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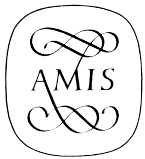

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Collecting of Musical Instruments in Russia and the Soviet Union

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The circumstances which directly gave rise to Russian collecting took shape at the beginning of the eighteenth century, in a completely spontaneous fashion. Among the various cultural reforms of Peter the Great, the reorganization of theatrical and military music based on the European model is of particular note. At the same time, a developed system of training and education for musicians was instituted. This created a corresponding demand for supplies of instruments. By agreement with foreign firms, large quantities of the latest models of instruments were purchased. In the harsh conditions of the military music schools, these instruments were used rather brutally, and—one is inclined to think—the attitude of the peasant recruits to the government-issue instruments was not the most indulgent. As a result, instruments wore out quickly and, after serving the standard five-year period, were replaced with new ones without being withdrawn from the storehouses. Thus, from year to year, ever-increasing stocks of instruments were accumulated. The responsibility for these collections was usually with the kapellmeister or conductor, or with the senior musician. In accordance with the law, they systematically drew up accounts or registers which described their collections in detail. Documents began to emerge which reflected not only the component instruments of one or another collection, but also their number in a given period, the construction, condition, type, existence of replacement parts, their use and designation, and not infrequently the names of the makers and the names of the firms from which the instruments were obtained.

Such documents were called "extracts." The credit for their discovery and description belongs to the former curator of the Leningrad Instrument Collection, Nina Lisova, who, in the culmination of several years of archival work, discovered at the end of the 1970s documentation pertaining to the Imperial Saint Petersburg Noblemen's Ground Corps and the Imperial Life-Guards Semyenovsky Regiment, which documentation includes extracts of their instrument collections from the year 1730 to 1750.

These unique documents, miraculously preserved in all the archival chaos, describe significant collections of wind, string, and percussion in-

struments used not only in military practice but also in chamber and orchestral music. There are detailed selections of scores as well.

The study of these materials goes far beyond the scope of the institutions which gave rise to them and provides a base from which to make conclusions on specific characteristics of Russian music-making of the eighteenth century and the related process of developing professional instruments. It also relates to the issue of instrumental scholarship and museums in our day, for we have every reason to view the first regimental stocks of instruments as among the earliest collections in eighteenth-century Russia.

We do not, however, have information on the continuation of this line into the nineteenth century; at least, such information has yet to surface. Having turned our attention to this period, we should consider two major collections which now belong to the Museum of Ethnography of the Peoples of the USSR and the Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography of the Academy of Sciences in Leningrad, both collections of folk instruments. The first, numbering around one thousand pieces, consists primarily of instruments of Russia, among which are to be found relatively rare instruments characteristic of old village life. The other collection, of the Academy of Science's Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography, is unique.

Forming the principal ethnographic collections of this oldest museum of Russia—the former kunstkammer of Peter the Great—the collection has at its core the riches collected during the well-known Russian geographic expeditions to the unknown peoples of the North, the Far East, Asia, and Africa, which took place in the second half of the nineteenth century. It is only in this collection, and nowhere else, that one may see examples of authentic musical instruments of northern Russia. In 1977, during the XI General Assembly of the International Council of Museums—when the International Committee for Musical Instruments was meeting in the halls of the Leningrad Instrument Collection—I had the great pleasure to be able to introduce to the delegates of the assembly these practically inaccessible materials in the Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography.

Additionally, the collection contains a large number of splendid specimens of the instruments of the peoples of Africa and Asia, the latter including an extremely rich selection of shengs. All these instruments have particularly high research value.

Unfortunately, owing to purely formal reasons, neither collection as such is accessible. Established in an era when the study of instruments was

just beginning to take shape, they were instantly relegated to the realm of purely ethnographic interest. This meant that objects of inestimable value to the study of instruments were viewed on a level with common implements of daily life, and if they attracted the attention of the researcher,then it was only because of the existence of some original coloration, painting, or inlay, like a kitchen ladle, tablespoon, or an artistically embroidered towel. With such an approach, of course, there could be no discussion of a special exposition of musical instruments. They were usually displayed in the recreated interiors of living quarters, and even then not more than one or two pieces were used. The bulk of the collection remained in isolated, inaccessible storage areas

In a century and a half, this situation has not changed; as before, in both of these museums, instrument collections are maintained on the level of ethnographic interpretations of the middle of the nineteenth century (which is also the case, without exception, in all of the lesser republic-level museums which purvey local lore and history). Special inventories for instrumental studies do not even exist.

The overwhelming majority of private Russian collections consisted of folk instruments and did not remain in the hands of their owners long but soon found their way to the government repositories. Some private collections were described by their owners and these have a particular significance. One was the collection of Eingorn, a violinist and kapellmeister who worked in Tashkent at the end of the nineteenth century. He collected local instruments and described them in the book, *A Complete Collection of Musical Instruments of the Peoples of Central Asia,* which was published in Saint Petersburg in 1885. Shortly thereafter he gave the collection to the museum of the Moscow Conservatory.

Such, too, was the fate of the collection of the well-known ethnographer and instrument scholar, Nikolai Privalov, which was created around the same time as a result of an expedition to the region of the Onega Sea in Karelia. He described this collection in a series of essays published between 1903 and 1908 in the *Proceedings of the Saint Petersburg Society of Musical Collections,* after which his instruments were merged into the holdings of the Saint Petersburg Instrument Collection.

In our own time there is the marvelous systematized collection of more than one hundred Russian harmonicas belonging to the well-known researcher, A. M. Mireka, who is still alive and well. This collection served as the basis for his books, *From the History of the Accordion and the Bayan* (Moscow, 1967), *Guide to Harmonicas* (Moscow, 1968), and others. It has now been added to the collection of the Leningrad Museum.

The 1880s should be considered the beginning of a new era. This period is marked not only by the outstanding achievements of such musicians as Borodin, Mussorgsky, Tchaikovsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, and Rachmaninoff, but also by fundamental changes in the entire structure of Russian musical life, where the pull towards musical education and culture experienced a sharp increase. It is in this context that we should consider the founding of the Imperial Court Orchestra in Saint Petersburg by Tsar Alexander III on July 16, 1882. This organization subsequently gained worldwide fame as the Leningrad Philharmonic.

The appointment of Konstantin Shtakelberg as head of the court orchestra was of primary significance. His name is now virtually forgotten, and even when it appears in the pages of Soviet literature, it is without the slightest mention of the enormous role which this passionate figure played in organizing and establishing, in the midst of the oldest Russian symphony orchestra, the first and only specialized museum of musical instruments.

A general in the cavalry, Baron Konstantin Karlovich Shtakelberg was born in 1848, in Strelna near Petersburg, to the affluent, gentrified family of a prominent military functionary of Baltic German descent. He was a graduate of the Corps of Pages (a military school in Saint Petersburg), where he apparently received a musical education as well. He worked fully thirty-five years in his position as head of the court orchestra, right up to the October Revolution of 1917.

Inspired by the lofty goal of establishing a Russian musical culture, Shtakelberg was able to effect beneficial reforms in the orchestra's position. His projects were not limited to this alone, however. In his opinion, the perception of music should constantly be accompanied by an immersion in its history, an understanding of its evolution, and a comprehension of all objects and phenomena connected with the musical customs of the preceding eras. As a result, he came to the idea of the musical museum, destined, as Shtakelberg, thought, to become one of the first strongholds of Russian musical culture and education. By the designs of its founder, its walls should contain not only musical instruments but also various materials illuminating the evolution of musical culture from earliest times to the present. Musical performances were also proposed, including historical concerts using museum pieces.

Shtakelberg was not able, however, to realize such a broad program in its entirety, inasmuch as the ministry of the court did not release the necessary funds. Nonetheless, having exhibited an extraordinary organizational talent, he was able to attract to his idea members of the Society of Lovers of Music and several affluent admirers of the musical arts. Capital was accu-

mulated, not a large amount but sufficient to allow the acquisition of a significant collection of over three hundred sixty pieces of the most valuable Western European instruments from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, among which were some unique originals. These instruments originally were a part of the extensive collection of the well-known Belgian, César Schnoeck. The previously mentioned major collection of Nikolai Privalov was also purchased, as well as a number of other pieces related to the development of musical culture.

Thus the Musical Museum of the Imperial Court Orchestra was created in Saint Petersburg, and in 1902 it was granted official status. This collection was the forerunner of the well-known Leningrad Collection of Musical Instruments, with which many today are well acquainted.

Even in its early stages it contained about nine hundred instruments and a significant amount of other materials of great scholarly and artistic value. The collection thus reflected most of all the history of Western European musical art. The museum occupied several rooms of the Imperial Court in space made available in the building formerly belonging to the Department of Stables on the Yekaterininsky Canal, now Number Nine, Griboyedov Canal.

In the mid-1970s, Shtakelberg's aged daughter, Yelena Konstantinovna, living at the time in Paris and not indifferent to her father's favorite child, the museum, contacted me to ask a number of questions about the fate of the museum, of some of its particularly memorable holdings, and of some family belongings that she rather ingenuously believed to have been preserved in their former apartment, which was practically destroyed in the conditions of post-revolutionary life. At the same time she forwarded copies of several descriptions of the museum, as well as photographs of its displays. Despite imperfections, these materials offer a clear presentation of the systematic approach and the thoughtfulness taken in the selection of the pieces. There is no doubt that Shtakelberg, having voluntarily assumed the most difficult educational mission, successfully realized it, and in so doing broke ground for the noble cause of Russian musical instrument collecting. This, in turn, helped establish the contemporary science that now studies the instruments.

From the start, Shtakelberg's museum was formed as the only one in the country devoted exclusively to musical instruments and it has survived almost all phases of its existence this way. In the 1920s it began to take shape as the generally recognized scholarly center for the study of musical instruments. Here the fundamental principles and traditions of Russian-Soviet

instrument studies, and of the Leningrad school which leads them, were laid down. It is here that the most significant scholarly works in the discipline have been produced. Instrument collections that appeared later, including the important collection of the M. I. Glinka Central Museum of Musical Culture in Moscow, have relied on the authority and experience of the Leningrad collection. For this reason it seems best to focus further on this history, especially since it is representative of the major processes in the development of musical instrument collecting in Russia.

In 1918 the museum fund was nationalized and transferred to the People's Commissariat for Education of the Russian Republic, and in 1921 the museum was reunited with the former Imperial Court Orchestra, which by that time had been reorganized into the Symphony Orchestra of the Leningrad Philharmonic. In 1932 the Museum of Musical Instruments was given to the Hermitage, and from 1940 until 1984 was under the jurisdiction of the Leningrad Institute of Theater, Music, and Cinematography, where it served as the scientific base of the Department of Instrument Studies.

How did its holdings change and what became of Shtakelberg's museum over the course of time? Having preserved its nucleus for the most part—the instruments received from César Schnoeck—the collection was richly augmented by the acquisition of the complete or partial holdings of other museums or collections that had either been liquidated or subjected to reorganization as a result of the new state cultural policy. Large numbers of instruments, including many valuable ones, were transferred to the museum after the nationalization of the mansions of the nobility and wealthy merchants. Many were purchased from individuals and in some cases even donated by their owners. Toward the end of the period, the museum had grown by three thousand musical instruments as well as approximately the same number of iconographic items, such as pictures, engravings, drawings, sculptures, and photographs, as well as books and scores relating to the field of instrumental studies. Among the scores are some unique examples of original editions from the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries.

Professional musical instruments, reflecting the history of symphonic and wind orchestras, constitute the larger portion of the collection; the remainder is comprised of lutes, guitars, zithers, citterns, mandolins, and other instruments from the sixteenth to twentieth centuries.

Among the wind instruments may be found recorders and transverse flutes, flageolets, oboes, clarinets, basset horns, shawms, bassoons, contra-

bass clarinets, English horns, hecklephones, saxophones, cornet, serpents, ophicleides, tritonikons, Russian bassoons (bass horns), trumpets, trombones, French horns, instruments of the bugle family and flugelhorns of all possible systems, trumpets and horns with valve systems, natural French horns with crooks, as well as their hunting horn predecessors, and many others. The works of many prominent makers are represented by these instruments; among them are Jean Hotteterre, Johann-Christoph Denner, Thomas Lot, N. Federov, K. Loran, the younger Denner, I. Piana, S. Delusse, J. W. Oberlender, M. Schwager, M. Lisin, J. Haas, J. Kodisch, S. Hainlein, and J. Schmidt.

The examples of viols from such masters of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as Rudolf Hess, Ludovicus Guersan, and Johannes Jaiss constitute a large group of bowed string instruments. There are also instruments of the same period and of the nineteenth century in the violin family collection. Included are instruments by Nicolo Amati, Gasparo da Salo, R. Hess, R. Reber, Francesco Stradivari, S. Klotz, J. Vuillaume, and the well-known Russian peasant master I. Batov, renowned as the "Russian Stradivari."

The collection of manual, pedal, and chromatic harps, and those of the Dizi key system contains instruments of the seventeenth to twentieth centuries.

The keyboard instrument section consists of spinets, clavichords, harpsichords, upright and vertical fortepianos of various types, antique and contemporary grand pianos, upright pianos, small positive organs, and harmoniums. Here is found one of the oldest instruments in the world: a Neapolitan spinet of 1532 which is the work of Brunetto. There are also examples of Pressburg clavichords of the eighteenth century from the shops of I. Figerigel and G. Lener, upright fortepianos from well-known eighteenth- to early twentieth-century firms (Butenbart & Sievers, Longman, Clementi, Freidentaler, and Friderizzi), the first Russian grand pianos from splendid Petersburg masters of the early nineteenth century (A. Nechaev and A. Tischner), and also instruments from the workshops of Érard, Pleyel, Bechstein, and others.

The personal grand pianos of seven great Russian composers are the pride of the collection. These are the instruments of Mikhail Glinka, Alexander Dargomyzhsky, Alexander Borodin, Anton Rubinstein, Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov (which was recently transferred to his memorial museum-apartment), Alexander Glazunov, and the piano which Alexander Serov and Peter Tchaikovsky used in their student years.

Lutes, citterns, guitars, mandolins, zithers, and pochettes are also represented very comprehensively. In the large lute collection are instruments of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, including works of Joachim Tielke, J. Weiss, J. Hofman, P. Gabboni, and D. Smorson. There are also numerous vihuelas and chitarre batente, and old French and Italian guitars with five pairs of strings, including a magnificent ceremonial instrument made by Jean Voboam in 1681.

Among the folk instruments the largest collection is that of peoples of the Soviet Union, and among them, Russian instruments. Of particular note is the only completely preserved set of instruments of the horn orchestra created in 1752 by J. Maresh at the court of the Grandee Narishkin. The Ukrainian, Armenian, Georgian, and Azerbaijanian collections are also significant, as are the collections of instruments of the Baltic, Central Asian, and Siberian peoples. The richest foreign collections are those of instruments from India, Iran, Japan, China, Poland, Bulgaria, and Yugoslavia.

This is a limited and sketchy overview of the state of the museum in the early 1980s. It is a collection of novel dimensions, encompassing practically all branches of instrumental studies. This creates the attendant demand for scholarly endeavors. These actually began to take shape in the 1920s and 1930s, when the museum was joined by leading musicologists who discerned in the problems of studying musical instruments a refined tool for historical musical cognition. These scholars were Alexander Rabinovich, Boris Struve, Semen Ginzburg, Konstantin Vertkov, and Georgii Blagódatov, all pupils or close associates of the academician B. V. Asafiev, whose scholarly views played a reforming role in the development of musicology and, following closely upon that, in instrumental studies.

The science of the study of instruments was faced with some pressing questions: what were the nature of the laws of evolution of musical instruments, in what were we to find the reasons for their emergence, their rise to preeminence, their dying out? How were we to understand expressive media, the progress of technical development and of instrumental construction? All of this could be resolved only from fixed methodological positions, and it was precisely such focuses that were lacking in instrumental studies.

The difficulties were to found mostly in the duality of interpretation of the very object under study, the musical instrument. In the one case, it was seen as a technical construction, a manufactured product; in the other, as a phenomenon of the spirit, of creative culture, as a means of expressing

music. Correspondingly, various types of research emerged: organological, representing the tangible, and musicological, representing the aesthetic.

Instrumental studies are indebted in great part to the organological method. The great body of organological research, directed primarily toward the structure of the instrument, created a solid foundation for the science of instrumental studies by supplying it with facts. This body was in itself a source of tested, scientifically based, specialized information on musical instruments and was grounded on the works of V. Mahillon, E. Fetis, G. Kinsky, G. Riemann, C. Sachs, M. Petukhov, A. Maslov, A. Famintsyn, and many other accomplished scholars. Yet, however well intentioned the descriptions of the facts and their evolution, they are still not capable of explaining the reasons and laws of the historical evolution of musical instruments. The major obstacle here was the isolation of the organological method from the historical-aesthetic processes.

As a result, another methodology took shape in the 1920s and 1930s under the direct influence of Asafiev's theory. The principles of musicological research propounded by him—based on a deep penetration not only into concrete material at hand, but also into the course of history, the spirit of the times, and the character of the culture—sharply changed the objectives of classical instrumental studies. The evolution of the instrument came more and more to be viewed in the course of the musico-historical process, from the point of view of the relationships between the content, character, and style of musical creativity on the one hand, and the peculiarities of the development of instrumental culture on the other.

Asafiev expounded the understanding of the musical instrument as "the expressive given of music" and, most importantly, showed that the evolution of construction is determined not by internal reasons but by changes of the historical-aesthetic order, caused in part by the evolution of musical creativity. Thus, the object of the science of instrumental studies—the musical instrument—began to be freed from the formal interpretations based only on technical aspects, and to be directly connected with historical-artistic development.

Indeed, the paths of development of European professional instrumentation were always closely intertwined with the evolution of the art of music. The process of enrichment and development invariably encompassed primarily those types of instruments which more fully answered the aesthetic demands and artistic needs which were born anew in each period. It was precisely on this basis that the sphere of instruments saw its own pecu-

liar form of natural selection take place: the diversity of obsolete types gave way to the few newer ones, in which new qualities were generalized, qualities which allowed new expressive possibilities in the new conditions.

Thus, with assertion of the ideals of the Renaissance, the instrument world of post-feudal Europe was penetrated by a new realization of timbres; it stepped onto the path of chromaticity and gave birth to designs capable of enriching the performing media. The medieval fiddle was displaced by the gentle, aristocratic viol; the family of natural mouthpiece instruments gave rise to its first chromatic representative, the trombone; the awkward bombardons and pommers were transferred into an early type of dulzian and the bassoon itself.

The shift in artistic style from the seventeenth to eighteenth centuries led to the displacement of viol by violin, the transformation of shawm into oboe, the invention of the clarinet, the rise and decline of the recorder and the transverse flute's eventual preeminence, the displacement of the lute from ensemble and orchestral practice, and, in domestic music-making, the replacement of the lute by the vihuela and then the guitar. By the end of the eighteenth century, the delicate harpsichord gave way to the fortepiano with its wider range of expressive possibilities.

In the second decade of the nineteenth century, one finds the period of the development of the orchestra and the perfection of its instruments. The invention of valves and keys transformed the natural horn and reed instruments into instruments capable of reproducing any of the intervals of the chromatic scale.

In the 1920s Asafiev's views began to be worked out by his successors: in S. Ginzburg's curriculum for instrumental studies, in G. Gruber's *History of Musical Culture,* in the books *Russian Opera up to Glinka* by A. Rabinovich and *The Process of Formation of the Viols and Violins* by B. Struve, in K. Vertkov's *Russian Folk Instruments,* G.Blagódatov's *History of the Symphony Orchestra,* and the *Atlas of Musical Instruments of the Peoples of the USSR* by K. Vertkov, G. Blagódatov, and E. Yazovitskaya.

When referring to these works—only a small number of the total, yet so valuable for their scholarship—one must also take into account the peculiarities of the era in which they were created. An unprecedented pressure on all areas of science and scholarship, together with the drive to permeate them, even replace them by the demands of topical political ideology, made the existence of every honest scholar unbearably painful and difficult. It was necessary to possess great personal selflessness, exceptional will, and moral fiber to carry even a glimmer of scholarly truth through the

darkness of the enforced ideological and political norms, and this at the risk of one's professional and personal standing.

Such a situation could not help but have an effect on the works just cited. The compulsory normative phraseology occupies a particular position in many of them. This phraseology, however, cannot and should not be considered in the context of their scholarly ideas. Rather, it is the inescapable price paid for the right to exist in one's occupation, the only possible resolution to the Hamlet question under the conditions of Soviet scientific endeavor during those years.

Nonetheless, the objective scientific content of these works proved to be extremely fruitful. In them the basic principles of Soviet instrumental studies were clearly established. These are based on the mutual interconnection of three factors: the music itself, its performance, and the technical potential (i.e., the qualities of construction) of the instruments. Indeed, the perfection of instrument construction is a direct consequence of the demands of the developing musical works and the attendant mastery in performance; for its part, development in construction creates the conditions for the evolution of instrumental music and the performing arts. This is a symbiotic relationship based on the absolute preeminence of the musical beginning. From this the methodology of instrumental research receives its aesthetic-musical character, while instrument studies as such constitute, first and foremost, one of the branches of general musicology, related as well to musical folklore, ethnography, and acoustics. The entire, enormous range of phenomena which together constitute the phenomenon of art then enters into the realm of research.

At the same time, the researcher's attention more and more frequently focuses on such periods of history when music either has not emerged, or from which it has not come down to us. As before, the starting point of inquiries of this type remains the cause and effect relationship between the development of musical culture and the formation of instrument making. Throughout this process the relationship unfolds in something of a reverse order. That is, by ascertaining the condition of the final link—the construction of instruments—we can judge the condition of the initial link, the musical culture of the given period, its structure, character, and stage of development. Thus, for example, detailed depictions of instruments on the bas-reliefs of ancient Egypt allow us, based on their construction and the subsequent music thereof, to assess the nature of music-making in the various periods of the history of this country. The predominance on the Old Kingdom bas-reliefs of transverse flutes and recorders, often together with voice and bow-shaped harp, testifies to preference for soft, melodic sonori-

ties befitting a place of worship. In the Middle Kingdom the displacement of flutes by the penetratingly shrill Eastern aulos, drums, and angular harps in conjunction with dynamic dances speaks of the strengthening in ancient Egyptian music of elements of sharpness and expressiveness.

The construction of original New Kingdom instruments uncovered in tombs testifies to the fact that pentatonic scales, at the foundation of music of the preceding centuries, were giving way to diatonic and chromatic scales.

Similar research into the musical cultures of such ancient civilizations as those of China, India, Greece, and Rome have been conducted by R. Gruber, and into the early musical culture of Russia by Nina Lisova. It is easy to observe that this research is based primarily on organological principles, not in their formal, technological sense, but in reliance on earlier formulated historical normalities of musical instrumental evolution.

All these methodological objectives were implemented in the arrangement of the Leningrad collection. Laid out in eight halls of the former mansion of the Counts Zubov at Number Five Saint Isaac's Square, it consisted of five departments: 1) folk instruments of the peoples of the USSR; 2) folk instruments of foreign countries; 3) instruments of symphonic and wind orchestras; 4) keyboard instruments; and 5) everyday and popular instruments.

The so-called professional instruments (symphonic and wind orchestra instruments, and string and keyboard instruments) are distributed according to their typological attributes and in chronological order, which allows one to trace the development of each instrument from its origins through to its full development. Popular instruments which share an identical application throughout the world are placed according to their typological attribute. Folk instruments are arranged by country, republic, and region, taking into account geographical proximity or directness of kinship to the various national displays which would testify to the historical and cultural ties of the peoples who gave rise to them.

Thus, the very principle of arrangement was born of the idea of the historical and cultural conditions of instrument evolution. This idea was further served by iconographic materials and explanatory texts on the walls, and special books and scores. On the open house days, when the doors were open to all visitors—natives and foreigners alike (admission was always free)—music resounded in the halls of the museum: live performances on various instruments or ones recorded on tape. Special excursions were accompanied by scholarly lectures.

Shtakelberg's vision of historical musical concerts was realized. The idea

of the rebirth of forgotten masterpieces of the past in their original sounds on old museum instruments united an entire collective of musicians who formed a chamber orchestra. Works of the great masters of the Renaissance and the Baroque, and of the pre-Classical and Classical periods were heard at these theme performances. Along with its intensified theoretical work, the museum set and achieved educational goals as well.

Now only the tragic fate of this unique and most outstanding museum collection of the USSR needs to be related. At the end of the 1970s the moral and scholarly principles it had developed came more and more into conflict with the relentlessly thickening amoral atmosphere which took hold of the scholarly influence outside the museum as well as inside its walls. Matters of substance gave way to topical, political concerns of the day. Persecution of independently thinking scholars increased sharply. These scholars were replaced by people with the requisite convictions but without the ability to work independently. A commitment to the cause was replaced by the cynical philosophy of scheming and careerism.

Under these conditions the museum, with its demands for high-level maintenance and other expenses, began to be viewed as a persistent burden: its upkeep, always meager, became beggarly, and facilities were neglected. The exhibits suffered damage from incessant roof leaks, hot water pipes burst, and the plaster collapsed. Under the pretense of repair work which never took place, the museum was closed in 1978. The rest of the story is in keeping with everything else: the furious persecution of employees, provocative accusations not infrequently involving official government organs, and cruel, illegal dismissals. Finally, in 1984, the instrument collection was given to the Museum of Musical and Theatrical Arts in Leningrad, where its priceless collections are now no more than objects for external review.

The destruction of the museum and its removal from the research institute has done irreparable damage to Soviet musicology. One of its most important branches, musical instrument studies—the only stronghold of which for more than half a century was the Leningrad Instrument Collection and its staff—has been virtually eliminated.

It has been more than a decade since the museum was closed. Its collection has been inaccessible, incompetents are in charge of it, scholarly work has come to a complete standstill, and there are no reasons to suppose that the situation will change in the foreseeable future.

* * *

Of the presently functioning Soviet instrument collections, one created in 1943 may be mentioned; it is part of the M. I. Glinka Central Museum of Musical Culture in Moscow. Similar to the Leningrad collection in its makeup but with holdings noticeably inferior in quantity and value, it has never conducted definitive research, even after receiving research institute status in the 1970s.

Since 1923 a historical musical instrument collection has functioned in the Theater Museum of Tallin. It is a small, well organized collection which stands out for the fullness of its mechanical pieces, and it enjoys the deserved respect of a city known for its traditions of performing old music.

The collection of unique musical instruments in Moscow was founded in 1919 as a result of nationalization, requisitions, expropriations, and other acts of socialization characteristic of the early post-revolutionary period, as well as on the basis of removing precious specimens from other collections, including Leningrad. To a significant degree it contains unique examples of bowed instruments, especially the works of great Western European masters. These instruments are not viewed from the scholarly museum perspective, however. Their significance here is a purely practical one: they are used for special performances, and are issued to the best performers, who use them in their everyday work. Musicians, in many cases, do not always treat these masterpieces in the most conscientious manner. Carelessly maintained and mercilessly exploited outside the conditions of museum storage, these remarkable examples of instrument construction are becoming irreparable. Their fate inspires fear.

Although there are many other aspects of the scholarly collecting of musical instruments in Russia and the Soviet Union which are beyond the scope of this paper, the main features are portrayed here as they appear to the author now. They represent a view that results from many years devoted to it.

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This article is a revision of a paper read at the eighteenth annual meeting of the American Musical Instrument Society, held in New York City, May 25–28, 1989. The author, Simon Levin, died earlier this year in California.