

CULTUROLOGY

VIOLINISTS FRANZ, JOSEPH AND LUDWIG BÖHM, SOLOISTS AND PEDAGOGUES OF 19th CENTURY

Sinkevich G.

*Saint Petersburg State University
of Architecture and Civil Engineering,
Department of Mathematics, professor, docent*

Abstract

This article comprises results of archival research devoted to the violin players of the Böhm family: Franz (1788–1846), Joseph (1795–1876), Maria (nee Moravek, 1795–1823), and Ludwig (1825–1904). Franz was the first solo performer at Imperial theatres in St. Petersburg; his wife Maria appeared in concerts together with Franz; his son Ludwig was a professor of violin at St. Petersburg conservatory; his daughter Maria-Anna (married name Cantor) became mother of a great mathematician, Georg Cantor; Joseph Böhm became the founder of a violin class in Vienna. Among the disciples of Franz Böhm were composers M. Glinka and A. Arensky, as well as members of the tsar's family, and among the disciples of Joseph Böhm were G. Hellmesberger-Sr., H.W. Ernst, J. Don't, L. Minkus, E. Reményi, E. Singer, J. Joachim, A. Pollitzer, L. Straus, J. Grün, E. Rappoldi, and his nephew from St. Petersburg Ludwig Böhm. This article describes the history of this family against the background of musical life of St. Petersburg in the 19th century. The article publishes archival documents and portraits found by the author. It also tells about the fate of the Stradivarius violin, which belonged to the Böhm family.

Keywords: St. Petersburg, virtuoso violinists Franz, Joseph, Ludwig Böhm, Maria Moravek.

Abbreviations

Russian State Historical Archive – RSHA
Central State Historical Archive of St. Petersburg
– CSHASpB

Many outstanding musicians in the 17th, 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries had the name of Böhm. This name was quite widely spread in Russia too. In the 17th century, Moscow knew violinist Ivan Böhm (who was born and educated in Russia); in 1807, St. Petersburg orchestra engaged a certain Alexandre Böhm¹ as a violin player. The author is unaware whether they had anything to do with the heroes of our story.

The Böhms trace back to Pest, a Hungarian city on the bank of Danube. In 1898, Pest merged with the neighbouring cities – Buda and Obuda – to make Budapest. The Hungarian origin of this family marked an immense imprint on the family's talents: the art of playing the violin is as natural for Hungarians as nothing else. They say that Hungarians are born with a violin in their hands.

We do not know much about Hungarian traces in the violinists' family. Michaelis Böhm, a violin player from a theatre orchestra lived in the City of Pest with his wife Anna (nee Dorfmeister²). Their elder son Franz was born in 1788, and Joseph on 4 March 1795. They are not mentioned in Hungarian *Who is Who* – they did

not win fame in their motherland. Those were other cities which made him a celebrity – St. Petersburg lent éclat to the elder brother and Vienna, to the younger one.

In 1896, the grandson of **Franz Böhm**, great mathematician Georg Cantor, recalled: “My grandparents Franz and Maria Böhm (nee Moravek) from the school of a Frenchman Rode in St. Petersburg were imperial virtuoso violinists in the 20s and 30s. They admired the musical community. My granduncle Joseph Böhm, also a student of Rode, founded the famous school of violin in Vienna. Joachim³, Ernst⁴, Singer⁵, Hellmesberger⁶ (father), L. Straus⁷, and Rappoldi⁸ graduated from this school.” [6, p.278].

We know that Pierre Rode (1774–1830) came to St. Petersburg in 1803 together with F.-A. Boieldieu (1775–1834) and from 1804 to 1807 was the first violinist⁹ at Imperial Theatres. Rode's contract was terminated six months before its expiration because of his illness. On 23 February 1808, Rode played a farewell concert in Moscow and left for his motherland. He taught the heroes of our story, brothers Franz and Joseph Böhm, as well as Maria Moravek, to play the violin when they were young children. In 1804, Franz was 16, and Maria and Joseph were 9 years old. In 1807, by the time Rode left Russia, they were 19 and 12 respectively. Two years later, Franz began performing in St. Petersburg theatres.

¹ RSHA. F. 497. Schedule 4. No. 55. Leaf 30.

² CSHA SPb. F. 347. Schedule 2. No. 9. Leaf 18.

³³ Joseph Joachim (1831–1907)

⁴ Heinrich Wilhelm Ernst (1812–1865)

⁵ Edmund Singer (1830–1912)

⁶ Georg Hellmesberger senior (1800–1873)

⁷ Ludwig Straus (1835–1899)

⁸ Eduard Rappoldi (1839–1903)

⁹ RSHA. F. 497. Schedule 4. No. 55. Leaf 293.

Joseph Böhm



Joseph Boehm (Böhm). Lithograph of Böhm by Joseph Kriehuber

After the youngest of the brothers, **Joseph Böhm (1795–1876)**, left St. Petersburg, he undertook further study in Italy. He began performing in 1815. In 1821–1868, he was a soloist at the Hofkapelle in Vienna. In 1819–1848, he worked at Vienna conservatory as a professor. He wrote violin pieces. Joseph Böhm is considered to be the father of the Viennese school of violin playing. In addition to the above-mentioned violinists, Jakob Don't (1815–1888), Ludwig Minkus (1826–1917), Ede Reményi (1828–1898), Adolf Pollitzer (1832–1900), Jakob Grün (1837–1916), and his nephew from St. Petersburg Ludwig Böhm¹⁰, were his students.

According to some sources, Joseph Böhm came to Vienna in 1813 and made his first appearance on the stage in 1816¹¹. Together with violinist Josef Mayseder, he was distinguished as the best solo performer of the younger generation. Critics noted the clear and noble tone of his playing [10, p. 191].

He was attracted by Viennese musicality. One could hear music in this city at dawn, in the daytime, and at night. In concert halls, in coffee shops, on open-air stages in parks, one could listen to serenades, divertimentos, nocturnes. There were three coffee shops along the main walkway in Prater Park, where Beethoven, Lanner, and Strauss brothers used to perform. Weekend morning concerts began at eight in the morning, and thereafter, there were day and evening concerts yet to come. In the morning, public would traditionally go for an outing in Prater. Grand people would take a ride along the central parkway in a carriage, common people would walk. Musicians would play music on small open-air stages and cafes. At that time, there was no famous concert halls of Music Association and Society of Music Lovers as yet. There were only Hofburg and Schönbrunn, where one could listen to first-night concerts of Mozart and Beethoven. In the evening, they

would set off fireworks, play music, and arrange dancing functions in Prater. Goethe's Mephisto said to Faust: "Come, mount the hill, or follow after, / There 'tis as gay, as in the Prater" [9, p. 191]. In accordance with the order of Joseph II, as of 1782, morning concerts were regularly held in the Garden Hall in another park, Augarten. Mozart and thereafter, Beethoven were invited to direct orchestras at these concerts. One could hear music in Vienna in large concert halls and in private houses.

A.K. Razumovsky, a wealthy patron of the arts and music lover, was the ambassador of the Russian Empire in Vienna from 1790 to 1799 and from 1802 to 1807. Being a good violinist, he maintained a quartet, in which I. Schuppanzigh (1776–1830) played the first violin, and was on visiting terms with Mozart, Haydn, and Beethoven. Beethoven wrote three quartets on Razumovsky's order. In 1816, Schuppanzigh with Razumovsky's quartet went on a tour to Germany and Russia, and the same year in November, Joseph Böhm gave a series of six concerts with his quartet. Later, they went on a tour of Italy together with pianist Johann Peter Pixis.

In 1817, Antonio Salieri, court music director, founded a Singing School to train boys for Imperial Music Chapel. The Society of Friends of Music made efforts to create a music conservatory in Vienna. In 1819, Salieri invited Joseph Böhm, who returned from Italy, to teach orchestral instrument playing as a professor. Together with the Singing School, Böhm's class formed the basis for Vienna Conservatory.

From 1821 to 1868, Joseph Böhm was the principal violinist of Imperial Music Chapel and gave numerous concerts. According to critics, Böhm's playing was "exquisitely pure and delicate" and filled with "soulful intimacy"; Böhm introduced dark, voluptuous Hungarian sound in academic rendition of music.

¹⁰ RSHA. F. 497. Sch. 1 (97/2121). No. 9754. 69 L.

¹¹

http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph_B%C3%B6hm_%28Violinist%29

For example, on 7 July 1821, he performed in Prater, and an article describing this concert has remained:

“Today, at eight o’clock in the morning, at the dawn of a wonderful sunny day, a violin quartet – Messieurs Böhm, Linke, Holz, and Weiss – gave a concert at Benkoschen Hall in magnificent Prater. We know them through the performances in the late May when they played Haydn’s quartet in B-flat major, having finished with big Beethoven C-major quintet. Their earlier programs had already won a well-deserved appraisal. Let us mention the splendid rendering of Haydn C-major quartet with a big and beautiful variation on the theme of “Gott erhalte Franz den Kaiser”. Subsequently, they executed Mr. Weiss first G-major quartet. They gave an encore, as on the third day, when they executed Mozart D-major quartet and Beethoven’s third so-called C-major Rasumosschische Quartet, having justified the appreciation of the public listening to their execution of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven. Messieurs Barlh and Jüger executed vocal compositions in between the first and second quartet. Many people will

agree that quartet music is perceived better than clavier owing to the gorgeous sound of strings. These violinists demonstrated great skill and enthusiastic drive, which was appreciated by connoisseurs of our musical art. Musical prowess of Mr. Böhm, who played the first violin, won the deserved recognition. Mr. Linke, who was a great virtuoso, played the second cello. The ease of his play won the admiration of public. Mr. Weiss was playing the violin with admirable restraint. However, his playing was at the same time appropriately filled with mellow and passionate tone. Mr. Holz splendidly played second.

We are hopefully awaiting for these concerts to continue and willing to enjoy this superb rendition of chamber music again.” [1, 1821, July No 54, p. 428].

We can’t but admire that all music was in major, and the concerts in Vienna began at eight in the morning! Just imagine how wonderful your day is going to be should you come to Prater early in a summer morning to be into major quartets of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven!



Joseph Boehm (Böhm). Ca 1820. R. Ceracchi’s print is kept at The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts / Music Division

From 1821 to 1823, Böhm performed on a tour of Germany and France. In 1823, having returned from a tour, Schuppanzigh invited him to join his quartet. Their concerts featured many premieres of Beethoven’s and Schubert’s musical compositions. With Schuppanzigh’s departure, Böhm replaced him as the leader of Rasumovsky’s quartet.

Joseph Böhm continued performing at Imperial Music Chapel as a solo performer, teaching students at Vienna Conservatory, and composing. His musical pieces for violin in the then popular style have remained to these days.

Joseph Böhm knew Beethoven and Schubert personally and often played their music [11, p.6]. A.W. Thayer wrote about his execution of Beethoven String Quartet No. 12 in E-Flat Major, Op. 127, in 1825:

“Böhm had been leader of the quartet concerts in Vienna during Schuppanzigh’s long absence. He has left an account of the incident, in which he plainly says that Schuppanzigh’s attitude toward the work was not sympathetic and that he had wearied of the rehearsals, wherefore at the performance it made but a succès d’estime. Beethoven sent for him (Böhm) and curtly said: “You must play my Quartet” – and the business was settled; objections, questionings, doubts were of no avail against Beethoven’s will. The Quartet was newly studied under Beethoven’s own eyes, a circumstance which added to the severity of the rehearsals, for, though he could not hear a tone, Beethoven watched the players keenly and detected even the slightest variation in tempo or rhythm from the movement of the bows. Böhm tells a story in illustration of this:

At the close of the last movement of the quartet there occurred a *meno vivace*, which seemed to me to weaken the general effect. At the rehearsal, therefore, I advised that the original tempo be maintained, which was done, to the betterment of the effect. Beethoven, crouched in a corner, heard nothing, but watched with strained attention. After the last stroke of the bows he said, laconically "Let it remain so," went to the desks and crossed out the *meno vivace* in the four parts.

The Quartet was played twice by Böhm and his fellows at a morning concert in a coffee-house in the Prater, late in March or early in April, and was enthusiastically received" [19, p. 193].

In 1827, Joseph Böhm abandoned extensive concert activities, giving preference to teaching students and music-making in family circle. He attached particular importance to ensemble music-making with students, playing mostly Beethoven together with them in evenings. On 26 March 1828, Joseph Böhm took part in an exclusive concert-portrait of Franz Schubert in the Hall of Music Society in Vienna, where he gave the premiere of Schubert's opus 100 trio with J. Linke [10, p. 285].

Robert W. Eshbach writes:

"Joseph Böhm played in many historically significant concerts, including a performance of Beethoven's 9th symphony under the composer's direction. He became an early advocate for Schubert's chamber music, and, on 26 March 1828, he gave the premiere of Schubert's opus 100 trio. Together with Holz, Weiss and Linke of the original Schuppanzigh Quartet, he performed Beethoven's string quartets under the composer's supervision" [13, p. 243].

During the revolution of 1848, the Conservatory was temporarily closed. Soon after it was opened again in 1849, Böhm left the Conservatory and stopped participating in the orchestra with no apparent political cause. However, he kept playing at the Chapel until 1868 and teaching music privately.

Many Böhm's students managed to nurture famous violinists. This was the way the Viennese violin school was formed.

From 1840 to 1844, Joseph's nephew, Ludwig Böhm, studied and lived at his uncle's place in Vienna together with his student Joachim. Later, they maintained their family ties as well. More than once Ludwig came from St. Petersburg to visit his uncle. He wrote about these visits in his reports on the vacations he had taken to go abroad. Thus, the reason for his last visit was Joseph's terminal illness in 1876¹². This was the last time the uncle and the nephew met. Joseph Böhm died on 28 March 1876. After Ludwig died in 1904, his widow, artist Elisaveta Böhm, sold his violin [11]. This violin had an interesting fortune.

Antonio Stradivari created it in Cremona in 1733; as of 1800, it belonged to the family of Prince Johann Friedrich Siegmund Khenhüller, which is why it bears the name of Prince Khevenhüller; its catalogue number at the Cozio Archive is 40678. As of 1820, the violin belonged to Joseph Böhm; after he died, it descended to his nephew, Ludwig Böhm, who lived in St. Petersburg. As of 1900, the violin was owned by a Moscow violinist, Victor M. Popov (1879–1965), who sold it to Emil Herrmann (1888–1968), a prominent dealer and restorer of violins in New York City, who came to Moscow in 1920s. Around 1928 (1929?), Henry Goldman (1857–1937), an American heir, banker, philanthropist and art collector, purchased this violin. In 1928 (?), Yehudi Menuhin got the Stradivarius violin (then worth \$60,000) from Henry Goldman for his 12th birthday. In April 1929, Menuhin gave his famous concert in Berlin on this violin (Bach, Beethoven, Brahms). In 1936, a copy of this violin was produced. Menuhin played this violin too, and later, he began playing Guarnerius. In 1937, the violin was transferred to Michel Scheinen; in 2000, the violin was transferred to Peter Biddulph, one of the world's premier dealers in fine stringed instruments; and in 2004, it was sold to a private owner [20].

We are aware of four portraits of Joseph Böhm. The first one is a lithographical work of Joseph Kriehuber of 1830. The second portrait is a print of Romuald Ceracchi, which is kept at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts / Music Division. The third one is a relatively unknown portrait of 1839 also made by Kriehuber and provided herein.

¹² RSHA. F. 497. Sch. 1 (97/2121). No. 9754. 69 L.



Joseph Böhm. Porträt: Unterschrift: Facsimile des Namens. Kriehuber 1839 (lithogr.). Gedruckt bei Joh. Höfelich (Wien 1839, Tob. Haslinger in Wien, Fol.)

This portrait was published in a magazine entitled “Die Musik” which was issued in Germany in the early 20th century. Caption:

“In commemoration of the wonderful violinist, Joseph Böhm (deceased in 28 March 1876 in Vienna) we present this portrait on this old print. In 1821–1868, he

played at Imperial Music Chapel (Kaiserl. Hofkapelle) and was an outstanding educator: Ernst, Jachim, Singer, Hellmberger (Vater), and L. Straus were among his students.” [7, p. 444].

The fourth portrait was a portrait of old Boehm: the Society of Friends of Music, Vienna.



Joseph Boehm: Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, Vienna Musical St. Petersburg

Founded in 1703, St. Petersburg was rapidly developing as a young capital of the Russian Empire. The City’s population was rapidly growing. The turn of the 19th century was the golden age of St. Petersburg – industry was emerging; commerce was rapidly developing; architects, builders, and artists created splendid buildings. Cultural life of the young capital attracted European musicians. There were three theatres in St. Petersburg, and each of them had an orchestra of its own. Numerous houses held private concerts; music salons and circles were very popular; guest actors and amateurs performed there. Such concerts gathered from four to four hundred people. There were many music shops in the City. One could use music sheets there as if it were a library. Private music-making was more than entertainment and pastime. One could hear choral

and symphonic music in private homes; families would engage professional performers and gifted amateurs to render chamber compositions. These amateurs were substantially at the same level with professionals. The borderland between “drawing-room” and public concerts was blurring. In 1820s, a famous Polish pianist M. Shimanovskaya used to regularly arrange “musical mornings”. Young Glinka, whose fame as a pianist and composer had already established in St. Petersburg, took part in these concerts. Singers A. Gebhard and D. Tozi, violinist F. Böhm were permanent performers at her concerts. The first and the biggest musical salon was that of counts Vielgorskies. All nine Beethoven’s symphonies were performed at the Vielgorskies’. Yury (Jerzy) Vielgorsky, Polish nobleman, who went over to

Russian service, was a highly educated person and music lover, he played the violin. His sons were also musicians. Matvey Vielgorsky (1787–1863), a cello player, Romberg's student, he arranged quartet evenings at his place and was a member of Directorate of Imperial Theatres. Mikhail Vielgorsky (1788–1856) played the alto and the piano, and composed music – Cherubini taught him composition in Paris. He met Beethoven in Vienna and in 1808, was one of the first

eight listeners of his Pastoral Symphony. In their estate in Luisino, the Vielgorskies had a bonded orchestra. It was in Luisino that the first seven Beethoven's symphonies were performed. There was a tradition in St. Petersburg in 1820–1850. Before any foreign guest actors could perform in public concerts, they had to kind of qualify for it at the Vielgorskies' salon. It was like an unofficial dress rehearsal for guest performers, that is to say, the first appraisal before public concerts.

Franz Böhm and His Family in St. Petersburg



Franz Boehm. From lithograph of Joseph Kriehuber, by Gottlieb Kissling¹³ Ca 1836. Russian National Library of St. Petersburg, Prints Division

The first documented evidence we found about Franz dates back to 1809. It was a contract he signed on 15 January with the Imperial Theatres, which remained in holdings of the Russian State Historical Archive. He was engaged as a chamber violinist. Under this contract, Franz undertook to “play the violin in concerto and to play alone at all concerts the Imperial Directorate may give at the City’s theatres and at the Imperial Court.” The terms and conditions of his engagement comprised the requirements “to accurately attend rehearsals” and “to use my entire talent for the benefit and needs of the theatrical directorate.” Franz Böhm was given an annual salary of 1,500 roubles¹⁴. This was quite a high remuneration compared to the salary of an average violin player, who got paid 400 to 500 roubles per year, or a music copyist, who was paid 50 roubles per year.

Under this contract, Franz Böhm was in employment till 8 January 1811. Then he asked to terminate the contract. According to the enclosed information letter, “Mr. Böhm suffered the lung rot. The climate in St. Petersburg was utterly bad for his health, his protracted illness posed him at the risk of his own life, he was unable to perform his duties.” (ibid., p. 2). He did not

serve until 1816. However, as of 1813 he gave some concerts in St. Petersburg.

What held Franz Böhm from leaving St. Petersburg? Love and music of course! A young Czech lady, Maria Moravek, studied the violin together with him and Josephm Böhm under Pierre Rode (from 1803 to 1808), and as of 1812, began concertizing in St. Petersburg. They began performing together and got married in 1814.

Maria Moravek (1795–1823), the wife of Franz Böhm, was coeval with Joseph Böhm. Her family came from Vienna; her father served in Russia as a Maitre d’ at the Imperial Court in the reign of Catherine the Great, Paul I, and Alexandre I. An excerpt from the formulary list reads as follows: “Leopold (Ludwig) Moravek. Austrian. Registration in Vienna was terminated in accordance with the Contract of 24 February 1788 made with him by Prince Golitsyn, Minister Plenipotentiary, who was staying at Viennese Imperial Court¹⁵”; in 1799, he was granted personal nobility. The Moraveks had eight children including Maria and Sophia. The girls from this Viennese family possessed artistic freedom and musical sense so typical of Viennese people. Maria studied the violin under P. Rode together with brothers Böhm and in 1812–1813, even gave concerts

¹³ Gottlieb Kissling (1790–1849) was a copper engraver, associate professor of engraving art at Vilnius University. Visited St. Petersburg in 1836 and 1845.

¹⁴ RSHA. F. 497. Sch. 1. No. 601. L. 3.

¹⁵ RSHA. F. 1284. Sch. 21, 1 dep., 1 table, No. 59. L. 74.

in St. Petersburg alone and performed together with Franz Böhm. In 1812, an announcement was published in *St. Petersburg News*:

“Young lady Maria Moravek is honoured to announce that this year, on 18 December, she will give a big vocal and instrumental concert at Philharmonic Hall, where she is going to play the violin” [17, No. 100, 13.12.1812, p. 1402].



Maria successfully gave concerts in 1813 and 1814. In spring 1814, she was playing together with Böhm (before the departure, as they announced), and on 8 July they got married.

This is evidenced by records in the register of Catholic Church of St Catherine:

“Franz Böhm from Hungary, son of Michaelis and Anna (nee Dorfmeister) is united in matrimony with young lady Maria Moravek, daughter of Leopold and Anna (nee Maho Grosentes).” Franz was 26 years of age, Maria was 19. The wedding ceremony was held in the Catholic Church at 34 Nevsky Prospekt and was attended by Ferdinand Gidello and Public Officer Yanovsky.

Both spouses kept giving solo and joint concertos.

Franz Böhm had four children of this marriage, including Maria (married name Cantor), future mother of the great mathematician Georg Cantor [18].

Neither her married life nor her tender age prevented Maria Moravek from announcing her solo concertos daringly and repeatedly. Solo concertos given by young ladies were something of a novelty to the public of that time, all the more so as those were violin concertos. As a rule, a lady would perform together with her father or husband; ladies began giving first public piano and song recitals some 15 years later – those were Maria Shimanovskaya, Camilla Pleyel, Pauline Viardot. But Maria Moravek began giving violin concertos in 1812 when she was only 17!

However, Maria performed together with her husband. It was seldom that she gave solo concertos. Her concerts were very popular and apparently were played to a full house. Her concerts were held many times: on 11 February 1813, 15 March 1813, 28 February 1814 (played together with Böhm before the departure), 23

March 1816 (Böhm together with his wife Maria – Double Concerto for 2 violins, 17 March 1817 (Böhm and his wife played a Fantasy for duet (2 violins), orchestra, and choir (*Die Töne*, music by Fuchs¹⁶), 1818 (Böhm and his wife, Mass), 13 March 1819 (Böhm with L. Maurer and his wife). The concerts were also held in the 20s: 23 February 1820 (Böhm alone and with his wife), 9 March 1821 (Maria Moravek alone), 3 March 1822 – new variations of Maurer – Böhm with his wife, and on 15 March in a big concert with Chervenko and Meyer, who played Beethoven fantasy for piano and choirs¹⁷.

Maria continued concertizing until 1821. In May 1823, she died from “lung rot” at the age of 28.¹⁸

Maria’s sister, Sofia Moravek (1798–1866), was taking care of her orphaned children, and a year later, in July 1824, Franz Böhm married her.¹⁹ Sofia and Franz had three children, including Ludwig, future violin player and professor of Conservatory.

Ivan Lenz²⁰, Pierre Rode (1804–1807)²¹, Charles Lafont (1808–1815)²² were successively First concertists²³ in St. Petersburg. Franz Böhm became the next concertist.

Franz entered into a contract as a violinist-concertist, which was valid from 1816 to 1819. In 1818, he asked for an increase in pay, and the new contract, already valid till 1821, was re-executed with a remuneration of 4,000 roubles in paper money. Pursuant to the contract, they had to be paid every two months in equal instalments. In addition, the Directorate of Imperial Theatres granted to Böhm the right to give one benefit concert annually during the Lent.

One would note Franz Böhm’s name in theatre guides of that period. He took part in various theatrical performances, e.g. in operas of G. Rossini (*Tancredi*) and D.G. Steibelt (*Cendrillon*), and in ballets of I.I. Lesogorov (*Valberkh*). It was mentioned in all playbills that violin solo would be performed by Mr. Böhm, first concertist²⁴.

From 1819 to 1821, Mr. Böhm was teaching M.I. Glinka. This isn’t to say that both were pleased. Glinka recalls this experience, mocking Böhm’s German accent: “It wasn’t so fortunate with the violin. Although my teacher, first concertist Böhm, played faithfully and clearly, he had no gift for conveying his knowledge to others. So when I was bowing amiss, he would say: “Messier *Klinka fous ne chouerez chamois du fiolon*” (meaning Mr. Glinka, you will never master the art of playing the violin) [8, p. 219]. However, later, in 1822–23, Glinka wrote: “On the contrary, with Meyer, and even with Böhm, I learnt fast.” [ibid., p. 222]. In 1836, Glinka composed solo in *Ivan Susanin* intended especially for Böhm [ibid., p. 272].

¹⁶ Probably, Johann Nepomuk Fuchs (1766–1839).

¹⁷ The list of concerts announced in newspapers was kindly provided by G.V. Petrova, PhD (Art History), Sr. Researcher of Music Department at Russian Institute of the History of Arts.

¹⁸ CSHA SPb F. 347. Sch. 1. No. 33. L. 125.

¹⁹ CSHA SPb F. 347. Sch. 1. No. 60. L. 78.

²⁰ RSHA. F. 497. Sch. 1. No. 73, L. 27.

²¹ RSHA. F. 497. Sch. 17. No. 82.

²² RSHA. F. 468. Sch. 34. No. 223.

²³ At that time, the word “concertist” or “concerter” (as it sounds in Russian) was understood in Russia as the lead performer in his/her group of instruments. When translated into German and thereafter, from German into English and French, as, for example, in Décaillot A-M. Cantor et la France, these words transformed into “solo performer”, “chapelmaster”, and even “orchestra director”, which is incorrect.

²⁴ RSHA. F. 497. Sch. 1. No. 1. F. 497. Sch. 15. No. 1. 264 L.

A.F. Lvov, A.N. Verstovsky, N.I. Bahmetev, and imperial family members were among Böhm's students [3, p. 73].

Later on, Franz' contract was renewed several times more. He could expect a seniority pension after 12 years of service; and after 18 years of service, one would be entitled to a pension of half the salary. This rule applied to foreigners in the service of Russia, the pension being remitted even to their native country. If a musician continued working, his/her pension was paid to him/her in addition to the salary. On special occasions, pension could be awarded by Personal Imperial Majesty's Edict on a full salary basis. The violinist worked under these conditions until 1826²⁵. In 1832, for 18 years of service, Böhm was awarded a pension which amounted to half the salary. For the years of his service, he deserved the praise of C. Cavos as follows: "With excellent and renowned talent, he fulfils his duties with due diligence."²⁶

In 1834, "based on his brilliant capabilities and assent", Böhm was appointed an inspector of the violin class at the School of Performing Arts with a salary of 4,000 roubles.

Franz Böhm was the first concertist in St. Petersburg for almost 30 years – he gave solo concertos, played in ensembles. All this time he was a citizen of Austro-Hungarian Empire (in the contract of 1835, he was referred to as the Hungarian national; in the contract of 1845, as the Austrian national²⁷) and had never taken Russian citizenship²⁸.

One can see the fruitful activity of this violinist behind these facts. His intensive work and increasing popularity are reflected in playbills.

As the talented violinist served, fame came to him among St. Petersburg music lovers.

At first, Franz Böhm was a member of a German stage company which gave performances for the German population of St. Petersburg. And it was large: according to the police register of 1818, there were more than 23,000 Germans in the City.

Performances were suspended during the Lent, however, many concerts were held in rented halls in homes of music lovers. Böhm often and eagerly took part in such concerts. It was after such concerts that public began calling him the "primary rival" of Alexey Fedorovich Lvov, violinist, composer, and author of the national anthem, *God Save the Tsar*. Being an aristocrat, Lvov could only play in salons [15, p. 172]. Popular musical salons were quartet meetings at A.F. Lvov's place; meetings at M. Szymanowska, Polish pianist's place; salons of the Olenins, V.F. Odoevsky, and brothers Vielgorsky. Franz Böhm often played at home meetings. He arranged concerts at his place as well. For many years, quartet meetings were regularly held at home of the "first concertist" of Imperial Theatres, violinist F. Böhm.

We also came across the viewpoint that it was thanks to F. Böhm that all Beethoven quartets could be heard in St. Petersburg [16]. However, this issue remains disputable, because his performances were not

public ones – he performed in salons, which can only be supported by records of contemporaries. Böhm's unquestioned merit was that he initiated St. Petersburg public into the music of Vienna. He also played his own compositions.

The evidence of Böhm's performance in the house of the Philharmonic Society has also remained.

Odoevsky liked Böhm playing very much and wrote a lot about him, calling Böhm's bow a "silk bow of Cupid" [14, p 107].

Odoevsky wrote in 1837:

"On 17 March, Wednesday, in the same hall of the Philharmonic Society, a concert of Mr. Böhm, our favourite violinist, will take place. His proper, correct, and spiritual playing would always satisfy a musician perfectly well". "We will hear H. Marschner's overture to his opera (*Hans Heiling*), which is unknown here as yet, and relatively unknown Mendelssohn Bartholdy's *Les Hebrides*, which, like other compositions of this young and already renowned musician, is distinguished by singularity of melodies and flamboyant instrumentation. This same evening, Mr. Böhm will play a concert of Maurer whose music he understands so well. In the same concert, we will hear Mr. Brod playing the oboe, Cyprian Romberg playing the cello, and finally, young Böhm (Ludwig) playing the violin. This young performer, who was so brilliantly promising way back in the past year, will play variations of Bériot. Let's finish this announcement with our gratitude to Mr. Böhm, for, in spite of his truly great talent, he has not increased ticket prices for his concerts, like many others do. The price of his tickets is still 5 roubles." [ibid., p. 131].

Odoevsky, 1837:

"We took a break from all the horrors of the contemporary violin playing school at the concert of Böhm. How accurate, how clear, how noble Böhm's playing is! No hint of jugglery – only permanent respect and unconditional love to the art. The concert was filled with wonderful overtures, excellent choice of other music pieces, best actors! The audience was delighted, and admittance fee did not exceed five roubles; packed hall – one could not move a muscle; a good lesson to some concertists who hope to rise their talent in public's esteem by the price of chairs!" [ibid., p. 139].

Odoevsky, 1837: after Ole Bull's concerts,

"the violin concerts, which were given this week one after another, convinced everybody in the old proven truth that there is a lot to be said about each musical school and that a good musician, no matter which school he belongs to, would always be a real treat for the audience. We listened to the classical playing of Mr. Böhm. Unintentional public applause could be heard all over the hall – people cheered him for his accurate, noble singing; for his clearness in the most challenging passages. In acknowledgement of his father, people clapped the son who, I must say, was played Mr. Artôt's fantasy (substantially simplified, I would say) very well. But, let us admit, we don't like children on stage! A child may play very well, accurately; it may be very

²⁵ RSHA. F. 497. Sch. 1. No. 148. L. 18.

²⁶ RSHA. F. 497. Sch. 1. No. 601. L. 42.

²⁷ RSHA. F. 497. Sch. 1. No. 148. L. 52.

²⁸ RSHA. F. 497. Sch. 1. No. 148. 78 L.

good for him as it trains him not to quail before the audience (which amounts to a curse for a violin player!). However, a kid's playing will never satisfy any feeling other than curiosity, which is too little for music." [ibid., p. 169].

At first, Böhm lived next to the Stone Theatre on the Embankment of Kryukov Kanal; later, he lived not far from this place, at 34 Officerskaya Street. At present, the Second Stage of Mariinsky Theatre has been built on this place. In 1844, his address was: 14 Officerskaya Street.

In 1825, Böhm moved to Nevsky Avenue; now this house number is 58. Probably he moved because of the flood of 1824, when houses on the Theatre Square, in which the Böhms lived, were severely affected. There was an announcement published in *St. Petersburg News* as follows:

"On Wednesday, 25 February, Mr. Böhm, the first concertist of the Imperial Theatres, will have the honour to give a big song and instrumental concert in the hall of the former Philharmonic Society on Nevsky Avenue not far from Kazan Bridge. He will play a concert he composed and a new Polonaise composed by Mr. Maurer." [17, No. 14, 17.02.1825, p. 169]. The newspaper of 31 March published a review of the concert of 16 March where they regretfully announced that "due to an unexpected sickness of Mr. Böhm, who was willing to take part in the concert, Catalani volunteered to replace Mr. Böhm during the time allocated for him, and performed *la Placida Campagna*".

Nikolai Ivanovich Bakhmetev (1807–1891), Böhm's student, officer, composer; in 1861–1883, director of Imperial Music Chapel, wrote interesting memoirs. In his reminiscences, Bakmetev described an intriguing episode in the Assembly of Nobility:

"On my return in 1837, my battle-field service went on as before, but for my favourite instrument which I got down to, having bought a Guadagnini violin very cheap, for 600 roubles. It came so cheap to me because someone pledged and I luckily purchased it. At that time, as a former student of our first violinist Böhm, I only played pieces composed by various composers like Rode, Viotti, Lafont, Lipiński, Maurer... In 1840, after a Patriotic Concert in the Assembly of Nobility, they forced me to sign a couple of *romances* of mine. By the way, it was then that I sang my *Persian Sword* for the first time. This passionate song was composed in 5/4 time. This rhythm has never occurred to anyone, while I meant to add passion to my romantic song. Maurer and Böhm rebelled against this innovation, saying that 5/4 just cannot exist as this is indivisi-

ble, and nothing like that has been mentioned in the theory. Only count Vielgorsky did not find anything unpleasant or indecent in this timing, and Glinka put on thinking cap, sitting in the corner of the room, and did not utter any opinion. Only when departing, he told me: "We will think about it." And he did so, and subsequently made women's chorus (in *A Life for the Tsar*) in 5/4, which had previously been made in another rhythm dimension, probably in 3/8 time." [3, p. 279–282].

Public and drawing room performances of F. Böhm found a broad response in various testimonies of contemporaries, e.g. A.S. Dargomyzhsky [5, p. 341–342].

V.F. Odoevsky, known as a musical critic, wrote:

"Böhm really consoled us, having brilliantly presented Bériot's piece of music. What a correct pitch in the most critical passages – not a bit of singing out of tune; what a dignity in singing, what a gliding legato! We heard that when Mr. Böhm finished writing his piece, a music lover said out loud: "Thank God! We have finally heard the violin!" We inwardly shared this opinion, but please, for God's sake, tell me if there is anything else behind this simple phrase?" [14, p. 157].

F. Böhm died on 16 February 1846. The cause of his death recorded in the formulary list was "nervous weakness". It was also written there: "citizen of Austrian Emperor, born in the City of Pest in Hungary, 57 years of age, left his wife Sofia (nee Moravek), four children from the first marriage – Adolph, Anna, Maria, and Sofia – and three children from the second marriage – Ludwig, Julia and Maximilian."²⁹ A notice of Böhm's death was published in *Moscow News* on 26 February 1846: "We regret to advise everybody who used to know Franz Böhm, the first concertist of the Imperial Theatres who was among the most remarkable virtuoso performers on the violin, as well as numerous admirers of his outstanding talent, that he died recently in St. Petersburg." [12]. All members of this generation of the Böhms were buried at Smolensky Cemetery.

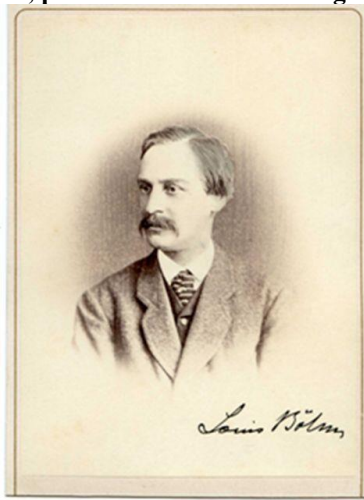
Thanks to his merits, Franz Böhm was portrayed among the St. Petersburg's most important people in the picture of brothers Grigory and Nikanor Chernetsov "Parade on Tsaritsyn Meadow". On the foreground of the painting, there is a group of citizens admiring the parade with Pushkin, Zhukovsky, Krylov, nobility, actors, artists, and musicians among them. All in all, 223 men – crème de la crème of St. Petersburg. Franz Böhm (character No. 185 in the painting) is standing to the right of the group of people with Pushkin, among musicians and actors.

²⁹ RSHA. F. 497. Sch. 1. No. 148. L. 58.



Franz Boehm in the picture of G. and N. Chernetsov "Parade on Tsaritsyn Meadow", 1837. (Personal archive of the author)

Ludwig Böhm, professor of St. Petersburg Conservatory



Ludwig Boehm (1825–1904), Conservatory professor. (Personal archive of the author)

Ludwig Böhm belongs to the second generation of the unique family of violin players. He was the son of Franz Böhm from his second marriage with Sofia Moravek. Ludwig was born in St. Petersburg on 3 February 1825. His uncle Joseph Böhm taught him to play the violin in Vienna. This education is described in the musician's service record as "family education"³⁰. Ludwig performed together with his father since he was 11, i.e. as of 17 March 1837. Odoevsky:

"We listened with pleasure to the young (Ludwig) Böhm playing in this concert. Can you tell me what point will instrument playing soon reach? Just look at him: he is but a child, but how keen he is, strong bow, what an aplomb in devices, what an accuracy in the most difficult passages! Really, instrument playing will soon become as common as reading books. They will be good readers and bad readers, but each and every person will be able to read." [14, p. 139].

³⁰ CSHA SPb. F. 361. Sch. 11. No. 150. L. 15.

In 1844, Ludwig completed his education in Vienna and the same year, on 1 May, he was admitted in the Imperial orchestra in St. Petersburg as a violin player with an annual salary of 400 roubles. His service in the orchestra was included in his service record of 1844–1876. In 1856, he sprained his arm and, as a result, got erysipelas [*ibidem*]. In 1864, he was transferred to play the first violin. He had a certificate of an actor playing the violin for the Imperial theatres with an annual pension of 571 roubles and 44 kopecks paid from the Cabinet of His Imperial Majesty.

In 1867, Ludwig married Elisaveta Endaurova (1843–1914). She was an artist, student of Kramskoy. Her works – images of children, Christmas and Easter post cards, silhouettes – were very popular in the late 19th – early 20th century. Ludwig Böhm supported his wife's hobbies. Elisaveta's friend, children's writer S.I. Lavrentieva, quoted the violinist in her reminiscences:

“You know, looking at those lovely works, which Elisaveta Merkurievna made with her hands and used to show me from time to time when I visited her, I often thought that I would not have been satisfied to such extent if my wife were, for example, a musician and I, having returned from the conservatory, still filled with slightly wrong sounds my students produced, would have heard musical tones again, even if they were good tones! But here, I take real rest looking at her paintings.” [11, p. 6–7].

In 1875, Ludwig's uncle, Joseph Böhm, fell ill. Therefore, his nephew asked to grant him 14 days of leave in 1875 and three weeks in 1876: “My uncle, who resides in Vienna, is badly ill, and I will have to leave for his place forthwith on demand (by telegram)”³¹. In the end of April 1876, Ludwig asked to dismiss him from his service in the orchestra and went to serve in the St. Petersburg conservatory³². His career is described herein below in the “Service Record of Conservatory Instructor L.F. Böhm”.³³

His service record there successively included supernumerary instructor (1870), senior supernumerary instructor (1876), supernumerary professor (as of 1879). He was paid a compensation for his classes by the job. In the course of his service, he was awarded the Order of St. Stanislav and the Order of St. Anna, 3rd class [*ibidem*]. In the period of his teaching, in 1882, Ludwig Böhm became the first in the family of violin players who was granted Russian citizenship. And in 1896, he converted to Orthodox Christianity.

Until 1901, Ludwig Böhm taught two classes: a special class of violin playing and multiplayer violin. However, on 9 May 1901, the 76-year old Böhm wrote a petition to the Conservatory Administration addressed to Bergard:

“Dear Valued August Rudolfovich, I feel that I am unable to teach my special class anymore as I did before. Therefore, I cannot be of use as expected, and I feel it my duty to give up on it. At the same time, having served in the Conservatory for more than 30 years, I got

to love it so much that it is hard for me to tear myself away from the place all at once. Therefore, please leave my multiplayer class to me.”³⁴

Of all contemporaries, it was S. Lavrentieva, his wife's friend, who cherished the most vivid reminiscences of Ludwig Böhm in her letters. “Ludwig Franzevich Böhm, Hungarian by birth, but totally Russified, was a very educated man, talented violinist, and excellent teacher, who worked in St. Petersburg Conservatory first, as Auer's associate professor, and thereafter, as professor. He studied at Viennese Conservatory. At that time, he lived at his uncle's place. His uncle was a famous professor of violin Josef Böhm, Beethoven's friend and teacher of entire galaxy of famous violin players, such as Joachim, Laub, Minkus, Ernst, and others, including Auer's teacher. Being on especially friendly terms with Joachim, Ludwig Franzevich lived at his uncle's (Böhm's) place together with him. When L.F. was already married, he inherited his uncle's famous Stradivarius violin and Beethoven's letter.” [11, p. 6].

On 7 June 1904, Ludwig Böhm died and was buried at Novodevichy Cemetery. Vice rector of Roman Catholic Church of St. Catherine made the death record in the passport attached to the service record of Conservatory Teacher Böhm³⁵. It is unclear whether Ludwig was buried in accordance with catholic or orthodox funeral rite. The violinist's widow applied for a pension to the Directorate of Russian Musical Society in 1909. She stated in her petition to the Directorate that Ludwig had served for the Conservatory for 33 years and raised a pleiad of musicians: E. Mlynarski, who eventually became a director and professor of Conservatory in Warsaw; I. Malkin, subsequently teacher of Vilna Musical School and the first teacher of Y. Heifetz; Shvachkin, member of the quartet of the Society of Chamber Music in St. Petersburg; Tez, orchestra musician at Imperial Romanian Opera; Frenkel. Being Mr. Auer's associate professor and substituting him during his leave, Böhm contributed a lot to get students ready for the higher course of Auer's class.

Regretfully, no mention whatsoever was made about Böhm in L. Auer's book [2].

In our opinion, the merits of Ludwig Böhm listed in the petition most particularly stress the importance of his work and of the work of other family members who served for the benefit of St. Petersburg culture of the 19th century.

Such was the history of this family which enriched Vienna and St. Petersburg with its performing and teaching talents.

References

1. Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung 1821 Wien, July No 54. [https://de.wikisource.org/wiki/Allgemeine_musikalische_Zeitung_\(Wien\)](https://de.wikisource.org/wiki/Allgemeine_musikalische_Zeitung_(Wien))
2. Auer L. My long life in music. N.Y.: F. A. Stokes. 1923.

³¹ RSHA. F. 497. Sch. 1. No. 9754. 69 L.

³² CSHA SPb. F. 361, Sch. 9, No. 9. 13 L., F. 361. Sch. 11. No. 150. 66 L.

³³ CSHA SPb. F. 361, Sch. 9, No. 9. 13 L.; F. 361. Sch. 11. No. 150. L. 15, 21.

³⁴ CSHA SPb. F. 361. Sch. 9. No. 9. L. 53.

³⁵ CSHA SPb. F. 361, Sch. 9, No. 9, 13 L.

3. Bahmetev N.I. Zapiski i dnevnik N.I. Bahmeteva (Notes and Diary of N.I. Bakhmetev) // Rossijskij arhiv: Istoriya Otechestva v svidetel'stvah i dokumentah XVIII–XX vv.: Al'manah. T. XII. M.: Studiya TRITE: Ros.Arhiv, 2003. – P.242–301. <https://runivers.ru/lib/book4777/63970/>
4. Belyakaeva-Kazanskaya I.V. Siluehty muzykal'nogo Peterburga (Silhouettes of musical Petersburg). St-Petersburg: Lenizdat, 2001. – P.2. <https://search.rsl.ru/ru/record/01000695069>
5. Dargomyzhskij A.S. Avtobiografiya (Autobiography) // Russkaya starina. 1875. T. XII. P. 341–358. <https://runivers.ru/lib/book4646/57346/>
6. Décaillot A.-M. Cantor et la France. Correspondance du mathématicien allemand avec les français à la fin du XIX siècle. Éditions Kimé. Paris, 2008. <http://onscene.ru/Cantor-et-la-France--correspondance-du-math%C3%A9maticien-allemand-avec-les-fran%C3%A7ais-%C3%A0-la-fin-du-XIXe-si%C3%A8cle-Anne-Marie-D%C3%A9caillot/2/dgccaie>
7. Die Musik. V Jahr 1905/1906 Neft 12 Zweites Märzheft. <https://archive.org/details/DieMusik05jg2qBd.181905-1906>
8. Glinka M. Zapiski. Literaturnye proizvedeniya i perepiska (Notes. Literary works and correspondence). Moscow: Muzyka, 1973. (In 2 v.) V. 1. <https://search.rsl.ru/ru/record/01007594069>
9. Goethe's Faust, Translated Into English. Verse by Sir G. Lefevre. Second Ed. 1843. Frankfort o M.: Ch. Jugel. https://play.google.com/store/books/details/Goethe_s_Faust_Translated_Into_English_Verse_By_Si?id=CjNdAAAACAAJ&hl=zh_HK
10. Hanslick E. Geschichte des Concertwesens in Wien // Bd. 1. Braumüller. Wien, 1869. <https://books.google.ru/books?id=8tRXI-OAZ7xQC&dq=editions:LCCNgb72007361&hl=tr>
11. Lavrent'eva S. Drug detej – E.M. Bem. Biograficheskij ehskiz (A friend of children is E.M. Böhm. Biographical sketch). SPb, 1911. <https://search.rsl.ru/ru/record/01004489324>
12. Moskovskie vedomosti (Moscow newspapers) №25. 26.02.1846. – p.68. http://nlr.ru/res/inv/ukazat55/record_full.php?record_ID=131435
13. Moser, A. Geschichte des Violinspiels. II. Berlin: Hesse, 1923. https://play.google.com/store/books/details/Geschichte_des_Violinspiels?id=n9wsAAAA-MAAJ&hl=ru
14. Odoevskij V.F. Muzykal'no-literaturnoe nasledie (Musical-literary heritage). Moskva: Muzgiz. 1956. <https://imwerden.de/publ-858.html>
15. Petrovskaya I.F. Muzykal'noe obrazovanie i muzykal'nye obshchestvennye organizacii v Peterburge 1800–1917 (Music education and musical public organizations in Petersburg 1800–1917). SPb.: Petrovskij fond. 1999. <https://search.rsl.ru/ru/record/01007484788>
16. Purkert W., Ilgauds J. Georg Cantor. 1845–1918. Basel–Boston–Stuttgart: Birkhäuser Verlag, 1987. <https://www.springer.com/de/book/9783034874120>
17. Sankt-Peterburgskie vedomosti (St. Petersburg State Gazette). http://nlr.ru/res/inv/ukazat55/record_full.php?record_ID=123517
18. Sinkevich G.I. Georg Cantor&Pol'skaya shkola teorii mnozhestv (Georg Cantor&Polish school of a set theory). St-Petersburg: SPbGASU, 2012. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/277775314_Georg_Kantor_Polskaa_skola_teorii_mnozhestv
19. Thayer A.W. The Life of Ludwig van Beethoven, Volume III / Translator: H. E. Krehbiel. New York: Published by The Beethoven Association. Copyright, 1921, By H. E. Krehbiel. From the press of G. Schirmer, Inc., New York. <https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/life-of-ludwig-van-beethoven/D0CD40BDD0CD55A57B768752B9E7035A>
20. Toby Faber. Stradivari's Genius: Five Violins, One Cello, and Three Centuries of Enduring Perfection. Random House Publishing Group. <https://ru.b-ok.org/book/2270821/768cdf>
21. Sinkevich G. I. Böhm. Sem'ya skripachej (Böhm, violinists family, in Russian) // Musicus. 2010. №5 (24). p. 54–59. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/277719487_Bem_Sema_skripacej