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# Musei e mostre tra le due guerre

a cura di Silvia Cecchini e Patrizia Dragoni

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Saggi

# The Beginnings and Development of the Collection of Historic Musical Instruments of the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna

Beatrix Darmstaedter\*

## *Abstract*

The Collection of Historic Musical Instruments of the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna (KHM) was founded during the First World War when the inventories of the collections owned by Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria-Este (1863-1914) went to the Imperial museum in Vienna after his assassination. From 1916/17 on, the renowned art historian Julius von Schlosser (1866-1938) and his successor, Hermann Julius Hermann (1869-1953), organized one of the most important collections and exhibitions exclusively dedicated to musical instruments. They assembled valuable items from the 16<sup>th</sup> century that had belonged to Archduke Ferdinand II's (1529-1595) Cabinet of Curiosities, objects collected by members of the Obizzi dynasty in the castle of Catajo, and recently acquired historical instruments connected with the Viennese tradition of instrument making. In 1920, Schlosser wrote his fundamental catalogue on the newly established collection, considered to

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be the first systematical and scientific publication on historic musical instruments in Austria. During the following years, he strove towards amplifying the inventory and expanding the exhibition. He transferred precious items originally belonging to the movables depot of the erstwhile court (*Hofmobiliendepot*) and instruments left in former imperial residences, such as the castle of Laxenburg.

The contribution reviews previously unpublished archived sources documenting the early history of the collection and broaches the issue of the extended exhibition in the 1920s, discusses the thematic orientations of the collection and the principles in museum didactic that consequently arose. Moreover, the position of the collection and its policy in the context of other museums with similar emphases at that time will be analyzed.

La collezione di strumenti musicali antichi del Kunsthistorisches Museum a Vienna (KHM) è stata fondata durante la prima guerra mondiale quando l'inventario delle collezioni dell'Arciduca Francesco Ferdinando d'Asburgo-Este (1863-1914) è stato portato, dopo la sua uccisione, al museo imperiale a Vienna. Dal 1916/17 in poi il famoso storico dell'arte Julius von Schlosser (1866-1938) e il suo successore Hermann Julius Hermann (1869-1953) hanno organizzato una delle più importanti collezioni e esibizioni dedicata esclusivamente a strumenti musicali antichi. Hanno assemblato strumenti preziosi del XVI secolo che facevano parte della stanza delle curiosità dell'Arciduca Ferdinando II (1529-1595), oggetti raccolti da membri della dinastia Obizzi nel castello di Catajo e oggetti recentemente acquisiti legati alla tradizione viennese di costruzione di strumenti musicali. Nel 1920 Schlosser ha scritto il catalogo completo della nuova collezione, considerato la prima pubblicazione sistematica e scientifica di strumenti musicali antichi in Austria. Negli anni successivi Schlosser ha cercato di allargare l'inventario di oggetti e la collezione, che si è inoltre arricchita di preziosi esemplari originariamente situati nel Deposito imperiale di mobili di corte (*Hofmobiliendepot*) e di strumenti musicali abbandonati nelle residenze imperiali come il castello di Laxenburg.

Il contributo esamina fonti inedite che documentano la prima storia della collezione, affronta il tema dell'esposizione ampliata del 1920, discute l'orientamento tematico della collezione e i principi di didattica museale che ne risultarono. Inoltre, il contributo esamina il ruolo della collezione e della sua strategia nel contesto di altri musei con la stessa tematica.

### 1. *The historic starting point*

Following the assassination of Franz Ferdinand, heir to the throne of Austria-Este on 28 June 1914 in Sarajevo, a court committee – in agreement with Archduke Carl Franz Joseph of Austria (1887-1922), who, from 1916 to 1918 headed the monarchy as “Emperor Karl I” until its collapse – was commissioned to sort out the remains of his uncle’s collections. In August 1914, large parts of the extensive collections were already housed in the Austrian metropolis, other parts were still in Franz Ferdinand’s seigneurial palaces in Konopiště in Bohemia, in Lower Austria’s Artstetten Castle and in the Czech estate of Chlumec.

The majority of Franz Ferdinand's notable and extensive arts collection included not only art historical cimelia, but also comprised real estate properties such as the *Villa d'Este* in Rome or the *Castello del Catajo* near Padua, which had been handed down to him following the death of Archduke Franz V (1819-1875) of the Austria-Este line. Furthermore, a substantial part of the collection also focussed on natural historical and ethnographic objects which he himself had passionately collected. As these objects mostly originate from his world tour of 1892/93, they most notably document Franz Ferdinand's interest in what was then termed "exotic" cultures. In Vienna, Franz Ferdinand resided in the Belvedere Palace, where he surrounded himself with objects from his collection. Additionally, in 1877, he had inherited the Modena Palace (no longer in existence) on the *Landstrasse*, where art objects from the so-called "Obizzi Collection" from Catajo Castle were housed and which had been brought to Vienna successively since 1870. Several musical instruments from this collection were already known to art lovers through the "Vienna Music and Theatre Exhibition" of 1892 where they had been exhibited. As of 1904, this collection was also made open to the public in the Modena Palace.

By 1908, most of the objects in the named parts of the arts collection – particularly the inheritance from the House of Modena – were counted amongst the «historical arts collections of the Highest Imperial House» and were managed by the Keeper of the Privy Purse (*Oberstkämmerer*), and stood under the auspices of the administration of the court museums. In August 1914, Archduke Carl Franz Joseph gave instructions to procure the art objects on a long-term basis for the royal collections, although those in Konopiště, Chlumec and Artstetten had not been part of his legacy. He confirmed, as chronicled by the court lawyer, Maximilian Ritter Schneider von Ernstheim<sup>1</sup>, that the collection from the Este estate would be housed in the *Neue Hofburg* – today's *Neue Burg*. According to Article V of Archduke Franz Ferdinand's testament dated 3 June 1907, the Este legacy was handed over to the royal collections in the *Neue Hofburg* for the sum of 500.000 *Kronen*<sup>2</sup>.

Special mention is made there of the musical instrument collection «because it also contains objects of an historic character which correlated to an art, namely that of music»<sup>3</sup>. It also appeared important for Carl Franz Joseph to record that, in the inventories and catalogues, the provenance of these art objects from the Este legacy «should be in evidence for all times»<sup>4</sup>.

Julius von Schlosser (1866-1938), who first worked at the Coin Cabinet of the Court Museum and then became director of the Collection of Art Industrial Objects and Weapons, began to think about targeting an exhibition of the

<sup>1</sup> Austrian State Archives (henceforth HHStA), OKäA, box 880 B, category 54, file 1949 (ex 1914), note by Maximilian Schneider von Ernstheim, fol. 4r.

<sup>2</sup> Ivi, fol. 1v.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>4</sup> Ivi, fol. 3v.

historical instruments due to their increasing number. During the First World War, he implemented his plan to the rooms in the *Neue Hofburg*<sup>5</sup>. This part of the building complex, planned in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, erected, but never fully completed, was to have served as an accommodation wing. Other areas were set up right from the beginning as a museum, respectively as locations to house the royal collections. The building's spacious *Corps de logis* served right from the beginning as depot and presentation location for the royal collections, in particular for commercial art and ethnographic pieces. The music instrument collection was thus integrated into this context, and its exhibition in 1916 was said to have been spread over two rooms<sup>6</sup>. Transcriptions of bills from 1917 for structural adaptation work in the *Corps de logis* show the renovation of three door sides in a room that borders onto the instrument room<sup>7</sup> and a bill from 1918 shows unequivocal evidence about the furnishings in Room III which is fitted with seven double doors to the balconies and two double entry doors which were renewed during the course of the repainting work<sup>8</sup>. Recognized archive materials have, until now, only produced evidence of equipping a large exhibition room. Correspondence from the time also speaks about a (single) musical instrument room.

Schlosser's idea consisted of unite the numerous musical instruments from different Habsburg collections and in founding an exhibition of the musical instruments and other relevant musical objects. Until then – if at all – these items had only been shown individually in different exhibitions, or presented as particularly valuable collectors' pieces of art thematically isolated within the framework of the exhibitions' Cabinet of Curiosities. He also took a firm stand on the fact that, to date, Vienna had lacked a publicly available musical instrument collection<sup>9</sup>. The exhibition in the *Neue Hofburg* was therefore intended to enrich the museum scene in Austria and was a novelty for the country. It took approximately two years for Schlosser to amalgamate the musical instruments from the Obizzi and the remaining Este collections with those of the world tour, as well as with the famous objects from the Ambras collection which went back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century, into an impressively compelling exhibition and to make it open to the public.

During the initial phase of the collection's creation and the planning of the installation, Schlosser acquired additional instruments which he incorporated into the inventory of the newly developed collection under the thematic motive

<sup>5</sup> Lhotsky 1941, p. 638. Lhotsky reports on the furniture truck that brought the musical instruments from the museum on Burgring 5 to the "*neue Hofburg*" in October 1916.

<sup>6</sup> Luithlen 1966, p. XIII. In 1933 Schlosser speaks about a reception room and a large exhibition gallery; see Schlosser 1933, p. 6.

<sup>7</sup> HHStA, OKäA, box 922 B, category 54, file 2275 (ex 1917), invoice by Meissl dated 27<sup>th</sup> of April 1917.

<sup>8</sup> Ivi, file 1422 (ex 1918), invoice by Meissl dated 23<sup>th</sup> of April 1918.

<sup>9</sup> Ivi, file 747 *Jahresbericht 1915* (ex 1917), fol. 2r.

of “Old Vienna”. These objects, amongst which were special wind instruments, served to document the history of the outstanding handicraft of the instrument makers in Vienna during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Thus, in 1914, Schlosser handed in several inventory supplements from 1913 to the Lord Chamberlain’s Department (*Obersthofmeisteramt*) from which can be seen that a successful purchase of «a series of old wind instruments»<sup>10</sup> had been effected through the mediation of the renowned brass instrument maker, Anton De[h]mal (†1907). Amongst the objects were a clarinet in Bb and a very extravagantly decorated bassett horn in F by Johann Baptist Merklein (1761-1847), as well as an unmarked cor anglais from the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century<sup>11</sup>. Two years later, Schlosser acquired brass and woodwind instruments from the well-known and internationally sought-after Uhlmann workshop for the sum of 143 *Kronen* 50 *Heller* in Brno from Sedal and from Vienna’s *Dorotheum*<sup>12</sup>. The court instrument maker, Leopold [Tobias] Uhlmann (1806-1878) marked a bassoon and a trumpet in F. According to an imprint on the leather casing of the bassoon, it is clear that this instrument was played in the Municipal Theatre in Baden near Vienna; a very carefully manufactured and visually attractive clarinet in A, which was later fitted with a (not-original) ring, is signed «J. Uhlmann»<sup>13</sup>. Schlosser really appears to have taken great interest in the new exhibition of Viennese instrument manufacture and focussed on making regional and typical constructional features visible which were ultimately also determinative for the Viennese music-making and sound-style traditions. So, where the named objects are concerned, it is not only about high-quality instruments by outstanding makers, but it also establishes a line of tradition between both workshops over several generations: namely, that Dehmal learnt his handicraft from Leopold Tobias Uhlmann. The main idea of incorporating the younger instrument makers’ handicrafts into the concept of his exhibition and collection possibly occurred to Schlosser after he had perused a catalogue from the paper manufacturer Wilhelm Heyer (1849-1913) from Cologne, as his report on the year 1913 suggests<sup>14</sup>. In it, he indicates that «it’s time to direct interest towards the slowly disappearing witnesses of the old music culture» and he refers to the collection of «W. Heyer, Councillor of Commerce», which in 1910 and 1912, had become know through catalogues

<sup>10</sup> Ivi, box 879 B, category 54, file *Nachtrag zum Teilinventar*, (ex 1914), nos. 3-9.

<sup>11</sup> These instruments are still on display in today’s exhibition. They have the inventory numbers SAM 325 (cor anglais), SAM 326 (clarinet) and SAM 328 (basset horn). The basset horn, in particular, is counted among the most important and valuable original instruments from the Viennese classical period.

<sup>12</sup> HHStA, OKäA, box 906 B, category 54, file 710 (ex 1916), nos. 4, 5 and 27.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibidem*. The bassoon (SAM 337) and the clarinet (SAM 327) are still part of today’s collection. In the mayhem of the Second World War, the bassoon was separated from its case. The items were brought together again in 1994. The trumpet (SAM 348) got lost during the Second World War.

<sup>14</sup> HHStA, OKäA, box 879 B, category 54, file 184 (ex 1914), fol. 1v.

by Georg Kinsky (1882-1951)<sup>15</sup>. Furthermore, Schlosser recognized the then beginning general trend of art lovers and collectors<sup>16</sup> who, increasingly, took an interest in objects from the 19th century and thus forced up the market values of these items. Additionally, Schlosser not only aimed to show the museum visitors artistically exceptional historic objects from the Ambras and Obizzi collections, but also to offer them an insight into the classification of musical instruments. Schlosser integrated the ethno-musicological items from the world tour into the exhibition by thematising their simple construction forms. These instruments have been regarded as "organological pedigrees", indicating former European instrumental traditions and early forms of music making. The content fields of the classification and typification of the musical instruments and above all, the description of the beginnings of instrumental music were well known to him through other musical instrument collections, such as that in Brussels (*Musée instrumental du conservatoire royal de musique*) and Berlin (Collection of Ancient Musical Instruments at the *staatliche Hochschule für Musik*). Together with the then highly topical musicological studies by Curt Sachs and Erich Moritz von Hornbostel<sup>17</sup> they belonged to the fundamentals of organology.

## 2. *Development of the Collection of Historic Musical Instruments as of 1918*

As soon as the new musical instruments exhibition had been set up, four areas of activity were emphasized, all of which Schlosser and his staff henceforth embraced and which, to this day, remain the principal tasks of the museum: research, collect, conserve, educate. Schlosser first applied himself meticulously to the scientific documentation of the musical instruments. He continuously increased the collection's stock, took care to find the best possible conservation method for the objects and, within the framework of the then opportune means, offered the visitor popular scientific guidance notes to make a visit to the exhibition a meaningful, educational experience for all those interested.

### 2.1 *Scientific projects*

The scientific analysis and documentation of collections' stock generally have an important role within the museum's fields of work.

<sup>15</sup> Today, the Heyer collection belongs to the *Grassi Museum für Musikinstrumente* of the University of Leipzig.

<sup>16</sup> HHStA, OKäA, box 879 B, category 54, file 184 (ex 1914), fol. 1v.

<sup>17</sup> Hornbostel/Sachs 1914.

As the nuclei from various collections were amalgamated to form the basis of the Collection of Historic Musical Instruments, a catalogue was created. The inventory, which is usually accompanied by a detailed description, augurs intensive preoccupation with the objects, their history, their construction and provenance. Schlosser undertook a further, very progressive step by planning the publication of his scientific catalogue in light of the necessary study of the objects and preparations for the exhibition. In addition, and within the framework of the documentation, he consulted organological and museological professional literature which he considered indicative<sup>18</sup>. During the war years, and for a long time afterwards, public visits to the museum were limited; this gave Schlosser and his staff space to devote themselves increasingly to scientific issues and to expedite the work on the catalogue, which had already been planned in 1914<sup>19</sup>. For the art historian Schlosser, the organology was “new country” which he explored step by step with the help of the then newly-released musicological works. Taking Leo Planiscig (1887-1952) into the museum’s scientific personnel was a great help. Planiscig studied under Schlosser at the University of Vienna and, in 1915, came to the collection at the *Neue Hofburg* as an assistant<sup>20</sup>. That enabled Schlosser to concentrate on work on the catalogue, which he brought out in 1920 through the fine arts publishers, Schroll & Co., as the third volume of the collections’ catalogues of the Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna. From a report given to the Keeper of the Privy Purse, it can be seen that particular attention was focussed on photographic documentation of the objects which was carried out by a specialist from the publishers<sup>21</sup> and, where the Este objects were concerned, by the court photographer Paul Frankenstein<sup>22</sup>. According to the status in 1918, the entire series of publications was to begin with the first volume on the Collection of Historic Musical Instruments. Subsequently, the catalogues and publications on the Ambras engravings collection, the Este music archive, the small arms collection, the bronzes from the *Hof Museum*, the Este collection of antiques and two volumes by Planiscig on the Este collection in general were planned to follow. Schlosser was to act as editor. In the end, the series was begun in 1919 with Planiscig’s work, “The Este Arts Collection”. The publishers themselves invested 25.000 *Kronen* in the extravagantly designed, illustrated books, the Keeper of the Privy Purse gave 5000 *Kronen* annually and the museum contributed a total of 16.000 *Kronen*<sup>23</sup>. In the musical instruments catalogue<sup>24</sup> the transcription and publication of the earlier historic inventories

<sup>18</sup> For example, the *Iconographie des instruments de musique* by Daniël François Scheurleer published in The Hague, 1914; see Archives of the *Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna*, KK archives, file 33 *ex* 1916, and HHStA, OKäA, box 906, file 3599.

<sup>19</sup> HHStA, OKäA, box 565 B, category 54, file “*Jahresbericht 1914*” (*ex* 1915), paragraph 2.

<sup>20</sup> Ivi, box 906 B, category 54, file 546 “*Jahresbericht 1915*” (*ex* 1916), paragraph 3.

<sup>21</sup> Ivi, box 938 B, category 54, file 4137 (*ex* 1918).

<sup>22</sup> Ivi, box 921 B, category 54, file 2659 (*ex* 1917).

<sup>23</sup> Ivi, box 938 B, category 54, file 4137 (*ex* 1918).

<sup>24</sup> Schlosser 1920.

from Ambras, Ruhelust (*Innsbrucker Hofburg*) dated 1596, and the Graz Instrument Chamber from 1577 come first. The Court Museum's regulations to quote the item's provenance – particularly in the case of the Este objects<sup>25</sup> – inspired Schlosser to implement a new catalogue numbering system. This system was also valid up until 1939 as a kind of inventory numbering system, whereby identification of the old Ambras inventory and the objects from the treasury chamber was also possible with the help of their historic Cabinet of Curiosities numbers. Schlosser differentiated between the objects from Ambras, which he marked with an “A”, the objects from Catajo (“C”), from the Chamber of Curiosities (“S”), Franz Ferdinand's world tour (“W. R.”) and the newer acquisitions (“N. E.”). In an extra prefixed chapter in the catalogue, he listed the world tour stock and classified it into stringed and wind instruments. Thereafter, on the one hand he also listed the rest of the stocks (instruments with the abbreviations “A”, “C” and “N. E.”) in chronological order, but separated the stringed instruments and their sub-groups from the keyboard instruments, the wind instruments and their sub-groups, as well as the percussion instruments. He also listed musical instruments, under which he localized a folk music reference, as well as the renowned miniature instruments from the Ambras collection. He dedicated a further section to classical musical instruments (as of ca. 1720) – following the chronological thoughts. These instruments mostly came from extant purchases or from Catajo, and were comprised solely of wind instruments. Schlosser completed his publication with an overview on signatures and makers' labels, a table of contents and photographic tables which show all objects mentioned in the catalogue. With this publication, he succeeded in presenting and emphasizing the history of both music and instruments in the collection which he had set up, and in making it visible, familiar and understandable. He did not follow a stringent organological classification such as that which is to be found two years later, for example, in Curt Sachs' catalogue of the objects in the musical instruments collection Berlin<sup>26</sup>. In Sachs' book, the “Hornbostel/Sachs classification” is strictly adhered to. Non-European musical instruments appear separately indexed, although they follow the same classification criteria – model instruments are sorted in order. For each group of instruments, Sachs wrote a short, very concise description as to the function and technology of the respective type of musical instrument. Schlosser, in contrast, used extensive texts about the music history and handiwork. The wide historic contents lent great attractiveness to his book, especially for the reader who has no previous knowledge of instruments.

With his catalogue, which today serves as the most intrinsic work of reference, Schlosser definitely set a milestone in the scientific and cultural history analysis of the musical instruments belonging to the Kunsthistorisches Museum.

<sup>25</sup> HHStA, OKäA, box 880 B, category 54, file 1949 (*ex* 1914).

<sup>26</sup> Sachs 1922.

## 2.2 *Expansion of the collection and composition of the exhibition*

As mentioned above, Schlosser had already expanded the newly-established collection in its initial phases through purchases – whether by private mediation or by auction<sup>27</sup>. The new instruments were to be extensively integrated into the exhibition and the regional tradition of the instruments' construction documented. To enrich the contents of the exhibition, he also – besides buying – took advantage of other strategies which primarily enhanced stock augmentation and which are still the norm today in museum practice, namely, exchanging objects and taking items on loan. In this connection, it may be surprising to learn that very early on, he took pains with ethnomusicological objects which he presented as a type of “genealogical table”, the aim of which was, above all, to illustrate the beginnings of European musical instrument construction<sup>28</sup>.

In June 1918, Schlosser despatched master-workman, Karl Buchegger, and museum attendant Johann Walka, to Ambras, to collect and bring back to Vienna the so-called “Treasure Chamber Violin” (“*Schatzkammergeige*”) and a «decorated piano with bellows»<sup>29</sup>. The violin, built in 1749 and acquired by Maria Theresia (1717-1780), was a magnificent piece of tortoiseshell and kept in a beautiful instrument case made of the same precious material<sup>30</sup>. The creator of the violin and its case, Wenzel Kowansky (active around 1750), worked in Vienna as a cabinet maker and appears not to have built any further instruments other than the highly unusual one referred to. The «decorated piano with bellows» was never inventoried as an object in the Collection of Historic Musical Instruments. Today we understand it to be the clavichord by Servatius Rorif († 1593). Schlosser integrated it into the Vienna exhibition and included it in his catalogue where it appears under the catalogue number A. 132 as «house organ a combination of a spinet and a regal»<sup>31</sup>. Schlosser originally thought of it as an exchange of objects, because the castle administration in Innsbruck was to have got two small (otherwise no closer description) ebony

<sup>27</sup> HHStA, OKäA, box 921 B, category 54, file 747 *Jahresbericht 1916 (ex 1917)*; Schlosser bought, for example, unique instruments at the Franz von Amerling auction. Among these instruments are the harpsichord by Joseph Salodiensis made in 1559 (SAM 630), the baryton by Simon Schödler from 1782 (SAM 88), an anonymous *liuto attiorbato* from the 17<sup>th</sup> century and an oboe made of ivory signed by Jacob Denner (SAM 318).

<sup>28</sup> *Ivi*, file 5277, (*ex 1917*). At that time, the African arched harp (then: inv.-no. 10.892), an *arghûl* (then: inv.-no. 15.313) and a vessel flute (then: inv.-no. 90.454) from the South Seas belonged to the inventory of the Court Museum of Natural History (*Naturhistorisches Hofmuseum*).

<sup>29</sup> *Ivi*, box 938 B, category 54, file 2240 (*ex 1918*).

<sup>30</sup> Today, the item (violin, bow and case) bears the inventory number SAM 638 and is on display in the exhibition in Vienna. The registration of this art object as an item of the Collection of Historic Musical Instruments took place in 1960.

<sup>31</sup> Schlosser 1920, p. 75. Until today, this instrument is listed under Schlosser's catalogue number A. 132 as a loan from Ambras.

altars from Vienna. This also appears to have been the reason that the exchange was first of all rejected in Tyrol – similar objects were already in the collection, thus it had no attraction as an exchange object<sup>32</sup>. It was only after further intervention that Schlosser was able to convince the Keeper of the Privy Purse of the deal by arguing that the “Treasure Chamber Violin” was in no way counted amongst the older stock in the Ambras collection, but actually belonged to the Viennese stocks in the Lower Belvedere and had only been transferred, for unknown reasons, in 1880 to Ambras<sup>33</sup>. Regarding the keyboard instrument, he noted that it did indeed belong to the Ambras inventory but could not at the present time be integrated into the context of the exhibition in Innsbruck, and therefore stood alone<sup>34</sup>, which naturally implied that the instrument would be substantially better placed in the new instrument exhibition in Vienna.

Similarly, in 1919, Schlosser brought forward the argument to obtain four musical instruments from the former Court Furniture Depot (*Hofmobiliendepot*) for the exhibition in the *Neue Hofburg*. As the musical instruments would be in rather contextless surroundings in the depot which held the furniture from the former court, and which was partially on display, they would be one of the objects with a prominent position in the newly created exhibition, especially as they had a very prominent previous owner, namely emperor Joseph II (1741-1790)<sup>35</sup>. Schlosser concretely asked the Crown Estate Office, under whose administration the Court Furniture Depot also came, for the following instruments: «harpsichord, apparently also from emperor Joseph II’s estate (formerly in the opera); [...] recorder, by a Venetian master, respectively H. S.[;] [...] Oboe da caccia, XVIII Century, (cor anglais in the old curved form)»<sup>36</sup>. Although Schlosser had already asked for the objects in 1919, these instruments only came into the collection in 1921 and were complemented by a further keyboard instrument<sup>37</sup>. Discrepancies are to be found regarding the three instruments that Schlosser quoted in his letter. The keyboard instrument – which came from the emperor’s estate and stood for a longer period of time in the Court Opera (*Hofoper*) – is definitely not a harpsichord, but a fortepiano<sup>38</sup>. It is also consternating as to why Schlosser recorded an incorrect manufacturer’s

<sup>32</sup> HHStA, OKäA, box 938 B, category 54, file 1616 (*ex* 1918).

<sup>33</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>35</sup> HHStA, OKäA, box 948 B, category 54, file 1989 (*ex* 1919).

<sup>36</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>37</sup> Schlosser took over the following musical instruments in 1921: oboe da caccia, 17<sup>th</sup> century, unsigned (SAM 362; former: MD 14451); basset recorder stamped with three silkworm moths, 16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup> century, attributed to the Bassano dynasty (SAM 363; former: MD 14452); fortepiano, c. 1785, unsigned, probably by Ignaz Kober and Franz X. Christoph (SAM 364; former: MD 13811); spinet, Vienna 1804, by Christoph Bock (SAM 365; former: MD 7472); see (1) the instrument’s dossiers in the archives of the SAM, and (2) the inventory book of the collection.

<sup>38</sup> Darmstädter 2014, 11-39. As the spinet – which Schlosser did not mention in his letter to the treasurer – was made in 1804, confusion with the fortepiano can be excluded because of the emperor’s date of death.

brand on the recorder, because the instrument is marked with silkworm moths<sup>39</sup> and not with the majuscule “H.S.”. In both cases, it is to be assumed that he had not seen the objects, but only knew about them on the basis of extrinsic descriptions, possibly incorrect inventory entries, or from rather superfluous verbal reports. The exhibition and collection benefited, above all, through the fortepiano, an immensely important acquisition for Austrian music history, because this piano on the one hand, has Court connections and on the other, can almost certainly, over its long history, be connected with Muzio Clementi, Wolfgang Amadé Mozart, as well as – without doubt – Gustav Mahler<sup>40</sup>.

Two very valuable, artistically finely designed instruments came into the Collection of Historic Musical Instruments in 1922, after the Ministry of the Interior and Education had decided to bring valuable arts objects which were situated in Laxenburg, to Vienna, where they were to be integrated into the collections in the Kunsthistorisches Museum. Since the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, members of the royal family had passed their summer vacations in the Laxenburg estate south of Vienna. The small castle with magnificent interior decorations and very unusual art objects, as well as the extensive park, gave, above all, Emperor Franz II (I)’s grandchildren pleasant country sojourns<sup>41</sup>. After the end of the monarchy, administration of the estate was handed over to the Fund for War Damages (*Kriegsgeschädigtenfonds*) until in 1922, the “*Société anonyme Chateau Laxembourg*” sought commercialization of the venture. In its own interest, the Society also disagreed with the Ministry of Education’s decision to allow the art objects to be transferred to Vienna, and reached a partial back-down in as far as the Kunsthistorisches Museum at least desisted from taking over several of the paintings<sup>42</sup>. The Collection of Plastics and Applied Arts got the clavicymbalum by Martin Kaiser (SAM 377) which stood in the Hungarian Coronation Room in the Franzensburg and the organ table by Hans Wesch (SAM 376) which was to be seen in the refectory<sup>43</sup>. Both instruments show an indivisible connection to the House of Habsburg. Thus, the royal house acquired the splendid Renaissance organ table which had allegedly been made in 1628 as a present from Christoph Anton Graf Migazzi (1714-1803), who, as of 1757, functioned as archbishop of Vienna. In him, Maria Theresia found a scholar whom she very much admired and whom she eventually promoted to Head of Court Commission of Studies (*Studienhofkommission*). According to courtly legend, the clavicymbalum was in emperor Leopold I’s (1640-1705) estate, who – as his musical oeuvre confirms – was a passionate musician and composer and who also supposedly played on the piano instrument. Many

<sup>39</sup> Darmstädter 2006, p. 254.

<sup>40</sup> Darmstädter 2014, pp. 11-39.

<sup>41</sup> Springer 1998, p. 20.

<sup>42</sup> Archives of the *Kunsthistorisches Museum* Vienna (henceforth AKHM), KK archives, file 49 ex 1922.

<sup>43</sup> Ivi, file 32 ex 1922.

of the opulent extravaganza from earlier eras ornamented with tortoiseshell, mother-of-pearl and lapis lazuli were first brought to Laxenburg at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when the Court museums were being established on Vienna's Ring Street and a reorganisation of the royal collections became necessary<sup>44</sup>.

### 2.3 Restoration, conservation and security in the museum

The cellar of the *Corps de logis* tract, which had been planned according to special criteria, had already been altered in size and physical structure during the construction phase of the *Neue Hofburg*. It was therefore feared that optimal functioning of the «air well infrastructure» which was to control the temperature of the entire *Neue Hofburg*, would be threatened. Consequently, Carl Böhm, the technician responsible for the “air well” (*Luftbrunnen*) insisted on structural correction of the cellar layout<sup>45</sup>. Not only was the room temperature affected, but also the hygiene conditions in the more frequently visited museum halls. As Böhm planned theatres and hospitals, which, at that time, had to be assured of being provided with an adequate supply of fresh air, he certainly knew about the difficulties.

Schlosser paid particular care to the installation of a balanced room temperature because a too strong fluctuation in climate would have caused irreversible damage to the, partly very sensitive, musical instruments. During the last phase of the First World War, there was a chronic lack of coal in Vienna which made heating extremely difficult; as a result, this led to a temperature in the *Neue Hofburg*'s exhibition rooms of sometimes only about 6 °Ré [7.5 °C]<sup>46</sup>. From correspondence between Schlosser and those in responsible court positions, it appears that the average normal room temperature in the exhibition rooms of the *Neue Hofburg* in winter should have been 13 °Ré [16.3 °C]; this would have necessitated between 1000 and 1200 kg of coal during the cold season. To protect the unique exhibits, the engineer responsible for the heating in the *Burg* complex, *Ingenieur* Jindra, ordered other tracts of the building to be cooled down slightly, so that the rooms housing the instruments exhibition could be more evenly heated<sup>47</sup>.

Another weak point in the *Neue Hofburg*'s museum's rooms came to light after the First World War following a reorganization of the – once entire – court structure. It showed that many of the former smaller court positions had been made redundant. At the same time, the opening of the royal parks and gardens in Vienna's inner city enabled general use, which in the *Neue Hofburg* – situated in a strictly enclosed former “Royal Garden” – led to a considerable

<sup>44</sup> Ottillinger 1998, 57f.

<sup>45</sup> Huber 2011, 43f and 51-57.

<sup>46</sup> HHStA, OKäA, box 922 B, category 54, file 5038 (*ex* 1917).

<sup>47</sup> Ivi, file 1002 (*ex* 1917).

security problem, as the building's windows and doors were, for the most part, unsecured, a fact that Schlosser had already pointed out in 1919<sup>48</sup>. As the surviving correspondence suggests, iron doors were successively installed to protect the Este arts collections; where collection halls connected to other rooms, single windows were also cross-barred and new locks were installed on several doors<sup>49</sup>. According to Schlosser, the «main problem» remained, however «[...] after closing time, as of 2 o'clock in the afternoon until the morning of the following day, the collection is completely unguarded. No porter, no night watchman, and now, not even a soldier's watch in the vestibule cares for its protection during this whole time. Minor matters were attended to, but not the main thing, a continuous guard on the premises<sup>50</sup>». The urgent call to have the building tract continually under surveillance and to install a porter in the entrance area, as well as to employ a «roaming watchman»<sup>51</sup>, was only partially implemented by the administration after 1920.

When conditions for a half-way beneficial indoor climate for the objects had been reached and the elementary security measures met, concentration could really be turned towards work on preservation and restoration of the objects. Josef K. Stecher (1878-1932) and Karl Haudek (1862-1919), both renowned instrument makers and resident in Vienna, helped the museum's above-mentioned master-workman, Karl Buchegger, and devoted themselves to the special preservative maintenance of individual stringed and woodwind instruments for whose restoration definite professional knowledge of instrument making was necessary. Haudek, court violin maker and responsible for the stringed instruments of the Vienna Philharmonic, examined all stringed and plucked instruments from Ambras and Catajo over the course of several months, as well as those newly-acquired instruments from the Amerling collection that fell into his specialized field. He restrung them in part, and replaced missing components, carrying out this work free of charge<sup>52</sup>. Special mention should be made of his restoration work on the bass cittern with corpus in gothic style (SAM 55), the tenor viola from the 17<sup>th</sup> century with the emblem of the Obizzi family painted on the base (SAM 102) made between 1580 and 1596, and in all probability, the violins (SAM 92) accredited to Giovanni Ventura di Linarol from the first quarter of the 17<sup>th</sup> century<sup>53</sup>. Although Haudek never presented a bill to the museum for any of his work, Schlosser decided after the end of the

<sup>48</sup> AKHM, KK archives, file 1 *ex* 1919.

<sup>49</sup> HHStA, OKäA, box 956 B, category 54, file 376 (*ex* 1920).

<sup>50</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>52</sup> HHStA, OKäA, box 906 B, category 54, file 4000 (*ex* 1916); *Ivi*, file 1061 (*ex* 1917). In February 1917, at Schlosser's proposal, Emperor Karl I (1887-1922) bestowed the title of «*kasierlichen Rates*» upon Haudek in recognition of his pro bono expert groundwork on the museum's items.

<sup>53</sup> During Schlosser's time, the year of manufacture was said to be 1642; nowadays the instrument is dated with 1622 (?).

First World War to grant him a half-yearly lump sum of 150 *Kronen* to at least cover part of the material costs<sup>54</sup>. The wind instrument maker, Stecher, worked daily for five hours over three-quarters of a year on the museum's historic instruments. He cleaned all wind instruments and prepared documentation dossiers. After the war ended, he came to the collection once a week to check on things and to administer care and conservation to the objects, as appropriate<sup>55</sup>.

## 2.4 Public Approach

When Schlosser received a full professorship in Art History at the University of Vienna in 1922, Hermann Julius Hermann (1869-1953) took over the management of the Collection of Weapons and Industrial Art Objects<sup>56</sup>. At first, he undertook negotiations with the Austrian Museum for Art and Industry<sup>57</sup> in order to define the thematic emphasis of his collection as opposed to the so-called Austrian Museum. Regarding the musical instruments, the collection activities remained absolutely with the Kunsthistorisches Museum, whereby objects from the 19<sup>th</sup> century were also explicitly to be included in the stock<sup>58</sup>, which implied future expansion of the collection towards the more recent past. In all other collection areas, particularly clocks, automates, mathematical and astronomical instruments, goldsmiths' work, sculptures and plastics, the year 1800 was set as the limit for acquisitions<sup>59</sup>. Accordingly, objects dated prior to 1800 also, furthermore, fell into the collecting activities of the Collection of Weapons and Industrial Art Objects, whilst objects of a later date were to be collected by the Austrian Museum. As, in certain cases, instrument making is closely connected to furniture manufacture and design – which, for example, can easily be seen in piano making – a grey zone existed, so that some objects which originally fitted into the arrangement of the collections in the Austrian Museum remained there and were not left to the Kunsthistorisches Museum until the 1970's and 1980's<sup>60</sup>.

<sup>54</sup> HHStA, OKäA, box 938 B, category 54, file 2449 (*ex* 1918).

<sup>55</sup> *Ibidem*. Stecher, too, worked unsalaried in the museum. Through Schlosser's intervention, he was repeatedly released from military service – an additional decoration in the form of a badge with the initials of his majesty (*Busenadel mit den Initialen Sr. Majestät*) was refused by the court.

<sup>56</sup> AKHM, KK archives, file 67 *ex* 1922.

<sup>57</sup> The foundation of today's *Museum für Angewandte Kunst* goes back to 1863; the institution should focus on the presentation and apprenticeship of arts and crafts. After the First World War, sub-stocks of the Habsburg collections were admitted to it and objects were exchanged between the *Österreichisches Museum* and the *Kunsthistorisches Museum*.

<sup>58</sup> AKHM, KK archives, file 25 *ex* 1925.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>60</sup> Highly decorated instruments, like the harpsichord by Dulcken made in Amsterdam 1745 (SAM 726; former: H-1416), the pedal harp by Naderman built in Paris 1785 (SAM 727; former: H-728) and the pyramid-fortepiano made in the German region at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (SAM 808; former: inventory number of the *Österreichisches Museum* unknown) were typical instruments that formerly belonged to the furniture collection in the *Österreichisches Museum*.

The discussion carried out in the 1920's regarding the incorporation of future collecting fields and main points was formative for Vienna's museum landscape. Many of the basic rules then established are still valid today and explain the contents of the collections in the different museums. Through this, the curators of the collections were also bound to standards of content which were only exceeded in rare cases, so that normally, no state of competition occurred in the area of collecting activities. Behind these guidelines stood, above all, the effort not to split up historically formed collections, to let them continue to grow within certain limits, and to avoid duplication and overlap. The museum public had the opportunity to orientate themselves exceedingly well in an expanding museum scene with increasing numbers of special exhibitions.

The first of the larger special exhibitions was held in the 1920's, and the curators turned to the newly-formed musical instruments collection for loans. Initially, it centred solely around loans from within Vienna. International exhibitions were not yet served. The contextualization tendency focussed, of course, on the area of music history, but other topics were also evident in which, at first, musical instruments did not play a central role. Thus were created new views and nexuses.

The "International Exhibition of New Theatre Technique" – which was within the framework of the "Music and Theatre Festival of the City of Vienna" – took place in the *Wiener Konzerthaus* from 15 September to 15 October 1924. The architect and stage designer, Friedrich Kiesler (1890-1965), who headed the exhibition, envisaged two showcases for musical instruments<sup>61</sup>. Eye-catching is the highly professional request for loan in which commitments and actuarial valuation details are addressed. The arrangement of the objects makes clear that Kiesler not only had a talent for exceptional organological design, but wanted to present the instruments in the context of historic theatre stages and festival scenes. Not to be missed amongst the selected seven objects, therefore, are a tartoelt (SAM 212) from the famous whole consort and the lovingly denoted «theatre instrument» lyre cittern (SAM 61)<sup>62</sup>. Kiesler, for whom this exhibition was one of the earliest in his career, obtained approval for the loan of the desired objects from the Ministry of Education, under whose auspices the Kunsthistorisches Museum then stood. Hermann finally clarified the insurance sum of 50.000.000 *Kronen* and confirmed the appointment for picking the objects up as being between 8 and 13 September<sup>63</sup>.

For the "Beethoven Centenary Exhibition" which was curated by the Municipal Collections in 1927<sup>64</sup>, six loan items insured for 560 Gold *Kronen* left the house on 18 March<sup>65</sup>. This time too, the Federal Ministry for

<sup>61</sup> AKHM, KK archives, file 9 ex 1924.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>64</sup> Former *Historisches Museum der Stadt Wien*, today's *Wien Museum*.

<sup>65</sup> AKHM, KK archives, file 3 ex 1927. The loans were a flute by Schöllnast in Pressburg 1820

Education granted permission to the Kunsthistorisches Museum to co-operate. The instruments were returned undamaged to the *Neue Hofburg* on 13 June 1927, as Hermann meticulously noted. The printed guide to the exhibition gives information about an extremely comprehensive and contentually profound exposition about Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827) and about the musical life of his times. Besides the Kunsthistorisches Museum, private persons and above all, the Society of Friends of Music (*Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde*) appear as lenders. The Historical Museum of the City of Vienna was also represented by interesting musical instrument from its own collections. A clarinet by Johann B. Merklein that appeared in the loan request, was eventually not exhibited, as it is not mentioned in the guide<sup>66</sup>. Because primarily visually impressive objects in the specialized field of musical instruments were shown, it suggests that the clarinet would probably not have attracted a great deal of attention given its unpretentious design, or that it appeared substantially redundant beside two bassett horns and a clarinet in C<sup>67</sup>.

In the same year, the “Vienna and the Viennese” exhibition took place in the Vienna Trade Fair Palace, which was also furnished by the City of Vienna. Once again, the request for loans from the Municipal Collections went to the directorate of the Collections of Weapons and Industrial Art Objects. This time, the request itemized 24 musical instruments which primarily belonged to the Este collection<sup>68</sup>. A clear connection to Vienna, as suggested by the exhibition’s title, was not to be found in the choice of the loans requested. From today’s point of view, the long wish list looks quite arbitrary. Instruments from the 16<sup>th</sup> century stood beside exhibits from the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and irrespective of the size and transportability of certain types of instruments, bulky and highly fragile objects, such as the harpsichord (SAM 123) built in the 16<sup>th</sup> century in Padua and attributed to Antonius Patavinus, as well as the conservationally delicate spinet-regal by Anton Meidting from Augsburg 1587 (SAM 119), were requested. In the request for loans, the exhibition organizers neither elucidated the role of the objects in the planned exhibition, nor depicted the conceptual context. It is therefore no surprise that – almost by return of mail – the request was rejected. For the Beethoven exhibition, the *Kunsthistorisches Museum* had already lent several instruments and moreover, Hermann pointed out guardedly in his reply letter that the requested objects were mostly of German and Italian provenance, «extremely delicate and easily subject to damage», so that they were

(SAM 311), a clarinet in Bb (SAM 326) and a bassett horn (SAM 328) by Johann B. Merklein made in Vienna around 1800, a cor anglais by Theodor Lotz in Vienna circa 1780 (SAM 324), a French horn made by Joseph F. Riedl in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (SAM 341 or SAM 342), and a keyed trumpet that came into the collection on loan by the so-called *Kriegsmetallsammlung*.

<sup>66</sup> Führer durch die Beethoven-Zentenarausstellung 1927, pp. 179-191.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 184-185.

<sup>68</sup> AKHM, KK archives, file 8 ex 1927.

not available for the «Vienna and the Viennese» exhibition<sup>69</sup>. The catalogue for this extensive exhibition indeed confirms a diffuse concept where music is only addressed in one single essay<sup>70</sup>, but no exhibition objects are described. As, primarily, firms with their base in Vienna functioned as exhibitors, the aspect of a commercial exhibition predominated.

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a strong interest in the performance practice of Early Music manifested itself in Europe. To achieve the so-called “original sound” and to use historical music-making techniques in the best possible way, the supporters of the Early Music scene endeavoured to obtain reproduction of musical instruments held in trust by different museums and collections for their ensembles. In summer 1930, the internationally renowned woodwind instrument maker, Wilhelm Heckel (1879-1952), contacted director Hermann. Since the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the firm of Heckel had enjoyed a distinguished reputation and had been responsible for decisive discoveries in the wind instruments making sector. Heckel indicated an earlier correspondence with Schlosser and a visit to the museum with the bassoonist and former court musician, professor Karl Strobl (1876-1949), who had taught at the then Music Academy in Vienna. Heckel asked for permission to reproduce the oboe by Friedrich Hammig (SAM 321) which had been made around 1800 and the bassoon by Heinrich Grenser (SAM 335) made at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. He introduced his client as a «connoisseur orchestra that had been formed in the Rheinland»<sup>71</sup>. In the future, this ensemble would like to devote itself to Mozart’s music on copied historical instruments, respectively on original instruments. The reproduction would be coupled with the lending assignment of both instruments and thus also with specific transport modalities and an insurance. In order to manufacture acceptable copies, Heckel would also leave the, then still existent, original reed of the oboe and an historic reed on the bocal of the bassoon<sup>72</sup>. All costs would be borne by the firm of Heckel. The collection’s director, the directorate of the Kunsthistorisches Museum and the Ministry of Education sanctioned the loan and thus facilitated the copies of both historical instruments<sup>73</sup>. The transport insurance was arranged with the *Providentia* Insurance Company in Vienna and came to 700 *Reichsmark*. It was also valid against damage to the museum object during its storage with Heckel in Biebrich, against fire, and against theft from the workshop<sup>74</sup>. As the instruments were still fitted with a small number of keys, but apparently already conceived for the, around 1800 usually somewhat higher tuning, Heckel relayed to Hermann the

<sup>69</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>70</sup> Fischer 1927, pp. 56-63.

<sup>71</sup> AKHM, KK archives, file 28 *ex* 1930, letter by Heckel dated 5<sup>th</sup> August 1930, (Heckel writes the maker’s name as “Hamisch”).

<sup>72</sup> Ivi, letter by Heckel dated 13<sup>th</sup> September 1930.

<sup>73</sup> Ivi, letters dated 4<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> September 1930.

<sup>74</sup> Ivi, policy dated 29<sup>th</sup> September 1930.

great difficulties that the reproduction presented him with. Ultimately, he had to modify both reproductions for the Rheinland orchestra to the lower level of concert pitch that had been usual in Mozart's time<sup>75</sup>. Heckel's project, which had been willingly supported by the Kunsthistorisches Museum, is early and highly significant evidence of qualified co-operation with renowned instrument makers. Furthermore, it documents the nearly unconditional openness of the institution towards those musicians who, with the aid of historic musical instruments, come to grips with past music making traditions – a fundamental attitude with which the Collection of Historic Musical Instruments sticks up to the present day.

Around 1930, interest in visiting the exhibitions in the *Neue Hofburg* increased. Visitors not taking part in guided tours were to have the opportunity to view the musical instruments individually. To arrange also a meaningful visits to the exhibition for a musically inexperienced public, a small-format "Guide through the Collection of Historic Musical Instruments" which Schlosser had written, appeared in 1933<sup>76</sup>. In two rooms, the public could view 33 wall cabinets, respectively cupboards, and eight free-standing instruments. Concerning the museum didactic, Schlosser decided to briefly describe each displayed object in the printed guide. He also occasionally made reference to the thematic focal points – above all, in areas where non-European objects were presented. The exhibition's little handbook also encompassed an illustrated section in which the most illustrious pieces are photographically documented<sup>77</sup>.

### 3. Conclusion

The perusal and evaluation of the archival documents on the founding and expansion of the Collection of Historic Musical Instruments demonstrate an intense endeavour to establish a completely new contentual accent in Vienna, which bound the richly faceted regional history of music and the lively musical mode of performance, with one another. As a consequence, director Julius von Schlosser initiated a booming collecting activity and applied himself to optimal conservation and careful restoration of the objects, for which he also engaged renowned external instrument makers. Of decisive importance to him was the creation of an inventory-like system through the catalogue and opening up access to the objects for visitors. He succeeded in the latter through the expansion of the exhibition, a carefully thought out new assembly, as well as a low-level, convenient publication in the form of the "Exhibition Guide". Director Hermann Julius Hermann developed a dynamic exhibition management in

<sup>75</sup> *Ivi*, Heckel's letter dated 17<sup>th</sup> December 1930.

<sup>76</sup> Schlosser 1933.

<sup>77</sup> *Ivi*, plate 1-16.

the 1920's, in which the Collection of Historic Musical Instruments appeared increasingly as lender. As of 1930, instrument makers came to the museum to reproduce certain instruments for musical use – giving due consideration to a «historically informed performance»<sup>78</sup>.

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<sup>78</sup> Copies of exceptional items had already been made in earlier times in order to document the history of instrument making. Mahillon mentions a copy of the crumhorn SAM 203 that came into the Brussel's collection; the Crosby Brown collection in New York also contained a reproduction of this particular item. Neither in Brussels nor in New York were the copies manufactured for making music – notwithstanding, the instruments could have been used as veritable musical instruments. See: Mahillon 1909, vol. 2, p. 240f., and *Hand-Book No.13 1904*, p. 150.

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