

## NEITHER ORIGINALS NOR FAKES: RECONSTRUCTIONS OF MEDIEVAL FIDDLES AT THE *FIN DE SIÈCLE*

*Viva fui in sylvis, sum dura occisa securi, dum vixi, tacui, mortua dulce cano.*  
(I was alive in the woods, I was cut down by the hard axe.  
While I lived I was silent, now that I am dead I sing sweetly.)  
Riddle commonly found on musical instruments (Borthwick 1970, 379-380)

The last decades have witnessed a growing awareness about the preservation of historical musical instruments and a parallel interest in the investigation of their provenance and authenticity. As functioning artefacts which are made primarily to be played, rather than to be looked at, musical instruments have been frequently modified in order to meet new tastes and demands, and this process has inevitably led to the distortion or loss of their original features. This significant topic has been the focus of recent scholarly research, as evidenced by several publications which have examined the drastic alteration of historical instruments through constant use, maintenance, repair and extensive restoration<sup>1</sup> or have discussed their transformation through faking and forgery<sup>2</sup>.

In contrast, relatively little has been written so far about the authenticity of reconstructions, replicas or copies of historical musical instruments that were built during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Such objects were usually commissioned by private collectors or museums in order to fill gaps in their collections<sup>3</sup> and were typically displayed in exhibitions which intended to show a linear evolution of instruments, both chronologically – from antiquity to the present age – and technically – from the »primitive« instruments of the ancient civilisations in the East to the »advanced« instruments of the industrialised Western world<sup>4</sup>. In the case of ancient instruments, particularly when no surviving specimens existed, makers built reconstructions using the information that was available from extant instrument fragments or from contemporary iconographical and literary sources in combination with modern practices that were used in the manufacture of similar instruments<sup>5</sup>.

### RECONSTRUCTIONS OF MEDIEVAL BOWED INSTRUMENTS

The distinctive approach of replicating or reconstructing obsolete instruments by combining existing pictorial or written evidence with new instrument-making methods can be observed in the field of stringed instruments. For example, in the case of medieval bowed instruments it was only during the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that scholars turned their attention to similar folk instruments of Eastern Europe and Asia, whose construction and playing techniques have remained largely unchanged for centuries, using them as valuable comparable sources to reach new conclusions about their medieval equivalents in Western Europe<sup>6</sup>. Previously, reconstructions of medieval bowed instruments were commonly based on contemporary two- or three-dimensional depictions, such as frescoes, paintings, manuscript illustrations and miniatures, sculptures, reliefs and carvings on stone, wood, ivory, bone, etc., in which musical instruments often had a symbolic character. Apart from the fact that some of these artworks do not reveal the full or exact details

of the depicted instruments<sup>7</sup>, one should also consider that for aesthetic or symbolic reasons an artist may have decided to portray various parts of an instrument without necessarily respecting proportions and dimensions that could be significant for modern researchers<sup>8</sup>. Furthermore, many of these artworks may have been restored at a later time, and thus some instrument details may have been changed or completed by the restorers using their imagination or taking later instruments as models<sup>9</sup>.

More significantly, in order to compensate for missing information, the makers of these reconstructions often »borrowed« features from modern instruments. For instance, reconstructions of medieval bowed instruments often have features such as the neck, the fingerboard, the bridge or the internal structure that seem to have been copied from instruments of the modern violin family, while the construction materials or decorative patterns are sometimes quite different from those that would have been originally used in medieval times. Furthermore, these reconstructions demonstrate craftsmanship of varying degrees, which betrays either the maker's skills or the purpose for which the copy was made (or both). For example, some were clearly designed as display pieces rather than as sounding devices, while others are finely made and were probably intended to be played. It is also interesting that even when they originate from or have been inspired by the same source, these reconstructions can be dissimilar from one another in terms of their appearance, size and dimensions, construction materials and methods, or sonic characteristics. Nevertheless, as will be shown later, through the acquisition and display of such reconstructions in many museums around the world and through their inclusion in standard reference works published during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, a new »historical authenticity« was progressively constructed, strongly influencing our perception and understanding of medieval musical instruments.

## THE CASE OF MEDIEVAL FIDDLES

The above remarks can be confirmed with regard to reconstructions of the fiddle, a type of bowed instrument of which a wide variety appeared in medieval Europe<sup>10</sup>. Despite the fact that numerous reconstructions of medieval fiddles and related stringed instruments are housed in major museums in Europe and North America, various aspects concerning their production, provenance, acquisition, preservation and display in museums have received limited attention by scholars and remain largely unknown. Even in the recently updated second edition of »The Grove Dictionary of Musical Instruments«, the most acknowledged source on musical instruments worldwide, the article on the fiddle includes no reference to medieval fiddle reconstructions made in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries<sup>11</sup>.

This neglect is not surprising since these reconstructions, many of which have now ended up permanently in museum storerooms, constitute a »grey area« for collectors, museum curators, conservators, organologists, musicologists and other researchers. Although they may not be repudiated as emphatically or cause as much embarrassment – or provocation – as fakes or forgeries, they are nevertheless considered less valuable or are less respected than »authentic« historical instruments<sup>12</sup>. However, such reconstructions should not be simply rejected as imprecise and misleading interpretations of the past, but should be seen instead as important documents of their time. On the one hand, these objects can help us study the different approaches that modern instrument makers employed in their construction and to understand the ideas and traditions that influenced their decisions. On the other hand, these objects reflect the contemporary state of scholarly knowledge and expertise concerning antique instruments and can therefore reveal new details on the collection, documentation, conservation and exhibition strategies of museums at an international level during the *fin de siècle*.



**Fig. 1** Front, side and back views of a fiddle by Neuner & Hornsteiner, Mittenwald, 1908, in the Deutsches Museum, Munich (inv. no. 15583). – (Photos © Deutsches Museum, München, Archiv, CD 78366, CD 78367, CD 78368, reproduced with permission).

### THE NEUNER & HORNSTEINER FIDDLES: MADE TO DISPLAY, NOT TO PLAY

One indicative example that demonstrates the issues mentioned above concerns the acquisition of four reconstructions of medieval fiddles in 1908 by the Deutsches Museum in Munich<sup>13</sup>. The four fiddles were donated together with other replicas of medieval instruments by the firm of Neuner & Hornsteiner in Mittenwald, Bavaria, which was a centre of violin making in Germany. Interestingly, some of these replicas, which had been based on drawings included in a publication about the history of bowed instruments<sup>14</sup>, were described and depicted in a book on the development of the collection at the Deutsches Museum published in 1963<sup>15</sup> as representative specimens of the evolution of medieval bowed instruments.

However, although bowed instruments produced by Neuner & Hornsteiner are generally of good reputation, closer inspection of the four fiddles as well as of the other replicas by this firm acquired by the Deutsches Museum has shown that they are rather crudely made, using low-quality woods with poor finishing and employing historically inauthentic components such as mass-produced parts used on modern violins. Furthermore, on some of them the soundboard is very thick, the neck profile is not rounded as normal, but is square, while some parts seem structurally too weak to withstand the string tension when tuned to an appropriate playing pitch (**fig. 1**).

These unusual features suggest that such instruments were not made to be played, but were principally designed to be displayed frontally in exhibition showcases, thus fulfilling the museum's aim of presenting to visitors the ancestors of modern bowed instruments, as stated in a letter dated 5 October 1908 in the surviving correspondence in the Deutsches Museum archives<sup>16</sup>. It was not until recently that these reconstructions were discussed critically in terms of their quality and authenticity<sup>17</sup>.

### **THE TOLBECQUE FIDDLES IN BRUSSELS AND PARIS: CREATING THE »ORIGINAL« RECONSTRUCTION**

The examples presented above show only one side of the coin, since during the same time there were also serious attempts to produce accurate reconstructions of medieval bowed instruments. These include a particular type of guitar-shaped fiddle, as illustrated below, reconstructions of which are housed in several European museums.

One of the earliest, if not the earliest, of these reconstructions, dated 1891, is in the Muziekinstrumentenmuseum, Brussels<sup>18</sup>. This instrument, which can be considered to be the »original« reconstruction, was built by Auguste Tolbecque (1830-1919), a French musician, instrument maker and collector in Niort, who was one of the pioneers in the replication of ancient stringed instruments at the *fin de siècle*<sup>19</sup>. It should be pointed out that guitar-shaped fiddles were depicted in illustrations included in early organological publications, some of which had appeared as facsimiles by the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries<sup>20</sup>, as well as in books on the origins and evolution of musical instruments that were published around the same time<sup>21</sup>. A museum catalogue published in 1900 which listed the Tolbecque fiddle claimed that Tolbecque had used a painting by Cimabue in the Uffizi Gallery in Florence as his model<sup>22</sup>. However, Tolbecque had most likely based his reconstruction on a fiddle shown in the fresco *Via Veritatis* (»Way of Salvation«) painted c. 1365-1368 by Andrea di Bonaiuto in the Spanish Chapel of Santa Maria Novella in Florence, since he also referred to this image in two of his books<sup>23</sup>.

Tolbecque subsequently made several reconstructions of fiddles and other ancient instruments which ended up in the Musée de la Musique, Paris<sup>24</sup>, including three examples of the fiddle depicted by Bonaiuto, all made after 1896<sup>25</sup>. Tolbecque was a violin maker and to some extent these fiddles share many similarities in the design and the choice of materials with the modern violin, whose manufacture had been standardised by the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, when most makers had adopted the style of Cremonese violin makers such as Amati, Stradivari or Guarneri. For instance, two almost identical fiddles by Tolbecque in the Paris museum<sup>26</sup> have an arched soundboard, back and fingerboard, an arched and quite high bridge, and a neck tilted backwards to increase the string tension, even though these details are not discernible in Bonaiuto's fresco.

However, one of the three examples in Paris<sup>27</sup> has different construction features. For example, its back is made with six staves and the neck is almost parallel to the body rather than tilted. Additionally, the tailpiece and the fingerboard, which has tied gut frets, are not veneered with tortoiseshell, but are plain, and the soundboard does not bear the »fishbone« purfling with ebony and ivory inlays. It is not known when and how Tolbecque became aware of the Bonaiuto fresco and why he chose it as a model for his reconstructions. Whatever the case, the instruments discussed above indicate that he did not imitate this image slavishly, but was trying out various design concepts.



**Fig. 2** Front, side and back views of a guitar-shaped fiddle by Charles Hautstont, Brussels, 1908, in the Danish Music Museum, Copenhagen (inv. no. D 106). – (Photos © Danish Music Museum – Musikhistorisk Museum & The Carl Claudius Collection, reproduced with permission).

### THE HAUSTONT FIDDLES IN COPENHAGEN AND MUNICH: COPYING THE »ORIGINAL« RECONSTRUCTION

Other instrument makers soon began producing similar reconstructions for private collectors or museums. In 1908 the Musikhistorisk Museum in Copenhagen purchased a guitar-shaped fiddle (**fig. 2**) by Charles Hautstont (1863-1929), an instrument maker, dealer and restorer in Brussels. It is important to mention that Hautstont had been authorised to copy Tolbecque's fiddle in the Brussels museum, as verified in the correspondence between Angul Hammerich (1848-1931) and Victor-Charles Mahillon (1841-1924), curators of the collections in Copenhagen and Brussels respectively, and Hautstont, held in The Danish Music Museum – Musikhistorisk Museum & The Carl Claudius Collection's instrument archives. The Hautstont fiddle, which was listed in a catalogue of the collection published in 1911<sup>28</sup>, is now in The Danish Music Museum – Musikhistorisk Museum & The Carl Claudius Collection<sup>29</sup>.

Two years later, in 1910, Hautstont sold a similar fiddle dated 1908 (**fig. 3**) to the Deutsches Museum in Munich<sup>30</sup>. A letter dated 2 May 1910 in the surviving correspondence in the Deutsches Museum archives<sup>31</sup> states that the museum, which was willing to pay Hautstont 180 francs for the fiddle, wanted the larger of the two models that Hautstont was offering, suggesting that Hautstont may have been building, and perhaps keeping a stock of, such instruments for museums or private collectors.



**Fig. 3** Front, side and back views of a guitar-shaped fiddle by Charles Hautstont, Brussels, 1908, in the Deutsches Museum, Munich (inv. no. 24505). – (Photos © Deutsches Museum, München, Archiv, CD 78378, CD 78379, CD 78380, reproduced with permission).

It is noteworthy that the two Hautstont fiddles in Copenhagen and Munich do not have the »fishbone« purfling on the soundboard, even though the Bonaiuto fresco which had inspired the original Tolbecque reconstruction in Brussels clearly depicts this feature. In a letter dated 23 June 1908, it was mentioned explicitly by Hammerich that the fiddle Hautstont produced for the Copenhagen museum did not have »the difficult ebony and ivory inlays' with which Tolbecque had decorated his fiddle in the Brussels museum. Therefore, it seems that this was a deliberate decision aiming to reduce the time and cost of building the instruments, though compromising to a certain extent their authenticity. As in the case of Tolbecque, Hautstont's background as a violin maker is revealed by the fact that his fiddles have arched soundboards, backs and fingerboards, and are also equipped with arched violin-style bridges and soundposts, features that are not evident in Bonaiuto's fresco.

### THE BUSCH FIDDLE IN LEIPZIG: THE COPY OF A COPY?

A similar guitar-shaped fiddle was built before 1912 by Wilhelm Busch (1861-1929) at the workshop of the Musikhistorisches Museum founded by Wilhelm Heyer (1849-1913), a private collector in Cologne. According to the 1912 catalogue of the Heyer collection<sup>32</sup> the Busch fiddle (**fig. 4**), now in the Musik-



**Fig. 4** Front, side and back views of a guitar-shaped fiddle by Wilhelm Busch, Cologne, before 1912, in the Musikinstrumentenmuseum der Universität Leipzig (inv. no. 766). – (Photos © Museum für Musikinstrumente der Universität Leipzig, reproduced with permission).

instrumentenmuseum der Universität Leipzig (Museum of Musical Instruments of the University of Leipzig)<sup>33</sup>, was based on Bonaiuto's fresco.

In many aspects the Busch fiddle is more similar to those made by Hautstont than those by Tolbecque. It is uncertain whether Busch worked directly from the Bonaiuto image, but it is quite possible that he was aware of the fiddles in Brussels, Paris, Copenhagen or Munich – or had at least seen photographs of them – especially since the loaning of instruments between museums or private collectors and instrument makers for the production of copies was not uncommon during this time<sup>34</sup>.

#### **THE FLETA FIDDLES IN BARCELONA: BUILDING MEDIEVAL FIDDLES FOR MODERN PLAYERS**

The fiddle reconstructions produced around 1900 by Tolbecque, Hautstont and Busch may have influenced the work of later instrument makers. For instance, during the 1940s and 1950s Ignacio Fleta (1897-1977) produced various replicas of medieval instruments, including fiddles, for *Ars Musicae*, an ensemble performing medieval music in Barcelona. In 1980 three guitar-shaped fiddles by Fleta, made in 1943, 1945, and 1957



**Fig. 5** Three guitar-shaped fiddles by Ignacio Fleta, Barcelona, made in 1943 (left), 1945 (middle), and 1957 (right), in the Museu de la Música, Barcelona (inv. nos MDMB 1282, 1280, and 1303 respectively). – (Photos © Museu de la Música, Barcelona, reproduced with permission).



**Fig. 6** Ignacio Fleta (seated on the right) in his workshop. – (Photo © Museu de la Música, Barcelona, reproduced with permission).





**Fig. 7** Front, side and back views of a guitar-shaped fiddle made at the Staatliche Berufsfach- und Fachschule für Geigenbau, Mittenwald, 1973. Deutsches Museum, Munich (inv. no. 79325). – (Photos © Deutsches Museum, München, Archiv, CD 78387, CD 78388, CD 78389, reproduced with permission).

(fig. 5), were donated to the Museu de la Música, Barcelona<sup>35</sup> and were subsequently listed in the museum's catalogue published in 1991<sup>36</sup>.

Fleta, who can be seen here in his workshop (fig. 6), was an important luthier in Barcelona. According to the former director of *Ars Musicae*, Romà Escalas i Llimona, in order to make the fiddles Fleta worked from drawings provided to him by the founder of *Ars Musicae*, Josep María Lamaña, a musicologist and organologist who selected construction details from various medieval images and also supervised Fleta during the manufacture of the fiddles.

Despite their high-quality workmanship and finishing, the Fleta fiddles should be considered experimental hybrids rather than precise reconstructions, since they have several features not typical of medieval fiddles. For example, they are equipped with four instead of five strings and they have fingerboards with tied gut frets as well as modern violin-style bridges and chin rests. Additionally, the strings are secured on the pegs passing through the nut, not through holes on the head as in the reconstructions presented earlier, and the small diamond-shaped sound holes on the soundboard are purely decorative, being inlaid rather than hollow. These features suggest that the fiddles were most likely intended for musicians accustomed to modern instruments of the violin family.

## THE »INSTITUTIONALISATION« OF COPYING

With the advent of the early music revival and the increasing demand for historically informed performances in the twentieth century, the practice of reconstructing ancient instruments, an activity which had initially begun with a few amateurs and enthusiasts, gradually became institutionalised, just like early music itself. For example, in the early 1970s the Deutsches Museum was loaned a guitar-shaped fiddle based on the Bonaiuto fresco<sup>37</sup> bearing the serial number 1906 on its back. This fiddle (fig. 7) had been built in 1973 at the Staatliche Berufsfach- und Fachschule für Geigenbau (State School for Violin Making) in Mittenwald<sup>38</sup>, indicating that by that time the production of such reconstructions was included in the curriculum of instrument-making courses. Not surprisingly, the choice of woods, the neck and fingerboard design and the presence of a bass bar and soundpost on this fiddle highlight the strong influence of traditional violin manufacture on the reconstruction of medieval bowed instruments.

## CONCLUSIONS

The cases presented in this article reveal how little we know about reconstructions of ancient instruments made during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, particularly in regard to issues of provenance and authenticity. As illustrated by the fiddles discussed earlier, interpreting iconography can be an ambiguous process, and it is interesting that from only one source, the Bonaiuto fresco, many different reconstructed versions of the same instrument emerged, each moving one or more steps further away from the original source. Regarding reconstructions of medieval fiddles based on visual sources, it has been argued that such attempts »can at best be educated guesses« since the painter or sculptor »may not have had the means technically to present us with the aspects that are so important to modern players of the fiddle: the curvature of the bridge, how the strings were fastened, how the bow hair was attached to the stick«<sup>39</sup>. So even a century later and after several attempts to come closer to the original medieval fiddle, there are still many open questions about these instruments which continue to puzzle modern researchers and instrument makers<sup>40</sup>. Focusing on reconstructions of medieval fiddles, this article is one of the first studies of such instruments from a historical, technical and sociocultural perspective. However, more examples certainly need to be examined and compared systematically before any similarities or differences, as well as any prevailing tendencies, can be identified in the reconstruction of ancient instruments at an international level during the *fin de siècle*. As shown in this article, the historical accuracy and authenticity of some of these reconstructions may be doubtful, but one should take into account that, in the absence of extant examples in playing condition, museums primarily used such reconstructions to offer the possibility for modern instrument makers and musicians to gain useful insights regarding contemporary instrument-making methods and performance techniques, and for modern audiences to experience the instruments' sound and repertoire. Additionally, these artefacts are nowadays of considerable museological and educational value, since they are part of the early history and establishment of many instrument collections, thus representing the history of the people who made, used and collected them, as well as of the museums in which they are now housed. From this perspective these instruments can be effective research and educational tools for people of diverse interests, including experts (curators, historians, museologists, musicians, instrument makers, etc.) and the wider public<sup>41</sup>. With the passing of time, these reconstructions have begun to constitute a special – though until recently ignored – category among the broad variety of objects that one can find in museums. Being neither originals nor fakes, such artefacts have gradually gained their own unique historical »aura«, thus rightfully earning a place in future museum exhibitions.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The preliminary results of the research for this article were discussed by the author in his papers »Neither Originals Nor Fakes: Evaluating Modern Copies of Ancient Musical Instruments«, presented at the International Conference of the Leibniz Research Alliance Historical Authenticity: »Museums – Places of Authenticity?«, Mainz, 3 and 4 March 2016, and »The Various Faces of the ›Authentic‹ in Musical Instrument Collections: A Problem or an Opportunity?«, presented at the Annual Conference of the International Committee of Museums and Collections of Instruments and Music (ICOM-CIMCIM) »Musical Instrument Museums: Interpreting the Present«, MiCo, Milan, 3 to 9 July 2016. – The author would like to thank the following persons, presented alphabetically, for sharing information or providing access to instruments and archival material in museum collections: Silke Berdux (Deutsches Museum, Munich); Anne-Emmanuelle Ceulemans (Muziekinstrumentenmuseum, Brussels); Jean-Philippe Echard (Musée de la Musique, Paris); Josef Focht (Musikinstrumentenmuseum der Universität Leipzig); Alban Framboisier and Florence Gétreau (IReMus-CNRS, Paris); Marisa Ruiz Magaldi (Museu de la Música, Barcelona); and Marie Martens and Lisbet Torp (Danish Music Museum – Musikhistorisk Museum & The Carl Claudius Collection, Copenhagen). The author is also grateful to the Leibniz Research Alliance Historical Authenticity for the financial support of this research during a fellowship at the Deutsches Museum in 2016.

## Notes

- 1) Barnes 1984; Watson 1991; Andrew 2005; Barclay 2005; Kevin et al. 2008; Sparr 2009; Pouloupoulos 2010; Barclay/Watson 2014.
- 2) Koster 2000; Moens 2002; Restelli 2013; Barnes/Beare/Libin 2014; Pouloupoulos 2016.
- 3) Deutsches Museum 1906, 448. 457. 459; Powell 1996, 233-244; Libin 2014, 689.
- 4) Haine 1988, 230-235; Libin/Myers 2014, 609-610.
- 5) Wackernagel 1997, 336-339.
- 6) Page 1974, 167; Baumann 1999, 29.
- 7) Page 1974, 166-167; Remnant 1975, 47-49; Polk 1989, 508-518.
- 8) Tindemans 2000, 293.
- 9) Remnant 1968-1969, 16; Cook 1992, 138; Baumann 1999, 29.
- 10) Remnant 1975, 47-49; Baumann 1999, 34.
- 11) Remnant 2014, 272-278.
- 12) Dehail 2017; 2018.
- 13) Inv. nos 15582, 15583, 15588, and 15589; Wackernagel 1997, 340-341.
- 14) Rühlmann 1882, 37. 114-115. 119. 197.
- 15) Fuchs 1963, 19-20.
- 16) Verwaltungsarchiv, DMA, VA 1756 N.
- 17) Wackernagel 1997, 336-341; Pouloupoulos 2016, 110.
- 18) Inv. no. 1331; De Keyser 2007, 80.
- 19) Gendron 1997; Gétreau/Framboisier 2015.
- 20) Virdung 1882, 11; Agricola 1896, 55. 92. 102-103. 198; Praetorius 1929, pl. XXXIV no. 14.
- 21) Galpin 1910, 87; Ruth-Sommer 1920, 159-168.
- 22) Mahillon 1900, 14-15.
- 23) Tolbecque 1898, 8; 1903, 8.
- 24) Gétreau 1996, 310-314.
- 25) Inv. nos E.0653, E.927.2.11, and E.980.2.632.
- 26) Inv. nos E.0653 and E.927.2.11.
- 27) Inv. no. E.980.2.632.
- 28) Hammerich 1911, 102.
- 29) Inv. no. D 106.
- 30) Inv. no. 24505; Wackernagel 1997, 342.
- 31) Verwaltungsarchiv, DMA, VA 1758 H.
- 32) Kinsky 1912, 374. 378.
- 33) Inv. no. 766.
- 34) Powell 1996, 233-239.
- 35) Inv. nos MDMB 1282, 1280, and 1303 respectively.
- 36) Escalas i Llimona 1991, 145-146.
- 37) Inv. no. 79325.
- 38) Wackernagel 1997, 343.
- 39) Tindemans 2000, 293.
- 40) Rose-Jones 2016.
- 41) Myers 1994.

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### Zusammenfassung / Summary

#### Weder Originale noch Fälschungen: Rekonstruktionen mittelalterlicher Fideln im *Fin de Siècle*

In den letzten Jahrzehnten ist ein zunehmendes Bewusstsein für den Erhalt historischer Musikinstrumente und ein gleichzeitiges Interesse für die Untersuchung ihrer Provenienz und Authentizität zu beobachten. Im Gegensatz zu dieser Tendenz, wurde bisher wenig über die Authentizität von Nachbildungen geschrieben, die für private Sammler oder Museen im späten 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhundert angefertigt wurden. In diesem Artikel soll im Rahmen des breiteren Diskurses über »Historische Authentizität« neues Licht auf die Konzepte und Praktiken geworfen werden, die bei der Rekonstruktion historischer Streichinstrumente im *Fin de Siècle* zum Einsatz kamen. Durch die Untersuchung von Fragen bezüglich der Originalität von Rekonstruktionen mittelalterlicher Fideln im Deutschen Museum in München sowie ähnlicher Beispiele von Sammlungen in Brüssel, Paris, Kopenhagen, Leipzig und Barcelona, wird die Rolle solcher Nachbildungen als Museumsartefakte und deren Einfluss auf unsere Wahrnehmung »authentischer« mittelalterlicher Instrumente diskutiert.

#### Neither Originals nor Fakes: Reconstructions of Medieval Fiddles at the *Fin de Siècle*

The last decades have witnessed a growing awareness about the preservation of historical musical instruments and a parallel interest in the investigation of their provenance and authenticity. In contrast, little has been written so far about the authenticity of reconstructions of musical instruments which were made for private collectors or museums during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This article aims to shed new light on the concepts and practices employed in the reconstruction of ancient bowed instruments at the *fin de siècle* within the broader discourse on »historical authenticity«. By investigating issues of originality in reconstructions of medieval fiddles from the collection of the Deutsches Museum in Munich, as well as in similar examples from collections in Brussels, Paris, Copenhagen, Leipzig, and Barcelona, the article discusses the role of such reconstructions as museum artefacts and their impact in shaping our perception of »authentic« medieval instruments.