

Provenance Research beyond Looted Art and Restitution – the RückPortal

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Abstract

Today, the term provenance research is generally associated with questions concerning rightful ownership and the Second World War, especially in the public perception. However, the question of provenance has been connected with museum objects at any time.

The systematic editing, digital indexing, and online presentation of the »Nachlass Rück« in summer 2018 which will result in the RückPortal make it possible to find evidence for the provenance of the Rück collection. Ulrich Rück's correspondence concerning his own collection also offers insight into other public and private musical instrument collections from the period before, during, and after the Second World War. Supplemented with a price comparison list for historical musical instruments that is based on numerous offers, market values and sales, the RückPortal constitutes an important material basis for future provenance research concerning historical musical instruments.

Examples from the Nachlass Rück demonstrate the importance of provenance research even beyond questions of ownership. It becomes clear that other research questions about cultural music historical context, for example concerning the maker of an unsigned instrument, are closely linked with provenance research and should therefore not be investigated separately. Not least, this research provides interesting stories about museum objects, which can contribute to museum education programs and knowledge transfer.

Provenienzforschung auch jenseits von Raubkunst und Restitution – das RückPortal

Der Begriff Provenienzforschung ist heute – vor allem in der öffentlichen Wahrnehmung – mit zumeist (un-)rechtmäßigem Besitz und dem Zweiten Weltkrieg verbunden. Allerdings ist die Frage nach der Herkunft seit jeher Teil der Arbeit mit Kunst- und Museumsobjekten.

Durch die systematische Bearbeitung des Nachlasses Rück, die digitale Erschließung und anschließende Veröffentlichung im Sommer 2018 in Form des RückPortals ist es möglich, nicht nur zahlreiche Nachweise für die Herkunft der sammlungseigenen Instrumente zu finden. Die Korrespondenz Ulrich Rück's zu seiner Sammlung ermöglicht auch einen Einblick in andere öffentliche wie private Musikinstrumentensammlungen der Zeit vor, während und nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg. Zusammen mit einem daraus entstandenen Preisspiegel für historische Musikinstrumente auf der Basis zahlreicher Angebots-, Marktwert- und Ankaufpreise entsteht ein wichtiges Fundament für zukünftige Provenienzforschung im Bereich historische Musikinstrumente.

Beispiele aus dem Nachlass Rück zeigen, wie wichtig die Provenienzforschung nach wie vor über Eigentumsfragen hinaus sein kann. Zudem wird deutlich, dass andere Forschungsfragen zum kulturhistorischen und musikgeschichtlichen Kontext sowie die Frage nach dem Erbauer eines unsigned Instruments eng mit Provenienzfragen verknüpft sind und diese deshalb nicht immer getrennt voneinander betrachtet werden sollten. Nicht zuletzt liefert die Provenienzforschung auch Sachverhalte zu Museumsobjekten, die wertvolle und oftmals willkommene Gesprächspunkte für die Vermittlungsarbeit in Museen bilden.

Introduction

Today, the term provenance research is generally associated with questions of rightful ownership and Nazi Germany. The reason for this association were the destructions and expropriations of the Second World War and the subsequent need for compensation. This desideratum was reemphasized in the so-called Washington Principles in 1998 and highlighted by new possibilities for targeted fundraising.¹ Moreover, the public awareness of provenance research was heightened by cases that have been discussed prominently in the media, such as the »Gurlitt Case« (since 2013) or George Clooney's film »The Monuments Men« (2014).

Provenance research in the context of looted art represents a more or less new topic and future challenge for musical instrument collections. Public museums in particular have to face the potentially uncomfortable question where their objects came from, and curators of public institutions may have to refuse offers of interesting and valuable instruments in case they cannot demonstrate a »clean« provenance.²

The existing sources that aid research into these questions are often unsatisfactory. The Second World War left its traces in the documents of public and private collections. Additionally, musical instruments often found their way into a museum through private collections. As a result of their different interests and concerns, private collectors and /or their heirs usually do not keep records concerning their collection. Even when sources are available, the musical instruments therein are sometimes described insufficiently making it hard to identify to which object the document is referring.

The following entry in the Germanisches Nationalmuseum register of 1871 is a case in point. The seller's name as well as the price are given, but the instruments do not have inventory numbers:

»Sammlung von musikalischen Instrumenten: 13 kleinere, geigenartige, 8 grössere Saiteninstrumente, 1 Trommel, 1 Cymbel, 2 Drehleyern, 23 Blasinstrumente und Bruchstücke von solchen, Dazu 5 außereuropäische Instrumente von Holz u. Rohr.«³ (Collection of musical instruments: 13 smaller,

violin-like, 8 bigger stringed instruments, 1 drum, 1 cymbal, 2 hurdy-gurdies, 23 wind instruments and fragments of such instruments; moreover, 5 non-European instruments made of wood and reed.)

The exceptional case of the Rück collection and its comprehensive documentation can fill some of these gaps and offer a foundation for future research into the provenance of musical instruments. Provenance research itself is not an invention of the post-war era. The search for and reference to (potentially famous) previous owners, the investigation into making, transfer, and safekeeping has been connected with questions about originality and authenticity, collection and collecting history since the second half of the 17th century.⁴ Especially in the case of musical instruments this research has always been connected with questions about who used them, how, where, and for what. The following examples from the Rück collection suggest the importance of provenance research, beyond the examination of issues relating to rightful ownership.

Collecting Musical Instruments – the Rück Example

The Rück collection is unique: by acquiring the collection in 1962, the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg (GNM) received more than a large collection of musical instruments. Other objects including a specialized library, guest books, photos, as well as music-related drawings and pictures were also transferred. Additionally, the museum received Ulrich Rück's documents and correspondence concerning his collection, the so-called »Nachlass Rück« (Rück estate).⁵

The Nachlass Rück contains about 17,200 letters, correspondence with 1,022 dealers, musicians, musicologists, restorers, instrument makers, private collectors and museums from the years before, during and after the Second World War. These documents provide detailed insight into the history of this collection. They reveal strategies of acquisition and

1 See also the contributions by Uwe Hartmann and Monika Löscher in the present conference proceedings.

2 Cf. the contributions by Frank Bär and Conny Restle in the present conference proceedings.

3 Germanisches Nationalmuseum (GNM), Zugangsregister, ZR 1871/6133.

4 Cf. Uwe Hartmann: Anmerkungen zu aktuellen Anforderungen an einen historischen Gegenstandsbereich. In: Provenienzforschung und Restitution (Museumskunde 73). Ed. by Deutscher Museumsbund. Berlin 2008, pp. 7-22.

5 GNM, Historisches Archiv, Nachlass Rück (hereinafter NL Rück). The inventory of the NL Rück can be searched on the archive's homepage: <http://ha.gnm.de/start.fau?prj=ha-ifaust> [31.8.2017].

NL Rück, I, C-0444a, 1930,03,24, Brief

View Create and Link Text Delete Edit Form Graph Iip Network Paths Triples XML

▼ Allgemeiner Kommentar:

"Sehr geehrter Herr Doktor

Ich liess heute als Expressgut an Sie die beilieg[nd] verzeichneten Sachen abgehen und bitte Sie um gütige Ausfüllung des Fragebogens, welchen ich Ihnen möglichst bequem gestellt habe.

Soeben erhalte ich von meinem Bruder [Hans Rück], welcher momentan in Meran weil, die auf beiliegendem Bilde abgebildeten Instrumente [nicht erhalten] angeboten und wäre Ihnen für Schätzung und Bewertung zu Dank verbunden.

Ohne mehr für heute, lege ich Ihnen ein vor ein paar Tagen geschriebenes Schreiben bei und begrüsse Sie // hochachtungsvoll // [handschr.] R."

Beiliegendes Blatt mit handschriftlichen Ergänzungen von Georg Kinsky am Rand.

"Es wird mir angeboten:

1 Flöte von H[einrich]. Grenser mit Krone, 9 (10) Klappen aus Silber handgearbeitet, Ebenholz mit Effenbeinringen. Ab Lock 60 cm, im ganzen 67 1/2 lang, einschliesslich Etui alles Handarbeit. Der Mann verlangt dafür M 100. - welchen Preis ich für zu hoch halte (Angebot Anni Moser Meran).

[Kinsky:] "H. Grenser-Dresden ist einer der besten Flötenmacher der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jhdts: 100 M zu teuer, höchstens: 50 M."

Ferner 1 Fagott, 9 Klappen, das eine von K. Hammig-Wien, das andere von Tauber-Wien, ohne Preise. Wir haben in unserer Sammlung bereits ein Fagott mit 9 Klappen [MIR414] unsigniert mit Messing-Stütze. (Angebot Plaschke).

[Kinsky:] Nur, wenn billig zu haben. (c. 30 M. je Stück)."

Ferner wird mir angeboten: Eine Clarinette 'es' hoch, von S. Koch in Wien mit 6 Messing-Klappen, Länge 48.5 cm bi[s] zum Schnabelende (Deister), [handschr.] 237/202 [unleserl.]

[Kinsky:] S[tephan] Koch: ein ausgezeichnete Meister, doch firmierte auch der Sohn mit der Marke des Vaters. Ankaufswert etwa 30-40 M.

Ferner: 1 Zither, Kiendl - Wien, 4 Melodie- und 22 Begleitsaiten in Palisander mit Leder-Etui, sehr gut erhalten, 160 Lire (Angebot Deister). Folgende Maße: Ganze Breite 46cm. Tiefe am Stimmstock 1511/2cm, am Anhänge-Stock 17cm. in der Ausbauchung 27cm.

[Kinsky:] Kiendl-Zithern sind geschätzt. 160 Lire = c. M 35.20. Ich würde ein Gebot von 25 M. vorschlagen."

[Goto] [Edit]

▼ Archivgut

Signatur

NL Rück, I, C-0444a

Typ

Brief

Beschreibung

Typoskriptdurchschlag

▼ Entstehungsdaten

Absender/Urheber Person

Rück, Ulrich

Empfänger Person

Kinsky, Georg

Datum

1930,03,24

Schreibort

Nürnberg

▼ Referenzierte Person

Referenzierte Person

Rück, Hans

Typ der Referenz

Kontaktperson

▼ Referenziertes Objekt

Referenziertes Objekt

MIR319

Allgemeine Bezeichnung

Querflöte in C, 8 Klappen

Typ der Referenz

Angebote(n)s Musikinstrument(e)

▼ Referenziertes Objekt

Referenziertes Objekt

MIR411

Allgemeine Bezeichnung

Fagott

Typ der Referenz

Angebote(n)s Musikinstrument(e)

▼ Referenziertes Objekt

Referenziertes Objekt

Zither Kiendl

Typ der Referenz

Angebote(n)s Musikinstrument(e)

▼ Referenziertes Objekt

Referenziertes Objekt

Klarinette in Es Koch

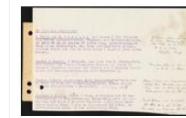
Allgemeine Bezeichnung

Klarinette in Es

Typ der Referenz

Angebote(n)s Musikinstrument(e)

Images



Who's online

There are currently 2 users and 0

guests online.

Online users

• von Roth

• Escherich

Linked WissKI-Individuals

Archivgut derselben Signatur

• NL Rück, I, C-0444a, 1929,05,27,

Brief

• NL Rück, I, C-0444a, 1929,06,01,

Brief

• NL Rück, I, C-0444a, 1929,06,07,

Brief

• NL Rück, I, C-0444a, 1929,06,29,

Brief

• NL Rück, I, C-0444a, 1929,08,17,

Brief

• NL Rück, I, C-0444a, 1929,08,23,

Brief

• NL Rück, I, C-0444a, 1929,08,23,

Brief

• NL Rück, I, C-0444a, 1929,08,31,

Brief

• NL Rück, I, C-0444a, 1929,12,21,

Brief

• NL Rück, I, C-0444a, 1929,12,27,

Brief

• NL Rück, I, C-0444a, 1930,02,14,

Brief

• NL Rück, I, C-0444a, 1930,02,

Postkarte

• NL Rück, I, C-0444a, 1930,02,22,

Brief

• NL Rück, I, C-0444a, 1930,03,03,

Brief

• NL Rück, I, C-0444a, 1930,03,07,

Brief

• NL Rück, I, C-0444a, 1930,03,22,

Brief

• NL Rück, I, C-0444a, 1930,03,26,

Brief

• NL Rück, I, C-0444a, 1930,03,30,

Postkarte

• NL Rück, I, C-0444a, 1930,04,01,

Brief

• NL Rück, I, C-0444a, 1930,03,26,

Brief

1 Example of a WissKI-page in the RückPortal. Every orange name of a person / institution / object (middle) or indexed item (right) has its own entry with further information. The images can be opened with an integrated viewer. The left window shows the description and transcript of the document.

collecting⁶, the restoration of instruments⁷, as well as the exchange of ideas (and instruments) with other museums, collections, and institutions.⁸ The Nachlass Rück has often been used for research on different topics in the past, but its baffling size posed a significant problem: Either one had to dig really deep, or one had to know where to look for information.

To preserve this information and make it accessible, the research project »Musikinstrumente sammeln – das Beispiel Rück« (Collecting musical instruments – the Rück example; hereafter Rück project) is systematically indexing the entire

6 See the contribution of Dominik von Roth: The Rück collection – a view onto the whole, in the present conference proceedings.

7 See the contribution of Klaus Martius in the present conference proceedings, and Klaus Martius: »Professor Neumeyer war hoch beglückt«. Restaurierung und Kopienbau für die Sammlung Neumeyer während der 1950er Jahre durch das Pianohaus Rück in Nürnberg. In: Fritz Neumeyer und seine Sammlung. Ed. by Susanne Berkemer and Markus Zepf. Freiburg (Breisgau) 2014, pp. 71-91.

8 See the contribution of Markus Zepf in the present conference proceedings.

Nachlass Rück by digitizing it and incorporating it into a wiki-based virtual research environment WissKI (Wissenschaftliche Kommunikations-Infrastruktur). In this WissKI, the letters and other archival materials can be indexed and cross-referenced.⁹ All the edited material will be accessible online via the RückPortal which is intended as a research platform, not only to collect large-scale data, but also to enable researchers as well as interested museum visitors to gain a systematic overview of price ranges, provenance, corresponding musical instruments, or archival materials connected to linked items.

The benefits of WissKI – in comparison to standard databases – is that the letters and documents are not only digitized, uploaded to the internet, and supplied with metadata. Every referenced person, institution, and object has – similar to Wikipedia – its own entry supplied with more details. Even

9 For more information about the open source WissKI, the »Swiss army knife for scholars from diverse disciplines that deal with object-centric documentation«, see <http://wiss-ki.eu/> [25.7.2017]. See also the contribution of Dominik von Roth in the present conference proceedings.

more important is the possibility to network the information. For example, the entry belonging to a person/institution/object not only delivers the information about this datapoint, but shows also all the documents in which the person/institution/object is mentioned (fig. 1).

Prices and Market Values of Musical Instruments

A particularly important aspect to be gleaned from the Nachlass Rück is the range of market values of historical musical instruments. The records make it possible to trace the development of the value of instruments between the Great Depression and the Second World War. Especially in the 1930s and 1940s, Ulrich Rück sought the help of experts to estimate the market value of instruments in which he was interested.

Georg Kinsky (1882-1951) was Rück's most trusted expert. Kinsky worked for the Musikhistorisches Museum Wilhelm Heyer in Cologne for a number of years and published catalogues that were to set the standard for years to come, including detailed information about the Heyer collection and musical instruments in general.¹⁰ When the collection was sold to the University of Leipzig in 1927, he had to earn money through self-employment in addition to his teaching position at the University of Cologne, which he gave up (by choice) in 1932.¹¹ The correspondence and collaboration between Kinsky and Rück began during those years.¹² Even though the relationship between Rück and Kinsky also had its problematic aspects¹³, Kinsky seems to have been a reli-

able expert for a fair market value estimate, as he was an experienced expert in the field. Nevertheless, Kinsky had difficulties to find work after 1933 because of his Jewish descent, and so it seems unlikely that a seller's Jewish origin would have had a negative effect on Kinsky's estimate (fig. 2).

The letter from Ulrich Rück to Georg Kinsky from 24 March 1930¹⁴ is a typical example of their correspondence, concerning the market value of instruments on offer. Rück describes four instruments that are being offered to him, and Kinsky notes his estimate in the right margin. The first instrument is a Grenser traverse flute, which is still part of the GNM collection (inv. no. MIR 319). It was offered to Rück for RM 100, but Kinsky estimated its value to be only RM 50: »H. Grenser-Dresden ist einer der besten Flötenmacher der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jhdts. 100 M zu teuer, höchstens 50 M.« (H. Grenser-Dresden is one of the best flute-makers of the first half of the 19th century, 100 M too expensive, 50 M at the most.) Every offer, sale, or estimate like this can be noted in WissKI in a »Ereignisfeld« (event field).

To date (April 2018), the Rück project has indexed about 530 offers, 249 purchases, and 320 estimates with prices. It is possible to search for these prices in combination with a particular object or for objects within a certain category. One of the project's aims is to use this information to produce a price comparison list for historical instruments for the years before, during and after the Second World War, and make this accessible via the RückPortal.

For example: The offers, estimates, and sales of historical fortepianos before 1945 which the Rück project has edited so far show that offer prices are less consistent and often higher – which is in the nature of things – than market value estimates. The estimate lies between RM 100 and RM 500, with a decreasing tendency towards the end of the war. So far, the Rück project has found no examples of historical fortepianos for which the acquisition price is remarkably low and which might raise the suspicion of a (politically) enforced transaction. There are, in contrast, cases with conspicuously high

10 Georg Kinsky: Musikhistorisches Museum von Wilhelm Heyer in Cöln. Catalogue vol. 1: Besaitete Tasteninstrumente, Orgeln und orgelartige Instrumente, Friktionsinstrumente. Cologne, Leipzig 1910. – Georg Kinsky: Musikhistorisches Museum von Wilhelm Heyer in Cöln. Catalogue vol. 2: Zupf- und Streichinstrumente. Cologne, Leipzig 1912. – Georg Kinsky: Musikhistorisches Museum von Wilhelm Heyer in Cöln. Kleiner Katalog der Sammlung alter Musikinstrumente. Cologne, Leipzig 1913.

11 Karl Ventzke: Zur Biographie von Georg Kinsky 1882-1951. In: *Studia organologica*. Festschrift für John Henry van der Meer zu seinem fünf- undsechzigsten Geburtstag. Ed. by Friedemann Hellwig. Tutzing 1987, pp. 473-474.

12 See Markus Zepf: Musikinstrumente aus der Sammlung von Curt Sachs im Germanischen Nationalmuseum. In: *Vom Sammeln, Klassifizieren und Interpretieren. Die zerstörte Vielfalt des Curt Sachs (Klang und Begriff 6)*. Ed. by Wolfgang Behrens, Martin Elste, Frauke Fitzner. Mainz 2017, pp. 171-196.

13 See also Zepf 2017 (note 12).

14 Letter Ulrich Rück to Georg Kinsky, 24 Mar. 1930. NL Rück, I, C-0444a.

Es wird mir angeboten:

1 Flöte von H. G r e n s e r mit Krone, 9 (10) Klappen aus Silber handgearbeitet, Ebenholz mit Elfenbeinringen. Ab Loch 60 cm, im ganzen 67 1/2 cm lang, einschliesslich Etui alles Handarbeit. Der Mann verlangt dafür M. 100.- welchen Preis ich für zu hoch halte (Angebot Anni Moser Meran).

H. Grenser-Flöte ist eine
sehr beste Flötenmacher
im Jahre der 19. Jahr:
100 M zu sein,
Küchler: 50 M.

Ferner 1 Fagott, 9 Klappen, das eine von K. Hammig-Wien, das andere von Tauber-Wien, ohne Preise. Wir haben in unserer Sammlung bereits ein Fagott mit 9 Klappen unsigniert mit Messing-Stürze. (Angebot Plaschke).

Nur wenn billig zu haben.
(c. 30 M in Lok).

Ferner wird mir angeboten: Eine Clarinette "es" hoch, von S. Koch in Wien mit 6 Messing-Klappen, Länge 48,5 cm bis zum Schnabelende (Deistler). 237/202 Jahr

Clarinete] Koch: ein ungeprüfetes
Mittel; sehr feinste und so
schon mit der Marke des Vaters.
Ankaufpreis etwa 30-40 M.

Ferner: 1 Zither, Kindl - Wien, 4 Melodie- und 22 Begleitsaiten in Palisander mit Leder-Etui, sehr gut erhalten. 160 Lire (Angebot Deistler). Folgende Maße: Ganze Breite 46 cm. Tiefe am Stimmstock 15 1/2 cm, am Anhängen-Stock 17 cm. in der Ausbauchung 27 cm.

Zither-Zither und geschätzt,
160 Lire = c. M. 35.20
Die wurde in Selbst von 25 M
vorschlagen.

2 Letter from Ulrich Rück to Georg Kinsky, 24 March 1930, detail. NL Rück, I, C-0444a © Germanisches Nationalmuseum

sale prices, for example a note with sale prices from Rück's local competitor J.C. Neupert¹⁵ dating from 1941, with several fortepianos, each for more than RM 1,000, some even for RM 3,000.¹⁶ The same is true for the sale of two fortepianos, one by Conrad Graf (SAM inv. no. 593) and one by Sébastien Erard (SAM inv. no. 594), which Rück offered and sold to the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna for a total of RM 6,200 shortly before the end of the war. Whether Rück made a very good deal or the price was no more average for 1945 as a result of inflation is an issue that will need to be resolved with reference to further comparison material. Probably, it was something in between.

All of these prices and estimates will, as comparative figures, be helpful for future provenance research concerning musical instruments, making it easier to decide whether the price paid for an instrument was appropriate or to highlight the necessity of further research. The benefit of WissKI lies not only in the possibility to collect and compare such data, but also in the ability to have a closer look at the circumstances and context of each price through the linked documents.

The Provenance of the Rück Collection

When Ulrich and Hans Rück started to expand their father's collection in the mid-1920s, it held nearly 500 instruments. When it came into the possession of the GNM in 1962, about 40 years later, it consisted of c. 1,500 objects. The letters in the Nachlass draw a picture of the Rück brothers' network of dealers, specialists, musicians, and museums that helped them to grow the collection. Other pri-

¹⁵ On the relationship between the Pianohaus Rück and J.C. Neupert, see also: Dominik von Roth, Linda Escherich, Markus Zepf: Collecting musical instruments – a merchant's passion. The Rück collection, Nuremberg. In: Through the eyes and ears of musical instrument collectors (1860-1940) (Material culture and collecting 1750-1950). Ed. by Christina Linsenmeyer and Michael Yonan. London (forthcoming).

¹⁶ Note by an unknown writer, Vienna, 31 March 1941. NL Rück, I, C-0970b.



3 Epinette des Vosges, Val d'Ajol (France), 19th century. Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, inv. no. MIR 660, photo: Günther Kühnel
© Germanisches Nationalmuseum

vate collectors of musical instruments (only male ones, according to the documents studied so far) played an important role as well. Some collections of his contemporaries were offered to Ulrich Rück on the open market or through second parties, for instance the instruments of Curt Sachs (1881-1959; see below). Rück also stood in contact and exchanged information about instruments and offers with other private collectors, including Fritz Wildhagen (1878-1956) in Berlin¹⁷, Erich Fiala (1910-1978) in Vienna¹⁸, and Charles F. Colt (1912-1985) in Bethersden, Kent¹⁹, to name just a few.

Example 1: Provenance Curt Sachs, Berlin

In 1934, Rück was offered some non-Western music instruments from the collection of Curt Sachs through Adolf Hartmann (1881-1943), Sachs' former colleague and restorer in Berlin. As a Jew, Sachs had lost his job at the Sammlung historische Musikinstrumente Berlin (now Musikinstrumenten-Museum) in 1933. He emigrated to France but left behind his wife Irene Sachs (1888-1985) and their children, as well as his collection of instruments.²⁰ In the end, Rück agreed to buy nine instruments from Irene Sachs, which are still at the GNM.²¹ One of these instruments is the Epinette des Vosges (GNM inv. no. MIR 660), which also appears in Sachs's »Real-Lexikon der Musikinstrumente«.²² This instrument's historical value is greatly increased when one knows about its famous, previous owner as well as the fact that it was used for this important work of organology in 1913. Thereby, it became an »archetype« of its kind that could be looked at, investigated, and compared.

17 NL Rück, I, C-0980. – Klaus Martius: »Des schönen Fülle hat den Weg gesegnet«. Die Laute in der Sammlung Fritz Wildhagen. In: Die Laute. Jahrbuch der Deutschen Lautengesellschaft 9-10, 2011, pp. 65-87.

18 NL Rück, I, C-0207. – See further Dominik von Roth, Linda Escherich: Der Nürnberger Musikinstrumentensammler Ulrich Rück und die Sammlung alter Musikinstrumente des Kunsthistorischen Museums Wien unter der Leitung von Victor Luithlen. In: Die Sammlung alter Musikinstrumente. Die ersten 100 Jahre/The Collection of Historic Musical Instruments. The first 100 years. Ed. by Beatrix Darmstädter, Rudolf Hopfner and Alfons Huber. Vienna 2018, pp. 65-85.

19 NL Rück, I, C-0123.

20 Martin Elste: Curt Sachs. In: Lexikon verfolgter Musiker und Musikerinnen der NS-Zeit. Ed. by Claudia Maurer Zenck and Peter Petersen. Hamburg 2007, URL: https://www.lexm.uni-hamburg.de/object/lexm_lexmperson_00002025 [27.10.2017].

21 Markus Zepf was able to identify these instruments, see Zepf 2017 (note 12).

22 Curt Sachs: Real-Lexikon der Musikinstrumente. Zugleich ein Polyglossar für das gesamte Instrumentengebiet. Berlin 1913, col. 337a.

In such cases, in which the provenance can be traced, the information is noted in the object entry of the WissKI, and the »provenance Sachs« can consequently be searched in the RückPortal. This is only one of many examples in which Rück's letters have been able to aid the reconstruction of historical collections (fig. 3, 4).

Example 2: Provenance Klinckerfuß, Stuttgart

Another interesting case is the Klinckerfuß collection that Rück bought, almost in its entirety, from Walter Klinckerfuß (1876-1954) in 1939.²³ It is testimony of an interesting family: The Klinckerfuß family was an important bourgeois family in Stuttgart. The villa of Walter's parents Apollo (1840-1923; piano maker and trader) and Johanna (1855-1924; pianist and former student of Franz Liszt) played an important role in the musical life in Stuttgart, where Johannes Brahms, Edward Grieg, Hans von Bülow, Anton Rubinstein, Fritz Busch, Hugo Wolf, and Wilhelm Furtwängler were frequent visitors.²⁴

Ulrich Rück discussed this collection with his friend Alfred Kreutz (1898-1960), piano professor and Rück's expert for clavichords in Stuttgart:

»Sehr verehrter, lieber Herr Doktor, auf Ihre Eilanfrage teile ich Ihnen mit, dass ich bei dem Herrn K. war und wegen des evl. Instrumentenkaufs vorsondiert habe. Wie es sich herausstellte, war die Zeitungsnotiz im N. S.-Kurier etwas verfrüht: das Haus K. wird nicht zwangsenteignet, sondern die Verhandlungen mit der Stadt werden fortgeführt.«²⁵

(My dearest Doktor, In response to your urgent request I tell you that I have been to Mr K. [Klinckerfuß] and have taken initial steps for the possible instrument sale. As it turns out, the news item in the N. S.-Kurier was a little hasty: the house K. [Klinckerfuß] will not be expropriated, but the negotiations with the city will continue.)

The name »Klinckerfuß«, the term »expropriation« as well as the mentioned N. S.-Kurier might set alarm bells ringing for current provenance researchers. Yet research on this well-known Stuttgart family currently shows no indication that

23 Letter Ulrich Rück to Walter Klinckerfuß, 6 July 1939, and letter Walter Klinckerfuß to Ulrich Rück, 8 July 1939. NL Rück, I, C-0455.

24 Silke Wenzel: Johanna Klinckerfuß. In: MUGI – Musik und Gender im Internet. 5 Nov. 2009, URL: http://mugi.hfmt-hamburg.de/old/A_lexartikel/lexartikel.php?id=klin1855 [6. 5. 2017].

25 Letter Alfred Kreutz to Ulrich Rück, 29 Oct. 1937. NL Rück, I, C-0482b.

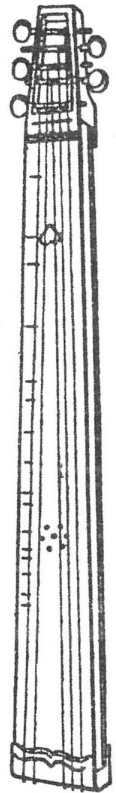
breitet ist und zu der auch die französische *Epinette des Vosges*, die niederländische *Noordsche Balk*, der dänische *Humle* und der schwedische *Hummel* zählen.

Vgl. Trompeterl.

Schelle, von ahd. *scella*, nennt der Sprachgebrauch jedes kleine Glöckchen. Mit Rücksicht auf die im Artikel „Glocke“ gekennzeichnete Verschiedenheit der mit diesem Wort benannten Typen ziehen wir vor, den Namen *Schelle* nur den zur Familie der Gefäßbrassen gehörigen klingenden Gefäßen zu geben, die einen losen Rasselkörper einschließen, zum Unterschied von den ‚Glöckchen‘, die einen befestigten Klöppel haben müssen.

Engl. *JINGLE*, ndl. *SCHELLETJE*, dän. *BJÆLDE*, schw. *BJELLRA*, fr. *TIMBRE*, it. *BUBBOLO*, sp. *CASCABEL*, port. *SOALHA*, rum. *CLOPOTEL*, rät. *SUNAGL*, russ. *ZVONOK*, poln. *DZWONEK*, é. *ZVONEC*, serbokr. *ZVONČIC*, lit. *KANKALAS*, lett. *SWAHRGULIS*, estn. *KELL*, ung. *CSÖRGÖ*, ngr. *ΚΩΛΩΝΙΟΝ*. — Vgl. *Edibu*, *Ghunguru*, *Ġindai sudsu*, *Krol dong*, *Ma ling*, *Nhac*, *Phaamon*, *Qakel*.

Schellenbaum, Halbmond, Glöckcheninstrument aus einem



SCHEITHOLT
im Besitz des
Verfassers

4 Illustration of »Scheitholt, owned by the author«, in: Curt Sachs: *Real-Lexikon der Musikinstrumente*. Berlin 1913, col. 337a

the Klinckerfuß family had any Jewish ancestry or other reasons for persecution by the Nazis.²⁶ As it turns out, the so-called »expropriation« had to do with the Nazi party's city reconstruction plans (fig. 5).²⁷

26 Margarete Klinckerfuß (1877-1959), Walter's sister, did attract the attention of the Nazis as the result of critical comments against the Nazi regime. She was arrested in 1937 and was committed to a psychiatric clinic. See Margarete Klinckerfuß. In: GO-Stuttgart, URL: <https://go-stuttgart.org/de/biografien.html#margarete-klinckerfuss> [27. 10. 2017]. – Margarete Klinckerfuß: *Aufklänge aus versunkener Zeit*. Urach 1947.

27 Letter Alfred Kreutz to Ulrich Rück, 16 Jan. 1938. NL Rück, I, C-0482c.



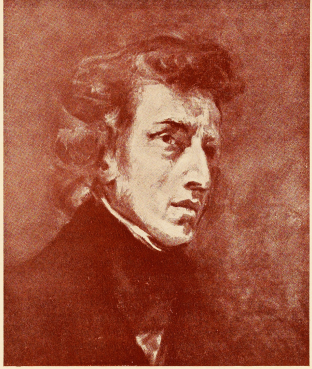

5 »Chopin-Flügel«, Sebastian Erard, Paris, 1840. Nürnberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, inv. no. MIR 1125 photo: Günther Kühnel, © Germanisches Nationalmuseum

One outstanding instrument that found its way from the Klinckerfuß collection through the Rück collection to the GNM is the so-called »Chopin-Flügel«. It is a grand piano-forte made by Erard in 1840 (GNM inv. no. MIR 1125). The Nachlass Rück notes its provenance before it came into the possession of the Klinckerfuß family. Helen Horsfall, the daughter of the contemporary witness Marie von Leins²⁸, tells the colorful – but not entirely reliable – story about this instrument:

28 Marie von Leins (1836-1907), née Judée, was – according to her daughter Helen Horsfall – the adoptive daughter of the musical editor Maurice and his wife Elisabeth Schlesinger.

»Ich will Dir gerne alles erzählen, was ich weiss und mir aus Mama's Berichten in Erinnerung geblieben ist. Als Mama noch ein Kind war, stand das Musikleben in Paris auf einem Höhepunkt. Im Hause ihrer Eltern, des Adoptivvaters Musikverlegers M. Schlesinger und seiner Frau Elisabeth, [...], versammelte sich jeden Mittwoch die Musik und Schriftsteller-Welt von Paris, da wurde eifrig musiziert auf dem »Erard«. Die Namen der Künstler, welche die Tasten meisterten sind berühmte und viele. Alary, Berlios, Cherubini, Hiller, Liszt, Mendelssohn, Meyerbeer, Diardat, Garcia [Viardot-Garcia], Nicolai, Paganini, Piseis, Ries, Rossini, Rubinstein, Spontini, Verio, Wagner (wohnte ein Jahr lang im Hause) Rue Drouot Nr. 2.

Chopin, sehr zart liebte es nicht, bei dem langen Diner zu sitzen, schlich sich bald in den Musik Salon, setzte sich an den Flügel, nahm meine Mutter, das fünfjährige Kind, auf seinen Schoss,

 <p>Chopin. Gemälde von Eugène Delacroix</p> <p>Der urkundlich nachweisbar</p> <h2>FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN</h2> <p>gespielte Flügel</p> <p>des berühmten Pariser Klavierbaumeisters Erard vom Jahre 1839</p> <p>erklingt in Wien wieder!</p>	<p>BRAHMS-SAAL (Musikvereinsgebäude)</p> <p>Montag, den 8. Dezember 1941, um 19:30 Uhr</p> <h3>I. CHOPIN-ABEND</h3> <h2>FRÉDÉRIC OGOUSE</h2> <p>PROGRAMM:</p> <p>Nocturno Des-dur op. 27 Zwölf Präludien op. 28 Walzer A-moll op. 34 Zwei Mazurkas: A-moll Cis-moll II Scherzo B-moll op. 31</p> <p>P a u s e</p> <p>Nocturno Fis-dur op. 15 Fantasie-Improptu op. 66 Erard-Balladen: Fis-dur op. 39 As-dur op. 47 F-moll op. 52 Polonaise As-dur op. 53</p> <p>Um den Hörern einen Klangvergleich zu bieten, wird ein Teil des Programmes abwechselnd auf dem modernen Steinway-Flügel (Vertretung Klavierhaus Stumberger) gespielt.</p> <p>Frédéric Ogouse hat die Erlaubnis erhalten, den Original-Chopin-Flügel, der aus der Sammlung historischer Musikinstrumente des Pianohauses Wilhelm Rück von Nürnberg eigens nach Wien kommt, spielen zu dürfen.</p>	 <p>Erard, Paris, vom Jahre 1839</p> <p>aus der Sammlung historischer Musikinstrumente des Pianohauses Wilhelm Rück, Nürnberg</p> <p>010414</p>
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6 Program of the former Chopin-student Frédéric Ogouse's concert in the Musikvereinsgebäude in Vienna, 8 December 1941. Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, NL Rück, I, B-004g, © Germanisches Nationalmuseum

lehrte sie Klavier spielen, komponierte reizende kleine Stücke für sie, welche ihre kleinen Fingerchen greifen konnten! [...]

In Stuttgart, wohin meine Mutter sich 1856 verheiratete und den Flügel mitbekam, wurde der Tradition folgend auch viel musiziert, Frau Johanne [Johanna] Klinckerfuss [...] und viele mehr spielten auf dem Erard, bis er 1882 in den Besitz Klinckerfuss übergang als ein interessantes Stück ihrer schönen Instrumentensammlung.²⁹

(I'm very happy to tell you everything I know and what I can remember from mother's accounts. When mother was still a child, the music life in Paris was at its height. At the home of her parents, her adoptive father the musical editor M. Schlesinger and his wife Elisabeth, [...] the musicians and writers of Paris gathered together every Wednesday; at these meetings, much music was played on the Erard. The names of the artists who mastered this keyboard are famous and numerous. Alary, Berlios, Cherubini, Hiller, Liszt, Mendelssohn, Meyerbeer, Diardat, Garcia [Viardot-Garcia], Nicolai, Paganini, Piseis, Ries, Rossini, Rubinstein, Spontini, Verio, Wagner (who lived for one year at the house) Rue Drouot No. 2.

Chopin, who was very sensitive and did not like to spend much time sitting at dinner, would soon sneak to the musical parlor, sit at the piano, take my mother, the five-year-old child, on his lap, teach her to play the piano [and he even] composed delightful little pieces for her, which she could play with her little fingers! [...]

In Stuttgart, where my mother married in 1856 and where she took the piano, there was also a lot of music as had been the tradition; Mrs. Johanne [Johanna] Klinckerfuss, [...] and many more played on the Erard, until it passed to Klinckerfuss's possession as a beautiful object of their collection.)

The name of a famous musician who played or owned an instrument always raises the non-material and financial value of an instrument, and this appears to be the reason why Rück bought it: »Auf diesen Erard-Flügel wäre ich sehr scharf!«³⁰ (I'd be very keen on this Erard-Pianoforte!), he wrote to Alfred Kreutz, after he had read about its provenance. It is probably

29 Letter Helen Horsfall to Helmut Steinhart, 16 Nov. 1940. NL Rück, I, C-0455.

30 Letter Ulrich Rück to Alfred Kreutz, 18 Oct. 1937. NL Rück, I, C-0482b.

also the reason why Frédéric Ogouse (1908-1982) – pianist and former Chopin-student – played the instrument at a concert in Vienna in December 1941, as a concert program from the Nachlass Rück shows. The event was followed by a concert tour which was part of a large-scale marketing move for Ulrich Rück.³¹ There are obvious parallels with Rück's major restoration project of the »Mozart-Flügel«, which was followed by the trilingual publication of the brochure »Mozart's grand piano sounds again« in 1937 (fig. 6).³²

Even though it is doubtful that every word of Horsfall's colorful letter is true – it is unlikely, for example, that Richard Wagner lived with the Schlesinger family and unclear whether Chopin himself ever touched the instrument – it becomes a contemporary witness of the French salon culture in the middle of the 1840s as well as a witness of the historical performance practice movement of the 1940s.

Example 3: Provenance – the Gräbner Fortepiano

One last example shows how important even little asides in the Nachlass Rück can be. In recent years, a keyboard instrument was (re-)discovered at the Städtisches Museum in Brunswick: a fortepiano, made around 1800, that had been transformed into a harpsichord around 1900 (inv. no. 12/0/143). The material, construction technique, and especially the design of the metal fittings reveal a close similarity to the four surviving, known fortepianos of the »Gebrüder Gräbner«.³³ Unfortunately, the Brunswick instrument's name-board, which usually features an ascription, was lost during the Second World War. Without further research, this instrument would have probably been attributed to the »Gebrüder Gräbner«.

31 Program »Frédéric Chopin«, 8 Dec. 1941. NL Rück, I, B-004g; and letter Ulrich Rück to Victor Luithlen, 11 Dec. 1941. NL Rück, I, C-0970b.

32 See also the chapter »Mozart's fortepiano sounds again« in von Roth/Escherich 2017 (note 18).

33 Johann Wilhelm (1737-1798) and Johann Gottfried Gräbner (1736-1808). Surviving fortepianos of the Gräbner Brothers: Paris, Musée de la musique, inv. no. E.2002.7.1; USA, private owner; Nuremberg, GNM inv. no. MIR 1106; Halle (Saale), Stiftung Händel-Haus, inv. no. MS-31. – An unpublished paper about the stringed keyboard instruments of the Gräbner family was presented by Linda Escherich at the conference »Klaviere« (15 Feb. 2016) at the Städtisches Museum Brunswick and the »Clavier-Forum« (20 Aug. 2016) at Schloss Pillnitz in Dresden.

However, using information in the material of the Nachlass Rück it was possible to find out more facts about this instrument: the correspondence between Ulrich Rück and Georg Kinsky in April 1931 discussed a sales announcement in the Berliner Allgemeine Zeitung and the Zeitschrift für Musik, Regensburg (fig. 7):³⁴



7 Sales Announcement (»Original-clavichord very inexpensive, original-harpsichord »Gräbner« for sale for 900 RM«), Zeitschrift für Musik 98, April 1931, p. 268

The letters show that the instrument was offered by J. C. Neupert's branch in Nuremberg. Kinsky contacted Neupert, without the latter knowing that his local rival Rück was the interested party.³⁵ The basic information provided to Kinsky by Neupert matches the instrument in Brunswick, and he claims that it was made by Carl August Gräbner. Rück showed no more interest in the instrument, not only because it was offered by Neupert, but also because he was looking for a harpsichord with not just one, but two manuals.

The stock book of Neupert confirms the details about the converted harpsichord and adds that it was acquired by a certain »Lorenz, Leipzig« in 1928.³⁶ Further, the note reveals that

34 Zeitschrift für Musik 98, April 1931, p. 268.

35 On the relationship between the Pianohaus Rück and J. C. Neupert see note 15.

36 J. C. Neupert Lagerbuch, pp. 72-73, copy at the GNM. »Lorenz, Leipzig« is probably the »Kunstmaler« (painter) Lorenz, from whose estate »einer Anzahl alter Instrumente« (a number of old instruments) were sold to the department of musicology at the University of Leipzig in 1925. I am grateful to Eszter Fontana, Leipzig, for providing this information.

it was sold to the Städtisches Museum Brunswick in 1935. It was altered to a harpsichord by the famous private collector Paul de Wit (1852-1925) in Leipzig.

In this case, the findings about the instrument's provenance go hand in hand with the findings about its alteration and attribution. It can now be attributed to Carl August Gräbner (1749-1827) and not to the »Gebrüder Gräbner«, who were the half-brothers of Carl August. This makes the instrument the only currently known – at least partly – surviving fortepiano by Carl August, and only the second surviving instrument known to have been by this maker.³⁷ It is the youngest instrument from a lineage of three generations of important harpsichord- and pianoforte-builders in Dresden. The alteration from a pianoforte to a harpsichord by Paul de Wit, or probably by his repairer Hermann Seyffarth (1846-1933), around 1900 makes this instrument an important witness to the generation of collectors in the 1850s as well as to the harpsichord renaissance at the beginning of the 20th century.

Conclusion

The chosen examples give an idea how diverse and complex the information in the Nachlass Rück is, for some of this could be found only thanks to little asides. By systematically indexing and cross-referencing the Nachlass and making its contents available online via the RückPortal, the information will be searchable and much easier to access as a whole in the future. Relationships and cross connections can be displayed and evaluated in a way that a visit to the GNM's archive or a print publication would never be able to attain. Researchers in the field of private and public musical instrument collections worldwide can use the material as a basis for their work.

The price comparison list in particular will provide a foundation for future provenance research in the field of musical instruments as well as for questions about the (market) value development of musical instruments in general. Private as well as public collections that stood in contact with Rück, especially those with missing documentation, can be partly reconstructed.

The examples of Curt Sachs, the Klinckerfuß family, and the Gräbner harpsichord/pianoforte show that other research questions about the history of organology, cultural history, and music history, or questions about attribution and the alteration history of an instrument are closely linked with provenance research and consequently represent an indispensable part of any investigation.

Finally, there is another reason for public as well as private collections to undertake more provenance research on their instruments, not only in suspicious cases: The stories behind the acquisition history and previous ownership of instruments is always engaging and rewarding – looted art, or non-looted art. It would be an enrichment for all musical instrument collections to tell the museum visitors the (hi-)story of their objects, especially since most of them cannot speak for themselves anymore.

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³⁷ The other instrument is the harpsichord GNM inv. no. MIR 1079 that Rück acquired in 1935.

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