

ICTM Study Group on Musical Instruments

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Introduction

The history of this very early study group cannot be looked at separately from the larger picture of the Council and its development. Since musical instruments were a rather obvious topic of interest that combined all types of more or less substantiated knowledge on diverse peoples, it was fairly easy to establish this study group in the framework of what was then an international organization of professionals in the area of ethnomusicology, a freshly emerging discipline of the humanities at that time.

On the website of the study group appears a very short statement on the first page:

The Study Group on Musical Instruments is an informal association of scholars, instrument makers and musicians who share interests in studying all aspects of traditional musical instruments. The study group was founded in 1962 by Erich Stockmann within the framework of the International Folk Musical Council / International Council for Traditional Music. (<http://www.uhv.sav.sk/popularis/>; accessed 5 July 2020)

In order to understand Erich Stockmann (1926–2003) and his strong interest in musical instruments, it is important to look into his surroundings and the life stories of his peers. Among them is Ernst Emsheimer (1904–1989), who must have had a very significant impact on Stockmann's initiative to establish a study group on folk musical instruments. Emsheimer's network has been well studied by Madeleine Modin. She observes:

Emsheimer's interest in the origins of music and Western polyphony led him, like many of his fellow students, to studies of primitive music, as it was called at the time. Within this sphere of ethnomusicologists he got his principal and most extensive network and The International Folk Music Council, and later International Council for Traditional Music, ICTM, became an important forum for them. (Modin 2013: 256)

Stockmann tried in many ways to continue the legacies of Hornbostel and Abraham, along with being an effective organizer, administrator, and eventual president (1982–1997) of the large group of people that the ICTM became. The old-fashioned and heavily criticized smell of the early Berlin school of ethnomu-

sicology still accompanied his efforts in discovering Europe's folk musical instruments. The foundation of the study group helped him very much in carrying out his dreams of a united European approach to ethnomusicology that stood against the supposed shallowness of American professional associations. The later developments in Europe and among ethnomusicological scholars made these dreams take another and rather unexpected direction.

The long life of the study group has not always been without challenges. When Stockmann stepped down as chair in 2000, he left an organizational and scholarly heritage that had to be reconsidered in a painful process of re-establishing and modernizing organology.

Time periods

The website of the study group¹ contains basic information about meetings, symposia, and publications.

Here I discuss some meetings and resulting publications. The first meeting took place in Budapest in 1964 on invitation of the Institute for Folk Music Research of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. The overall topic was "Methods of documenting folk musical instruments." The programme was organized by Erich Stockmann, and the local organizer was Zoltán Kodály. No publication resulted from this meeting. As most of the participants spoke German, the meeting used this language.

The second meeting in 1967 was organized by Ludvik Kunz at the Ethnographic Institute of the Moravské Museum in Brno, Czechoslovakia. The topic of the first meeting was continued, and the typology of musical instruments was discussed. The first volume of *Studia instrumentorum musicae popularis* originates from this meeting. This volume was edited by Erich Stockmann, was published in 1969, and was the prototype in the

¹ <http://ictmusic.org/group/folk-musical-instruments> (accessed 5 July 2020) or <http://www.uhv.sav.sk/popularis/> (accessed 5 July 2020).

design of the entire first series. The entire series was published by Musikhistoriska museet in Stockholm, and Ernst Emsheimer was the series editor.

Two years later, in 1969, the third meeting took place in Stockholm, following the invitation of Emsheimer to the Musikhistoriska Museet Stockholm. The topic of this meeting was “Methodological problems in acoustic research about folk musical instruments and the construction of folk music ensembles.” The second volume of the study group’s series resulted from this meeting and was published in 1972. The third volume of the series was a Festschrift to Emsheimer on the occasion of his seventieth birthday, edited by Gustav Hilleström and Emsheimer (1974).

Many of the meetings in [table 1](#) below were organized in Europe; resulting publications in the named series and in the same design are noted. The topics were quite ambitious and also telling. We may identify a first period from 1962 to 2000, after which Stockmann stepped down as chair of the study group. This was followed by a transition period with irregular publications and changes in leadership and research direction. After 2009, the situation stabilized again, and the new series of *Studia instrumentorum musicae popularis* represents a large part of this recent development through more than a hundred peer-reviewed articles.

The printed outcomes and their digital additions (audio files and audiovisual files uploaded to specific platforms) can be easily found on our website, where there are further links to the contents of the resulting publications and an indication of how to purchase them.²

Publications and other activities

In 2009, the study group established a new series of *Studia instrumentorum musicae popularis*. This was discussed and agreed to by study group members, as well as among other ICTM members during the meeting in Erkner and in virtual follow-ups. It was felt that the title of the series should be preserved since it had a number of important preceding issues in a unique format, and was chosen by its founder and long-standing chair, Stockmann. The format of the early series allowed for a normal text flow and an additional side column. Since modern media and online possibilities make such an additional placement of information obsolete through the availability of different reading windows and applications, the new series adopted a very simple and clear layout. Furthermore, publication guidelines were revised to encourage diverse research contributions and an important code of ethics was developed

that adheres to international standards of authorship and responsibilities. Neither the old nor the new series published reviews of other publications or events. One of the outstanding features of the new series is its regular publication, mostly occurring in the same year as the symposium, from which selected papers are included.

A long discussion took place concerning changing the name of the study group from Study Group on Folk Musical Instruments to Study Group on Musical Instruments. Some members argued that although we are all familiar with and support the dynamic development of our research methods and goals, the original name is best retained, as it testifies to the historical basis of the study group and the sub-discipline of ethno-organology. Others added arguments about the inclusiveness of the notion of “folk,” or questioned instead recent developments in ethnography in general. Nevertheless, in 2015, the name was changed during the business meeting in Luang Prabang. The title of the publication series, which corresponds to the old study group name in Latin, has been retained since it indeed reflects the historical origins of the group. In order to simplify the matter, recently we prefer to use the abbreviation SIMP* to refer to the new series. The editorial board consists of seven members from all continents. All members have PhDs.

In the period until 2009, most activities, meetings, and symposia, were primarily focussed on Europe. This may have resulted from the way of starting ethnomusicological research in this part of the world, and the need for renewing musicology within post-war Europe. Among those pioneering studies into the traditional practice of instrumental music were, as noted above, Emsheimer, Stockmann, Birthe Trærup, and later on Oskár Elschek, Marianne Bröcker, and Jürgen Elsner. In searching for ethnographic details, proofs for original ideas regarding technologies or repertoires, the concept of nation states and the documentation of achievements within their territories were often emphasized.³ Over the decades, only very little in-depth research about parts of the world outside Europe was considered, and much of this work showed a rather colonial approach that did not contradict the newly experienced European openness towards the idea of “folk.” In order to overcome this way of documenting, listing, quantifying, or proving ideological ownership or local achievements, the study group underwent a transformation, becoming a community of experts contributing to discourses that go far beyond the theme of musical instruments as objects or tools in music production.

2 <http://www.uhv.sav.sk/popularis/STUDIA/publications.htm> (accessed 5 July 2020).

3 An overview of topics is given in the table and in the contents lists of earlier publications: http://www.uhv.sav.sk/popularis/STUDIA/SIMP_bibliogr.htm (accessed 5 July 2020).

Table 1. Scholarly events of the Study Group on Musical Instruments.

| No. and year of scholarly event | Place of event and supporting local institution | Inviting member | Topic(s) of event and resulting publication, if any |
|---------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|---|
| 1 1964 | Budapest, Hungary Institut für Volksmusikforschung der Ungarischen Akademie der Wissenschaften | Zoltán Kodály | Documentation methods for folk instruments |
| 2 1967 | Brno, Czechoslovakia Ethnographisches Institut des Mährischen Museums | Ludvik Kunz | Typology of folk music instruments Documentation methods for folk music instruments → <i>Studia instrumentorum musicae popularis</i> 1, 1969 |
| 3 1969 | Stockholm, Sweden Musikhistorisches Museum | Ernst Emsheimer | Methodological problems of acoustic research on folk music instruments Forms of ensemble formation in instrumental folk music → <i>Studia instrumentorum musicae popularis</i> 2, 1972 |
| 4 1973 | Balatonalmádi, Hungary Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Népzenei Kutatóintézete, Budapest | Bálint Sárosi | Principles and methods of a historical research in folk musical instruments → <i>Studia instrumentorum musicae popularis</i> 4, 1976 |
| 5 1975 | Brunnen, Switzerland Kuratorium “Die Volksmusikinstrumente der Schweiz” der Schweizerischen Geisteswissenschaftlichen Gesellschaft | Brigitte Geiser | Principles and methods of a historical research in folk musical instruments; The historical development of shepherd instruments → <i>Studia instrumentorum musicae popularis</i> 5, 1977 |
| 6 1977 | Kazimierz Dolny, Poland Instytut Sztuki Polskiej Akademii Nauk, Warsaw | Ludwik Bielawski | Musician – instrument – music → <i>Studia instrumentorum musicae popularis</i> 6, 1979 |
| 7 1980 | Seggau, Austria Institut für Musikethnologie an der Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst, Graz | Wolfgang Suppan | The player of folk musical instruments → <i>Studia instrumentorum musicae popularis</i> 7, 1981 |
| 8 1983 | Piran, Yugoslavia Sekcija za glasbeno narodopisje Inštituta za slovensko narodopisje Slovenske akademije znanosti in umetnosti, Ljubljana | Zmaga Kumer and Julijan Strajnar | The world of children’s instruments and the relationship to the culture of adults; The significance of inter-cultural processes for the history of folk musical instruments → <i>Studia instrumentorum musicae popularis</i> 8, 1985 |
| 9 1986 | Orta San Giulio, Italy Civica scuola d’arte drammatica, Milan | Roberto Leydi | Norms and individuality in the production of folk musical instruments → <i>Studia instrumentorum musicae popularis</i> 9, 1989 |
| 10 1989 | Lillehammer, Norway Norsk Folkemusikksamling and University of Oslo | Reidar Sevåg | Instrumental ensembles and their music → <i>Studia instrumentorum musicae popularis</i> 10, 1992 |
| 11 1992 | Smolenice, Slovakia Slovenská akadémia ved, Bratislava | Oskár Elsček | (No specific topic) → <i>Studia instrumentorum musicae popularis</i> 11, 1995 |
| 12 1995 | Terschelling, the Netherlands Instituut voor Muziekwetenschap, Universiteit van Amsterdam | Rembrandt F. Wolpert | Analysis of instrumental music → <i>Studia instrumentorum musicae popularis</i> 12, 2004 |
| 13 1998 | Copenhagen, Denmark Musikhistorisk Museum | Lisbet Torp | Traditional musical instruments in museum: Collecting, preserving, researching, and presenting; The revival of folk musical instruments |
| 14 2000 | Markneukirchen, Germany Westfälische Hochschule, Zwickau (Fach-Hochschule) | Andreas Michel | Traditional musical instruments in the age of mass media; Professional making of traditional musical instruments |

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|----------------------|--|--|---|
| 15 2002 | Falun, Sweden The Swedish Centre for Folk Music and Jazz Research (Svenska Center for Folkmusik och Jazzforskning) | Gunnar Ternhag and Dan Lundberg | Interaction between instrument makers and musicians; The introduction of new instruments from historical or contemporary perspectives; Nordic folk music instruments in contexts within or outside the Nordic region → <i>Studia instrumentorum musicae popularis</i> 15, 2005 (in a different format as part of the institutional series) |
| 16 2006 | Vilnius, Lithuania Lietuvių literatūros ir tautosakos institutas | Rūta Zarskienė and Austė Nakienė | “Classical” instruments in folk music and folk musical instruments in “classical” music; Folk musical instruments as symbols; Folk musical instruments around the Baltic Sea → <i>Tautosakos darbai</i> 32, 2006 |
| 17 2009 | Erkner, Germany Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft | Gisa Jähnichen and Timkehet Teffera | Percussion; Migration of musical instruments; Current research → <i>Studia instrumentorum musicae popularis</i> (new series) 1, 2009 |
| 18 2011 | Stubičke Toplice, Croatia Institut za etnologiju i folkloristiku, Zagreb | Irena Miholić | Instrumental melodies and voice construction; Rural musical instruments in the 21st century; New research → <i>Studia instrumentorum musicae popularis</i> (new series) 2, 2011 |
| 19 2013 | Bamberg, Germany Schwenk und Seggelke Werkstätte für innovativen Klarinettenbau | Marianne Bröcker | Wind instruments in regional cultures; Social significance of instrumental music practice; New research → <i>Studia instrumentorum musicae popularis</i> (new series) 3, 2013 |
| 20 2015 | Luang Prabang, Laos National Library of Laos and Luang Prabang City Council | Thongbang Homsombat and Gisa Jähnichen | Song instruments – dance instruments; Emotional implications of instrumental sound; New research → <i>Studia Instrumentorum musicae popularis</i> (new series) 4, 2016 |
| 21 2017 | Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina Muzička akademija Univerziteta u Sarajevu | Jasmina Talam | Musical instrument makers between local quality and global market; Permissibility of instrumental sound in society; New research → <i>SIMP*</i> (new series) 5, 2017 |
| 22 2019 | Lisbon, Portugal Universidade Nova de Lisboa | João Soeiro de Carvalho | Musical instruments and the senses; Mobility and colonization of musical instruments and instrumental repertoires; New research → <i>SIMP*</i> (new series) 6, 2019 |
| 23 2021 (planned) | Colombo, Sri Lanka University of the Visual and Performing Arts | Saumya Liyanage and Chinthaka P. Meddegoda | Musical Instruments and food; Inventions and sustainability of instrumental music → <i>SIMP*</i> (new series) 7, 2021 (planned) |

Stockmann often stayed for relatively long periods in Stockholm, and became a close friend of Emsheimer’s (figure 1). The latter made a considerable effort “to establish contacts with scholars, musicians and craftsmen in Eastern Europe” (Modin 2013:266).

Sweden’s position as a country between ideological systems, as well as the political contacts that both Emsheimer and Stockmann had, made it possible for the Study Group on Folk Musical Instruments to gather scholars from Western and Eastern Europe, in order to continue working towards a vision of social balance. Emsheimer’s influence on Stockmann’s further progress derived from his manifold experiences with scholars working with different collections of musical instruments throughout Europe, such as, Curt Sachs (1881–1959), Marius Schneider (1903–1982), and Alfred Berner (1910–2007), who worked with the

instrument collection at the Staatliches Institut für deutsche Musikforschung in Berlin. Sachs was later employed at the Musée du l’Homme in Paris before he moved to the USA. André Schaeffner (1895–1980) and Claudie Marcel-Dubois (1913–1989) also worked at the Musée du l’Homme. Schaeffner later worked with the instrument collection at Trocadéro in Paris. Edith Gerson-Kiwi (1908–1992) founded the Museum of Musical Instruments of the Rubin Academy of Music in Jerusalem. All these people, though not always directly involved in the activities of the Council, contributed to the formation of central views within the Study Group on Musical Instruments.

After the reunification of Germany in 1990, a number of scholars from the East became silent, discontinued their work, or withdrew from scholarly activities due to unemployment or because of their necessary refocus on

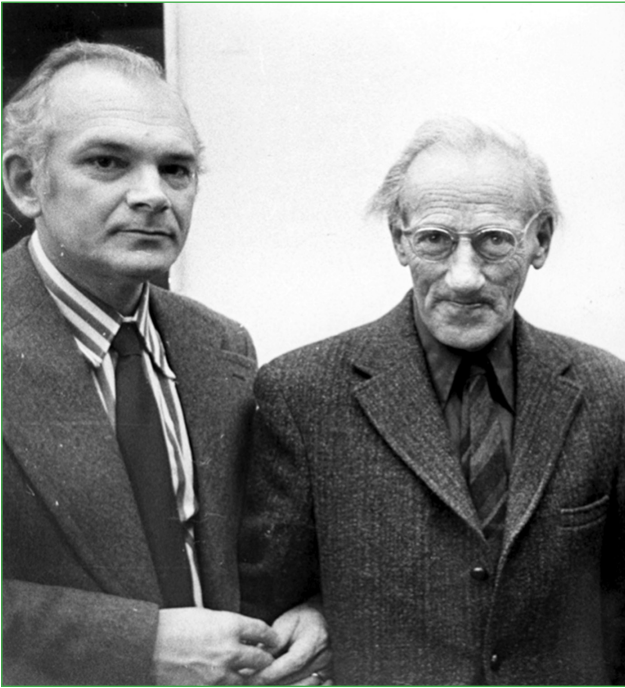


Figure 1. Erich Stockmann and Ernst Emsheimer (photo as published in Modin 2013:263; used with permission).

other essential problems in their lives. Stockmann's good intentions were also not always valued as he wished. Such reasons, in combination with severe health issues, ultimately led to his retirement as chair.

Stockmann's immediate successor, Andreas Michel, was not comfortable with his new role and soon declined to work as chair, leaving necessary decisions to a few people, particularly Gunnar Terhag and several other colleagues. In 2007, during the ICTM world conference in Vienna, Hans-Hinrich Thedens became interim chair, chosen by the majority present at an informal business meeting of the study group. He started to work on the next study group meeting that was planned to take place in Berlin, but quit his work eight months later due to personal reasons. Since preparation for the meeting were already underway, Timkehet Teffera and I took over. We were both former students of Elsner's, who was one of the few study group members who had been active since its foundation. The participants of the 2009 study group meeting decided to have a new election for a chair via electronic voting. Based on the successful experiences of this first electronic election, such elections were subsequently implemented more widely within the Council, particularly following the large 2013 election at the world conference in Shanghai. In the study group, there were five candidates for chair in each election, and Gisa Jähnichen was elected in 2010 and re-elected in 2016 through a similar procedure. As one of the earliest study groups, it has no detailed bylaws regarding re-election. This was simply an acceptance of common rules at this point of development.

New horizons

The study group changed over the decades from (a) a community of dedicated collectors and archivists of musical instruments, such as Ernst Emsheimer, Ludvik Kunz, and Birthe Trærup; to (b) a group of scholars investigating the historical processes of musical instruments in their immediate environment of which Doris Stockmann, Jürgen Elsner, and Marianne Bröcker were excellent examples; to (c) a large, global, and very diverse group of all of these plus others who try to focus not only on historical aspects and environment, but also having a wider vision of the discipline and the contribution of modern organology to the understanding of human creativity. This group is not a closed society of ethnomusicological academics. It is and always has been an open space for anyone who tries to gain more insights, and who tries to leave useful practical traces, as well as for those who provoke discussions and introduce ethical issues in research and its application. The study group always welcomes non-ICTM participants and tries to attract new members through the quality of outcomes and networking.

Since the Study Group on Musical Instruments has existed for such a long time without a full set of rules and bylaws, it may be also proof that such tools are not always necessary in order to exist and to work effectively. The regularity of publications from the study group is widely unmatched, and the consistency of encouraging new members to participate in this scholarly community is heart-warming (figure 2).

This does not mean that there are no critical voices. In the future, symposia will have to be organized more often outside of Europe in order to support local developments in research and the application of knowledge. During the early period, specific research areas and cooperation among scholars determined the venues for meetings, but subsequently travel opportunities and varying political backgrounds have had to be considered. The further the study group members reached out, the more difficult the organization of truly comprehensive symposia became. Some members and other interested scholars cannot attend symposia due to difficult visa requirements, lack of funding, or the difficulties of getting time off. While such problems are not new, advanced technological possibilities such as virtual presentations and the quick booking of travel routes with subsequent reimbursements, become more and more common. However, another big challenge has been the increasing membership of researchers who are not continuously employed, who are not employed at all, or who are employed in other sectors and have to arrange free time in order to stay connected and up-to-date. Such people should not be excluded from research and intellectual life within the



Figure 2. Participants of the twentieth symposium of the Study Group on Musical Instruments. Luang Prabang, Laos, 2015 (photo courtesy of Gisa Jähnichen).

study group and should not be treated differently in any way. Thanks to a case-by-case consideration, specific solutions through personal funding are sought, as well as other forms of academic solidarity.

It is not the time to embrace all modern possibilities, since the experience of face-to-face exchanges and the broad discussions resulting from direct input can hardly be replaced. However, we should not avoid rethinking past practices and improving them where necessary.

At the moment, the study group enjoys its revival on a global level, in close relations with colleagues from other fields and organizations, and the many new directions in researching all aspects related to musical instruments, instrumental music, and again object-related features recently made observable through modern technology. We are looking optimistically into the future and try our best to increase the body of knowledge in the study of musical instruments. Additionally, we keep our minds open towards inter- and cross-disciplinary projects, which may grow out of the obstacles that accompanied the long life of this study group.

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*SIMP**: see *Studia Instrumentorum Musicae Popularis* (new series) *Studia Instrumentorum Musicae Popularis*. 1969–2005. Vol. 1–15. Stockholm: Musikmuseet. (contents of volumes 1–12 can be found at: http://www.uhv.sav.sk/popularis/STUDIA/SIMP_bibliogr.htm).

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