the third, variety, charm, shadow and light
must be brought into play through the greatest diversity of bowing. 

34 Farga, 151.
35 Stowell, 227.
Baillot

Pierre Baillot was born in 1771 in Passy (now part of Paris) and studied violin with two lesser known Italian teachers. He moved to Italy in 1783 and following the death of his father he went to Rome where he studied with Pollani, a pupil of Pietro Nardini (1722 – 1793). At the age of nineteen he was offered a violin position in Viotti’s orchestra in Paris. Due to financial difficulties he only lasted five months in the orchestra and took up a government position in the department of finance teaching violin on the side. Baillot returned to Paris in 1795 and began to reconnect with his musical life. Following a performance of Viotti’s Concerto no.14 he made a distinct impression that lead to his appointment as violin professor at the newly established Conservatoire de Musique. In 1834 Baillot set about writing his *L’Art du Violon* to add information he felt was omitted in *Methode de Violon*. *L’Art du Violon* represents the first in-depth treatise written on violin playing. Part 1 discusses the mechanics of violin playing and deals with most technical and stylistic matters in great detail. Part 2 is devoted to the philosophy of expression. Baillot was praised for his technical mastery (particularly his skilful bowing that was rich in nuance) passionate soul and being possessed with a flame of genius. He was one of the first violinists in history to perform the works of others (Viotti, Rode, Kreutzer) as well as his own works – thus he was one of the first violinist-interpreters. This interest led to one of the fundamental principles of his *L’Art du Violon*: “that a violinist must render a piece of music in the style its composer would have used,” thus, “he must study all musical styles.” Musicologist David Boyden referred to Baillot as “the true teacher of the nineteenth century violinist” due to his emphasis on developing the whole musician, not just

39 Ibid, xv.
the technical violinist.\textsuperscript{41} This is illustrated by his three-step lesson initiative in \textit{L’Art du Violon}: First he presents an explanation of a technical point, then gives exercises for improvement, lastly he allocates examples from the violin repertoire to apply to the point being illustrated. This initiative has influenced the lesson structure in the teaching of countless individuals and schools of violin teaching ever since.

\textit{L’Art du Violon} is historically significant as it is the first treatise to discuss the possibilities of bowing with the new Tourte bow.\textsuperscript{42} It is an invaluable source for exploring the range of nuance (defined by Baillot as the different degrees of softness and loudness through which can pass one or more sounds in a note, melody, passage or piece)\textsuperscript{43} achievable with this modern French bow. Baillot seems to be the first violinist to comment on the use of technique to produce a range of colour and nuance in violin playing. He describes the three sections of the bow in the context of nuance where the frog represents aspiration created with power from bow pressure as well as drawing the bow slowly and with control. The middle is the breathing part of the bow created with full melodic tone and the tip is used for softness and dying sound.\textsuperscript{44} In addition to exploring nuance with the bow Baillot introduces the new idea of exploring expression through timbre and characters of the four strings of the violin. He attributes to each string a natural and imitative character. In his opinion the E string emulates the brilliant, sweet and pure character of the soprano voice and imitates the piccolo. The A string also personifies a soprano voice but with a more penetrating colour, and it imitates the flute and when the bow is pressed harder, the oboe. Baillot attributes the noble, velvety character of the D string to the alto voice and imitative quality of the flute. The G string takes on the tenor role and enables sublime expression with the ability to imitate the horn and the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{41} Pierre Baillot, \textit{The Art of the Violin}, xxii.
\item \textsuperscript{42} Ibid, xxiii.
\item \textsuperscript{43} Ibid, 254.
\item \textsuperscript{44} Ibid, 159 – 164.
\end{itemize}
trumpet.\textsuperscript{45} Baillot emphasises that these affectations should be considered in order for the violinist to be well acquainted with the natural riches of the instrument and better express characters, but it should not be the goal of the performer to imitate resulting in a superficial rendition.\textsuperscript{46}

Throughout his treatise Baillot reveals a deeply philosophical character. His philosophy regarding the teacher/student relationship (and indeed the performer/audience relationship) is frequently emphasised:

Seek counsel, not praise ... the true artist counts less on being praised than on evoking response.\textsuperscript{47}

This statement reflects an expectation of the student to remain emotionally detached from playing and performing. Chapter 3 of \textit{L’Art du Violon} is devoted to the progress of the art of violin playing, and the will of human nature to want to improve and discover new possibilities. Baillot takes an esoteric position here, describing the consummate nineteenth century artist as:

A man with a passion for everything that is beautiful and true ... and his inspirations seem to spring from the heart of his creative enthusiasm. ... This is difficult to fulfil ... the artist must have an upright sprit, a sensitive and generous heart, and elevated soul, and a firm and steadfast will.\textsuperscript{48}

Part 2 of Baillot’s \textit{L’Art du Violon} is a brief but profound discussion on expression and means of expression. In summary, he states that once elementary technical difficulties have been conquered, the violinist can focus on exposing his individual character. By exploring the means of expression (which Baillot defines as tone, tempo, style, taste, rhythmic

\textsuperscript{45} Pierre Baillot, \textit{The Art of the Violin}, 244 – 253.
\textsuperscript{46} Ibid, 253.
\textsuperscript{47} Ibid, 467.
\textsuperscript{48} Ibid, 14.
steadiness) the violinist can explore limitless ideas and possibilities. Baillot introduces us to the idea of *Genius of Performance* in part 2 of his treatise. To possess genius of performance in Baillot’s long and esoteric definition could be summarised as the possession of a profound sensitivity and creativity that enables the performer to bring to life the creativity of past geniuses and to bring a spirit to the piece that is not explicitly written in the music.

**The German School**

The other significant treatise to emerge in the nineteenth century was in Germany: Louis Spohr’s *Violinschule*. Spohr was renowned as both a composer and a leader in the German art of violin playing. Spohr’s work was characterized by a richness of harmony and new developments in modulation and chromaticism that placed him amongst the pioneers of early romanticism. His writing for violin often avoided what he referred to as empty virtuosity as represented by the compositional style of Paganini. This is reflected in his preference for a more concentrated application of the bow and singing tone on the violin:

The scholar must exert himself from the outset to produce a pure and full tone. As already observed the first requisite for this is a straight bow, but it is also necessary to ascertain how great or how little, in proportion to the quickness of the bowing, should be the pressure of the bow on each of the four strings, to cause them to sound easily and clearly: and how near on the different strings, the hair may approach the bridge … if the scholar can himself perceive the need of a fine tone, his own ear and experience will teach him, better than any theory, the niceties of bowing which best produce it.

Although Spohr still addresses a large portion of his treatise to issues that could be considered mostly stylistic or artistic (such as the rule of the down bow and embellishment) much of his

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50 Ibid, 479 – 480.
treatise introduces pedagogical concepts (although without explicit titles) such as bow division, speed and point of contact for expression and nuance:

In the forte the bow is pressed firmly to the string, moved with some speed, and brought towards the bridge. In the piano it is drawn lightly over the string, moved rather slowly, and at some distance from the bridge. In the crescendo and decrescendo the bow passes gradually from one to the other of these conditions.55

Spohr is also credited for the invention of the chinrest and his treatise codified some of the latest technical advances for violin such as staccato.

**Joachim-Moser**

A major representative of German violin playing was Joseph Joachim who studied with Spohr’s pupil Ferdinand David. 56 He is noted for his performances of the Beethoven Concerto (with Mendelssohn conducting) and the Mendelssohn Concerto (with Schumann conducting). He accepted the post as concertmaster in Weimar at the age of sixteen and during this time established a close relationship with Brahms, advising him on numerous string works.57 Continuing in the traditions established by Spohr, Joachim’s teaching emphasized musical matters rather than virtuosity and he tended to leave pupils to their own devices to acquire technique.58 Joachim published his *Violinschule* in three volumes from 1902 to 1905, but it is mostly written by his pupil Andreas Moser. Joachim’s preface to the treatise reveals the first ideas about the student functioning as their own teacher, a concept that becomes further developed by numerous teachers in the twentieth century with the rise of the natural sciences and the scientific approach. The treatise methodically arranges Joachim’s principles of violin playing with a particular focus on phrasing, dynamic expression and

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58 Ibid, 412.
tuning.\textsuperscript{59} According to Walter Kolneder the publication was not entirely successful due to a large number of dry exercises and little concern for the student’s musical development.\textsuperscript{60} Among Joachim’s pupils were Leopold Auer, Carl Flesch and Fritz Kreisler. According to them a student could only benefit from the inner expression of Joachim’s ideas if they came to him with thorough technical training.\textsuperscript{61}

\textbf{Carl Flesch}

In the twentieth century teaching trends began to emerge that represented a fusion of German, Franco-Belgian (and therefore partly Italian) and Eastern European pedagogy.\textsuperscript{62} Such a method is exemplified in the teaching of Carl Flesch who uncovered new and highly analytical approaches to playing and teaching the violin. Born in 1873 in Mosonmagyaróvár, Hungary, Flesch commenced violin aged five before commencing formal study at the Vienna Conservatory, then the Paris Conservatoire with Eugène Sauzay and Martin Marsick (pupil of Joachim and Lambert Massart who was a pupil of Kreutzer). He enjoyed an illustrious performing and teaching career throughout Europe and his performances were famous for technical perfection as well as intellectual interpretation. His pupils included Max Rostal, Szymon Goldberg, Henryk Szeryng, Henri Temianka, Ida Haendel, Ginette Neveu and he had a significant influence on Tibor Varga. According to the entry on Carl Flesch in the \textit{Oxford Music Online Encyclopaedia}:

\begin{quote}
He was not a ‘born’ violinist but developed through constant analysis and self-criticism. This diagnostic ability made Flesch into one of the greatest teachers of our time.\textsuperscript{63}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{60} Walter Kolneder, \textit{The Amadeus Book of the Violin – Construction, History and Music}, 505.
\textsuperscript{61} Margaret Campbell, \textit{The Great Violinists}, (London: Granada, 1980), 79.
\textsuperscript{62} Stowell, 228.
Between 1923 and 1928 Carl Flesch wrote his main treatise on violin playing; titled *Die Kunst des Violin-Spiels* (The Art of Violin Playing). According to Robin Stowell, it represents a synthesis of the various schools which formed the mainstream of violin teaching in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but it also uncovers new and highly analytical approaches to playing and teaching the violin for Flesch’s time. Carl Flesch’s teaching style was strongly influenced by the logical system devised by Ottakar Ševčík (1852–1934). According to Flesch there existed no detailed source that could guide teachers and pupils to becoming a fine violinist, until the emergence of Ševčík. Flesch credits Ševčík for making it possible for violinists (through use of his exercises) to develop skills to master the most technically difficult problems in the violin repertoire. He still believed, however, that there existed no compendium outlining methods for identifying, outlining and overcoming technical difficulties, and that the mentality of his time (early twentieth century) did not encourage the violinist to think for himself. In his preface to *The Art of Violin Playing*, Flesch admits that his treatise is aimed at the “thinking” violinist and those aspiring to join that category. He is critical of the overall “average” standard of violin playing at the time of writing, and attributes this in part to teachers who are “satisfied with proclaiming traditional tenets as unchangeable truths.” His purpose:

I would like to equip violinists generally with the tools enabling them to think logically for themselves and to analyse violin-technical problems in depth. In this way I hope to bring them gradually to a point where they can function as their own teachers … . My aim has been to create clarity about those subjects which most violinists hitherto have dealt with only instinctively or in a traditional manner.

This statement succinctly defines the *thinking* violinist in Flesch’s definition. He implicitly emphasises the need to promote awareness in the pupil throughout his treatise, i.e.

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the student should be able to recognise ineffective action. He does this by analysing all aspects of violin technique and pointing out why something does not work and how it can work. Flesch’s clinical approach to teaching is reflected literally when he states:

The teacher, having established an accurate diagnosis, must select the healing remedy from his apothecary, and prescribe the appropriate use of it.\textsuperscript{68}

Implied is the role of the teacher to remove obstacles and mistakes, and to do this Flesch identifies the two main tasks for the teacher during a lesson: gathering clear aural impressions and describing these in words. Of course the choice and timing of these words are equally important to create an atmosphere of mutual trust and calm objectivity to avoid confusion and nervousness in the teaching studio.\textsuperscript{69} Flesch gives detailed advice on determining the sequence in which a teacher should handle individual issues by addressing questions of general violinistic habits, intonation, sound production, tone colour, general technique, applied technique, style and personality.\textsuperscript{70}

When considering what is new about Flesch’s teaching approach in the context of his time, he was (probably via the influence of his own teacher Marsick) among the first to consider foremost teaching from the perspective of the individual needs of the student as opposed to teaching via a recipe or method handed down from previous traditions. Flesch is adamant that a teacher must, due to changes in taste over periods of time, go with ‘his time.’ He states that society is continually influenced by contemporary trends and violin teachers have an obligation not to ignore them and to educate students according to the interpretative ideal of the epoch.\textsuperscript{71} In addition to the emphasis on patience, selflessness and an objective and

\textsuperscript{68} Carl Flesch, \textit{The Art of Violin Playing} book 2, 102.
\textsuperscript{69} Ibid, 111.
\textsuperscript{70} Ibid, 109 – 110.
\textsuperscript{71} Ibid, 100.
respectful manner towards the student and their physical, spiritual and emotional characteristics, Flesch places numerous high expectations on the violin instructor:

A teacher has to have sufficient psychological insight and knowledge to be aware of the technical, musical and spiritual-emotional needs of the student with whose welfare he is entrusted and to satisfy those needs. ... The ideal teacher does not think of his profession as a way to make a living, but rather ... as a calling, a reason for being, and the mainstay of his life.\textsuperscript{72}

The Soviet School and the Twentieth Century to Present

The influence of the Franco-Belgian school reached Russia around the beginning of the nineteenth century via visits from Rode and Baillot and later Vieuxtemps and Wieniawski who became the first professor in violin at the St Petersburg Conservatoire.\textsuperscript{73} In 1868 Leopold Auer succeeded Wieniawski as the institution’s principal violin professor and as an influential pedagogue established the Russian school of violin playing famous for producing talents including Mischa Elman, Efrem Zimbalist, Jascha Heifetz and Miron Poliakin.\textsuperscript{74} German violinist and musicologist Kathinka Rebling gave a succinct summary of the formation of the soviet violin school:

The support which the young soviet state gave to scientific research also extended to music, which encouraged three leading pedagogues of the Moscow Conservatory, Lew Zeitlin, Abram Yampolski and Konstantin Mostrass to combine their abilities ... and to design a collaborative cycle of lectures on the methodology of violin playing- and teaching. Based on the traditions of their predecessors they ... used the results of the new scientific research, such as the work of the acoustician Garbusow. This collective work responded to the demand which was posed by the new social order, namely ‘...the endeavour to establish unified, scientifically grounded technical methods and artistic principles for interpretation and pedagogy to overcome the subjectivism and the limitations in the work of every professor or

\textsuperscript{72} Carl Flesch, \textit{The Art of Violin Playing book 2}, 100.  
\textsuperscript{73} Robin Stowell ed., \textit{The Cambridge Companion to the Violin}, 75.  
\textsuperscript{74} Ibid.
teacher...’ as it was stated in the resolution of the department of music in a conference about artistic institutes in April 1925.\textsuperscript{75}

This set the standard for determined and rigorous training of violinists in the Soviet Union reflected in the triumph of soviet violinists in the first Queen Elisabeth Violin Competition in 1937.\textsuperscript{76} The soviet school is ordinarily recognized for its emphasis on scales, exercises and etudes, but it itself emphasized that musical interpretation should always take a principal role. Enormous value is placed on the development of artistic individuality and individual treatment of students and independence and initiative are encouraged in the general education system.\textsuperscript{77}

By the middle of the twentieth century the influential pedagogue Ivan Galamian, student of Mostrass, emerged in America. His teaching represented the best traditions of both the Soviet and French schools (particularly Lucien Capet’s \textit{Art of Bowing}).\textsuperscript{78} Like Flesch, Galamian’s teaching approach was rational and analytical with minute attention to every detail.\textsuperscript{79} Similarly, Galamian also had high expectations of the teacher:

\begin{quote}
The teacher must realise each student is an individual with their own approach to the instrument and music ... . The teacher must understand the interdependent nature of individual technical elements of violin playing in a mutual organic relationship.\textsuperscript{80}
\end{quote}

Building on the scientifically informed approach of Mostrass, Galamian defines technique as “the ability to direct mentally and to execute physically all of the necessary playing movements of left and right hands, arms and fingers.\textsuperscript{81} To build such a technique requires the

\textsuperscript{75} Kathinka Rebling, \textit{Violinspiel und Violinpaedagogik- Beitraege zum Instrumentalunterricht}, (Berlin: Frank & Timme, 2005), 12.
\textsuperscript{76} Robin Stowell ed., \textit{The Cambridge Companion to the Violin}, 87.
\textsuperscript{78} Stowell ed., 228.
\textsuperscript{81} Ibid, 5.
correct relationship of the mind to the muscles, a relationship that Galamian refers to as correlation\textsuperscript{82} which stems from his fundamental principle that mental control over physical movement is of paramount importance and is the key to mastery of violin technique.\textsuperscript{83} Galamian was the first to teach the improvement of violin playing technique using this method as opposed to simply training and building muscles. In his chapter on practicing he outlines how correlation can be improved using the following techniques:

1. Left hand: Variation of time values (rhythms)
2. Right hand: Variation of bowing patterns
3. Combination of 1 & 2.
4. The superimposition of accents which may further complicate the problems to be solved.

Galamian composed the 24 note scale to facilitate the development of correlation and coordination. Where Flesch’s three-octave scale can only be performed in multiples of three, Galamian added two notes to the ascending and descending scale to form the 24-note version, allowing the student to practice scales in multiples of two and three.\textsuperscript{84} He proposed numerous bowing patterns – combinations of slurring and détaché, slurred staccato patterns and groups of quavers with varying accent patterns – to deal with the coordination of the left and right hand, with intelligent thought being given to bow distribution and pressure.\textsuperscript{85} For left hand correlation, Galamian suggests practicing twelve notes in a slur with various rhythmic combinations. By combining the rhythmic units, one has infinite possibilities to develop

\textsuperscript{83} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{84} Ibid, 96.
\textsuperscript{85} Ibid.
correlation thus correcting problems with string crossings and shifting, leading to clearer articulation, better intonation, rhythm, and sound.

Possibly a result of new social trends in the twentieth century and again influence of the soviet school, Galamian emphasised the idea that a good violin teacher should also be a good psychologist. Many of his innovations have paved the way for the more nurturing teaching style established in the twentieth century and continuing in the twenty-first, particularly in the teaching methods of his own student and pedagogue Dorothy DeLay. Galamian emphasised the importance of knowing when to encourage, discourage, advise or hold back information for a later date. Many opinions exist to contradict this, such as his teaching psychology being described as ‘authoritarian.’ No evidence seems to prove he was in any way negative or derogatory towards his students, he simply did not speak a lot in lessons (a pedagogical tool in itself), did not smile much, had a disciplined routine for lessons, and preferred his students to adhere to his suggestions such as fingerings and bowings.\textsuperscript{86} For the reason of the latter his teaching style could be classified as ‘old school.’ David Cerone hailed Galamian for his patience, fairness and sense of humour,\textsuperscript{87} qualities that don’t necessarily define an authoritarian style of teacher. It seems not all students responded well to Galamian’s more objective manner in the studio, a fact which does not necessarily reflect his teaching ability. It merely indicates that like any relationship, not all violin students are suited to all teachers, and for this reason attempting to categorise teachers in schools or styles may not be entirely conclusive.

\textsuperscript{87}J.E. Koob, \textit{The Violin Pedagogy of Ivan Galamian}, (Michigan: UMI, 1986), 35.
The Hungarian School and Tibor Varga’s position in the history of violin playing

Carl Flesch stated that “only since Hubay’s appointment to the Budapest Academy can one speak of a specifically Hungarian school.”\(^88\) Jenő Hubay (1858 – 1937) emigrated in his youth due to limited opportunities in Hungary. He studied with Joachim in Berlin, and spent much time taking advice from Vieuxtemps whilst in Paris. In 1882 he was appointed violin professor at Brussels Conservatoire. Hubay returned to Budapest in 1886 to take over from his father at the Budapest Academy where he taught until 1934. Joseph Szigeti, Jelly d’Aranyi and Sandor Vegh were among his students.\(^89\) According to Margaret Campbell Hubay’s own playing was a mixture of Magyar, German and Franco-Belgian elements.\(^90\) Flesch states that “Hubay students could be relied upon to have a very well developed left-hand technique and that they had a natural feeling for tonal beauty … but their vibrato … is too slow and wide.”\(^91\)

He was also critical of their lack of attention to dynamic contrast.

When trying to place Tibor Varga’s principles of violin playing in the context of this pedagogical history, it is clear that from the twentieth century and onwards that pedagogical philosophies (including Varga’s) became inextricably linked. As a student of Hubay’s class and Flesch, Varga’s teaching and playing principles seem strongly linked with Joachim’s German School and the Franco Belgian School particularly that of Baillot and Kreutzer as will be shown further in Chapter 3. On the categorization of ‘schools’ of violin playing Walter Kolneder makes a pertinent point:

It has become customary to speak of various nineteenth-century national schools (Franco-Belgian, Russian, Hungarian, and so on) … One is tempted to see decisive factors in a teacher’s effect on his students, passing on to them distinctive features … Among violinists, every strong personality gradually develops an individual style, thereby transforming what had been typical of a given school or tradition. Such a


\(^{90}\) Margaret Campbell, *The Great Violinists*, 104.

\(^{91}\) Ibid.
violinist will also be exposed to influences that may differ greatly, or indeed may contradict each other. Nor must we forget that most violinists are products of several teachers and have been exposed to various, often conflicting schools.\textsuperscript{92}

The content of this chapter and chapter 3 of this thesis suggest that having being significantly exposed to the teaching of Hubay and other Hungarian teachers, Varga indeed embodies the characteristics of the Hungarian school.

The other musician to strongly influence Varga’s career was composer, pianist and teacher Leo Weiner, who taught chamber music at the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music from 1920 to 1959.

Leo Weiner taught me how to read the music, to place each note in context. The player must take everything he can from what the composer has written – he must never put in anything that is not there.\textsuperscript{93}

The historical analysis in this chapter has been informed by a clear distinction between individual and school. The discussion suggests that Varga’s teaching method was defined by individual influences on playing and teaching as opposed to a single school of thought where his primary influences were Carl Flesch and Jenő Hubay. Chapters 3 and 4 will also highlight Varga’s use of esoteric analogies to describe his philosophies and show that Baillot’s highly philosophical character may have influenced Varga. Baillot’s concept of expression in the context of timbre and individual string character was prevalent in Varga’s playing and teaching, especially in relation to voicing which can be heard in his recording of Bartók’s second Violin Concerto.

Flesch’s teaching manner could have been labelled guileless as evidenced by his somewhat contentious philosophy that technique can be learnt and developed but good artistry

\textsuperscript{92} Walter Kolneder, \textit{The Amadeus Book of the Violin – Construction, History and Music}, 398.
\textsuperscript{93} Tully Potter, “A Fiery Philosopher,” 380.
requires a degree of inborn musical ability.\textsuperscript{94} Whilst Flesch obviously believed in thinking about everything and finding the right ‘treatment’ for faults in violin playing, his perspective implies that there are limitations to teaching and learning as determined by a student’s genetic make-up and their upbringing and education. It is evident that this philosophy has found its way to Varga. In 2000 he gave a presentation at the European String Teachers’ Association Conference in which he too argued at length that a teacher is confronted with limitations if a student is not “endowed by nature with the minimum of receptivity, and ‘inner resonance’, which enables him to make mental and emotional associations.”\textsuperscript{95} When studying Galamian’s teaching method the issue of not all violin students being suited to all teachers was uncovered and will be discussed when reflecting the effectiveness of Varga’s teaching methods in chapter 4.

\textsuperscript{94} Carl Flesch, \textit{The Art of Violin Playing book 2}, 73.
CHAPTER 3

VARGA’S TECHNICAL BASIS

When asked if he had specific teaching methods for violin technique Varga responded that he had no specific method, and if a student played with his foot on the fingerboard and the results were good, he would not interfere. Where the result was not good, Varga stated that he supported his students in their own way, by bringing his own experience to their learning process. First he would aid his students to acquire a craft, but he admitted that one can consume their whole life perfecting their craft and along the way lose contact with music.\textsuperscript{96}

As soon as the student can play beautifully on open strings, the teacher should begin to make music with them straight away. And when someone can play cleanly with two fingers, then one should allow that to be translated musically also.\textsuperscript{97}

This chapter details some specific technical and applied technical elements of Varga’s teaching and playing approach as well as his thoughts relating to practice, performance and interpretation.

\textsuperscript{96} Noltensmeier, Geiger von Beruf, 86
\textsuperscript{97} Ibid.
Setup:

Like Flesch, Varga encouraged students to stand with legs spread apart (Ex.1).

Ex.1.

Varga referred to the left hand as ‘tactical’ and the right ‘dynamic’ so for this reason he encouraged students to place more weight on the left foot to allow the right side of the body maximum freedom. This concept is unique to Varga’s teaching as it lies outside the common paradigm of fluid technical or mechanical ‘functionality.’ For similar reasons Joachim and Moser also advised letting the body weight rest on the left side, but they encouraged the older school’s (as described by Flesch) close-together, right angled standing position (Ex. 2).

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99 Goetz Richter, written comments to author, 3 August 2011.
100 Joseph Joachim and Andreas Moser, *Violin School*, vol 1 - part 1, 12.
Varga was an advocate of playing the violin without a shoulder rest:

I must say that I am very much against the use of shoulder devices. For me, the violin is a replacement of the throat. The violin should sing through the F-holes. By not using a shoulder pad I can feel the vibrations much better ... I am not sure a long neck is a sufficient reason for using a shoulder pad because the real problems in violin playing emanate from about 15 centimetres in front of the point where the chin and shoulder grasp the instrument ... . I recommend an unusually high chinrest to fill the gap ... . I find that people using shoulder pads play with a different attitude – the instrument, which should be an extension of their body, is less a part of them ... For those (students) who are addicts I recommend a cushion that lies on the shoulder or under the clothing of the shoulder, so they can feel less alien to the violin.\textsuperscript{102}

This statement suggests that Varga was of the view that technique is a mental or behavioural attribute leading to different character, not just different functionality. The subject of much research and debate, Varga was of the belief that a shoulder rest dampened the amplitude of the violin’s sound projection and encouraged his students to attempt playing without the device for one year. He, like other violinists accustomed to playing without a shoulder rest, argued that playing without a shoulder rest requires its own technique. The

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{101} Carl Flesch, \textit{The Art of Violin Playing book 1}, 166.
\bibitem{102} Applebaum and Roth, \textit{The Way They Play: Illustrated Discussions with Famous Artists and Teachers}, vol 10, 201.
\end{thebibliography}
weight of the violin is held by resting the neck of the violin on the webbing between thumb and first finger, therefore the left thumb is quite visible above the finger board. According to Varga the chin should not grip the violin, but rest loosely on the chinrest applying extra pressure when shifting while remembering to release pressure following the shift. Varga echoed Flesch when he stated that playing without a shoulder rest was advantageous as it permitted more intimate contact with the violin.\textsuperscript{103}

**Left Hand Technique**

Within the scales you have all the necessary technique: the putting down and lifting of fingers, changing positions and strings … . A student can lose a tremendous amount of time unless he takes care to first learn properly how to put the fingers down and lift them, along with mastering coordination of the fingers, changing of position etc. … . Prepare everything you need to play a good scale and THEN put it all together. Set your foundation and then build upon it.\textsuperscript{104}

In line with this statement Varga always commenced the first lesson with a new student with a dissection of left hand technique and the study of the following left hand exercises, with very few exceptions.

\textsuperscript{103} Carl Flesch, *The Art of Violin Playing* book 1, 3.

\textsuperscript{104} Applebaum and Roth, *The Way They Play: Illustrated Discussions with Famous Artists and Teachers*, vol 10, 201.
Ex. 3.

(F2)

(F3)
Ex.3. shows Varga’s left-hand finger exercises (*Fingerübungen* – F2, F3, F4, – there was no F1, instead a B1 bowing exercise) which Varga used to help a student achieve a strong falling and lifting finger movement. Practicing the exercise is not simply a drill in which the player reads the notes and performs the sequences as fast as possible. The violinist should repeat one segment (four semiquavers) until it is perfectly in tune by hearing harmonies within the segment. Instead of sliding fingers around to achieve clean intonation, they should stop playing and repeat the segment again. Left-hand fingers should not bang the fingerboard but stick to the string so when lifted the string resonates like a mini pizzicato. To achieve an even rhythm it may be necessary to hold the fourth finger down fractionally longer due to its muscular weakness. The violinist should take care to keep the left-hand fingers light and to lift them quickly but not to flick them back further than necessary. They should also take care with the position of the left hand. When the left hand is parallel to the fingerboard and the back of the left hand is in line with the left arm and vertically perpendicular to the floor the harder tip of the fourth finger will make contact with the string, not the pad, creating a more
clarified sound. The left hand should not be moving around a great deal to compensate for changing intervals. Instead the opportunity to develop the extension ability of the fingers should be used. Interestingly, violinist and pedagogue Max Rostal highlights the likelihood that Flesch influenced Varga’s left-hand technical approach when he commented that Flesch was opposed to the flatter finger posture and advocated the same left-hand position that Varga requests for his *Fingerübungen*. Rostal was of the belief that the pronation of the left arm does not need to be changed.\(^{105}\)

Having personally spent many hours scrupulously attempting to master Varga’s *Fingerübungen*, the following improvements were noticed:

1. Left-hand fingers were more rhythmic at faster speeds.

2. More refined intonation as a result of hearing harmonies and a developed ability to squash left-hand fingertips into finer increments and memorise these sensations with a sense of comfort and ease.

Varga often encouraged an attitude towards practicing these exercises that parallels the attitude of an athlete building strength and fitness for their sport. F3, F4 and F5 often caused the region of the *abductor digiti minimi* (the skeletal muscle situated on the ulna border of the palm of the hand – as shown in Ex.4 taken from *Gray’s Anatomy*, 36\(^{\text{th}}\) edition\(^{106}\) in the left hand to experience some strain with repetition. Varga often stated that this phenomenon of the weak fourth finger occurred because the third and fourth fingers share the same muscle for movement from the base joint of the fingers whereas the first and second fingers function individually with their own muscle. As the following anatomical diagram (Ex.4) illustrates, this would appear to be incorrect and to explain the phenomenon of the weak fourth finger


would require an informed and detailed understanding of the layers of muscles and tendons that allow the hand to function. The extent to which Varga studied this in detail during his brief time studying medicine during World War Two is unknown.

Ex.4.

When questioned on this issue, Varga argued that if violinists practiced F3 until a small strain was experienced in this *abductor digiti minimi* region and stopped immediately then the next day they would be able to perform the exercise a little bit longer and faster. With time the fourth finger would become strong enough so that no pain would be experienced. Whilst
Varga himself and some students (interestingly, many that commenced studying with him younger than fifteen) were able to perform F3 without physical limitation, it should be considered whether their physiological make up (e.g. finger length and circumference) and technical development at an early age were contributing factors. When I questioned my present teacher Alice Waten (who studied at the Moscow Conservatoire and whose teaching accordingly was influenced by a scientific approach) on this phenomenon, she commented that such a philosophy is outdated and could lead to injury and weakness rather than strength and agility. Personal experience showed that whilst F2 improved left hand agility and rhythm, numerous attempts to cross “pain barriers” when practicing F3, F4 and F5 were unsuccessful.

To deduce whether Varga’s *Fingerübungen* were adopted from previous technical methods, other technical methods were consulted. Of Varga’s direct influences, Hubay does not seem to have composed any left hand drills.

Flesch’s *Basic Studies* for the left hand are composed with the same purpose as Varga’s *Fingerübungen*: to equip the violinist with good physical condition and flexibility of the left hand.\(^{107}\) Beyond this the exercises differ greatly. Where Flesch’s exercises are intended to be practiced slowly without the bow and pedal fingers on three strings, Varga asks his students to increase the speed of his exercises, the left-hand fingers work on a single string at one time, and the exercise is bowed creating an aural result for the left hand movements. Nevertheless, it appears Varga’s physiological philosophy behind his *Fingerübungen* was probably influenced by Flesch:

> Many violinists will tire their hand very quickly. One cannot repeat too often how extremely dangerous it is, not to heed nature’s warning in continuing to practice without resting. It is best to relax the arm frequently in order that the circulation of the blood may again become regular. In about thirty seconds the fatigue will disappear.\(^{108}\)

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\(^{108}\) Ibid, 13.
Flesch’s exercises (Ex. 5.) practice the vertical (1A), horizontal (1B) and chordal (1C - string hopping) movements of the left-hand fingers, where Varga’s exercises are a combination of the vertical and horizontal movements moving upwards in chromatic increments.

Ex. 5.

I A.

I B.
The exercises from Ottakar Sevcik’s *School of Violin Techniques* also reflect similarities with Varga’s *Fingerübungen*. The following exercise from Sevcik’s *School of Violin Techniques* op.1 – Book 1: Exercises in the First Position (Ex.7a) shows a melodic fragment that resembles Varga’s F3 exercise, and his F4 exercise is based on the same finger combinations as the following exercise from Sevcik’s *Preparatory Trill Studies* op.7 - Book 1 (Ex.7b). Instead of repeating fragments, Varga strings them together and has the violinist climb chromatically up the string. As previously stated, Flesch was significantly influenced by Sevcik, and therefore Varga’s approach to left hand technique is likely to have been influenced by this school of instruction.

**Ex.7a.**
Whilst the above discussion shows that Varga’s left hand exercises share some similarities with methods that existed before him, no exercise exactly replicates those of any previous violinist, school or pedagogue. His dexterity exercises are a unique contribution to the field of developing left-hand technique.
Position Changes

Varga approached the study of position changes by dividing them into three types of shifts:

Ex.8a: Only with finger (no hand or arm movement).

Varga suggested having a second person hold the left hand still to isolate finger movement.
Ex.8b: Only with Wrist (No arm movement or finger activity).

To achieve a seamless position change without intermediate sounds Varga reminds his students to ensure the thumb shifts with the rest of the hand and to throw the hand with ‘elegance.’
Ex.8c: Position Changes with the whole arm.

According to Varga, when these position change exercises are executed correctly the sliding sound should not be heard and the position change should sound as if notes were being changed by different fingers. The bow should not ‘cheat’ by releasing pressure to disguise any sliding sound present as this will articulate the position change. Varga suggested thinking of the starting note and the destination note rather than focusing on the journey (the shift itself). He described the movement in slow motion where the finger releases from the commencement stopped note so it is just touching the string and then the wrist or finger is thrown quickly with elegance to the destination note before it is pressed down again (Ex.9).
Following analysis of other pedagogues it was discovered that this shifting action is described similarly by Mimi Zweig, a violin professor in Indiana. She describes the motion of sliding the finger lightly up the surface of the string as a ‘finger diet.’ A comment promoting the opposite phenomenon is mentioned in Kolneder’s *The Amadeus Book of the Violin*: Wilhelm Trendelenburg, professor of physiology at the University of Tübingen who wrote *The Natural Foundations of String Instrument Playing*, controversially stated that “if a very large move to a higher position is called for, it is best to stop the bow during the move of the left hand.” As Kolneder points out, however, such statements are problematic as Trendelenburg lacked artistic experience to be qualified to write on the subject of violin playing.

Varga’s approach to studying shifts provides the violinist with the ability to shift using three different physical movements; however, (and he also acknowledged) the arm shift is utilised most frequently. Varga would frequently emphasise the need for a more relaxed left arm the greater the shift distance. The division of the shift into the finger, wrist and whole arm shift is excellent preparation for isolating finger, wrist and arm vibrato. When comparing Varga’s shift exercise to past philosophies on shifting, no identical exercise was identified. It

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111 Ibid.
is interesting to compare Varga’s exercise to other position-change exercises preparatory to the scale. Exercises in Sevcik’s *Shifting the Position and Preparatory Scale Studies op. 8* focus on all combinations of shifts in small fragments of the scale (Ex.10). The earlier exercises focus on one position change only, and the latter include multiple position changes within the one fragment. In contrast, Varga’s exercises move through all position changes using the same finger along one string.

**Ex.10.**

Sevcik’s exercises also study the overtaking finger shift (Ex.11.) and shifting between two different fingers which is not practiced in Varga’s exercise.
This comparison highlights the unique nature of Varga’s approach to shifting, as he focuses on the conception of the shift rather than the exercise.

Flesch, who believed that shifting was the most difficult aspect of left-hand technique, differentiates between technical shifts and expressive shifts (which originate within the artistic intention of the performer.) He states:

Should a technical shift be executed fast or slowly? ... During practice and study, it should be done slowly, with a gliding, not jumping finger. When performing, it should occur as rapidly and unnoticeably as possible. Practicing glissandi slowly has great advantages because the involved finger and muscles will ‘remember’ the exact distance more accurately, thus avoiding unintentional accents caused by jerky movements.\(^\text{112}\)

Whether Flesch influenced Varga’s philosophy on shifting is doubtful. Whilst both aim for the same smooth but quick position change as the result, achieved by memorising muscle feeling in each position, the methodological path differs vastly where Flesch encourages the use of intermediate notes as a practice tool for the ‘exact determination of the

distance to be covered’ in an isolated shift. Galamian writes no specific exercises to isolate the shifting motion. His philosophy focuses on the motion of the hand frame whereas Varga’s concentrated on the tactile aspect and memory for finger location. Interestingly, Galamian states that “the speed of execution of the shifting motion should be proportional to the general tempo of the passage.” Whilst Varga, like Galamian, encouraged variable speeds when considering shifting within the context of repertoire, it was noted that regular practice of his exercise created a tendency to approach all shifts with a more aggressive throwing motion on a subconscious level which was not always appropriate to more lyrical repertoire.

Scales

When Varga commenced teaching in Detmold he was asked how one can differentiate between Hungarian and German students. He responded with a somewhat controversial statement that “in Hungary we learnt scales in order to be able to play Beethoven. In Germany one often plays Beethoven to be able to play scales.” For Varga, scales were of paramount technical importance, yet he described practicing them as a very tedious and unrewarding routine that can consume too much time. Varga essentially prescribed his students scales from the Flesch (originating from Sevcik) System. It is possible that this mechanical nature of practicing scales created his own approach to turn scale practice instead into a stamina building exercise beginning with the Flesch scale system on the G string and continuing directly into the three-octave system on all strings: (Ex.12 – C major ). Following the execution of the diminished and dominant seventh arpeggios on C, Varga also inserts a diminished arpeggio on the supertonic preceded with a C. He also adds C minor broken thirds

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115 Noltensmeier, Geiger von Beruf, 87.
between the C major broken thirds and chromatic scale in Flesch’s system. In addition Varga notates numerous different fingerings to the Flesch system.
Varga advised his students to always prepare left-hand fingers in the correct shape so they go down where required when practicing his scales. To achieve optimum rhythmic articulation he suggested keeping the fingers on the string for the longest time possible. He encouraged aiming for a strong and mature tone with weight from the right arm and looking for a different sonority on each string. In line with his philosophy on position changes, he often advised students not to cheat with the bow during position changes (release pressure) and also to avoid bow accents to achieve a seamless tone.

**Approach to Bowing**

Varga credited Hubay for bringing the Franco Belgian school of Vieuxtemps to Budapest:

> As I look back I think it was a very good school, less perhaps for the left hand, but for the right arm it offered fluent and sensitive bowing.\(^{117}\)

Varga advised his students to think of the bow in equal thirds: The motion in the lowest third is controlled by the upper arm, the middle third by the forearm and the upper third by a combination of both by stretching the forearm and pushing forward with the upper arm. On the action of drawing up and down bows Varga’s approach to bowing was similar to Galamian, which seems logical as Galamian was also influenced by the French school of bowing as mentioned in Chapter 2.\(^{118}\) Varga prepared numerous handouts for his students for detailed practice of his bowing approach, characterised with graphics to indicate bow division for the various exercises. These exercises can be viewed in Appendix 2.

\(^{117}\) Applebaum and Roth, *The Way They Play: Illustrated Discussions with Famous Artists and Teachers*, vol 10, 185.

On executing a successful bow change Varga said that “one must consider the weight of the bow, the weight of the hand, and the weight of the arm. If you change all three at the same time it won’t work right. Let the bow advance and change with the wrist before moving the arm.”119 In describing this concept to his students Varga often suggested approaching bow changes with the feeling of a figure eight motion. The seed for this phenomenon was planted in the early twentieth century when the physician Adolf Steinhausen (1859-1910), an amateur violinist and pianist, systematically investigated the physiological bases of playing both instruments.120 In his publication Die Physiologie der Bogenführung (The Physiology of Bowing) he states that the form of the figure eight is suitable for exposing the mechanics of a bow change.121 Steinhausen also initiated the theory that remains valid to the present day that the upper arm should lead in all bowings, the hand follows and the role of the wrist and of the fingers is only a transmitting and mediating one.122 Flesch states his preference for this new phenomenon in The Art of Violin Playing,123 but it must not have translated to Varga in this context as he used the image of the figure-eight motion to argue the exact opposite as indicated in the quote on the previous page.

The following photos (Ex.13) taken from Applebaum and Roth, The Way they Play vol. 10 of Varga’s bowing action up close support Varga’s preference for the Franco-Belgian bow hold as defined by Flesch:124

The index finger presses down on the stick in a somewhat sideways manner, the bow touching the finger near the lower end of the middle section of the finger, which is thus pushed considerably forward in the direction of the tip of the bow. There is a

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120 Walter Kolneder, The Amadeus Book of the Violin, 444.
122 Carl Flesch, Book 1, 38.
123 Ibid.
124 Flesch categorized bow hold into 3 styles; the older German bow-hold, the newer Franco-Belgian bow-hold and the newest Russian bow hold.
space between the index and middle finger. The thumb is across from the middle finger.¹²⁵

Similar to Flesch’s definition of the Franco-Belgian bow hold Varga advocated a slight (not exaggerated) inward rotation of the forearm from the elbow joint. As Ex.13 indicates, despite Varga’s promotion of the aforementioned nineteenth-century bowing concepts he did not advocate a low, body hugging elbow defined by Flesch as ‘old school.’¹²⁶ This bow hold was illustrated in Spohr’s violin method and is evident in pictures of Joachim. It was used as most teachers believed that all bowing movements could be executed by the wrist.¹²⁷ This philosophy was not abandoned until the early twentieth century with Steinhausen’s recognition that the sources of bow-arm strength were upper arm and forearm.

¹²⁶ Ibid, 38.
Ex.13.

a) [Image of a person playing a violin]

b) [Image of a close-up of a person's hand and fingers on a violin]

c) [Image of a person looking at a piece of paper]

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128 Applebaum and Roth, *The Way They Play: Illustrated Discussions with Famous Artists and Teachers*, vol 10, 192(a), 193(b), 184(c).
Possibly on account of the composition of his own exercises Varga did not appear to rely too heavily on assigning large amounts of etudes to his students – at least from my personal experience this appeared to be the case. He did, though, and perhaps as a result of the Franco-Belgian influence via Hubay and Gabriel, refer frequently to Kreutzer etudes. He employed Kreutzer’s second etude for his bowing method and for practicing forty-two various bow strokes (Appendix 3). One of the most successful teachers of the Soviet School, Abram Yampolsky (who taught on the faculty of the Moscow Conservatoire until his death in 1956), was another pedagogue to employ this Kreutzer Etude for the study of some forty-six bowing combinations. Interestingly very few of Yampolsky’s combinations overlap with Varga’s, however whether Varga’s use of the specific forty-two bowing strokes in Kreutzer’s second study were unique to him was unable to be determined from sources consulted. Varga also varied Kreutzer’s second and eighth etude in double stops (Appendix 4) so that his students would not test notes against random tones, but against those that would assist the left-hand fingers to memorise the correct and very small finger angles required to execute perfect intonation. The chosen chordal combinations create overtones which enable the student to perceive the correctness of intonation. Varga encouraged students not to ‘ice-skate’ (i.e., remain indecisive or ambivalent) when assessing whether the intonation of a chord is correct. One must, rather, prepare each chord quickly and play with confidence. If the intonation is false then the process needs to be repeated again. The concept of different ‘kinds’ of intonation was very important to Varga:

The relationship between two or more notes which is generally termed harmony is a very complex matter. In itself the relationship of two notes to one another represents a physical state of tension and this causes a corresponding feeling of tension in the listener ... . Between the tempered scale and a ‘tangy’ gypsy style of intonation there exists a vast range of minute degrees. These nuances are particularly striking in the

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intervals of the third and the sixth. My personal view is that an F sharp which may suit well a piece of music by Bach is not suited to one by Mozart. Likewise an F sharp in a composition by Tchaikovsky, even in the same key, must sound differently from one in Mozart.\(^{130}\)

In addition to Kreutzer etudes, Varga often allocated small bravura and concert works for the application of technical principles, for example, Paganini’s *Moto Perpetuo* for left-hand technical facility and stamina, and the arrangement of Massenet’s *Thais Meditation* for vibrato and smooth bowing, particularly bowing changes.

**APPROACHES TO PRACTICE, PERFORMANCE AND INTERPRETATION**

Students should always be given pieces below their technical ability. It’s impossible to learn technique through pieces – it only leads to disappointment. Too often students jump in and play big works thinking ‘the more difficult the work I am playing, the better violinist I am.’ Much of this is the fault of teachers who attempt to speed up the progress of a student by giving him pieces which are beyond him.\(^{131}\)

Varga believed that when one possessed technical ability then music could be made with ease and joy. “One shouldn’t have to sweat through music, only when practicing particular technical exercises when preparing to play a technical work.”\(^{132}\) Perhaps this is the philosophy behind Varga’s controversial statement “in Hungary we learnt scales in order to be able to play Beethoven. In Germany one often plays Beethoven to be able to able to play scales.”\(^{133}\) To reiterate his intention for formidable technique Varga states:

> When someone plays Bach or Mozart well but can play Tchaikovsky, it makes the Bach better – and if they can play Paganini it will be even better. My idea of teaching is that the technique should be better than the piece asks for – the difference between your musical experience and the technique should not be too big.\(^{134}\)


\(^{131}\) Wayne Kiley, “Ventures Abroad,” 126.

\(^{132}\) Noltensmeier, *Geiger von Beruf*, 87.

\(^{133}\) Ibid.

\(^{134}\) Tully Potter, “A Fiery Philosopher,” 385.
Varga had numerous useful suggestions for organising practice of a particular piece, strategies that may seem obvious at first, yet frequently neglected by many violinists, students or professionals alike. He was not a proponent of repeatedly playing through repertoire in an indulgent fashion in the practice room. He suggested writing brackets around the bars where a piece presents technical challenges and coming to the practice room with the purpose of practicing those segments only (with numerous repetitions) until they are perfect. Like Flesch, Varga encouraged students to only practice a passage with one purpose in mind at a time, and similarly he also advocated slow practice. In addition, Varga encouraged the seemingly reverse psychological task of playing a piece above tempo, so that it would feel easier when returning to the intended tempo. He often suggested practicing passage work in slurs, likely an influence from Flesch who described the purpose of such practice as a method to isolate left hand difficulties, string crossings and shifts.  

He also suggested practicing piano passages in forte, equating playing in piano with the idea of a person unable to see what he is doing without enough light. As the passage improves, the dynamic presence can increase. Varga never quantified how much we should practice. He would often reiterate that one should not necessarily practice eight hours a day, but be mentally occupied with the violin, its repertoire and its interpretation for eight hours a day. On dividing practice time and approaching practice in the detailed fashion outlined by Flesch, Varga did not offer so much advice. His thoughts on practice were blunt but simple:

The person who stops practicing when they are tired is lazy.

The person who stops practicing when the clock says so is stupid.

The person who stops practicing when they have achieved their goals is smart.  

On performing, Varga emphasised the importance of approaching a piece like running a race. Smart runners have spurts of energy and relaxation – they are not under pressure the

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whole time. Identify which sections require muscle tension and strength for good technical execution so that the mind can instruct the body to relax in more lyrical sections requiring less physical energy. For example, *spiccato* on one string requires little effort, but with string crossings energy is required from the upper arm. This emphasis on pacing and timing of relaxation and recovery is not an element of early string pedagogy. It is highly relevant to violin playing especially since the turn of the twentieth century when players were required to consider issues of stamina as a result of needing to produce a large tone to perform in large concert halls and compete with the ever-growing symphony orchestra. This resulted in the movement to involve the upper arm in the bowing action as mentioned previously.

Steinhausen draws our attention to the concept of ‘*loslassen*’ (to let go) when he encourages a consciousness of muscle feeling and being able to differentiate between states of tension and relaxation.\(^{137}\) The phenomenon of relaxation and recovery has gradually become a common element in violin pedagogy towards the latter half of the twentieth century. Whilst Galamian did not proceed as far as discussing measuring doses of energy throughout practice and performance, he did pave the initial stones for this realm of thinking when he introduced the idea of correlation (described in detail in Chapter 2) as a means of achieving fluid technique.

Varga’s teaching of interpretation was focussed on high technical achievements. Issues of intonation, rhythm, tempo and articulation were a priority and attention to historical and aesthetic context less so. As his recordings reveal, Varga’s artistic personality could be defined by his impressive technical capabilities. He viewed technique and musicianship as an integrated whole and his recordings indicate that his flamboyant technique drove the musical journey in his interpretations. In general Varga gave students photocopies of repertoire to be studied with his fingerings and bowings which did take away some responsibility for individual interpretation. If a student could convince him that his own fingerings or bowings

were logical, then he welcomed the idea. He did, however, constantly encourage students to search for varied possibilities of phrasing by experimenting with bow division, point of contact and vibrato. He encouraged listening to great artists and would often come to the class with a recording to demonstrate his ideals. Treating melodies like words and sentences in speech was important to Varga and highlighted in his esoteric statement:

> It is through this ability to combine notes and to produce phrases and melodies that music can develop into that high art which has the capacity to express and convey the whole range of human feelings, thoughts and imagination as far as the realms of philosophy.  

The literature consulted has proven that the need to detach the ego from the performance whilst maintaining a search for personal expression was of paramount importance for the most successful interpretations for Varga. He frequently emphasised that “we should prepare a performance to present to an audience like a meal prepared by a chef for his customer,” as the performance is a vehicle for transmitting the composer’s ideas and intentions for the audience to experience and not for the self gratification of the performer’s ego. This statement harks back to the description of Baillot’s philosophy in outlined in Chapter 2:

> “Seek counsel, not praise ... the true artist counts less on being praised than on evoking response.”

Although this statement was employed in a different context the implication is the same. A great interpreter does not think about his personality and accepts that it simply exists detached from the artistic experience. This is a somewhat Nietzschean view and indicative of Varga’s (like Baillot) extremely complex and entertaining character.

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CHAPTER 4

TIBOR VARGA’S PHILOSOPHY OF TEACHING

The analysis presented in this thesis so far clearly shows that Tibor Varga has made a significant contribution to the technical and methodological realms of violin pedagogy in addition to broadening the virtuosic and interpretative possibilities of violinists through a history of performance documented in an extensive discography. This chapter will analyse Varga’s philosophical approach to playing and teaching and will discuss the educational advantages and disadvantages of his approach. Analysis of pedagogical research that discusses the psychological effects of positive and negative criticism from music educators will be used to determine whether Varga’s teaching approach was sound, and if such an approach can function in the twenty-first century. A comparison with the teaching method of twentieth-century violinist and pedagogical leader Dorothy DeLay (who promoted a more nurturing psychological approach in her violin studio) will help to place the discussion in context. The psychological analysis represents a view based on personal experience and documented supporting evidence and is not an attempt to make a conclusive assessment of Varga’s personality.

Possibly confused about the definition of his own pedagogy, Varga was of the view that his pedagogical philosophy was untimely and seemed the exact opposite to many:

I don’t want to train people and teach them to do things. I want to work as long as possible with people till they understand why, and then I like them to go their own way. This is the total opposite of many other methods where the emphasis is on imitating and training, and the reasons why things are so remains in the background. I achieve the best results with students who are prepared to search on their own. I really can’t begin with students who stand before me and ask me to make them a famous violinist.  

141 Ralf Noltensmeier, Geiger von Beruf, 84.
During personal study with Varga I observed that numerous violin students, teachers and professionals commented that many of Varga’s views were untimely, however in a positive and negative sense. As mentioned in Chapter 2, in his preface to *The Art of Violin Playing* Carl Flesch states his desire to equip violinists with the ability to think logically for themselves and function as their own teacher.\(^ {142}\) The above comment from Varga also encouraging the thinking violinist indicates that Flesch is likely to have influenced Varga’s philosophy as quoted above. Flesch’s writing style in *The Art of Violin Playing* reveals a tendency to typecast groups of violinists, teachers and students, sometimes with a hint of a cynical tone. From personal experience this tendency permeated to Varga’s manner in the teaching studio. As an example Varga was asked in an interview for his opinion about masterclasses and made the following comment:

> At the so called Mastercourses I have experienced the following categories of student: The first take part to obtain certified proof they studied with a particular name to make their CV more impressive. A second group come to receive praise and acknowledgement from a teacher. The third category, which is rare, are those who really want to learn something.\(^ {143}\)

Perhaps this tendency to categorise with the intention of disqualifying is reflective of an accepted style in communication present in the first half of the twentieth century, particularly in regions of Europe (Hungary, Austria, Germany) where both Flesch and Varga were active during their respective careers. Interestingly, and to help further explain this mentality, an example of such communication was encountered personally as a member of the Sydney Symphony in June 2011 when performing under a world renowned conductor. The conductor came to the podium with memorable anecdotes and quite controversial statements like:

> I don’t understand why string players spend all their time applying rosin at the frog and the tip yet I never see them playing in these parts of the bow! (At this particular moment he was requesting the string players to use more bow.)


\(^ {143}\) Ralf Noltensmeier, *Geiger von Beruf*, 84.
Is this intimidation and simply a lack of sensitivity that is intended to make musicians feel foolish and stupid? Or is it a calculated way of making a musician feel inadequate for forgetting to execute the conductor’s suggestion that being told in such a guileless manner will force them never to forget to use the full length of the bow again? Some performers need to establish a sense of power over others to determine that their interpretation and view prevails. Establishing power by deriding or disqualifying others can create a sense of self confidence and security for that leader. The perceived result at Sydney Symphony was simply that the conductor was a great musician, with an ‘old school’ mentality, and the reaction to such a manner, despite the conductor’s evident musicianship, was in general negative and resistant. The conductor had been a violin student of Heifetz and Gingold before his conducting career unfolded. Interestingly and ironically, Gingold had a forward-thinking mentality for his time:

We cannot remain in the past. That the past was one of greatness, and that today’s performances are less so, is simply not true. Styles and performers change. Today, I believe, there is greater scholarship. What I mean is, that young players studying Bach, for example, are very particular as to which edition they study. They are fastidious about a mordent, a trill, a phrase, and whether a chord is short in order to return to the fugal theme. They give this a good deal of thought. Years ago this was not so. Two things were important: beauty and sound. Today we are more analytical regarding violinistic equipment, such as the manner in which we hold the bow. Each detail is probed. The trend is toward good thinking along with good playing. Yes, the standards have risen tremendously.¹⁴⁴

The fact that this flexible mentality did not translate from Gingold to his student indicates that such cynical approaches might stem from some form of inner conflict rather than a thoughtful directional or pedagogical approach. It seems both Varga and the conductor mentioned have struggled to change their means of communication in an era where the more nurtured and subjective approach to communication is more practiced and accepted across all industries. Of

course, cultural influence should not be discounted as a reason for a certain psychological approach to communication. It would be unfair to accuse either Varga or the conductor of remaining in the past, as evidenced by their recordings, openness to performing the works of new composers, and in Varga’s case, the encouragement of students to think for themselves. Varga, however, frequently made statements that reflected his bias towards the past as an era of greater artistry in the sense described by Gingold above:

When I was very young, people made a pilgrimage to hear the recitals given by Fritz Kreisler, to experience his art and his p-playing and to be transported to a different entrancing world, by his musical outpourings which spoke of a deep understanding of human nature. Today, usually the concert halls are filled to let the public admire the manner in which a young girl skips through the Sibelius concerto with absolute security, every note in its place, but with a complete disregard of its content of feeling and emotion, rather like a circus acrobat swinging from one trapeze to another as though gravity did not exist. ... Musical education today is in a very serious position; its objectives are being questioned and music itself has become a field of experimentation. Although I have never come across a word from Bach, Haydn or Mozart which would lead me to play a quaver written by them as a semi-quaver, the world is full of prophets who always knew better and know better than the composers themselves.\textsuperscript{145}

This comment suggests Varga’s guileless teaching manner stemmed from this sense of resentment towards performances and interpretations in the twenty-first century that have contradict the style of playing he idolised in the great violinists and musicians that inspired him in his younger years. As Flesch states:

Every pioneering performing artist ... (was) representative of the interpretative ideal of beauty of a particular epoch, until there was a change in taste. It follows that the teacher, too, must go with ‘his time’. Only the ‘sacred fire’ of his spirit ... can lay claim to ... enduring validity.\textsuperscript{146}

Fortunately, Varga had an incredibly fiery spirit that survived in all his recordings and inspired his students until his last day. His sustained sound characterised by fast vibrato

\textsuperscript{145} Tibor Varga, “The possibilities and limitations of teaching,” Address at the European String Teacher’s Association Conference, 3.
\textsuperscript{146} Carl Flesch, \textit{The Art of Violin Playing book 2}, 100
shaded with his broad left-finger palette, his incredibly virtuosic technique and his immaculately turned phrasing indeed represented the interpretative ideal of violin playing in the first half of the twentieth century – if we think of respected violinists such as Henryk Szeryng (1918 – 1988), Isaac Stern (1920 – 2001) and Ruggiero Ricci (1918 – ). His resistance to move with changing tastes and trends, particularly as a teacher, was evident through various aspects mentioned previously such as encouraging students to play without a shoulder rest to performing baroque and classical repertoire with voluminous vibrato. During personal study with Varga he consistently provided his own manuscripts with his suggested bowings, fingerings, articulations and phrasings and rarely adhered to *Urtext* editions or suggested his students study them, although he would unlikely have been opposed to the idea. One has to question whether so many prescribed notations contradicted Varga’s intention to encourage students to think for themselves. A student should not be denied access to the composer’s original intentions, however, and Varga’s convincing and inspiring interpretations possibly explain why students rarely questioned his teaching methods. The conclusion we can draw from this analysis is that Varga was probably dealing with issues of inner conflict, someone who said one thing and meant another and whose complexity provided a field of tension in which he himself was not completely intellectually at ease.\footnote{Goetz Richter, written comments to author, 17 August 2011.}

**CARL FLESCH’S VIEWS ON TEACHING AND CRITICISM**

Given Varga’s passion for teaching and close association with Carl Flesch, it is likely he read Flesch’s *The Art of Violin Playing*, including the section on teaching, at some point in his career. Given that Varga’s teaching style was highly critical, it is useful to briefly discuss Flesch’s comments on teaching and his criticism at this point. Flesch defined teaching as follows:

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\footnote{Goetz Richter, written comments to author, 17 August 2011.}
Teaching means transmitting to others one’s accumulated knowledge. The goal of violin teaching is the training and development of new generations of violinists, by giving them the chance to profit from the experience of present generations. However traditional rules should only be without reservation adopted by the younger generation, if it has proven that these rules also relate well with contemporary concepts of beauty as far as the performance of music is concerned.\textsuperscript{148}

In this section, Flesch frequently emphasises the importance of a teacher’s ability to transmit their knowledge in addition to their knowledge capacity itself:

In order to be able to judge the accomplishment of his student, (the teacher) has to approach the personality of that student in an objective manner and to respect it, even if it conflicts with his own. In his advice and actions he must take into account the physical and spiritual-emotional characteristics of the student .... Self-control is an essential quality for the teacher.\textsuperscript{149}

Flesch reverts to negative stereotyping of weak teachers by describing them as careless, untalented, those who are flowery and verbose and replace specific matter-of-fact criticism with cultural or historic information, and manic.\textsuperscript{150} In Flesch’s opinion, a healthy pedagogy encompasses the qualities mentioned in the previous quote, and can analyse the technical accomplishment of a student and give a factual, calm and matter-of-fact critique. It can bring about improvements through appropriate measures. The model pedagogue would be able to demonstrate his ideas in living sound, particularly with the aim to raise the spiritual-emotional maturity of a student. Flesch defines a teacher who embodies all the characteristics of his ideal pedagogue as an “Artistic Pedagogue.” He acknowledges that such a complete blending of objectivity and subjectivity, of intellectuality and intuition is an ambitious skill to acquire, but that all teachers should aim to achieve it.\textsuperscript{151} With the exception of moments of insensitive criticism, in personal opinion Tibor Varga was an

\textsuperscript{148} Carl Flesch, \textit{The Art of Violin Playing book 2}, 100.
\textsuperscript{149} Ibid, 100 – 101.
\textsuperscript{150} Ibid, 102 – 103.
artistic pedagogue. Despite suffering from arthritis in his later years, he would demonstrate where necessary to illustrate his suggestions and reveal glimpses of his musical genius. He had the ability to analyse, diagnose and remedy technical shortcomings and in general his advice was transmitted in a calm and matter-of-fact manner. The ‘matter-of-fact’ psychological approaches of both Flesch and Varga resulted in what they presumably believed to be an effective means of communicating and conditioning of student behaviour. A paradigm shift occurred in the 1950s with the emergence of scholars like American behaviourist B.F. Skinner who argued for the possibility of human behaviour as a science. This bought about a cognitive revolution and therefore the acceptance of cognition as central to human behaviour and has meant that the phenomenon of ‘matter-of-fact’ or ‘blunt’ criticism employed by ‘old school’ teachers like Varga in his later teaching years was met with emotional results. Interestingly, Flesch promoted a discrete (for his time) attitude when transmitting critical remarks:

The purely human relationship between teacher and pupil is (also) of great importance and must not be underestimated when thinking of the success of the teaching process. It must never evolve into a relationship of ‘judge and accused.’ The basis of a good relationship, on both parts, must always be one of human sympathy. The teacher’s influence should (after all) basically be a calming one, and the student should feel sheltered and secure in his care.\textsuperscript{152}

In the case of advanced players, Flesch advocated a scenario in which the student performs a work without interruption and the teacher writes remarks in the score. Following the performance there would be a calm and matter-of-fact discussion about the remarks. Flesch states:

The advantages of this manner of teaching are very clear. It takes place in a civilised form, and permits the student to ‘abandon himself’ to his concept of the music, without being apprehensive of being ‘dashed’ to earth by some sudden hysterical outcry of the teacher. The latter can, without the necessity of intervening immediately,
calmly listen, formulate his opinion and gain a general impression. The criticism, which then follows, will be more judicious and more objective because it is done retrospectively and no longer subject to the excitement of the moment ... . This calmness after the storm (on both sides) also permits the intellectual participation of the student and the airing of his larger or smaller worries. An atmosphere of mutual trust and calm objectivity takes the place of confused and confusing nervousness.  

Flesch completed his second book of *The Art of Violin Playing* in the 1930s, so perhaps his thoughts were beginning to be influenced by the growing cultural shift in psychological awareness. It is noticeable that Flesch remains agnostic on encouraging any form of positive reinforcement that became prevalent in general pedagogy as the twentieth century progressed as a result of the cognitive revolution. Flesch student Ida Haendel makes a comment that indicates Flesch must have endowed students with some element of praise, however:

> (Flesch) would always allow a pupil to play through without interruption, and when he or she finished, he would ‘slowly’ rise from the chair upon which he sat like a Caesar and read from the notes he had jotted on the score. First came the good points and then the onslaught from his merciless tongue. Although pupils cringed, they seldom bore resentment."  

This comment would have occurred in the period 1926 to 1935 and Haendel stated that she “never personally feared Flesch, but liked and respected him.” The ‘head-washings’ as Flesch himself called them, were just as acceptable to her as the *praise*.

**SCHOLARLY RESEARCH RELATING TO PSYCHOLOGY IN MUSIC TEACHING**

The well-known music education researcher, musician and music educator Susan Hallam has conducted significant quantitative research into psychological interactions in the one-to-one student teacher relationship. She states:

> The development of early motivation to engage with music requires teachers to be relatively uncritical, encouraging and enthusiastic. As students progress, the

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relationship with the teacher changes from one of liking and admiration to respect for their expertise. While at this point constructive criticism is valued, sarcasm or biting criticism does not engender good, positive working relationships and can demotivate pupils. Teacher-pupil relationships, particularly in instrumental lessons, are heavily influenced by the teachers own life history, and in particular past relationships with their own teachers. Student personality characteristics determine the way that teacher behaviours are perceived. There may also be interpersonal dynamics operating in lessons between teachers and pupils of which teachers are not consciously aware. Defence mechanisms of projection and turning passive into active may be adopted by teachers to ward off unpleasant memories relating to their own experience as learners. Past problems of the teacher in relation to their own learning can be projected onto the pupil. Inevitably, some teacher-pupil matches will be better than others, but as professionals teachers should set minimum standards of behaviour which they apply consistently, whatever the circumstances.155

This statement echoes the majority of Flesch’s opinions on criticism in the teaching studio.

Hallam also studied the effect of using praise in instrumental teaching and consolidated the results in the following statement:

Music teachers are often critical in their teaching although praise is more effective in motivating pupils and improving achievement. When positive reinforcement which is contingent on particular behaviours is used, achievement, attitudes and attention are improved, inappropriate social behaviours are reduced and positive attitudes towards music are enhanced. Students can achieve significantly more accurate intonation when contingent reinforcement is used . . . Students can distinguish between praise which is deserved and directed to good performance and that which is used to provide encouragement and gain student co-operation. Teachers need to be honest in their appraisals of performance for them to have meaningful impact.156

Hallam’s comments imply, particularly in the context of Varga’s teaching approach, that whilst positive reinforcement is not essential in all teaching situations, it should be considered on a case-by-case basis where a student’s self esteem may be low and improvement best achieved through praise and highly discrete criticism rather than a matter-of-fact approach.

Social development has, in a way, dictated that a high level of circumspection and integrity be

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156 Ibid, 171.
exercised at all times in the teaching studio, which may not have been an important
requirement during Varga’s peak teaching period.

At this point it is useful to mention the issue of self esteem in the context of the
relationship of the teacher to the student (and therefore performer) which is integral to
revealing the advantages and disadvantages of Varga’s teaching approach. Pianist, teacher and
humanist Barbara Schneiderman emphasises the importance of a positive self image:

Inner peace derived largely from self-esteem is indeed an essential ingredient in
performance. Here I would like to emphasise the importance for a performer of a
positive self-image and the key role of the music teacher in nourishing that image ... .
A performer needs to value himself, to feel that he has a message worth sharing,
something special to contribute. One gives in performance the gift of oneself ... .
(Confidence) must be fed from a deep well of self-esteem that grows gradually over
months and years, evolving with beneficial life experiences.\textsuperscript{157}

She mentions a pertinent speech from pianist Lorin Hollander in which he spoke of “the need
today for the arts in education as a humanizing force in a world badly out of tune.” The
speech urged the student to attribute a state of anxiety experienced in a performance as a
projection of the over-critical teacher felt within. According to Schneiderman, Hollander
suggested that “teachers need to learn to understand and heal their own ‘resentments and
fears’ to become nurturers of healthy-minded students.” Schneiderman acknowledges the
enormity of such a task but that all teachers should consider the importance of increasing
emotional health rather than perpetuating the flaws of the past.\textsuperscript{158} When reflecting on lessons
with Varga during which tears streamed down my face as I was asked “Why do you always
cry? Maybe you would be happier if you didn’t play the violin?” I can now look back and
possibly explain the provoking statement with the following comment from Schneiderman:

\textsuperscript{157} Barbara Schneiderman, \textit{Confident Music Performance – The Art of Preparing}, (Saint Louis: MMB Music,
\textsuperscript{158} Ibid.
Some of us have been exposed, usually at advanced levels, to the harshness and thoughtlessness of people who attempt to teach through intimidation and we have felt the damage. Rather than decry their lack of humanity, ironic in this field of the ‘humanities,’ we must recognise sadly that they too have been deprived of nurturing … . The teacher is a model for the student’s ‘becoming’ – his self realisation … . One can always find something to praise before proceeding with critical comments … . Your student is painting a portrait of himself as reflected by your words and your tone of voice.159

In contrast, it would be wrong to accuse Varga of lacking humanity. Articles devoted to his legacy reveal a strong but wise character, deeply devoted to cultivating the maximum potential from every student. It is likely that his life experience taught him to use guileless statements experienced in lessons that stemmed from his will to realise a student’s potential and communicate in a way he believed to be humane. Perhaps he was simply too absorbed in thinking about musical possibilities and his devotion to his teaching to notice the evolving cognitive perspective around him and absorb that into his teaching approach. The more likely explanation was that Varga was simply ignorant of the fact his moments of cynicism could have a negative as well as positive psychological impact on his students so he ploughed on regardless. We also should not ignore the fact that the success of any teaching approach is also dependent on the resilience and receptivity of students. Some students flourish when challenged by confrontation and even fear and without this may turn complacent and indulgent. From personal understanding of Varga’s character he would have been aware of this tactic and in some cases it was successful and may be the reason he extended the same approach to all students in the hope it would achieve similar success.

OLD SCHOOL VERSUS NEW SCHOOL

Today the characteristics of Varga’s teaching approach are often labelled ‘old school’, but as the discussion of schools of teaching in Chapter two revealed, a school embodies much more

159 Barbara Schneiderman, Confident Music Performance – The Art of Preparing, 8.
than a philosophy of communication, and Varga’s teaching principles have been influenced by too many schools of teaching and individuals for it to be labelled within the boundaries of one particular school. The tendency to classify a mentality like Varga’s as ‘old school’ has risen from the cognitive influence on instrumental teaching, and the teaching approach of pedagogue Dorothy De Lay is a pertinent example to highlight this development in violin instruction.

Dorothy De Lay was born in Kansas in 1917 and studied violin at the Oberlin Conservatory in Ohio and at Michigan State College, where her teacher was Michael Press, a student of Leopold Auer’s. It was here that she took an additional course in psychology. In 1937 she moved to New York to study at the Julliard School, where she studied with Louis Persinger for a short time, and where her chief teachers were Hans Letz and Felix Salmond. Following completion of her artist diploma at Julliard De Lay began to concertize, particularly as a member of the Stuyvesant Trio. Following the Second World War and not enjoying the life of a soloist, DeLay decided to return to serious violin study with Ivan Galamian, who had just been appointed to the faculty at Julliard. In 1948 Galamian invited DeLay to join him as his assistant at Julliard. She continued to work with him for more than twenty years until the two clashed over teaching methods in 1970. Among DeLay's most successful students were Itzhak Perlman, Sarah Chang, Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg, Midori, Gil Shaham and Shlomo Mintz. In 2000 Barbara Louie Sand wrote a book dedicated to DeLay’s legacy; Teaching Genius- Dorothy DeLay and the Making of a Musician. In the chapter devoted to the teaching geniuses of Leopold Auer, Ivan Galamian and DeLay, Sand used the term ‘old school authoritarian’ to describe Galamian’s teaching approach. In her

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162 Ibid, 33 – 34.
163 Ibid, 97.
opinion, this was defined by his heavy emphasis on technical work, and Galamian’s intolerance for students who deviated from fingerings, bowings and some matters of interpretation he advocated.\textsuperscript{164} Itzhak Perlman, who studied with both DeLay and Galamian, described Galamian’s authoritarian teaching style as frightening because he had a particular system that he applied to everybody, and because he could be stern, severe and even harsh. Perlman accredited the greatness of his teaching to the fact that he could teach anyone to play the violin well no matter how talented they were, but he used the same method for everyone. This is where DeLay and Galamian came to their differences and DeLay discontinued as Galamian’s assistant.\textsuperscript{165}

DeLay had no particular teaching method which she adhered to, preferring to describe her teaching as an approach rather than a system. She had a great ability to decipher what students needed and to help them discover that for themselves over time. Above all she had a great belief in positive reinforcement and the power of the spoken word:\textsuperscript{166}

Communicating is a very difficult thing to do. Words are so powerful. Musicians are the worst criminals in being careless about what they say .... You can use words to communicate, you can use words to conceal, you can use words to impress – you can use words for many different motives.\textsuperscript{167}

DeLay strongly believed that the best learning takes place in an atmosphere of support and encouragement. She knew precisely how to cultivate a student’s ‘best’ and didn’t impose her own ideas, but instead she insisted that students think for themselves. She was incredibly sensitive to the fragility of her students’ psychological well being and the fear and sense of unimportance that criticism could instil:

\textsuperscript{165} Ibid, 57.
\textsuperscript{166} Ibid, 64 – 67.
\textsuperscript{167} Ibid, 67.
We had a little neighbour across the street when my kids were little whose father used to call him ‘bucket-head,’ and that’s what he grew up into – a bucket head.\textsuperscript{168}

DeLay was very precise about when to comment and when to remain silent: “I am just sitting here thinking of things to say and then stopping myself from saying them.”\textsuperscript{169} Her teaching approach was strongly founded in the belief that anything was possible, whereas the approaches of both Galamian and Varga believed that teaching was limited by the natural ability or talent of the student. For example, Galamian viewed intonation as a gift which a student either had or did not possess whereas DeLay was convinced it could be taught, and taught well.\textsuperscript{170} In 2000 Varga gave an interesting address at the European String Teachers Association Conference in Odessa on the possibilities and limitations of teaching. He argued that a pupil should be naturally endowed with a minimum of receptivity which enables him to make mental and emotional associations. This skill can be widened and enriched through teaching, but if it does not exist to begin with it cannot be artificially replaced; “you cannot grow a tree without a seed,” thus the teacher has reached his limit.\textsuperscript{171}

DeLay’s teaching approach highlights the shift from the so called ‘old’ to ‘new’ school of violin teaching that occurred in the twentieth century. Varga’s approach was bound by limitations of the possible:

Vibrato is hard to teach. It is like teaching the blind to shoot ... . Even someone without a trained ear can learn to vibrate, at least on a single note. But music does not consist of one note. The next note already demands a different expressivity. You can help only if someone is hampered by a physical shortcoming, but to implant or inject the idea of vibrato is not possible, if the student does not himself feel the impulse to vibrate.\textsuperscript{172}

\textsuperscript{169} Ibid, 71.
\textsuperscript{170} Jessica Duchen, “Response and Responsibility,” 127.
\textsuperscript{171} Tibor Varga, “The possibilities and limitations of teaching,” 1.
\textsuperscript{172} Applebaum and Roth, \textit{The Way They Play: Illustrated Discussions with Famous Artists and Teachers}, vol 10, 184.
In contrast, DeLay acknowledges that whilst inborn talent is a factor in teaching and the subject of much academic research, she cannot do anything about a person’s genetic situation, so she decided to ignore it and focus on the ‘environment.’ Varga also acknowledged the significant influence the spiritual and social environment had on a pupil; however, he determined that it set the boundaries for the possibilities and limitations of teaching. DeLay took complete responsibility for the psychological state of her students:

The power of the words which teachers speak is gigantic. Because it’s so powerful there is a tremendous responsibility for the teacher to speak with care, to speak with consideration. A large part of teaching, it seems to me, is to set things out clearly, in such a way that students are successful and feel successful. When people feel successful at something they love to do it. And if we feel unsuccessful we’re really uncomfortable ... . When we struggle with something we think we can’t do ... we can’t focus the concentration because of the fear. I promise you, children become what they’re told they are.173

When looking at the advantages and disadvantages of both teaching approaches it is hard to fault the methods of DeLay, particularly with respect to the achievements of her students. Possibly the only question that can be asked is if there is a limit to how much responsibility a teacher should assume for their students improvement, psychological well-being and long term success. Susan Hallam states that in simplicity “teachers teach, learners learn. Teachers cannot learn for their students. Effective teaching can be assessed only in relation to its impact on student learning.”174 Perhaps this is the best philosophy to adopt when looking at Varga’s teaching approach. Whilst this discussion has shown that a highly critical and authoritarian manner in the teaching studio is slowly being overtaken by a more nurturing approach, Varga’s teaching was highly effective as evidenced by his impact on student learning and supported by the career achievements of his students. His fiery and passionate personality as well as his teaching method contributed to this success, and the effectiveness of

174 Susan Hallam, Music Psychology in Education, 165.
his teaching is summarised well by Barbara Sand’s statement: “Effectiveness lies in those intangible and still unclonable qualities that constitute a magnetic personality.”
CONCLUSION

Tibor Varga has made a unique and impressive contribution to violin performance and pedagogy. As a player his most noticeable attributes were his phenomenal technique, vibrant vibrato and thoughtful and original attention to phrasing. This is represented by the legacy of his recorded output and that of his students who went on to successful solo careers. As a composer he also left a small contribution to the violin repertoire including his entertaining solo violin work *The Snake – Fantasy for Solo Violin*.\(^\text{175}\)

A detailed analysis of the historical development of violin pedagogy helped to establish that Jenő Hubay (via his student Franz Gabriel) and Carl Flesch were Varga’s primary influences. Due to similarities in personality, philosophical attitude and aesthetics of performance it is likely that Varga’s teaching and playing approach was also indirectly influenced by Pierre Baillot. Chapter 2 also revealed that with time schools of violin playing have become inextricably linked and it is more logical to speak of individual style rather than attempting to categorize schools of violin playing. If Varga’s style of playing and teaching was to be labelled, however, it was established that he embodied the characteristics of the Hungarian school with links to Joachim’s *German School* and the *Franco Belgian* school.

Varga was a strong advocate of technique before music. The presentation of his technical basis revealed that he made numerous original contributions to the field of violin technique including his left-hand *Fingerübungen* and shifting exercises. Varga made strong arguments for playing without a shoulder rest and for the ‘no pain, no gain’ philosophy behind his left hand *Fingerübungen*. Advancements in violin technique based on the new scientific

\(^{175}\) Written in 2002 as a compulsory work for the Tibor Varga Violin Competition and recorded in 2004 by Varga’s student Mirijam Contzen for BMG Ariola Classics.
approach argue, however, that these technical concepts are outdated and detrimental to a player’s muscular health. Research enabled the concrete conclusion that Varga’s scale etude was clearly influenced by Carl Flesch and his bowing approach had its roots in the Franco Belgian style. Varga possibly made a unique contribution to the application of bowing practice to Kreutzer’s second etude and his composition of Kreutzer’s second and eighth etudes in double stops is an original contribution to the development of secure intonation.

Varga had numerous unique ideas on practice. His concept of pacing energy and physical tension versus relaxation and recovery during practice and performance is a highly valuable contribution to violin pedagogy with respect to the increasing demand for physical stamina in violin performance. Varga viewed technique and musicianship as an integrated whole and research revealed that whist Varga somewhat restricted his students’ artistic freedom by prescribing bowings, fingerings and some phrasing, he showed an active interest in developing expression in those motivated to do so. Varga was of the view that the player should not play with a motivation for self satisfaction rather detach the ego from the emotional expression in a performance. Research has shown that this philosophy had its roots in those of Baillot.

The final chapter revealed the complex nature of Tibor Varga’s character which he admits in a statement regarding his inspiration for his composition *The Snake*: “The title is a metaphor for the convoluted paths which an artist has to follow during the course of his life.” Research revealed that as a result of a cognitive revolution in the 1950s there is an enhanced awareness of the power of words to influence behaviour today. For a teacher this implies a huge responsibility to speak with care and consideration. It would seem that whilst Varga’s words were exploding with wisdom, intelligence and advice, he did not appeal to the

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idea of taking responsibility for his students and nurturing them as is far more common today and seems to foster a different kind of success. It seems he was trapped in a pedagogical ideal that functioned successfully for himself as a student, and in general at the time he was studying. In present day teaching both ‘old school’ and more nurturing teaching approaches exist and currently cultural influence seems to influence what type of teacher a student chooses, based on their psychological strengths. Some personalities still carry a pragmatic nature that withstands the guileless manner of teachers like Varga. With cultural environments leaning towards a nurturing style of upbringing, society will likely determine whether ‘old school’ teaching styles will endure in the twenty-first century.

This thesis has shown that Varga’s teaching approach was a clear reflection of his personality and cultural background. Like Galamian, he had the ability to inspire people to work very hard. He was clear minded and had a superior ability to analyse the structure of music. I have argued for the likelihood that Varga carried some resentment about a change in playing style from the so-called golden era of violinists 177, and maybe his violin education was not an entirely positive experience either. Although he had a great reputation, not everyone knows the name of Tibor Varga. When questioned about this he responded:

I think the music syndrome has its own logic, its own price. I wasn’t willing to pay the price to attain a grandiose career as a soloist ... . Establishing a soloist career is tantamount to establishing a big business ... . I found that producing music, playing music, was more interesting than selling it ... . I must say that I am satisfied and happy with what I have done. I like to live for the music, not for the career. 178

Perhaps Varga did not achieve the same fame and fortune as some soloists because he did not want to live his life out of suitcase performing the same concertos countless times a year, but

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177 The golden era refers to the long list of great violinists of the first half of the twentieth century including Kreisler, Heifetz, Elman, Szigeti, Oistrakh, Menuhin, Stern, Perlman....
178 Applebaum and Roth, *The Way They Play: Illustrated Discussions with Famous Artists and Teachers*, vol 10, 204.
his legacy certainly shows that he deserves to be documented among the golden era of violinists.

What this research paper has revealed most prominently through analysing so many teaching approaches is that the most successful have all advocated the necessity to encourage students to think for themselves. This is a legacy of both the ‘old’ school and the contemporary teaching style that needs to survive into the twenty-first century to take classical music into new dimensions.

From a personal stance, my experience with Tibor Varga will have a lasting impact. His words of wisdom have inspired and motivated my career and personal journey. His most enduring advice guides me daily: Be honest with yourself.
Tibor VARGA (1921– )

BACH

Concerto No. 1, in a, BWV1041 vln, strs & c
with CAX 10545/8–1 Columbia DX1586/7
Philharmonia Orch. – Bernard

Concerto No. 1, in a, BWV1041 vln, strs & c
with chamber orch. – Varga Somerset SM607

Concerto No. 2, in E, BWV1042 vln, strs & c
with Berlin Philharmonic Orch. – Archive APM14050, PV2429/30
Lehmann

Concerto No. 2, in E, BWV1042 vln, strs & c
with chamber orch. – Varga Somerset SM607

\[^{179}\text{James Creighton, Discopedia of the Violin.}\]
BARTÓK
Concerto No. 2 (1938) vln & orch.
with Berlin Philharmonic Orch. – Fricay
Dacapo DL9545
Deutsche Grammophon 72075/7,
LPM18006

BEETHOVEN
with Zagreb Philharmonic Orch. – Horvat
CAX. 10549/0-1A
with Philharmonia Orch. – Bernard
BRUCH
with Philharmonia Orch. – Suskind
with Vienna Festival Orch. – Walberg
Guide Internationale du Disque

CHOPIN
Nocturne, Op. 9 pf
No. 2, Nocturne No. 2, in E flat arr. vln & pf Sarasate
with piano
Nocturne No. 20, in c sharp Op. posth pf – arr. vln & pf Miksa
with piano

Dohnányi
Rúrulás Hungarico, Op. 32A pf
No. 7, Moto vivace arr. vln & pf Kreiner
with piano

FALLA
(Vi) Vida Breve (1913) – opera
Danza española arr. – vln & pf Kreiner
with G. Moore pf
CAX 10173-3

FERRARA
Burleska vln & pf
with piano

GESZLER
(Th) Humming top vln & pf
with G. Moore pf
CAX 10169-1

HUBAY
(6) Blumenleien, Op. 30 vln & pf
No. 5, Der Zephir
with piano

KREISLER
Sicilienne & Rigueudon (Francoeur) vln & pf
with piano

MENDELSSOHN
Concerto in e, Op. 64 vln & orch.
with Berlin Philharmonic Orch. – Lehmann
Deutsche Grammophon 72125/6
LPE14015, LFX2053
Heliodor 47409

MOZART
Adagio in E, K281 vln & orch.
with Tiber Varga Chamber Orch. – Varga
Concerto No. 3, in B flat, K207 (cadenzas by Varga) vln & orch.
with Philharmonia Orch. – Suskind
Concerto No. 2, in D, K211 vln & orch.
with chamber orch. – Varga
Concerto No. 3, in G, K216 vln & orch.
with chamber orch. – Varga
Concerto No. 4, in D, K218 vln & orch.
with Tiber Varga Chamber Orch. – Varga
Concerto No. 5, in A, K219 “Turkish” vln & orch.
with Tiber Varga Chamber Orch. – Varga
Rondo in G, K773 vln & orch.
with Tiber Varga Chamber Orch. – Varga

NIELSEN
with Royal Danish Orch. – Semkow

PRINCIPE
(El) Campello (1922) vln & pf
with G. Moore pf
CAX 10169-1

SARASATE
Introduction & Tarantella, Op. 43 vln & pf
with G. Moore pf
CAX 10172-1

STRAVINSKY
Folksied (1940) – ballet orch
No. 5, Berceuse arr. vln & pf Duskin & Stravinsky
with piano

SZYMANOWSKI
(Zy) Mythes, Op. 30 (1915) vln & pf
No. 1, La Fontaine d’Aréthuse
with G. Moore pf
CAX 10168-3

Tchaikovsky
Concerto in D, Op. 35 vln & orch.
with Vienna Festival Orch. – Auberson

Istvan VARKONYI
KODÁLY
with V. Istvai vln & G. Koranyi vla

VARKONYI – KODÁLY

Deutsche Grammophon LPM30164, SLPM13014
Fonit S1
Heliodor 10764
Turaubos TV4063, TV34043

973
TAKE BOW

PUT BOW ON THE D-STRING AT D

BRING FINGERS AND THUMB IN PULL-UP-POSITION

FEEL CONTACT BETWEEN HAIRS AND STRING

RELAX TOTALLY ARM AND SHOULDERS

PULL BOW BY PUSHING BACK ELBOW, FROM D TO E

KLASSE: TIBOR VARGA

UP BOW

DOWN BOW

TAKE BOW

PUT BOW ON THE D-STRING AT D

BRING FINGERS AND THUMB IN PULL-DOWN-POSITION

FEEL CONTACT BETWEEN HAIRS AND STRING

RELAX TOTALLY ARM AND SHOULDERS

PULL BOW BY STRAIGHTENING ELBOW, FROM D TO E
APPENDIX 4

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Pulver, Jeffrey. ”Violin Methods, Old and New.” *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* vol. 50 no.23 (1923/24).


**Online resources and Websites**


The Spohr Society of Great Britain. “Spohr the Composer,” Olivia Stationary.  

