



Nicolas Slonimsky: Centenarian Lexicographer and Musicologist

AMONG MUSICAL DICTIONARIES and encyclopedias originating in the United States, none have stimulated wider use nor appeared in more frequent re- editions than *Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians* (© 1900, 1905, 1919, 1940, ⁵1958, ⁵⁵1971, by G. Schirmer, Inc.; ⁶1978, ⁷1984, ⁸1992 by Schirmer Books, A Division of the Macmillan Publishing Company) and Oscar Thompson's *The International Cyclopedia of Music and Musicians* (© 1938, 1943, 1944, ⁴1946, ⁵1949, ⁶1952, ⁷1956, ⁸1958, 1964, 1975, by Dodd, Mead & Company). Nicolas Slonimsky, celebrant of his centenary April 27, 1994, edited the fifth through eighth editions of *Baker's* and the fourth through eighth of *Thompson's*.

Baker's and *Thompson's* were already encyclopedic standbys before Slonimsky took over. But he himself at age 44 originated the encyclopedic *Music Since 1990* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, ¹1937, ²1938; Coleman-Ross, ³1949; Charles Scribner's Sons, ⁴1971, *Supplement*, 1986; Schirmer Books, ⁵1994)—a vademecum which from its inception established him as a tireless corrector of mistakes in other lexicons¹ and a transmitter of choice

¹ Divided into three major sections, the first edition contains in Part Two (pp. 437–520) a “Concise biographical dictionary” followed by “Corrections and additions” to A. Eaglefield Hull's *A Dictionary of Modern Music and Musicians*, London, 1924 (“a pioneer volume and, despite an overabundance of egregious errors and misconceptions, of service as a guide”); *Grove's Dictionary*, 3rd edition, London, 1927; Hugo Riemann's *Musik-Lexikon* eleventh edition, supervised by Alfred

documents² in English or translated from German, Italian, Russian, and other languages.

But despite these undeniable lexicographical triumphs starting as early as 1937, Slonimsky himself inspired a paltry 33-line article by Paula Morgan³ in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*

Einstein, Berlin, 1929; and H. J. Moser's *Musik-Lexikon*, Berlin, 1935.

In his “Lexicographis secundus post Herculem labori,” *Notes of the Music Library Association*, 33/4 (June 1977), 764, Slonimsky quoted Percy Scholes's comment on the demise [November 4, 1928] of Arthur Eaglefield Hull: “Hull's suicide was the result of my exposure of his thefts in his book, *Music, Classical, Romantic and Modern*. He threw himself under a train.”

² Part III of the 1937 edition headed “Letters and documents” contains 13 items, all of which are retained in editions through the fourth: Pius X's *Motu Proprio*; The Black List of Disapproved Music; Three Anti-Modernist Poems: 1884, 1909, 1924; The Art of Noises; Society for Private Musical Performances in Vienna (A Statement of Aims); Music and the Classes (The Ideological Platform of the Russian Association of Proletarian Musicians); Futurist Manifesto of Aeromusic; History of the Dalcroze Method of Eurythmics; Letter from George Bernard Shaw; Letter from the President of the Composers' League in Japan; What is Atonality (A Radio Talk by Alban Berg); *Gebrauchsmusik* and *Gemeinschaftsmusik*; Letter from Arnold Schoenberg on the Origin of the Twelve-Tone System.

³ Sole author of some 150 biographies in *The New Grove Dictionary of American Music*, Paula Margaret Morgan (*b* Modesto, California, August 11, 1935)—Princeton University Music Librarian since 1964—obtained her B.A. at Mills College in 1957, M.A. at Columbia University in 1959, and M.L.S. at University of California, Berkeley, in 1964.



(1980), xvii, 383–384, an article shorter than the line entry on the Russian soprano Oda Slobodskaya (1888–1970) by Desmond Shawe-Taylor that immediately precedes his profile. As if 33 lines in 1980 were too much, Slonimsky returns six years later in *The New Grove Dictionary of American Music*, iv, 241–242, with an even slimmer article by Paula Morgan—this time comprising a mere 26 lines. Next comes the “Sly and the Family Stone” article (iv, 242–243) occupying 60 lines.

Faced with this kind of downplaying in the chief dictionary in English and in its American offshoot, Slonimsky nonetheless remains at age 100 a name scarcely less consequential in the domain of musical lexicography than Fétis and Riemann (both of whom differed from George Grove because they were soloists, not captains of a team). Although not the tight-lipped summarizer in the fewest lines possible that Hugo Riemann (1849–1919) became in his lexicons, Slonimsky does bear extensive comparison with François-Joseph Fétis (1784–1871), because both composed, both wrote prolifically on the widest possible variety of musical topics, both never hesitated to offer their personal opinions, and both are now especially valued for their biographical articles having to do with close contemporaries. As a composer, Fétis continued active from the first of his four opéras-comiques *L’amant et le mari* (June 8, 1820) to his Concerto for flute and orchestra (1869). Slonimsky’s published piano pieces began with a *Russian Prelude*, Op. 1 (1914) published at Providence, Rhode Island by Axelrod in 1945, and six decades later blossomed into “50 quaquaversal piano pieces” collectively called *Minitudes* (1971–1977). According to Wilfried Brennecke’s “Slonimsky” article in *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, xii (1965), 768–769, his first orchestral work was an *Overture on an Ancient Greek Theme* (1933, premiered at Hollywood Bowl in 1933), followed by *Four Simple Pieces* (1938, Boston, 1942).⁴

⁴His alphabetically catalogued compositions in Library of Congress file cards (first editions) range thus: April, song, words by Theodosia Garrison (Boston: White-Smith, 1928); Big Ben, piano (Boston, etc.: Oliver Ditson, 1932); Two études for advanced students, piano (Providence: Axelrod, 1946); Grave-stones at Hancock, N. H., texts from words engraved on tombstones, voice and piano (Axelrod, 1946); The hunting horn, piano (Oliver Ditson, 1931); Impressions, 2 songs for high voice, words by Oscar Wilde (1. Silhouettes, 2. The flight of the moon) (White-Smith, 1927); Little Suite, for flute, piccolo, oboe, clar-

Fétis’s music appreciation text, *La musique mise à la portée de tout le monde; exposé succinct de tout ce qui est nécessaire pour juger de cet art, et pour en parler, sans en avoir fait une étude approfondie* (Paris, 1830; 3. ed. Brandus et c^{ie}, 1847) boasts a longer title than Slonimsky’s *The Road to Music* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1947; 178 pp.), but both serve the same purpose. In her review (*Notes of the Music Library Association*, iv/2 [March 1947], 186–187), Virginia Cunningham designated its suitable readership as being not children—despite Slonimsky’s having culled much of its contents from articles “published several years ago in the *Christian Science Monitor*, on the children’s page.” Instead, like Fétis’s appreciation text, its traversal of music theory in the first 12 chapters, of musical forms and instruments in chapters 13 through 23, of history in chapters 24 through 31 (ranging from “Greece, the Cradle of Music” to Jazz, Swing, and Boogie Woogie) meets the needs of “the serious beginner of whatever age.”

Fétis’s *Curiosités historiques de la musique, complément nécessaire de La musique mise à la portée de tout le monde* (Paris: Janet et Cotelle, 1830; 454 pp.)—consisting of articles reprinted from his *Revue musicale* (founded by him in 1827)—parallels Slonimsky’s *A Thing or Two About Music* (New York: Allen, Towne & Heath, 1948; 305 pp.). However, not even Fétis had the opportunity to review his own *Curiosités*. In Slonimsky’s review of his own *A Thing or Two* in *Notes*, v/4 (September

inet, military drum, suspended cymbal, triangle, portable typewriter, and cat’s meow (New York: Coleman-Ross, 1955); Modinha russo-brasileira, piano (Axelrod, 1942); My little pool, song, words by Paul S. Nickerson (White-Smith, 1929); My toy balloon, variations on a Brazilian tune, orchestral score (Axelrod, 1942); Four picturesque pieces for ambitious young pianists (1. The opening of the piano 2. Dreams and drums 3. Kiddies on the keys 4. Country dance) (Boston: Riker, Brown & Wellington, 1931); Four Russian melodies, for B-flat clarinet and piano (New York: Hill-Coleman, 1936); Russian prelude, Op. 1, piano (Axelrod, 1945); Silhouettes ibériennes, piano (1. Aromas de leyenda 2. Jota 3. Festive dance) (Axelrod, 1949); Studies in black & white, piano (San Francisco: New Music, [Vol. 3, no. 1], 1929); Tintinnabulations, piano (Oliver Ditson, 1935); Variations on a Kindergarten tune, piano (Axelrod, 1942); A very great musician, song, words by T. Marziale (Axelrod, 1947); Yellowstone Park Suite, piano (1. Continental Divide 2. Black bears 3. Paint-Pot Basin 4. Fumarole and solfataras 5. Clepsydra (Water-Clock Geyser) 6. Roaring Mountain 7. Old Faithful) (Axelrod, 1957).

1948), 564–565, he begins his second paragraph with these observations:

Mr. Slonimsky's obvious aim is to shock and to impress. In the essay on *Modulating Birthdays*, he indulges in his favorite sport of chasing wrong dates in music dictionaries. Some of his shots have misfired, however.

Among instances of errors, he writes:

Mr. Slonimsky tells us that when the remains of Beethoven and Schubert were exhumed in 1863, Schubert's skull was photographed but not Beethoven's. Well, he can find a photograph of Beethoven's skull in the Beethoven centennial issue of *Die Musik* (Apr. 1927, xix. Jhrg., Heft 7, 6th plate following p. 496). On p. 33, Mr. Slonimsky credits Gershwin with saying "Discords make the sweetest airs," but Butler said it first in *Hudibras*, Part III, Canto 1, line 919. The author of the play used by Mozart for *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* was not Butzner (p. 95), but Bretzner.

It is of course true that Fétis did not travel extensively in order to gather his pioneering published information on foreign musical cultures. Nonetheless, Barbara Krader saluted Fétis thus in her "Ethnomusicology" article published in *The New Grove*, vi, 276:

One exceptional work deserves to be mentioned positively, F.-J. Fétis's *Histoire générale de la musique* (1869). It discusses not only China, Japan and India, but even Kalmyks, Kirghiz, Kamchadals and other peoples of Siberia; above all, Fétis saw that the history of music was the history of mankind, and that all peoples should be included.

The peoples of distant regions not surveyed by Fétis inhabited the stretches of the Western Hemisphere that Slonimsky made his own in his epochal *Music of Latin America* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1945; 374 pp.).⁶ Both Henry Cowell in *Notes*, II/3 (June 1945), 171–172, and Gilbert Chase in *The Musical Quarterly*, xxII/1 (January 1946), 140–143, reviewed it, but with diametrically opposed

⁵ Christopher Freidrich Bretzner (1748–1807), author of the *Belmont und Constanze* libretto written in 1780 for Johann André, protested in 1783 against the additions for Vienna made at Mozart's suggestion by Gottlieb Stephanie the Younger.

⁶ Translated by M. Eloisa González Kraak as *La música de América Latina* (Buenos Aires: El Ateneo, 1947; 430 pp.). Slonimsky's "Dictionary of Latin American musicians, songs and dances, and musical instruments" at pp. 295–325 of the English occupies pp. 337–377 of the Spanish.

results. According to Cowell, "with a little good will, the book may well be highly valued for what it is: an invaluable compendium of information on many aspects of music in the southern republics unconventionally infused with the lively and intense personality of the author."⁷

Slonimsky tried, as far as possible, to discover and list everyone who could possibly be called a composer, instead of presuming to select and eliminate according to merit. He is not backward about expressing a critical opinion, but this is not his main purpose. He sees himself as a sort of cartographer, mapping the creative music of Latin America. To critics of his rather extreme inclusiveness, several of whom he quotes at length, Slonimsky points out that map-makers plot the arid as well as the fertile portions of the earth.⁷

Chase begins his acerbic *Music Quarterly* review with this appraisal: "This book is divided into three parts. The first might be described as a bureau of general misinformation, flamboyantly decorated with colorful but irrelevant examples of the author's rampant exhibitionism." Continuing, Chase decrees that "Erroneous or misleading statements are strewn throughout the book as thickly as autumn leaves on a suburban lawn." He concludes thus: "It is difficult to see how Slonimsky's reputation for accuracy can survive the publication of this book."⁸

Slonimsky's *Lexicon of Musical Invective* (New York: Coleman-Ross, 1953, 296 pp.; 2d ed., 1965,

⁷ In Carlton Sprague Smith's "Music Publications in Brazil," *Notes*, IV/4 (September 1947), 426, he quotes Otto Mayer-Serra's appraisal of Slonimsky's Mexican haul thus:

When Nicolas Slonimsky left Mexico, he took with him over a hundred orchestral manuscripts. From his lexicographical viewpoint, this constituted a veritable triumph. But when we examine these works from an esthetic angle, we find that 40 per cent are nothing more than conservatory exercises; and 40 per cent, although technically adequate, are conventional in form and style. Some 20 per cent, perhaps as little as 10 per cent, represent the product of real composers, musicians who have something worth while to communicate.

Smith adds his own estimate:

Well, you can laugh at Baron von Münchhausen Slonimsky; but if you take his book with a grain of humor, as of course it is intended, you will find out something about music in the lands to the south of us.

⁸ In Chase's *Saturday Review*, November 3, 1945, review, he demolishes Slonimsky with equal sarcasm and disdain. Remarkably, Slonimsky continued treating Chase with uniform courtesy in all editions of *Baker's* entrusted to him. Chase, "eminent American musicologist," emerges with none of the many ugly blemishes that a less irenic lexicographer would have itemized.



325 pp.) reviewed by Jacques Barzun in *Notes*, 3/4 (September 1953), 620–621, contains “Critical Assaults on Composers since Beethoven’s Time.” Material in the Allen A. Brown collection at the Boston Public Library, “in the archives of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the New York Public Library, and the Carl Van Vechten Collection at Fisk University” proved his richest sources. His omnivorous reading that preluded so virtuosic a performance as the *Lexicon* had already prepared Slonimsky admirably for his Oscar Thompson revisions that occupied him 1946 through 1958.⁹

In Charles Warren Fox’s review of the “4th ed. revised and enlarged by Nicolas Slonimsky” (*Notes*, iv/2 [March 1947], 169–171), he compared it with the third edition.

In the preface to the new edition Slonimsky says: “The revised edition of the International Cyclopaedia of Music and Musicians continues the policy of the late editor-in-chief Oscar Thompson in gradually supplanting and expanding biographical, historical, and theoretical articles.” Since a complete collation of the two editions [third and fourth] is obviously impossible for one reviewer, the first sixty pages of the entries under the letter “M” in the two editions were selected for comparison. These entries number about 400. In the fourth edition, only one new article (“Manhattan School of Music,” seven lines) appears on these pages, and the arti-

⁹In “Lexicographis secundus post Herculem labor,” *Notes of the Music Library Association* 33/4 (June 1977), 766–767, Slonimsky recalled his first encounter with Thompson’s *International Cyclopaedia*:

I got involved with it when Oscar Thompson sold the idea of a huge one-volume encyclopedia to Dodd, Mead, Inc., in 1938, only to find that the ineffable A.E. (“Weird”) Wier [Albert Ernest Wier, 1879–1945] sold a similar project to Macmillan. A race ensued between the two giant publishing houses. At the time Oscar Thompson was editor of *Musical America*. One spring morning I dropped in on Thompson’s office where two female secretaries were busily copying something from the 1926 edition of *Grove*, and a graduate student was struggling with the tenebrous impenetrabilities of Riemann’s *Musik-Lexikon*. Thompson emerged from his editorial cubicle and asked me, somewhat sheepishly, whether I could read the galley proofs for the letter “R,” fresh from the typesetter.

Slonimsky discovered three spellings of the same composer’s name, Ruebner, Rübner, and Rybner, “all with divergent dates and different misspellings of the Danish titles of his works.” Quickly, he destroyed Ruebner and Rübner, leaving the Americanized Rybner [1855–1929] “to face the music.” Within less than two hours, Slonimsky “did what I could for the other ‘R’s’ in time for the printer to collect the galleys. Not surprisingly when the volume was out, I found unspeakable horrors all over the place.”

cle “Manjon, A. J.” has been dropped to make place for it. In the same sixty pages, the other changes are mostly alternates of dates, additions of death dates of recent musicians, additions of place names of birth or death, and corrections in spelling. The short article on Martinu, which falls within these sixty pages, differs in many respects from the new and longer article on the same composer in the appendix.

Having distinguished himself as a corrector and amplifier of Oscar Thompson, Slonimsky in the same year of his last revision, 1958, embarked on his culminating lexicographical tour de force, the fifth through eighth editions of *Baker’s*. Now on the same ground occupied by Fétis’s *Biographie universelle des musiciens* (Brussels: 1833–1844, eight vols.; 3d ed. Paris: 1860–1865, with two supplementary volumes edited by Arthur Pougin, 1878–1880), Slonimsky rose to heights never before reached in American lexicography. *Notes*, xvi/2 (March 1959), 239–240,¹⁰ contained the following laudatory paragraphs:

At last, an old friend has been revitalized with a new edition, its first (except for supplements) in eighteen years, its fourth since *Baker’s* first appeared in 1900. Expansion has been the dependable feature of successive editions of this work; 653 pages were contained in its first edition; 695 in the so-called second edition (an added supplement was meant to justify this designation); 1904 in the third; 1234 in the fourth; and now a triumphant 1855 pages. The extension of coverage is by itself a legitimate excuse for a new edition; but can the new *Baker’s* claim additional novelties and improvements? The answer is a grateful and emphatic yes.

A unique combination of virtues has accounted for the traditional popularity of this survivor from the dark ages of American musical lexicography. It was remarkably cosmopolitan in coverage; readable from the standpoint

¹⁰*Baker’s*, 6th ed., reviewed in *Notes* 36/1 (September 1979), 81–83, by Stanley Sadie, contained approximately 12,000 entries. The 7th edition enlarged to some 13,000 entries on 2577 pages irritated Arthur Jacobs, reviewer in the *Times Literary Supplement*, September 27, 1985, because Slonimsky old-fashionedly called homosexuals “deviates,” and also because Jacobs disliked Slonimsky’s Brobdignagian vocabulary.

Jacobs vented his further dislike of Slonimsky’s publication in old age with a scathing review in *TLS*, September 1989, page 1068, of the *Lectionary of Music* (1988), capped by the judgment: “Alas, the whole book is an unfortunate production.” Unruffled, Slonimsky displayed his usual equanimity with a Jacobs article in the 1992 *Baker’s*, page 837, saluting him as “an accomplished linguist who prepared admirable translations of some 20 operas into English.”

of typography as well as style; printed on good stout paper and bound in rugged library buckram to withstand years of heavy use and misuse; and eminently portable in its jaunty, one-volume format. For the hurried or casual reader, it cited in handy form the primary biographical information and literature concerning notable musicians, leaving to statelier publications the furnishing of detailed biography and bibliography.

The new *Baker's* retains these virtues, even that of portability, despite its considerable growth. It proves also to be a brand-new dictionary, and a durable monument to its compiler. Mr. Slonimsky has spent a lifetime exercising and perfecting the speciality of lexicography, frequently in an anonymous capacity. The fifth edition of *Baker's*, unlike that of a weightier transatlantic rival, shows the control of a strong hand at the helm by its consistency of accuracy and comprehensiveness and its astonishingly up-to-date information for virtually every entry.

. . . . Recent literature, and a critical selection of it is ordinarily represented as unerringly as are the latest academic appointments and honorary degrees in the biographical portions.

Mr. Slonimsky's fascinating preface should not be overlooked by any reader. It performs the necessary task of explaining editorial decisions about format, style, and the inclusion or exclusion of certain information. Moreover, it supplies a useful catalog of traditional misinformation perpetuated by earlier editions of *Baker's* and other dictionaries which Mr. Slonimsky's sleuthing has corrected. Most importantly for the future, it exposes the ideals of thorough investigation and precision which distinguish the compilation at hand. Though couched in Mr. Slonimsky's engagingly leisurely style, the preface defines both a personal credo and a new universally applicable standard of lexicography.

In 1988, Oxford University Press published Slonimsky's autobiography. On page 211 of *Perfect Pitch* he recounted the uneasiness of Gustave Schirmer (1890–1965) with the expansion of *Baker's* in the fifth edition (1958)—fearing that such an unknown as “Ramo” absorbed too much space. Slonimsky had to explain courteously that Jean-Philippe Rameau could not be sacrificed to make more room for the likes of John Sylvanus Thompson (1889–1963) and John M. Williams (1884–1974)—“ten million copies of the latter's various piano books having been sold.” However, protest against expansion in 1958 of a one-volume *Baker's* did not cease with the original publisher.

When the eighth edition appeared in 1992, *Notes* reviewer Susan T. Sommer (Vol. 49/1 [September

1992], 67–70) took both the publishers and Slonimsky sharply to task. Although she herself is not profiled,¹¹ the 1992 edition does include entries on Richard S. Hill, William Lichtenwanger, James W. Pruett, Harold Spivacke, and Edward N. Waters, Library of Congress notables. Also, New York Public Library Music Division chief (from 1959 to 1966) Philip L. Miller enters—but not Frank Campbell nor his successors.¹²

According to surcharged Sommer, the “swollen and unwieldy eighth edition, so idiosyncratic as to be almost libellous, raises some questions about the functions of a reference book and the responsibilities of its publisher.” She ends her 2100-word review with another broadside: “To call many of the remarks on composers and performers whom Slonimsky finds uncongenial ‘snide’ is to be generous to their author. The dictionary, so responsive on the surface to the democratization of music, is on another level elitist in a rather unamusing way.” Who the composers and performers treated uncavalierly may be, Sommer does not say.¹³

If Sommer has carved an epitaph on Slonimsky's tomb as a lexicographer, it cannot be denied that he still remains the only dictionary soloist comparable with Fétis, and even to a certain degree with Rie-

¹¹ Paula Morgan gave Susan Thiemann Sommer more space in *The New Grove Dictionary of American Music*, iv, 258, than she allotted Slonimsky. Born in New York City January 7, 1935, Sommer obtained her B.A. from Smith College in 1956 and her M.A., M.L.S., and M.Phil. degrees from Columbia University in 1958, 1967, and 1975. From December 1982 through June 1987 she edited *Notes of the Music Library Association*.

¹² Among other omitted librarians: Michael Keller, Donald Krummel, Michael Ochs, John Roberts, Harold Samuel, Wayne Shirley. He profiles Alan Curtis, Richard Crocker, William Denny (1910–1980), Vincent Duckles (1913–1985), Daniel Hertz, Joseph Kerman, and Olly Wilson, professors at Berkeley, but not Anthony Newcomb (*b* New York, August 6, 1941), author of *The musica secreta of Ferrara in the 1580s* (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1977) and *The madrigal at Ferrara, 1579–1597* (Princeton University Press, 1980, 2 vols.) or Richard Taruskin (*b* New York, April 2, 1945), author of *Opera and Drama in Russia* (Ann Arbor, 1981), based on his 1975 Columbia University Ph.D. dissertation.

¹³ In Stanley Sadie's review of the Sixth Edition (*Notes*, 36/1, 81–83), he faulted Slonimsky for referring to Britten as Sir Benjamin, rather than Lord, for omitting Sir David Willcocks, David Munrow, Helmut Walcha, Carl Dalhaus, Jaap Kunst, and others specifically named. Sommer does not specify her mistreated or omitted figures.



mann. As a musicologist, he remains less recognized than his articles, especially on Russian subjects, would entitle him to being saluted. Slonimsky's contributions to *The Musical Quarterly* began with "Further Light on Tchaikovsky" (xxiv/2 [April 1938], 139-146) in which he laid to rest the still today persistent theory that Tchaikovsky committed suicide after "being involved in an unsavory statutory offense in the autumn of 1893," and refuted the hypothesis that Tchaikovsky and his patroness never saw each other. In "Dimitri Dmitrievitch Shostakovitch" (xxviii/4 [October 1942], 415-444) he preceded all other writers outside the Soviet Union in analyzing Shostakovitch's operas, symphonies, chamber works, and in publishing a catalogue of Shostakovitch's works (supplied by the composer). In "Chopiniana: Some Materials for a Biography," (xxxiv/4 [October 1948], 467-486), Chopin's paternal ancestry is tabulated through three generations to Nicholas Chopin, vinegrower in Lorraine, who in 1738 married Elizabeth Bastien. Chopin's father, born April 15, 1771, emigrated to Poland to become a *nauczyciel* (teacher). Slonimsky assembles copious documentation to thwart misconceptions concerning Chopin's final days, recites some possibly authentic anecdotes, and reproduces the articles denouncing Chopin published in the *Musical World* October 28 and November 4, 1841—together with publishers Wessel and Stapleton's defensive reply. For *The Musical Quarterly*, xlvi/1 (January 1960), 12-21, he wrote "The Weather at Mozart's Funeral," a landmark article relieving Salieri of any guilt imputation, explaining Constanze's absence from the interment, and quashing wholesale other erroneous fictions surrounding Mozart's decease.¹⁴

In 1937, the same year that W. W. Norton published the maiden edition of *Music Since 1900*, Slonimsky contributed "Development of Soviet Music" to the *Research Bulletin of the Soviet Union*, ii/4 (April 39, 1937), pages 31-36, an article that ended with biographical "Notes on leading Soviet composers." Three years later *Musical America*, February 20, 1940, issue included his 7-page "South American Composers." In 1941 Boston Public Library Music Department collected under one cover

¹⁴Herbert K. Goodkind, *Cumulative Index 1915 thru 1959 to the Musical Quarterly* (New York: Goodkind Indexes, 1960), pp. 55-56, itemizes Slonimsky's complete oeuvre (articles and reviews) published in the *Quarterly* between 1938 and 1959.

24 of his articles published in the *Christian Science Monitor*, 1936-1938, with the title, *Stories About Music*.

In 1944, the year before *Music of Latin America* appeared, he published in the *Slavonic and East European Review*, xxii, no. 61 (December), the illuminating 18-page article, "Soviet Music and Musicians." Because Slonimsky's discussions of Soviet music lie frequently entombed in journals not read by present-day musicologists, several paragraphs from his "Soviet Music and Musicians," pages 15-17, here bear repetition if for no other reason than to offer testimony to his pre-World War II musicological stance.

The social status of Soviet musicians is higher than ever in the history of Russia, or in any other country for that matter. Soviet composers are assured economic security and given every facility to enable them to write music without thought of the daily cares. Morally, too, Soviet composers are given every encouragement, through a unique system of government prizes, ranging from 10,000 to 100,000 rubles, awarded for symphonic and other works. Thus, Shostakovitch received the "Stalin prize" of 100,000 rubles for his piano Quintet (certainly the greatest sum of money ever paid to any composer for a piece of chamber music), and a like prize for his Seventh Symphony. Myaskovski received a Stalin prize for his Twenty-First Symphony. Khachaturian was awarded the same prize for his ballet *Gayane*, but gallantly returned the money to Stalin with a request to use it for building a tank for the Red Army.

The Committee of Fine Arts of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR is in charge of commissions to write symphonies, operas and chamber music. The Committee pays a definite fee for the composition of each work, 10,000 rubles for a symphony, and lesser sums for smaller works. In addition, the composer receives a lump sum from the State Music Publishing House for publication rights, plus royalties. The question of publication is naturally free from commercial considerations, and so we find that all of Myaskovski's twenty-four symphonies have been published or scheduled for publication in the near future, even though sales of orchestral scores cannot possibly cover the expenditure of printing. Works by Soviet composers enjoy frequent performances. All of Myaskovski's twenty-four symphonies have been performed by the Moscow orchestras.

Soviet composers are given, whenever possible, housing facilities to enable them to go on with their work. This practice has been continued even in war conditions. Aram Khachaturian describes the life in such a composer's home:

"In the spring of 1943, the Soviet Government placed

a country mansion near the town of Ivanovo at the disposal of Reinhold Glière, Dmitri Shostakovich, and myself. The summer we spent there was highly productive for all of us. Dmitri Shostakovich lived in a small cottage on the fringe of a forest, and he wrote his Eighth Symphony there. Reinhold Glière, a representative of our older but never aging generation of composers, wrote his Fourth Quartet. I worked on my Second Symphony in C major. It is not a program music, but it reflects my reaction as a musician and a citizen to the trials through which our country is passing. The day I began my work on the third movement, a Scherzo, five school girls from Ivanovo came to visit me in my secluded cottage, and brought me a bunch of field flowers. They were shy and attractive, with their braids crowned by enormous wreaths of corn flowers and rye. They seated themselves demurely around the piano, gazing at me with expectation. I played for them some of my piano music. They thanked me and soon disappeared into the sunlit fields."

Soviet music is not synonymous with Russian music. The constituent republics of the Soviet Union, the Ukraine, Azerbeidzhan, Armenia, Georgia, Turkmenia, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Tadjikistan, Kashkiria, possess music of their own which is gradually beginning to come to light. To be sure, few natives possess requisite knowledge and technique for the creation of higher forms of composition, and their contribution to Soviet music has been heretofore limited to simple songs accompanied on primitive instruments. In order to stimulate musical progress in the periphery of the Soviet Union, the Union of Soviet Composers in Moscow assigns prominent composers to travel in the minority republics, organize educational facilities there, and write operas and symphonic works based on native folklore. Thus, Glière wrote the opera *Shah-Senem* on Caucasian themes; Brusilovski composed the opera *Kyz-Zhybek*, derived from the folklore of Kazakhstan; Shekhter wrote the opera *Yusup and Akhmet* on Turkmenian motives; Tchemberdzhi contributed the opera *Karlugas* on Bashkyrian folklore; Kozlovski wrote the opera *Ulugbeh* (Tamerlane's grandson) on Uzbek melodies; Balasanian wrote a Tadjik opera *The Song of Wrath*; Frolov composed a Buriat-Mongol opera, *Enke Bulat Bator*. Paliashvili is the author of the Georgian opera *Abessalom and Eteri*.

As to the Ukrainian Soviet Republic, it possesses a highly developed musical culture. The founder of the Ukrainian national tradition in music was Nicolas Lysenko (1842-1912), who wrote the opera *Taras Bulba*. The Soviet period of Ukrainian music is marked by an intensification of creative composition. The foremost Ukrainian composer of today is Boris Lyatoshinsky. His opera *Shchors*, after the life of the Ukrainian revolutionary commander Nikolai Shchors, was produced in Kiev on September 1, 1938.

Slonimsky's 50 pages of program notes for the Little Orchestra Society Concerts, 1947-1948, are gathered at the Library of Congress Music Division under call number MT 125.559. The infant *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, II/3 (November 1950), 236-255, welcomed his substantial article, "The Changing Style of Soviet Music." His 20-page tribute to Roy Harris published in *The Musical Quarterly*, xxxIII/1 (January 1947), 17-37, that concluded with a list of works, grew into a G. Schirmer commissioned book, *Roy Harris, Cimarron Composer* (1951). The 169-page carbon copy typescript of his work (with additions and corrections in manuscript) found its burial place in UCLA's Music Library—after what was to have been an American composers series initiated with Nathan Broder's *Samuel Barber* died stillborn—no buying public taking an interest in biographies that concealed facts in favor of mere publicity releases. Written under Roy Harris's supervision, Slonimsky's aborted book omits all details of a personal nature that the composer forbade being divulged.

Reviews do not always enter a musicologist's bibliography. Nonetheless, Slonimsky's reviews—ranging from recensions of M. D. Calvocoressi's *Modest Mussorgsky: His Life and Works* (*Notes* 15/2, March 1958, 208-210), Rudolph Reti's *Tonality, Atonality, Pantology* (*Notes* 16/3, June 1959, 393), and Alois Melicar's *Musik in der Zwangsjacke: die deutsche Musik zwischen Orff und Schönberg* (*Notes* 17/1, December 1959, 53) to his review of his own *Perfect Pitch: A Life Story*¹⁵ (*Notes* 45/4, June 1989, 753-754) uniformly contain information of highest scholarly value.

His entries in Marquis *Who's Who in America* as late as the 48th edition (1994), II, 3201, still classify him as "conductor, composer." *Current Biography, Yearbooks*, 1955 and 1991 issues, in both text and bibliographies profiled him as a flamboyantly picturesque individual.

Lacking the earned degrees that conventionally preceded a tenured university post, he nonetheless leaves us a body of books, articles, reviews, and encyclopedias not equalled in bulk, variety, and accuracy by any professional musicologist active in the twentieth century.

¹⁵ Eric Salzman, who reviewed *Perfect Pitch* in *The Musical Quarterly*, LXXIV/3 (1990), 455-457, called Slonimsky "an authentic genius," but disparaged his compositions.