

**Defining an Israeli school of cello pedagogy and
performance through an analysis of the teaching of
Professor Uziahu Wiesel**



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Statement on Sources

I declare that this thesis is my own original work and has not been submitted in to any other institution for the award of a degree.

Signature

Date

Abstract

This research enquiry seeks to define a contemporary Israeli school of cello pedagogy and performance that has evolved out of numerous influences, and particularly the teaching of Wiesel. In analysis of the elements that define this school, a survey of the components that comprise Israeli cello playing is achieved. This adds to the body of knowledge, as this branch of cello pedagogy has not previously been investigated to this extent.

The researcher used the Grounded Theory method to analyse and collate interviews from important cellists connected to the Israeli school. A questionnaire format was employed, which addressed the scope of issues concerning cello playing which help to define a school. These responses were analysed in juxtaposition with more detailed responses and source material from Wiesel. Important works on cello technique and literature that connect to Israel's pedagogical development are also discussed in support of the argument for a distinct school. While opinions on cellistic matters varied between participants, most cellists displayed significant application of Wiesel's methods. These results aided this researcher's thesis that a distinct school of Israeli cello pedagogy and performance can be defined, and is in thriving existence.

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Introduction

Project origins

“New impulses for research must start from what is already known and available if further knowledge is to be gained,” (Stutschewsky, 1932, p. 42). This is the starting point for my research into Israeli cello playing and provides a link to the early founders of the school in question and a springboard for an analysis of what Israel’s contribution to the cello means in the twenty-first century.

Key definitions

The Macquarie dictionary defines the term ‘school’ as: “A body of scholars, artists, writers etc., who have been taught by the same master, or who are united by a similarity of method, style, principles,” (‘school’, Macquarie Online Dictionary, 2011). This concept of school, as loosely defined as it can often be, is the starting point for this investigation into Israeli cello playing. This research project will examine contemporary Israeli cello pedagogy and evaluate the extent to which a truly Israeli school of cello playing can be defined. The numerous international influences in Israeli string pedagogy will be assessed and the significance of each will be evaluated in defining a distinct school.

The concept of ‘school’ is widely debated amongst string players, and is only defined by the evolution of history and performance practice. However in

commencing this research project, background reading was undertaken through study of key works of cello technique.

Cello playing naturally developed partly in reaction to the developments in schools of violin playing, which have always been more advanced and documented both in the extent of progress and the actual time of occurrence. While significant physical resemblances make observing players of the French, Franco-Belgian, Russian and German schools of violin playing immediately evident, these differences are far less defined in schools of cello playing, and have often overlapped and also become diluted. Naturally this process has happened over many years and leads to the end result of modern-day playing, which is far more international. However, the dilution of schools of tradition is less defined even now in violin playing, as certain traits of bow-hold, *vibrato*, stroke and violin position remain in violinists whose training reflects a certain school.

The many great violinists and pioneers of the nineteenth-century clearly influenced the playing of cellists through chamber music collaboration. Both Julius Klengel¹ and Diran Alexanian² played chamber music with Joseph Joachim, and musical ideas, translating into technical processes (particularly in the use of *vibrato* and types of articulation) could not avoid being absorbed and then

¹ German cellist and pedagogue 1855–1933.

² Armenian cellist and pedagogue 1881–1954.

furthered in cellists' playing. This process of dilution and influence of schools can be seen in the coalescence of traditions, which make up modern-day Israeli cello playing, which this thesis aims to define.

As the researcher's study progressed, an important distinction in defining an Israeli school emerged—the ambiguity surrounding what it means to be Israeli. Since any individual of Jewish background can claim Israeli citizenship, and the early origins for Jewish string-playing pre-dated the State of Israel, this makes defining an Israeli school complicated, and is reflected in a number of Israeli cellist's doubt over whether there truly can be an Israeli school. However, technicalities and semantics aside, this research has revealed a clear pedagogical tradition, which can be viewed as a distinct school.

Background

The analytical body of my research will comprise a questionnaire answered by important Israeli or Israeli-trained cellists and a detailed interview with Professor Uziahu Wiesel, highlighting aspects of technique, pedagogy and the history of cello playing in Israel. Qualitative analysis of this data will enable a clearer picture of the state of cello playing and pedagogy in Israel. The methods of important Israeli pedagogues will be assessed through reference to the individual cello pedigree of former teachers. An evaluation of the established pedagogical method will be made with specific reference to technical and musical exercises and approaches that

develop individual students' abilities. In the last decade, Dr David "Dudu" Sella, President of The Israel Cello Society, has created an organisation that highlights the strength of cello pedagogy and performance in twenty-first-century Israel, while acknowledging the debt to past traditions and schools of other countries, as well as the importance of the future development of cello playing. Its goals, as stated on the ICS website are: "To encourage and advance cello and chamber music playing by initiating concerts, master classes and seminars. To encourage original Israeli compositions for cello, and for writing and publishing professional articles in Israel and the world. To promote contact among cellists in Israel," (2009, www.israel-cello.com, accessed 31 May 2011).

The existence of the ICS is testimony to the evolution of an Israeli school of cello playing and provides a valuable forum for the furtherance of specific Israeli ideas about cello playing and pedagogy. This organisation includes many internationally acclaimed cellists as members, and regularly holds the Israel International Cello Congress, as well as other concerts and events, promoting the cello in Israel.

As there is little existing literature directly addressing Israeli Cello Pedagogy, this research aims to fill a gap in the body of knowledge, and help to map out an approach to cello playing that could be of considerable benefit to both cello teachers and students. Indeed, the field of cello pedagogy in general is far less

researched and documented than that of the violin, and some of the reasons for this will be addressed as part of this research.

The genesis for this thesis lies in my background of studies from 2002–2009 with the distinguished Israeli cello pedagogue, Professor Uziahu Wiesel. Born in Tel-Aviv in 1927 in the former Palestine, Wiesel has taught generations of highly successful cellists and pedagogues, and dramatically influenced the cellistic landscape of Israel. His pedagogical pedigree (see Appendix D: Cello Pedigree) includes studies with Felix Salmond, the recently deceased Bernard Greenhouse, (both at the Juilliard School in New York), Diran Alexanian and Pablo Casals in Prades. These pedagogues have influenced the development of cello pedagogy worldwide, and a distillation of their ideas can be found in the existing Israeli cello training systems. Wiesel's teaching expands these influences through ideas of his own which have developed over years of experience (Ben-Zur, 2008).

Following his return to Israel in the late 1950s, Wiesel became a founding member of the internationally successful Tel-Aviv String Quartet and forged a prominent solo and chamber music career, collaborating with numerous important Israeli and Jewish artists, including Yehudi Menuhin, Jacqueline du Pre, William Kroll, Pnina Salzman and others. His awards and honours include the 1953 Piatigorsky Prize, the 1957 Moscow International Concours and the 1961 Pablo Casals International Concours, as well as the 1975 Israeli Council of Culture and

Arts National Prize and the Chevalier du Violoncelle (1996) from Indiana University (ICS 2009, www.music.indiana.edu/html/som/ejmccf/honorees/wiesel.html, accessed 31 May 2011). He has also had a strong association with distinguished Israeli composers including Josef Tal, Paul Ben-Haim, and Odon Partos, commissioning, serving as dedicatee and premiering many works for solo cello, thus expanding the awareness of the cello in Israel and developing cello technique in a distinctly Israeli manner. This connection has continued through the dedication of several Israeli works (including *Yizkor* by Ayala Asherov, www.ayalaasherov.com/music/compositions/176/yizkor.html) for the cellist and teacher most closely associated with his methods, Hillel Zori (Shiffers, 1982).

While developing his performing career, Wiesel began his career as a teacher, gradually developing his system through his initial work at private institutions for young musicians through to his Professorship at the Rubin Academy of Music at Tel-Aviv University (where Odon Partos, also a violist, was director). He has regularly given international Masterclasses, contributed to International cello congresses and festivals and served as a member of numerous International Competition juries. Based in Australia since 1999, Wiesel now teaches at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music (University of Sydney) and has taught at the Australian National Academy of Music and given masterclasses throughout the country. My own studies with Wiesel arose indirectly out of recommendations from student colleagues in London and have profoundly

influenced my development as a cellist, understanding of the instrument, and identification with perhaps the most noble of instruments.

Uzi Wiesel

Wiesel was the first cellist to perform the complete Bach cello suites in Israel, and also the cello concerti of Berio, Ligeti and Lutoslawski. He was a founder member of the Tel Aviv String Quartet (1959–93) and was appointed professor at the Tel Aviv University music department in 1965. His initial teacher was Josef Weissberger, who had been a student of Hugo Becker, and his subsequent teacher was Daniel Hofmekler, a student of Julius Klengel. Both of these teachers had been members of the then newly formed Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, which had been founded by the great violinist Bronislaw Huberman (Paynter, 1980). Wiesel discussed the rich cultural fabric of his country while it was in its infancy:

Huberman really saved a lot of lives of musicians that came to Israel to form the Philharmonic. They were the best players ever...they came from Germany, Poland, Hungary, Russia sometimes...and whoever he'd pick up and talk with, they brought with them a certain upbringing, cultural way of playing without really knowing *why*. They were used to it, they were taught like this and they played like this and they never asked the question *why*?

(U. Wiesel, personal communication, 28 January 2011)

This richness of culture was undoubtedly advantageous to Wiesel, though the lack of awareness he points to here reflects the researcher's question regarding the

balance between intuition and analysis. He states: “It brought something cultural and when you listened to the people there playing chamber music, they’re good players and sometimes inspired, so you got to see yourself the cultural spirit,” (U. Wiesel, personal communication, 28 January 2011). In discussing both Weissberger and Hofmekler, Wiesel implies that he had to form his own ideas, which eventually led him to expand his horizons abroad:

What he (Weissberger) taught me was centered in the wrist and the fingers of the bow- arm.... and then, when I changed to my next teacher (Hofmekler) who was the concertmaster of the Philharmonic, I discovered he studied with Klengel, together in the same class where Piatigorsky studied. Through him I discovered suddenly that I have an arm, not only wrist and fingers. Not that he could explain anything or show me anything, just ‘I show,’ I looked at him and that’s that. So I acquired everything just by random. (U. Wiesel, personal communication, 28 January 2011)

Perhaps this discovery of the whole arm as one unit was an early formation of the idea which he continued to promote in his method, and which Vienna Philharmonic Principal cellist Tamas Varga refers to in his interview.

Wiesel studied at the Jerusalem Academy of Music in Tel Aviv, where significant influences included the violinist Emil Hauser (leader of the first Budapest Quartet) and the composer Josef Tal. In 1950 Wiesel left Israel for New York, where he auditioned for the class of Felix Salmond at the Juilliard School. In his audition, Wiesel chose to play from the Alexanian edition of the Bach Suites,

which angered Salmond, as “he could not abide this controversial pedagogue,” (Campbell, 2004, p. 122). Wiesel recalled in an interview with Margaret Campbell: “When I went to the Juilliard, I made the mistake of playing the Alexanian fingering of the Bach and then I didn’t get the scholarship for Salmond’s class. So then I come to the first lesson and he wanted to destroy me, by saying everything is wrong, bad and awful,” (Campbell, 2004). A period of discovery followed, as Wiesel recalled: “Then suddenly towards the end of the year I heard Fournier and I went to listen to every concert and I suddenly saw that there is an order to the left hand (and technique). And then I went home and practiced about, I remember sixteen hours a day, and practiced and practiced the Schumann Concerto, brought it to Salmond and that was my last lesson because he went to hospital afterwards and that was the first time he listened to a work from beginning to end; I played the whole Schumann. And he said, ‘Bravo.’ The minute he said ‘Bravo,’ I realised I’m on the right track,” (Campbell, 2004, p. 123).

Following the death of Salmond, Wiesel became one of the first students of the recently deceased (2011) Bernard Greenhouse, who assumed Salmond’s teaching chair at Juilliard. Wiesel declared: “Greenhouse had a special attitude to me and with his exceptional ears, sensitivity, experience and personality helped me to develop my own artistic character without forcing himself on me or making me imitate him,” (Campbell, 2004, p. 120). Greenhouse continued to influence Wiesel’s outlook and forged his connection to Casals, another link in the chain of school development. Wiesel commented on his studies with Greenhouse: “I studied

with him about three years. And he was very, very helpful ... he was helpful by lending his ears and allowing me to have a 'friendly' kind of learning atmosphere ... but I really did everything myself ..." (U. Wiesel, personal communication, 28 January 2011).

In 1954 Wiesel embarked on his studies in Prades with Casals following his graduation from Juilliard. Although he only stayed a few months, Campbell describes this time as "the supreme inspiration of his life," (Campbell, 2004, p. 122). Wiesel recalled his time with Casals: "Just to sit in a small room with him, to hear him playing with such technical accuracy, the most beautiful tone colour which I will probably never hear again, a special expressive intonation—and what an atmosphere. This is something I shall remember all my life," (Campbell, 2004, p. 122).

Following this period, Wiesel returned to Israel, and instead of choosing the seasoned path of joining the Israel Philharmonic, he turned to teaching, and developing further as an artist: "I had about thirty or thirty-five students—not necessarily talented ones—and I started developing my ideas about teaching ... sort of a clinic. And I arranged works for the cello, all kinds of things, as there were no printed materials at that time ... " (U. Wiesel, personal communication, 28 January 2011). Later Wiesel moved to Tel-Aviv where he was professor at the Academy of Music at Tel-Aviv University from 1965 to 1977. "I started forming a whole school of cellists by my ideas and suddenly there were a lot of cellists there

thinking musically and technically and they are now famous teachers, professionals and soloists and concertmasters and they *learned how to think*. This is what I was interested in. I was very happy when I discovered they really inherited a lot of things from that,” (U. Wiesel, personal communication, 28 January 2011). At the same time, many Israeli composers became aware of Wiesel’s presence and he cites this development of creating new literature for solo cello as assisting greatly with the development of an Israeli cello school (U. Wiesel, personal communication, 28 January 2011).

Wiesel has written a long dissertation on the performance of the Bach suites, and has given performance lectures at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, revealing the breadth and depth of his knowledge and understanding of these masterpieces. Demonstrating the link between technical realisation and musical outcome, Wiesel discusses the innumerable editions of the Bach suites and the challenge to teachers, students and professionals in choosing their own approach which reflects Bach’s intentions while bringing out musical details, dance forms and larger architectural shapes. This is also linked to the choice of bowings and technical realization. Wiesel comments: “I looked over many editions—I have more than twenty, starting with Dotzauer (1827) through Grutzmacher, Hausman ... ” (Campbell, 2004, p. 122). Here the line of inheritance from the old Dresden school, the works of Brahms (Hausman was his favoured cellist) and the evolution of the cello and the idea of cello ‘school’ can be seen on the following page:

Ex. I

The image displays a musical score for a piece titled "Ex. I". It consists of twelve staves, each representing a different performer. The names listed on the left side of the staves are: Anna Magdalena, Kellner, Westphal?, Berlin?, Vienna?, Dotzauer, Tortelier, Wenzinger, Markevich, Mainardi, Harker, and Aquelin Du Pre. Each staff contains musical notation, including notes, rests, and dynamic markings such as *mf* and *f*. The notation is written in a single system across all staves, indicating a unified musical piece. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The music features a consistent rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, often grouped in pairs or fours, with various phrasing slurs and accents.

(Wiesel, p. 22)

In an article written for *The Strad*, Wiesel discusses Beethoven's use of *dolce* and *espressivo* where he suggests "a relatively slower, relaxed vibrato for the *dolce*, using a softer bow stroke, as if one is just 'leaning' on the string," (Wiesel, 1991, p. 596). This reveals Wiesel's technical idea of the arm weight producing a deep,

projecting and relaxed *piano* sound, as reflected in the questionnaire responses. He goes on to say: “For the *espressivo* try to use a relatively faster *vibrato*, ‘dig in’ rather more with the bow and play as slowly as you can *within the tempo*,” (Wiesel, 1991, p. 596). This shows Wiesel’s subtle and effective use of *rubato*, as well as the dynamic and incisive bow stroke he often recommends for energetic and passionate material.

In relation to tempo markings, Wiesel comments: “My experience has taught me that terms like *adagio*, *andante* or *allegro vivace* are meaningless unless the performer conveys the full sense and meaning of the term to the listener,” (Wiesel, 1991, p. 597). Regarding pulse, he states “One can slow down or accelerate and still give the illusion, to the listener, that you are playing in tempo. The pulse, as in life itself, changes constantly,” (Wiesel, 1991, p. 597). This also fits with Casals’ idea of: “Fantasy as much as you like—but with order!” (Blum, 1977, p. 242).

Wiesel also reveals the importance of musical division for control and ensemble playing. This can be seen in this example from the Beethoven Op. 102 no. 1 Sonata, also cited by Casals (1991, p. 598):

The image shows a musical score for Beethoven's Op. 102 no. 1 Sonata, starting at measure 47. The score is divided into two staves. The upper staff is in bass clef and the lower staff is in treble clef. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The score includes various performance instructions and dynamics:

- Upper Staff:**
 - Measure 47: *cresc.* (no accel.) *sf*
 - Measures 48-49: *Faster* (no accel.) *sf*
 - Measures 50-51: *Faster* (no accel.) *sf*
 - Measures 52-53: *Faster* (no accel.) *sf*
 - Measures 54-55: *Faster* (no accel.) *fp*
 - Measures 56-57: *(no accel.)*
- Lower Staff:**
 - Measures 47-53: *hold this tempo*
 - Measures 54-55: *non legato*
 - Measures 56-57: *(slower?)* (3) (3) *dim.*
 - Measures 58-59: *(v)*

He also advises the performer to: “Articulate the two semiquavers with the bow” (Wiesel, 1991), a recurring idea in his teaching where he desires a speaking projection to be aided by an almost *portato* bow stroke. This is also reflected by Tamas Varga’s comments on the articulation of short note values in the questionnaire responses.

Wiesel refers to the lack of stimulating performances and visits from international artists in Israel, and discusses his time in New York (from 1950 onwards) with relish:

You must remember that when I went to the US in 1950 the cultural import to Israel was poor; so, during those four years, I took advantage of every opportunity that came about. I went to the theatre, ballet, to concerts, recitals of all kinds, instrumental, singers, whatever. I was so starved of all that which we could not then find in Israel; I heard Toscanini, Cantelli, Bruno Walter, Schnabel, Serkin, Lotte Lehman. (Campbell, 2004, p. 123)

The article also refers to his period as guest professor from 1979–1981 at the State University of New York Graduate School at Stony Brook. Campbell also describes his teaching style: “He seems to be able to tune in on the same wavelength as each individual player and diagnose their problems ... one can feel the young player gaining confidence as that advice begins to work,” (Campbell, 2004, p. 121). He refers to more gifted students as often creating a greater problem: “As teachers we have to find a way to develop the knowledge without losing the subtleties of the subconscious ... you have to stimulate and help shape the musical personality,”

(Campbell, 2004, p. 121). This clearly correlates with the questionnaire topic regarding the balance between intuition and analysis.

Wiesel's collaborations with other pedagogues are also discussed—he was invited to attend Aldo Parisot's classes at Yale (connecting to Magen's cello pedigree) and make comment, and did the same thing for Parisot when he visited his class in Israel. Wiesel also did this for Joan Dickson at the Royal College of Music and the recently deceased Gerhardt Mantel in Frankfurt (linking both Lipkind and Eickenbusch). He discusses bad technical habits with Campbell and states that:

Many great talents come to you for advice and you realize that these bad habits are accumulative ... their inner fire seeks an outlet and creates unnatural physical positions, so sometimes you have to be a kind of musical plumber which clears the pipes in order to let personal expression flow out naturally ... there are certain schools today who aim to make 'perfect' cellists and the products from these schools look at everything from the technical point of view ... it is difficult to detach the mechanism from the emotional without causing some damage. You have to find a way of correcting the mechanism whilst allowing the personal expression its own freedom. (Campbell, 2004, p. 122).

The article discusses Wiesel's own performances and refers to his performance of contemporary Israeli repertoire—adding works by Stutschewsky and Leon Schidlowsky and “some twenty others.” His comments in relation to the first

performances of a work reveal fundamental ideas of interpretation in line with Casals' approach discussed in reference to Blum's work: "Stave notation has its limitations ... we have to look between the notes because composers write ideas and we play notes," (Wiesel, 1991, p. 597). He then discusses his dissatisfaction with the nature of competitions, though he has been a jury member on several international competition panels. Interestingly, he refers to two cases where two cellists of high calibre failed to proceed to the final of a competition as they played with a short endpin. This prejudice goes against the ideals that may be related to playing with a shorter endpin and are seen in the questionnaire responses and Wiesel and Sella's discussion of sitting position.

In an interview between the researcher and Wiesel, he refers to a masterclass visit to Russia, which illustrates the idea of prejudice against school, but at the same time demonstrates the benefits of school—in this case, his own:

A girl played the *Prelude* from Bach's Second Suite with a very, very low wrist, pressing the sound, and I thought what should I say—the whole school was present there in the master class as well as the teacher, and so I said to her, 'Look, let me come and experiment, play it with a high wrist.' And she started and suddenly everybody was talking about it because of the quality of the sound ... And then the teacher comes to me and all she said is, "It's a matter of *school*." And I answered her, "Admit it, but it sounds better." (U. Wiesel, personal communication, 28 January 2011)

This clearly illustrates Wiesel's knack of honing in on the most crucial element to create improvement, and also his strong belief in the quality of his principles.

A review of Israeli and related cello schools' written descriptions of style and technique

An historical and contextual background

This literature review allowed the researcher the opportunity to gain significant background knowledge of history and trends in cello pedagogy and performance in general, as well as differences between cello and violin schools. The relevance of progress in instrument and bow development, social and geographical factors and technical demands of repertoire have all emerged as key elements in my reading into the development of a school. In the *New Grove Violin Family*, the development of the cello and bow is discussed in detail, noting that Francois Tourte's innovations in producing a concave bow enabled "a more intense and carrying tone ... (laying the) foundations of brilliant, virtuoso bowing technique, and allowed the player to exercise an optimal influence on tone-colour and dynamics," (p. 161). The influence of violin playing is discussed in the technique of Bernhard Romberg (1764–1841), one of the founders of the Dresden School of cello playing who also invented the Romberg fingerboard, a flattened fingerboard allowing more room for the C string to vibrate (p. 162). John Gunn's 'The Theory and Practice of Fingering the Violoncello' (1789—see Appendix E) demonstrates early variation in left-hand positioning, and therefore the evolution of 'school' in this

sense. It is noted that “Romberg advocated a violin-oriented left-hand position, whereas Dotzauer and Kummer adopted the modern position: that is fingers more squarely away from the neck.” Kummer’s fingering system is noted as forming the basis of our present day system.

Significant developments in the cello are outlined in the advent of the endpin, first used by Adrien-Francois Servais in 1846. This had advantages in improving resonance, security and independence of the thumb as a playing finger. “The whole process of development borrowed extensively from violin technique but always lagged behind it.” (Silvela, 2001, p. 169) In discussing Casals, the New Grove Violin Family states that the master’s methods were explained in the Alexanian treatise. “Casals spoke of half-step shifts with the same finger, of shifting in repeated finger patterns, of as little shifting as possible within slurred articulations, and of contractions and extensions,” (Boyden, 1989, p. 252). One of Casals’ pupils, Maurice Eisenberg, is referred to in this chapter quoting him in saying: “I could appreciate how the former awkwardness in handling the cello had been replaced by a more ‘natural’ technique, formulated to serve interpretative ends,” (Boyden, 1989, p. 174) He also is quoted as saying: “[the hand] must be trained to be so vital and flexible that as soon as a finger strikes its note, the preparation for the following note begins.”

Casals’ foreword to Diran Alexanian’s classic treatise (Alexanian, 2003) shows his unwavering support of his assistant at the Paris Conservatoire. A

connecting line can also be drawn here between Uzi Wiesel and the evolution of an Israeli School of cello playing, as Wiesel took lessons from Alexanian during his studies in New York, while he went on to study with Pablo Casals in Prades, prior to his return to Israel from the United States. Casals demonstrates his faith in Alexanian's treatise and frustration that existing methods (in 1922) did not take a number of factors into account and were very limited and restrictive, being based on 'classical' methods. This treatise is of great value to any evaluation of cello pedagogy and has specific relevance to the development of Israeli cello playing for these reasons.

Casals points to the scientific rigour of the Alexanian treatise saying: "Only routine and empiricism contributed to the production of such works," (Alexanian, 2003, p. 3) while displaying his frustration by posing the question "why does written instruction find itself in opposition to practical instruction?" (Alexanian, 2003, p. 3) He describes the treatise as "a dictionary of our technique ... the method employed could be compared to the ever-widening circles created by the dropping of a stone in a pond," (Alexanian, 2003, p. 3). This imaginative description highlights the gradual process of developing a technique on any instrument and the importance of these incremental steps. "The best method to follow in the study of technique is to trace a spiral, starting from a sound basis and ending at the extreme limit of physical possibilities," (Alexanian, 2003, p. 4). He goes on to state that: "Even experienced virtuosos will find in it (the treatise) food for instructive meditation," (Alexanian, 2003, p. 4). This point confirms the

importance of rigorous analysis of cello methods, pedagogies and techniques, even at the highest state of technical advancement. Through this process, high quality knowledge and information can be passed on from professional to student, thus creating a 'school', and as this process occurred in Israel, largely following the work of Wiesel, it is absolutely valid to claim that a distinct Israeli School is in existence.

The Treatise is divided into distinct sections, beginning with "The way of holding the violoncello." Here the basic fundamentals of beginning to play the cello are outlined: "the fundamental principle is the necessity of leaving to the body of the instrument its freedom with a view to the production of untrammelled sonority." It continues with the following divisions, often reflecting the layout of Sella's thesis:

Seating position: "The seat of the chair should be on a level with the knee of the player"—sitting on "the forward edge of the chair." (2003, p. 10) Alexanian refers to "the left foot ... a little forward and with the toe turned slightly outwards." This point referring to the positioning of each leg and foot links in well with Uzi Wiesel's ideas on the matter which can be perceived as unusual to some 'orthodox' cello pedagogues. Wiesel utilizes the foot positioning to enable 'turning of the cello,' often using the knees, which gives the cellist an ideal angle to produce a full tone, in much the same way as the violinist can turn the instrument without the use of a shoulder rest. Alexanian also refers to the positioning of the instrument on the player's chest; something that Wiesel maintains is of crucial importance "the

instrument being pressed against the chest of the player,” (U. Wiesel, personal communication, 28 January 2011). This concept of chest placement of the cello dictates the entire sitting position and eventually has significant implications for the use of both hands.

The way of holding the bow: Alexanian uses photographic instructions and stresses the importance of practicing basic positions and movements *before* taking a bow into the hand: “I cannot impress too much on the beginner the necessity of repeating these movements frequently and as slowly as possible, before attempting to use the bow.” (2003, p. 10) He draws a parallel between the two hands: “there is, anyway, a certain resemblance between the right hand prepared to grasp the bow and the left hand (first disposition) prepared to play,” (2003, p. 10–11). Photographs are included displaying the extended palm and the instruction to “close the thumb over the face of the 2nd finger,” (2003, p. 11). A discussion of elbow height relates directly to Wiesel’s technical ideas—“At no point of this movement should the elbow be higher than it is when furthest from the body.” (Alexanian, 2003, p. 15) Although there are many derivations of elbow height in bowing technique, Wiesel firmly states that a low and relaxed elbow produces the best possible tone, thus maximising the creative and musical expression that can be gained from one’s technique. This is seen in Wiesel’s use of the bag or satchel strapped around a student’s elbow and then instruction to play with the additional weight. A free and larger tone almost invariably results.

Alexanian describes the change in the hand as the bow draws across the string from the frog to the tip as a “gradual straightening of the phalanges of all the fingers (particularly those of the thumb),” (2003, p. 15). This idea is consistent with Wiesel’s ideas and allows for additional power in the upper half of the bow. Alexanian clearly defines the terms ‘down’ and ‘up’ bow: “movement of the bow from left to right (the hand leaving the body).” Obviously the up-bow is the inverse, but this ‘definition’ links to Wiesel’s idea of *preparation* of each bow, so that the down-bow comes from the end of the up-bow. It also connects to the concept of “moving with the body” (See Questionnaire questions) that Wiesel uses in exaggeration to release physical tension and promote free tone-production and projection. The treatise outlines the importance of the ‘parallel bowing to the bridge’ concept—“it will be necessary to imagine a line drawn perpendicularly to each of these strings ... the bow forms a right angle to each of the strings.” (Alexanian, 2003, p. 18)

In discussing the change of strings he highlights the importance of avoiding jerky changes—using the concept of ‘preparation’ of the arm to leave a string and then arrive on the next string, whichever that may be. This is also Wiesel’s principle of training the string-crossing mechanism, using the elbow movement, as opposed to the very common use of the wrist. The treatise continues, covering the “preparation concerning the use of the left hand.” He discusses the setting up of an effective hand position and highlights the later importance for accuracy of intonation. The left-hand fingers are described as being “nuts” and holding

“dispositions.” This idea is useful and relates to the personality of each finger and how this needs to be overcome, and simultaneously acknowledged. Alexanian includes exercises for finger *suplesse*: “It will also be useful to work the fingers one by one raising and lowering them as far as possible ... (at) rapid and at equal intervals from each other ... one should avoid, as far as possible the working of more than one finger at a time.” This idea links to Wiesel’s concept of ‘hitting, lifting and plucking’ in the left hand and the use of this to develop strength, flexibility and *independence* of the fingers. This can also be seen in Cossman’s famous exercise for the agility and evenness of the left hand. (See Appendix B, Cossman Etuden, Schott).

He proceeds to discuss the formation of the positions of the left-hand. These are interestingly described as ‘dispositions’ of the left hand (as the disposition of each finger was used earlier). The first position is described as the “chromatic disposition of the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th fingers,” (Alexanian, 2003, p. 24) The position of each finger on the string is discussed in terms of “pressure ... made by the tip of each finger, at a point on the inner side of the latter, corresponding to the line of the ‘cut’ of the nail on the outside,” (Alexanian, 2003, p. 24) The placement of the thumb on the neck is also described. This advice relates to Wiesel’s concept of playing on the pad of the finger. A disparity between playing on the pad and tips should be observed – particularly between execution of *cantilena* material and rapid technical passagework. The importance of thumb placement is stressed—it “should always be held opposite the 2nd finger,” (Alexanian, 2003, p. 25). The need

to avoid pressing is emphasized, as this impedes facility. The first to fourth finger should form a minor third, and the importance of this correct distance is linked to the correct framing of the hand. Regarding the use of the bow, Alexanian holds the belief that though left-hand technique is highly complex, the right hand is infinitely more so and will eventually *dictate* many left-hand functions. On *legato*, he states: “Often the change of bow is not the result of a musical intention, but is brought about by the bow having reached one of its extremities.” Here an interesting link is provided between the limitations of technical mechanics and their musical function. Alexanian also emphasises that the left hand must not interfere with the movement of the bow, therefore the bow function is basically the same in a highly active left-hand passage as it would be in long sustained notes. A series of “Exercises of percussion” (p. 39) follow, which directly connect to Wiesel’s use of percussion exercises to develop finger strength. Alexanian describes this as the “regularity of fall and strength” which eventually becomes a reflex movement of rising and falling (2003, p. 39).

Alexanian continues to describe the “mixed use of the first two dispositions” and “the changing of place of the left hand at the neck of the violoncello.” In terms of fingering choice (see Questionnaire questions) he advocates the use of the same string for unity of sound for melodic reasons—the *chanterelle*—singing string. As regards intonation, the “natural rule” (2003, p. 50) of the fingers moving closer together as the pitch ascends is outlined, as are the parameters of the “guiding point” of the E on the A string in fourth position as a compass for ascending into

the higher registers of the instrument. He recommends practising exercises in different positions and on different strings “so as to get accustomed to changes of position on varying thicknesses and consistencies,” (2003, p. 51). Alexanian includes photography of the preparation of a shift, reflecting Wiesel’s idea of preparing the lower finger from underneath and gliding gradually to the side towards the new note. In his discussion of *portamento*, a link to an ‘older’ school of playing is seen. Wiesel and Israeli/Russian-Jewish schools of string playing tend to favour audible *portamenti* as an expressive device. Differing types of *portamenti* are outlined, including those from underneath the note shifting with a different finger to the arrival finger on the new note.

Vibrato is described as enabling “fullness of tone colour” (Alexanian, 2003, p. 96) while making reference to earlier schools forbidding its regular use, due to the dangers of “inaccuracy of pitch” (Alexanian, 2003, p. 96). As early as 1922, Alexanian sees “The *vibrato* is not any more a quavering than the *portamento* is a chromatic scale,” (2003, p. 96) The use of *vibrato* for expression is described as contributing to the “singing of a phrase, with the charm and intensity of a warm and well-coloured voice.” He highlights the importance of relative use of *vibrato* “in connection with the volume and the *tessitura* of the tones.” (2003, p. 96) *Vibrato* is further described as an oscillation “produced by a slight, supple and regular movement of the left hand and forearm, executed in a practically vertical direction.” This links back to the importance of the first position description, of

where to play on the finger. This highlights Wiesel's crucial idea of having a flexible vibrato to develop the left hand's suppleness and the individuality of each finger.

Alexanian advises that the *vibrato* be produced on the "fleshy" part of the finger and also points to "a slight internal deviation of the bone" (2003, p. 96). This point links to Wiesel's concept of the finger movement in *vibrato* which he demonstrates to students by placing his own finger on the student's finger and manipulating it so that the feeling of relaxation and firmness of bone is *palpable*. He advises that each finger should only be vibrated on "for the length of the time that it is in play" (2003, p. 96). Alexanian also advises against the use of extensions using *vibrato* but points to the option of vibrating through the initial note, extending gently, reaching the new note and then starting *vibrato*. This can be seen as suggestive of Wiesel's *vibrato* exercises where the *vibrato* is developed in extensions, so that each distance between any combinations of fingers can be seamlessly joined by a good *vibrato*. There are many critics of this method, but the resulting connection of tone is very desirable and creates many new possibilities for fingering in *cantilena* passages that would avoid audible shifts or hidden changes of position that may not have any particular expressive purpose. Alexanian advises again here that "all cramping of the thumb must be avoided" which links to Wiesel's idea of teaching of *vibrato* "as if there is no thumb" (U. Wiesel, personal communication, 28 January 2011), which successfully avoids such cramps, enables extended positions, and encourages the ninety-degree angle of the left hand frame to the fingerboard of the instrument. Unlike Wiesel, Alexanian

appears to believe that study of *vibrato* “does not call for special exercises” (2003, p. 97). Perhaps Alexanian prefers to develop the left hand and awareness of the *vibrato* gradually through the experience and musical instinct of the student. He does, however, produce a musical example displaying the “oscillations of the *vibrato*” (2003, p. 97) which shows a gradually sped up vibrato oscillating between two notes, almost like a trill, where the distance becomes gradually smaller and the tendency of the movement is towards the upper note, so a *vibrato* on a C sharp would incline towards the D natural. Like Wiesel, Alexanian advises that it is not necessary, or indeed possible to vibrate “in certain rapid virtuoso passages,” (2003, p. 97) as it interferes with the agility of the hand. In addition it can be argued that the fingers should land on a different part of the flesh in a fast passage for precision of ‘rise and fall’ and therefore clarity of articulation. This is particularly evident in passages in the thumb positions. Alexanian also helpfully refers to the role of *vibrato* in repertoire, stating that often *vibrato* in the cello part of a chamber work can disturb the voice that has a more principal role so it needs to be adjusted and modified according to the importance of the pitches in question.

Alexanian introduces the thumb position “preparation for the use of the nut-thumb,” (2003, p. 125) exclaiming his frustration at the widely assumed myth that the thumb position is “among the great difficulties of our instrument” (2003, p. 125). He asserts that until figures such as Boccherini, and even in certain Haydn quartet parts and some small excerpts of Mozart, and of course the Haydn cello concerti, “the normal *tessitura* of the violoncello was confined to the neck.” He

extols the virtues of the use of the thumb, addressing the possibilities of using all five fingers as “nuts” (2003, p. 125). This does, indeed, dramatically enhance the possibilities of the left hand, and the use of the fourth finger in thumb-position can be seen as far back as Boccherini, and was perhaps most successfully employed by Danil Shafran who extended its opportunities for use immeasurably.

Alexanian advises that the thumb is to be placed across the strings perpendicularly, and is of the belief the thumb should lie across two strings, with more pressure on the lower string. This allows for great stability, particularly in octave passages, and is also advocated by Wiesel. Wiesel describes playing ‘on the bone’ of the thumb. Some cellists, (including Paul Tortelier) however, do not use this method of playing on two strings and prefer to be only on the string they are playing on. Wiesel, however, takes this a step further in certain cases by pushing the thumb in the direction of a third string so there is a very solid basis. Exercises for the sixteen first dispositions of the five fingers are written out in minute detail with many exercises for all different combinations of fingers and positions. Detailed examples from repertoire are also given to substantiate each. Alexanian goes on to outline all double stops and combinations as extensions of the basic dispositions already outlined and the movement between each as different variations of ‘changes of place.’

Pablo Casals is without doubt one of the greatest figures in the history of cello playing and has had a strong influence on many aspects of Israeli cello

playing and pedagogy. His teaching of Bernard Greenhouse had a direct impact on the playing and teaching of Uzi Wiesel and later more directly, in Wiesel's studies with him in Prades. This in turn was further woven into the Israeli pedagogic tradition through Wiesel's professorship at the Rubin Academy in Tel-Aviv, and Bernard Greenhouse's frequent visits to Israel under the auspices of the Israel Cello Society.

While in exile in Spain, Casals began teaching only in 1946 when Greenhouse, previously taught by Salmond, Alexanian and Emanuel Feuermann in the United States, sought out the great master's guidance to further his playing (Baldock, 1992, p. 177). In spite of a reference from Alexanian, Casals was reluctant to take on Greenhouse, but later relented—"he broke down Casals' resistance to the idea of teaching at all." Baldock points to the time the two cellists spent discussing "musical technique" (1992, p. 178): an idea that unifies the technical and musical approaches which can be seen in the number of methods and volumes the researcher has examined. The visits of celebrated cellists including Zara Nelsova, Amaryllis Fleming and Christopher Bunting are recalled, with Bunting describing Casals as "unbelievably analytical, obsessively analytical." The potential limitations of Casals' pedagogical method are noted by Baldock, as "there would only be one interpretation." Wiesel himself is referred to in this chapter (1992, p. 178) where it is recalled that after three months of study in Prades in 1955, Wiesel began "playing like [Casals]—imitating the smallest gradation of

colour, intonation, speed, glissandi, phrasing ... I was becoming a lesser replica ... and I felt artistically strangled, so I had to leave before it was too late.”

Baldock notes that Casals viewed music as the highest priority and that “there was no law of the cello he would not break if he thought the music required it” (1992, p. 179). He also refers to one of the most important aspects of Casals’ approach to string playing and therefore musicianship and intonation. Casals saw notes not in a mathematical way but in a state where they could be “variable stages in a developing organic line.” Baldock also observes Casals’ insistence on percussive left-hand technique, which is seen particularly in the teaching of Greenhouse and also in the left-hand exercises of Wiesel, and his revolutionary impact on fingering (1992, p. 180). He notes Casals’ modifications of eliminating formal shifts and emphasizes the importance of playing in as natural a way as physically possible. In the researcher’s interviews discussing Casals, Wiesel added that: “He really freed our left-hand technique by changing our conception of positions from stiffness to flexibility, and by stretching he gave a new independence to the fingers.” In terms of *vibrato*, Casals had specific advice for Greenhouse, who, already a developed cellist at the age of thirty, was told to employ “an arm *vibrato* for the lower strings, an elbow *vibrato* for the middle strings, and a finger *vibrato* for the higher register.” Greenhouse acknowledged these adjustments saying that they “changed my whole approach to phrasing” (Baldock, 1992, p. 180)

“Play from the soul, not like a trained bird!” (Blum, p. 18) said C.P.E. Bach, indicating the recurring theme even at that time, of the importance of expression being in tandem with technical training. In discussing the technical realization of dynamics and the way in which ascending and descending patterns generally lead to a natural *crescendo* or *diminuendo*, Casals is quoted by Blum as saying “your intuition will tell you when the exceptions occur” (1977, p. 24). This perhaps reveals Casals using intuition in tandem with his undoubted intellectual supremacy.

The tendency to avoid a dry technical approach to interpretation is also seen in Casals’ comment: “it’s not a passage—it’s a wonderful melody!” (Blum, 1977, p. 49). This displays his deep musicianship and awareness that even a virtuosic passage must have phrasing and expression. In the Chapter ‘Diction for Instrumentalists,’ Blum includes an example from the Beethoven op. 102 no. 1 Sonata where “considerable demands are made upon the flexibility and responsiveness of the bow arm. With the *diminuendo* comes a slowing of bow speed and release of pressure; the subsequent accentuation on the first of the little notes requires a quickening of bow speed and re-exertion of pressure.” (Blum, 1977, p. 59) This highlights the elevated use of Casals’ bowing technique to enable the realisation of not only Beethoven’s demands, but the heightened communication of Casals’ expression. In discussing “time relationships,” Blum quotes Casals’ advice to students: “fantasy as much as you like—but with order!” (1977, p. 69). This is balanced by his comments regarding the restrictions imposed

by the written note that he saw as being: “like a strait jacket, whereas music, like life itself, is constant movement, continuous spontaneity, free from any restriction.” (1977, p. 70)

In the chapter entitled “Insights for String Players” (p. 101), Blum goes into some detail regarding matters of intonation, quoting Casals: “Intonation is a question of conscience. You hear when a note is false the same way you feel when you do something wrong in life.” The concept of *expressive* intonation is discussed in some detail, with a number of useful musical examples showing the potential for extreme difference in the placement of a given note when it is played in a different context within a phrase and or key in another work. Principally Blum refers to the importance of “the proper placement of semitones” (p. 103) and crucially, the idea of ‘gravitational attraction.’ Here the placement of the fingers in each key is governed by the role each will play in realizing the notes of the scale. The second and third degrees of the scale are drawn towards the fourth and fifth (which form points of repose) while the sixth and seventh notes are drawn towards the octave resolution. This idea is given further weight by Casals famous assertion that “there may be as great a distance between E-flat and D-sharp as there is within a semitone such as D-natural to E-flat.” Importantly, Casals combines both the intellectual and instinctive approach to his musicianship. In this technical aspect, Blum notes that “intellectual awareness, intuitive perception and critical listening all play a role in the determination of the precise degree to which the instrumentalist adjusts his pitch.” In addition, the use of expressive intonation is

shown to become “a foremost factor in the communication of emotional content” thereby unifying the expressive and purely technical/mechanical roles of intonation. In line with both Alexanian and Mantel’s comments about ease of execution, Casals is quoted later in this chapter as creating “the greatest possible effect for the least possible exertion,” (p. 110). Also connecting all the examined texts on cello playing, Casals believed in the importance of having independence of the left-hand fingers, and in avoidance of unnecessary difficulties he stated: “When you can use the strong fingers, don’t use the others ... we never gain anything by trying to do things against nature” (p. 132) In commenting on *vibrato*, which is also discussed in Baldock’s work in Casals’ advice to Greenhouse, Casals is quoted saying, “vibrato is a means of expressing sensitivity, but it is not a proof of it” (p. 134).

Emanuel Feuermann is quoted as saying “The development of cello playing stood still where culture—which means art—begins,” (Morreau, 2002, p. 232). In discussing the negative public and professional impression that the cello engendered, he went so far as to say “no-one had shown up to prove that the weaknesses of the instrument can be overcome and that the cello as a solo instrument could even be superior to the violin through its wider range” (2002, p. 271). Feuermann, like Starker later (see p. 25), also pointed bluntly to the problems of poor cello teaching, seeing this as the root of problems in cello playing: “Ideas deteriorate in passing from generation to generation, and many teachers are still using principles which they have received at third or fourth

generation ... no 'method' should be taken over and passed on purely mechanically. Schools of musical technique and style become as rigid and meaningless as, for example, political parties."

Feuermann connects the researcher to the development of violin school through his links to Sevcik, who was his violinist brother's professor (p. 4) Like Stutschewsky, and Hofmekler (Wiesel's early teacher), Feuermann studied with Julius Klengel from 1917 onwards. He remembered Klengel's teaching style through a possibly ironic comment of the great Russian cellist Gregor Piatigorsky (also teacher of the researcher's former teacher, Raphael Wallfisch): "I marvelled at Klengel's art of teaching by really not teaching." (p. 14) Morreau's study into the life of Feuermann also includes very helpful photographic depictions of the virtuoso's sitting, hand and bow positions in different variations, which connect the researcher back to the fundamentals of what comprises a school (see Appendix G).

Feuermann most famously asserted, "It is my opinion that the basic ill of poor playing lies in the complete disregard of natural laws" (2002, p. 275). This emphasises the importance of a sound basis and a constant and evolving physical awareness in a cellist's development at any stage. Interestingly, Feuermann expresses with disappointment that of the hundreds of cellists who had played for him, all showed areas of lacking and an absence of self-criticism and ongoing development after having completed their studies and entered the profession:

“should not the development of their own faculties begin at this point?” (Morreau, 2002, p. 276)

Feuermann’s ideas about self-criticism connect easily with those of Joachim Stutschewsky (Schott, 1932), a significant figure in the development of cello pedagogy and one of the founders of cello playing in Israel. Stutschewsky meaningfully stated—“there’s only one step from overrating one’s work to underrating it” (1932, p. 3). He has edited numerous works of the cello literature for publishers such as Peters Edition, and his influence thus expands into modern-day performance. There is a direct link to Wiesel here, as Stutschewsky wrote some short works for him and Wiesel discussed him in an interview with the researcher:

He was the first one, who wrote about six volumes and edited so many works, in which he analysed every phase of the technique. But I don’t think he took into account the flexibility of the body and the hands...disregarding tension and such things. All his exercises are fantastic exercises to develop fingers, but also tendonitis and everything developed from these things because they were often taken too literally. (U. Wiesel, personal communication, 28 January 2011).

Stutschewsky thought of himself as something of a travelling Jewish musician and *klezmer*, and towards the end of his life, became increasingly concerned with arranging traditional Jewish melodies for performance on the

cello. Born in the Ukraine, he moved to Leipzig in 1909 to study with Klengel. In 1924 he moved to Vienna, where he formed the Vienna String Quartet, which premiered works by composers of the New Viennese School, including Alban Berg (*Lyric Suite*) and Arnold Schoenberg. He also assumed a position as *spiritus rector* of the Society for the Promotion of Jewish Music and worked as a composer, cellist, impresario and journalist. Prior to this time Stutschewsky lived in Switzerland, where he organized and gave the first concerts of Jewish music. He returned to Switzerland in 1938, fleeing Nazi persecution at the outset of the Second World War. Later that year he emigrated to Palestine, where he was to give many concerts and lectures concerning the Jewish musical idiom (Nemtsov, 2005, http://www.musica-judaica.com/stut_e.htm, accessed 10 August 2011). His compositional style incorporated elements of the folk traditions of the Ashkenazi, Sephardic and Yemenite Jews.

In the foreword to the first volume of *The Art of Playing the Violoncello*, Stutschewsky states: “New impulses for research must start from what is already known and available if further knowledge is to be gained. The law of continuous development is inherent in nature, in art and all discipline” (1932, p. 10). This statement is of particular interest to the researcher, as in the process of defining a contemporary Israeli school of cello playing one can only refer to information that has already been acquired and developed through cellists and pedagogues over time. The concept of the line of development is also crucial as this is what leads to future advancement in playing and teaching, and indicates that all work in the

cellistic field is constantly evolving and adapting to the demands that new repertoire, instrumental modifications and performance conditions make on it. This also links to Gerhard Mantel's assertion (Mantel, p. xviii) that every cellist is, to an extent, self-taught. Stutschewsky concludes his foreword with confidence, asserting: "I feel sure that I have created an instructional work which will become the constant companion of teachers as well as of pupils."

Interestingly, something which unites the works on fundamental cello technique of Alexanian, Mantel and Stutschewsky is the belief that there was (at each instance in time, although Stutschewsky acknowledges Alexanian's work as being exhaustive) a gap in the body of knowledge as to how best to instruct the teaching of the cello and thorough analysis of the physical movements required to realize the entire scope of techniques available to a performer: "the absence of a systematically arranged and suitable book of instruction was keenly felt." This is also evident in the foreword passages to Alexanian and Mantel's works (by Casals and Starker respectively, undoubtedly two of the most important and revolutionary figures in twentieth-century cello playing) where each cellist displays frustration about the lack of rigorous information regarding cello pedagogy, and also their satisfaction with the thoroughness and completeness of each work in dealing with all aspects of cello playing. In the introductory section of Stutschewsky's manual, he makes the important point that: "As late as the nineteenth century the manipulation of stringed instruments was based mainly on 'ability without knowledge'" (1932). This connects to the researcher's

questionnaire question regarding the balance between intuition and analysis, or knowledge, in a player's development. Perhaps this suggests that before such detailed works on cello playing were available, instinct was all that could be relied upon to realise a technical, and then musical goal. In this way the performer had to find a way to make a composer's intentions possible, without a methodical rigour to simplify this process.

Stutschewsky discusses in some detail the purpose of teaching music, outlining the important roles of both teacher and pupil. Although his work is clearly concerned with highly rigorous technical instruction (as seen particularly in the Alexanian treatise), he has higher pedagogical aims, which would benefit any teacher at any stage of experience. He asserts: "Main importance should not be given merely to inculcating dexterity in fingering and bowing, but rather to using the instrument as an aid to arouse and strengthen in the pupil an understanding for music and to develop his musical aptitude." This surely must be the principle aim in playing any instrument, regardless of the player's ambitions or external motivations. When discussing the role of the teacher, Stutschewsky stresses the importance of a pedagogue not being purely a commanding player but an innate educator: "A complete command of the instrument will in itself not suffice unless it is accompanied by extensive physiological and educational knowledge, complete knowledge of those branches which concern the instrument and music generally, as conscientious course of action, a sense of responsibility and, last but by no means least, he should be specially gifted as a teacher," (1932, p. 11).

Stutschewsky also includes quite poetic descriptions of what a teacher and pupil should aim for. He sees that the right kind of person should choose to be a teacher, and that temperament is a decisive factor in this:

Do not suppress, but unfold!

Do not fetter, but release!

Do not order, but convince!

Do not direct, but advise! (1932, p. 59)

In advising the pupil, Stutschewsky inspiringly encourages perseverance and patience while emphasizing the importance of the capacity to work:

Energy connotes the capacity for work and must go hand-in-hand with application, perseverance, conscientious introspection and self-control; inclination shapes, arranges and creates:

Never play half-heartedly, but always

With the highest degree of concentration!

Differentiate between what is essential

And what is non-essential!

Carry out your daily task with

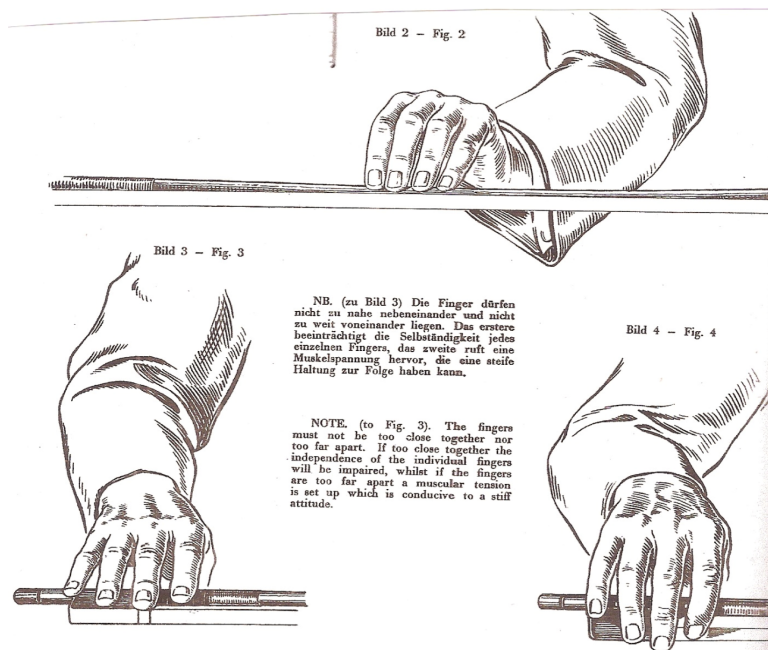
Perseverance and zeal!

Never lose your patience! (1932, p. 87)

Stutschewksy provides the reader with a small amount of background history to the development of the cello, which is helpful in assessing the evolution

of the sitting position and variations in endpin use. He notes that the important cellists of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, including Boccherini, Duport, Romberg, Dotzauer, Kummer, Piatti and Grutzmacher did not use an endpin, and that the last cellist of note to continue this tradition was Robert Hausmann (favoured cellist of Brahms and dedicatee of his Double Concerto and Opus 99 Sonata, as well as chamber music partner of Joachim). He points to the problems of holding a “tiring and strained posture” and the resulting freedom that arrived with the development of the endpin: “The left hand was left entirely free, whilst beauty and depth of tone were considerably increased owing to the development of bow technique,” (1932, p. 72).

In beginning to describe the manner of holding the bow, Stutschewsky includes elaborate illustrations to display the process the beginner must undertake: (1932, p. 4)



This is similar to the photographic examples used in Alexanian's treatise (Alexanian, 2003). Also in common with Alexanian, Stutschewsky displays exercises for developing the left hand, and a diagram showing the string contact points on the finger tips is provided, showing the position through "the cut of the nail" which Alexanian refers to, and Wiesel's technical exercises result in.

In the preface to Stutschewsky's *Studien*, the author makes a number of intriguing points of relevance to this examination of cello pedagogy. In relation to technique he states: "Manual dexterity on an instrument means conquering nature through systematic practice," (1931, p. 2). This is perhaps the essence of developing skill on an instrument, overcoming the natural tendencies of the hand and body in the most relaxed and efficient way through daily work. He goes further to assert: "Endurance and concentration are the cornerstones of progress," implying that these qualities of perseverance and strength of mind can overcome physical problems and even make up for lack of natural ability and talent. Stutschewsky discusses the use of the "long stretch" between fingers here, which connects to Wiesel's use of stretching exercises in vibrato, which Alexanian cautioned against. He notes that though this is an advanced development in left-hand technique, it is important to develop the flexibility to stretch a whole-tone between the second and third fingers, and to have an expanded stretch between the first and fourth fingers, thus creating more possibilities of fingering and hence expression. The author goes on to give advice in the development and monitoring of one's progress, highlighting that the most crucial element in this study is "self-

observation and a critical attitude towards all problems.” Linking in the idea of intuitive talent and instinct versus knowledge, intellect and analysis, Stutschewsky states: “Manual dexterity and accomplishment depend quite as much on the intellect as on the hands ... Accomplishment suffices not without knowledge, and knowledge suffices not without accomplishment!” (1931, p. 3)

In a short essay as part of the same volume, the “very essence” of practicing is analysed. The author gives invaluable advice on the preparation of a work and the stages that need to be undergone. The cellist should strive towards “reaching a degree of perfection which does not allow the listener to perceive his previous patient work.” He also emphasizes a recurrent theme in this study, of the inseparable connection between technique and musical result: “The technical should not be segregated but permanently carried on with regard to the emotional tenor of the music” (1931, p. 3)

Dr. David Sella, a former student of Wiesel, initially states in his doctoral thesis: “Each player should adopt sitting and instrument holding positions appropriate to his own body,” (Sella, 1980), an idea that is general but important to acknowledge, and supports the Israeli emphasis on physical relaxation while playing. As outlined in the introduction, Sella concurs with other cellists, lamenting the “real lack of information directly relating to the body in cello playing.” He incorporates several interviews, also in questionnaire format, from a number of experts in related fields. These include a physician, a physical therapist, a

professional cellist and an Alexander Technique teacher. For each matter, which is examined in the questions, a diagram is included of the subject at hand. The first topic addressed is Sitting Position, and differing examples are given: Low Chair; High Chair (cello held lower—deemed more favourable by professional cellist); Chair Adjusted to Player; Forward Tilt; Backward Tilt; Erect Position; Side Tilt (Left or Right). The position of the neck, back and shoulders (central to the Alexander Technique) follow: Forward Tilt (Neck); Backward Tilt (Neck); Back Collapse; Back Stretch; One Shoulder Raised; Both Shoulders Raised; Relaxed Shoulders, One Shoulder Pulled Backward; Both Shoulders Pulled Backward; One Shoulder Pushed Forward and Straight Shoulders. Following this are differing foot positions: Narrow Angle Between Leg and Foot; Wide Angle Between Leg and Foot; Foot Rests on Toes Only; Leg Vertical to the Floor; Foot Rests on the Floor; One Leg Stretched Forward and One Leg Pulled Backward.

Sella discusses sitting positions and variations as being “chosen or adjusted according to the lengths of both the thighs and forelegs of the player,” including the following descriptions of positions and the resulting impact on cello technique:

Side Tilt:

“When the cellist tilts to the right, the left shoulder is raised and the left hand is tensed. When the tilt is to the left the influence is on the right hand, which must therefore be stretched incorrectly in order to allow the use of the tip of the bow.”

One Shoulder Raised:

“When the right shoulder is raised, the right hand cannot be free. All arm and hand joints, as well as the muscles of the upper arm, are tensed. A raised left shoulder impedes the freedom of the left hand. This position also causes serious problems of coordination.”

Legs:

“The leg should be perpendicular to the floor, and weight should rest on all of the foot, not just the toes.”

Concluding remarks:

“A loss of balance occurs when body symmetry is distorted and when body weight is poorly distributed.”

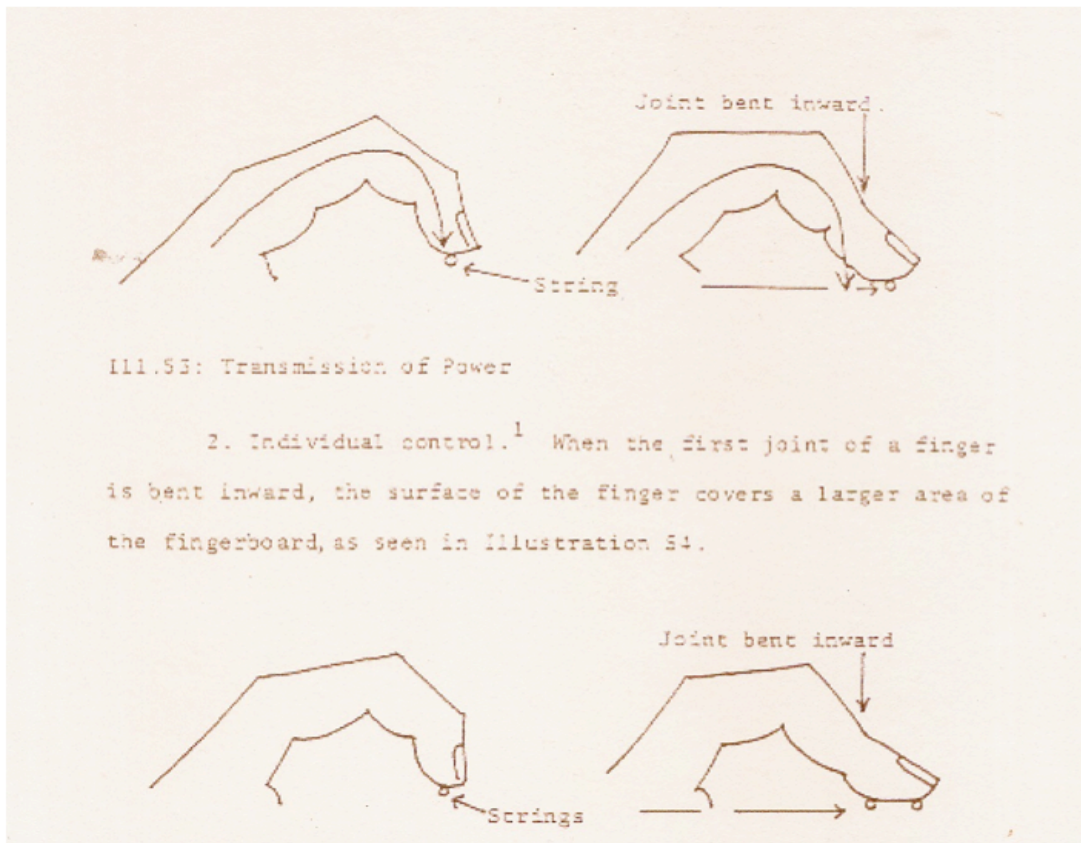
This problematic concept of “distorted symmetry” is central to Sella’s thesis and is logically valid. Sella cites two statements from Eckhart Richter’s article ‘Good sitting balance in Cello Playing’ (1976) to emphasise the importance of natural and relaxed position: “Except for spreading one’s legs to accommodate one’s instrument, there exists no need to assume a special sitting posture in order to play the cello” and “The cello must be positioned in such a way that neither cello nor body are in the way.” It could be argued that these statements are somewhat self-evident, particularly as Sella chooses to include a further statement which potentially undermines the entire concept of relaxed, obstacle-free playing: “A cellist may decide to overlook one or both of the above mentioned factors in order to achieve an aesthetic goal which otherwise might not be achieved” (Sella, 1980,

p. 69). This statement is also obviously correct, but undermines the idea of a systematic school. Sella then discusses the function of each hand.

Left Hand:

“The basic position of the left hand is when fingers one, two, three and four are placed on a string or above a string ready to be used ... the basic position of the left hand is used between the first and the third positions on the cello. In this position the thumb is free to move up and down the cello’s neck,” (Sella, 1980, p. 70). Sella then refers to Gerhard Mantel’s views on the conformation of the hand, (Mantel, 1972, p. 89) stating that the fingers vary in length, strength and width of tips. These three factors are all involved in formative exercises characteristic of the Israeli school, and indeed directly addressed in the teaching of Wiesel.

Sella incorporates two further sources in his discussion of the left hand, revealing a consensus of ideas between two other authors. In Ruth W. Stevens ‘The Hands of Musicians’ (1959, Sketches of nine playing positions) she states: “The fingers should be curved to a higher or lesser degree, depending on the individual hand and the finger used,” (Sella, 1980, p. 70). This is reflected in Paul Tortelier’s statement: “The first two joints of the fingers should stand straight or even slightly curved,” (Sella, 1980, p. 71). Fine individual control of the finger is then discussed, noting the possibilities of the finger joint bending inward and the implications on the playing part of finger (whether tip or pad):



The pad is defined as the surface of the fingertip in contact with the fingerboard. The use of the pads of the fingers is strongly advocated in the Israeli cello school, particularly in *cantilena* playing, but also to facilitate relaxed, difficult shifts. This idea is also reflected in Alexanian's discussion of the same principles (see page 24). Sella suggests that individual control may be disturbed when pushing a finger towards a non-playing string. This may be the case, but this position can also be advantageous for stability of the finger joints, particularly in the case of the weaker fourth finger. Sella also points to implications for double-stop positioning of each finger resulting from this concept.

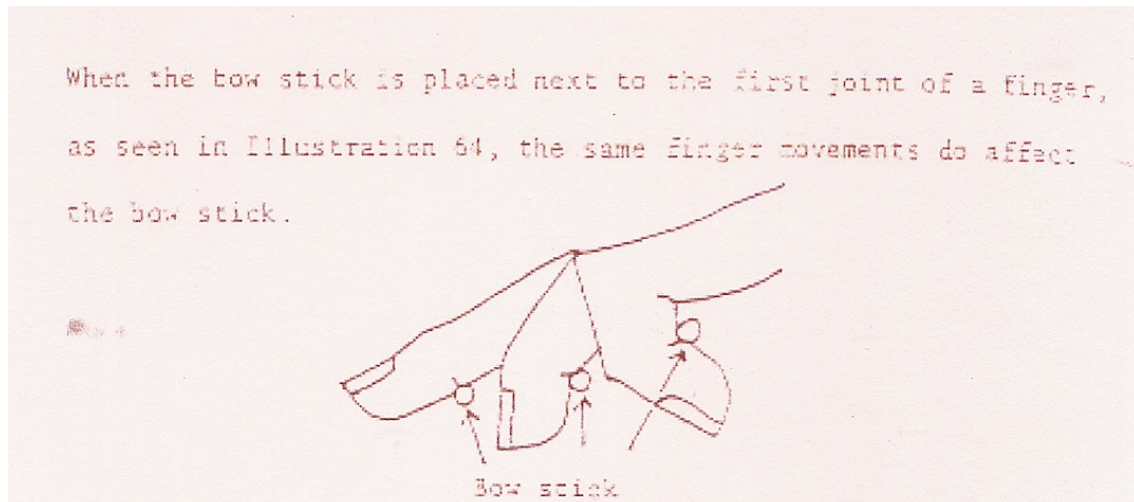
Sella states that “the thumb is used to counterpress against the fingers,” (Sella, 1980, p. 73) though the use of the word counterpress may be questionable. He also notes that the placement of the left thumb varies in relation to the fingers depending on the individual hand. This may be valid to an understanding of ‘Israeli’ left-hand technique, though it is generally acknowledged in the majority of my reading that the thumb should lie somewhere between the first and second finger, and most likely inclined more towards the latter.

Sella outlines a number of other factors in left-hand technique, describing the hand opening and closing function anatomically in analysing fundamental movements—the flexors are used for gripping while the extensors are used for opening: “When one group of muscles contracts the other expands and vice versa” (Sella, 1980, p. 74) This final concept is unusual and contradictory to Uzi Wiesel’s idea of leaning the left hand towards the fourth finger and therefore maintaining a ninety-degree position (U. Wiesel, personal communication, 28 January 2011).

Right Hand:

“While size and proportions of the fingers and the hand determine the manner in which the bow is held, the size and proportions of the upper arm, forearm and body determine their posture in relation to the hand,” (Sella, 1980, p. 82) Here Sella emphasizes the need for placement of the bow relative to the fingers, warning that bow movement is affected by the fingers of the right hand “in the event that the bow stick is placed above the first and second joints of a finger ... a contraction of a finger... or a stretch of a finger ... do not affect the bow stick at all.” (Sella,

1980, p. 82) He advises that the placement of bow stick should be determined based on the first and fourth fingers: the shorter ones. The second and third fingers are adjusted accordingly and here he recognizes a similarity in determining the position of the left-hand fingers: (See also Varga and Alexanian)



Regarding the placement of the thumb on the bow (important in wrist-positioning and power in the upper half), Sella notes that: “The fingers and the thumb of the right hand counterpress against each other, (again) similarly to the fingers and thumb of the left hand,” (Sella, 1980, p. 73). This observation is not advisable, as it encourages tension through the left hand, and potentially a distorted hand-frame. He also advocates the movement of the entire arm from the shoulder, utilizing arm weight for the purpose of creating “pressure.”

Regarding the angle between the bow and the string, Sella notes that the movement of the bow is vertical relative to the string, but when the arm interacts

vertically the bow is released into horizontal movement. Interestingly, he states that different angles between the bow and the string can be created by the fingers alone. Many pedagogues, including Alexanian, religiously conform to the 'parallel to bridge' concept to allow a 'straight' bow and good sounding-point. This concept is generally true, and should not be disturbed by such adjustments. However much variation in this can be seen in the playing of many great instrumentalists, and Wiesel controversially pays little heed to this, feeling that the optimum sound on each string is not always achieved by parallel motion (U. Wiesel, personal communication, 28 January 2011).

With regard to the basic movement of the bow, a 'pulling and pushing' movement is outlined by Sella, who sees it as possible to maintain a desirable contact point while creating different angles between the bow and the string. Gavriel Lipkind also employs this idea and achieves the 'shoving' bow movement used by Uzi Wiesel to create freedom of movement and free tone. Wiesel uses the Popper Etude (*High School of Cello Playing*, Op. 73, Barenreiter) no. 36 to develop this:



Gerhard Mantel's seminal text has influenced much of twentieth and twenty-first century cello pedagogy. It contains a foreword by Janos Starker who states: "It discusses all conceivable aspects of cello playing in the utmost clinical detail," (1972, p. ix). Significantly, Mantel also taught Gavriel Lipkind, one of Wiesel's best and most prominent students, and thus provides a link in the pedagogical chain. Reflecting Feuermann's quote regarding ill-playing cited earlier, Starker also refers to the problem of: "Much harmful teaching of baseless principles, usually the result of individual teachers' playing shortcomings." Early on in this text, Mantel poses an interesting question which is useful in forming the idea of school, training and continued development—"what does a proficient player do differently from a less proficient player?" indicating that this could also be the same player before and after a practice session. This points to a focus of Mantel's, which is the efficiency, and strength of intention in practicing, and the reality that the majority of a cellist's time is spent working in isolation. Here Stutschewsky's words are reflected—"manual dexterity on an instrument means conquering nature through systematic practice," (Stutschewsky, 1932, p. 3).

Mantel also interestingly and appropriately suggests that "to an extent everyone is self-taught." This is intriguing as the whole concept of a pedagogical pedigree implies development in playing and this progress creates a school where the roots may be similar, but all individual advancements are personal and take place in isolation in the practice room. He stresses the importance of the fact that only a few key areas can be addressed at one time during a practice session. Mantel

calls for the importance of developing knowledge of the instrument so that there is “insight (possibly intuitive) into the necessary relationship between the sound and its physical production” (1972, p. 23) Mantel discusses misconceptions in playing and how they can impede the possibility of correction “if the conception and the actual execution of a movement do not match, external and internal tensions will result.” He describes the experience of playing as being a “unit”—in spite of the different functions of each hand he believes that they must co-operate and cannot be divided into left and right. “A mistake sensed in one arm will influence the other; an ideal movement in one arm makes a similar one easier in the other.” He believes that any movement affects the balance and equilibrium of the body, so that an imbalance in any area can result in further imbalances in other parts of one’s technique.

Goal Directed Movement:

Goal conception is outlined in different ways—the impulse can be visual, acoustical, or based on muscle-memory. The development of control mechanisms is outlined, emphasizing the importance of ‘on-the-spot’ correction, and connected to the work of Carl Flesch in *The Art of Violin Playing*. Regardless of different intonation systems or variations in aesthetic taste, the importance of developing an *auto-correct* control mechanism that can make small adjustments based on a good ear and frequent practice, and familiarity with all the positions on the cello and the intervals that can derive from them on one string or over all four strings. Mantel highlights the importance of anticipation of any sound or movement,

adding that: “The anticipatory sensation of a movement is dependent on the conception of its goal.” He discusses repetition of a movement several times in order to internalise it—something which fits with Wiesel’s concept of ‘computerising’ movements, particularly in technically complex passages. A “movement can at best be only as exact as the goal conception” is an intriguing point raised by Mantel, suggesting that the goal and then its anticipation have to be ideal in order for the movement to be realised successfully. He goes into further detail regarding adjustment and accuracy of finger placement in acquiring good intonation in all tonalities. “The spatial conception will soon be coordinated with the acoustic one to the extent that a precise acoustic conception will initiate a precise spatial conception as a *reflex*.”

Vibrato is discussed as “a means of expression: frequency and amplitude.” It is described that we take for granted that a human singing voice is beautified by *vibrato* and this concept naturally relates to string playing, reflecting Alexanian’s idea of the singing *chanterelle* string. However, there is a discrepancy in this as the singing of a boys’ choir is pure and without vibrato. The problems of intonation outlined by Alexanian are also pointed to by Mantel, who adds his own definition of the technique—“a consciously employed means of intensifying expression,” (1972, p. 109). In his chapter on “transmission of pressure to the string” Mantel interestingly discusses arm weight, something of crucial importance to Wiesel’s teaching of right-hand technique: “The arm has considerable weight.” He postulates that the average weight of the arm close to the hand is two kilograms

and this is more than enough weight to produce the desired strength of tone — “any additional active pressure from the arm will be totally superfluous” (1972, p. 210).

In holding the bow, Mantel discusses the role of pronation which is traditionally used to describe the direction of pressure from the hand leaning into the stick as opposed to its inverse, supination: “The index finger must transmit most of the rotational force of pronation.” This connects to Alexanian’s advice about the placement of the first finger joint on the stick of the bow, which can also be seen in Sella’s thesis. Mantel asserts: “At the frog, the bow and the forearm form an obtuse angle; at the tip they form an acute angle.” The importance of such angles then connects to the universally-accepted principle of bowing parallel to the bridge (seen in both Alexanian and Sella’s writing). In conclusion to his work, Mantel states that: “It is surprising that string pedagogy has barely tried to examine the energy and weight relationships of bodily movements,” which can be interpreted through the Israeli concept of physical movement, weight transfer, relaxation and bow weight.

Through this review of literature concerning Casals, Alexanian, Feuermann, Stutschewsky, Sella and Mantel, a clear line of cross-influence, tradition and development is revealed. This is displayed clearly in the cello pedigree and is also supported by the topics and participant responses analysed later in this thesis. Although numerous differences of opinion and approach are evident, the many

ideological similarities point to a shared desire for high-quality performance, interpretation and technical skill, as well as the furtherance of this through pedagogical tradition.

Researching an Israeli cello school

Research approach

The aim of this study has been to define an Israeli cello 'school,' and contribute to the body of knowledge while helping to clarify my own ideas about my development as a cellist. The legacy of key cellists and pedagogues with Israeli backgrounds justifies this study, as the methods used to develop such talented individuals as players and teachers are invaluable to the younger generation of cellists still reaping the benefits of this largely verbal knowledge-transfer.

Due to the wide diaspora of Jewish musicians, this research project can be viewed as a highly contemporary examination of Israeli cello playing, made possible from a Sydney base by twenty-first century technology, including internet, email, MP3 recorders and online databases. As there is limited existing literature on this topic, the contemporary angle of the study is highlighted, as Israel is a relatively young country (formed as the State of Israel in 1948) compared to Italy, France, Germany, England, Russia and even the United States where existing cello schools had developed from the eighteenth century onwards. Perhaps Israel as a location for the development of a school of string-playing can be seen as

advantageous, as a vast amount of knowledge and talent from around the world converged in the new nation, sowing the seeds for the school which my thesis aims to define. This melting pot of ideas about cello playing has inspired my research and will be viewed through the prism of my studies with Wiesel.

As the research subject matter relates to my former teacher, ethical issues arose regarding conflict of interest. In addition, as many of the individuals I wanted to involve were connected to me in some way, or at least had significant interest in Wiesel's methods, it was necessary to generalise the description of my study in order to keep a comfortable distance between the researcher and the subject material. This, however, proved very useful in giving clarity and focus to the topic, and assisted in the development of my research strategy. The researcher found that an interview format was the most useful format to display aspects of a school of cello playing and this would be valuable as a supplement to other forms of evidence, such as recorded material, and an assessment of the actual impact Israeli cellists have had on the musical world. The participants agreed to be named in this process as part of creating a picture of a school includes revealing identities of personalities that have made key contributions. Naturally this had a number of ethical problems, but these were addressed by avoiding coercion in questions or request to participate in the study and in the general nature of the ideas presented.

As the primary source material for my thesis is the knowledge of cellists linked to Israel in a variety of ways, this ethical framework needed to be very clear

before any further research steps could be taken. The researcher's own knowledge of individuals in the study, and particular association with the key informant, Wiesel, meant that I needed to keep some distance from the subjects at hand in presenting the questions and avoid prompting responses which might be linked in some direct or indirect way to my own development and experiences. The subjects were chosen for their contributions to cello playing in Israel and also to display a variety in age, achievement, potential and legacy. Predictably the final choice of participants for inclusion in this study was impacted on by which cellists actually chose to respond, but thankfully the depth of some responses and the detail in the verbal interviews with Wiesel provided the researcher with an excellent amount of material to analyse. Compounding the personal ethical issues discussed, a country as volatile as Israel is always problematic to address, as although the research in question has no political or religious connection, this is the fabric and foundation of the society and culture in which a school of cello playing has emerged and developed.

The methodological framework for my research consisted of a questionnaire, interview process, and background research on Israel in general, as well as cello and string pedagogy. The questionnaire format was chosen to enable clarity and consistency of information, and to aid in data collection. Although a follow-up interview was also part of my research methodology, the questionnaire was preferable as it de-personalises the topic, avoids the potentially arduous

transcription task (particularly as many interview participants speak English with a pronounced Israeli or foreign accent), and aids comparison of the collected data.

In evaluating the development of an Israeli school of cello pedagogy and performance, the questionnaire concerning basic principles of cello technique and musicianship became the backbone of the project and the starting point for not only analysis and data collection, but also reflection on a number of related topics. This questionnaire, consisting of twelve questions, was disseminated to twenty cellists who are either Israeli, Israeli-trained, or have studied or been associated with significant Israeli pedagogues.

The questionnaire was sent with a cover letter from my supervisor, Professor Anna Reid, and was accompanied by a consent form and a Participant Information Statement. The questions were chosen to encompass a range of ideas about the use of the right and left hands in cello technique, as well as concepts that combine musical ideas and technical execution, and the psychology and temperament of individual students. The questions aimed to ignite interest in the research project participant, and provide a basic reference-point that facilitates comparison of the answers given, and helps to identify a potential framework for a school of pedagogy specific to Israel. A follow up interview was offered within the questionnaire and this was selected by six participants, including an in-depth interview with Wiesel.

Having decided the key figures in Israeli cello playing that I wanted to interview, I was able to compile a list of cellists using my own contact database, and with the assistance of Sella. Amongst these cellists were eleven former students of Wiesel including Gavriel Lipkind, laureate of international competitions and international soloist; Hillel Zori, international soloist and Professor at the Buchmann-Mehta School of Music in Tel-Aviv (formerly the Rubin Academy of Music where Wiesel was Cello Professor and currently holds an honorary professorship), Tamas Varga, Co-Principal cellist of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, as well as Dr David Sella.

As a participant in the Israel International Cello Congresses held in Kibbutz Mizrah and the Jerusalem Academy of Music in 2006 and 2009, I was able to make some connections with Israeli cellists (some of whom have been interviewed as part of this research), and formed my ideas for this thesis during the latter congress. Dr Sella's support of the project through the Israel Cello Society helped to cement the Ethics approval (USYD Ethics approval no. 13117) and my exposure to concerts, masterclasses, lectures and workshops during two visits to Israel has furthered my understanding and awareness of cello playing in twenty-first-century Israel.

The eleven completed responses received varied considerably in length and depth, and there are clearly a number of reasons for this. To further substantiate the development of a school and commonalities in approach and style, recordings across the teaching pedigree that has produced Israel's current tradition have also been analysed and compared. The variety of questionnaire responses were analysed, reasoned and compared in the findings section of this thesis. A number of the originally selected participants did not reply to my initial approach, and three participants wrote explaining reasons for declining to complete the questionnaire. In keeping with the Grounded Theory methodology (Glaser, 1978), the completed responses formed an assortment of 'memos' for the researcher to draw on.

Having assembled these responses, I was then able to begin the interview process, commencing with a two-hour in-person interview with Wiesel. This was conducted at Wiesel's home in Yass, in rural New South Wales, and was recorded using an MP3 Player. Subsequent interviews were arranged via the online 'Skype' portal, as all the other cellists in the survey live outside of Australia. There were some problems with arranging these Skype interviews due to time differences and scheduling, but this proved to be a convenient way of conducting and recording interviews. This diaspora of cellists highlighted the influence of Israeli cello playing around the world, and the importance of contemporary technology in making this research project possible. In the end, the questionnaire and interview process provided the majority of the data for the thesis.

The background reading and research undertaken also included study of cello 'pedigrees' (Campbell, 2004), showing the line of influence in different schools and the spread of knowledge through different countries and timeframes. Illustrations and photographs of hand-positions were also analysed in relation to established ideas in Israeli cello playing; and technical exercises and passages in the cello literature relevant to the questionnaire questions were studied. The large volume of mechanical exercises used by Wiesel to form and maintain the technique of both hands, provided invaluable material in the development of this study. Many of the concepts in these exercises are reflected in the questionnaire questions, and also in some of the responses provided by participants. These exercises display the influence of a variety of schools, and reflect pedagogical trends and connections as seen in the cello pedigree tables. These traits can be combined to reveal a method that is evidence of an Israeli school of cello pedagogy and performance.

The emergence of an Israeli cello school

The twelve questions of my questionnaire were devised to broadly cover all aspects of cello technique, and also to touch on musical and developmental elements. Some cellists may have found the questions to be too general and potentially requiring responses that were of considerable length, but the timeframe given for completion was only twenty minutes, meaning that succinct responses gave a clear picture of each cellist's approach to the matter in question.

The questions were:

1. What are your ideas about sitting position?
2. What fundamental principles of right-hand technique do you hold?
3. What methods do you use to develop these in your own and students' playing?
4. What fundamental principles of left-hand technique do you hold?
5. What ideas do you use to develop vibrato, shifting and double-stops?
6. What are your views on the connection between the right and left hands?
7. In what areas do you see synchronicity and independence of the hands as important?
8. Do you employ movement of the body in your playing or teaching?
9. Do you choose fingerings for a work based around the position of the hand, particularly in thumb position?
10. To what extent do you use musical division of a phrase in preparing a work, both technically and musically? How do you view this method of preparation?
11. What are your views on the balance between intuition and analysis (instinct as opposed to intellectual/mechanical analysis) in a player's development?
12. Would you be interested in participating in a follow-up interview any issues raised in this questionnaire?

The identity of each cellist is provided to assist in the connection of each individual to the teaching of Wiesel and the furtherance of cello playing and pedagogy in Israel. In this chapter, the responses of each cellist will be analysed and referred to, and key points relating to elements of what makes a school and what connects the players will be highlighted. The researcher has attempted to cover a wide range of ages and experiences, as well as career stages, in choosing the participants to take part in the questionnaire. In this way a history, continuation, legacy and future is seen in the formation of an Israeli cello school.

Some cellists remain guarded about their ideas related to their craft, while others claimed to have not deconstructed their playing from a technical and analytical standpoint. This concept of not being able to articulate technique in words emerged, to my mind further validating the need for this research project to tie together written, spoken and demonstrated information about cello playing.

Cellist responses in context—school and legacy

Professor Wolfgang Laufer, cellist of the Fine Arts Quartet, was one of Wiesel's most important students, and a pivotal figure in Israeli cultural life, as well as an important member of the Israel Cello Society. Recently deceased at the age of sixty-four, Laufer was born in Romania, immigrating to Israel in 1961 and training at the Tel-Aviv Academy. He joined the Fine Arts Quartet in 1979 and was resident Professor at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee until his death (Rabideau

Silvers, 2011). His son, Daniel Laufer is the Associate Principal Cellist of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, showing a line of succession in the Israeli school. Laufer's response to the questionnaire began with an initial statement about the nature of teaching, which he believed: "Must be tailored to the individual needs of each student, might they be physical, musical or otherwise." He also acknowledged that "The help (he received) from Mr Wiesel was undeniable and very helpful in my development as a solid and accomplished cellist, musically and technically."

Regarding sitting position, Laufer advises that the cellist should sit on the front of the chair, regardless of the length of the endpin, and believes that this should be adjusted "in function with the body-build of the student." In discussing right-hand technique, Laufer refers to the importance of a student's hand "conformation," a term used in Alexanian's treatise. He hesitates to give detailed information here, believing that the individual hand must be adapted to, however he "prefers loose right hand wrist changes." Laufer recommends the Francouer, Dotzauer, Popper and Franchomme methods to develop the functions of both hands in his students. Like Wiesel, he calls for "round left-hand fingers with strong attack ... each finger handled as an individual." This concept of individuality of the fingers has recurred throughout my examination of left-hand technique. Laufer sees the connection and co-ordination between the two hands as vitally important—"it is extremely strong and cannot be disrupted." Interestingly he states that he tries not to use movement of the body in his playing and teaching, but declares that it happens naturally as a result. This may suggest that he believes

excess movement can interfere with fluency and economy of movement, but also implies that natural movements in correct directions gradually appear, and can have a favourable impact on playing. Laufer chooses fingerings “in accordance with the musical idea and line”; something which is reflected in most of the responses and sources that this researcher has examined. He sees that the musical and technical aspects must always be combined, but perhaps this is a reflection of teaching students at a higher level. Intriguingly he emphasizes that a player should develop through “instinct first, and then (undergo) intellectual preparation.” This could be seen as dangerous in some cases, but highlights a point that continues to appear—the fundamental qualities and innate talent of an individual need to be fostered first and brought to the fore, before more probing analysis and intellectual rigour is engaged.

Hillel Zori (born 1966, Israel) is one of the foremost pupils of Wiesel, and is uniquely responsible for the furtherance and development of a twenty-first-century Israeli Cello School. He implements Wiesel’s methods very actively in his teaching, and has an influence over Israeli cellists of all ages through his teaching at the Buchmann-Mehta School in Tel-Aviv and his work for the Israel Cello Society and Israel International Cello Congress. An impressive virtuoso (his arrangements include Sarasate’s *Carmen Fantasy*) and sought-after chamber musician, Zori has won numerous international awards and has performed regularly as soloist with the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra (www.hillelzori.com). Like many other participants, Zori views each cellist as highly individual regarding sitting position

but believes “in having the upper part of the body free from any difficulties. The chest should have enough room to have the arms able to hug the cello. The feet should touch the floor in full. The cellist should be able to push the floor in order to bring the cello to the bow when needed.” He also refers to the choice of chair as important and quite variable from player to player.

Regarding the right hand, Zori clearly echoes Wiesel’s ideas: “the right hand should be free and hanging down. It should lean on the bow. The wrist should be free and let the work be done through it. One should not use the wrist but let the wrist be as a hose of energy from the armpit. Shoulder should be down naturally but not forcefully. I believe strongly in wise bow distribution and efficient and economical use of bow speed, pressure and quantity, while still using the ears in order to control the tone quality.” For developing these elements in his students, Zori interestingly recommends not only practicing exercises on open strings but also “trying to move the cello sideways with only the bow catching the strings without producing any sound. This teaches you the principal of focusing the hair into the string with hardly any pressure but the natural weight of the bow and the arm.” He advocates practicing the simpler Popper and Duport Etudes (numbers one, six and seven respectively) for developing lower half bow technique in numerous bowing variations.

Zori believes that the “left hand should be strong, quick, soft when needed and flexible. I believe in virtuoso passages that the left hand should be placed

ninety degrees to the fingerboard while in *cantilena* it could have the option also of diagonal directions.” This helpfully clarifies the difference between left-hand positioning in passages and in *cantabile* work which has been identified not only by a number of participants, but examined in key works of literature that have supported this study. He goes on to state: “the fingers should touch the string away from the nails, trying to have as much meat as possible and imagine pulling down the hand. Thus one can cultivate the sound and reach a richer vibrato and tone quality.” Like Wiesel, Zori sees *vibrato* as important in developing the left-hand mechanism in general. It should be produced “using the arm from the elbow, flexibility of joints is also welcome, the thumb should be present in the neck of the cello under the fingerboard constantly, as if it vibrates also, with the exception of the 4th finger, here the thumb could be allowed to be away. Naturally one finger at a time is essential!” This is interesting as he clearly sees the thumb stability on the neck as important and a component of *vibrato* in the other fingers. On double stops, Zori recommends that the hand “should be based on the ninety degree position to the fingerboard although it depends very much if the 1st finger is longer or shorter than the 3rd finger, especially in 5th, 6th, 7th and thumb positions.” This reference to finger length and *disposition* is of interest and reflects some of the detail in Alexanian’s hand analysis, while also acknowledging the inevitable anatomical differences from one cellist to another.

Concerning shifting, Zori states that: “the principal lies in the preparation of the arm in advance, namely, making the arm and the wrist as one flat unit a bit

above the finger board and send the hand to the target. One should avoid the technique for each shift. Knowing the positions is essential as well. Moving up and down an octave or 1.5 octaves is different from moving a third.” This reflects the importance of fingerboard *geography* that is highly emphasised by Mantel. Zori makes very intriguing remarks concerning the integration of the hands—“the right hand and left hand should play chamber music together.” He continues to discuss some principles that are often used by modern day cellists: “I never liked the method of preparing the left hand before the right hand, like the idea of vibrating before touching the string ... I detest this idea. The music needs one action of breathing before. We have two hands to make one music.” This is significant as it emphasises the *connection* between the hands, and also the role of momentary anticipation before playing, which is holistically connected through breath.

Continuing this theme, Zori explains that: “Independence should be seen in timing bow slurs differently than fingering or shifting. I teach my students to play scales which force left hand to play random positions while at the same time right hand plays equal groups of notes, from two notes in a bow to a whole scale in a bow.” He goes further to state the musical role of the co-ordination of the hands: “synchronization is important for musical expression. The intensity of *vibrato* should be accompanied with the same treatment of the bow in terms of pressure, quantity or speed.” Again combining the physical and musical, Zori is a strong believer in ‘moving with the body’: “the body is part of the whole system and I believe at least it should not go against the music. I also think the moving the body

as a support to the right hand actually makes the bow longer and at the same time not off center. For example, the beginning of the Elgar Concerto,” (where fast retakes of bow are required to play large sonorous chords). As the questions continue, Zori further reveals his integration of music, mechanics and technique: “Understanding the music brings the cellist to better choices. A note is not music, it could be only a beautiful sound ... two notes start some relationship but do not tell the story yet. A phrase tells us a lot about the style and the mood and henceforth demands the right choices. Many times we have to use the music in order to improve the technique because it forces us to use the right timing for different aspects.” Finally, concerning intuition and analysis, Zori makes clear that the balance between the two is all-important: “Instinct is wonderful but on its own could lead to boredom. Analysis without juice leads to the same result. I do prefer instinct in the beginning but soon after I look for a reason as well.”

Tamas Varga, born in 1969 in Budapest, is now Principal Cellist of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, and has visited Australia on two occasions, most recently in October 2011, where he presented a solo recital in tribute to Wiesel. Varga studied with Wiesel in Israel, and therefore provides a powerful link in the pedagogical chain as an international student, trained in Israel. Regarding sitting position, Varga asserts that this often depends on the musical role required of him—“In orchestra I play more often to the back of the chair and when I play solo I sit more to the front,” noting that when he first went to Wiesel he played with a very short end-pin. He recalls how Wiesel advocated having the cello slightly

higher, but so that it is equal to, or slightly below chest height. Varga remembers two significant changes to his right-hand technique—the use of the hand as one unit with the arm, and the consciousness of the weight of the arm and bow on the string. He helpfully recounts the use of Wiesel’s pedagogical ‘tricks’: “He taught me to put an elastic band on my four fingers, so not on the thumb but all the other four fingers, so to pull them together and take the bow like this, so that my hand is more a unit and not each finger having some separate position and separate rule.” This links to the commonly accepted idea, (by Alexanian, Stutschewsky, Andre Navarra and Sella amongst others) which the bow-hold should be taught with a role for every finger, and a correlating alignment for each on the bow. The basis gained by this is undoubtedly excellent and was clearly strong in Varga’s playing, but the expansion into a whole unit enables another world of expression and projection.

Varga remembers Wiesel’s use of the satchel to increase the weight of the arm, and also an additional device: “ ‘Break The Bow,’ so, holding the point of the bow with the left hand, putting the right hand on the normal position and on the string, kind of like the way you break a piece of wood on your knee ... once you find the sound it’s much warmer, much broader and you can also see the strings moving really *to the side*, which means a big sound.” This idea of “playing to the sides” is also reflected by both Zori and Lipkind. Referring to left-hand technique, Varga focuses on shifting, which also connects to the sitting position and cello position. He remembers Wiesel’s advice to “push the cello down ... towards your

stomach (before a big shift) and that way you have much more overlook over the cello and you have much better space feeling and you catch the notes much better and the sound is much better.” This in turn links to the use of a shorter end-pin length, which both Wiesel and Varga see as helpful in the function of the left hand, as it provides the cellist with a ‘birds-eye view’ of the compass of the instrument from which to shift from. Furthermore, Varga adds that he believes a shift should originate from the elbow: “The elbow starts the motion and that elbow then pulls the hand up.” He discusses learning difficult shifts and combining the elements of aural and spatial perception: “Your ear learns the way up and then you go really just with the constant speed but very slow with the glissando... you go up and when you arrive then you give again big sound.” Adding further detail, the concept of shifting ‘up’ and ‘down’ with the body is revealed, as well as the timing of different shifts, an idea central to Starker’s left-hand system. Varga remembers Wiesel saying—“You have to decide where is the shift—is it on the old bow or is it on the new bow?” an important and often neglected question which helps bring awareness to the technical process. Regarding the choice of fingering, Varga, like Wiesel, believes that it is important to establish secure fingerings that one can feel comfortable with on stage, but that expression should be the first priority in the selection process.

On *vibrato*, Varga concurs with other cellists, particularly Zori, in his description of the *vibrato* technique. He reflects on the common practice of placing the thumb fixed under the neck of the cello, and Wiesel’s “liberation” of this: “Uzi

was motivating me to put away the thumb and straighten my finger and also to make long fingers, not round fingers but very long straight fingers.” The problems of intonation when losing the basis of the thumb (particularly in high *tessitura*) are noted, but Varga asserts that works simply needed to be reviewed in this way to secure the left hand, advocating a combination of both types of technique. He emphasises the benefits of this type of vibrato, which avoids a ‘beating,’ almost countable amount of *vibrato* oscillations and produces an overall glowing vibrato tone. Varga continues, reflecting on the matter of *portato* and how this can both benefit co-ordination but detract from independence—both technically and musically. However, he remembers Wiesel’s teaching aid of alternating speeds and amounts of bow, often using a faster and broader stroke to enunciate the small notes. Connecting this to the movement of the body, Varga states that he moves a lot when he plays and confirms Wiesel’s idea of moving in the direction of the bow that you are playing. He also adds useful advice on the connection between psychological anxiety and physical tension which often arises in stressful situations: “It’s very important, the breathing and the moving in the sense of staying relaxed, and sometimes if you, especially with solo pieces, if you concentrate very much, you want to play very well, then suddenly you realize you are having short breath and your shoulder is going a little bit up and your body becomes stiff. And the moment that happens, the sound just goes away and the expression goes away, so then it’s very important to let down your shoulder and try to make big breath and deep breaths and in that moment if you start to move

with the bow a little bit more, that helps incredibly much to relax and to be again on a much more natural way to play.”

Regarding phrasing and division, Varga draws a strong connection between syntax, language and music, reflecting Casals’ ideals. The idea of *speaking* notes is strongly emphasised, as are the concepts of rhetoric and declamation. He then dissects this into the smaller units of a ‘word’ and building up sentences through the choice of emphasis in division: “You make your decisions about the small units; so what is not possible to take apart, what belongs together?” This in turn connects to technical control, where each section of a passage has a start and gradually relaxes before the impulse of the next section. This concept also aids co-ordination between the hands and the development of an overarching phrase.

Also in relation to phrasing, Varga discusses the build-up of a crescendo through a large phrase: “It was very important that it’s not a completely constant crescendo ... so it’s much more like a walk on a mountain, going up on a hill in the forest which means you are basically on a way up but that means, time by time, it’s straight or it’s even just going a little bit down and then it’s going up so not being afraid to relax for certain moments ... it will not break the long development of that phrasing to arrive to the peak. And as I always tell my students, walking in the forest and looking at mountains and hills, that is nature so that is natural and making a completely straight line, that is the most unnatural thing on Earth because there is nothing that is really straight.” This important musical idea also

connects to Casals' ideas of the organic and *human* phrase development and expression—"Music, like life itself, is constant movement, continuous spontaneity, free from any restriction." (Blum, 1977, p. 69–70)

Taking this idea further, Varga comments on the nature of interpretation and preparation for a performance. He remembers Wiesel's words: "Learn everything very precisely. Look at the music, analyse it—why did he write it, what did he mean with writing this *crescendo*, this *piano*, this expression and so on. And really, be busy with that and when you go on stage, forget it." This highlights Wiesel's idea of *computerising* a musical text, so that everything is studied and ingrained fully before the performance, so that the individual personality of the interpreter can emerge on stage. Again drawing a line back to speaking and presenting a text, Varga alludes to the *story* in music: "Just imagine this story, there are so many differences; where you put the accent, where you make a little slowdown in the text, where you make a break before you go on." This reveals the highly personal nature of interpretation, which Varga tempers with a real respect for the composer's wishes. In an article from *The Strad*, (1991, p. 596) Wiesel supports the process, which Varga outlines in this interview: "Interpretation is a matter of instinct (which may lead us astray), knowledge (which, as long as it does not force itself, helps greatly), experience and intelligent speculation." In his own teaching, he discusses cultural differences in students, and particularly the problems faced with encouraging Oriental students to display their emotions and

expression through music, when this is something that they are generally conditioned to conceal.

Regarding the early stages of a student's development, Varga believes firmly that the idea of music should be introduced even when the full technical means are not yet stable. As a student matures through high school and university levels, he feels that no amount of musicality can make up for a poor technical base, going further to say that he does not believe in *perfection* per se, but in the journey towards this goal: "You should be able, technically, to relax so that you are almost all the time always busy only with the music, only with the expression and that you are not constantly forced to think about technical problems, technical solutions, technical subjects."

Gavriel Lipkind, born in 1977 of Russian heritage, was raised in Tel-Aviv and began studies with Wiesel at the age of nine. Wiesel recalls the first time he met Lipkind, and asked him to play a fast work to demonstrate his facility. To his amusement, Lipkind played the Prelude from Suite no. 1 in G-major by Bach, but this was the beginning of a long journey that resulted in one of Wiesel's most impressive pedagogical 'products.' Lipkind now resides in Frankfurt, Germany and enjoys a wide-ranging career as an international soloist with a difference. Though a true virtuoso he is actively engaged in many unconventional projects and has an inspiring 'holistic' approach to cello playing. The researcher has been acquainted

with Lipkind since 2003 and has spent periods working with him and discussing many aspects of cello playing, life in music and musicianship.

Lipkind believes that in sitting “the chair, end-pin and cello are one system.” This interesting remark is highly appropriate as it draws attention to the fact that the ideal playing position is one where everything is united and organically connected. He also connects this to his own unusual use of the curved endpin (this researcher employed this device from 2008–2009). Lipkind sees this as being essential to achieving “the ultimate freedom of movement.” He asserts that “with a curved end-pin the cello can be a bit higher on the knees and lower on the chest, and a bit more diagonally rested on the body.” This goes to an extent against Wiesel’s idea of the low endpin and the cello being rested on the body at chest height with the legs free to adjust the angle of the instrument. However, the emphasis on freedom and flexibility of movement is common and perhaps a more important factor to focus on. It is interesting to note that the importance of the cellist’s chair itself is the focus of Lipkind’s response. Indeed, Lipkind uses a special chair that enables the lower back to be supported, the cellist to sit lower and “lean backwards at times, letting the cello sink into the body and the upper body lean over the cello.”

Somewhat cryptically, in discussing right-hand technique, Lipkind states that “the right hand serves the lower contact point with the string—this is the only principle.” This is in fact a very basic point only clarifying that the right hand

produces sound on the lower length of the string, while obviously the left hand articulates at a higher point on the string. Lipkind then comments on technique itself—“Every finger should be able to participate in the drawing and change of bow.” He refers to the differences between pulling and pushing the bow in each direction, and points to how this is an important concept which is often neglected in conceptualising right-hand technique. In terms of angle awareness, Lipkind demonstrates the important characteristics “of each given diagonal, and their inversions when changing the bow.” Unlike many of the cellists examined, he believes in the need to use and control pressure, advocating “the vectorization of pressure.” He emphasizes the importance of shoulder flexibility and “the ability to draw and change the bow with the shoulder and upper body alone.” This concept is powerful and relates to the holistic idea of every muscle in the upper body being activated (in a relaxed manner) in drawing each bow, moving at the same time in a complementary way. Lipkind also discusses “counter motions between adjacent parts of the bow arm,” perhaps referring to the involuntary action of sympathetic muscles in activating any bow stroke. Intriguingly, Lipkind himself refers to his own holistic approach to playing and teaching by quoting Wiesel: “An holistic approach to specific technical functions.”

In discussing left-hand technique, Lipkind refers to the concept of “one finger, hanging on the string” with a basis that is strong and flexible at the same time. He also mentions “playing within position” which is perhaps the more grounded and ordered approach to fingering which can then be expanded in

innumerable directions. Lipkind has very interesting remarks regarding the importance of synchronicity and independence. He sees this as highly dependent on the music in question, again highlighting the constant interweaving of technical procedure and musical outcome. He states: “Technically I need both everywhere in the body ... I would go further as to say that one cannot be achieved without the other,” reflecting Zori’s statements. This interesting parallel displays that while independence of action is needed (indeed individuality is vital in the left hand and in obtaining primary control of each hand) synchronicity is required to make anything come into being, as these are the tools one has as a cellist and musician to express a composer’s intentions as an *interpreter*. Regarding movement of the body, Lipkind adopts a similarly holistic approach. He believes that: “Playing is movement within or outside of a structure ... and we need to learn the structure and movement potential of each part of our cellists’ bodies.” This perhaps points to the growing awareness a cellist gains through all stages of learning and then advancement, of the capacity of the body to realize our musical goals.

As far as choice of fingering is concerned, Lipkind states that he does take positions into account in choosing an appropriate fingering, but only does this “to serve better the musical connection I am looking for between the notes.” This idea of between the notes is a fascinating concept as numerous musicians refer to this as being the essence of technique: what happens to get from one note to the next. Without technique, no consequent movement can occur, and therefore no phrase can be sculpted. Even further than this, Piatigorsky used to famously assert that

the cello is a “one-note instrument” as it takes a lot of technique to play one note well on the cello, while anyone can play one note on the piano, for example (Janof, 2001, accessed 9 August 2011).

Lipkind discusses the musical division of a phrase as being a very broad term but sees it as “the essence of interpretation (in its broader syntactic and most differentiated sense.” This idea of syntax links to the idea of speaking on the cello, pioneered by Casals and to the units of each phrase forming parts of a sentence. In this way, on the smaller scale, each articulation and small inflection is a consonant or even vowel sound (in tone production), while each section of a work combining several phrases, or perhaps an elongated romantic phrase, is a paragraph or stanza. In his characteristically cryptic manner, Lipkind provides the following closing remarks about the most complex question in the questionnaire: “Intuition rests on the shoulders of conscious knowledge. Knowledge is carried by Intuition.” This again suggests the connection between these two extremes and the harmonious relationship they need to have in every player. Here the holistic idea of cello playing comes full circle as we have only our natural talents and instincts which can then be developed and broadened by knowledge, but still with those innate qualities that make each player an individual personality.

Shmuel Magen is Professor of Cello Pedagogy at the Jerusalem Academy of Music (www.israel-cello.com/congress_teacher_en.php?teacher=magen). He found it difficult to answer the questions in the researcher’s format, but provided me

with the following interesting response: “Uzi Wiesel is no doubt the most important cello teacher that has ever been in our country ... I studied with Uzi from 1955 to 1967 and during those twelve years (his first years as a teacher) he developed a lot and changed many things in his teaching. From 1967 to our days (forty-four years) he continued his progress as a teacher and his teaching today or even twenty years ago is not the same as what it was in the '60s.” This affirms Wiesel’s status as the most significant Israeli cello pedagogue and also the important concept of *evolution* as a teacher. Naturally as any teacher develops, ages and has wider experience, the teaching style will change too, thus affecting the outcome of school development. This strand of enquiry is useful to my argument, but in the end only supports the development of an Israeli school. Magen continues to comment: “Uzi is the most important teacher in my life ... (however) the two teachers that I was having after him: Paul Tortelier in the Paris Conservatory, and Aldo Parisot in Yale University, changed my technique in many ways and when I started to teach it was mostly Tortelier and Parisot.” This is intriguing as it reveals Magen became more open to Western contemporary ideas of cello playing and has chosen in his own path to employ these in his teaching in Israel. However, it can be argued that these ideas in use in Israel combine to create a broader Israeli school, reflecting the wide range of influences created by the Jewish diaspora. Magen concludes his remarks with some complimentary comments about Wiesel’s methods: “His musical thinking and values are much more involved in my playing and teaching and also his openness and sensitivity to

each individual. I like very much his beginner's method and in my pedagogy classes I recommend it highly to my students."

Ulrike Eickenbusch studied at the Frankfurt Hochschule with Gerhard Mantel (see Literature review section) and with Wiesel from 1987–1990 in Israel. While in Israel she won the Rubin Academy Chamber Music Competition (1989) and she is now a member of the Stuttgart Kammerorchester and the Turina Trio (www.audite.de/en/artist/201-eickenbusch_ulrike.html) and provided the researcher with the following comments: "I listened to a lot of concerts he played during this time. Sonatas, quartets, solo etc. It opened my view on music and much more. It opened my ears, and I still remember some very special moments from his performances. I am in a continuous contact with him, listening nearly every year since then to his lessons (somewhere in the world). And he still has always something to say that gives me to think and to develop, despite I play and teach myself. It is such a pity that nobody in Israel made a documentation at former times."

Ohad Bar-David was born in Israel and has been a member of the Philadelphia Orchestra since 1987. Bar-David began his studies at the age of seven with Uzi Wiesel in Tel-Aviv, continuing at the Juilliard School with Leonard Rose and later studying conducting at the Curtis Institute of Music with Max Rudolf (www.philorch.org/about/musicians). He also founded "Intercultural Journeys" which, like Daniel Barenboim's West-Eastern Divan Orchestra, promotes the

unification of Israelis and Palestinians through music. In an interview with the Juilliard School newsletter, he comments helpfully on the contemporary role of a musician in society: “We are living in a changing world ... the role of a musician and an artist is evolving ... as musicians, nothing is complete ... our audiences are dwindling ... when you go into communities ... you present either music or visuals that are related to their culture, and you speak their language. And once you bring them in, you can present anything else, including all the masterworks that we have studied as classical musicians ... we have the added responsibility of educating with our performances ... ” (www.juilliard.edu/alumni/news/qa/archive/2010-11/201104.php)

Leonard Elschenbroich (born 1986, Frankfurt) studied at the Yehudi Menuhin School in Surrey, UK and unusually, left the school at an early age to study with Lipkind and then in Sydney with Wiesel. He is now forging an impressive career in Europe and the United States. Elschenbroich provided me with the following recollections of his studies with both Lipkind and Wiesel:

Uzi and Gabi were the only teachers who taught me to move while I play, with specific directions as to how to move and why. Turning the cello to optimize the comfort of playing on different strings and in different positions, moving in the direction of the travel of the bow, to increase the sensation of ‘drawing’ the sound, as well as generally being loose in the body and not afraid to curve the spine, lean to one side etc. Uzi and Gabi taught me to divide passage work into sections that hang together

technically, and Gabi taught me to play each of these sections with one impetus which, as you reached the end of a section, slowed down the speed slightly, until the next section gave the next impetus and, adding speed again. Sort of like pushing a toy car and watching it slow down and then pushing it again. Uzi taught me lots of things about the polyphony of the Bach Suites, analysing phrase lengths, varying pulse in a sensible and 'natural' way etc. It is hard to put this in words without giving examples musically.

This response gave some excellent information and reflects the often-problematic idea of putting complex technical and physical concepts into words. Elschenbroich is in fact an important link in the chain of this study, as he studied with both Lipkind and Wiesel, therefore creating an additional connection in the legacy and development of the Israeli school. He is also indirectly the reason I was alerted to Wiesel's relocation to Sydney, leading to my many years of subsequent study with him.

Ofer Canetti (born in Tel-Aviv, 1987) is a rising talent in the European scene and has had considerable success both in Israel and abroad. He has studied with a wide range of teachers, but credits his time with Wiesel as being of crucial importance to his outlook and development as a cellist and musician. In reference to sitting position, Canetti comments that he previously played with a very long endpin, seen particularly in the Soviet School of playing pioneered by Msislav

Rostropovich, and also in the advancements of endpin length and angle brought about by Paul Tortelier, who fashioned the “Tortelier endpin” in the 1960s to allow playing in higher registers with greater ease, and to enhance projection of tone. This endpin was also used by players of the calibre of Jacqueline du Pre, but is much less common in modern-day players. Canetti now uses a shorter straight endpin, which was advised by Wiesel and finds it is possible “to control the sound quality better” (Canetti Questionnaire Responses). Canetti believes in using a low right elbow, “to produce the biggest sound,” and refers to the importance of constant elbow movement “to divide and control the balance between weight and pressure on the string.” He discusses Wiesel’s idea of “playing to the sides,” which he believes creates a balance in the division of the bow and also “getting the feeling and identification with every note in order to express and present the musical and emotional idea behind every note.” This points to the important idea of the musical result being the most important outcome of an ‘ideal’ technical approach. Canetti also refers to the importance of repetition in practice that is exaggerated, in order to allow the cellist to assimilate the idea and then come away with an altered and enhanced way of playing. This is an idea that can be seen in all of Wiesel’s teaching, and can potentially be dangerously misinterpreted, particularly by students of lower technical ability, but can also have fantastic results when it is pared back and the remnants that remain bring the playing to a higher level of quality and artistry.

In regards to the left hand, Canetti comments that the fingers should be straight and used at the points with the most “meat” to produce a large and full-

bodied tone. He also emphasises the importance of keeping the left hand at a ninety-degree angle to the string, thus “enabling greater mobility between positions.” Canetti seeks a vibrato that is slow and wide, and reflects some of the beliefs of Wiesel in his response to this topic. His aim in this is to produce a projecting sound that carries to the audience and to the back of a hall.

Regarding co-ordination, Canetti believes that the hands need to assist each other and does not believe they can be truly isolated. He gives the examples that the right hand can help in “pronouncing” the notes, while the left-hand *vibrato* can help to create a *legato*. Interestingly, Canetti again connects technical elements with producing an emotional impact when discussing movement of the body. He states that: “It helps embracing the musical and expressional [sic] understanding and identification with every note ... and helps producing a more convincing emotional connection while playing and with the cello.” Canetti discusses the combination of musical and technical ideas, and sees the separation and integration of the two as vital: “To get an idea of the piece played, I try to understand and divide the musical sentences and structures, then I try to find the technical solutions that will help me bring out aspects of the music in the most convincing and involved way.”

Canetti makes numerous interesting comments regarding one of the most complex questions—the combination and balance of instinct and analysis in a player’s development. Very much in line with Wiesel’s beliefs on the matter, he

views it as imperative that the strong and “unique” aspects of a cellist’s character are developed and nourished, as these will always come to the fore in performance in a way that no other cellist can reproduce. However he sees the role of analysis as equally vital, and stresses the importance of working on a student’s weaker aspects so that a balance is achieved between innate qualities and acquired ones. In closing, Canetti adds that: “My view of the tradition that Uzi Wiesel passes through his pedagogical methods are important not only in the technical and ‘cellistic’ aspects, but the devotion and full emotional connection with the music and playing, which I find, through complimenting the playing, both extremely inspirational and enormously admirable.”

Yoni Draiblate (also born 1987), is another rising star of the Israeli cello playing culture, and now resides in the United States. He has had numerous masterclasses with Wiesel and is one of Zori’s most accomplished students, possessing a particularly brilliant left-hand technique, which impressed me very much at the 2009 Israel International Cello Congress in Jerusalem.

Draiblate makes interesting comments regarding sitting position, which reflect the slight left body inclination in position seen in many of Wiesel’s students. He recommends that the cello: “Should be comfortable on you ... and you may pivot your back slightly to the left to allow more comfortable handling of the left hand.” In describing right-hand technique, Draiblate emphasises that the most important aspect is to use weight and not pressure to create sound. He also states that the

“first finger, fourth finger and thumb are the foundations of the bow hold,” which relates to the setting up of the right-hand described in Alexanian’s treatise, and most standard concepts of bowing technique. In terms of the left hand, Draiblate sees strength of fingers, speed and flexibility as being the most important elements. Regarding shifting, Draiblate refers to “preparing” the shift, something fundamental to Wiesel’s idea of shifting. He also refers to the helpful example of a cat preparing to jump before actually initiating and then completing the movement. He sees *vibrato* as coming from the joint, which relates to the ideas seen in Wiesel’s teaching of *vibrato*. He advises against the use of the wrist as this invariably leads to a nervous kind of *vibrato*. Unlike many cellists who have spent time studying with Wiesel, Draiblate tends towards the economy of movement idea in playing, which was evident in his performance. He does, however, state that movement of the body can be used in executing a technical difficulty and makes interesting remarks regarding bow-direction in movement: “If you are playing an up-bow ... move your cello to the right, not to the left—the simple reason is because that way you make the string focus better and you make the cello work for you—otherwise you are just making the string further (away) and harder to focus.” In choosing fingerings for a work, Draiblate looks for an optimal combination of “expressiveness and efficiency”. It is certainly evident from Draiblate’s playing that he makes great use of efficiency of movement in general.

Understanding Wiesel through an analysis of interviews

Wiesel discusses sitting position at length demonstrating that the most fundamental idea is that “the person has to get rid of every small tension”. He believes that the most important element is that “the first upper half of the body should be completely free to move and to be flexible. That’s the first axiom, the first fundament of playing.” Wiesel goes on to say that the cello should lean on the knee of the left leg, to allow the instrument to be moveable. He refers to the position of early cello playing where the cello was placed between the knees, indicating “Casals rebelled against it,” thereby demonstrating the lineage from Casals in developing his idea of basic sitting position. Wiesel suggests that to find an ideal quality of sound, the cellist must “move the cello toward the A string and toward the C string.” He explains that when the cello rests against the knee and you move the knee, the instrument will be in the ideal position ready to play on each string. Furthermore Wiesel states: “Every cellist has to imagine that when he plays on the A string, he has a cello with one string.” This concept then applies to all the other strings, so that the maximum tone, expression and security can be realised on each string. Wiesel comments that most cellists move to an extent in handling the instrument, though he acknowledges there are some cellists and teachers that recommend total stability and immovability, which perhaps has merits of a different kind. This difference of opinion is also reflected in some of the questionnaire responses. However, flexibility of handling the instrument can be seen in the playing of most cellists linked in some way to Israeli cello pedagogy.

Wiesel also stresses that the basic position and flexibility described is extremely important for the bow position and the position of both right and left arms. His belief that the cello should not rest too high on the cellist allows for the hands to be ready in an ideal position without any hindrance or exaggerated angles. Wiesel notes here that the higher the cello position on the chest, the more the right arm must be raised, thus affecting flexibility of bow and left-hand technique and hence the overall quality of tone. He does acknowledge the advancements made in this regard by Paul Tortelier and Mstislav Rostropovich (both of whom made use of the patented 'Tortelier' endpin, enabling an almost horizontal playing position), but suggests that even in modern day playing, most cellists have reverted to an earlier and less exaggerated playing position. Lipkind is an obvious exception to this who combines the benefits of the short endpin with those of the 'Tortelier' through his use of the curved endpin.

The commonly held idea that the beginner cellist should imagine 'hugging' the cello is also referred to by Wiesel, (also see Zori responses) and he believes this sitting position makes this possible: "If you put the left hand on the harmonic A on the A string and embrace the cello ... this is the basic position that each person should find for himself." He also indicates that this applies regardless of an individual's height or the chair height, acknowledging that many cellists have a preference for a higher or lower chair (see Lipkind and Varga responses). In accordance with this position, Wiesel emphasizes that the bow hand must *lean* on the string so "that you feel the heaviness of the bow arm". This idea is central to

Wiesel's and his protégé Zori's concept of sound production, and he even goes so far as to tie an empty satchel or bag to a cellist's right arm to encourage the feeling of weight—an approach that he has also used with both violinists and viola players.

In regard to the right hand, Wiesel affirms that the most important factor to stress is that “the bow has a weight by itself”. He demonstrates this by describing holding the tip of the bow with an underhand *viola da gamba* grip and “move the bow so that you feel that the bow leans on the string, every inch of the bow from the beginning to the end of the bow, as low as you want with the bow arm.” This is also reflected in Zori's exercise to develop a feeling of bow and arm weight. Wiesel refers to the problems of not realizing the element of weight as when the bow is held “very stiff, there's no more weight of the bow on the string because then the hand holds it and the hand moves it.” He also notes the common problem of cellists believing that power of sound can be produced by pressing the bow, and warns against this as he believes: “The best power, the free tone, comes by feeling the consciousness of the weight of the bow.” Surprisingly, Wiesel does not believe that there are numerous variations in bow hold, as he notes that the eye on the frog of the bow dictates the placement of the little finger in all schools of cello playing, and the hand must be arranged around this point. He does comment that the key problem in producing a relaxed, balanced and flexible right-hand position is the awareness of the distances between the fingers. This connects to Alexanian's description of establishing a bow hold by bringing the fingers together, which

could encourage a bunching of the fingers. This interestingly connects to Varga's description of his reassessment of using the bow and arm as one unit with Wiesel, facilitated by the use of an elastic band over the right hand fingers to sense this unity. Wiesel notes that the hand in its resting state has natural distances between each finger, and these should generally be kept in transferring conformation of the hand to the bow hold. Another problem referred to is the stretching of the distances between the right-hand fingers, often the first and second, which can particularly be seen in the Soviet School of Cello Playing and the technique of Rostropovich (which was often mistakenly imitated by students, one reasons that the Russian master refrained from using the cello to demonstrate in lessons—Wilson, 2007, p. 92). Wiesel believes this exaggerated distance between fingers causes tension of the wrist and in the bow.

He advises that the second and third finger should lie over the ferule of the bow and that the first finger and thumb should provide the main contact with the bow. The tendency for the right hand to lean towards the small finger is discussed and described as “a problem with gravitation.” This balance tendency is recommended by Wiesel for use in pianissimo passages to produce a fine but still projecting tone but discouraged as a tendency for the right hand's conformation. The importance of the first finger is emphasized, and this can also be seen in Wiesel's teaching of the bow change and development of *spiccato*, *sautille*, *martele* and *staccato* strokes:

The hand leans on the first finger ... if you lean on it ... you don't have to press...just lean the whole hand and it gives the illusion that you still have the gravitation....the word *weight* is one of the most important principles in playing. Pressure strangles the sound and (sic) weight you can afterwards control, because the role of the hand is to control the amount of sound, the amount of bow, the amount of everything ... (U. Wiesel, personal communication, 28 January 2011)

Wiesel advises that the first finger should be placed at a contact point somewhere between the first and second knuckle, but warns against pushing this point beyond the second knuckle. In keeping with his ideas about the natural position of the hand and finger distances, Wiesel notes that if the hand hangs loosely, the wrist will naturally be high, and this concept should be applied in establishing a good bow hold. He also refers to a large percentage of cellists who allow the wrist to cave in towards the second half of the bow and begin to press on the bow to maintain power and strength. Wiesel connects these concepts to the notion of the angle that the bow makes with the string (see Sella discussion p. 43), but perhaps controversially believes that the concept of playing always perpendicularly to the bridge is *passé*. He cites the example of playing on the C string to support this, where he believes it is not possible to play at the tip of the bow and remain parallel to the bridge.

To counteract these problems and explain his own approach to such angles, Wiesel advises that the bow should be placed at the extreme tip of the bow on the A string and a quality forte should be searched for, preferably using a still-arched wrist. He suggests this position will eventually guide the player to the correct angle where sound quality is optimal and flexibility of the wrist and arm is always possible. Perhaps self-evidently, he comments that every string is different and the ideal angle needs to be found in accordance to the angles of the bridge and the quality of contact gained with the bow. At this point in the Questionnaire Interview, the researcher went further to ask: “Do you think if these basic elements are in place does that lead to every kind of stroke?” to which Wiesel replied: “Everything stems from it ...”. This idea being supported by many schools of string pedagogy where the *detache* is sped up into *sautille* and brought off the string for *spiccato*, while *colle* is defined further into *martele* and *martele* is joined into a single direction to make *staccato*.

Concerning the left hand and specifically *vibrato*, Wiesel provides excellent information for developing this essential and expressive mechanism. He advises that a student should “feel that their arm weighs and lies on the tip of the finger ... (on) the fatter side of this knuckle as if you cut the nail in the diagonal; cut it into half.” This reflects Alexanian’s comments on the positioning of the finger pads on the strings, which is reflected in both his and Stutschewsky’s images in their respective texts. Wiesel recommends that the cellist vibrates with the whole arm and then practice one octave scales on the A string with each finger. Once this

mechanism is established he advises that this same type of *vibrato* production should be achieved with the thumb resting on the neck, “on the outside half of the neck.” Later on in the course of development, Wiesel recommends developing a “finger *vibrato*” in order to amplify the *vibrato* and prepare for richly expressive romantic and contemporary works, such as those of Brahms, Tchaikovsky and Shostakovich. He advises that this *vibrato* be developed without the participation of the wrist, and only with the finger movement from the note below and back to the note, until this movement is sped up to create a full and vibrant *vibrato*. Wiesel points to the dangers in teaching *vibrato* and the many poor habits that are acquired, such as when people are nervous, pressing the left hand and resulting in cramps and inconsistent or tight vibration.

In terms of shifting, Wiesel states that: “Shifting is coming to the note that you shift for a little bit on the side of the finger, the side that leans towards the body.” He also insists that the arrival point should be on a ‘soft’ and not stiff finger, which allows for adjustment of intonation where necessary that when systematized, becomes inaudible: “The minute you are sure the note is there, then you can press more.” The idea of approaching a shift note from *under* the note is mentioned, as well as the speed of shift, which needs to be slow and gliding, perhaps leaving the origin note a little early depending on the time required.

In developing left-hand mechanisms, Wiesel stressed that it is crucial to “develop the individuality of the fingers, that there will be no sense of blocks and

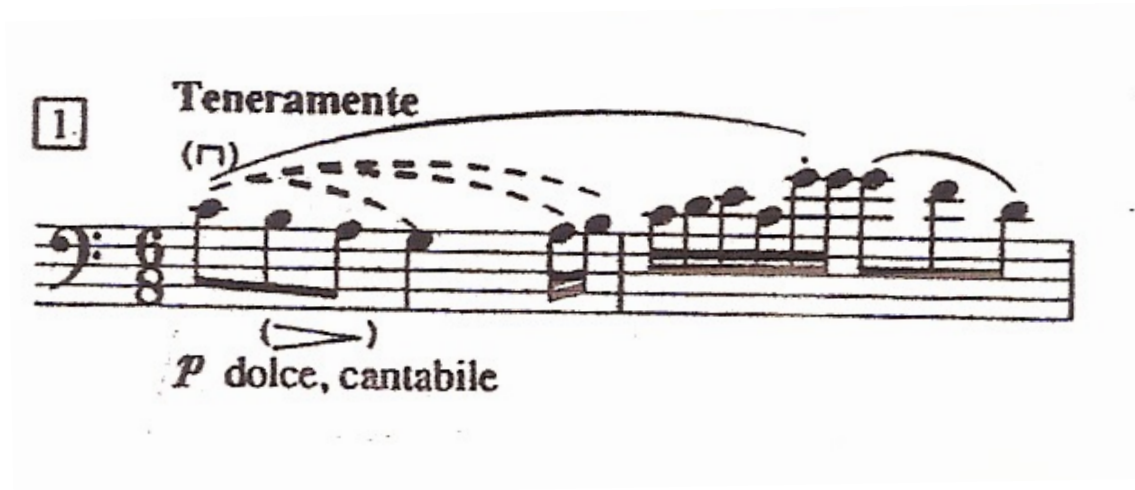
that every finger could function by itself.” He emphasizes that one must feel that all the fingers are relaxed—“If they don’t have the individuality, they don’t relax.” In developing double-stops, Wiesel applies the same logic as single-note playing, but adds that the fourth finger should be in a comfortable position, preferably at ninety degrees to the fingerboard.

The question regarding synchronisation and independence of the hands receives an interesting response. Wiesel sees it as important to develop the independent functions of the hands as much as possible, but that the hands always influence each other and require co-operation. For instance, a difficult passage in the left hand may result in an unhealthy tone in the right hand as the bow becomes stiff, while a legato passage with many notes should be articulated “as if the right hand is playing all the notes also.” Teachers and players often dislike this *portato* idea, but there is no doubt in the merits of using it as a control mechanism and way of balancing the functions of each hand. Wiesel reveals that in most instances, mistakes occur when a cellist tries to “follow with the right hand the left-hand mechanism and that’s what causes rhythmic problems and all kinds of things. I don’t believe in completely ideal independence of the two hands, they are all the time effecting ... (each other).”

Regarding moving with the body, Wiesel discusses the whole-body approach of many ‘old’ school performers: “If you watch some old violinists or singers or pianists, you see how their hands function as part of their body or even

their voice comes out with the participation of the body as if the voice comes from the body and is part of it. If a person should feel the vertebrae of the spine with every note, it'll be good!" This links to Casals' comments about the freedom of the entire organism in the sense that "he credited his ease in playing to a feeling of repose emanating from the centre of his body which brought the movement of the extremities into natural integration" (Blum, 1977, p. 134). Wiesel continues further to discuss the physical and psychological state of a performer: "People usually, when they want to express themselves intimately or very intensely, they close themselves up and go inside and then suddenly the body doesn't function, they just close themselves in the body and this is their playing. And you have to know that intense playing also needs to have the effect of space, that you have to move more because the bow is breathing ... the minute you stop breathing normally or you don't breathe freely, then the sound is not alive, not free." Interestingly, this also connects to Mantel's comments and supports the idea that an intense musical feeling or idea or even technical difficulty should not result in a physically restricted performance. Mantel points to the "continually correcting impulses that control the external movement are influenced by minimal psychic tensions ... the tensions are the internal equivalent of what happens externally (physiologically)—they mirror the effects of hope and disappointment" (Mantel, 1972, p. 17). Crucially, Wiesel points to the importance of developing this physical and psychological freedom to enable the development of the individual personality and artist—"if you develop this, then the player will find himself, or herself."

In discussion of fingerings, Wiesel refers to the differences between secure and expressive or artistic choices: “There are cases of solid fingering, fixed to the position, and instead of using fingerings on one string, you use fingering and passages on both strings and the thumb position ... sometimes it doesn’t sound that well but there is a solid way of fingering things but there is also what I call a long range fingering which goes with the phrase, helps a phrase and not all the time what seems in the first instant or moment the safest. If you work them out and you’re very flexible in your fingering handling when you work them out, you work them out until they become safe. But I watched cellists and sometimes when you want a student to be safe, to feel safe, then you give him a very solid fingering and not the real musical fingering ... ”. This then leads on to his comments on division of phrasing, so the connection between choice of apparatus in realising the musical intention: “Everything in music is divided. Even a technical passage is divided. But you don’t have to show the division, you have to absorb it in your mind and know that the passage is divided. If you have a conception that music is like a speech that you have to utter then you have to divide or articulate and to learn how to articulate the beginning of phrases ... this beginning of short passages is an art in itself. And this is why Casals stayed in a minority of players that really speak when they play.” This can be seen in this extract from Beethoven Op. 102 no. 1 (Wiesel, 1991, p. 596), where the simple opening cantilena phrase is shaped through, yet also divided for clarity, which eventually relies on bow technique to be realised:



Wiesel described the topic of intuition versus analysis as “the question of questions” and explained in detail about the many different talents that he taught and how they have developed in different ways. He also acknowledges that though there are merits to a scientific level of analysis of cello playing: (as seen in the works of Alexanian, Mantel, Stutschewsky and the approach of Lipkind) “Sometimes in order to play the cello, you don’t need the scientific analysing of the cello.” Wiesel went further to elaborate on the question of conscious thought and analysis in cello playing: “I do believe that everything should be devoted to make a person understand why. How to use efficiently the bow arm, with a certain analysis scientifically. How do you produce sound? What are the components of the cello body? But going scientifically, for instance I was trying to show somebody the way to staccato and suddenly somebody came to the room and saw it and said, ‘staccato is ...’ and started doing a scientific analysis ... I didn’t want to stop him, but then I asked myself, ‘Does it help the playing?’ Does he know now, because of this scientific analysis? ... you have to show him ... (a student) that’s the whole point ... and if you find a combination of the two—go ahead. Do it. But in teaching,

I think that again, the consciousness—how much can you develop it?” (U. Wiesel, personal communication, 28 January 2011).

This detailed topic provoked further comments which create a kind of paradox, but one that is essential to at least be aware of in order to be a successful pedagogue: “I was fortunate enough to have all my life, great and some special talents: great talents that became afterwards, artists. And the question is always; how far do we go with arousing the consciousness of a great talent without losing his subconscious. The subconscious of a talent is the rare and fantastic thing, which makes the personality different from others. At the base of every talent there is intuition, no doubt about it. But do we let them play all the time what intuition dictates to them or do we add some knowledge here, some knowledge there, how to phrase, how to look at playing Bach, not to play Bach like Tchaikovsky and not play Tchaikovsky like Mozart and so on ... if you sometimes enrich them with this knowledge, make sure that they absorb it, that it will be part of the system afterwards without killing their subconscious, which is a rare thing ... finding the balance is what makes a better teacher. If you start talking about this note is out of tune and this note has a certain flaw and so on then you can destroy everything. You have to have a list of priorities, as a teacher and to differentiate and see what is more important to get rid of ... I try to, even if sometimes I don't like it, I try to make them conscious of their intuition. And this is the main thing—to encourage a personality but it's the most difficult question to answer.” Wiesel continued to discuss the importance of slowly unravelling a student's problems to enable real

progress: “If you start pouring out all you know in one lesson, nothing will come out. So you have to pick up one point, two points and to know what is more important ... ” These remarks reveal some of the essence of Wiesel’s pedagogical approach, and point to the success of it in developing well-rounded professional cellists and teachers. The idea of consciousness of intuition is a fascinating and focal one to Wiesel’s methodology and is also reflected in Stutschewsky’s statement: “Instinct, after all, is no worse an instructor than actual experience,” (Stutschewsky, 1932, p. 3).

Concluding remarks

The gestation of this thesis has been long, and connects directly to the researcher’s own development as a cellist and teacher. From my first encounter with Wiesel in 2002, through to this point in 2012, the fascinating differences and unique qualities in the Israeli school have informed and coloured my own journey with the cello. As the initial idea for this thesis arose in early 2008, I have lived with this project in parallel to my career development, and have been fortunate to use some of the ideas and strategies gleaned through research in my own playing and teaching.

Many key issues have arisen through the formation of this research, but in the end, all have contributed to the shaping of an Israeli school, as seen in the pedagogical ‘trees’ included in the Appendices. As the key focus of the study was

the technical and mechanical questions of the questionnaire, there was a tendency to dwell on such 'dry' matters and sometimes overlook the reason for all this pedagogy—a convincing and communicative musical and aesthetic ideal. However, a 'school' can only be the sum of its parts, and all the intricate mechanisms discussed in this research are what *create* a cellist and are first visually, and later, aurally evident in the course of one's development. Through this process of development, the important point of knowing *when* to introduce a new concept to a student has emerged as essential on the path towards developing a technique, and therefore becoming part of a 'school'.

Despite some cellists believing that an Israeli school cannot be seen as distinct, it has emerged that this is largely due to the complex questions of identity which Israeli musicians face, representing as they often do, a cross-section of nationalities unified by the concept of a faith. The issue of *where* this *Israeli* cello pedagogy took place has also arisen as a factor in need of assessment, and this certainly helps in the process of defining a school. As already demonstrated, the origins of Israeli cello playing are in both European, and to a lesser extent, American traditions, but crucially, these influences occurred in Israel, before they were passed on to future generations, thus creating a cello pedigree. The fact that much of this knowledge that has been developed and implemented in Israel is now being imparted throughout the world (and also in Australia through the teaching of Wiesel and others) is surely testimony to the creation of a distinct Israeli school.

With his patriarchal status over the development of Israeli cello playing and pedagogy, Wiesel himself does not see that the 'school', which is now in existence, is truly Israeli. He genuinely believes *he* has single-handedly shaped this way of playing and teaching, and his many successful students generally concur. Regardless, this legacy has clearly led to what we can define as an Israeli cello school, as demonstrated through my research and in the existence of the Israel Cello Society and Israel International Cello Congress.

Wiesel is quoted as saying: "Developed personal expression convinces best because it is your own" (Wiesel, 1991, p. 596), an idea which holds true in all his students' development and the continuation of this through the next generation of students. This very human concept has emerged throughout this study, and links back to the work of Wiesel's former mentor, Casals. The importance of a student's temperament and personality and how this relates to the rapport with a teacher is also revealed through the many questionnaire responses. In the researcher's findings, this balance is uniquely well realised by Wiesel and proponents of the Israeli school, but has not always translated as successfully outside of the Israeli or European musical environment. This is also a crucial point, as has been seen in the interviews with many cellists who *think* in Hebrew or a language other than English. Naturally, meaning, tone and intention can always vary when this is the case, but the strength of the Israeli pedagogical principles usually transcend any boundaries.

The researcher's findings are not only of great personal benefit, they have potential to assist in the furtherance of a school of cello pedagogy in Australia. Like Israel, Australia is a young nation and has comparatively few exponents of high-level cello training. Unfortunately the extent of international influence that was and is present in Israel, is not yet ingrained in Australian cello pedagogy, but the researcher hopes this can change through implementation of some of the methods revealed in this thesis. This brings to mind Feuermann's statement: "The development of cello playing stood still where culture—which means art—begins."

After evaluating the number of cellist responses and interviews, the strong tradition of the Israeli cello school cannot be denied; and particularly in relation to Wiesel's work, it is hard to envisage how a distinct school could *not* develop after producing so many internationally influential and successful cellists and pedagogues. At this point in time I feel that I have come full circle with my own knowledge of the rich Israeli pedagogic tradition, and feel truly prepared to embark on the career that this process has enabled for me. Through examination of my practice diaries between 2006 and 2012 a line of influence is seen, and key concepts consistently emerge.

In closing this research, I would like to end with the cellist with whom this thesis began: Joachim Stutschewsky. Stutschewsky provides this research with a probing insight into the nature of technique, knowledge and skill, which, as

established by the researcher, is clearly defined in the twenty-first-century school of Israeli cello playing and pedagogy:

Manual dexterity and accomplishment depend quite as much on the intellect as on the hands...Accomplishment suffices not without knowledge, and knowledge suffices not without accomplishment! (Stutschewsky, 1932, p. 3).

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Appendix A

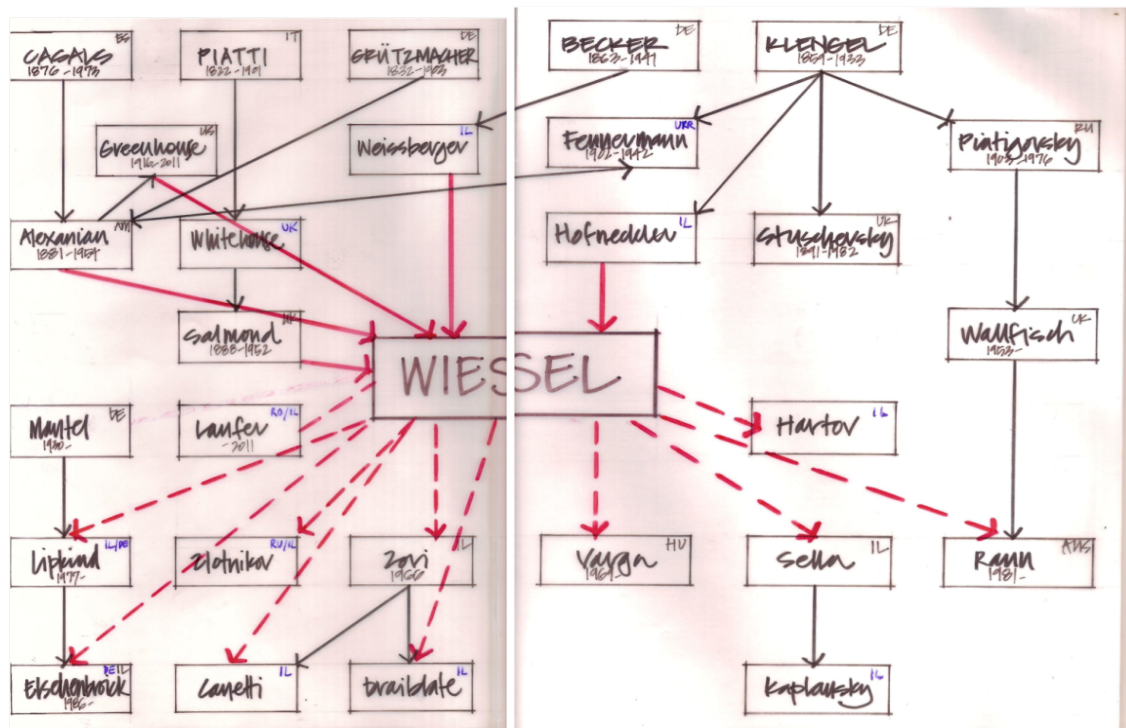
Handwritten musical score for three staves, measures 61-74. The notation includes various rhythmic values, accidentals, and dynamic markings. The first staff (measures 61-74) features a melodic line with slurs and accents. The second staff (measures 61-74) includes a melodic line with slurs and accents, and a handwritten instruction "relax to" above measure 70. The third staff (measures 61-74) features a bass line with slurs and accents, and a handwritten instruction "build" above measure 62.

Printed musical score for three staves, measures 61-73. The notation includes various rhythmic values, accidentals, and dynamic markings. The first staff (measures 61-73) features a melodic line with slurs and accents. The second staff (measures 61-73) includes a melodic line with slurs and accents. The third staff (measures 61-73) features a bass line with slurs and accents.

Appendix B

The image displays nine staves of musical notation, all in bass clef. Each staff contains a single melodic line with a long slur over the entire phrase. The notation is complex, featuring many sixteenth and thirty-second notes. The first staff begins with a common time signature (C). The second staff has a key signature of one sharp (F#). The third staff has a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a first fingering (1) above the first note. The fourth staff has a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a first fingering (1) above the first note. The fifth staff has a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a first fingering (1) above the first note. The sixth staff has a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a first fingering (1) above the first note. The seventh staff has a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a first fingering (1) above the first note. The eighth staff has a key signature of one flat (Bb), a first fingering (1) above the first note, and a second fingering (ii) below the first note. The ninth staff has a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a first fingering (1) above the first note.

Appendix D: Cello Pedigree 2



Appendix E

(Walden, V 1998, *One Hundred Years of Violoncello—A History of Technique and Performance Practice 1740–1840*, Cambridge University Press)

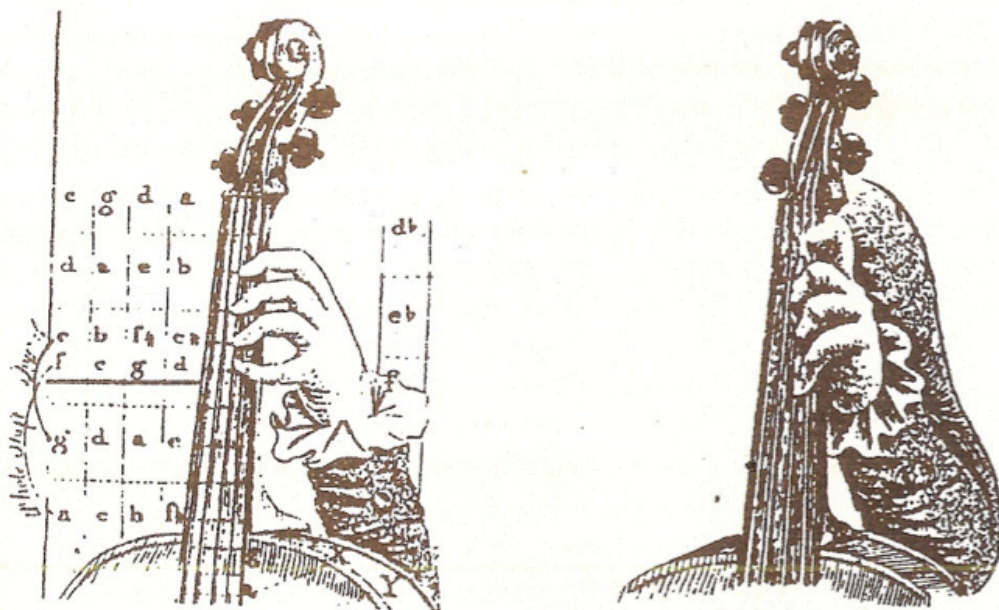


Fig. 3.6 Left hand positions as illustrated by John Gunn

Appendix F



HAUTUNG DES INSTRUMENTES / TENUE DE L'INSTRUMENT

26. 'Holding the instrument'.

Illustrations from Sebastian Lee's *Praktische Violoncello-Schule* which was revised and enlarged by Feuermann and Dr J. Sakom and published in 1929.



HAUTUNG DER LINKEN HANDE / POSITION DE LA MAIN GAUCHE ET DES DOIGTS



DAEMONIENSALE POSITIONEN DER LINKEN

27. 'The left hand'.



HAUTUNG DER RECHTEN HANDE / TENUE DE L'ARCHET



HAUTUNG DES RECHTEN AM FROSCH / TENUE DE L'ARCHET AU TALON



HAUTUNG DER RECHTEN AN DER SPITZE / TENUE DE L'ARCHET A LA POINTE

28. 'The bow'.

Appendix G

עמותת הצ'לו הישראלית



The Israel Cello Society

May 23, 2010

To whom it may concern,

I know Mr. Thomas Rann. He is a very serious cellist and performer. He attended a few international cello seminars that were held in Israel.

The topic of his suggested research – "The development of Israeli cello pedagogy" – is of great importance, particularly in reference to the world-renowned cello teacher, Uzi Wiesel.

I warmly support his research and I will see that members of The Israel Cello Society do respond to his questions concerning the said topic.

Sincerely,

**Dr. David Sella, Director
The Israel Cello Society**

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