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Period instruments, material objects, and the making of the 20th–century early music revival

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PERIOD INSTRUMENTS, MATERIAL OBJECTS, AND THE MAKING OF THE 20TH-CENTURY EARLY MUSIC REVIVAL

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ABSTRACT

When period instruments first appeared, audiences were highly skeptical of their musical value. It was not until the early-1900s—and performers like Arnold Dolmetsch—that they began to become not only accepted, but increasingly mandated for early music performances. However, while criticisms regarding their use persisted into the 1940s, it has never received the type of intense debate other details of performance practice have. Perhaps because of this lack, scholarship has also neglected to consider what ideological roles period instruments have played in historical performance.

Why does the role of period instruments matter? Partly because most writing about early music includes assumptions about them and their importance; for instance, mid-20th century performance practice guides implicitly assign them considerable authority over the ever-contested designation of "authenticity." However, this is not the only role period instruments play. I argue that early advocates for period instruments like Arnold Dolmetsch used them to create a type of "intimacy" crucial to many aspects of performance practice. Created through both the instruments' materially and their timbres, this intimacy closes temporal and spatial historical gaps, allowing performers and their audiences to connect with distant musics in a modern way—and allowing "old" music to develop a living musical value.

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INTRODUCTION

When Arnold Dolmetsch arrived in New York in 1905 to give the first of his early music concerts in the United States, reviewers and audiences were more than a little confused. Between Dolmetsch's elaborate historical costumes and beautifully decorated period instruments, he seemed like an apparition of the distant past. And yet, the old musical works he performed—and the instruments he played—also sounded entirely new to his listeners. Some of the music he chose dated from as early as the fourteenth century, and other pieces were long-forgotten works by less familiar composers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, like the chamber works of Matthew Locke. Dolmetsch unearthed his repertoire from disorganized archives, and he discovered his instruments in pawn shops and museums. Unsurprisingly, reviewers immediately began debating the value of these re-discoveries and of the old, yet novel concerts they produced. Was there any modern purpose to Dolmetsch's music, besides serving as an entertaining novelty or perhaps as an educational example of an ancient past? The debate around this question was fixated on the greatest change Dolmetsch brought to early music performances: his use of period instruments. They embodied this early contradiction inherent in Dolmetsch's revival: old materials somehow creating new sounds. Yet despite this contradiction and Dolmetsch's ambivalent reception in New York, his revival successfully anticipated the development of the enduring and widespread early music movement we know today. And despite reviewers' confusion over his decision to use "ancient" instruments instead of their modern progenies, the use of period instruments

has become indissolubly linked to early music revivals.

This is not to say that things haven't changed in early music since Dolmetsch began performing. In fact, the past thirty years or so have seen a rapid conceptual shift in how and why early music ought to be performed. From what Richard Taruskin famously called a "positivistic purgatory," the tenants of the movement have seemingly transformed from those firmly based in literalistic interpretations of text and composer intent to one in which early music performance practice could use differing historical styles to confront inherited, often restrictive, musical traditions.[1] While scholars like John Butt and Bruce Haynes have questioned the strict divide between this shift and argued that the freedom of the latter part of the revival was already latent in the first, there was a significant period in which the fundamental tenants of the early music revival were picked apart, battled over, and eventually recast into, at the very least, a new openness about how and why we ought to continue to include history in our performances.[2] Yet throughout this period, one fundamental part of early music performances has only rarely been addressed with any seriousness: the role of period instruments.

Harry Haskell, in his 1999 survey of the revival, states the need for investigation into the role of instrument-makers, but rarely engages with either them or their instruments in his book.[3] And Richard Taruskin, in his collection of essays, *Text and Act,*

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[1] Richard Taruskin, "The Authenticity Movement Can Become a Positivistic Purgatory, Literalistic and Dehumanizing," *Early Music* 12 (1984): 3–12.
[2] See John Butt, *Playing with History: The Historical Approach to Musical Performance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002) and Bruce Haynes, *The End of Early Music: A Period Performer's History of Music for the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).
[3] Harry Haskell, *The Early Music Revival: A History* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1996). Also

only briefly mentions that he "sometimes wonder[s] whether the craze for original instruments has anything much to do with historicism at all."[4] Taruskin seems to imply that the "craze" for period instruments has more to do with their "magical aura"—an aura he ties to the museum—than to historicism. Like the museum and its collection of paintings by "Old Master[s]," he states that the instrument's possible aura is something "concretely, tangibly, and objectively authentic."[5] But what that aura really is, and why that concreteness and tangibility is so essential to it, is left unquestioned.

Why does the role of period instruments matter? One crucial reason is that despite scholarship's lack of outward discussion of their role, most writing about early music alludes to their importance in the performance of early music. In 1960, Robert Donington included a disclaimer in his performance practice guide stating that while period instruments had an "intimate connection" with their music, a good performer on a modern instrument could still play early music successfully, depending on the piece and style.[6] Yet in the decades following Donington's book, period instruments became perceived as being more and more essential to early music performance. Thus, when in 1996 Frederick Newman published his own performance practice guide, he highlighted the use of period instruments as the single most divisive argument in the "present schism" over how early music ought to be performed.[7] The question Dolmetsch proposed through

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see Geoffrey Burgess, *Well-Tempered Woodwinds: Friedrich von Huene and the Making of Early Music in a New World* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 2015), which begins to answer Haskell's call for investigation into the role of instrument-makers.

[4] Richard Taruskin, *Text and Act* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 101.

[5] Taruskin, *Text and Act*, 149–150.

[6] Robert Donington, *The Interpretation of Early Music* (London: Faber & Faber, 1963): 435–7.

[7] Frederick Neumann, *Performance Practice of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (New

his own insistence on using period instruments was now, almost one hundred years later, given serious scholarly consideration. And today, the vast majority of early music audiences almost demands that, as Dolmetsch would say, early music be played on the instruments for which it was written.

Besides advocating for the use of period instruments, recent scholarship has confronted the issue of why this necessity exists. Butt summarizes some of the assumptions about the roles that instruments have played in his discussion of the revival's relation to Platonic ideations. Focusing on the latter half of the twentieth century, he surveys how period instruments have been understood as novelties, connections to history, and ways of altering both performers' attitudes and their musical results.[8] Although Butt concludes that "the value of instruments and performing styles would seem to lie in specifically contemporary needs rather than considerations of eternal musical truth or essence," these contemporary needs and how they have developed throughout the twentieth century are still left underexplored. If period instruments are no longer novelties, and if we no longer believe they can create "authenticity" in sound and performance, what modern purpose do they fulfill? Why, in short, do we continue to see period instruments as valuable to the performance of early music?

To answer this question, it is necessary to summarize the multitude of roles that period instruments have played in the 20th-century early music revival. For although by now they may have been accepted as a "given" for historical "authenticity," this was

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York: Macmillan International, 1993), 8. See also Malcolm Bilson, "The Viennese Fortepiano of the Late 18th Century," *Early Music* 8 (1980): 158–169.

[8] Butt, *Playing with History,* 40–43 and 62–67.

never their only purpose. Instead, like the multi-faceted conceptions of the early music revival itself, period instruments have been used in many overlapping forms and for many purposes. In order to clarify the reasons for the use of period instruments, I will begin by tracing the first real attempt to conceptualize these instruments as fundamental to early music performance practices: Arnold Dolmetsch's period instrument revival, beginning in the 1880s. Before Dolmetsch, and even during his life, period instruments were never consistently regarded as essential components to early music performance, and they were, in fact, frequently perceived as detrimental to the music. By understanding how Dolmetsch effected the shift from this ambivalent acceptance of period instruments in performance to one in which period instruments became a necessity for an early music revival, we can understand how and why period instruments have retained their value throughout the twentieth-century early music revival through to the performances of today.

There is no consensus about how Dolmetsch's revival fits within the larger aesthetic movements of the turn of the century. He has been alternately described as a "vitalist" by Taruskin, an "antiquarian" by Butt, and an "apostle" by Haskell. In addition, he has been associated with William Morris's Arts and Crafts movement, British literary modernism, and the Pre-Raphaelites.[9] Indeed, much of the relatively little scholarship on

[9] See Butt, *Playing with History*, 40. Taruskin refers to Dolmetsch as a "vitalist" as a way of dismissing any connection to modernism-derived early music in his *Text and Act: Essays on Music and Performance* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 145. Haskell titles his chapter on Dolmetsch "The Apostle of Retrogression" in *The Early Music Revival.* For Dolmetsch's connection to William Morris, see Edmund Johnson, "The Green Harpsichord Revisited: Arnold Dolmetsch, William Morris, and the Musical Arts and Crafts," American Musical Instrument Society Annual Meeting (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2012).

Dolmetsch has focused not on his early music revival, but on his relationship to specific groups, ignoring the larger affinities between these movements. However, confronting these multiplicities of both Dolmetsch's ideologies and practices and how they relate to larger, concurrent movements is essential to explaining the primary focus of his movement, period instruments.

Dolmetsch's instruments, at least as much as his music, were what connected him to these various groups. The natural affinity between instrument-maker and craftsman eventually led to Dolmetsch's famous "Green Harpsichord," made at the suggestion of William Morris for an Arts and Crafts exhibition. James Joyce famously requested a lute (the request was rejected), and William Butler Yeats collaborated with Dolmetsch in for the use of a psaltery in his theatre productions. Similarly, Dolmetsch himself appeared on stage in the Elizabethan Stage Society's Shakespeare productions, providing both musical accompaniment and "authentic" props in the form of his instruments.[10] Writers like Arthur Symons and George Moore elaborately described these instruments in their works, intrinsically linking them to their maker. Understanding how these interrelated movements connected to the purposes of Dolmetsch's period instruments is thus an important motivation for this study. Furthermore, the focus on the instruments themselves allows us to explore Dolmetsch's work in the context of his relationship to these groups and their ideologies.

The terms used to describe Dolmetsch himself also have larger histories and

[10] For a detailed exploration of Dolmetsch's work with W. B. Yeats, with mentions of his interactions with James Joyce, see Robert Schuchard, *The Last Minstrels: Yeats and the Revival of the Bardic Arts* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

associations with these movements. In particular, the term "antiquarian" has a long history during and after the Victorian age that connects broader cultural collecting practices with the early development of museum curation. From the eighteenth century onwards, "antiquarian" was used to describe (and sometimes criticize) specific collecting and curating practices, usually employed by upper-class British and German men. Groups like the Society of Antiquaries organized excavations, published findings, and supported their members in acquiring, collecting, and displaying "antiquities."[11] Unlike other historical societies that focused on texts, antiquarians were distinguished by their fixation on material objects. By the time Dolmetsch began to perform on period instruments, the term also had a long and established history of associations with death. Antiquarianism had been dismissed as legitimate historical study, and criticized for its bizarre fascination with the corporeal and material evidence of the decay inherent in objects from the past.[12] Antiquarianism's focus on these material objects of the past perhaps explains the derision of Dolmetsch, whose musical performances depended on and foregrounded the materialities of his period instruments.

Antiquarianism also contrasts with newer modes of collecting and curation that were becoming prevalent during Dolmetsch's career, such as display methods that attempted to demonstrate linear progressive narratives of technological and evolutionary development. Other musical instrument collectors of Dolmetsch's day were certainly

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[11] See Susan Pearce, *Visions of antiquity: The Society of Antiquaries of London, 1707–2007* (London: Society of Antiquaries, 2007).

[12] For a history of the term "antiquarian" that establishes its long connection with death and decay, see Martin Myrone and Lucy Peltz, eds., *Producing the Past: Aspects of Antiquarian Culture and Practice, 1700–1850* (Brookfield, VT: Ashgate Press, 1999).

interested in this method of understanding historical objects, such as the renowned Frances Galpin. Although Galpin briefly questions the validity of this evolutionary method of historical survey when applied to musical instruments, he proceeds to use it throughout his book, *A Textbook of Musical Instruments.*[13] If Dolmetsch indeed represents a continuance of antiquarianism, he does so against the grain of this newer, more highly-regarded and "scientific" strand of museum curation.

Shifts in museum curation not only intersect with Dolmetsch and period instruments, but also with all performances of "classical" music during this period. Lydia Goehr argues that it was during the early twentieth century when the concert hall developed as a "musical museum" that canonized nineteenth-century repertoires.[14] Exploring Dolmetsch's anti-evolutionary strand of musical curation thus becomes a way to undermine this teleological narrative of Western music that was developing concurrently with his revival. Tracing how he promoted this contrast within the ideologies of museum curation helps our understanding of how period instruments may have continued to function as subversive within the twentieth century as well. Crucially, it also uncovers ways in which nineteenth century cultural practices persisted into the twentieth century as well as how the roles period instruments have played both

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[13] See Frances Galpin, *A Textbook of Musical Instruments* (London: Williams & Norgate, 1937), 25: "In dealing, however, with such products of art and man's device as instruments of music a classification on the lines of natural evolution is hardly possible, although, as will be shown later, there are certain affinities between them which suggest a progressive development from a common source." Galpin also structures his book so that each new section starts with an idealized history of how each category of instruments might have developed in an imagined "primitive" society, an idea I will discuss later in greater depth.

[14] Lydia Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).

established and responded to those practices.

By contextualizing the revival of period instruments within concurrent changes in museum curation methodologies, we can also take advantage of the recent move in museum studies and especially in archeology towards a broader consideration of material and object studies. Considering period instruments as historical objects, artifacts, and/or relics provides a new critical lens through which to understand their impact on performers, audiences, and the larger cultural functions of early music revivals. One of the important ways this lens enlarges our view of early music revivals is the shared concern for the "aura" surrounding historical relics.[15] The "aura" that Taruskin mentioned may not have derived from the great-works-model museum as cleanly as he implied. Is the "aura" of period instruments really the same as the aura contained in those paintings created by the "Old Masters" and hung on the walls of the museum? Does it really affect us—as both performers and audiences—in the same ways?

I argue that focusing on the historical and ongoing understandings of this "aura" is perhaps the clearest way to understand the roles that period instruments played in the twentieth-century early music revivals. As their interactions with this "aura" shifted, so, too, did the roles the instruments were intended to and perceived to play. From this perspective, I propose three major "auras" that period instruments have assumed throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries: novelty, authority, and intimacy. Of course, these auras/roles are not discrete entities, but often appear twisted

[15] A particularly readable and critical discussion of historical relics and the "auras" that accompany them can be found in Teresa Barnett, *Sacred Relics: Pieces of the Past in 19th-century America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013).

together—sometimes in responses to or understandings of the same performances.

The first of these auras—novelty—may seem applicable only to the very beginning of the revival, when period instruments and their music had rarely been heard before. Yet novelty itself persists as both a fundamental strength of period instruments and as a distinct role for them into the present.[16] The desire for novelty also becomes more understandable through its interaction with both evolutionary and antiquarian curation methodologies. Novelty functioned both as a way of audibly realizing the "primitive" starting point of an evolutionary model and as a way of constructing the disinterment popular in antiquarianism as a new, modern, experience with dead instruments and repertories. Timbre was thus crucial to how audiences heard novelty. Instruments (particularly highly decorated ones, like harpsichords) had been preserved in museums and were visually recognizable as "antique" to their audiences. It was only in breaking the silence imposed by the museum that the instruments became novel.

Yet auras inherited from the museum, and from the past more generally, do not disappear once instruments produce sound. Despite the novel "voices" of the instruments, their material bodies still existed—and their materiality, like the objects that so fascinated Victorian antiquarians, expressed an aura of antiquity and decay that imbued these instruments with authority. When Dolmetsch insisted on performing early music on its "proper instruments," he appropriated this antiquarian attitude and used it to ensure that they would be perceived as essential to creating a "proper" performance. Like novelty, this aura persisted, both changing and retaining elements of this original basis in

[16] "Novel Concert-Lecture," *Boston Daily Globe* (Jan. 29, 1903): 2.

antiquarianism. As the century progressed, it became a way of using the materiality of the past to establish an authority that demanded certain musical stylistic practices.

While the concepts of novelty and authority have been mentioned by early music scholars, like Butt, the idea of intimacy has been significantly underexplored. Perhaps this is because both novelty and authority fit more easily within the early-music-as-modernism lens that Taruskin so eloquently argues, whereas intimacy frequently challenges this understanding by requiring direct and personal connections between performer, composer, listener, instrument, and musical work. Created through both the instruments' materiality and their sounds, intimacy closed temporal and spatial historical gaps, allowing performers and their audiences to connect with distant musics in a modern way. This led to larger constructions of intimacy, new constructions of musical (and even cultural) nationalism, and a re-focus on intimate music-making in the domestic and familial sphere.

We know that material affects the sound of instruments. But period instruments carry with their materiality more than just a timbre, and their timbre carries with it more than just aesthetic sound. When instruments are "resuscitated" from the silence and death of the museum, they enact specific auras that affect all who interact with them. These auras do not negate the museum, but rather warp its influence into new roles—they both continue to recreate societal and cultural ideologies from the nineteenth century and still manage to constantly create new meanings in their interactions with performers, audiences, and scholars well into the twentieth century. These auras, and their profound influences, should not be underestimated. After all, when Dolmetsch first arrived in New

York, his audiences cared most about what within them that was especially novel, intimate, and emblematic of the past—his instruments.

CHAPTER 1: CURATING THE INSTRUMENTAL PAST

The nineteenth century witnessed a transformation in collecting culture and in the ways these collections were organized and displayed. While the traditionally Victorian "cabinet of curiosities" continued to exist well into the mid-1800s, museums began to emerge as a new way of curating and disseminating material remnants of the past. Museums functioned on a broader, more public scale, presenting historical objects more widely, and in doing so, creating more cohesive narratives of a cultural and national past. Susan Pearce found that, prior to 1800, only twelve museums existed in Britain; by 1850 this number had quintupled, and by the late 1920s more than five hundred museums had appeared throughout the country.[17]

Alongside the massive growth of museums themselves, curation practices shifted, changing to reflect new scientific theories and cultural engagement with historical objects. Following general trends of technological and scientific development, museum displays developed towards an evolution-based curation and presentation model focused on continuous advancement. Unlike the cabinet of curiosities model, objects were not merely grouped haphazardly or located around significant historical figures. Instead, their positioning demonstrated theories of progressive advancement, with objects positioned based on chronologically-derived development and via differing cultures and "civilizations," which in the nineteenth century were thought to exist within a similar narrative of technological and cultural progress. More "primitive" cultures provided,

[17] Ruth Hoberman, "In Quest of a Museal Aura: Turn of the Century Narratives about Museum-Displayed Objects," *Victorian Literature and Culture* 31 (2003): 467.

alongside the past, objects that functioned as points in this narrative for modern technologies and cultures to compare themselves against.

This evolutionary model of curation influenced musical instrument collectors as well as musical scholars. Laurence Libin ascribes this specifically to the "then-current biological models, notably Charles Darwin's."[18] Music in general began to engage with these "scientific" methods of musical history, of which one prominent example is Carl Engel's seminal work on the music of ancient nations, published in 1864. While Engel is perhaps most well known as one of the earliest scholars to engage with what would become the field of ethnomusicology, he also was an avid instrument collector. Besides his book on the music of ancient nations, he also published the *Descriptive Catalogue of the Musical Instruments in South Kensington Museum* in 1874 and organized a corresponding exhibition.[19] However, despite this book's clearer focus on instruments, the "scientific" theory of his earlier work, *The Music of the Most Ancient Nations, Particularly of the Assyrians, Egyptians, and Hebrews; with Special Reference to Recent Discoveries in Western Asia and in Egypt,* had a clearer impact on prominent instrument collectors of the period, such as A. J. Hipkins.[20] In this book, Engel argues for a study of

[18] Laurence Libin, "Progress, Adaptation, and the Evolution of Musical Instruments," *Journal of the American Musical Instrument Society* 26 (2000): 187.

[19] Mary Campbell, in her biography on Dolmetsch, claims that Engel was "known as a leading authority on early instruments, and his private collection of books and instruments could hardly be rivalled except by those in a few public institutions." In *Dolmetsch, the Man and His Work* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1975), 24.

[20] A. J. Hipkins mentions Engel explicitly in his book on musical instruments, a book he also claims is the first of its kind to attempt a mass instrument categorization attempt and which was certainly known to later catalogers/instrument historians as well. In it, he praises Engel's "theory of Development" for instruments, and supports it by saying that "this theory has lately been reconstructed upon a more scientific basis by Mr. Rowbotham (*History of Music,* vol. 1., London,

non-Western musics, basing his argument on the theory that by observing the music(s) of "contemporary nations in different stages of civilisation" one could reveal a progressive narrative of music history, rediscovering in what he saw as less advanced nations the "primitive" roots and practices of music that were lost throughout history.[21] During the age of Victorian colonialism and English imperialism, this argument probably seemed more logical and less inherently problematic. Yet despite its obvious basis in racism and colonialism, Engel's theory demonstrates that musical scholarship was engaging with the same "scientific" theories of evolution as other scholarly institutions, just as the museums were doing.

Other scholars continued developing Engel's theory of musical progress and applied it more specifically to the history of instruments themselves. As museums expanded during the nineteenth century, their collections of instruments grew as well. Facing the need to somehow organize these growing collections and to display them in a comprehensible manner to the public, early organologists began to develop systems of musical instrument classification. One of the first to do so was Victor Mahillon, who developed a widely-emulated system for cataloguing instruments during his organization of the Brussels Conservatory Museum.[22] As Margaret Kartomi writes, these developing systems were at least "motivated in part by the practical need to systematize, catalogue,

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1885)." In *Musical Instruments, Historic, Rare, and Unique,* illus. by William Gibb (London: A. & C. Black, Ltd., 1888), ix.

[21] Carl Engel, *The Music of the Most Ancient Nations, Particularly of the Assyrians, Egyptians, and Hebrews; with Special Reference to Recent Discoveries in Western Asia and in Egypt* (London: John Murray, 1864), 8–9.

[22] Curt Sachs and Erich M. von Hornbostel, "Classification of Musical Instruments," trans. Anthony Baines and Klaus P. Wachsmann, *The Galpin Society Journal* 14 (1961) [1914]: 6.

display and store the large collections of instruments that had been acquired by museums from the eighteenth century onwards."[23] While these systems of classification represented a response to a practical need, they also strongly engaged with modern disciplines like biology and scientific theories like evolution. However, these new systems of classification did not exist only within the museum or other specifically scholarly institutions; early organologists were often amateur collectors themselves, and their desire to classify reflected both their own immense instrument collections and their serious theoretical engagement with the instruments that formed these collections. One of the most famous nineteenth-century instrument collectors and early organologists in England was Francis W. Galpin.

Galpin is still well known as the namesake of the major organology publication, the *Galpin Society Journal*. During the late 1800s and early 1900s, he maintained an immense personal collection of musical instruments, including early and modern specimens and instruments from non-western cultures. As a parish priest in Hatfield, Galpin put on concerts, loaned instruments in his collection to various exhibitions, wrote articles on specific instruments, and in 1937 published a book that attempted to organize his knowledge into a complete history. While the specific details are cloudy, it is clear that he had begun to engage with evolutionary musical organizational structures near the turn of the century. In May, 1901, his Orchestral Society put on a concert with musical works "arranged in historical order to show the progress of orchestral music from 1685–

[23] Margaret Kartomi, "The Classification of Musical Instruments: Changing Trends in Research from the Late Nineteenth Century, with Special Reference to the 1990s," *Ethnomusicology* 45 (2001): 284.

1828."[24] Although this concert did not cover too broad a period (the music it started with was that of J. S. Bach), its deliberate programming intended to show a clear progression of music. This indicates that, at least by 1901, Galpin shared an interest in organizing music via technological progress and in publicizing this method of organization.

This interest extended into the realm of musical instruments themselves. In 1837, he published *A Textbook of European Musical Instruments.* While his book acknowledged its limits as a complete resource or descriptor of all possible instruments, it clearly illustrates a very careful and conscientious engagement not only with individual instruments, but also with theories on how they might be organized and relate to one another. And despite some initial qualms indicated in his introduction, Galpin's choice of organization most obviously reflects a deliberate engagement with a progressive, evolutionary model of curation and presentation similar to Engel's.

In the introduction to his book, Galpin discusses this model quite specifically, although at first he seems disinclined to use it in the case of instruments. However, the book's overall structure and his framing of each individual chapter show that these initial qualms were clearly secondary to the benefits that Galpin found in using such an evolutionary system. He writes: "in dealing, however, with such products of art and man's device as instruments of music a classification on the lines of natural evolution is hardly possible, although, as will be shown later, there are certain affinities between them which suggest a progressive development from a common source."[25] Why Galpin

[24] Stanley Godman, "Francis William Galpin: Music Maker," *The Galpin Society Journal* 12 (1959): 11.
[25] Galpin, *A Textbook of European Musical Instruments,* 25.

believed an evolutionary organization was "hardly possible" is never directly stated, although it can probably be implied from the difficulties of ascribing to clear human technological development the same types of random variation that lead to "progress" (or at least change) in evolution as it functions within species. The "natural evolution" he admired in science could not be applied to human-created instruments without a disclaimer.[26] This disclaimer however, certainly did not stop Galpin from organizing musical instruments into the same types of evolutionary structures that were so popular in museums of this period. Galpin organizes the book into families of instruments, with groupings analogous to species. Most obviously, within each chapter he begins by briefly describing a theorized development for each family of instruments—a development that implies the same evolutionary narrative Engel proposed. For instance, in his first chapter on autophonic instruments, Galpin starts by asking the reader to imagine an early "primitive life of war and recreation" that resounded with "nature's own untutored symphony" of drum-beats and rhythm.[27] In beginning with this primitive fount of music, Galpin positions the chapter itself within a narrative of evolutionary progress, where the description leads the reader through increasingly technologically complicated musical instruments.

Why did Galpin use this evolutionary structure? One reason might be revealed in

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[26] Kartomi ("The Classification of Musical Instruments," 306) also argues this is a crucial difference between musical instruments and biological evolution, although she discusses it in context of the 1990s. She writes that because of this difference, "organologists need not slavishly follow the whole gamut of classificatory terms used by Ernst Mayr (1982) and others in the field of biology, but may use and apply terms differently according to the special requirements of the field of instrument classification." Ernst Mayr, *The Growth of Biological Thought* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1982).

[27] Galpin, *A Textbook of European Musical Instruments,* 37.

how he chose to describe it: "a progressive development from a common source."[28] This definition reflects two important ideas surrounding this evolutionary organizational system. One, that instruments had been (and still were) continually progressing, and two, that this progress could be traced backwards to a shared source.[29] These two ideas also demonstrate potential implied ideologies carried alongside the focus on evolution as a structure, especially when this structure is applied to a context that Galpin himself admits may be problematic. If Galpin is correct in saying that organizing musical instruments via evolution is "hardly possible," then why would he still desire to do this? Galpin's definition perhaps reveals not only what he believes is the evolutionary model, but also what he finds important about it, and why he finds it valuable to the application of musical instruments: continual progress, and potential commonality.[30]

The book also reveals another, more problematic association with progress in Galpin's discussion of Curt Sach's earlier article on instruments, "*Geist und Werden der Musikinstrumente,*" published first in 1914. He says that Sach organizes them in "a very interesting and novel way, arranging the instruments of music in strata according to human progress and civilization," a method similar to that which Engel proposed for

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[28] Ibid., 25.

[29] Galpin believed that instruments had not only been continually progressing, but were actually continuing to do so. The last chapter in his book, "Electrophonic Instruments," details new developments in sound-production technology, although Galpin (*Textbook of European Musical Instruments,* 251) describes such innovations as still "in its infancy," but also states that he believes these new progressions "may in the years to come place this latest form of sound production in the forefront of our musical instruments." This attitude demonstrates not only an open-mindedness about musical innovation, but a firm belief in its power and importance.

[30] This commonality-focus also reflects Engel's music history theories, as one of the rationales Engel gives for promoting a study of non-Western musics is the ability to find common musical patterns across cultures (and thus, potentially across history as well). He argues this has even farther-reaching applications, such as discerning common derivatives of civilization itself. In *The Music of the Most Ancient Nations,* 4–5.

using in exploring the general history of all musical development.[31] Just as with Engel, the use of the word "civilization" highlights all the dangers inherent in "progress," particularly dangers of colonization and eradication of the cultures and cultural products deemed "primitive" or uncivilized. While progress could be beneficial, it also could work to destroy its predecessors in its push towards more innovative and perfected technologies. In his *A Popular Account of Ancient Musical Instruments and their Development, as Illustrated by Typical Examples in the Galpin Collection,* William Lynd continues with these damaging colonial statements. Lynd claims that "the earliest form of Transverse Flute (Fig. 7) was the nose flute of the Fiji Islanders...happily, that instrument was not introduced into civilized countries."[32] Such a dismissal highlights the restrictive and gate-keeping function of Sach's, Engel's, and Galpin's focus on linear progress. Music and musical instruments that did not fit into the ascribed "civilized" or "perfect" categories—that had not significantly progressed—could easily be barred from the concert hall, and from potentially contributing anything to music and musical culture.

Despite his admiration of Sach's work, and his implementation of an evolutionary-based structure in his own, Galpin did slightly resist this totalizing progression. Occasional asides demonstrate his lack of complete conviction. For instance, he briefly muses on the "poore scholar" of the Canterbury Tales who plays the psaltery as a comfort for himself each night. Galpin asks if "this fourteenth-century student would

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[31] Galpin, *Textbook of European Musical Instruments*, 28.
[32] William Lynd, *A Popular Account of Ancient Musical Instruments and their Development, as Illustrated by Typical Examples in the Galpin Collection* (London: James Clarke & Co., 1897), 13–4.

have been equally refreshed by 'turning on the wireless.'"[33] While this example may show only his hesitancy towards adopting musical reproduction instead of self-created musical performance, other comments on contemporarily revived instruments like the viol and clavichord show his support of present-day revivals. He calls the clavichord "unsurpassed" as a domestic instrument, and writes that hearing revived viols was a "great privilege."[34] These comments certainly contrast with those of A. J. Hipkins, whose earlier book of musical instruments, published in 1888, also raises the question of whether there might be value in actually hearing the old instruments that his book so carefully describes and illustrates. When Hipkins answers this question, however, he states that such period instrument performances could only occur if their listeners were willing to make "some concession to defective intonation"—and even then, these performances could only expect to "be sometimes heard with pleasure."[35] In contrast to these statements, Galpin's short description of viol performances sounds almost effusive. Yet the overall structure of his book still prioritizes an evolutionary model of progress. Galpin may go beyond Hipkins in acknowledging musical revival, but he ends his book by seceding music's progress to the new instruments that had just begun to be created—the electro-instruments of the future, not the period instruments of the past.[36]

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[33] Galpin, *Textbook of European Musical Instruments,* 85.
[34] Ibid., 121 & 140.
[35] Hipkins, *Musical Instruments*, xxiii.
[36] In fact, Kartomi points out that Galpin actually presented the first musical instrument classification system in which electrophones were a category at all. See "The Classification of Musical Instruments," 285.

To be fair, Galpin did actually perform music on period instruments.[37] However, these performances were mostly limited to his small community, and presented primarily as educational and amateur performances meant to entertain the lower-class communities encompassed by his parsonage. As Campbell writes: "none of these men [Engel, Hipkins, Galpin], however celebrated in their particular field, set out to take practical steps for the general re-establishment of early music on the instruments for which it was written… Their performances were sporadic and mainly experimental; their approach was confined to the museum."[38] Tying these early period-instrument performances to the museum, Campbell accurately connects them to the taxonomic work Galpin most heavily promoted, and the comparative irrelevance of his performances as potential sources for a true revival. Lynd's book on Galpin's collection, previously mentioned, highlights this fact: that even in performances and the sounding of his instruments, Galpin focused on classifying them according to evolutionary-derived museums schematics. His book, seemingly intended as an advertisement for the Edison-Bell phonograph (of which Lynd was an electrical engineer), was accompanied by recordings that presented the sounds of "Ancient Musical Instruments," each followed by "the repetition of a brilliant Solo,

[37] Hipkins was also aware of contemporary performances on period instruments, although he did not participate in these himself. In the description of a plate of a viola da gamba, he includes a mention of period instrument performances in Brussels (*Musical Instruments,* 46): "At the present time Mr. [E. J.] Payne, Herr Paul de Wit of Leipsic, and Mr. E Jacobs of Brussels, have reintroduced the Viola da Gamba to the notice of the musical public. Mr. Jacobs played upon one furnished with sympathetic string, with great success in the Historical Concerts given, under the direction of Mr. Victor Mahillon, in the Music Room of the London International Inventions Exhibition of 1885." For a more detailed discussion of nineteenth-century viol playing, see Peter Holman, *Life after death: the viola da gamba in Britain from Purcell to Dolmetsch* (New York: Boydell Press, 2010).

[38] Campbell, *Dolmetsch,* 24.

played on a modern instrument by one of the leading artistes of the day."[39] This formatting demonstrates Galpin and Lynd's commitment to a progress narrative, in which "ancient instruments" were sounded only in comparison to their more "brilliant" modern successors. And from Lynd's description of the development of his recording project, it seems clear this conception of period instruments permeated all elements of their collaboration. He explains that "I was so impressed with the instruments and their owner, that I conceived the idea of recording, by means of an Edison-Bell Phonograph, the tones of a large number of ancient instruments. Mr. Galpin seemed pleased with the idea, and offered to arrange the instruments in families."[40] This revealing description shows that even from the very first discussion between the collaborators, which Lynd claims led to this series of recordings and accompanying book, hearing or recording the "tones" of the instruments was immediately followed by a desire to "arrange" them in "families." The goal of this project is not performing on these instruments for their musical value, but rather is to provide yet another feature by which they can be categorized, and to provide another way to demonstrate, through this categorization, how instruments demonstrate an evolutionary narrative of technological progress.[41] As Campbell says, Galpin's performances were of the museum—not a part of modern musical life.

Galpin's engagement with period instruments represented this newer, museum-

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[39] Lynd, *A Popular Account of Ancient Musical Instruments*, 1.
[40] Lynd, *A Popular Account of Ancient Musical Instruments*, 5–6.
[41] In using sound to categorize instruments, Galpin ("Classification of Musical Instruments," 10) was actually resisting some earlier concerns (expressed by Sachs and Hornbostel) that this practice might damage the instruments: "In general we have tried to base our subdivisions only on those features which can be identified from the visible form of the instrument, avoiding subjective preferences and leaving the instrument itself unmeddled with."

derived, mode of historical conceptualization, but other modes of engaging with historical objects still persisted. Musical performances using period instruments had begun to attract audiences during this period. While some of these audiences seemed to have been of Hipkin's mind, anticipating and hearing musical defects like poor intonation, others enthusiastically embraced this new form of musical presentation. If these audiences did not see period instruments as primitive "antiques," representative only of the vast progress extant in their modern successors, then why did they desire to hear these instruments? One answer may lie in antiquarianism. While unfashionable and outdated by the late nineteenth century, antiquarian historical engagement provides a partial explanation for the value audiences heard in period instrument performances.

Antiquarianism's long history has received increasing attention in museum studies and historiographic scholarship since the 1990s. Antiquarianism encompassed a large and nebulous timeframe, and though by the nineteenth century it had faded as a legitimate method of historical study, it continued to have significant cultural resonance. Descriptions of antiquarian historical practices contrast sharply with Engel and Galpin's newer models of categorization. Myrone argues that beginning in the eighteenth century, "the antiquarian is cast as the maker of lists, the accumulator of meaningless data, who can bring neither order nor meaning to the materials he gathers."[42] Antiquarians focused on the material object, but not as a means of demonstrating historical progress. They collected data, but collected so much and with such detail, that their data were all but meaningless. They uncovered antiquities, but did not disseminate these in a way the

[42] Myrone, "Graphic Antiquarianism in Eighteenth-Century Britain: The Career and Reputation of George Vertue (1684–1756)," in *Producing the Past*, 37.

public could understand—instead, antiquarianism formed a highly personal, disorganized, and material-focused mode of historical engagement.

With its focus on the material past, antiquarianism also became heavily associated with death. As Teresa Barnett says, even in comparison to other nineteenth-century engagements with history, "the antiquarian enterprise in particular was repeatedly portrayed as a kind of visceral participation in the particulars of death and decay."[43] Much of this association, of course, derived from their frequent grave exhumations, and their often lurid descriptions of these scenes. Antiquarian publications frequently included these retellings, and their unearthings of famous past Englishmen solidified the association between antiquarianism and death. However, another crucial influence on this association was the antiquarian focus on material objects, like coins or jewelry. Unlike a text, which may be transmitted from edition to edition with (at least in popular conception) little change, material objects inevitably demonstrate material signs of temporal change: they decay.

Decay became crucial to cultural depictions of nineteenth-century antiquarians, such as in the satirical portrait present in one of Sir Walter Scott's popular novels, *The Antiquary* (1816). In his novel, the titular character hoards antiquaries in his rural estate, filling his "den" with mountains of seemingly worthless objects. Scott emphasizes that these objects, in fact, have no worth save their antiquarian value, a value that entirely depends on their scarcity and antiquity. As Scott jokes about the character's book collection: "there was, it seemed, no peculiar distinction, however trifling or minute,

[43] Barnett, *Sacred Relics,* 38.

which might not give value to a volume, providing the indispensable quality of scarcity, or rare occurrence, was attached to it."[44] The descriptions of his protagonist's hoard also demonstrates that hoarding past objects in such a haphazard and overcrowded manner may even be contributing to the objects' continual deterioration—helping them to develop the valued "rust and the antiquity which it indicates."[45] And while Scott's descriptions are, while satirical, in general kind to the character of the Antiquary himself, other writers more greatly emphasized the influence that antiquarianism could have on its practitioners. As Martin Myrone eloquently writes, these characters—and thus antiquarians in general—were "being polluted by the fragments that they studied, collected and fetishized."[46] Their antiquarian obsessions not only focused on the decay of the material objects they hoarded, but also worked to decay their own social and cultural standing.

If nineteenth-century antiquarianism embraced death and decay, other modes of historical engagement with material objects resoundingly rejected such a seemingly morbid focus. One major area in which these debates occurred was in architectural revivals and restorations of gothic cathedrals and castles.[47] One representative figure concerned with this form of historical restoration in England was the founder of the Arts and Crafts movement, William Morris, who insisted on both the decay of antiquarianism and the continued relevance of these decaying material objects in modern culture.

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[44] Walter Scott, *The Antiquary* (London: Longman, 1816), 125.
[45] Ibid., 115.
[46] Myrone, *Producing the Past,* 2.
[47] Katherine Ellis has convincingly tied the gothic cathedral revivals of mid-nineteenth-century Paris with François-Joseph Fétis's early music concert series during the same period in her book, *Interpreting the Musical Past* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

Morris's conception of material decay is perhaps more applicable than antiquarianism as a symbol of musical decay, as it resists both a purely antiquarian impulse towards death and even more strongly resists the evolutionary and progress-centric alternative. In his article on Morris, Dolmetsch, and Bernard Shaw, Andrew Heywood claims that "he [Morris] challenged Victorian evolutionary ideology and its consequent inability to see the past in its own terms, and thus helped to change the intellectual climate, which in turn began to make possible a positive re-evaluation of the music of the past."[48] This claim makes sense when considering the unique way in which Morris engaged with antiquarian decay. While the antiquarian-derived decay of material objects perhaps deteriorates or "pollutes" its viewer, Morris describes how architectural and artistic decay influence their viewer far more positively, particularly in contrast to other modes of "restoration" that Morris observed during the mid-nineteenth century—such as that within the museum. Morris muses on its method of display, saying that "there is something melancholy about a museum, such a tale of violence, destruction, and carelessness, as its treasured scraps tell us."[49] While this description overlays an antiquarian historical mode onto the museum, particularly in its use of "scraps" reminiscent of the antiquarian "fragments," Morris' makes clear that museums engage in some sort of "violence" and "destruction" in their quest to display material objects. While his commentary on museums themselves is brief, we can look towards his discussion of architectural "restoration" as a way of understanding what might cause the damage he

[48] Andrew Heywood, "Morris and Early Music: The Shaw/Dolmetsch Connection," *Journal of William Morris Studies* 10/4 (1994): 12.
[49] William Morris, *Hopes and Fears for Art* (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1882), 36.

describes. Morris' phrasing implies that the destruction inherent in museum display shares its origin with the restoration he decries, calling such restoration "as impossible to bring about, as the attempt at it is destructive to the buildings so dealt with."[50] This restoration requires destroying and altering the buildings to "return" them to a prior state, one that may never have existed historically. Such a "restoration" does not engage the buildings with either their actual history or their potential role in modern daily life. Instead, it fixates them as an exemplar of the distance between the past and present, preserving the building in an almost primitive state to better contrast with the progress of modernity.

Morris utterly rejects this method of destructive "restoration," and instead proposes a caretaking model of engagement that allows the buildings to continue their natural lives into the present and future. Both Morris and antiquarians fetishize decay, but Morris does so not as a marker of a preserved, stagnant death; rather, he sees it as a way to emphasize the role these buildings have played in history, and their power to witness past events and temporal change while at the same time existing in and contributing to the present day. The buildings Morris describes, properly restored, are not merely disinterred, but revived into modern relevance. Morris' description of the role of the revived practice of Decorative Arts in general illustrates this. He states that ""this interweaving of the Decorative Arts with the history of the past is of less importance than their dealings with the life of the present," and asks: "for should not these memories also

[50] Ibid., 32.

be a part of our daily life?"[51] This intermixed existence of past memorialization with present "daily life" contrasts with his description of the museum and the destruction it requires. For Morris, the decay present in buildings and arts stands as proof of its continued existence and potential for continued relevance.

While instruments are material objects, and thus demonstrate the same types of physical decay as other objects do, they also demonstrate a specifically and uniquely musical decay, deriving from metaphors of muteness, silence, and voice. Antiquarians and other writers of the nineteenth century frequently used metaphoric tropes of silence and muteness to envision even non-musical material objects they encountered. When Barnett discusses relics from the American civil war, she argues that "the mute but eloquent trope" epitomizes the past's "visceral claim on the viewer."[52] With musical instruments, this metaphorical rhetoric becomes an even more powerful, visceral reality—unlike their living counterparts in contemporary performances, instruments from the past were silent, in direct contrast to their usual and intended function. The sounding potential in this uniquely musical materialism served as a constant reminder of their distance from the present. Ruined castles might have demonstrated antiquity through weathered stones and crumbling walls, but the complete silence of these instruments demonstrated such temporal progression even more profoundly. Trapped without performers to play them, and kept in collections or museums, period instruments were perpetually mute.

Later nineteenth-century Antiquarian (and other) writers certainly fixated on this

[51] Morris, *Hopes and Fears for Art*, 14.
[52] Barnett, *Sacred Relics,* 94.

musical "decay" of silence in their descriptions of period instruments, more so than the instruments' material deterioration. Even Galpin himself uses this language to criticize museums, saying: "It is unfortunate that many of these museums keep their specimens in the still silence of the glass case; and, even if they are liberated from their prisonhouse, they are forbidden to speak...a few of those silent voices, at any rate, might be permitted to let their gentle sounds creep once more into our ears."[53] The trope of silent (or mute) instruments trapped within museums permeated descriptions of instruments during this period, and often led to a decidedly antiquarian means of engaging with the historical past. Galpin's categorizations attempted to organize musical instruments along a scientific schematic that related each instrument in the collection to each other and to the times and cultures—and especially to the specific moment of progress—they represented. Antiquarian collecting, however, crucially engaged with the past through a direct and personal connection. Sam Smiles ties this connection to "the metonymic trope within Romanticism," a trope that he describes as a moment in which the antiquarian views a fragmented material object, and in doing so, enters into a reverie in which "the imagination may recover what history has dispersed."[54] In Smiles's theorization, the subject of the antiquarian fixation does not merely connect itself to other material objects, neatly forming a temporal or culturally derived progression of technological progress, as it does in Engel's and Galpin's categorizations.[55] Instead, it functions as a fragment of the

[53] Galpin, *A Textbook of Musical Instruments,* 15.
[54] Sam Smiles, "British Antiquity and the Antiquarian Illustration," in *Producing the Past,* 58.
[55] Indeed, Sachs ("Classification of Musical Instruments," 5) explicitly says one of the primary benefits of his categorization project is that "objects which otherwise appear to be quite unrelated to each other may now become associated, revealing new genetic and cultural links."

past; a fragment from which the antiquarian viewer can imagine its past existence as present, giving it the present relevance that Morris's preferred method of restoration attempts to create. This function allows the antiquarian to act on the object, and in that creative act, connects the viewer to the object itself in a highly imaginative and personal way.

The decay represented through silence thus worked as a means of fragmentation or decay, in which part of the instrument was irretrievably lost, except in the viewer's (or perhaps hearer's) imagined reverie. Writers on instruments frequently utilized this trope, guiding the reader towards moments of appropriate imagination. Even Hipkins uses it, despite his book's overwhelmingly visual focus.[56] Although it centers on beautifully printed plates of instruments in various collections, Hipkins explicitly states that "while we should never lose sight of the purpose of a musical instrument, its capacity to produce agreeable and various sounds, we can take advantage of its form and material, and, making it lovely to look upon, give pleasure to the eye as well as the ear."[57] He follows this visual preference for most of his plate descriptions, often describing in detail the minutiae of decoration and ornament that characterize antiquarian historical presentation of material objects. However, his visual focus does not prevent him from indulging in,

[56] Interestingly, Edmond Johnson's article on the harpsichord in the nineteenth century also perhaps unconsciously replicates some of this metaphoric language and the connection between silence, visual attraction, and imagined sound. He discusses the prioritization of their instrument's historic and visual value, as Hipkins illustrates, and states that "for the most part the objects on display were treated more as silent historical relics." Yet in tracing the importance of bibliographic connections with famous persons and their instruments, he also often describes these (usually imagined) connections in terms of imagined hearing, performing, or sounding. See "The Death and Second Life of the Harpsichord," *The Journal of Musicology* 30 (2013): 180–214 [must give page nos. specific to the quotes used here].

[57] Hipkins, *Musical Instruments,* vii.

and encouraging the reader to indulge in, imaginative aural reveries as well as visual ones. For instance, in describing a plate of an instrument claimed to be Queen Elizabeth's virginal, he demonstrates how the visual appearance of the instrument leads directly to its decayed, but still latent, sounding power. He describes the instrument as: "gloriously decorated, and it awakens an intense feeling of interest to reflect upon who may have played upon it and who may have stood by and heard the pleasing tones of an instrument once so cared for."[58] The immediate shift from a visual description of the instrument in the present—"gloriously decorated"—to the "awakening" and subsequent "reflection" on the persons involved in its performance and in the "pleasing tones" they would have heard, invites the reader to imagine being one of those historical listeners, either in the person of the performer or as an audience member. The process can perhaps be simplified to three steps: an initial attraction to the physical construction of the object, an attempt to imagine the past performer/listener associated with the object, and finally an imagined aural hearing of its music. For a musical instrument like the virginal, the visual markers of antiquity thus inevitably lead to a personal moment of aural reverie, against the background of the instrument's contemporary silence.

Of course, not all period instruments were silent. By the 1880s, the most prominent advocate of period instruments had arrived in London: Arnold Dolmetsch. Dolmetsch was not the first to perform on period instruments—for instance, we have already mentioned Galpin's performances—but he was one of the first and loudest voices

[58] Ibid., xxii.

to insist that old music required the "instruments for which it was written."[59] This revolutionary attitude towards revival performances had a profound impact on the twentieth-century early music revival. Dolmetsch's ideas both derived from and challenged those older and concurrent methods of historical engagement previously discussed: evolutionary categorization and antiquarianism. Dolmetsch's writings and the reception of his performances reveal a highly counter-evolutionary mode of musical curation, one that works to undermine the totality of this teleological narrative of western music and musical instruments. But Dolmetsch's revival does not present an altogether coherent proof of antiquarianism's persistence. Instead, like the objects valued by antiquarianism itself, it was highly fragmentary. And like antiquarians, we shall begin to untangle Dolmetsch's ideologies and involvement with these movements through a process that ruminates on the fragments of historical engagements, ideologies, and practices that together informed how Dolmetsch's revival influenced the roles that period instruments developed.

[59] This phrase appears in remarkably consistent formations throughout numerous reviews and commentaries of Dolmetsch's work, from early concert reviews in the 1880s and 1900s to Campbell's 1975 biography. Its longevity and distinct phrasing make it appear almost emblematic of this major tenet of Dolmetsch's revival.

CHAPTER 2: ARNOLD DOLMETSCH AND MUSICAL ANTIQUARIANISM

Dolmetsch's connection to antiquarianism is twofold, comprising 1) his and his supporters' own understanding of their movement, and 2) the criticisms leveled against this movement by concert reviewers and other writers. The connection between Dolmetsch and antiquarianism is most obvious with regard to the latter of these. Throughout Dolmetsch's career, critics used antiquarianism dismissively, to critique his performances. In reviews, the term "antiquarianism" was used to deride his concerts as unmusical and possessing only historical value. This use of the term certainly reflects the general trend of eighteenth- and nineteenth- century satires of antiquarianism. As Myrone writes while discussing criticisms of eighteenth-century antiquarian prints, for contemporary critics "it would appear that antiquarianism and artistry are not only incompatible, but perhaps even defined against each other."[60] This attitude certainly persisted into the critiques against Dolmetsch, in which the use of antiquarian reflects a sense that this music was only relevant as far as it helped scholars study the past; its musicality, like the print's artistry, was non-existent.

Early concert reviews include numerous accusations of antiquarianism, and even if these accusations are not intended as highly critical of Dolmetsch's endeavors, they reveal an attempt to situate his performances within the late-nineteenth-century cultural understanding of antiquarianism and its perceived foibles. A review in 1894 claims that "most interest was attached to the performances of Locke's chamber music, of which

[60] Myrone, "Graphic Antiquarianism in Eighteenth-Century Britain," 36.

probably very little if any has been heard by even musicians of antiquarian tendencies."[61] While this review does not criticize Dolmetsch's concert, it locates the primary interest of his performance solely in antiquarian values. Whether or not Locke's music has musical or cultural value does not matter—only its relative scarcity when compared to other items on the program. Reviewers also consistently ignored musical value in favor of historical value. In 1895, a reviewer gives rather faint praise to a Dolmetsch concert, merely commenting that the concert "was an interesting entertainment from an historical point of view."[62] This focus on the value of a historical "point of view" encouraged listeners to dismiss the potential musical and cultural value of performances for a dead and stagnant antiquarian value. And audiences often did not actually see much value in the antiquarianism they ascribed to Dolmetsch's concerts. One audience member, reflecting on a concert, exclaimed: "How different were our ancestors!" and then went on to explain they had hated the sound of period instruments and had thought they belonged firmly back in the past.[63] Clearly, antiquarian value was not a positive attribute for musical performances to possess.

These criticisms persisted well into the twentieth century, when Dolmetsch continued his performances in the United States and began attracting increasing attention. These criticisms of antiquarianism coalesced in the late 1920s, immediately after the Dolmetsch Foundation was established.[64] In 1928, as a response to the establishment of

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[61] "Mr. Dolmetsch's Recitals," *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular* 35/614 (Apr. 1894): 244.
[62] "The Dolmetsch Concerts," *The Musical Standard* 3/57 (Feb. 1895): 94.
[63] R. Peggio, "Rambling Reflections," *The Musical Standard* 7/164 (Feb. 20, 1897): 115.
[64] I presented a paper including an early version of the following analysis at the American

the Foundation and the increasing acceptance of Dolmetsch's ideas, an argument within the *Musical Times* editorial section broke out after the Foundation published an appeal for supporters. The subsequent squabble shows the endurance of criticisms of antiquarianism and, even more importantly, demonstrates how crucial these criticisms were to Dolmetsch and his supporters' own understanding of their revival and its insistence on the use period instruments.

The argument began when the chief critic for *The Musical Opinion,* Clinton Gray-Fisk, wrote a response to the Foundation's appeal, criticizing or disdaining almost every goal of Dolmetsch—both the musical and cultural value of his repertoire, and especially the choice to use period instruments to perform it. Gray-Fisk claims that though the "research and instrument-making" may have "antiquarian" value, the music itself is "being mangled and distorted beyond recognition by a group of amateurs."[65] This biting assessment of Dolmetsch's skill harshly contests any possibility of musical appeal in these performances—and thus of these performances having any musical value. By calling Dolmetsch and the other performers "amateurs," and by referring to their work as merely antiquarian research, he firmly establishes they have no role in the world of professional music performances or are deserving of substantial critical engagement.

But Gray-Fisk's true problem with Dolmetsch rests on the use of period instruments for these period compositions. He deems such a decision utterly antiquarian,

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Musicology Society New England Chapter's Fall 2015 meeting at Amherst College. I would like to thank the other participants at that conference, whose questions encouraged me to continue to pursue the complexities of Dolmetsch's engagement with antiquarianism.

[65] Clinton Gray-Fisk, "The Dolmetsch Foundation," *The Musical Times* 71/1047 (May 1, 1930): 442–443.

and argues that just because the works were originally composed for them does not mean, he writes, that they "were fore-doomed to be performed for the rest of time on those (now) superannuated specimens."[66] His use of the word "specimen" immediately implies the modern irrelevance of these relics from the past. Specimens belong to museums, and conjure up images of preservation and stagnation. If Dolmetsch's amateurism had not already doomed his music to antiquarian irrelevance, then his insistence on using museum relics surely does.

The Foundation was quick to respond to these (admittedly very harsh) critiques, and the next *Musical Times* was filled with their fervent arguments against Gray-Fisk, and in support of Dolmetsch. Their responses vary, but crucially, one of the most common threads is a direct rejection of the label antiquarian. The people responding to Gray-Fisk continuously emphasize Dolmetsch and the Foundation's belief that this music has a modern, living, value. One of Dolmetsch's strongest supporters, the musicologist Gerald R. Hayes, responds with a direct quote from one of the Foundation's publications that emphasizes Dolmetsch's rejection of antiquarianism. He says that "it must be emphasised that the present attitude towards this music is not in any way antiquarian. The instruments, with the music proper to them, make a living art."[67] Hayes emphatically highlights the direct contrast between "antiquarian" and "living art" and the necessity of the period instruments themselves to this living art. By quoting from the Foundation's own publications, he also demonstrates the centrality of this contrast to their purpose in

[66] Gray-Fisk, "The Dolmetsch Foundation," 442.
[67] Gerald R. Hayes, "The Dolmetsch Foundation," *The Musical Times* 71/1049 (July 1, 1930): 637.

supporting Dolmetsch. Another letter, from R. Wane-Cobb, expresses this idea even further, firmly stating:

> If there is one quality that I feel confident about in Mr. Dolmetsch it is that he has never regarded this study of early instrumental music as mere historical research; in fact, it could be only his intense belief in it as a living thing, of importance in life to-day, that could have led him to devote the whole of a long life to such a study.[68]

Again, we see the rejection of "historical research" as a valid reason to perform this music. Instead, Wane-Cobb describes the music explicitly as something alive, and something able to contribute to current life. Without the belief that this music has present relevance, he argues that Dolmetsch, or, in fact, anyone, would not have been able to sustain such immense focus and create such an enduring revival. Thus, we can see that, in the 1920s, Dolmetsch's supporters were already arguing not only for early music's existence as a modern musical movement, but in fact that early music's very existence entirely depended on its modern relevance.

However, these accusations of antiquarianism crucially differ from earlier critiques; instead of fixating their critique on antiquarianism's association with death, they also tie this association to the museum itself, conflating the derogatory power of the term "antiquarian" with an ideological critique of museum-based curation methods. This conflation becomes difficult to parse because many of the criticisms leveled against Dolmetsch were based in critiques of antiquarianism, and many of these critiques

[68] R. Wane-Cobb, "The Dolmetsch Foundation," *The Musical Times* 71/1049 (July 1, 1930): 635–637.

overlapped with more museum-specific ones. The most significant association that occurs is that of the museum with death. Silence, in its role as antiquarian decay, becomes not only decay, but also death, and the museum cases that entrap and mute instruments transform into a tomb. In this view, then the instrument museum does not just place its objects in an evolutionary narrative that ends with the technological advancements of contemporary life, but in doing so, also condemns these objects to a voiceless and silent death. One example of this conflation of the museum with death appears in the *Boston Daily Globe* in 1926; here the instruments themselves are described by an anonymous reviewer as "museum curiosities," and the value of Dolmetsch's concerts, it is claimed, "rest[s] very largely on their antiquarian interest."[69] The instrument's designation as belonging to the museum negates their potential musical interest, denying them a real revival and condemning them a museum-restricted death.

Whether or not this condemnation is warranted, of course, depends on the perspective of those responding to Dolmetsch; his supporters bristle at leaving instruments to remain thus neglected, and his critics see their death in the museum a fulfillment of the only role now available to such antiquated objects. The contrast between his critics and supporters thus reveals the underlying question constantly asked of Dolmetsch's project: what relevance did period instruments have to modern life? Or, once "revived," what roles could they really play?

To answer this question, we must first focus on the language and accompanying theorizing of the first part of this process: the "revival" of period instruments. How

[69] "English Family Revives Old Music: Copies of Old Instruments Used in Concerts." *The Boston Daily Globe* (Apr. 4, 1926): A36.

Dolmetsch counteracted critiques of death with an insistence on revival presents the first place to begin in determining how he attempted to answer that major question, so often couched in terms of antiquarianist death. When Dolmetsch insisted on his role as a revivalist, he was directly positioning himself against the museum-death critiqued in terms of antiquarianism. But confusingly, in rejecting accusations of antiquarianism, Dolmetsch's use of revival actually reflects an almost antiquarian engagement with history. He rejected death, but embraced the creative past-reverie as a way of reviving period instruments and their use in musical performance.

Dolmetsch is frequently described as bringing the music and instruments back to life, an obvious but essential element in the idea of a revival. In a 1909 poem by Arthur Upson, titled "After a Dolmetsch Concert," Dolmetsch revives "music's breath" from a "dream of death" and lifts the "wondrous bloom" from a "voiceless tomb."[70] While the music remains dead, it is unable to breathe and thus sound. It is only when Dolmetsch resuscitates it that it can become audible as actual, sounding, music again. The "voiceless tomb" of the museum precluded any potential role for period music outside of the museum's narrative. By rejecting the death of period instruments, Dolmetsch rejected this narrative and the way it restricted period instruments' roles and potential value. Instead, he insisted on a real musical revival. As he says in his 1915 book on performance practice, stating his goals in perhaps his clearest manifesto:

> Will this music ever be heard again? Will music, like the sister arts, ever retake possession of its past, its heirlooms, its rightful inheritance? Yes, it must; and by

[70] Arnold Upson, "A Viola d'Amore, XVIth century," in *The Collected Poems of Arthur Upson, Vol. II* (Minneapolis: Edmund D. Brooks: 1909), 166.

> patiently working backwards, mastering each step, the now dim past of music will be brought to life, and will take its place side by side with the other arts, to which it never was inferior.[71]

Dolmetsch does not resign music and its instruments to "the dim past," fixing it in a progressive narrative that ignores that music's possible value to the present. Instead, he firmly ties the ability to hear this music again with "[bringing] it to life"—and he insists, that in doing so, reviving music will allow it to regain its place amongst other arts, and even more importantly, perhaps amongst modern culture as well.

But what did Dolmetsch mean by "patiently working backwards"? Or in other words, how did he believe this music must be revived in order to insure its value? I propose that the answer lies in Dolmetsch's relationship to antiquarianism. Dolmetsch's method of revival enacted a new mode of historical engagement that derived from the creative antiquarian reverie, rejecting the restrictive, progressive evolutionary narrative. Based on the three-step reverie conceptualized and described earlier, Dolmetsch's revival method realized this previously imaginary way of connecting to the past—and to the past's music. Rather than simply being inspired by the visual materiality of the instrument, imagining its performer, and then imagining its timbre while reflecting on its current silence, Dolmetsch shifts this process beyond individual imagination and into a shared reality. In doing so he continues the work of antiquarian writers like Hipkins, who guide their readers to appropriate moments of reverie. He also radically alters these moments, however, in ways that will become crucial to enacting the auras surrounding

[71] Arnold Dolmetsch, *The interpretation of music of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, as revealed by contemporary evidence* (London: Novello & Company, Ltd., 1915), 476.

and created by period instruments throughout early music revivals.

The first part of the antiquarian reverie process—the immediate and initial visual attraction—is very much a part of Dolmetsch's revival process. Both his third wife Mabel Dolmetsch and musicologist Mary Campbell, Dolmetsch's main biographers, share brief stories of how Dolmetsch acquired his period instruments. They present one of these as an often-heard tale: the acquisition of an antique lute, a tale that relies heavily on visual descriptions and attractions. Dolmetsch, stopping by an auction, was apparently struck by the sight of a particularly beautiful lute, offered for a price far below its apparent worth. According to his wife, Mabel Dolmetsch, he saw the lute held up by the auctioneer, and was horrified by an offer of only five pounds. Unable to resist, Dolmetsch corrected him loudly with an exclamation of "*Five* pounds? Nonsense! *Fifty* pounds!" and thus somewhat accidentally purchased the lute for himself.[72]

Like the antiquarian collector who stumbles upon (or obsessively searches for) a rare and antique text, Dolmetsch alone is enlightened enough to see the lute's real value. This story of acquiring the lute reflects the glee, for instance, that Walter Scott's character feels when he describes his own abilities to see and perceive instantaneously the value of his various antiquarian treasures. Like Dolmetsch, he gains his prizes not by spending significant amounts of money, "but gain[s] in a manner that shows [he] know[s] something of the matter"—a manner based in immediate visual identification, informed by superior knowledge of antiquity and its signs and values. [73] When Dolmetsch is

[72] Mabel Dolmetsch, *Personal Recollections of Arnold Dolmetsch* (London: Routledge & Paul, 1957), 30–31.
[73] Scott, *The Antiquary,* 107.

visually attracted to the lute, this visual attraction proves his superior knowledge and vision. Such a focus on appearance and the specialized knowledge required to parse these antique appearances makes sense, as few, if any of these instruments were in playing condition, and many were altered or misidentified as other objects (including modern instruments). To further emphasize the visual power of the lute, and its particular power of those luckily knowledgeable enough to recognize this power, Campbell even includes a picture of it in her biography. The lute's visual power is essential to its ability to attract a revival; without attracting Dolmetsch visually, he would not have been able to acquire it—and thus to begin the process of bringing it to life. Thus, as in antiquarian collecting, immediate visual interest plays a crucial role, beginning the process of creative engagement with each individual object.

It is in the second moment of the reverie process that Dolmetsch radically alters this creative and antiquarian mode of historical engagement. Once visually inspired by the material object, Dolmetsch does not merely imagine a past performer or performance, but instead, through knowledge acquired by reading past texts, he attempts to overlay the existence of this past performer and performance style onto his own role as a now-modern performer. He steps into this second moment, enacting a past performance, and realizing in a concert setting what could previously only be imagined inaudibly within each individual viewer's/listener's mind. In doing so, Dolmetsch also realizes the third moment of the reverie, fundamentally altering it to something no longer purely antiquarian. Acting as the performer, he plays the instruments, at last making their voices audible and fully reviving them from the silence of the museum. Thus, the antiquarian

reverie reaches its full potential as an audible, creative, and social act. When Dolmetsch revives instruments and discards the silence of the museum, he transforms the antiquarian reverie in ways that crucially reveal the inceptual moment from which some of the most enduring auras period instruments possess have sprung: auras of novelty, authority, and intimacy.

CHAPTER 3: OLD INSTRUMENTS, NEW SOUNDS

The first of these auras, novelty, functioned both as an affirmation of the role that period instruments could play and as a criticism leveled against Dolmetsch's project. When Dolmetsch creatively and audibly enacted what was previously only imagined, his revived instruments sounded novel timbres, reappearing for audience interaction often for the first times in decades, if not centuries. While English audiences could enjoy the visual interest of these instruments in the museum, exhibitions, or in antiquarian publications like Hipkin's book, they were typically unable to hear them—and certainly unable to hear them in the concert settings Dolmetsch created. Comparisons between the sounds of period instruments and their modern counterparts could, as in Galpin and Lynd's recording collaboration, fix the sound of period instruments in a distant, primitive past, and audiences often responded to even Dolmetsch's performances through this conceptualization. However, the comparisons necessarily created through the sounding of period instruments could also slip outside this evolutionary positioning, subverting period instruments' roles as preserved examples of the past, and instead causing audiences to hear them as equally novel as the contemporary electronic instruments Galpin foresaw as the future of modern music. While novelty proved elusive as audiences' ears became accustomed to the sound of period instruments, early music continued to periodize repertoires and instruments throughout the twentieth century, chasing after the profoundly novel aura that Dolmetsch's earliest performances so easily possessed.

As already discussed, at least some English audiences had been able to hear

period instruments before Dolmetsch through Galpin's work, which began in 1891, or through the few performers still playing these instruments as part of an uninterrupted tradition. As Peter Holman argues in his book, *Life after Death: the Viola da Gamba in Britain from Purcell to Dolmetsch,* a tradition of viola da gamba playing existed after Carl Friedrich Abel's death into the nineteenth century, although as an amateur-centered and marginalized tradition.[74] However, despite this minor living tradition and Galpin's work, and despite the earlier revivals of period instruments in France and Germany, the majority of Dolmetsch's audiences had likely never heard period instruments before. Their reactions frequently reference the novel interest of his concerts, using novelty alternately as an advertisement and as a criticism.

Concert reviews of Dolmetsch's performances highlighted their novel interest, presenting them as something new, unique, and exciting. Their novelty seemed to imply scarcity, drawing audiences in for a special opportunity to hear instruments they may never have had an opportunity to hear again. The very earliest of Dolmetsch's concerts reviewed in *The Musical Times* were frequently described as "uncommon" and "extremely interesting," marketing them on this sense of scarcity.[75] A review from 1895 calls the concert "so delightfully fresh to modern ears, so old and yet so new."[76] This description does not place period instruments as a primitive contrast to modern instruments, but rather contrasts the novelty of hearing the new and uncommon timbres

[74] Peter Holman, *Life after Death: The Viola da Gamba in Britain from Purcell to Dolmetsch*, (New York: Boydell Press, 2010).
[75] "Miscellaneous Concerts, Intelligence, &c," *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular* 32/578 (Apr. 1891): 233.
[76] "Dolmetsch Concerts," *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular* 36/624 (Feb. 1895): 98.

of the viol, harpsichord, lute, and clavichord with the actual date of these instruments and their music—and perhaps even with the now-boring and often-heard sounds of their modern counterparts. Modern ears, having gone so long without a chance to hear these period instruments, hear them not as a primitive contrast to current technology, but as something unique and novel.

The novelty of period instruments continued to draw audiences once Dolmetsch left London and moved to Boston in the early 1900s. If period instruments had been only rarely performed in England, or even in Europe in general, fewer, if any, had reached the United States by this early date. Perhaps because of this, reviewers seem to have focused even more strongly on the novel elements of Dolmetsch's concerts. "No one but Dolmetsch plays these airs on the instruments for which they were composed," an anonymous reviewer writes in 1903 for the Boston Daily Globe.[77] A subsequent concert in Boston received a review titled "Novel-Concert Lecture," and the concert was subsequently described as "delightfully novel."[78] These reviews were some of the earliest reactions to Dolmetsch's performances in the U.S., and they demonstrate a focus on the instruments' novelty at least as much as on their antiquity.

The focus on this novelty unsurprisingly centered specifically on Dolmetsch's use of period instruments. After all, despite his revival of many unique sixteenth- and seventeenth-century musical works, at least some musical remnants of these centuries continued to be performed within living traditions that reached the present day. Some of the programs from his Boston concerts reveal the overlap between his musical choices

[77] "Musical Topics: Old-Time Concert," *Boston Daily Globe* (Jan. 25, 1903): 33.
[78] "Novel Concert-Lecture." *Boston Daily Globe* (Jan. 29, 1903): 2.

and those that were already in circulation. Alongside anonymous works from the fourteenth century for lute, and lesser-known works of English composers like Christopher Simpson and John Jenkins, he also performed a significant amount of works by J. S. Bach, Handel, and even on occasion music by Haydn and Beethoven. These composers and their music would not have been unknown to Dolmetsch's audiences, and indeed reviews of these concerts reflect this familiarity. After a concert in February 1908, a reviewer writes of Bach's Concerto in D major that: "aside from the requirement for a harpsichord there is slight reason to regard this concerto as more entitled to archaical distinction than the majority of Bach's writings for a small orchestra." This is in contrast to the reviewer's remarks on a cantata, also by Bach, which is described as a "real treat" due to being previously unheard.[79] Thus, while novelty clearly also mattered as an incentive for listening to the musical works Dolmetsch performed, it is through the period instrumentation that the works become truly "distinct" and exciting. Bach has been heard before, but Bach performed on harpsichord has not.

The reliance on period instruments to create novelty appears even more obvious when reviewers speak of Dolmetsch's performances of works by later composers like Haydn and Beethoven. In Dolmetsch's final concert in Boston, in which Dolmetsch put on works of both Haydn and Beethoven, the Beethoven concerto is lavishly described—and yet, the entire description is devoted to the instrument used to perform it, not to the musical performance itself. The reviewer writes:

[79] "Dolmetsch Concert, Last of the Series Gives Delightful Performance of Bach's Concerto and Comic Cantata," *The Boston Daily Globe* (Feb. 8, 1908).

> The Beethoven concerto was played by Mr George Proctor, and the piano used was an experimental model made by Chickering & Sons under Mr Dolmetsch's direction. This piano is meant to be a duplicate of the instruments used during the latter part of Beethoven's life, which were much lighter and more "stringy" in tone that those now in use. It is so constructed that by means of a double shifting pedal the player is enabled to have the hammer strike one, two or three strings at will, thus producing tonal effects, unfamiliar to the present generation, that were dearly loved by Beethoven.[80]

Aside from a brief mention of the performer, this description could almost have been written about an instrument exhibition and not a concert at all. However, unlike such an exhibition, the reviewer was able to hear the new timbres created by Dolmetsch's innovative recreation of a period piano. The reviewer does not linger over specific visual details of the piano, or even mention them at all. Instead, they devote all attention to the sounds this instrument can produce. Beethoven's concertos would not have been new to Dolmetsch's audiences, but a new type of a piano with a "lighter and more 'stringy'" tone certainly would have been. The reviewer's focus on tone reveals the true draw of these concerts—not hearing, necessarily, the music, but hearing the music performed on instruments with new and unique timbres.

Yet not everyone saw the newness of period instruments as a positive effect. Unlike Galpin, Dolmetsch did not present direct comparisons between his instruments' timbres and their modern counterparts'. However, his reviewers were more than happy to

[80] "Last Dolmetsch Concert," *Boston Daily Globe* (Mar. 11, 1909): 9.

do so for him, usually through unflattering descriptions that reiterated a primitivist goal of using such instruments only to substantiate a concrete progression—and to discredit the value or even the existence of novelty. According to some reviewers, the instruments contrasted unfavorably with both the relative merits of the music they played and with modern instruments. In this framework, period instruments were the "comparatively small means" with which famous composers managed to make music, and had they the opportunity, they would have switched to modern instruments immediately.[81] Some reviewers state this explicitly, asking quite seriously: "Are we to suppose that Bach was satisfied with the musical effect of the popular instrument of his day?"[82] This attitude reflects an unwillingness to grant instruments the same temporal flexibility that "great" music might possess. While Bach's compositions possessed modern value and belonged to a living performance tradition of the present as much as (or perhaps even more than) they belonged to the past, instruments were contrasted with these timeless pieces of music. From the perspective of these writers, period instruments were trapped in the past and unneeded in the present.

Criticism of Dolmetsch's concerts also used novelty as a way to dismiss them as a temporary, rather strange fad that would soon disappear. Interestingly, these criticisms often overlap with the language used to criticize Dolmetsch through antiquarian associations, as a reviewer in 1907 demonstrates. They argue that "all this music is more curious than inspiring, and so it affords interesting and rather amusing contrasts with

[81] "Mr. Dolmetsch's Recital," *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular* 35/616 (June 1894): 392.
[82] "The Dolmetsch Concerts," *Musical Standard* 3/57 (Feb. 1895): 94.

latter-day compositions of the same class."[83] This reviewer firmly places period instruments and their novel timbres back into their role as contrasting with modern instruments in order to show technological progress. The music itself is novel only so much as it briefly amuses the audiences, who can then move on and return to modern-day orchestras and chamber ensembles with modern-day instruments.

This criticism, in which novelty is not an aura surrounding period instruments but rather a fad to be dismissed, reflects an important reality about novelty and its ability to be continually relevant. Novelty relies on people hearing new sounds for the first time, raising the possibility that eventually no more new sounds, or new audiences to hear them, can be found. In period instrument performance, this led to historically informed performance and period instruments continuing to constantly creep forward into newer and expanded repertories. Novelty was reliant on distance between the audience and what they heard, a distance between audience and music that was necessary to access the feeling of novelty in the first place. By 1936, a reviewer of a Dolmetsch concert argues explicitly that "a cynical person might regard such a movement as a fad, destined to be forgotten when its course has been run."[84] While of course this is not what happened to early music or to period instruments, the writer does reflect a very real problem with relying too heavily on a novel aura to promote the value of period instruments. Once the timbres of "new" old instruments became commonplace, they could no longer attract audiences with their novel sounds alone.

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[83] "Dolmetsch Concerts," *Boston Daily Globe* (Mar. 14, 1907): 2.
[84] "Music and Musicians: New Interest in Old Music," *Boston Daily Globe* (Oct. 25, 1936): A52.

CHAPTER 4: THE AUTHORITATIVE PAST AND MATERIAL AUTHENTICITY

Novelty relied on timbre to create interest and demonstrate the value of period instrument performance, but focusing on the materiality of period instruments did not necessarily lead to an antiquarian obsession with death. nor to a museum-derived focus on preservation and technological progression. Materiality, as William Morris so aptly recognized in his writings of restoration of ancient art and architecture, inevitably demonstrated temporal change. While novelty required temporal (or spatial) distance in order for period instruments to sound "new" to their audiences, materiality endured through time as close or as distant to the present as the object itself encouraged. Museum cases fixed material objects in history, actively distancing them in order to contrast with the present. But other modes of interacting with material objects exist, as Morris and Dolmetsch both demonstrate—like performance. Morris's allowance of decay in restoration also allows material objects to live organically through time, interacting with all who encounter them. Unlike timbre, materiality can sustain itself across centuries.

This unique endurance of materiality caused it to assume an aura that ensured period instruments would not merely be a "fad," dying out before half of the century had passed. Instead, materiality accompanied the novel timbres of period instruments to create an aura of authenticity that would become one of the most enduring (and most controversial) hallmarks of the early music revivals of the later twentieth century. While Dolmetsch's version of historically informed performance depended on written scores

and treatises for much of that information, the novelty of his use of period instruments contributed to their position as his major alteration of music performance. And in doing so, their materiality became the basis on which Dolmetsch's supporters built the infrastructure for an "authenticity" that gave the instruments themselves considerable authority over the performance practices of early music. Richard Aldrich's review of Hayes's guide to period instrument performance states this attitude empathically: "Mr. Hayes in not content with authorities. He knows and has handled the instruments themselves and speaks of them from personal knowledge."[85] Period instruments no longer simply attracted audiences who hoped to hear unique and novel timbres. Early music musicians and writers like Hayes positioned them as powerful authorities and more "authentic" guides to performance and scholarship than musical texts.

This "authenticity" derives from the direct connection to the past that period instruments as material objects possess. This authenticity also appealed to museum-based historical narratives, lending its material weight to whatever method of past-present relationship curators chose to endorse and utilize. However, in museums objects often served more as particularly illustrative examples of the past, lending credence to texts rather than contesting their primacy as authorities of the historical record. Barnett describes this role, arguing that in museums, material objects "were history's own version of the scientific specimen, and borrowing from the prestige accorded the written word, their advocates also spoke of them as texts."[86] In the evolutionary progressions presented in museum displays, objects lent their own veracity as remainders of the past even as they

[85] Richard Aldrich, "Some New Books on Old Music," *The New York Times* (Nov. 2, 1930): X8.
[86] Barnett, *Sacred Relics,* 8.

borrowed prestige from the traditional hierarchical position texts held in historical study.

However, musical texts began to lose this authoritative position when confronted with the past materiality of period instruments. Musical texts already struggled with missing information—the audible performance—that written texts did not seem to miss. And unlike objects displayed in museums, instruments performed in concert required performers to handle them and audiences to hear them, sounding music in an immediate contrast with the silent texts. As the novelty of period instruments' timbre brought them the most attention in performances, the novelty of handling the instruments also made performers particularly aware of the differences between these "new" instruments and the modern instruments they likely had previously encountered. Because Dolmetsch was the first to make modern versions of period instruments, many of the instruments first used in concerts were actually from the past—they were not replicas, but genuine antiques. The combination of sound from the instruments and the reality of handling objects that had existed for so many decades or centuries prior created a powerful aura of authenticity that surrounded period instruments. Unlike musical texts, they could "speak" in past voices and embody that same past in their own intrinsic materiality—and both of these abilities seemed to possess an authenticity that transformed period instruments into legitimate authorities on musical performance.

Laurence Libin gives one example of early music performers' continued belief in this ability, writing that "antique musical instruments… offer tangible clues to how music sounded to our forebears."[87]. Haskell recognizes the same turn towards instruments as a

[87] Libin, "Progress, Adaptation, and the Evolution of Musical Instruments," 187.

more "authentic" authority than texts as well, writing that: "it is easy to see why so many discussions of authenticity turn on the question of period instruments, for this is one area in which historical evidence is both plentiful and reasonably unambiguous."[88] Unlike the perceived incomplete and inaudible nature of musical texts and written treatises, period instruments seemingly survived into the present still "authentic" to their past selves. Of course, such an avowed authenticity is perhaps less "authentic" than it immediately seems. Wanda Landowska, a world famous virtuosic harpsichordist, was often positioned as a rival to Dolmetsch—but she played on "inauthentic" harpsichords. Sol Babitz draws a comparison between the two specifically on their differing commitment to authenticity in period instrument construction. While he describes Dolmetsch as "the most uncompromising researcher into historical instruments and technique," Landowska is derided as "inventing modern harpsichords for her pseudo-historic adventures."[89] Even Dolmetsch typically had to restore his instruments prior to using them in performance. He may not have been as flamboyantly careless of historical restoration as Landowska was, but he often did not hesitate to innovate in his reconstructions and restorations. Despite his restorations, his instruments were still widely perceived as representing the past more accurately and legitimately than musical or written texts could.

Performers finally saw period instruments as an authentic and authoritative means to play historically informed music. The very tangibility and physical construction of the instruments, they felt, would naturally lead them to the "authentic" style they desired when performing early music. Their aura of material authenticity acted as a concrete

[88] Haskell, *The Early Music Revival,* 182.
[89] Sol Babitz, "The Landowska Approach," *The New York Review of Books* (Mar. 11, 1965).

guide to proper performance practice. Downes describes how the instruments lead to this authentic music when discussing a Dolmetsch performance on recorders. He writes that when the music was played on recorders, "the design of the music stood out clearly. The ingratiating tone of the instruments made one feel the calm beauty and grace of the music; it was felt that they were the proper medium for its interpretation."[90] Only through the timbre of period recorders can the "design" of the music be properly heard and thus properly played. If modern instruments could not showcase the same affects that belonged to this early music, then they could not possibly be appropriate for this repertory.

Other writers stress even more clearly that it is not merely through the timbre of the instruments that the music is properly performed, but through the way performers encounter their distinctive material characteristics. Bonavia argues this point in his review of the 1932 Haslemere Festival, when he claims that:

> When the right instruments are used the temptation to give to the art of one age that which is proper to the art of another vanishes. Any musician who lays a hand on a viola da gamba must realize that to attempt to force its tone can end only in disaster, that its prerogatives are different from those of modern string instruments; he then sets about to discover where the genius of the instrument is.[91]

He describes how the musician creates a timbre and style that leads to an "authentic" performance, or one that makes the "design" of the music readily audible to the audience. Using the viola da gamba as an example, he argues that it is the mere act of "lay[ing] a

[90] Olin Downes, "Dolmetsch Reveals New Music," *The New York Times* (Aug. 19, 1934): X4.
[91] F. Bonavia, "Dolmetsch's Haslemere Festival," *The New York Times* (Aug. 21, 1932): X4.

hand" on the instrument that guides them to the proper mode of playing and thus proper expression of sound. The instrument does not allow even a modern-trained musician to play it as they might a modern instrument; instead, it actively resists this attempt to "force" a tone not proper to early music. The tangible act of the playing the instrument—the performer's direct engagement with its materiality—inevitably leads to an authentically historical style of music.

Hayes became a particularly ardent believer in the ability of period instrument materiality to function as an authority on performance style. In his review of an earlier Haslemere Festival, he gives an even more specific example of how the material construction of a period instrument could fundamentally support its necessity for early music performance. He compares the modern piano to the harpsichord, arguing that the piano "is far too muffled in tone for these brilliant and sparkling compositions, which demand the sharp accent of the plucked string."[92] In order for the compositions to sound correctly, they require the use of a period instrument. Perhaps because Hayes was himself a performer, he is able to speak of the specific material details of the instrument that lead to this correct sound in a way Bonavia is not. By including in his review of the festival the fact that it is the plucking mechanism of the harpsichord that makes it suited for early music performance, he foregrounds the technical construction of period instruments as essential for "authentic" performance.

Dolmetsch himself pushes even further than Hayes in granting period instruments themselves authority over "authentic" performance. His performance practice guide

[92] Gerald R. Hayes, "The Haslemere Festival of Chamber Music," *The Musical Times* 66/992 (Oct. 1925): 936.

includes numerous appeals to the instruments for authoritative statements on performance practice, which he places alongside the more traditional theoretical descriptions and source analysis. For instance, when discussing how to decide on the "authentic" tempo of a piece, Dolmetsch claims that if left up to the musicianship of performers and their relationship to the period instrument, they will intrinsically land upon the right choice. "Sufficient knowledge of the instrument" is enough to lead the performer to a musically and historically appropriate tempo.[93] If written words and musical examples cannot provide "authentic" proofs of their missing pieces necessary for an audible musical performance, like tempo or tone quality, the period instrument has the authority to do so instead.

Even when the novelty of period instruments faded, their authentic connection with the past placed them in this position of authority. They seemingly existed beyond the usual constraints of time, performers using their existence in the past to justify changes to modern musical performance practice. Where novelty created temporal distance between listener and instrument, authority based on historical authentic allowed time to slip between two disparate and distant moments: past performances and the current one. Handling the material body of the period instrument was a constant reminder of its past role. However, while the temporal flexibility that functioned within the material past of period instruments allowed its role as an authority on performance to endure longer than novelty, period instruments also possessed another aura that connected seemingly distant times even closer together. As musicians and audiences

[93] Dolmetsch, *The Interpretation of Music,* 27.

began to resist the constant and chaotic progress of modern life—and modern music—period instruments' ability to recall the past into the present became a crucial way of creating an aura of intimacy with the past.

CHAPTER 5: PERIOD INSTRUMENTS AND INTIMACY

In 1891—around the time when Dolmetsch's performances started getting attention in London musical periodicals—the famous, tri-annual Handel Festival took place at the Crystal Palace. A writer for the *Musical News* described how the crowds "varied from sixty to eighty-eight thousands for the four days combined," and came from all over England, as well as from England's colonies. As this writer put it, "the festival is truly national."[94] And if the audiences were enormous, the orchestra and choir were scarcely less so. The same writer describes a gigantic performing force:

> The band was made up of 540 performers, consisting of 113 first violins, 106 seconds, 65 violas, 72 violoncellos, 61 double-basses, 13 flutes, 14 oboes, 9 clarionets, 12 bassoons, 3 double bassoons, 10 horns, 7 trumpets and cornets, 9 trombones, 3 tubas, 3 sets of drums, and 1 bass drum and cymbals. The chorus numbered 770 sopranos, 690 contraltos, 100 male altos, 710 tenors, and 790 basses.[95]

Coming from all across the country, and attended by huge crowds, such performances took these eighteenth-century works and re-created them in an almost Mahlerian mode. They reflected an English nationalist culture that came together, joining counties, provinces, and colonies in a spectacle of epic proportions. But whether or not these performances functioned on a social, and not merely national level, was less certain. Such massive performances may seem to reflect a moment of intense social connectedness,

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[94] "The Handel Festival," *Musical News* 1/17 (June 1891): 347–8.
[95] Ibid., 348.

bringing individual performers and audience members together in a shared expression of musical culture, but the size of these forces also alienated and distanced listeners. Despite the 60,000–80,000 audience members who eagerly attended this famous event, some went away unimpressed—and feeling distinctly unconnected.

Those uninterested in this version of a musical future found solace in Dolmetsch's alternative vision—one of intimacy, and of an intimacy created through musical domesticity and a new national culture. In Dolmetsch, they found a musical counterpart to William Morris's Arts & Crafts movement that similarly rejected large-scale production, and returned music to amateurs and to the home. This intimacy, which explicitly contrasted with the maximalist music of composers like Wagner and Mahler, was based in the restructured antiquarianism reverie discussed earlier. Emerging from this antiquarian historicism, it became a way to revive the music, connect to the past, and propose a new domestic nationalist culture for the present and the future. And of course, the intimacy required for this goal was fundamentally dependent on the materiality of the period instruments Dolmetsch insisted on using in his performances. While most instrumentalists probably share a strong personal connection with their instrument as they learn its physical characteristics, regularly perform on it, and frequently modify and repair it, the novelty of the materiality of period instruments heightened this closeness and musicians' awareness of it. Novelty may not have been sustainable in itself, but it led to a musical and material engagement more open to the intimacy required to achieve the goals of Dolmetsch and his supporters.

Audiences entered Dolmetsch's performance spaces and were immediately drawn

into a creatively imagined representation of the past. Performers often wore costumes inspired by the period, and the instruments themselves appeared radically different when compared to those of modernity. As a commentator of one of Dolmetsch's earliest concerts writes in 1895: "in his historical concerts and lectures one may for a time virtually enter this past world of art life."[96] Besides the immediate visual markers of antiquity, the timbres of the period instruments also drew their audiences away to "this past world" that differed so significantly from the current one. It was not only the contrast between the apparent antiquity of the concerts and the modern world that created such a strong impression of the past. How Dolmetsch's concerts allowed audiences to "virtually enter this past world" can be understood through the modified antiquarian reverie structure proposed in the first chapter of this thesis. In antiquarian engagements with past objects, observers connected with these objects through biographic, personal, and material modes. But music required something more as well. Dolmetsch's performances, and all early music performances, necessarily complicated these modes through the requisite intermediaries of composers and performers. These intermediaries also allowed more "points of entry" into this past world and into the intimate and creative moment of reverie.

Perhaps the most traditionally antiquarian way audiences or observers could connect with any instrument, sounded or not, was through biographic points of connection. Nineteenth- century antiquarians obsessed over relics that had some point of connection with famous figures, hunting down splinters, rags, and buttons on the dubious

[96] Joseph Goddard, "Revival of the Harpsichord and Clavichord," *Musical Opinion and Music Trade Review* 19/219 (Dec. 1895): 177.

assertions that they had once belonged to or observed the life of a now-deceased "great man." This attitude explicitly continued in earlier engagements with period instruments. In his book, Hipkins highlights instruments supposedly connected to famous people, including a virginal said to have belonged to Queen Elizabeth and a harp associated with Queen Mary. And this attitude existed outside England as well: Johnson describes how "in France, Marie Antoinette's spirit loomed large over a harpsichord she was said to have once owned; this instrument garnered much attention when it was displayed as part of the 1889 Exposition Universelle."[97] Johnson's description is particularly apt and evocative. The "spirits" of these individuals somehow continued within the material objects they may have left behind, and thus through these objects observers could interact at some level with those same spirits. The material object functioned as a point of connection: a steady force that withstood temporal change and death and could draw individuals across centuries together into an exchange of a more spiritual meaning.

But these biographic connections did not necessarily require a famous individual to connect people through time. Indeed, objects' more famous associations were often also extremely tenuous. While Hipkins supports the belief that "Queen Elizabeth's virginal" likely belonged to her, he does acknowledge that a similar belief cannot be supported for "Queen Mary's Harp." As he says when discussing the history of the harp, its biographic claim, "in passing through several mediums has become unreliable."[98] Despite lacking concrete (or even reasonable) historical support, Hipkins continues to perpetuate the long-held, if now disproved, biographic association. This reveals that it is

[97] Johnson, "The Death and Second Life of the Harpsichord," 195.
[98] Hipkins, *Musical Instruments,* 4.

thus not entirely the historical fact that makes these biographic connections powerful for the observers of the instruments. Truth mattered less than the desire to form a sympathetic and intimate connection with a past individual through the material object. It is this desire that Dolmetsch so effectively responds to in his performances. Through the materiality of period instruments, early music performances create the temporal slippage required to bring unnamed and imagined individuals across time into the same performance space. As Paul Seer, a reviewer of three of Dolmetsch's earlier concerts, writes:

> Such art-work [the music] was written by warm human hands and was the expression of natures, often sweet and gentle, who were conscious of the invisible robe of immortality which transforms all things and to which music is but a physical counterpart. I can hear in the distant strains echoes of a tender yearning, of an unearthly sweetness, and of a lovable humor, for which my heart is full of gratitude and affection. I am taught again how unchanging is the human heart.[99]

Unusually, Seer specifically calls music "a physical counterpart." This materialization of the entirety of the musical experience, not just the instruments, foregrounds their power in Dolmetsch's performances. It is through this physicality that Seer can "hear" the past, and thus intimately connect to the unknown individual(s) who lived then and is similarly "yearning" for some moment of connection. That the connection is particularly intimate is also undoubtable: it is Seer's heart that "hears" the heart of the past individuals, and it is in this connecting of hearts that the universal human heart is revealed as "unchanged"

[99] Paul Seer, "Three Concerts of Old Music," *Musical Standard* 21/546 (June 18, 1904): 389.

despite time's continued progress. Music's materiality has successfully condensed time into a single, shared, and vividly intimate moment.

The ability of period instruments to create moments of connection with the past is not unique amongst other material objects. Barnett describes the general historical relic as "a thing that could be interacted with on an intimate level and used to achieve certain emotional states. It created a relationship with the past rather than a stance versus the past."[100] When acting as this antiquarian, historical relic, period instruments did not function in the "stance versus the past" mode that was required to exist within the teleological progress narrative of technological evolution. Instead, they functioned on this "intimate level" that allowed those who interacted with them access to a unique relationship with history and time. And nowhere was this intimacy more obvious than in the direct material sensations of handling the instruments themselves. While this direct materiality could function as a powerful aura of authenticity and authority, it also could allow performers to connect intimately with these instruments and interact with a past in a broader way than through a single biographic connection.

Joseph Goddard visited Arnold Dolmetsch soon after one of his concerts in 1895 and had a unique chance as a non-performer to experience first-hand the physical features of Dolmetsch's period instruments. In his article on this special visit, he details his experience encountering various instruments and discussing them with Dolmetsch. Handling the lute, he remarks that "the bulk of these instruments becomes a very innocent thing as soon as we handle them; in fact, no sooner do we hold them than we

[100] Barnett, *Sacred Relics,* 8.

experience the sensation of lightness."[101] Here the visual deceives the observer; on seeing the instruments, Goddard expects them to be heavy, even questioning the accuracy of the common paintings which depict young girls playing such large instruments. It is only once he handles the instruments that he realizes they possess that "sensation of lightness." Suddenly the lute transforms from an awkward, difficult-to-play instrument into one that can readily be used. It reveals its performance capabilities and at the same time reveals a new sensation to the person holding it. While lightness may seem like a simple and obvious contrast to the supposed "bulk," the term also shares a more significant meaning: it would become one of the defining descriptions of the timbre of period instruments and early music performances in the early twentieth century.

If the materiality of period instruments could affect non-performers' conceptions of performance and musical sound, it had even more profound effects on the performers who dedicated themselves to playing them. Like Seer's description of human hearts reacting to each other across time, Dolmetsch described performers as connecting directly to the souls of their instruments. He writes that: "[the clavichord] possesses a soul, or rather seems to have one, for under the fingers of some gifted player it reflects every shade of the player's feelings as a faithful mirror. Its tone is alive."[102] The player touches the keys of the instrument and thus forms an intimate connection with it—a faithful, mirrored, and "alive" relationship. Like Seer's two hearts, which reveal a universal and unchanging one, through connecting materially with the clavichord, the instrument

[101] Joseph Goddard, "Revival of the Harpsichord and Clavichord," *Musical Opinion and Music Trade Review* 19/219 (Dec. 1895): 177.
[102] Dolmetsch, *The Interpretation of Music,* 443.

reveals that it too shares a heart/soul with its performer.

However, most of those Dolmetsch encountered were not performers, nor were all audience members lucky enough to share Goddard's experience of handling the instruments directly. How could Dolmetsch use the instruments themselves to create these intimate connections, as in the example of the clavichord, if audiences could not touch them. We can use the antiquarian reverie model to retrace how Dolmetsch's role as an intermediary created new ways for audiences to form an intimacy with the music and its instruments. These reached beyond direct biographic or direct material connections. Instead, they primarily existed through the personal bond between the performer and the audience, which then worked to create connections between the audience and a more general and nebulous historical past. Thus, Dolmetsch created an intimacy that he and his supporters extended into both domestic and national spheres, creating a new musical culture that rejected the alienation they found in modern musical performance.

The connection between performer and audience first began with the intimate connection described earlier, between performer and material instrument. In his theorization on material culture, Carl Knappett argues that "the simple tools of everyday life can be portrayed as extensions of the body's physical boundaries." While period instruments may not be "simple tools," their complexity only increases their role as an extension of the performer. But it is not only the instrument that becomes something more. He also argues that these "tools not only constitute extensions of human animacy

but also confer new possibilities for animacy on the human actor."[103] Within this dual and reflective role, shared by the human and the tool, we can see resonances of Dolmetsch's own description of a performer playing the clavichord. The performer's animacy or soul newly exists within the clavichord, extending itself beyond the human body. And simultaneously, the clavichord reflects this soul back onto the performer, allowing musical and historical connections that previously could not exist.

These shifts of animacy go beyond the confines of human/tool or performer/instrument, and slip into the audience that observes such a relationship. Speaking about Dolmetsch's own performances and their effects on audiences, Campbell writes that "Dolmetsch was never a brilliant lutenist in the technical sense, but his tone was superb. As with any instrument he touched, his instinct somehow guided him to produce the right sound, the sound which reached the heart of those who heard him play."[104] In this description of Dolmetsch's lute playing, we find a new and triangulated form of connection. Dolmetsch "touch[es]" the lute, connecting with its material characteristics and thus creating the body and animacy-extension Knappett describes. Similarly, the lute reflects back onto Dolmetsch a newfound animacy that reveals itself through "his instinct." While this instinct is his, it—and its ability to "guide[] him to produce the right sound"—can only exist through performing on the lute, demonstrating the lute's power towards Dolmetsch. And it is through the "right sound," produced by this reflective connection between Dolmetsch and his lute, that he is finally able to

[103] Carl Knappett, *Thinking Through Material Culture* (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania, 2005), 17.
[104] Campbell, *Dolmetsch,* 36.

"reach[] the heart" of his audiences. In order to create, for instance, Seer's connection to an imagined past individual, the performer functions as an intermediary in order to create intimacy between the materiality of the lute and the hearts of the listeners.

Dolmetsch did not solely rely on his musical performances to connect with his audiences. He also created a distinct intimacy through his extra-musical performance practices—and particularly through his habit of discussing the music verbally. Combined with his material connectedness, this solidified the connections between Dolmetsch and his audience, leading to a unique aura of intimacy. As Elna Sherman wrote when describing the atmosphere at Haslemere: "there is a delightful air of intimacy about the concerts, Mr. Dolmetsch taking the audience into his confidence on points of interest or controversy in the music performed."[105] Some critics did not appreciate Dolmetsch's seeming informality in pausing to explain aspects of the instruments or the music, or in even interrupting the performer to lecture. They saw this attitude as amateurish and unprofessional, or at best an attempt to educate audiences unfamiliar with the old music being performed. But while Dolmetsch certainly intended to educate his audiences, Sherman's understanding conveys a different and more interesting way to interpret Dolmetsch's behavior. When viewed as an attempt to create intimacy, it becomes merely another part of his performance practice, just as his use of period instruments was. Discussing with or lecturing at the audiences within the musical performance strengthened the ties between Dolmetsch (the performer) and his audience. It did not merely educate them on the old music or instruments, but brought them "into his

[105] Elna Sherman, "Arnold Dolmetsch and His Festival," *The New York Times* (June 26, 1938): 127.

confidence." His verbal descriptions connected his own "heart" to the audience, and thus cemented his role as intermediary in forming an intimate connection between the instruments and music, the audience, and the past.

Once the performer successfully created this connection, the audience was able to hear beyond the present moment and beyond connections with specific (if imagined) past individuals. Instead, performers' connection with their audiences led them into that imagined moment of temporal slippage necessary to creating intimacy with a broader and less specifically human past. Reviewers of early music concerts often wrote of being able to hear this moment through both the performer and through the materiality—as represented by timbre—of the period instruments. As in Dolmetsch's example of a performer's connection to their clavichord, the reflexive relationship between performer, instrument, and audience coalesced into a means through which the audience could "hear" something beyond the present. They often described this as hearing "distant," "eerie," or "ghostly" sounds within the music being played. One example from a review written in 1896 speaks specifically of the clavichord, saying that "the tone [the clavichord] produced was so weak that, as Miss Dolmetsch played the Prelude and Fugue from Bach's famous "Forty-eight," the sweet low plaintive tones seemed like the ghostly voices of faraway ages."[106] Like Seer's description of the individual he imagines, who "yearns" and thus reveals a distinctly human heart, the voices of the past are "plaintive." No longer specifically tied to a single person, they still push towards a newfound intimacy with the present audiences hearing these timbres through both the instruments

[106] "London Institution," *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular* 37/635 (Jan. 1896): 28.

and their players. The performer—at least at some level—thus acts as a substitute for the past individual, stepping into their connecting role and solidifying an intimate connection between themselves, their instruments, their audiences, and the distant past.

CHAPTER 6: A NEW DOMESTIC NATIONALISM

Why did Dolmetsch want to create this intimacy? Its purpose was not merely to connect audiences and performers to the past, but to use that past in order to alter the musical culture of the present day and to effect an even broader change in English national culture. Dolmetsch insisted that his music and instruments, in contrast to those preserved in the museum, formed part of a living culture. Intimacy became the groundwork through which he connected performer and audience, and in doing so, recreated cultural expectations for the role of music in the domestic and national sphere. Dolmetsch's supporters directly contrasted this intimacy with the modern music that they found alienating and overwhelming. Period instruments, they felt, possessed a unique quietness and domesticity that resisted the industrialized modern world, and the contemporary music fitting that world. Through this quietness and domesticity, Dolmetsch and his supporters hoped to use period instruments to alter the industrialized present and work towards a different, past-informed, future.

If the museum preserved past objects and fixed them in a progression that served to highlight continual technological advancement, then it follows that this fixation on technological advancement also served to promote a larger culture of industrialization. Hoberman argues that museums "flourish[ed] most in those cities where mass production was strongest, where they were most needed as 'counter-institutions to the factory.'" In fact, she claims that museums in general "could be read as an effort to resacralize displayed objects to compensate for the large-scale, society-wide 'decline of the aura'

[Walter] Benjamin detects in late nineteenth-century Europe, the so-called 'age of mechanical reproduction.'"[107] Museums' re-sacralizing efforts did not utilize the same auras period instruments did—the excitement of novelty and the comfort and personalization of intimacy—but instead were counter-institutions that re-inscribed the values of the institutions they theoretically countered even as they attempted this decentralization. Despite endowing their objects with sanctity, these objects were preserved only in the technological progressions that appeared to lead, inevitably, to industrialization. Leaving the outside world of factories and industrialization and wandering into a museum might have allowed visitors to see past objects, removed from the chaos and noise of a rapidly changing society. But once visitors followed the path laid out in museum displays—a path of careful progression from one technological advancement to the next—they found themselves back at the modern technologies that had led to this chaos and noise. Fixed in an evolutionary narrative, museum objects could not truly counter the factory—they could only sacralize the objects that seemed to have naturally progressed to it. It was only when museum objects were taken out of the museum and brought back into the modern living culture that they could alter the seeming inescapable drive towards a louder and more chaotic world.

Dolmetsch's supporters, and his audience members and reviewers, recognized the possibility of resistance towards industrialization inherent in period instruments. Once Dolmetsch had successfully brought them outside the museum and resuscitated their voices, these voices could connect their hearers with the past in a way the silent

[107] Hoberman, "In Quest of a Museal Aura," 468.

instruments, preserved in the museum, could not. The intimacy created through the timbres and materiality of period instruments allowed their hearers to connect to the past not via tracing a linear progression to the present day, but in genuinely forming an intimacy with a now-distant past on an immediate and personal level. A poet, Arthur Symons, writes a vivid description of this power while reflecting on hearing a Dolmetsch concert:

> This music seems to carry one out of the world, and shut one in upon a house of dreams, full of intimate and ghostly voices. It is a house of peace, where music is still that refreshment which it was before it took fever, and became accomplice and not minister to the nerves, and brought the clamour of the world into its seclusion.[108]

Symons's language highlights the role that period instruments and their music plays in direct contrast with that of modern music. "Ghostly" and yet intimate, the old music creates a retreat from the "clamour" of the modern world and brings the hearer refreshment and peace. Unlike an object in the museum, it does not inevitably lead the listener back into the world of technological advancement and industrialized cities. Instead, it both "shut[s] one" away in a place separate from this modernity, and helps to "minister" the fever and nerves caused by it. The intimacy with the past caused by period instruments is thus not one that merely removes audiences to a distant place, although it does serve that role. Instead, it also reconnects them in a more positive way with their own modern life, changing the present even as it ties them to the past.

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[108] Arthur Symons, "A Reflection at a Dolmetsch Concert," *Plays, Acting, Music*. London: Constable & Co., Ltd., 1909.

Symons links modern music and modern noise together, arguing that the former helps to create and is the "accomplice" of the latter. Other writers perceive this relationship between modern music and modern noise as well, presenting period instruments as a way to work against both of them simultaneously. If the noise of cities creates music that supports that disruptive chaos, then perhaps period instruments' intimacy with the past can provide a music that similarly supports that theoretically quieter past. Bonavia, a critic for the *New York Times,* explicitly prescribes Dolmetsch's concerts as a "cure" to the problems of urban, industrialized modernity, writing that "there is no better cure for the noise-haunted city dweller than to listen for a while to the soft sound of recorders and harpsichords, or to voices which have been trained to harmonize with them."[109] He contrasts the quietness of period instruments more explicitly with the noise of cities, not just with modern music. It is the otherworldly, past, timbres of these instruments that can "cure" the "city dweller."

Other writers emphasize the relationship between period instruments and modern music as a way of "curing" the problems caused by modern noise. Gerald Hayes, an avid supporter of Dolmetsch, gives one of the major goals of the period instrument movement in a review on the Haslemere Festival. He writes that "the time is ripening for a return of chamber music to its proper sphere in domestic life, and the viols and their music offer the ideal inspiration to a generation which is getting rather tired of the tempests of Scriabin and Gustav Mahler"[110] Finally naming specific composers, Hayes unequivocally

[109] F. Bonavia, "Dolmetsch Programs," *The New York Times* (Aug. 22, 1937): X5.
[110] Gerald R. Hayes, "The Haslemere Festival of Chamber Music," *The Musical Times* 66/992 (Oct. 1925): 937.

connects the chaotic noise of modernity and industrialization to modern music. If Scriabin and Mahler are "tempests" who tire listeners already weary of industrialization and "noise-haunted" by factories and cities, then period instruments require a new type of music and a new type of listening. As in Symons's poem, they create a domestic intimacy, bringing music back into the quietness of the home and away from the disruption of modern sounds.

Period instruments do not merely present a possible way to return to this domestic quietness, they actually require it through their distinct materiality. Unlike modern instruments, their material composition cannot be used to create the loudness required in the music of Scriabin or Mahler. The instruments' constructions necessarily limit their use to the intimate chamber concerts that Hayes and Bonavia believed represented a cure for the noise of urbanity. This distinct materiality created timbres that required a new form of listening—one that inevitably led its hearers to change their expectations for music's function in national and domestic musical culture. A reviewer for the *Boston Daily Globe* in 1909 claims that: "the charm of music by these instruments is very subtle, and the strain on the listener, striving to separate the thin sounds, to catch the tiniest shadings, is greater than in modern music."[111] Audiences for modern music may be overwhelmed by the "tempests" of composers like Mahler, and by the sheer size and sound of the large orchestras used to play those types of compositions. Even chamber music, performed on modern violins or pianos, had greater dynamic gradation and significantly greater intervals between the very ends of the dynamic range. In contrast, an

[111] "Chamber Concerts Again," *Boston Daily Globe* (Jan. 11, 1909): 13.

audience at a Dolmetsch concert, hearing the novel timbres of period instruments, would have had to be quieter and pay more careful attention to hear any dynamic changes in the performance. Dolmetsch specifically explained this to his audiences and demanded that they comply with his new mode of listening he thought necessary for truly hearing the period instruments. Many reviewers comment on how, for instance: "those who attended were scarcely allowed to move without a protest, for the tap of a foot, or the slightest rustle of a silken gown, was sufficient to drown the delicate phrases wafted from the tiny instrument."[112] If audiences wanted to experience the novel period-instrument timbres at these concerts, they had to remain still and silent to a far greater degree than when listening to modern music. Yet this silence did not only lead to a new way of hearing the music, but also led to the type of domestic quietness that could cure modern noise. Only when audiences embraced Dolmetsch's edicts of stillness and silence were they able to enter into the "house full of dreams" that Symons describes in his poem, or the "proper domestic sphere" for which Hayes longs to return.

The quietness of period instruments was also put forth as the reason for their disappearance in modern musical culture. If there were a continual and technological progression, as displayed in the museum, it was one not only of technological achievement but also of increasing loudness and noisiness. As factories imbued urban centers with higher and higher volumes of continual background noise, and as new technologies seemed to grow louder and louder, it seemed that instruments had quite reasonably followed suit. As the twentieth century progressed, technologies and

[112] "Music and Musicians," *The Washington Post* (Dec. 20, 1908): E3.

noisemakers continued to grow both in volume and in use. A reviewer in 1923, H. W. Wortham, quotes Dolmetsch questioning this association between modern noise and modern instrument volume: "'Is it surprising,' he asks, 'that this divinely shy instrument has been unable in a noisy and hustling age to compete with the modern piano, which in mere strength can nearly equal an orchestra?'"[113] As in Hoberman's reading of Benjamin, it is the past object that is sanctified in contrast with the "noisy and hustling age" of modernity. Yet unlike in the museum, this object does not inevitably lead to this noisy age. Instead, the technological progression that led to both industrialization and to modern instruments like the piano excludes the period instrument, so much quieter than its current counterpart. In its divine and quiet timbre, this instrument successfully resists the interconnected modernity expressed by both musical and non-musical loudness.

It is thus not just the music of modernity that corrupts the listener, but also the dynamic capabilities of the modern instruments themselves. By connecting modern instruments to modern music, and modern music to the noise of modern life, Dolmetsch's supporters create a strong case not only for the performance of old music, but for the necessity of period instruments. Their timbres lead to the calm required to counter modernity and industrialization, and this countering is essential to creating a new domestic and national culture. Yet just as Dolmetsch's audiences needed to learn new ways of hearing in order to reach this calm, period instruments had to struggle to be heard against the modern musical culture they both tried to inhabit and to resist. Only two years before Dolmetsch's death, Bonavia writes that "their tone is a thing as the voice of

[113] H. W. Wortham, "Old Instruments for New," *London Tory Daily* (Aug. 8, 1923).

conscience; they have little chance of being heard and appreciated in a world where musicians are blowing and shouting, scraping, trumpeting and drumming to the top of their bent."[114] The technological progression to loud instruments not only leaves period instruments in the past, but also actively silences them in the present—both in the museum and on the concert stage. Modern instruments actively work against the potential quietness and intimacy of period instruments, and thus against the domestic and national cultural goals for which Dolmetsch and his supporters strove. In order for period instruments to create the intimate musical atmosphere necessary to bring audiences and performers into a new soothing modern culture, they first had to find a performance space suited for their quiet timbres and resistant to the volume of modern instruments.

The domestic setting thus became the ideal performance space. Like the house Symons describes in his poem, it could at least to some extent shut out the world, especially when combined with the imagined reverie that created those intimate connections with the instruments and music so requisite for a continual change in musical and social culture. Music in the home functioned not only as a retreat from modernity, but actively reconstructed modern culture along a new formation that foregrounded domesticity and intimacy as crucial national values. Another poet, John Todhunter, describes this progression from home to cultural value in a poem entitled *The Harpsichord*:

It is a pleasant room, welcoming you

With stately air of courtesy antique,

[114] F. Bonavia, "Dolmetsch's Notable Sessions of Music for Old Instruments," *The New York Times* (Aug. 14, 1938): 132.

Yet with a touch of homelier kindness too

Seeming of our less formal age to speak.[115]

Despite the age of the harpsichord, it is not its antiqueness that connects with the audience, nor its highly decorative exterior. Instead, it is the "touch of homelier kindness" that reaches the audience, "speaking" to them of a more domestic, and "less formal" culture. This almost reads as an inversion of the typical descriptions associated with harpsichords; rather than connecting audiences to wealthy and famous personages, like Queen Elizabeth, it connects them to the domestic sphere and to the home and "pleasant room" that both welcomes the audience and reminds them of the possibility of a different musical experience: one less formal and more kind.

The association of a lack of formality with intimacy already figured in Dolmetsch's extra-musical lectures with which he filled his performances. Just as Dolmetsch's willingness to abandon music momentarily and shift into explanation drew audiences into his confidence and created a sense of mutual interest and intimacy with the period instruments and their music, the music itself could also reflect the lack of formality that signified a domestic, rather than concert, musical experience. Edgar Hunt explains for his readership in *The Musical Times* that "those who go to Haslemere do not seek the standards of the concert hall." They do not attend Dolmetsch's festival because they expect expert musical performance, or the "standards" that Dolmetsch and his family were often accused of failing to meet. Instead, "they go to hear the Dolmetsch family making music on those instruments which have been found to be most suitable for

[115] John Todhunter, "The Harpsichord," *Sounds and Sweet Airs,* (London: Elkin Mathews, 1905).

music in the home."[116] Hunt thus draws a contrast not between excellent and subpar musical skill, but between the concert hall and the home. The performance space shapes the formality of the concert experience, and the home allows for a lack of formality that creates the necessary intimacy to reconstruct a truly domestic culture. In the home, the quiet and "shy" period instruments can be heard with the stillness and intimacy they require.

By denying the concert hall its pre-eminence in musical culture, Dolmetsch proposes a radically different concept of musical performance and its role in national culture. While the domesticity of his performances often served as a defense against criticisms of his and his fellow performers' technical skills, many of Dolmetsch's supporters enthusiastically embraced his amateurism and informality as a rediscovered way to experience music within the home. They did not need to attend performances to connect with music—in fact, through playing the instruments themselves, they met Dolmetsch's ideal of a musical culture that valued amateur performance far more than professional skill. When responding to a criticism of the seeming amateurism of Dolmetsch's performers, one of these supporters berates the critic for being unable to "see the existence of no music other than that of the concert platform."[117] If concert music and the instruments required to play it simply added more noise to the chaos of modernity, then why did it deserve its high position in musical culture? This reviewer questions this concept, asking: "I like to play music at home for its own sake; have I,

[116] Edgar H. Hunt, "Haslemere Festival of Chamber Music," *The Musical Times* 77/1122 (Aug. 1936): 750.
[117] R. Wane-Cobb, "The Dolmetsch Foundation," *The Musical Times* 71/1049 (Jul. 1930): 636.

then, no right to existence?"[118] In playing music at home, on period instruments, he achieves the ideal performance environment preferable for creating a new national intimacy through musical culture. Quiet, still, and directly connected to the materiality of his instrument, this performer is not adding to the noise of urban, industrialized life; instead, he is creating a musical culture that values music not for loudness, but for the connections it forms between performer, audience, and domestic sphere.

When these intimate connections formed, they not only allowed period instruments to function on a personal level, but also pushed this intimacy outwards to a shared national culture. Just as museums organized history in ways that supported nation-building and national culture, period instrument performance possessed the possibility of expanding beyond each individual performance and creating a historicization that counteracted that developed and promoted through the museum. In this role, period instruments functioned similarly to more general historical relics: despite their use in performance, they still represented the past and a particular remembrance of history. Barnett argues that historical relics, in their role as authentic manifestations of the past, helped to develop national identity even outside of the museum culture developing during the nineteenth century. She describes them "as another manifestation of the sentimental memento," an antiquarian-associated historical object that allowed for the moment of creative reverie necessary to connected, imaginative intimacy.[119] As mementos, Barnett argues these objects were able to construct national identity. They functioned by "structur[ing] the nation-state on the model of the family—a domestic circle bound by

[118] Ibid.
[119] Barnett, *Sacred Relics,* 74.

ties of sentiment, and affects, and above all, memory."[120] While Barnett describes a general past material object, this description fits period instruments particularly well. Performed within the domestic sphere, they enacted the creation of intimacy through the antiquarian reverie as recreated by Dolmetsch, as discussed earlier. It is in this specifically musical and material intimacy that period instruments, as Barnett argues, are thus able shift beyond the immediacy of the domestic sphere in order to "structure the nation-state" and create a new national identity.

In England, much of this national identity dealt with a new way to imagine England's historical musical culture and contributions. During the nineteenth century, Germany, Austria, and France dominated musical culture, and English nationalism found itself deprived of artistic accomplishments to promote on a global stage. Thus, despite Dolmetsch's own French-Swiss background, many understood his concerts as specifically promoting English nationalism through attempting to highlight a period in history in which England, not other European countries, dominated within certain genres of music. A very early review of Dolmetsch's work, written in 1892, is explicitly titled "Old English Music." The reviewer encourages future audiences to attend these concerts not for musical interests, but for national ones; they deliberately mention that their readers should care about this new type of music because the pieces performed "were the delight of our forefathers at a period when, as a nation, we were more truly musical than now; and that they are performed upon the instruments for which they were written—

[120] Ibid.

viz., the viols, harpsichord, and lute."[121]

National pride derived from an earlier musical culture was not the only way period instruments constructed national identity, and certainly not the most important one to Dolmetsch and his supporters. After a concert at Haslemere, the musicologist Edward van der Straeten describes the surprising amount of non-English nationals who attended the festival, including many from Germany. He writes that these German musicians "were particularly interested in the old English music and the instruments" because "they look upon the old music as the spontaneous expression of the soul of the people, and its re-introduction into their homes as the greatest factor in its moral and cultural uplifting."[122] While Straeten does not explicitly connect this German sentiment to a parallel English one, he implies that the views of these German observers may apply to English national culture as well by clearly stating that their interest was not in old German music—which Dolmetsch certainly played regularly at Haslemere—but rather in specifically old English music. If German musicians saw their own ancient music as "spontaneous" folk music that sprung from a distinct national culture, then English music could play the same role within English culture. English music and the instruments used to play it did not only harken back to a time when England was more truly musical, but also a time when England was more truly English. Audiences able to access an intimate connection with the past through period instruments thus also were accessing not just any past, but a past moment that served as the foundation for English national identity.

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[121] "Old English Music," *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular* 33/590 (Apr. 1892): 216.
[122] E. van der Straeten, "The Haslemere Festival," *The Musical Times* 74/1087 (Sept. 1933): 841.

In order to tighten the connection to this nationalist past moment, Dolmetsch and his supporters encouraged two ways to increase access for audiences across the world. One was through highlighting the pre-eminence England enjoyed during the seventeenth century, when viol consorts were still fashionable in the country and domestic music-making achieved high levels of excellence. As Dolmetsch and his supporters presented it, this period was the first and last time England significantly contributed to a general European musical culture. This attitude, while presenting a somewhat critical view of English musical composition overall, also intended to encourage composers to reflect back on this period of English excellence and use the national musical identity encompassed therein to inspire future compositions, potentially elevating England's musical contributions in the present and future. For instance, Hayes writes that "in the English music of the Golden Period, when it was a truly national art, the future composer may find the finest inspiration in outlook, construction, and tonal effects."[123] The viol consorts of Lawes and Purcell could provide a national musical identity to raise England's current position in the European musical world. And more importantly, Hayes believes that the use of period instruments in modern compositions could create something new, although based in English identity. He writes that "as [period instruments'] particular natures inspired a music of their own in the past, so they may again lead to compositions suited to them, expressing a different age."[124] Just as old English music provided the fount of English identity, the modern use of period

[123] Gerald R. Hayes, "The Festival of Mr. Arnold Dolmetsch," *The Musical Times* 66/988 (June 1925): 527.
[124] Hayes, *Musical Instruments and Their Music: 1500–1750: Vol. II: The Viols, & Other Bowed Instruments* (London: Oxford University Press, 1930), 236.

instruments also could provide a creative impetus for new English music that would thus begin to perpetuate a new, blended English identity that comprised both a powerful remembrance of the past and a living response to modern culture.

However, the beginning of the twentieth century provided an even more exciting possibility for disseminating period instruments and their unique timbres to large audiences: recording technology. Despite the potential contradiction between recording technology and the industrialization that period instruments resisted, Dolmetsch actively recorded and broadcasted his music. Dolmetsch supporters like Hayes encouraged new music based on old English music, but they also continually explored the ways in which recording could be used to transcend the temporal and spatial restrictions music usually operated within. In order for period instruments to create the intimacy necessary to lead audiences to an imagined, truly English past, they had to sound within the quiet of the domestic world. This caused a distinct a challenge to reaching large audiences. As Bonavia claims, "to bring such music within reach of the mass is, of course, impossible. In a large hall the finer and more delicate effects of the old instruments would inevitably be blunted."[125] Period instruments, with their intrinsic quietness, could not perform in the same halls used for Mahler and still be heard. However, Dolmetsch and his supporters proved more creative and flexible than Bonavia—through recording technologies, they sought out ways to allow "the masses" to hear their period instruments in the same domestic world necessary to create the intimate national culture they desired.

By the 1920s, recording technology was beginning to be recognized as a

[125] F. Bonavia, "Haslemere Festival," *The New York Times* (Sept. 10, 1939): X6.

legitimate means to preserve and disseminate musical sound. An opinion column next to a concert review on Dolmetsch in *The New York Times* bemoans the lack of domestic piano playing occurring since the advent of the gramophone. But despite his complaints, he also recognizes that the gramophone allows for musical preservation in a way that did not exist for most of history. Using Dolmetsch as his example, he quips that in the future, "the Dolmetsch of 1975 will have one great advantage over our Mr. Dolmetsch. He will have gramophone records of the last of the great pianists"[126] Musical culture may be losing domestic performance, but they are seemingly gaining the ability to preserve sound across generations. Someone wishing to follow Dolmetsch in his attempts at reconstruction of historical sound would theoretically only have to listen to a recording.

Other writers did not need to look towards a future "Mr. Dolmetsch" who might benefit from the seeming preservation abilities of recorded sound; they saw the current Dolmetsch's recording efforts as essential in his work promoting period instruments and historical performance practices. An enthusiastic reviewer of the Haslemere Festival of 1930 specifically mentions that "recent recordings of the Dolmetsch 'orchestra' have made it possible to preserve for posterity the unique and invaluable labors of a lifetime of research, manufacture, practice and study."[127] These referenced recordings are probably Columbia Records' *The History of the Ear and Eye* (1930), featuring Baroque music performed by Dolmetsch and his family and including a prelude by J.S. Bach and a viol consort piece by Henry Lawes. When Dolmetsch made these recordings, he was already

[126] "An Englishman Laments the Passing of the Piano," *The New York Times* (Sept. 20, 1925): X7.
[127] "Ancient Instruments at Haslemere," *The New York Times* (Aug. 24, 1930): X6.

78 years old, and perhaps his devotees had begun to focus on the preservation of his work. Robert Donington demonstrates that it was not just reviewers who wanted to preserve Dolmetsch's work through recordings; writing for the Dolmetsch Foundation, he claims that "it had long been felt that one of the most valuable contributions that could be made to the preservation of Dolmetsch's work, would be to secure a series of recordings representative of his playing."[128] Somewhat ironically, this focus on preservation that sprung up in the last decade of Dolmetsch's life seems rather reminiscent of Galpin's recording project, or of the museum practice of preserving specimens in order to fix them at a certain point in the evolutionary narrative, leaving them unmoving and unable to contribute to the future. However, if Dolmetsch's supporters began to edge his work into this preserved and thus stagnant role, Dolmetsch's own use of recording shows that he himself saw recording technology not just as a way to preserve his unique style of playing, but rather as a way of disseminating the sound and intimacy of period instruments to wide audiences beyond the limits of his own home or festival.

Dolmetsch seems to have embraced recording technology, to the occasional surprise of his audiences. Olin Downes, writing in 1925, writes that at Haslemere "there was one innovation, astonishing in an artist of Mr. Dolmetsch's ideas. Certain of the performances were broadcast!"[129] As the B.B.C. itself was only established in 1922, Dolmetsch's broadcasting innovation was not only "astonishing" but positively cutting-edge. His rapid embrace of broadcast technology as well as recording technology shows

[128] Robert Donington, "The Work and Ideas of Arnold Dolmetsch" (Haslemere: The Dolmetsch Foundation, 1932), 23.
[129] Olin Downes, "Dolmetsch's Revival of Old Scores," *The New York Times* (Sept, 1925): X7.

an extreme interest in not only preserving his music, but in presenting it to audiences beyond his physical locale. Through broadcasting his concerts, and by recording his music, Dolmetsch allowed his audiences to bring the sounds of period instruments into their own domestic circles, even if they were unable to play music themselves. Just as at his concerts, they could listen to the period instruments and connect with the past they represented through their performers. By 1930 Mary Pendered is able to write that "once in about every three months we hear the harpsichord on the wireless. There is a magnificent instrument in the B.B.C. studio, and its tone comes through the loud-speaker as well as, if not better than, that of the pianoforte."[130] While once every three months is perhaps not too frequent an interval, the presence of a harpsichord in the B.B.C. studio implies that period instruments clearly had a place in early broadcasting technology. Indeed, Pendered's claim that the harpsichord responded better to this technology than the modern piano demonstrates that the relationship between period instruments and recording and broadcasting technologies was not merely a one-sided one: it had the potential to be a reciprocal one, in which recording technologies disseminated the timbres of period instruments into individual domestic spheres on a national level, and period instruments' timbres made recorded sound seem more enjoyable and accurate than with their modern counterparts. Period instruments continued to be recorded and broadcasted, and by the 1950s, Thurston Dart could compliment gramophone companies and the B.B.C. on their role in "familiariz[ing] modern audiences with their sounds"[131]

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[130] Mary L. Pendered, "The Dolmetsch Foundation," *The Musical Times* 71/1049 (Jul. 1930): 635.
[131] Thurston Dart, *The Interpretation of Music* (London: Harper Collins, 1954), 32.

Unlike the anonymous writer who bemoaned the lack of domestic piano playing, Dolmetsch's enthusiasm for recording technology implies that he saw domestic gramophone use as a positive way to spread period instrument performance that could exist alongside actual domestic musical performances. Perhaps part of this was due to simple practicality: while pianos were readily available to purchase and bring home, Dolmetsch was perpetually overworked creating period instruments for those who wanted them. Yet it also indicates Dolmetsch himself did not see recording merely as a way of preserving sound, but rather of bringing music back into the domestic sphere on a scale that would reach a national audience. Commentators noticed the overlap in the roles that period instruments and the gramophone could play, with one concert reviewer for *The New York Times* in 1927 repeating Dolmetsch's own assertion that "recorders 'were as familiar a feature of domestic life in the days of Shakespeare as the gramophone is today.'"[132] By comparing the role period instruments played during the Golden period of English culture with the role the gramophone now played, Dolmetsch opened the possibility that the gramophone's role in domestic culture could support the role he envisioned for his period instruments as restorers of that Golden-age derived national culture. The gramophone became simply another mediator, just as the performer was, through which audiences could reach an intimate connection with the past, and thus with a shared national culture.

Dolmetsch did not resist new technologies like recording and radio. He saw in them the same potential to contribute cultural value as he did in his period instruments

[132] "Pure Tone Harpsichord," *The New York Times* (Sept. 18, 1927): X7.

and the old music they played. If a home could not have its own viol consort, at least a family could listen to Dolmetsch's recording of a viol concert performance within the quietness and domesticity of their own house. English families did not need to venture out to the museum to learn of and share in a national cultural heritage. Instead, they could turn on the radio or play their gramophone and receive an even more powerfully intimate way of connecting to a new, national culture, irrevocably founded in the past, and yet constantly contributing to the future.

CONCLUSION

Arnold Dolmetsch did not live long after he made his recordings on period instruments for Columbia Records. In 1940, just a decade later, he died at the age of 82, having spent almost his entire life trying to resuscitate period instruments and prove their value to an often doubtful contemporary world. When Dolmetsch died, *The Musical Times,* which had so faithfully reported on his concerts—from 1892 onwards—hastily added a notice of his death to the March volume, promising to provide a more substantial obituary in next month's journal. But while the longer obituary gratefully describes every aspect and contribution of Dolmetsch's long life, the hasty notice, thrown together as the journal went to press provides a valuable glimpse into how Dolmetsch's career could be distilled—and what his late contemporaries found most important in his work. *The Musical Times* came up with the following to describe, quickly and almost impulsively, Dolmetsch's musical contributions:

> This music is of absolute and not antiquarian importance; it must be played as the composers intended and on the instruments for which it was written with their correct technique; and through it personal music-making can be restored to the home, from which two centuries of professionalism have divorced it.[133]

The first and most immediate reaction to this "obituary" is that it hardly reads like one. While the strung-together clauses make the speed with which it was written easily evident, this reads more like a series of commands intended for the future of the

[133] "Obituary: Eugene Arnold Dolmetsch," *The Musical Times* 81/1165 (Mar. 1940): 137.

movement than a dilution of Dolmetsch's past accomplishments. Clearly, despite decades spent promoting period instruments, Dolmetsch left some work undone. Yet while these commands indicate a movement still nascent, and still pushing towards recognition, they also reveal the progression Dolmetsch's own work took as he strove to bring period instruments out of the museum and into modern musical life. Condensed into a single paragraph, these commands illustrate the powerful roles period instruments eventually assumed.

The first statement, that the music "is of absolute and not antiquarian importance," demonstrates the complicated relationship Dolmetsch had with the term “antiquarian.” I have argued that Dolmetsch did, in fact, represent a continuation of some antiquarian ways of relating to material objects and the past. But he certainly resisted the term himself, and his supporters did as well. The antiquarianism they resisted was that of death and stagnation, an antiquarianism that fixed music in a distant past as surely as evolutionary narratives of progress did. This statement disavowing antiquarianism reflects that meaning of the term, and not antiquarians’ ability to connect individuals with the past through living (if decaying) material objects. The key to which reading of antiquarianism fits lies in its contrast with “absolute”: if absolute music existed outside of time, achieving an artistic greatness that removed it from a specific historical context, then the antiquarianism that opposes it must be fixed, stagnant, and dead. Absolute music can bring the past into the future and live in current musical cultures; the antiquarian music Dolmetsch and his supporters rejected required fetishizing something dead and unable to contribute further to the present.

The second command for those who might wish to continue Dolmetsch's work beyond his death insists upon the continued use of period instruments. This is perhaps unsurprising, as Dolmetsch's major contribution to early music performance was indeed his insistence that music be played on the instruments "for which it was written." But the qualifications surrounding this command reveal a tangled version of one of the reasons period instruments continued to be so necessary for early music performance. In order to play music "as the composers intended," period instruments must be used with the "correct technique." This insistence on correct technique alludes to the authenticity these instruments possess, and the authority that gives them. In their roles as authorities of performance practice, period instruments not only require correct technique—they demand it of their performers through their authentic materiality.

The next phrase of this hasty obituary diverts from the command form of the previous two statements. Instead, it reveals Dolmetsch's perpetual goal, the reward that awaits those performers who follow the authority of their period instruments and reject the antiquarianism that previously threatened them with stagnation and silence. If performers succeed, then they can participate in "personal music-making," or a music-making reliant on performer-to-audience and performer-to-past connections that are intimate and distinctly personal. And it is only through this intimate music performance that music can accomplish what Dolmetsch believed it ought to accomplish: a rejection of the modern concert hall and the noise of industrialization and urbanization that drove it there—and a return to the domestic life. Dolmetsch's music did not need to be professional. When the editors of *The Musical Times* wrote this obituary, they laid out a

path that led to domestic music, authentic and intimate, and performed on period instruments.

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