

RICE UNIVERSITY

**The Viola Class of Yuri Kramarov:
Students, Pedagogy, and Influences**

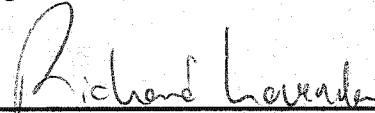
by

Misha Galaganov

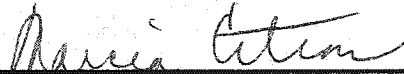
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ABSTRACT

The Viola Class of Yuri Kramarov: Students, Pedagogy, and Influences

by

Misha Galaganov

A Soviet viola player and a professor at the Leningrad Conservatory, Yuri Markovich Kramarov (1929 – 1982) was a musician in the most beautiful meaning of the word. He taught his students how to approach the preparation of a new composition, how to care about every note in a piece, and how to relate music to other aspects of life. This was the unique secret of Kramarov's school. Unfortunately, Kramarov was in disfavor with Soviet officials for the majority of his career. Therefore, his name, recordings, editions, transcriptions, and articles are unknown outside Russia.

Kramarov's biography, teaching methods, and output are presented; his students are listed, and their careers are traced. This work also gives a survey of the history of Russian/Soviet viola performance and provides the following lists: names of the most prominent Russian/Soviet violists, compositions for viola by Russian and Soviet composers, and compositions for viola by European composers.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to thank his parents, Anna and Pavel Galaganov, for providing invaluable research information in addition to their tireless emotional support.

Essential data was provided by the Kramarov's widow, Irina Alexeyevna Kramarova. Without her help, this dissertation would not have been possible. It is also important to mention the enormous effort spent by Maria Fedorov in transferring some of the documents into electronic format. The author is very grateful to the both of them.

In the process of his research, the author was both surprised and impressed by the amount of support provided by former students of Kramarov. Especially important information was provided by the following of Kramarov's students: Alexander Tumarinson, Vladimir Altschuler, Genadi Freidin, Mikhail Kugel, Vladimir Stopichev, and Elena Panfilova.

Indispensable information was also sent to the author, in the form of a fax letter, by a Saint Petersburg composer Vladimir Tsïtovich.

The author would like to thank Era Barutcheva for providing data about Yuri Markovich in the form of both a phone interview and her newspaper article.

Special thanks to Matvey Borisovich Liberman, the violin teacher of the author's father, who found two rare articles about Kramarov.

The author is very grateful to his adviser, Dr. Richard Lavenda, for agreeing to help him with this project and for providing such valuable aid and support.

Finally, the author thanks Talya Bernstein, who spent her personal time reviewing this work.

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	iv
PREFACE.....	vi

Chapter

1. HISTORY OF RUSSIAN-SOVIET VIOLA PERFORMANCE.....	1
2. BIOGRAPHY AND ACTIVITIES OF KRAMAROV.....	18
I. Kramarov's biography	
II. His personal portrait	
III. Kramarov's qualities as a solo violist	
IV. Work in the field of chamber music	
V. Orchestra experience	
VI. Conducting	
VII. Research activities	
VIII. Pedagogical activities	
3. TEACHING METHODS AND THE APPROACH TO PEDAGOGY.....	44
I. The actual process of teaching	
II. Repertory	
III. Approach to musical questions, including style	
IV. Technique	
V. Kramarov's article on teaching methods	

4. KRAMAROV'S CLASS.....	76
Vladimir Altschuler	
Oleg Balabin	
Genadi Freidin	
Mikhail Kugel	
Elena Panfilov	
Vasily Shulga	
Yuri Simonov	
Vladimir Stopichev	
Short biographies of other musicians	
CONCLUSION.....	99
Appendix	
1. Students of Kramarov.....	101
2. List of other Russian-Soviet viola players.....	103
3. Kramarov's editions and transcriptions.....	104
4. Kramarov's recordings.....	105
5. List of compositions dedicated to Kramarov.....	106
6. Compositions for viola mentioned in the dissertation.....	107
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	109

PREFACE

This work is dedicated to the memory of a wonderful person, a great musician, and an excellent pedagogue, Yuri Markovich Kramarov (1929-1982). He was one of the best viola players of the 20th century. His achievements in music can be easily compared with the successes of the more well-known violists, such as Primrose, Tertis, Borisovsky, or Bashmet. Unjustly, his name is not familiar to musicians outside of the former Soviet Union.

The author first heard Kramarov's name mentioned by his father, Pavel Galaganov, who knew Yuri Markovich personally. Kramarov's parents-in-law lived in Kislovodsk, where Mr. Galaganov held the Concertmaster position in the Kislovodsk Symphony Orchestra. Kramarov would often come to visit his relatives there; thus, the relation between the two (Y. Kramarov and P. Galaganov) started.

After moving to Israel, the author studied with one of the most prominent of Kramarov's students, Mikhail Kugel. During his lessons, Kugel would refer to Yuri Markovich constantly. The author also personally knows another wonderful viola player and a friend of his father, Vasily Shulga, who studied with Kramarov. Shulga saw the author's family off in Moscow, where they took a train on their way to Israel. During the couple of hours at the train station, he mentioned Kramarov's name several times.

Finally, when the author played as a substitute in the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra in Israel, he met Alexander Tumarinson, another student of Yuri Markovich. This time, it did not come as surprise to hear Tumarinson's enthusiastic stories about Kramarov. Thus, the interest was sparked.

The author was also fascinated by the personalities of Kramarov's students. All of them seemed to be both amazing viola players and very interesting, intriguing people. Through these people, Kramarov's school has become international. It would have been easy to write a separate research paper on the class of Vladimir Stopichev, one of the best violists of our time. A former student of Kramarov, Stopichev has already achieved prominence as a pedagogue, too. Many of his students are soloists, quartet players, or principals in leading orchestras.

Mikhail Kugel is also one of the most popular viola teachers in Europe. His brilliant technique has attracted the best violin and viola students to seek lessons with him. The names of other influential teachers and performers, alumni of Yuri Markovich's class, include Elena Panfilova, Genadi Freidin, Gennady Kleyman, Vladimir Altschuler, and Yuri Simonov.

In the process of writing this dissertation, the author avoided deep coverage of several important issues. One of these subjects is Kramarov's disfavor with Soviet officials. The main reason his name is very little known both in Europe and in the USA is that, for the majority of his career, Yuri Markovich was extremely limited by the Soviet system in all of his activities, including, primarily, his solo performances. However, this subject goes far beyond the limits of the dissertation's theme; it requires separate research, which will be done at a later time.

Another such subject is the anti-Semitism in Leningrad and its role in the careers of Kramarov (whose father was a Jew) and his Jewish students. It is well known that for many years, some of the key officials at the Leningrad Conservatory were anti-Semites. It is possible that the anti-Semitism had nothing to do with the official disfavor of

Kramarov; on the other hand, some of his students, like Yakov Levinson, had to leave their positions, in the midst of their careers, as the result of the anti-Semitism. This issue is also much broader than the topic of the dissertation, and it will be researched by the author for the publication of a future book about Kramarov and his class.

The information about Kramarov, his output, the pedagogical principles, and the activities of his disciples is presented to the reader for the first time in one study. The work can also serve as a source for the following information, most of which has never been available in English:

- a detailed overview of the Russian-Soviet history of viola performance;
- the names of some prominent Russian-Soviet viola players; and
- the compositions for viola written by Russian-Soviet composers.

It is necessary to explain the structures of Russian names. A full Russian name includes a first name (for example, Yuri), a middle name, which is always the name of the father (Markovich, loosely meaning “son of Mark”), and a family name. It is respectful in Russian to call a person by his or her first and middle names, as in Yuri Markovich. This form is, for example, used by students addressing their teacher, by workers addressing their boss, or by colleagues, who are not on familiar terms, addressing each other. This form of name is also appropriate for use in Russian musicological articles. In the dissertation, the full name is usually given when a person is mentioned for the first time. Afterwards, the author alternates between the last name and the combination of the first and middle names in order to avoid monotony.

Clarification of the method of translation is also important. Almost all of the quotations in this text are translations from Russian. Not being a professional translator,

the author has adopted the following system: in cases when finding an exact translation or nuance was not possible, optional words are given in brackets with parentheses [(like this)]; when an English word had to be added to a sentence for grammatical reasons, only brackets are used [like this].

The author sincerely hopes that readers share both his deep respect and his affection for the kind, interesting, talented, and fascinating personality of Yuri Markovich Kramarov.

CHAPTER 1

HISTORY OF RUSSIAN-SOVIET VIOLA PERFORMANCE

In order to understand the importance of Kramarov's work and his place in the history of the art of viola performance, it is necessary to take a short trip into the history of Russian/Soviet viola playing and teaching. In Russia, as in Europe, the viola gained prominence as a solo instrument only in the second half of the 20th century. As everywhere else in the world, the Russian viola tradition was most closely linked to the increasing demands of orchestral and chamber music parts. In the 18th century, the progress in Russian viola performance was mostly inspired by the development of orchestral writing in operas and in symphonic works. There were numerous court orchestras in this country, especially after the 1760s. In the next century, chamber music ensembles, string quartets in particular, served as the main vehicle towards the "emancipation" of the viola. Practically, however, not until the first half of the 20th century, did musicians start specializing in viola in the process of their education.

The viola as an instrument was known in Russia since about the 16th century, but the name "alt" (viola in Russian) did not appear there until about the 18th century.¹ Small orchestras were the most progressive type of ensemble at that time. During this period, Russian musical culture had been developing very rapidly, inspired by the reforms initiated by the Russian tsar Peter I (Peter the Great).² Consisting mostly of serfs, orchestras played an important part in the development and popularization of the art of

¹ M. Grinberg, "Исполнительство на альте в России" (Performance on viola in Russia) in *Вопросы музыкально-исполнительского искусства*, Выпуск 2. (Москва, Государственное Музыкальное Издательство, 1958), 466.

² S. Poniatovsky, *История альтового искусства* (History of the viola art) (Москва, Музыка, 1984), 141.

viola playing.³ The opera-symphony orchestra and the ballet orchestra, founded in the 1760s at the Russian Court by Ekaterina II (Catherine II), included such musicians as V. Pashkevich⁴ and I. Khandoshkin.⁵ The level of personnel and the performance qualities of these orchestras were not different from those of the best European ensembles.⁶

Most often, viola parts in orchestras were taken by violin players who knew how to read viola clef. Musicians specializing in viola were extremely rare at that time. One of the first professional violists-serfs was Konstantin Blinov, who studied with the principal of the symphony (or the “first orchestra”), Golsner, and who was later accepted to the ballet (or the “second”) orchestra with a salary of 120 rubles per year. Timofey Glagolev, another student of Golsner, was a serf of Prince Yusupov. Glagolev was also admitted to the second court orchestra. Almost nothing is known about the viola and flute player Maksimchenko, who was sold to the directorate of the imperial theatres⁷, as well as about many others.⁸

The 18th century was the time of the first Russian professional composers and conductors. The most important and popular genre during this period was opera. As in

³ M. Grinberg, 466.

⁴ Vasily Alekseevich Pashkevich (c1742-1797) was a concertmaster of the court ballet orchestra (Poniatovskiy, 142). In 1783, he “moved” to the symphony orchestra, which considered a better one, and in 1789 he became concertmaster there (Harvard Biographical Dictionary of Music, 673). However, Pashkevich was mostly known as an opera composer and a singer. His first operas were so popular that Catherine II wrote three librettos for Pashkevich’s later operas. At the end of his career, Vasily Pashkevich was the highest paid musician of his time in Russia (R. Taruskin: ‘Pashkevich, Vasily’, *The New Grove Dictionary of Music Online* ed. L. Macy (Accessed 26 December 2002), <<http://www.grovemusic.com>>

⁵ Ivan Yevstafyevich Khandoshkin (1747-1804), son of a serf, is considered to be “the finest Russian violinist of the 18th century” (G. Norris/r: ‘Khandoshkin, Ivan Yevstafyevich’, *The New Grove Dictionary of Music Online* ed. L. Macy (Accessed 26 December 2002), <<http://www.grovemusic.com>>). “There is little known of his creative and performing activities... He was a prominent composer, author of many instrumental compositions for violin, piano, guitare, and balalaika. Most of his works are left in manuscripts, many are lost.” (S. Poniatovskiy, 144.)

⁶ S. Poniatovsky, 141.

⁷ M. Grinberg, 467.

⁸ Mickail Fatuev was a violist in the orchestra at the court of prince Sheremetiev; Alexander Gulaev was let out by prince Chernyshev to the directorate of the imperial theatres along with 14 other orchestra musicians (M. Grinberg, 467.)

European works of the period, in operatic compositions of composers Pashkevich, D. Bortniansky,⁹ and E. Fomin¹⁰ viola played an important role in orchestra. In their operas, the viola line was very often separated from the bass line to create a so-called “polyphony of supporting voices.” In general, the Russian technique of orchestration followed “classical” principles.¹¹

After the 1760s, we can find examples of compositions that involve viola solo. One of the earliest works that include a solo viola part is a duet for violin and viola by Ivan Khandoshkin on a Russian folk song *Ax no mocy mочmочки* (On the little bridge). Khandoshkin was a violinist but also often performed on viola.¹² The viola part in the duet is only supportive to the violin part. Viola there serves mostly as an accompanying voice; the timbral possibilities of the instrument are unexplored, and, most of the time, the part does not require a performer to play above the first position.¹³ Far more interesting is the viola concerto, originally attributed to Khandoshkin, published in 1947. The work is written for viola with a string orchestra accompaniment. Later, Borisovsky¹⁴ arranged the accompaniment for a symphony orchestra, and also extended the solo part, above all, in the first movement. However, in Borisovsky’s version, the concerto loses its original “flavor.” The technical demands on a performer in the concerto are quite high; the solo part is very virtuosic, particularly in the final movement, and the sound possibilities of the instrument are masterfully emphasized, especially in the Canzone,

⁹ Dmitry Stepanovich Bortniansky (1751-1825) studied composition in Petrograd, with B. Galuppi, and in Italy; he composed operas in Italian and in French for performance at the Russian court. Bortniansky was author of dozens of concerti for choir and works for solo keyboard, chamber music ensembles, etc.

¹⁰ Evtigney Ipatovich Fomin (1761-1800) studied in St. Petersburg and Bologna, Italy. “He taught at the theatrical school and composed operas”. He was also a “répétiteur for the imperial theatre.” (Harvard Biographical Dictionary of Music, 275)

¹¹ Poniatovsky, 143.

¹² Grinberg, 474.

¹³ Poniatovsky, 144.

¹⁴ See more about Borisovsky later in the chapter.

which is easily the best movement of the concerto. The piece was first discovered in the late 1940s and recorded in 1947 by Barshai¹⁵ playing and conducting his orchestra.

Modern research has come to a consensus that the concerto was not composed by Khandoshkin,¹⁶ and that it is a work that was written after the composer's death; however, this fact does not take away the importance of the piece in the viola repertory.¹⁷

Mikhail Ivanovich Glinka (1804-1857) was the first really important Russian composer. He is considered the “father of the Russian compositional school.” In his operas and works for a symphony orchestra, the viola part for the first time received full independence. Glinka often gave melodies to the viola section. In his orchestration, voices do not always remain in their “assigned” registers: first violins on top, second violins a little lower, violas in the middle, and cellos with basses on the bottom. Contrary to that principle, Glinka's voices often cross and exchange registers. His viola parts require certain virtuosity from performers. Mikhail Glinka played both violin and viola. His unfinished viola sonata is one of the earliest sonatas composed for viola. Glinka composed the work intending to play it himself.¹⁸ He performed his own sonata on viola with the accompaniment of pianist Lige.¹⁹

By the middle of the 19th century, the level of viola playing in Russia was very high. We can deduce this by looking at the technical difficulties in orchestral viola parts in pieces by such composers as P. Tchaikovsky, N. Rimsky-Korsakov, and Mussorgsky. One of the highlights of the solo viola repertory of this time is the sonata for viola and

¹⁵ See more about Barshai later in the chapter.

¹⁶ G. Norris/r (see the footnote 4).

¹⁷ See analysis of the concerto in Poniatovsky, 146.

¹⁸ Poniatovsky, 150.

¹⁹ Grinberg, 470, footnotes.

piano by A. G. Rubinstein,²⁰ performed by the composer on piano with Jeronim Weickmann playing the viola.

Jeronim Andreevich Weickmann²¹ (1825-1895) was a very famous Russian viola player. He was considered a virtuoso on the viola.²² Weickmann performed in the world-class quartet of the Russian Musical Society (RMO in Russian) from 1859 until 1889, combining this with his duties as the Principal Violist of the Imperial Theatres orchestra. He was the first professor of viola at the St. Petersburg conservatory. Beginning in 1863, he taught viola performance there and, from 1870, was in charge of the obligatory viola class.²³ The first student who graduated from the St. Petersburg conservatory as a viola player was V. Bessel. He switched from violin to viola following a recommendation by A. G. Rubinstein, and graduated in 1865.²⁴ In fact, Bessel's career as violist was not long.²⁵

Jeronim Weickmann taught viola performance until 1875. After that year, having only 1 or 2 students specializing on the instrument, he supervised only the obligatory viola class. It was not until the Soviet period in Russia that a studio in viola performance was reestablished in the Leningrad conservatory.²⁶ Weickmann also performed as a

²⁰ Anton Rubinstein (1829-1894) was a great Russian pianist and a composer. He played hundreds of concerts in Europe and the USA. In 1858, he became the imperial concert director; he also founded and directed the St. Petersburg conservatory of music. In addition, he was the founder of the Russian Musical Society.

²¹ In the article about Bessel (see the footnote # 25), The New Grove Dictionary Online gives the spelling of Вейкман as *I. A. Veykman*. The author believes, nonetheless, that since the musician in question was of a "German descent" (Poniatovsky, 165), it is more logical to assume that his name in German was spelled as *Weickmann*. The first name, Иероним (*Ieronim*) in Russian, was probably *Jeronim* in Europe.

²² Grinberg, 476, footnotes.

²³ The obligatory viola class was designed for violin students to help them learn viola clef and to get used to playing viola. The class was dropped at the end of the 19th century, and then established again in many music institutions during the 1920s and 1930s.

²⁴ Grinberg, 475.

²⁵ Vasily Vasil'yevich Bessel (1843-1907) soon joined his brother in a publishing business. "Bessel's firm published works by all the prominent Russian composers". Vasily Bessel was also a writer, editor, and a correspondent of several German and Russian magazines. (G. Norris and C. Dunlop: 'Bessel, Vasily', *The New Grove Dictionary of Music Online* ed. L. Masy (Accessed 29 December 2002), <<http://www.grovemusic.com>>

²⁶ Grinberg, 476.

soloist. At that time, viola as a solo instrument did not attract too much attention.

Nevertheless, Weickmann's concert career was successful. For example, he brilliantly performed *Harold in Italy* by Berlioz in St. Petersburg with the composer conducting the orchestra.²⁷ The famous Polish violinist H. Wieniawski dedicated his beautiful piece *Reveries* for viola and piano to Weickmann.²⁸ In addition to his activities as a performer and a teacher, J. A. Weickmann was also an author of many original compositions and transcriptions for viola.²⁹

In some ways, a violist like Weickmann was a logical product of the combination of several factors, including the continuously increasing popularity of the string quartet as well as the very high cultural standards of Russian society of the 19th century. The level of string quartet playing at that time was very high even among amateur musicians. In the first half of the century, chamber ensembles nearly always functioned in the atmosphere of salon music making. One of the first excellent ensembles known to us was the string quartet formed and sponsored by Prince Lvov in 1835. The group was "one of the best quartets in Europe."³⁰ G. Vilde was the violist in the ensemble. According to the press of the time, he was "an outstanding violist" and played on a great instrument made by Guarneri.³¹ The group was based in St. Petersburg.

Another of the good quartets was formed by the Decembrists in Siberia in the late 1820s. The quartet consisted of F. Vadkovsky, N. Kr'ukov, A. Yushnevsky (a violist), and Peter Svistunov; the group functioned for about 4 years, and was noted for their fine

²⁷ The performance took place during Berlioz's second visit to Russia. The premier of *Harold in Italy* in Russia was conducted by Berlioz in Moscow and St. Petersburg in 1847 with G. Ernst playing the solo part. Twenty years later, Berlioz directed orchestras in the same cities with Weickman as the soloist. (Poniatovsky, 81.)

²⁸ Poniatovski, 166.

²⁹ Grinberg, 473; see also Poniatovsky, 165-166.

³⁰ Poniatovsky, 163.

³¹ Poniatovski, 164.

performances.³² A famous amateur music making took place in St. Petersburg at the home of M. P. Beliaev, who was an amateur violist and a music lover. Starting in 1882, Beliaev held string quartet³³ evenings every Friday at his house (so-called “Beliaev’s Fridays”). Recounting activities of the quartet, Rimsky-Korsakov wrote:

M. P. Beliaev, a passionate music lover..., being a violist and a zealous quartet player, from time immemorial, had started gathering his friends...on Fridays at his house. An evening usually began with a quartet by Haydn, next, there followed Mozart, than Beethoven, and, finally, some quartet from after-Beethoven’s epoch... The quartet existed for many years until the kind host was taken by death.³⁴

“Beliaev’s Fridays” played an enormous role in the popularization of chamber music. In connection to the home music making, it is necessary to mention that A. Glazunov also often gathered a string quartet at his home, in which he participated playing cello and, sometimes, viola.³⁵

In the second half of the 19th century, one of the most important professional ensembles for the Russian culture was the string quartet RMO (Russian Musical Society).³⁶ The violist in the quartet was Weickmann; the first violin part was at first played by Pikkell, than by Wieniawski, and later by Leopold Auer. It is interesting to note that H. Wieniawski had continued playing periodically in the quartet with L. Auer, probably as a viola player, until 1872.³⁷ The cello part was played by the very famous

³² Grinberg, 472.

³³ The ensemble included A. Gelbke, N. Gezehus, M. Beliaev on viola, and V. Evald. During the years of their cooperation, the musicians played many works, including quartets by Glazunov (from the manuscript), and others. (Grinberg, 474)

³⁴ Rimsky-Korsakov, “Летопись моей музыкальной жизни” (Chronicle of my musical life), in Grinberg, 474, footnote.

³⁵ Poniatovsky, 164.

³⁶ Russian Musical Society was created in 1859; the quartet in St. Petersburg was organized in the same year. (Poniatovsky, 164)

³⁷ L. Raaben, “Ауэр в России” (Auer in Russia), in *Вопросы...*, (Москва, 1958), 233.

cellist Davidov (Davidov).³⁸ After Weickman left the group, E. Albreht joined the ensemble on viola; Albreht later was substituted by Galkin, a violin professor at the St. Petersburg conservatory, who performed in the quartet as a violist.³⁹ The ensemble was absolutely first-rate and, deservedly, the quartet was world famous. Reflecting on the activities of the group, Auer wrote:

This ensemble played from manuscripts, for the first time, early quartets by Tchaikovsky, Arensky, Borodin, and Cui, in addition to the first compositions by Anton Rubinstein.⁴⁰

In reality, many of these works were premiered in Moscow, by the string quartet of the Moscow branch of the Russian Musical Society, led by legendary F. Laub, but Auer's ensemble was the first one to play many of the pieces in St. Petersburg.⁴¹

Finally, a string quartet sponsored by Herzog Mecklenburg-Sterlitzky was an exceptionally prominent professional ensemble of the late 19th century and the first two decades of the 20th. None of the other Russian groups could compare to the Mecklenburg Quartet in the intensity and scope of their concert activity. "By the time the ensemble reached [its] 20th anniversary, it had performed in more than 800 concerts in 150 cities in Russia. The group was the first Russian string quartet touring in the West."⁴²

It is obvious, therefore, that the presence of such high-class ensembles was possible not only because the country had superb violinists and cellists but also because

³⁸ Karl Yul'evich Davidov (1838-1889) played many solo and chamber music concerts in Russia and in Europe. He taught at the Leipzig Conservatory and at the St. Petersburg Conservatory, serving as the director of the conservatory in St. Petersburg from 1876 to 1886. In addition to being a concert cellist, Davidov was also a prolific composer. (*Harvard Biographical Dictionary of Music*, 199)

³⁹ Grinberg, 239.

⁴⁰ L. Auer, *Среди музыкантов* (Among musicians) (Ленинград, 1927), 63.

⁴¹ Raaben, 233.

⁴² Poniatovsky, 165.

outstanding viola players, though very rare, were already at hand at the time.⁴³ The high cultural standards of Russian society and the continuing expansion of the number of professional string quartets created an ever-growing demand for education of professional viola players. The first Russian conservatories were opened in St. Petersburg (1862) and Moscow (1866). At the same time, “new music schools were established in Kiev (1863), Saratov (1865), Khar’kiv (1871), Tbilisi (1871), and Odessa (1886), all of which were accorded the status of state conservatories” in the following years.⁴⁴ So-called People’s Conservatories, offering free education, were founded both in St. Petersburg and Moscow at the end of the century “through the offices of Rimsky-Korsakov, Lyadov, Taneyev, Auer”, and other prominent musicians.⁴⁵ A viola studio was opened in the St. Petersburg Conservatory,⁴⁶ but other institutions, including the Moscow Conservatory, offered only the class of the “required” viola. There still was a deficit of musicians able to play viola on a level adequate for performing solos in symphonic and chamber music pieces. Thus, solo and chamber music viola parts were often played by violinists. For example, at different times, both Auer and Laub had to perform the solo viola part in *Harold in Italy* by Berlioz. It was not until the Soviet period that regular instruction for violists spread through the country.⁴⁷

After Weickmann, the most prominent Russian violist at the beginning of the 20th century was Vladimir Romanovich Bakaleinikov (1885-1953). His activities included

⁴³ Nicolay Aver’ino, for example, participated in Shaliapin’s recitals, and, in 1913, performed Bach’s “Brandenburg Six” together with the famous French violist Casadesus; violist A. Yung in St. Petersburg, on the other hand, was noted for his performances of *Andante* by Rubinstein and *Rococo* by Ritter. He also premiered a viola sonata by A. Winkler. (Grinberg, 478-79)

⁴⁴ Marina Frolova-Walker, ‘Russian Federation, §1: Art Music’, *The New Grove Dictionary of Music Online* ed. L. Masy (Accessed 30 December 2002), <<http://www.grovemusic.com>>

⁴⁵ M. Frolova-Walker.

⁴⁶ See above.

⁴⁷ In Moscow and Leningrad, viola classes were opened in the 1920s; in other institutions, viola studios were established only in the 30s. (Grinberg, 477)

chamber music, solo performances, teaching, conducting, and composing. Bakaleinikov graduated from the Moscow conservatory as a violin player, but quickly began participating in various ensembles as a violist.⁴⁸ After joining the quartet of the Moscow's RMO, he continued playing viola on a permanent basis. In 1910, he was admitted to the famed "Mecklenburg" quartet and started going on many tours with the ensemble. During the First World War, Bakaleinikov served in the army; after the war, he joined the Stradivarius quartet.

In 1920, something that later proved to be of enormous importance to the Soviet viola school happened in Moscow: Bakaleinikov was invited to teach a quartet class in the Moscow conservatory and to give viola instruction to one student, who wanted to be a performing violist. That student was Vadim Borisovsky.⁴⁹

A very strong violist, Bakaleinikov nevertheless rarely performed as a soloist. In 1925, in the recital dedicated to the 25th anniversary of his concert activity, Bakaleinikov performed Bach's *Chaconne* on viola and the *Passacaglia* by Handel for violin and viola. Listeners noted that the performance of the *Chaconne* was technically fluent and the duet with violin sounded in an artistic and noble manner.⁵⁰ Bakaleinikov played on a viola made by Stradivarius.

While in Moscow, he combined his teaching and chamber music responsibilities with conducting activities. In 1927, Bakaleinikov moved to the United States and became the principal violist of the Cincinnati Symphony. He was also appointed Associate

⁴⁸ In 1909, Bakaleinikov played for Leo Tolstoy as a violist of the Moscow Quartet. Later, he wrote: "During our performance Leo Nikolayevich constantly wiped his eyes from tears, which, as though, proved that he feels and loves music." (Poniatovsky, 167)

⁴⁹ Vasily Shirinsky, "Из истории квартетных классов Московской консерватории" (From the history of quartet class in the Moscow conservatory) in *Камерный ансамбль* (Музыка, Москва, 1979), 119.

⁵⁰ Poniatovsky, 167.

Conductor of this orchestra. Bakaleinikov was the one who conducted the premier performance in the United States of the viola concerto Op. 108 by Milhaud, with Rosen as the soloist.⁵¹ He was also invited to teach the viola class at the University of Cincinnati. In 1934, he was named by the *Cincinnati Times-Star* the most perfect performer on viola in the world and the public's favorite.⁵² His last years were spent in Pittsburgh, USA. Bakaleinikov is also an author of several books.⁵³

In the 20th century, in Russia, the viola received serious attention from both performers and composers. In Odessa, for example, in Stoliarsky's⁵⁴ school for young violinists, everybody had to learn how to play viola.⁵⁵ String quartets, especially these by Haydn and Mozart, were also an obligatory part of the system of music instruction at the school.⁵⁶ The social conditions for the establishment of viola classes in the young Soviet Union were favorable at the time because of widely spreading free education in the country, both generally and in music. Almost certainly, the most important viola professor and performer in Russia at the beginning of the Soviet period was Vadim Vassil'evich Borisovsky (1900-1972), a student of Bakaleinikov.

Borisovsky is considered to be the founder of the Russian-Soviet viola school. As did many leading viola players, he began his studies on violin. At the beginning of his studies at the Moscow conservatory, Borisovsky played the first and, later, the second

⁵¹ Maurice W. Riley, *The History of Viola*, Vol. 1, (Braun-Brumfield, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1993), 317.

⁵² Poniatovsky, 168.

⁵³ "Записки музыканта" (Notes of a musician); "Инструменты оркестра" (Orchestra instruments); "Основы дирижирования оркестром и хором" (Basics of choir and orchestra conducting); "Complete Course for Viola" (1936).

⁵⁴ Pyotr Solomonovich Stoliarsky (1871-1944) was one of the leading violin pedagogues in Russia and one of the founders of the Soviet school of violin playing. Such violinists as Milstein, D. Oistrakh, Albert Markov, Fikhtengol'tz, and many others were his students.

⁵⁵ Viktor Yusefovich, *Давид Ойстрах: Беседы с Игорем Ойстрахом* (David Oistrakh: Conversations with Igor Oistrach), (Советский композитор, Москва, 1978), 22.

⁵⁶ Yusefovich, 30.

violin part in a student quartet.⁵⁷ Studying quartets with Rïvkind,⁵⁸ Vadim Vassil'evich was fascinated with the sound and possibilities of the viola as an instrument,⁵⁹ and, in 1920, he switched to viola to study with Bakaleinikov. He graduated with honors in 1922, and was invited to be Bakaleinikov's assistant. When Bakaleinikov immigrated to the US in 1927, Borisovsky succeeded him at the Moscow conservatory as a viola professor. He remained at this post until his retirement in 1970.

Until the 1920s, an audience could hear a viola solo only in orchestra or chamber music compositions. The viola was not considered an instrument suitable for solo recitals. Even such a brilliant violist as Bakaleinikov almost never gave solo performances. Nevertheless, Vadim Borisovsky started giving solo viola recitals while he was still a conservatory student. His concerts drew immense attention among musicians and inspired many more students to specialize in viola.⁶⁰ Soon, the Moscow conservatory had a full viola class, and, within a few years, several viola studios. The example of the Moscow conservatory was followed by other institutions in the Soviet Union. Viola players, graduating from conservatories, were filling in symphonic and opera orchestras and "gradually changed old weak and non-expressive viola sections."⁶¹

At his first concerts, Borisovsky played on a viola made by T. Podgornyi.⁶²

Sometime later in his career he used a large viola by Gasparo da Saló which "has a body

⁵⁷ The other members were Sofia Rosenblum on violin, a violinist and a composer Vasily Shirinsky playing viola in the group, and Sergey Shirinsky on cello. In 1923, V. Shirinsky, S. Shirinsky, and Borisovsky on viola formed Beethoven quartet with Dmitry Tsiganov as the first violinist. (V. Shirinsky, 117-18)

⁵⁸ Iosif Vassil'evich Rïvkind (1884-1920), a student of Joahim, later a second violinist in the Joahim's quartet, was a professor of chamber music in the Moscow conservatory.

⁵⁹ V. Shirinsky, 119.

⁶⁰ Shirinsky, 120.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Poniatovsky, 172.

length of 46 cm. (18^{1/8} inch).” Borisovsky asked T. Podgornyi to make copies of the instrument for his students.⁶³

Borisovsky also played concerts abroad both as a member of the Beethoven Quartet and as a soloist. After hearing the violist in Berlin, G. Piatigorsky said that Borisovsky’s performance “differs from that of ‘viola’s dominant influence’ P. Hindemith in the most flattering way, especially, in his own [(Hindemith’s)] solo sonata.”⁶⁴ During his teaching career, Borisovsky transcribed, arranged, and edited 253 works for viola.⁶⁵ As a member of the Beethoven Quartet, he premiered most of the quartets by Shostakovich, who dedicated his thirteenth quartet to Borisovsky, as well as many works by other Soviet composers. The *New Grove Dictionary* remarks that Borisovsky “along with Yuri Kramarov...at the Leningrad Conservatory...raised the standard of playing immeasurably.”⁶⁶ In addition to his concert and teaching activities, the violist participated in a compilation of the complete catalogue of all published works for the viola.⁶⁷

The sudden increase in the general level of viola playing and the appearance of many brilliant concert artists inspired Russian composers. Shostakovich, for instance, often gave the viola a leading role. Thus, in his first and second quartets, Shostakovich wrote solos for viola without accompaniment. In the thirteenth quartet, the viola part dominates through the entire piece. It is a unique example in the chamber music literature,

⁶³ Riley, 261.

⁶⁴ Poniatovsky, 173.

⁶⁵ Riley, 261.

⁶⁶ Tully Potter, ‘Borisovsky, Vadim’, *The New Grove Dictionary of Music Online* ed. L. Masy (Accessed 25 December 2002), <<http://www.grovemusic.com>>

⁶⁷ Altman W., Borissowsky W. *Literaturverzeichnis für Bratsche und Viola d’amore*. (Leipzig), 1937.

in the sense of exploration of the possibilities of the viola.⁶⁸ Shostakovich's last composition is the *Sonata for Viola and Piano* (1975), dedicated to Druzhinin. Armenian composer Aram Khachaturian wrote for viola as well. His *Sonata-Song* (1976) for viola solo was the last work he ever wrote. It is the last piece in the series of three solo compositions for violin, cello, and viola. The work was premiered by M. Tolpygo in Leningrad.⁶⁹

One of the most prolific composers for viola in Russia was Weinberg (Vaynberg in Russian).⁷⁰ He wrote four sonatas for viola solo; the last one was composed in 1983. Another prominent Soviet artist, Shebalin,⁷¹ wrote two pieces for viola: a sonata for violin and viola (1947) and a sonata for viola and piano (1955). Among composers who were stimulated by the sound possibilities of the viola are such artists as Georgian composer Tsintsadze,⁷² Tsitovich⁷³ who dedicated his viola concerto (1965) to Kramarov, Frid,⁷⁴ Armenian composer Aristakesian,⁷⁵ and many others.⁷⁶

⁶⁸ There are also chamber music pieces by Paganini that sound like concertos for viola with accompaniment of other instruments. In addition, there are many works in the chamber music literature that have a prominent viola part; however, there are not many pieces that present the viola as a solo instrument throughout the whole composition.

⁶⁹ Poniatovsky, 191.

⁷⁰ Moisey Samuilovich Vaynberg (1919-1996) was arguably one of the most talented of the Russian composers. In some ways, his compositional style was influenced by Shostakovich. (See more in New Grove, *Vaynberg*)

⁷¹ Vissarion Yakovlevich Shebalin (1902-1963) was famous in Russia not only for his original compositions but also for his incredible arrangement of a suite for strings and percussion based on melodies from *Carmen* by Bizet.

⁷² Sulkhan Tsintsadze (1925-1991) wrote two short miniatures for viola: *Romance* and *Horumi*. He was a very prolific string quartet composer (12 string quartets plus cycles of miniatures for the same combination of instruments).

⁷³ Vladimir Ivanovich Tsitovich (b. 1931) also composed *Triptych* (three pieces for viola and piano) and dedicated it to Kramarov. This piece was the required composition for the second round of the 1963 Soviet Union competition for young musicians in Leningrad.

⁷⁴ Grigory Samuilovich Frid (b. 1915) wrote a concerto for viola with chamber orchestra Op. 52, dedicated to Druzhinin, Concerto for viola, piano, and chamber orchestra Op. 73, and a quintet for viola solo, 2 violins, cello, and piano Op. 78/1.

⁷⁵ E. Aristakesian (b. 1936) is an author of two works for viola: concerto for viola and orchestra (1963) and Sonata for viola solo (1974).

⁷⁶ Poniatovsky, 201-204.

There are many important names of prominent musicians-violists in 20th-century Russia that could be mentioned in connection to the progress of the Russian art of viola. Most of them are graduates of the Moscow and Leningrad conservatories, or students of alumni of these institutions. One of the first famous graduates of Borisovsky was E. V. Strakhov (1909-1978). In 1935, he shared the second prize in the second All-Soviet contest with Y. L. Kaplun, also a violist from Moscow. It was the first time in the history of the country's competitions that any of the winners were violists. The achievement of both Strakhov and Kaplun is more impressive in light of the fact that the first prize in the competition was taken by David Oistrakh, one of the best violin players in history! Strakhov began teaching at the Moscow conservatory in 1936, and, along with Borisovsky, Sosin, and Terian was one of the founders of the Soviet viola school.

Mikhail Terian studied viola at the Moscow Conservatory with K. Mostras.⁷⁷ While a student, he founded the Komitas Quartet, in which he played for twenty more years. Terian combined chamber music and orchestra playing (as a Principal of the Bolshoi Theatre Orchestra) with his responsibilities as a teacher. The Borodin Quartet, one of the world's most famous string quartets, was formed in his studio.⁷⁸ M. Terian also conducted several orchestras.

Rudolf Barshai is another famous violist-conductor, a student of Borisovsky. Barshai was the original member of the Borodin Quartet. Later, he created the Moscow Chamber Orchestra, which he directed and conducted. The orchestra was at that time one of the best orchestras in the world. It was with this orchestra that Barshai made the premier recording of the concerto by Khandoshkin. After Barshai left the quartet, the

⁷⁷ Another famous student of Konstantin Georgiyevich Mostras (1886-1995) is Ivan Galamian, one of the founders of American school of violin playing.

⁷⁸ Poniatovsky, 208.

viola part in the ensemble was taken by D. Shebalin, son of the composer V. Shebalin and dedicatee of his father's viola sonata. There were also famous female violists at the Moscow Conservatory. For example, Galli Matrosova, a winner of an international competition, was a viola professor in Moscow, principal violist in the Bolshoi Theatre, and violist in the Bolshoi string quartet. Another violist, Galina Odinet, performed in the Prokofiev Quartet.

Fedor Druzhinin, the dedicatee of the last piece by Shostakovich, was also a student of Borisovsky. He succeeded Borisovsky as the violist of the Beethoven Quartet, and later, as a viola professor at the Moscow Conservatory. He was the first performer of the Bartok's concerto in the USSR.⁷⁹ Also, in 1979, he made the premier recording of A. Rubinstein's viola sonata.⁸⁰ His most famous student is Yuri Bashmet.

At the Leningrad conservatory, the oldest of the Soviet violists was A. Rïvkin (1893-1951). He was one of the founders of the Glazunov Quartet and one of the first viola professors in Leningrad. A very good Taneyev Quartet was formed under his supervision. He is the author of the book *Система ежедневных упражнений для альты* (A system of every-day studies for viola).⁸¹ A. Sosin (1892-1970) was another major teacher of viola in Leningrad. His students (like A. Ludevig) won first prizes in major competitions; some of them became viola professors at other conservatories. A. Ludevig (b. 1929) was an assistant principal in the Leningrad Philharmonic and a viola professor at the conservatory.

Isaak Leonidovich Levitin (1901-1954), a teacher of Kramarov, graduated as a violinist from the class of V. Sher at the Leningrad Conservatory in 1926. For many years,

⁷⁹ Poniatovsky, 119.

⁸⁰ Poniatovsky, 161.

⁸¹ Poniatovsky, 209.

he was the Principal Violist of the Academic Symphony Orchestra in Leningrad and also taught viola at the conservatory (1937-54).⁸² As a professor of viola at the Leningrad Conservatory he educated many brilliant viola players, including Kramarov and a member of the Taneyev Quartet, V. Soloviev.⁸³

The true fame of the Leningrad school, though, came only with and because of Kramarov's work. Until the appearance of Kramarov on the pedagogical scene (as well as on the concert stage), viola players from Moscow dominated the Russian viola world. It often happened for administrative reasons: Moscow was always "pushed" to the top of everything. It was mostly Yuri Kramarov who changed this through his performances and through his numerous first-rate students.

⁸² This information was provided by Susana Shenderovich, widow of the famous pianist-accompanist Yevgeny Shenderovich, who played several concerts with Yuri Kramarov.

⁸³ Poniatovsky, 210.

CHAPTER 2

BIOGRAPHY AND ACTIVITIES OF KRAMAROV

It is impossible to write about Yuri Markovich Kramarov without getting emotionally involved. His friends, colleagues, students, and other people who knew him speak about Kramarov with such warmth, such love, and such passion, that the author of this research, not knowing Yuri Markovich personally, feels that words cannot justly portray the unique personal qualities of this great musician.

Nevertheless, an attempt was made to systematize the collected information in a scholarly manner. To date, there have been only a few published sources on Yuri Kramarov's life or his activities as a musician. The contradictory facts and dates contained in some of these articles make the research even more difficult.¹

The material in this chapter is organized in the following order:

- I. Kramarov's biography
- II. His personal portrait
- III. Kramarov's qualities as a solo violist
- IV. Work in the field of chamber music
- V. Orchestra experience
- VI. Conducting
- VII. Research activities
- VIII. Pedagogical activities

¹ By way of illustration, one of the sources states that Kramarov graduated from the Leningrad Conservatory in 1954 (Poniatovsky), while another article provides the date as 1953 (The Music Encyclopedia). There are several other small disagreements in the information.

I

Yuri Kramarov was born in Moscow on February 12, 1929. His father, Mark Dmitriyevich Kramarov,² was an engineer and a good amateur cellist. Kramarov's mother, Antonina Vasiliyevna, had a university degree in agronomy. She did not work, because her son, Yuri, having health problems, required a lot of her attention.³

In 1937, Mark Kramarov was arrested as an "enemy of the state."⁴ At the end of the 1930s, many Soviet citizens were arrested as "enemies." Often, it was enough for somebody to make a phone call to a KGB office, indicating that he or she thought that a person was involved in suspicious activities, and this person would disappear from the face of the earth. Antonina Kramarov, Yuri's mother, was also "taken in" shortly after her husband's arrest. Yuri Kramarov was left practically an orphan at the age of eight.⁵ Sometime later, he received a notice, saying that Mark Dmitriyevich Kramarov had died under unknown circumstances.⁶ The next time Kramarov saw his mother was between 1953 and 1954 in Bashkiriya, where, after being in Siberian camps, she lived in forced exile (ссылка) from 1946 until 1956. Antonina Kramarov returned to Leningrad in 1956 and lived with her son until her death.⁷

Luckily for Yuri Kramarov, a friend of his mother, Alexandra Fedorovna or "Aunt Sasha" as Yuri called her, took Yuri to live with her in Leningrad. In the summer of 1941, he and his aunt were visiting places in the area of Smolensk, when, on June 22, the German army attacked the Soviet Union. Alexandra Fedorovna, as a refugee, took

² Originally, his name was Mark Moiseyevich, but after converting to Christianity, he changed "Moiseyevich" to "Dmitriyevich." (Irina Kramarova, interview by author, March 3, 2003)

³ Kramarova interview.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ That usually meant that he was executed by KGB. (Kramarova interview)

⁷ Ibid.

Yuri to Tashkent, where he started attending the music school for gifted children.⁸ The school had been moved from Leningrad to Tashkent shortly after the beginning of the war. Aunt Sasha left Yuri to live in a hostel of the music school and went to Moscow to work in a hospital.

In 1943, Kramarov “made an escape” to Moscow.⁹ It happened spontaneously. Cold and hungry, he was walking down a street and met a pilot. They talked, and the pilot asked, “Do you want to go to Moscow?” “Yes,” Kramarov replied. The pilot took him to Moscow on his military airplane.¹⁰ In Moscow, Yuri found a music teacher and continued his studies. There, for the first time, he understood that he wanted to be a musician.¹¹

In 1945, Kramarov again moved to Leningrad and continued his musical studies at the Special Music School for gifted children in Leningrad (Десятилетка), which by that time had moved back to the city.¹² In 1948, he was accepted to the Leningrad Conservatory in the viola class of Professor Isaak Levitin, a great Soviet viola player and pedagogue. Kramarov graduated in 1953.

He gained prominence as a soloist on the viola while still a student at the conservatory. In 1951, he and Victor Liberman¹³ performed Mozart’s *Sinfonia Concertante* with the Honored Group of the Republic Academic Symphony Orchestra

⁸ Kramarova interview.

⁹ Since that year, he stayed with Alexandra Fedorovna. In 1956, when Kramarov’s mother returned to Leningrad, Aunt Sasha invited her to live with them, and, when Yuri Markovich married Irina Alexeyevna in 1963, the five people (Aunt Sasha, Kramarov with his wife and a baby-son, and Kramarov’s mother, Antonina) lived together in an efficiency apartment. In 1968, Kramarov with his family (wife and son) moved to a separate efficiency. (Kramarova interview)

¹⁰ Kramarova interview.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Victor Liberman later won the very prestigious concertmaster position with the Concertgebauw Symphony to become one of the most famous and respected concertmasters in the world.

under the direction of Evgeni Mravinsky.¹⁴ One year before his graduation, in 1952, Kramarov was already the Principal Viola of the Big Symphonic Orchestra of the Leningrad Radio.¹⁵ The ensemble was later renamed the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra.¹⁶ In 1954, Isaak Leonidovich Levitin passed away.¹⁷ Yuri Kramarov was invited to replace him as a viola teacher at the Leningrad Conservatory. He held this position for the remainder of his life.

One of Kramarov's students, Genadi Freidin, says that for a short time after his graduation, Yuri Markovich worked in sports as a trainer of both a swimming team and a volleyball team.¹⁸

In 1956, Kramarov was personally invited by Mravinsky to take the Principal Viola position in the world famous Honored Academic Orchestra of the Leningrad Philharmonic.¹⁹ With this orchestra Yuri Markovich went on numerous tours in Russia and abroad and performed several solo concertos for viola and orchestra. Kramarov continued his solo career in spite of his many responsibilities with the orchestra. He won two difficult solo competitions in 1957: the All Soviet Competition (first prize) and the Six International Festival of Youth and Students in Moscow (first prize).

¹⁴ Y. Kramarov, Описание исполнительской деятельности (Description of performance activities), a report

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ See footnote # 4 in the 4th chapter for more information about the orchestras in the Leningrad Philharmonic.

¹⁷ Levitin was only 53 years old when he died. People who knew him said that he was a modest and a quiet person. The politics in the Soviet musical world, as well as the anti-Semitism, served as the main reasons for Levitin's untimely death. Even in the modern books, his name is generally mentioned only as I. Levitin. See also the end of the previous chapter for more information about him.

¹⁸ Interview with Freidin, January 7, 2003. (However, Kramarov's widow, Irina Alexeyevna, does not think that Yuri Kramarov had ever had a job in sports.)

¹⁹ We have several different opinions about the date of this invitation. In his report, Kramarov writes 1956, while The Music Encyclopedia (see the footnote 25) states that Yuri Markovich started working in the viola section in 1957, before moving to the Principal Position in 1958. The *Russian Jewish Encyclopedia* just gives 1958 as the starting point. The author decided to use the Kramarov's version.

While with the Philharmonic, Kramarov still valued the freedom of his thoughts. Apparently, both his open way of thinking and his opinions about various aspects of Soviet life resulted in his receiving the kind of pressure from the administration of the orchestra that Levitin had felt. When, in 1963, as a punishment for his independence of the spirit, Mravinsky did not take him on a tour to Japan,²⁰ Kramarov simply resigned.

After such a brave act of resignation from the “respected” Honored Orchestra, followed by a refusal to come back, Kramarov fell into deep disfavor with the Soviet officials. Acting through the Soviet system, Mravinsky made sure that many concert venues were closed to Kramarov.²¹ He was not allowed to perform in the main concert halls of Leningrad and Moscow.²² “After Yuri Markovich left the orchestra, they, so to say, ‘turned the oxygen off’ for him,” remarks Stopichev, “and later, when I did the same, a similar thing happened to me!”²³ Kramarov’s disfavor continued through the 1960s and most of the 1970s. He and Mravinsky had reconciliation in 1980.²⁴

Meanwhile, his work at the conservatory continued. In 1966, Kramarov was promoted to the position of Docent (доцент),²⁵ which can be compared to the Associate Professor level in the American system of education. From 1967 until 1972, Yuri Markovich also taught at the Petrozavodsk branch of the Leningrad Conservatory. In addition to teaching the viola class there, he was also head of the orchestra department, taught chamber music classes, and conducted the student orchestra. The distance between Leningrad and Petrozavodsk is about 400 kilometers. Kramarov would take a night train

²⁰ Interview with Tumarinson, June 2002.

²¹ Kramarova interview.

²² Fax letter to the author from Vladimir Tsitovich, February 12, 2003.

²³ Interview with Stopichev, January 19, 2003.

²⁴ Kramarova interview.

²⁵ “Kramarov, Yuri Markovich”, in *Музыкальная Энциклопедия* (the Music Encyclopedia), volume 6, Moscow: Soviet Encyclopedia, 803-4.

from Leningrad once a week, arrive at Petrozavodsk early in the morning, and immediately start teaching.²⁶

The pressure on Kramarov from the Soviet system continued even after the official disfavor ended. He was such a bright musician and so independent a person that he was not at all convenient for the Soviet musical bureaucracy. Besides, he lived in Leningrad, not in Moscow. Officially, in the former Soviet Union, Moscow had to have the best of everything, including music. If somebody in another republic or another city in Russia “grew too tall” and challenged the Moscow superiority, he had to be “cut down” like a tree. Yuri Markovich suffered a heart attack in 1966, which was probably caused, in part, by the pressure of the Soviet system.²⁷ Kugel pointed out that one of the great Soviet viola players, Genrikh Semënovitch Talalian (1922-1972), a violist of the Komitas State Quartet, suffered a similar fate and died when he was only fifty years old.²⁸

Only at the very end of his life did Kramarov receive the honors that he deserved for his many years of activities as a soloist, conductor, chamber musician, and pedagogue. In 1981, he was awarded the title of the Honored Agent of Arts of the Russian Federation (Заслуженный деятель искусств РСФСР). In 1982, he was promoted to the status of Professor at the Leningrad Conservatory. The notice about the promotion was received in Leningrad by his wife on March 15.²⁹ Tragically, Yuri Kramarov never read it. He died on the same day in Divnogorsk.

²⁶ Tumarinson interview.

²⁷ The doctors told him that he had to lead a quiet life style. For two months after the attack, Kramarov tried to follow doctors' advice. Then, he said, “I can't live like that! I will live the way I used to living, and I will die when it is my time to die!” (Kramarova interview)

²⁸ Interview with Kugel, January 8, 2003.

²⁹ Kramarova interview.

In the early spring of 1982, Kramarov went to a few cities in Russia to play recitals as well as to give master classes. The last performances were played in Krasnoyarsk. On the 15th of March,³⁰ Kramarov took a car trip to Divnogorsk, a town in the vicinity of Krasnoyarsk, with some other musicians. He went to see the Winter Olympics. It was very cold; snow was covering the ground. Yuri Markovich was sitting in the front seat of the car. Unexpectedly, he expressed a wish to change seats and to move to the back. They stopped the car; Kramarov got out and suddenly fell to the ground. He had had a heart attack. According to the paramedics, death was instantaneous.³¹ In such a way, so prematurely, the life of one of the greatest musicians of our time ended.

II

Yuri Kramarov was not only a prominent musician. He was also an exceptional person. Here is his portrait, made of the memories of the people who knew him.

In a letter to the author, Tsitovich gives the following description of Kramarov's personality:

Yuri Markovich was a splendid person, selflessly caring about everything he did. [He was] benevolent to the highest degree and, at the same time, extremely demanding towards his students and irreconcilable with any falsity, insincerity, [or] dishonor. He was a beautiful person in its most elevated meaning!³²

³⁰ This is the day when his wife, Irina, received the notice of his promotion.

³¹ This story was told to the author by both Mikhail Yavker (June 2002), who heard it from Igor Flesher (a person who was in the car) and Irina Alexeyevna Kramarova, who apparently heard it from Flesher, too.

³² Tsitovich; fax letter to the author.

Kramarov's friend, Era Surenovna Barutcheva, who works as a professor of musicology at the St. Petersburg Conservatory, adds:

He was one of the people who give away to others everything they have: heart, knowledge, skills, etc....He was a philosopher, who did not feel a need for honors and goods. Yuri Markovich was disinterested and unselfish to the degree of impossibility! When he disagreed with Mravinsky, he did not clutch on to his super prestigious position of the Principal. He was an excellent person!³³

"He was an honest and delicate person who never spoke poorly either of his colleagues or of his students," says Genadi Freidin. "If somebody in the class started speaking badly about another person, Kramarov immediately interrupted such monologues."³⁴ He acknowledged only open and frank opinions about himself, too:

Once, while congratulating him backstage on an exceptionally good and brilliant performance, a first-year student stumbled, and embarrassingly, in a whisper, mentioned a questionable place [in the performance]. The professor got very angry, but not at all for the reason expected by the student: 'Both congratulations and criticism have to be done loudly and honestly, without looking behind your shoulder,' [said he].³⁵

Thus, his personality had a wholesome and noble influence on everybody who was in touch with him:

With his appearance in any room, [whether] a concert hall or simply a classroom, [we] had a feeling that walls were moving away, opening horizons previously unseen by the average eye, and it felt warmer because of the presence of this...wise and very kind person.³⁶

³³ Phone interview with Era Barutcheva, January 8, 2003.

³⁴ Freidin interview.

³⁵ Shulpiakov, 106.

³⁶ Y. Simonov, 116.

“Kramarov’s opinions often differed from those of other people,” noted Mikhail Kugel. “He was a great musician, who loved music more than he loved himself!”³⁷

Veksler adds that Yuri Markovich had the ability “to create some kind of special creative incandescence around him, a peculiar electrical field, the power of which was sensed by students, ensemble partners, and orchestra musicians...”³⁸ O. Shulpiakov agrees that

He could create an atmosphere of both an enthusiastic passion for music and a logically sensible, but at the same time free, search for new ways of development...of the art. This atmosphere ...attracted to him young players, wishing to establish themselves in the eyes of the demanding artist, as well as mature musicians, gleaned many interesting and instructive things from their personal contact with him.³⁹

“His personal appearance was not very important to him,” observes Yavker. “Sometimes he would wear strange clothes.”⁴⁰

In his interview with the author, Vladimir Altschuler said that during one orchestra tour he and Kramarov shared the same room. He remembers that Yuri Markovich knew an incredible amount of poetry by heart, and, from time to time, he liked to “read it” from memory. Every day, Kramarov would start practicing at six in the morning. Altschuler also recalls that Yuri Markovich liked to collect beer mugs, and, if he liked a mug in a bar, he would ask if he could buy it.⁴¹

“He was so talented that he succeeded in everything he tried!” says Freidin in conclusion.⁴²

³⁷ Kugel interview.

³⁸ K. I. Veksler, *Отзыв* (Reference), July 4, 1978.

³⁹ O. Shulpiakov, “Исполнительские...принципы Крамарова” (Kramarov’s principles in performance and pedagogy), 102.

⁴⁰ Yavker interview.

⁴¹ Phone interview with Altschuler, January 5, 2003.

⁴² Freidin interview.

III

As a solo violist, Yuri Markovich's name can be put on the same list with such musicians as David Oistrakh and Sviatoslav Richter. His playing style was a unique combination of expression, passion, intellect, and brilliant technique. Yuri Simonov remembers:

He played on the viola as a genuine artist, wanting to express himself through viola playing. The position of his free and strong hands, proud head posture, [and] live, communicating eyes, in which the whole range of [his] feelings...was reflected – everything was breathing with such self confidence and was filled with such a natural essence, that it seemed, – it was he who created the composition he was playing, and he was playing on a viola made especially for him, – to such a degree were he and his instrument inseparable.⁴³

Kramarov played on an Italian viola made by an unidentified maker in the seventeenth century. He found this instrument in the collection of three violas that was left by the Russian violist Rïvkin⁴⁴ after his death.⁴⁵ After Yuri Markovich's death, the viola went to one of his students, Genadi Freidin.⁴⁶

Yuri Kramarov was “an interpreter of music in the most elevated meaning of the word.”⁴⁷ He had in his possession both a beautiful sound and a natural technical command over the instrument, but he utilized these qualities only as tools of musical expression. His whole playing was filled with intelligence.⁴⁸ In one concert review, Barutcheva said that a free flowing *cantilena* was one of the strong sides of Kramarov's performance. The beauty of his sound had characteristic viola individuality, though it was

⁴³ Y. Simonov, 113.

⁴⁴ See previous chapter about Rïvkin.

⁴⁵ Freidin interview.

⁴⁶ Unfortunately, the viola was stolen from Freidin in Europe.

⁴⁷ O. Shulpiakov, 103.

⁴⁸ Kugel interview.

bright and silvery like that of the violin, as well as deep and velvety like that of the cello.⁴⁹

One of the special qualities of Kramarov's viola playing was his mysterious *rubato*. "Kramarov's *rubato* was unbelievable," said Genadi Freidin. He remembers how, in one of their conversations, Yuri Markovich uttered the following phrase: "I understood that a quarter [note] is not necessarily equal to two eighth notes."⁵⁰ This principle was easily comprehensible; however, it was impossible to imitate the interpretations of the great master. "I can't understand how he does it!" said Yuri Bashmet to Freidin after hearing Kramarov's recording of the first movement of the E flat viola sonata by Brahms.⁵¹ Another special quality of Kramarov was his "natural superior ability in the [art] of sight reading."⁵²

One of Kramarov's favorite compositions was the concerto by J. C. Bach.⁵³ In that piece he treated the second movement as the most important, central movement of the work. His interpretation of the viola sonata by Shostakovich, on the other hand, was directed towards the last movement. Contrary to some published sources, Kramarov's interpretation of the piece was not at all "optimistic", but philosophical and tragic.

As a soloist, Kramarov performed in Leningrad, Petrozavodsk, Omsk, Voronezh, and other cities in Russia. He also performed on television and radio programs, and made several records.⁵⁴ He played concertos for viola and orchestra by J. C. Bach, Mozart,

⁴⁹ Era Barutcheva, "Профессия—альтист" (Profession – violist) in *Музыкальные кадры*, # 15 (581), 19 December, 1980.

⁵⁰ Freidin interview.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Poniatovsky, 214.

⁵³ Modern research attributes the piece, along with Handel's Viola Concerto and Mozart's violin concerto "Adelaide", to the Casadesus brothers, Francis, Henry, and Marius.

⁵⁴ See appendix 4 for the complete list of recordings available on record player disks.

Handel,⁵⁵ Khandoshkin, Hindemith, Tsïtovich, and Gurkov with such prominent Soviet conductors as E. Mravinsky, N. Rakhlin, K. Eliasberg, N. Rabinovich, A. Yanson, and M. Yanson.

As a whole, his repertory included compositions of all genres, periods, and styles. In connection with that, Tsïtovich wrote:

As a violist, he was an absolutely exceptional performer. He literally hypnotized the public with his sound, rich with all possible colors. [He] played music of very different styles, from Baroque to the modern compositions. He was quite critical towards the works that were written for him, [and] he rejected many compositions. In this respect, I was lucky.⁵⁶

A great violist, Kramarov inspired many composers to dedicate their viola works to him. The performances of the new works were closely linked to Kramarov's research activities because of the seriousness of his analyses of each new composition. More information on his work in that field can be found in section VII.

IV

Kramarov was an excellent chamber musician. Listeners in Russia will always remember him as being one of the best chamber music players of his time.⁵⁷ He participated in ensembles with I. Barudo, M. Rostropovich, P. Serebriakov, M. Vayman, B. Gutnikov, B. Davidovich, and D. Oistrakh. For example, one of the most memorable performances of the eighth quartet by Shostakovich in Leningrad was given by an

⁵⁵ See footnote 53

⁵⁶ Tsïtovich's letter

⁵⁷ E. Panfilova, "Исполнительская и педагогическая деятельность профессора Ю. М. Крамарова в Петрозаводске" (Performing and pedagogical activities of Professor Y. M. Kramarov in Petrozavodsk), Petrozavodsk, 1988, 204.

ensemble that consisted of Mikhail Vayman (1st violin), Boris Gutnikov (2nd violin), Yuri Kramarov (viola), and Mstislav Rostropovich (cello).⁵⁸

Kramarov was a permanent member of the Glazunov State Quartet, one of the best string quartets in Russia. With that group, he performed the piano quintet by Shostakovich; the piano part in the piece was played by the composer.⁵⁹

Yuri Markovich also played in the Rimsky-Korsakov Quartet. As a violist of that ensemble he went on numerous tours to many cities of the former Soviet Union.

Unfortunately, all of the recordings of Kramarov's chamber music performances were made at his concerts, and none of them have yet been released.

V

Every musician in St. Petersburg remembers that, as a principal of a viola section, Kramarov was a genius. According to many, he was the best Principal Viola in the history of the Honored Academic Symphony Orchestra of the Leningrad Philharmonic.⁶⁰ Yuri Simonov, who conducted orchestras with Kramarov playing the principal part, says that it was great luck for a conductor to play with such a principal:

You just hint, and he already takes and develops the idea farther; you don't have to shake him in every measure, or to convince him to stay within the limits of a particular style, or to cultivate this emotion in the section—he will do it himself.

And the attitude of Yuri Markovich towards his colleagues in the section of the Leningrad Philharmonic! ... [I] remember when I carefully asked him about one old musician in the section, who, as I could see very well, almost didn't play anything, because [he] simply could not manage it technically. Smiling, Yuri Markovich said: But he is a very good

⁵⁸ Panfilova interview.

⁵⁹ Kramarov, *Description of Performance Activities*.

⁶⁰ Panfilova interview.

fisherman....Besides, he doesn't disturb anybody, because he is very experienced, and also...he is always quiet.⁶¹

Kramarov's viola section always sounded not only unified but also musically interesting.

On the other hand, Yuri Markovich felt free to refuse to comply with the KGB rules that were imposed on the musicians when they were abroad. "Figuratively speaking, he would start walking with the left foot when everybody else was starting with the right one," said Yavker.⁶² Valuing the freedom of both his ideas and his actions, Kramarov left the orchestra in 1963. Thus, the orchestra career of the legendary Principal Viola was ended.

VI

In the spectrum of Kramarov's performance activities, conducting took an important place. During his career, he conducted several professional, student, and amateur orchestras.

While still at the Leningrad Philharmonic, Yuri Markovich founded and directed the Chamber Orchestra of the Philharmonic. "This orchestra performed several interesting programs,"⁶³ and it still functions today.

In addition to teaching viola, Yuri Markovich dedicated a lot of time and effort to the chamber orchestra of the Leningrad Conservatory. Under his direction, this student ensemble was recognized as one of the most interesting orchestras in the city. The following performances of the orchestra under Kramarov's direction were especially noted by the community:

⁶¹ Simonov, 117.

⁶² Yavker interview.

⁶³ Kramarov, *Performance Activities*.

- Performance of the Passion oratorio *Der Tod Jesu* by Karl Heinrich Graun⁶⁴
- Leningrad premiere of the *War Requiem* by Britten (in collaboration with N. Rabinovich)
- Performance of the *Concerto for Orchestra in D major* by Stravinsky⁶⁵

Y. Simonov remembers that Kramarov worked with the orchestra passionately and often with the viola in his hand:

Kramarov's manner of conducting was elegant, clear, and understandable to the highest degree. But, when he wanted more expression, he would jump on a section that was supposed to give sound and emotions, and [he] would shake his hands, screaming, "Go for it! Play!" [His] glasses moved to the tip of the nose, and [his] whole visage was furious.⁶⁶

Yuri Markovich was also one of the first conductors of the student symphony orchestra at the Petrozavodsk branch of the Leningrad Conservatory.⁶⁷ With this orchestra, he conducted many interesting programs and gave a few premieres. People of Petrozavodsk still remember the wonderful performance of the *Unfinished Symphony* by Schubert conducted by Kramarov.⁶⁸

His conducting career was not limited to student orchestras. Kramarov was invited to conduct the first performances of the Omsk Chamber Orchestra.⁶⁹ For several years, he supervised the Amateur Symphony Orchestra of Kirov, and he went on a tour

⁶⁴ A German composer Graun (1703-1759) wrote this piece in 1755. The work had been very popular in Europe until almost the end of the 19th century; however, later it was almost completely forgotten.

⁶⁵ That performance was noted in the introduction in the Stravinsky's book *Chronicle of My Life*: "His concertos are performed...with a big success...[including] concerto in D major, written in 1947. The last [concerto] has been superbly performed by the student chamber orchestra under the direction of Y. Kramarov." (Gosmusisdat, Leningrad, 1963, page 13)

⁶⁶ Simonov, 117.

⁶⁷ Veksler,

⁶⁸ Panfilova, 205.

⁶⁹ Kugel interview; also in Kramarov, *Performance Activities*.

with that orchestra.⁷⁰ Kramarov conducted the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra as well. For example, in December of 1976, he directed the orchestra in its performance of the second piano concerto by Chopin, played by Zelma Tamarkina.⁷¹

In addition, Yuri Markovich conducted professional orchestras in Novosibirsk, Voronezh, Krasnoyarsk, and other cities in Russia.

VII

Yuri Kramarov was a very active researcher.⁷² The musicological research activities of Kramarov included two main fields:

- 1) Research directly connected with viola performance:
 - A. Editions and transcriptions of old pieces, and
 - B. Work on newly written compositions
- 2) Creative writing, lectures, annotations, etc.

1A

Making transcriptions of the works of old masters was one of Kramarov's favorite interests. A creative person, he enjoyed bringing unknown or forgotten pieces to life. The list of his transcriptions is not as long as that of Borisovsky,⁷³ but the quality of Kramarov's work is at least as good.⁷⁴

⁷⁰ Kramarov.

⁷¹ Phone interview with Issarion Slonim, Jerusalem, June 2002.

⁷² Barutcheva interview.

⁷³ See chapter 1.

⁷⁴ See Appendix 3 for a list of some of Yuri Markovich's transcriptions.

Probably, his most famous work of research was the editing of J. S. Bach's *Suites for Cello Solo* and the three gamba sonatas. Unfortunately, though ready for publication, the edition of the gamba sonatas was left unpublished because of Kramarov's untimely death. However, he made a sound recording of the works.

For many viola players in Russia, Kramarov's edition of the cello suites has become an essential study guide on Bach's style.⁷⁵ The edition was published in 1982.⁷⁶ It includes a preface written by Kramarov as well as a table-commentary that contains both references to different sources and a list of text discrepancies among existing editions of the work.

In the preface, Yuri Markovich describes his strategies in editing the composition. At first, he gives an explanation of his decision to publish the transcription for viola using a one-line staff. While some of the editions publish music with two-line staves, the viola part being the upper line and the *Urtext* being at the bottom,⁷⁷ Kramarov argues that the text of the *Urtext* unavoidably changes because of the use of the modern notation and, as a result, it transforms into another edition. He suggests, instead, using a facsimile of the original manuscripts for reference.

After reflecting on the list of the manuscripts⁷⁸ and editions that were used in his research, Kramarov comments on the music text with regard to the following subjects:

- Articulation – the editor mostly used Bach's bowing, with exceptions made in the places where he thought the original bowing to be impractical. Additionally, the

⁷⁵ Panfilova interview.

⁷⁶ И. С. Вах, *Шесть сюит для виолончели соло* (переложение... и редакция Ю. Крамарова), Ленинград: Музыка, 1982.

⁷⁷ For example, the edition by Fritz Spindler, Leipzig, 1953.

⁷⁸ Presently, there are three different manuscripts of the suites; none of these is Bach's original. Kramarov mostly used the manuscript attributed to Bach's wife, Anna Magdalena.

editor used different articulation signs, like ^, to point out the “meaningful importance” of some of the notes.

- Dynamics – the editor did not write any dynamic nuances except for those suggested by Bach (three *piano* and two *forte*). For the performer’s use of the dynamics, Kramarov provides the following stylistic guideline: “The development of the dynamics inside of the piece... depends upon the musical texture and, primarily, on the leading melodic voice.” Usually, with some exceptions, the general direction of a melody dictates the logic of the dynamic development. The editor also points out the possibilities of the so-called “echo effect.”
- Tempi – there are no tempo indications in the manuscript, because each dance naturally suggests “the character and the frequency of the pulsation.” However, within the limits of the generally accepted concepts associated with this or that dance, tempo decisions can differ. Moreover, Kramarov explains that specifics of the development of the musical texture dictate to a player the use of so called “performing rhythm.” That concept includes: agogic laws, proportion between the performance time and the astronomical time, and the conscious misbalance of the last, as a result of which, the real length of any two formally equal musical episodes may not be identical.
- Melismatic elements – the editor reflects on the 18th-century rules of playing the grace notes. According to him, the real sound length of the grace note is reflected in its written length. Furthermore, Kramarov gives suggestions on the use of a trill. He asks the performer to keep in mind the following considerations: the

beginning of a trill (from the main note or from the “helping note”), the end of a trill (directly on the main note or with a *Nachschlag*), and the speed of a trill (in connection to the general character of a piece).

- Fingering – while giving many fingering suggestions within the musical text, the editor took into consideration the fact that Bach preferred the use of both the first position and open strings. In the episodes where a performance in the first position is impossible, Kramarov recommended “combinations of fingerings” with the frequent use of string crossings.
- Voice leading – The directions of note stems (up or down) in the manuscript express the composer’s intentions in the voice leading; however, in many existing editions, the editors change the notation, in keeping with the modern rules of stem directions. This however, often leads to confusion between the melodic lines. Kramarov also did not copy the positions of the stems from the manuscript, but he did try to express the author’s intentions through the modern notation. He points out that the “complex, and not always obvious” voicing in the work is contained in the essence of the structure of the music. Sometimes, the editor uses the sign ↓ to show that the performance of the chords from the top to the bottom is appropriate at that place in order for a player to keep the voicing consistent. In some cases, the editor shortened the note values in the secondary voices, keeping them consistent with the capacities of modern instruments that are less suited for sustaining many voices at the same time than were the instruments available at the beginning of the 18th century.

Kramarov concludes his preface with the following statement:

The editor, based on his own performing and scholarly [(research)] work experience with the suites by Bach, recommends [that a performer] not limits [himself] to the offered edition, but constantly reads the text of Bach's autograph. Besides, the study of the suites can only be managed in a unified process of study of the [whole] Bach's output in all its variety of genres.

1B

Once and again, Kramarov would repeat to his students that “a synthesis between both scholarly and performing [(practical)] approaches should be achieved especially during the first performances [of the new works].”⁷⁹ Serious study of an author's text, comparison of different editions, and comprehension of the style of a composer were the necessary components of Kramarov's work on the interpretation of a piece. In connection to this, he once told Shulpiakov the following:

In the orbit of attention of a performer, there are usually several problems: dynamics, melismatic [embellishments], articulation, general tempo, etc. These are all looked upon from the position of requirements expected from the modern interpreter. Many of these problems are hotly argued about from the positions of both aesthetics and method-pedagogy. Unfortunately, much less attention is directed toward the problem of the preservation of the author's text....Thus, articulation, phrasing, [and] dynamics push the text itself...into the background. Obviously, this point of view is not correct, because the resources of both the dynamic and the articulation are contained exactly in the musical text, not vice versa.⁸⁰

Tsitovich states that when Yuri Markovich was working on the preparation of his pieces, he offered different versions of interpretation to the composer: “He searched and

⁷⁹ Kramarov, *Scholarly and Methodic Activities*, report.

⁸⁰ Shulpiakov, 105-6.

offered various possibilities. There were even occurrences when I disagreed, but later understood that he was right.”⁸¹

The *Triptych* for viola and piano by Tsītovich was not, at first, dedicated to Yuri Markovich. It was written in 1962 and, after winning a prize in a competition for composers, it served as a required composition for all of the participants in the All Russian Viola Competition in 1963. After that event, it was often played in Russia, and, at one point, the composer heard his composition played by Kramarov. “His performance stunned me so much,” says Vladimir Tsītovich, “that when the piece was about to be printed (1966), I asked Yuri Markovich’s approval for the dedication. He became my good friend.”⁸²

Kramarov was the most active propagandist of modern music. Many times, when young composers (or student composers) needed a performer for a conference or an exhibit, he would play their pieces without questions.⁸³ His recitals were often heavily loaded with modern works unknown to anybody. For example, one of his recital programs in Leningrad (1980) included the following compositions: *Sonata for Viola and Piano* by Ilya Heifetz (a graduate from Novosibirsk), *Variations-Dialogue* by Anatoly Zatin (Leningrad), *Composition for Flute, Viola, and Cello* by Alexander Sledin (Leningrad), and, in the second half, *Viola Sonata* by Shostakovich. One of the Leningrad newspapers wrote:

Practically all of these works [(the first three pieces)] were performed in Leningrad for the first time....I especially want to note both the astonishing feeling of responsibility and the thoroughness with which the unexplored music was prepared. No ‘sight reading demonstrations’.

⁸¹ Tsītovich, fax letter. (See footnote 22)

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Barutcheva interview. (See footnote 33)

Seriousness, high concentration, involvement in the music making...
Young authors are lucky to have such an interpreter of their works.⁸⁴

For another example of his dedication to both modern music and unknown works, we can look at one of Kramarov's recital programs in Petrozavodsk. There, along with other pieces, he performed the *Viola Sonata* by Bogdan-Berezovsky, the *Suite for Viola* by Slonimsky (both pieces are dedicated to Yuri Markovich), and a sonata by C. P. E. Bach in Kramarov's own transcription.⁸⁵

Of course, it is not surprising that a musician such as Yuri Kramarov inspired many composers to write pieces for viola. The *Soviet Music Encyclopedia* states that there are about twenty compositions dedicated to the great violist.⁸⁶ In addition, Elena Panfilova claims that the first Kareliyan viola compositions were written in the republic as a result of activities of both Kramarov and his viola class. The list of these works includes the *Sonata for Viola Solo* by P. Kozinsky, the *Concerto for Viola and Orchestra* by A. Beloborodov, and the *Sonata for Viola and Piano* by B. Napreyev.⁸⁷

Shulpiakov adds that Kramarov also premiered the *Viola Sonata* by N. Logachev and "dozens of other works."⁸⁸ Later, many of the new compositions were included in the programs of his students. "Kramarov could not imagine the wholesome development of a young instrumentalist without music reflecting ... the complex inner world of a person of our epoch."⁸⁹ Yuri Markovich taught his students how to approach the preparation of a new piece:

⁸⁴ Barutcheva, *Profession—Violist*

⁸⁵ Kramarov, *Performance Activities*

⁸⁶ Also in the *Russian Jewish Encyclopedia*. Moscow: Epos, 1995, Volume 2.

⁸⁷ Panfilova, 202.

⁸⁸ See the appendices for the lists of some other compositions.

⁸⁹ Shulpiakov, 109.

Don't make hurried decisions. Analyze everything first, understand what the composer wanted to express, and don't forget that you are serving not as a prosecutor but as an advocate of music.⁹⁰

Promoting contemporary music, Yuri Markovich conducted several premieres of symphony orchestra compositions. He was the first one to conduct symphonies by Vaysburd and Patlayenko as well as works by Prigozhin and others.⁹¹

2

Another sphere of Kramarov's activities included writing book reviews, advising dissertations, working on theoretical articles, and presenting lectures on the following subjects: methods of pedagogy, the history of the performing arts, and the lives of prominent performers and composers.

Yuri Markovich wrote a book review of *Борисовский – основоположник советской альтовой школы* (Borisovsky – the founder of the Soviet viola school) by V. Yuzefovich (Юзефович). The contract on the review with the “Soviet Composer” publishing company was signed on the 16th of June, 1974.⁹² Additionally, Kramarov wrote an article *Альтовые редакции гамбовых сонат Баха* (Viola editions of the gamba sonates by Bach). The work on the article involved both a deep study of the existing editions for viola and an extensive manuscript analyzes.⁹³ One of the most famous of Kramarov's articles is *Некоторые вопросы альтовой педагогики* (Some issues of viola pedagogy), published in 1980.⁹⁴

⁹⁰ Shulpiakov, 112.

⁹¹ See Appendix 5 for more details.

⁹² Kramarov, *Description of scholarly activities*.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ See Chapter 3.

Kramarov advised the dissertation of K. Ivanov (post graduate of the Moscow Gnesin Institute) and the dissertation of O. Shulpiakov (post graduate of the Petrozavodsk branch of the Leningrad Conservatory).

One of the musicological subjects of Yuri Markovich's lectures was "Related Musical Elements." The lectures were given in Leningrad, Gorky, and Petrozavodsk.

Yuri Markovich's research interests did not include only music. Genadi Freidin remembers that Kramarov would attend lectures at the Sports Institute in Leningrad to learn more about the functions of muscles in the human body. He told Freidin that he discovered a similarity between the way muscles work when playing the violin or viola and when using the swimming style "crawl on a side." It is known that the "crawl on a side" was eventually eliminated from swimming competitions due to its negative effect on the heart. Kramarov said that this swimming style was the only other type of physical activity that used motions similar to those of playing on viola or violin.⁹⁵

VIII

Kramarov was not only a wonderful performer and musician, but also an exceptional pedagogue. His activities in pedagogy encompassed teaching viola and quartet classes, conducting orchestras, giving master classes and methodical lectures, and participating in numerous juries in both solo competitions and final graduation exams in various institutions.

Kramarov's viola class was one of the most famous and respected in the entire Soviet Union. In addition to viola players, students specializing on other instruments

⁹⁵ Freidin interview.

occasionally took lessons from him. In an article about Yuri Markovich, Yuri Simonov makes the following observation:

He looked upon the playing of an instrument as an opportunity for self expression ...and, therefore, also gave lessons to violinists, cellists, bass players, and even players of woodwind and brass instruments. Everybody knew him as a person [who was] both sociable and capable of responding to a request...for help.⁹⁶

While working with his viola class occupied the most important place in Kramarov's teaching,⁹⁷ he also taught chamber music and, in particular, a string quartet class. He prepared several student quartets for competitions. Especially notable was a quartet helped by Kramarov at the Leningrad Conservatory, composed of all female students,⁹⁸ which won the All Russian competition of student quartets in 1967. Another ensemble, the string quartet of the Petrozavodsk branch of the Leningrad Conservatory composed of Y. Zagarodnjuk, L. Briskin, R. Pakkanen, and M. Bergman, participated in a few All Soviet competitions.⁹⁹

As an orchestra teacher, Yuri Markovich was also very successful. Students loved the rehearsals led by Kramarov (see above). As a result of his successful preparation, Kramarov's chamber orchestra won the first prize in the Third Leningrad Festival of Youth in 1960. It is important to note that in Petrozavodsk Kramarov's responsibilities were not limited to teaching viola class, quartet class, chamber music class, and orchestra.

⁹⁶ Simonov, 114.

⁹⁷ See Chapters 3 and 4 for more information on this subject.

⁹⁸ The ensemble consisted of Tamara Tomskaya, Larisa Sokolovskaya, Elena Panfilova, and Natalia Romanova. Yuri Kramarov worked with them on the 7th quartet by Shostakovich, a piece that they performed in the final round. (Panfilova interview)

⁹⁹ Kramarov, *Pedagogical Activities*.

He was also the head of the orchestra department, which at the time included strings, wind, brass, and percussion instruments.

Kramarov provided various kinds of help to many educational institutions in the country. He gave master classes in many cities, including Voronezh, Minsk, Leningrad, Novosibirsk, Moscow, and Krasnoyarsk, among numerous others. He took his Leningrad Conservatory viola class on studio class concert tours to Minsk and Petrozavodsk. For many years, Yuri Markovich was invited to lead the final exam committees at the conservatories of Gorky, Astrakhan, Kharkov, and Petrozavodsk. As a jury member, Kramarov judged numerous important competitions.¹⁰⁰

Yuri Markovich Kramarov was a unique musician. He was equally talented in all spheres of his work: solo performances, orchestra playing, chamber music, conducting, musicological research, and creative writing. In addition, he had encyclopedic knowledge in the areas of poetry, arts, science, history, and physiology, among many other things. Furthermore, he was a very special and kind person. The combination of all these skills with his personal charisma allowed him to establish an influential school of viola playing.

¹⁰⁰ The author's father, Pavel Galaganov, met Kramarov for the first time while successfully participating in the 3rd All Russian Competition of Music Performers in 1969 (he was awarded a diploma). Kramarov was in the jury. After that time, they became friendly, and, when Pavel Galaganov became the Concertmaster of the Kislovodsk Symphony, he and Kramarov made plans for a performance of the *Sinfonia Concertante* by Mozart. Unfortunately, both Kramarov's disfavor with the Soviet officials and, later, his untimely death, prevented the plans from being realized.

CHAPTER 3

TEACHING METHODS AND THE APPROACH TO PEDAGOGY

Yuri Markovich's methods of teaching were directed towards an unusual ultimate goal: the education of concert violist-soloists.¹ Even today, there are far fewer soloists who specialize in the viola than solo performers who make their living playing violin or cello. Since Kramarov himself was an active performer both in solo and chamber music, his way of teaching was that of a great musician, who shares his experiences, achievements, and beliefs with the younger generations of players, helping them to find their own means of listening and thinking and aiding them in the establishment of their own beliefs. Kramarov succeeded in establishing his own school of musical thinking. "He had in his possession all of the qualities necessary for that: [he was] a musician, a pedagogue, and a [wonderful] person."²

It is not easy to classify or to analyze Kramarov's teaching approach. His instructions on technique, for example, were always linked to his musical ideas, because the music was the most important aspect of Yuri Markovich's teaching. Still, in an attempt to elucidate his pedagogical principles, the memories of his students and colleagues are organized under the following categories:

- I. The actual process of teaching; atmosphere in the class
- II. Repertory
- III. Approach to musical questions, including style (IIIa)

¹ O. Shulpiakov, "Исполнительские и педагогические принципы Ю. М. Крамарова" (Kramarov's principles in performance and pedagogy) in *Вопросы музыкальной педагогики* (Issues in music pedagogy), Music, Moscow, 8th printing, 1987, 103.

² Shulpiakov, 103.

IV. Technique, such as intonation, *vibrato*, etc.

It is not simple to separate the categories: repertory is closely linked to musical understanding; the technical problems in Kramarov's class were usually subordinated to musical ones; and, finally, the repertory in pedagogical practice is often chosen in connection with certain stylistic, musical, or technical ideas in mind. However, this interrelationship among all aspects of music pedagogy was one of the secrets of Kramarov's success as a teacher, and, therefore, it is highly appropriate in this chapter. The end of the chapter contains a brief review of the methodical article written by the great musician himself (V).

I

First, let us try to reconstruct the unique atmosphere in Kramarov's class. "Every one of his lessons was absolutely magical," remembers G. Freidin, "the whole conservatory would run to his studio to hear him teach."³ Yuri Markovich "always attracted a big crowd; during a lesson, students usually had a special sensation, similar to the excitement they felt on a concert stage. Each student performance in class was followed by a discussion that involved everybody in the room."⁴ Being a genuine artist and performer, Kramarov felt inspired by the public listening to him teach. He often gave lessons in the concert hall while teaching at the Petrozavodsk Conservatory.⁵ If there was no audience in his studio (which happened extremely rarely), Yuri Markovich would have a feeling that something was missing. He didn't like a "chamber atmosphere" in his lessons:

³ Phone interview with Genadi Freidin, January 7, 2003.

⁴ Phone interview with Vasily Shulga, January 7, 2003.

⁵ Interview with Alexander Tumarinson, Jerusalem, June 2002.

His lessons were always attended by many people; students from his class and from the special music school for gifted children⁶, visiting musicians and colleagues-teachers from Leningrad, composers-beginners and alumni. The general feeling [in the room] would often be that of exceptional responsibility, almost like at a concert.⁷

Kramarov had a very emotional, even “stormy” manner of teaching.⁸ He rarely remained calm during his lessons. Yuri Simonov wrote that Kramarov “would charge everybody with his energy” in the process of instruction.⁹ Sometimes he could get irritated with a student in a lesson; however, “he would never bear grudges.”¹⁰ Yuri Simonov remembers the feeling of enthusiasm he felt while observing Kramarov’s lessons for the first time:

A student from a Baltic republic, a [musically] infantile girl, played the [viola] concerto by Bartok. She played it not badly in general, [quite] strongly; the viola sounded good, but she would “fall asleep” all the time: the tempo would slow down, and the emotion would die out from time to time. Yuri Markovich was sitting for a while, than jumped up, started running up and down the studio, and screamed: “Play...play!” while shaking his left hand, intensely vibrating in the air in a diapason of at least an interval of a tenth.

Another student was rational and dry....He clearly but mechanically played passages of sixteenths. Kramarov started talking to him: “You are playing like a machine! These passages have meaning, and you are playing on a musical instrument, not on a hay-mowing machine. Maybe you don’t like music in general?”¹¹

Nobody felt offended. His students sensed overwhelming kindness behind these sometimes harsh words. Kramarov would give everything he had to help his students – that is why his lessons were so passionate. He was giving away all his knowledge, his

⁶ Десятилетка (desiatiletka)

⁷ Shulpiakov, 106.

⁸ Shulga interview.

⁹ Y. Simonov, “Об артисте, наставнике, друге” (About the artist [musician], the mentor, and the friend) in *Вопросы...* (see the footnote # 1), 115.

¹⁰ Phone interview with Mikhail Yavker, Jerusalem, June 2002.

¹¹ Y. Simonov, 115.

whole energy, his emotions, his heart. “Kramarov knew how to give; he was an outstanding pedagogue!” says Era Barutcheva.¹² Elena Panfilova agrees that the students “learned [from Kramarov] every second not only about music, art, history, and viola playing but also about life in general. It was not always necessary to play viola for him in order to learn; often, it was just enough to sit in Yuri Markovich’s class.”¹³

Simonov also compares the atmosphere in Kramarov’s class with that in a busy factory:

His stormy displays of temperament during the lessons and constant readiness to flare up impressed us, young people, very much, because it created ...a special atmosphere of a “hot [factory] section” where not only the mastery of a young instrumentalist was forged but also his esthetical principals, *Weltanschauung* [(philosophy)], attitude, ethics, and taste were formed.¹⁴

While teaching, Yuri Markovich would give as much time to each student as he felt was needed. “Kramarov never looked at his watch; he could spend a lot of time on one lesson!” remembers Freidin.¹⁵ Alexander Tumarinson also recalls that one of his lessons with Kramarov lasted approximately four (!) hours.¹⁶

It was customary for Yuri Markovich to demonstrate on his viola in class. “He taught us with an instrument in his hand,” said M. Kugel.¹⁷ V. Shulga adds that after listening to a student, “Kramarov would take his instrument and play [demonstrate] in a very noble manner.”¹⁸ Sometimes, Kramarov would take a student’s instrument to play. In his hands, every instrument, violin or viola, sounded beautiful and noble, like a very

¹² Phone interview with Era Barutcheva, January 8, 2003.

¹³ Phone interview with Elena Panfilova, February 11, 2003.

¹⁴ Simonov, 115.

¹⁵ Freidin interview.

¹⁶ Tumarinson interview.

¹⁷ Phone interview with Mikhail Kugel, January 7, 2003.

¹⁸ Shulga interview.

good and responsive musical tool.¹⁹ Yuri Markovich did not demonstrate pieces that he had not performed on stage.²⁰ He was highly critical of himself and did not allow himself to play poorly, even for just a few notes. In his article about Kramarov, Shulpiakov makes the following observation:

The talent of a performer and the ... artistic mastery of Yuri Markovich exerted beneficial [(wholesome)] influence upon the development of the most important interpretative qualities of the all of his students: he just infected everybody with his gifts. Young musicians acquired from him the brilliance of performance, embossed expressionism of [musical] phrases, clarity, precision, and active purposefulness of playing the instrument.²¹

The high level of musical demands in Kramarov's studio was always combined with a benevolent attitude of the teacher towards his disciples. All of Kramarov's students loved him. They were not afraid of him, but they were ashamed to play poorly for their lessons.

His attitude towards the students was always very warm,²² like that of a father or even of an older brother. Kramarov treated each one of his students as an individual, with respect; with some of them, he had simple and friendly relations. His democratic contact with students often bordered on friendship, but it would never cross the line of anything like a familiarity.²³ Yuri Markovich never spoke badly of anyone, and he did not allow his students to do so either. He created an unusually warm atmosphere in his class. All of the students in Kramarov's studio were friendly with each other. Elena Panfilova remembers how surprised Yuri Bashmet was seeing such friendliness and absolute lack

¹⁹ Simonov, 115.

²⁰ Kugel interview.

²¹ Shulpiakov, 112.

²² Kugel interview.

²³ Ibid.

of competitiveness among three Kramarov's disciples²⁴ who were participating in the same competition.²⁵

It is also essential to remember that, being a first-rate concert performer, Yuri Markovich was very tolerant towards the mistakes of others on the stage. Even if there were failures in the performances of his students, Kramarov would always find something very good and positive to say.²⁶ However, he would always remain the most critical of his best students. "When going to study with Yuri Markovich, everybody knew that a very serious work awaited them," remembers E. Panfilova. Many years after his graduation, G. Freidin still recalls how after one of his long recitals he got a positive comment from Kramarov about a piece by Hindemith. That was the only comment he received after the recital, which, for people who knew Yuri Markovich well, meant that a student should keep working.²⁷ On the other hand, after hearing an excellent performance, Kramarov would be generous with praise. Once, after another recital, he told Freidin that he wished he could play Schubert's *Arpeggione* sonata just like him.²⁸

In addition to the lessons and recitals, regular class discussions were also the norm in Yuri Markovich's class. The subjects of these discussions were interpretations of different pieces, new compositions, performances, and the like. In one of his reports, Kramarov describes this process as follows:

We conduct musicological study in class. It is carried out in the form of seminars, where we discuss editions of the pieces that are included in the recital programs as well as new compositions by Soviet, mostly Leningrad composers, and [we] have meetings with the performers of new works.

²⁴ Panfilova, Shulga, and Kugel.

²⁵ Panfilova interview.

²⁶ Freidin interview.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Freidin interview.

Thus, for example, it was interesting to have a discussion about the sonata by D. Shostakovich (Op. 147) as well as a lecture ... [given] by a professor of the Moscow Conservatory, F. S. Druzhinin, the dedicatee of the sonata, about the history of the creation of the work.

The methodic lectures with the participation of specially invited ... for that purpose I. Kodousek, one of the most prominent violists and pedagogues in Czechoslovakia, were met with big success.²⁹

II

Kramarov's pedagogical repertory included music of the most of the styles and epochs. For example, works of the following composers were often studied in his class:

- 1) Telemann, Hummel, Chimarosa, Nardini, Martini, Handel, J. S. Bach, and J. C. Bach
- 2) Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven
- 3) Schubert, Schumann, Brahms
- 4) Hindemith, Honneger, Milhaud, Reger, Bartok
- 5) Russian composers, such as Khandoshkin and Glinka
- 6) Soviet composers, including Shostakovich, Tsïtovich, S. Slonimsky, and Bogdanov-Berezovsky³⁰

Panfilova remembers that Kramarov made an effort to introduce each of his students to the maximum possible number of compositions from the viola repertoire.³¹ However, Shulpiakov argues that in his work on string technique, Yuri Markovich followed the didactic principle of the old masters, which consists of learning of the whole arsenal of

²⁹ Y. Kramarov, "Описание педагогической деятельности" (Description [(account)] of pedagogical activities), a faculty report, 1981, 3.

³⁰ Shulpiakov, 106.

³¹ Panfilova interview.

technical and expressive means from the examples of only a few musical pieces.³² As though in continuation of the argument, Mikhail Kugel remarked that the viola repertory in the Soviet Union as a whole was actually quite limited. Some of the works widely known in the Western countries were not easily accessible in the USSR.³³ Besides, the viola was recognized as a solo instrument really only in the 20th century. Historically, composers preferred to use the instrument mostly in chamber music ensembles. Because of that, the pedagogical repertory in a viola class is closely linked to that in chamber music lessons.³⁴ Thus, finding new works for viola was always at the top of the list of Kramarov's activities. As a result, he would often discover interesting pieces for his students, such as the viola concerto by Šulek,³⁵ which Yuri Markovich found for Kugel.³⁶ In his class, Kramarov popularized such compositions as the *Concert Poem* by Soviet composer Ledenëv and the concerto by Bartok. "Everybody played Bartok's concerto," said Kugel. In addition, students played arrangements made by Kramarov himself,³⁷ transcriptions by V. Borisovsky, and a transcription of Bach's *Chaconne* for viola.³⁸

Yuri Markovich was very selective in choosing students for his class. He accepted players who he thought had interesting personalities as musicians. That is why many of

³² Shulpiakov, 111.

³³ Though the opinions seem to contradict each other, this is not a discrepancy. Since the viola players in Russia had limited access to the compositions published abroad, it was a priority of Kramarov to search for new or unknown pieces in order to extend the repertory of his students as much as possible. However, in his "fight for quality" of performance, Kramarov continued working on each piece until it was completely polished. (See the Shulpiakov's statement at the top of the page.)

³⁴ E. N. Panfilova, "Исполнительская и педагогическая деятельность профессора Ю. М. Крамарова в Петрозаводске" (Performing and pedagogical activities of Y. M. Kramarov in Petrozavodsk) in *The Musical Culture of Karelia*, Petrozavodsk branch of the Leningrad Rimsky-Korsakov Conservatory, Petrozavodsk, 1988, 204.

³⁵ Stjepan Šulek (1914 – 1986) studied violin in Zagreb with Huml and learned composition mostly on his own. Since 1945, he taught composition at the Zagreb Academy and also conducted the Zagreb Radio Chamber Orchestra. His music includes concertos for piano, cello, violin, viola, bassoon, organ, and others. (*Harvard Biographical Dictionary of Music*, 886)

³⁶ Kugel interview.

³⁷ See Appendix 3 for the list of Kramarov's transcriptions.

³⁸ Kugel interview.

them were preparing for solo competitions,³⁹ which is reflected in their choice of repertoire. It is important to mention, however, that for Kramarov competitions served only as stimuli that he used for the acceleration of the musical growth of his disciples.⁴⁰ Most of the competitions require that certain pieces be played, so, in a way, preparation for a competition dictates the repertory. Kugel remembers that after their second year of studies, every student in Kramarov's class could choose his or her own program. Gennady Freidin, who did post-graduate studies with Kramarov, recalls that the choice of compositions for his recitals was almost always his own. The final decision on repertoire would be made in consultation with Kramarov. Yuri Markovich would offer his suggestions, but he rarely insisted on a particular piece.

In choosing repertoire for students, Kramarov, in accordance with his own way of musical thinking, was more inclined towards large-form compositions, such as sonatas, suites, and concertos, which required from a performer "all-embracing [(comprehensive)] artistic ideas and conceptions, in addition to a thorough knowledge of the laws of musical dramaturgy."⁴¹ This did not mean that Yuri Markovich neglected short pieces, so-called miniatures, in his pedagogy; yet, he was a musician of a "large style" with a symphonic approach to music making. This philosophy "showed [itself] primarily in [his] constant tendency to enlarge artistic problems."⁴² Kramarov usually concentrated at first on the central and most important moments of a performance, and, only afterwards, would he

³⁹ The system of solo competitions in the former Soviet Union was very developed, and the level of the participants was extremely high. At first, musicians had to compete in local contests, some of which were as difficult to win as to get a prize in the most famous international ones. Players who won the first few prizes in the local competitions were allowed to advance on to All Russian or All Soviet contests. Winners of the latter contests were chosen to compete in international competitions. It is of no surprise, therefore, that Soviet musicians often won international competitions.

⁴⁰ Panfilova interview.

⁴¹ Shulpiakov, 110.

⁴² Ibid.

polish the details. “Artistically developing his students, he first of all formed in them an ability to think conceptually.”⁴³

It is interesting that Yuri Markovich would often plan the programs for the final recitals of his class around a certain style or genre:

The work in ... the viola class is constructed in such a way, that the programs of the final concerts of the class are put together under a thematic principle ... [(for example a concert of all suites by J. S. Bach)⁴⁴]; [therefore, these recitals] require a large amount of preparatory work.⁴⁵

III

In his effort to expand the musical horizons of his disciples, Yuri Kramarov would never “pressure [(intimidate or overwhelm)] his students with his individuality [(personality)].”⁴⁶ He demanded that each person in his class have an independence of musical ideas. If a student copied Kramarov’s interpretation of a composition, Yuri Markovich would lose interest in working on the piece.⁴⁷ Panfilova writes that “in the process of working [with a student] on solo viola repertory, Kramarov’s primary goal was to bring out the artistic individuality in each violist.”⁴⁸ Even if a student interpreted a composition in an unusual (but logical) way, Kramarov would never reject the interpretation. “Please play again – I need to adapt,” he would say.⁴⁹ It was also common for him to ask a student to play a musical phrase in many different ways until the most logical solution was found.⁵⁰

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Phone interview with Vasily Stopichev, February 9, 2003.

⁴⁵ Y. Kramarov, faculty report, 1981, 3.

⁴⁶ Shulga interview.

⁴⁷ Freidin interview.,

⁴⁸ Panfilova, 204.

⁴⁹ Freidin interview.

⁵⁰ Freidin interview.

Everybody agrees that Yuri Kramarov had an encyclopedic knowledge of history, literature, arts, physiology, psychology, and other disciplines not related to music. During his lessons he would often make references or comparisons to explain the specifics of a musical style. For example, he would give an overview of the time when a composition was written, including the history, art, architecture, and so on, so that at the end, everybody in the room understood why this composition should be played in this or that particular way. Sometimes Kramarov would give unusual comparisons: “In this place, the sound should in some ways remind [us] of Spanish velvet. Did you see a costume of an 18th-century cardinal in the museum?” Or: “Your performance should radiate the color of real, fresh grass. Go to Nature and look!”⁵¹ Often, at his first meetings with new students, Yuri Markovich emphasized the importance of general education for a musician. “When a person enjoys [(possesses)] elevated inner culture [and] knows art and theatre well, it is also easy to suggest to him a corresponding figurativeness in the sphere of music,” he said.⁵²

More than anything, Kramarov could not stand “emptiness in music.” It was not enough for him to play in tune and with beautiful sound. Every note had to have a meaning.⁵³ Mikhail Kugel said that at one time, in preparing for a competition, he (Kugel) recorded his performance of the viola concerto by Bartok. Kugel was very happy with the recording: the playing was very precise and stable, the intonation was perfect, and the sound was beautiful. He and Yuri Markovich listened to the recording together. After the performance was finished, Kramarov asked:

“Are you happy with it?”

⁵¹ Simonov, 116.

⁵² Shulpiakov, 105.

⁵³ Kugel interview.

“Yes,” replied Kugel. “In general, I think, it is a good performance.”

“Then go home and think! Your playing does not say much. Sit down, close your eyes, listen, and think!”

Kugel stated that this event completely changed his musical philosophy.⁵⁴

In his article, Yuri Simonov adds that Kramarov was an “uncompromising enemy” of thoughtless music, even if played with both a beautiful sound and good intonation. The following words are characteristic of Kramarov:

Think about what you play! It is necessary to play conditions [(emotions)]! If this is sorrow, in that case, which one – gentle or elevated? What emotion – furious or proud? These are all different things; and expressiveness should be in everything!⁵⁵

Very frequently, Yuri Markovich would work with his students on emotional transformation during a concert. In essence it was “pedagogy of performance conditions.”⁵⁶ He repeatedly reminded his disciples that “only a trained emotion, not a chaotic expression of feelings, is capable of communicating the mood of an interpreted work.”⁵⁷ He taught students to control burning emotional energy with the power of the intellect. Every one of his students could, at any given moment, explain why he or she played a certain phrase in this or that particular way. Moreover, Kramarov thought that to warm up an emotion before a recital was at least as important as to do the traditional warming up of the muscles of both hands.

He also taught his students how to behave on stage – so called stage presence. He said, “After walking to the stage, don’t be in a hurry to start playing. First, feel the

⁵⁴ Kugel interview.

⁵⁵ Simonov, 115.

⁵⁶ Shulpiakov, 104.

⁵⁷ Shulpiakov, 105.

connection with the audience, establish a contact, and, after that, try to lead the listeners [into your musical world].”⁵⁸

IIIa

Kramarov never worked on technique separately – it was not interesting for him. Any specific technical problems in playing on a string instrument were usually addressed in the process of working on musical style. “He had an amazing ability to work on style,” comments Elena Panfilova. She adds that

Every type of *detaché*, *spiccato*, and the whole technique was subordinated to the specifics of a musical piece. Kramarov would give very detailed prescriptions [(instructions)] on which type of sound we should use playing Hindemith, or Honegger, or Bach.⁵⁹

In connection with Kramarov’s technique methods, let us first examine the essentials of Yuri Markovich’s process of work on compositions written in different periods, from the Baroque era to the 20th century.⁶⁰

Polyphony in the works by J. S. Bach was one of Kramarov’s favorite didactic tools. He spent much time analyzing and researching different editions of both the gamba sonatas and the six suites for cello solo,⁶¹ and, as a result, he developed his own concept of performing these works. Kramarov taught that all the voices must be listened to simultaneously, rejecting the idea of the classification of melodies as primary or secondary. Thus, in the gamba sonatas, the sounds of both viola and harpsichord have to

⁵⁸ Shulpiakov, 112.

⁵⁹ Panfilova interview.

⁶⁰ Most of the information about Kramarov’s work on different styles is taken from the article by Shulpiakov, 107-109.

⁶¹ See the previous chapter for more information about this research.

equalize and to blend in accordance with the nature of the music. Yuri Markovich called this concept “wave-like polyphony,” and he explained it as follows:

Every voice, subordinated ... to the laws of logic, moves in its own direction. Thus, even two voices rarely go in parallel ways. Most often, we can observe a more complex picture [(structure)] in the dynamic of their development.⁶²

Every technical decision about sound, bow strokes, and fingering in pieces by Bach should be based on a deep understanding of both the musical meaning and the dramaturgy of these compositions. Kramarov said:

The music by Bach should be built structurally as carefully as one builds a Gothic cathedral. Here everything has to be thought out and measured. It is impossible to imagine that one of windows of such a cathedral would appear in a wrong place; the whole composition would collapse, [it] doesn't matter how beautiful in details it is.⁶³

The *Symphonia Concertante* by Mozart was also one of Kramarov's favorite pieces. Having performed the work many times, he found it to be an excellent pedagogical device for instruction on the Classical style. He taught his students that the lightness of the musical atmosphere in the piece required an easy and transparent sound, in addition to the corresponding mood. The *vibrato*, used on all passing sounds of the melodic configurations, played an important role in the performance of the composition. Furthermore, Kramarov did not accept mindless copying in the exchange of the melodic phrases between the two soloists. He said that

⁶² Shulpiakov, 108.

⁶³ Ibid.

The music lives in the endless continuation and in the steady development of its tonal meaning. If your partner successfully played a phrase, your goal is not to repeat or to copy it, but to find its continuation.⁶⁴

In Romantic music, students were allowed more freedom of expression as well as spontaneity and openness of feelings. However, Kramarov brought elements of classical proportion into the music of 19th-century composers, such as Brahms or Schumann. Expression and emotions, he thought, should not cross appropriate esthetical borders. In the sonatas by Brahms, “demanding of his students utmost richness of sound, he never broke the balance between emotional fullness of an artistic image and its [(the image’s)] objectively logical interpretation.”⁶⁵

After 1976, the viola sonata by Shostakovich was frequently included in the concert programs of Kramarov’s students. Even before the piece was published, Yuri Markovich had been sending manuscript copies to his former students throughout the country.⁶⁶ Shulpiakov comments that Kramarov’s interpretation of the work differed from the “optimistic” one, generally accepted in the Soviet Union. He says that, while analyzing the composition during his lessons,

[Kramarov] persistently underlined ... the active element in the music of Shostakovich. [He] would, in particular, point out the intense dramatic effect in the first movement as well as the melodic fractures in the *Scherzo* and the sarcastic character of its themes...⁶⁷

In addition to the well-known compositions by famous 20th-century composers, works by young composers, mostly from Leningrad, were also studied in Kramarov’s studio. On

⁶⁴ Shulpiakov, 107.

⁶⁵ Shulpiakov, 109.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Shulpiakov, 110

such pieces, students learned about both the importance of serious analysis and the significance of the meticulous quality of work necessary for the preparation of a performance of a newly written composition.

IV

Most of the students in the class were very advanced string players who did not require special lessons for technique. The development of each student's technical expertise was always looked upon as a unity of musical goals with the individual ability of each violist. Yuri Markovich mostly worked on what was produced on the instrument in terms of music and sound, and he often did not care about the way in which a student held the viola or put fingers on the fingerboard.⁶⁸ He would say, "If you are playing Brahms, find a way for your hands not to disturb the music."⁶⁹ However, when advice on a technical problem was needed, Kramarov always gave it. Based on memories of his students and colleagues, Kramarov's advice on technique is organized on the next few pages in the following order:

- A. practice
- B. general quality of playing
- C. intonation
- D. sound
- E. fingering and bowings
- F. *spiccato*
- G. fast passages

⁶⁸ Shulpiakov, 112.

⁶⁹ Panfilova interview.

H. *vibrato*

A.

An Israeli violist, Mark Lodkin, who heard Kramarov's master class at Voronezh Music College (училище),⁷⁰ remembers the suggestions given by Yuri Markovich to his students regarding how to organize their practicing. In his recommendations, Kramarov compared the structure of the practice time with a puff-pastry pie. He advised players to alternate the work on scales and etudes with that on the repertoire compositions, like short pieces, sonatas, or concertos. It is common for a musician to start practicing various technical drills before continuing with artistic compositions. Contrary to that, Yuri Markovich recommended returning to the technical exercises periodically during the practice time for better productivity of work.⁷¹

It is not a secret that success in music performance depends not only on efficiency of practice time but also on the amount of the time spent in preparation of compositions. "Thinking is not enough," Kramarov said, "you also have to practice!"⁷² Alexander Tumarinson adds that Yuri Markovich often repeated to his students the famous phrase: "Art requires sweat," meaning that being a musician implies a lot of work.⁷³

B.

One of the main secrets of his success as a pedagogue as well as a performer lay in his incredible ability to hear all miniscule imperfections in the quality of the playing of the instrument. Furthermore, after hearing a defect, he knew what caused it and how to

⁷⁰ See footnote 3 in chapter 4 for an explanation of the Russian educational system.

⁷¹ Interview with Mark Lodkin, June 2002, Israel.

⁷² Lodkin interview (compare this statement "think – practice" to the "practice – think" story told by Kugel [see above]).

⁷³ Tumarinson interview.

fix the problem. Elena Panfilova reports the existence of a concept called “fight for the quality” in Kramarov’s class.⁷⁴ “He was extraordinarily critical of the quality of playing,” agrees Freidin, “and he was very picky of what [students] did with the musical text written by a composer, in the sense of rhythm, dynamics, etc.”⁷⁵

A clean performance is a performance without any indistinct sounds on the instrument. This concept was the key principle in Kramarov’s “fight for quality.” Moreover, he heard not only the sounds that were produced on the instrument but also the things that, for whatever technical reason, did not happen.⁷⁶ This rare gift was also noticed by the famous Russian solo violinist, professor of the Leningrad Conservatory, Boris Gutnikov:

Being repeatedly [an observer of] Yuri Markovich’s lessons, [I] every time made a mental note: [it] looks like he does everything that I do; [he] doesn’t say anything special. One time [I] could stand it no longer, and [I] asked him about the secret of his pedagogical mastery; where such amazing results come from [?]. He laughs answering, “It is very simple: I try not to let anything pass by.” [I] think, however, that the effectiveness of his pedagogy rested not only on the fact that he noticed everything but also on his phenomenal ability to instantly guess a reason that prevented a student from fulfilling his intention.⁷⁷

C.

There were days when Kramarov tended to be especially critical of the intonation of his students. On such days, he, figuratively speaking, tormented his disciples until he felt that the intonation was satisfactory.⁷⁸ When working on the double stops, he taught

⁷⁴ Panfilova, 205.

⁷⁵ Freidin interview.

⁷⁶ Shulpiakov, 111.

⁷⁷ Shulpiakov, 111, footnote.

⁷⁸ Kugel interview.

the class to listen to the overtones.⁷⁹ “He was very strict about the intonation,” comments Shulga. “He always made us listen to ourselves ‘from outside’.”⁸⁰

Yuri Markovich treated intonation as almost a physiological factor that should depend not only on the sensitivity of the ear but also on the physical condition of the hands. Simonov remembers the following comment from Kramarov:

Sensitivity of the tips of the fingers, adaptability of the whole neural system, [and] reflexes should be so instantaneous, that a finger would move to one side or another to make a note clean before a performer has time to think. The placing of the left wrist should [be able to] transform easily. Every musician must quickly react to falsity [(imperfect pitch)]; that is the sign of talent and professionalism.⁸¹

If a student could not play in tune because of technical problems, he or she had to learn some special “key” combinations of fingers in the first position.⁸²

Kramarov also insisted that his students listen very carefully to their sound and intonation while playing in an orchestra or in a chamber music ensemble. An orchestra musician as well as a chamber music player has to be aware of the musicians around him and to be able to blend his playing with their sounds and their intonation. Yuri Markovich taught his class to react instantaneously to any harmonic situation. If a student failed to correct a false note, Kramarov would say, softly but with a touch of horror, “False! It is not possible like this! You are not alone! Listen to the others!”⁸³

⁷⁹ Kugel interview.

⁸⁰ Shulga interview.

⁸¹ Simonov, 114.

⁸² Shulpiakov, 111. (See section V 8 for some examples.)

⁸³ Simonov, 118.

D.

While working on sound production, he preferred to hear a “viscous” viola tone, which was achieved by both a firm connection of the bow to the strings and a comparably slow bow speed. Broad and sweeping bow strokes, appropriate for violin playing, are cannot provide the connection of the bow hair with a string necessary on the less “responsive” viola; the bow has to move more slowly in order to achieve the full quality of the sound.⁸⁴

E.

It is interesting that Kramarov never insisted on the use of his fingering.⁸⁵ Mikhail Yavker says that, while working on technique, Yuri Markovich “would take the instrument, demonstrate, suggest his fingering, but he would never require [his students] to accept it.” If students found it comfortable, they used the suggestions of their teacher; otherwise, they had to come up with their own ideas. The goal was the same: quality of performance.⁸⁶ Yuri Markovich never practiced compositions with his students during lessons. His disciples were advanced enough to do that work on their own. In the process of the study of a musical piece, the correction of both bow strokes and fingerings most often took place only at the first lesson.⁸⁷

There was one characteristic peculiarity in Kramarov’s method: while giving suggestions about directions of the bow strokes as well as about ways to organize fingering, he always referenced to an author of the idea, when the idea was not his own.

⁸⁴ Shulpiakov, 111.

⁸⁵ Tumarinson interview.

⁸⁶ Yavker interview.

⁸⁷ Shulga interview.

Next to the fingering in the music he would write the name of the person who used it first, even if this musician was a student.⁸⁸

When making a decision on which finger to use for this or that particular note, Yuri Markovich always considered musical or expressive goals. For example, knowing that his pinky was not the best vibrating finger, he avoided using it on the most expressive notes, and, therefore, he suggested that the students follow his example.⁸⁹ For expressive reasons, he often used both the “even” positions (second or fourth) and the mixed positions.⁹⁰

F.

Yuri Markovich explained to his disciples that the same technical device can be used in many different ways, depending on the style and character of music. He helped the class to constantly widen the range of implications of such important technical tools as *vibrato* and *spiccato*. Mikhail Kugel has said that Kramarov would check the level of his students by asking them to play *spiccato* in different tempos, from the slowest one to the fastest one, with the even acceleration of the speed followed immediately by the steady decrease in tempo. In this way, he determined the degree of control his students had over the bow stroke.⁹¹

⁸⁸ Freidin interview.

⁸⁹ Shulga interview.

⁹⁰ Yavker interview. (The term “mixed positions” is usually used to describe a technique, in which the palm of the left hand remains calm in between any two or three positions, while the fingers, extending, play notes in the all of the positions. Practically, this means that even though more than one position is involved, no hand shifts are necessary. [MG])

⁹¹ Also, in Shulpiakov, 112

G.

While working on fast running passages in class, Yuri Markovich divided this type of technique into two different motions: the vertical one, with the maximum use of the possibilities of one position, and the horizontal one, in which the hand shifts between positions.⁹² For each of the two motions, Kramarov recommended a specific exercise.⁹³

H.

He also used an unusual teaching method in practicing the *vibrato* with his students. He advised the class to start the practice with the freest, best-sounding finger in the study of this important technical device:

Only after you achieve comparable success in the sound of this note, will you take on the next step; in particular, [you will] transfer the acquired habit of the correct vibrato to the neighbor fingers.

When, at one time, the best vibrating finger on one student's hand happened to be his pinky, Kramarov said to him without any hesitation: "Rest on this one!"⁹⁴

V

Yuri Markovich's article on viola pedagogy is a very important contribution to the system of teaching methods in music.⁹⁵ In it, he gives his opinion and suggestions on the following subjects, numbered here for convenience:

1. The history of viola specialization

⁹² Shulpiakov, 111. (The both terms "vertical" and "horizontal" are reversed in the source)

⁹³ See section V 8 for examples of intonation exercises in the first position.

⁹⁴ Shulpiakov, 112.

⁹⁵ Y. Kramarov, "Некоторые вопросы альтовой педагогики" (Some problems in viola pedagogy) in *Вопросы музыкальной педагогики*, 2 выпуск, Москва: Музыка, 1980.

2. The problems with teaching viola to beginners
3. Repertory
4. Two steps in viola pedagogy
5. Sizes of violas, advantages and disadvantages of the very large instruments
6. The specifics of sound production on the viola (*détaché* and *cantilena*)
7. The positions of both hands
8. Intonation on the viola; exercises for intonation.
9. Vibrato
10. The lesson process

An overview of the material of the article, in the order given above, can be found on the next few pages. The information is presented from Kramarov's point of view.

1.

In the first few paragraphs Kramarov compares the viola pedagogy of his time with that of the past. He says that though the development of both the viola repertory and, in connection to that, viola pedagogy, is significant in the 20th century, there are still many problems remaining in relation to the repertoire as well as to the teaching methods.

"In our time, the process of the deepening of the specialization," he writes, "...requires a well developed system that is based on a [pedagogical] practice," and this approach should be specifically distinctive from that in violin studies.⁹⁶ For each player, the initial period of the specialization on the instrument is the most important one.

⁹⁶ Kramarov, 91.

2.

Kramarov discusses the pluses and minuses of starting the musical education of young children with the viola, instead of the violin. While young violinists have in their possession a variety of instruments in different sizes, such as an eighth of the full size, a quarter, a half, and a three-quarter size violin, young viola players do not have that luxury. The small violins sound worse than a full size instrument, but these still make it possible for children to both play and study. So far, the attempts to construct a very small viola have failed because of the sound qualities of these instruments—small “practice” violas sound much worse than do their violin counterparts.

Thus, the only goal achieved in the very early viola studies is knowledge of the viola clef from the beginning of music education. It will not compensate for both sound and artistic-aesthetic losses; besides, any capable violin player can learn the viola clef quickly. Kramarov’s conclusion is that it is more practical to initially teach children the violin and later to switch them to viola. Most of the great viola players began their studies as violinists.

Another important factor is the age when a student makes the transition from violin to viola. Kramarov makes reference to Borisovsky, who thought that the best age for the transition is between fourteen and sixteen. Yuri Markovich adds that a teacher should take into account psychological factors when considering switching a student from violin to viola. For example, if a student has only one year left before graduating from a seven-year music school, it is better to let him or her finish it on violin, making the transition at the same time as the student changes institutions.

3

Continuing the argument about the advantages of starting musical education on violin instead of viola, Kramarov compares the student repertory for both instruments. In the sense of technical exercises, viola players are limited to the good caprices by Campagnoli, difficult and useful etudes by F. Hoffmeister, I. Palashko, M. Terian, and not much more than that. At first glance, it is not difficult to fill the “vacuum” by teaching children on transcriptions from violin etudes. However, in that case there is a paradox: the small child begins his or her studies on a bad sounding little viola, playing repertoire written for the violin.

There is an analogous situation in the student-concert repertory. Viola players do not have student concertos or sonatas. Also, the Romantic repertory for viola is extremely limited.

4

Viola pedagogy for beginners is divided into two steps or levels. First, the child should study the violin. Even if a teacher sees the student’s future as a violist, he or she should continue instructing the child utilizing the violin methods. Viola pedagogy on this level is not different from that of violin.

The second step is teaching the viola. It is obvious that this level of education requires further studies from the point of view of the specifics of viola performance and pedagogy.

Before giving practical recommendations about some methods of teaching viola technique, Kramarov discusses at length various sizes of violas and their effects on both pedagogy and concert performances.

Since the creation of the first violas, the following paradox can be observed: a small viola differs from a violin only by about 1.5 – 2.0 centimeters, while the same instrument is 8.0 – 9.0 centimeters smaller than some large violas. Thus, a violinist playing on a small viola can adjust to it much more easily than can a violist changing from a small viola to a large one.⁹⁷

There are three groups of violas: small (370 – 400 millimeters), medium (400 – 430 mm), and large (430 – 470 mm). Small violas are very rarely used in concerts because, as a rule, these instruments do not have a deep, full sound. On the other hand, it is possible to use small violas in studio teaching in order to make the transition from violin to viola easier.

In addition, Yuri Markovich points out that often in pedagogical practice it is a better idea to offer a bigger viola to a student making the change from violin to viola. If, from one year to the next, a child feels that he or she is behind the students of the same age in technical development on the violin, that child feels frustrated about everything that is connected to the instrument. In that case, a teacher should try to give the student an

⁹⁷ The author of the dissertation would like to add that there were/are several reasons for making violas of so many different sizes, including the following: 1) the earliest Baroque orchestras had as many as three different viola parts, which led to the construction of extremely large tenor violas, medium size violas, and smaller, closer to violin size, instruments. 2) In order for a viola's size to correspond to its tuning, as do the violin and the cello, the body size of the viola has to be twice as large as that of the violin. In the ideal case, the sound of the viola would be as bright and as deep as those of the other two instruments. However, an instrument of that size would be practically impossible to handle. The difference in sizes of the violas is the result of the efforts of the violin/viola makers to overcome the discrepancy between the ideal sound and the ideal size for the performance. The characteristic "nasal" viola sound results from the size of the instrument being smaller than the "ideal" one.

instrument that is very different from the violin. The repertory at the beginning of such a transition also should not include pieces or etudes which are familiar to the student from his or her violin studies.

Kramarov makes the observation that the hottest polemics take place on the subject of the advantages of medium versus large violas. While Borisovsky was a passionate propagandist of very large instruments,⁹⁸ Yuri Markovich believes that the sound advantages of big violas are usually “crossed out” by the practical inconvenience of handling these instruments: the technical possibilities of a performer are limited, and the process of long practice is much more difficult.

Kramarov states that he prefers the instruments of medium sizes. He adds that after a certain point large violas lose their connection to the violin. As a result, the whole violin education becomes unnecessary, because the technical ways of playing change completely. He argues that the enthusiasm for incredibly big violas is an extreme position based on very little perspective.

6

Some specifics of viola playing can be studied utilizing the example of *détaché*.⁹⁹ While violin players can comfortably use two different types of the bow stroke (a short one based on *martelé* and a simple dividing one, *non legato*), viola players use the short *détaché* less often. In general, *martelé* is used very rarely, and it is often substituted by a large *spiccato*, played close to the frog. The most preferable way of playing the *détaché*

⁹⁸ See Chapter 1.

⁹⁹ Kramarov notes that the problems of the bow stroke are looked upon from the point of view of playing a medium size viola. Very large violas require a different technical approach.

for a violist is *non legato*. It is more comfortable for the viola player to play in a heavier part of the bow, because it will help him or her to avoid the extra effort needed to overcome both the thicker strings and the specific acoustical properties of the instrument.

Kramarov writes that in contradiction to a violinist, a viola player should provide an even motion of the bow on the strings. Though Carl Flesch's recommendation to emphasize the *détaché* by sometimes accelerating the bow at the beginning of each stroke is a very good one for violin players, on viola, it will result in bad sound quality.

Both the speed and the distribution of the bow are important for *détaché*. A violinist can play the stroke with a full bow, moving very fast; on the viola, the bow should move more slowly. The faster the *détaché*, the less bow should be used. On the upper strings, the bow stroke can be broader and closer to the upper part of the bow; on the lower strings it should be shorter and closer to the frog. The speed of the bow will change correspondingly. The principle of the slow bow motion applies to *cantilena* playing as well. A bow fully "gathering" the sound is the basis for a beautiful, broad tone.

Working on scale can be a big help in perfecting the art of sound. It is advisable to play a scale without vibrato, in a moderate tempo, with three to six notes to a bow, and later, not very fast, the whole scale on two bows. It is important to pay attention to the bow distribution and evenness of its speed in playing arpeggios and double stops. The tempo of the scale will be defined by the use of the full bow.

Kramarov also directs the reader's attention to the differences in sound production even among violas of medium sizes. Before starting the work on *détaché*, it is necessary to check the quality of sound on each string; violas are especially sensitive to the position of the bow between the fingerboard and bridge. In each specific case, it is crucial for a

player to study his or her instrument and to find “the main line” of bow connection in accordance with its individual characteristics.

7

Continuing the discussion of the specifics of viola technique, Kramarov again refers to Borisovsky’s statement, in which he says that, in comparison to violin technique, the violist’s right elbow is “heavier,” and the position of the fingers of his bow hand is more spread out. Yuri Markovich argues that a student should not be directed to have the “heavy elbow.” In the process of education, everything will balance itself because of the development of the student’s listening abilities. Concerning the position of the fingers on the bow stick, Kramarov thinks that it also depends on the individual characteristics of each person. Sometimes, when a student makes the transition from violin to viola, the position of his or her hand should not be changed. In other cases, the grip of her fingers could be adjusted to make it broader or narrower.

Contrary to Borisovsky, who had a strongly defined opinion on the position of the left hand of a violist, Kramarov does not take it upon himself to argue or to state anything. For example, in connection to the position of the left thumb, he writes that he does not see big differences in the thumb positions between violin and viola.

To make the shifting to the higher positions easier, a violist can hold the instrument a little more to the left. That manner of playing has both plusses and minuses. One of the downsides of such a way is that the position of the right hand becomes less comfortable for the control over the parallel to the bridge motion of the bow. The

advantages are both easier sliding on the fingerboard and an acoustically good position of the instrument for playing in ensembles.

The following technical subjects are common for playing on both violin and viola.

8

While precise intonation is equally vital to performers of both instruments, Yuri Markovich states that good intonation on the viola is even more difficult to achieve than on the violin because of the bigger distances between notes. This is more obvious in fast tempos. Looking at the problem, he divides the passage technique into “vertical” and “horizontal.”¹⁰⁰ Both the specifics of the repertory and performance practice dictate to the violist more careful attention to the playing in one position (without shifting).

For example, in working on intonation in the first position, Kramarov suggests considering the following important points for practice:

- The position of the first finger close to the nut (especially on the upper strings)
- The position of the pinky (especially on the lowest string)
- Short, three-notes scales, consisting of whole steps: for example, on the D string, Eb-F-G, or, more difficult, F-G-A
- The diminished fifth performed with one finger on any two strings, with one or several notes in between the two.

The quality of the intonation in any of these “points” should be provided by a comfortable position of the left hand.

¹⁰⁰ See section IV G of this chapter.

In general, a young violist is not able to vibrate equally well with all four fingers. A teacher should find the best vibrating finger in the student's hand; on the initial level, he should provide the most comfortable conditions for this finger (for instance, to put the hand in the most comfortable for vibrato position on the fingerboard). After the best vibrating finger has achieved a very deep and even vibrato, the skill should be gradually transferred to the neighbor fingers.¹⁰¹

The vibrato starts on the "best" finger and then connects to another (developing) finger. Kramarov points out that it is very important that the developing finger should be vibrated for only a short time, after which it is necessary to return the hand to the initial position and to repeat the exercise. This work has to be done every day, but not for more than 15-20 minutes a day.

There is also another system of work on vibrato. A clearly defined artistic goal can force a player to find the most suitable expressive means, including vibrato. However, there is a defect in that method: the shortcomings of the technique can "pop out" and slow down the work on the repertoire.

In that aspect, Kramarov is in agreement with Borisovsky, who argued with A. Schnabel and G. Neygauz¹⁰² about the validity of special technical exercises for an accomplished performer. Both Schnabel and Neygauz said that it is not necessary for a performer to do exercises; both Kramarov and Borisovsky think that string players, with their constant worries about both the quality of intonation and explorations of the fingerboard, should not follow pianists' lead in that subject.

¹⁰¹ See also section IV in this chapter.

¹⁰² The spelling of the name of the famous Russian-Soviet piano pedagogue Genrikh Gustavovich Neygauz (Нейгауз) (1888-1964) is more often seen in the West as Heinrich Neuhaus.

In conclusion, Yuri Markovich reflects upon the lesson process. To make the procedure of studies more effective, he gives the following suggestions:¹⁰³

- Change the regime of the lessons from time to time. For example, change the time of a lesson from mornings to evenings and vice versa.
- Give a student time to work on a musical piece alone, which helps to avoid his or her bringing a badly prepared composition to the lessons. The hours not used for lessons will be utilized later for polishing the piece.
- Change the acoustic conditions. For instance, from time to time, move the lessons to a concert hall or a large class room.
- Alternate having lessons with piano accompaniment and without. A collaborative performance with a pianist should serve as a reward for good work.
- It is desirable that other students be present during the lessons. In that case, each student feels more responsibility and, as a result, prepares for lessons better.
- In addition, there could be class concerts and in-class competitions on a required piece.

Kramarov ends the article as follows:

A violist cannot limit himself to a single type of activity. It is unavoidable that work in both an ensemble and an orchestra will be included, in addition to his solo performances, in the circle of his interests. That will require additional artistic effort. However, this variety of professional interests will create the conditions for the full-blooded life in the arts.

¹⁰³ As in the previous cases, both the categorization and the bulleting are added by the author of the dissertation for the convenience of the reader.

CHAPTER 4

THE CLASS OF YURI MARKOVICH KRAMAROV

Nothing shows Kramarov's achievements in pedagogy more than the impressive number of outstanding musicians who studied with him. Most of his former students are either exceptional performers or teachers (or both), and Kramarov's musical ideas live on through them. Many of his disciples now live and work outside of the former Soviet Union; consequently, Kramarov's school is gaining international recognition. It is impossible to include the complete biographies of all of the students who studied with Yuri Markovich within the limits of these pages. During his almost three decades of teaching, Kramarov saw more than sixty excellent musicians graduate from his class.¹

In 1981, in a report of his pedagogical activities, Yuri Markovich, created a list of some of his prominent disciples organized by the areas of their activities, as follows:²

I. Winners of international and All Soviet competitions

1) V. Stopichev – first prize winner in the international competition in Munich (1971)

2) M. Kugel – first prize winner in the international competition in Budapest (1975)

3) B. Shulga – diploma in the international competition in Geneva (1972);
diploma in the international competition in Budapest (1975)

4) I. Malkin – first prize winner in the All Soviet competition in Leningrad (1963)

¹ See Appendix 1 for the list of graduates.

² All data is as of 1981, one year before Kramarov's death. Some of the musicians listed have moved abroad, changed their positions/places of work, or passed away.

II. Professors in institutions of higher education³

- 1) E. N. Panfilova – Petrozavodsk branch of the Leningrad Conservatory
- 2) B. N. Skibin – the Minsk Conservatory
- 3) Ch. Mamedov – the Baku Conservatory
- 4) B. I. Stopichev – the Leningrad Conservatory
- 5) Y. G. Papian – the Yerevan Conservatory
- 6) L. M. Kirillov – the Rostov-na-Donu Conservatory
- 7) Kh. Aliev – the Astrakhan Conservatory
- 8) V. Lotozkaya – the Astrakhan Conservatory

III. Principal, associate principal, and assistant principal violists

- 1) O. Balabin – principal violist in the Kirov Theatre Orchestra
- 2) G. Freidin – principal violist in the Kirov Theatre Orchestra
- 3) I. Malkin – principal violist in the Academic Symphony Orchestra of the Leningrad Philharmonic⁴
- 4) V. Shulga – principal violist in the Symphony Orchestra of the Leningrad Philharmonic

³ There are three major “steps” in the Russian educational system: 1) seven years of music school (or ten years of a special school that combines musical and general education); 2) four years of professional studies in uchiliche (училище), a special musical college (upon graduation from such an institution students receive professional qualifications as musicians); and 3) the higher education: five years in a conservatory. If a musician wishes to teach in a conservatory, he or she has to complete aspirantura (аспирантура) or post-graduate studies.

⁴ There are two major orchestras in the Leningrad (now St. Petersburg) Philharmonic. The most prestigious one is the “Honored Body [(or Group – коллектив)] of the Republic” Academic Symphony; the other orchestra is the Symphony Orchestra of the Leningrad Philharmonic.

- 5) V. Altschuler – Co-Principal Viola in the Symphony Orchestra of the Leningrad Philharmonic
- 6) M. Kugel – Principal Viola in the Academic Symphony Orchestra of the Moscow Philharmonic
- 7) K. Katz – Principal Viola in the Orchestra of the Malij (Small) Opera Theatre
- 8) R. Pakkanen – Associate Principal Viola in the Kirov Theatre Orchestra
- 9) V. Litvinov – Assistant Principal Viola in the Kirov Theatre Orchestra
- 10) M. Tux – Associate Principal Viola in the Malij Opera Theatre

VI. Musicians of the most prominent Leningrad orchestras

1) Academic Symphony Orchestra of the Leningrad Philharmonic

I. Malkin

V. Stopichev

V. Stadler⁵

Y. Levinson

Y. Dmitriev

2) Leningrad Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra

V. Shulga

V. Konovalov

V. Altschuler

E. Brodotzky

L. Shneydman

Y. Anikeev

⁵ An excellent viola player, Valentin Stadler is the father of the famous young violinist Sergey Stadler.

3) Kirov Theatre Orchestra

O. Balabin

R. Pakkanen

G. Freidin

V. Litvinov

T. Tumasova

D. Meerovitch

E. Petrova

V. Zaharov

E. Solov'ëva

K. Katz

M. Tukh

[In addition,] Y. Papian ... is the violist of the Komitas State Quartet.⁶

The following pages contain more extended information on some of the musicians who studied with Yuri Markovich Kramarov. The biographies are in alphabetical order. Unless otherwise specified, all biographical data is taken from personal interviews.

VLADIMIR ALTSCHULER⁷

Vladimir Abramovich Altschuler is currently the conductor of the Academic Symphony Orchestra of the St. Petersburg Philharmonia.⁸ Additionally, he is the chief

⁶ Y. Kramarov, "Описание педагогической деятельности" (Description of pedagogical activities), faculty report, 1981, 1-3.

⁷ Most of the biographical information about Mr. Altschuler is taken from the St. Petersburg Academic Philharmonic's website <<http://www.philharmonia.spb.ru/eng/asodirega.html>>

conductor and the artistic director of the Chamber Orchestra of the Academic Symphony Orchestra of the Philharmonia.

Vladimir Abramovich graduated from Kramarov's class in 1970. He started playing the viola in the Academic Orchestra as a substitute in 1968, and became a member of the Symphony in 1969.⁹ During concert tours with the orchestra, Altschuler shared a room with Kramarov and witnessed Kramarov's affinity for hard work. The few days that Altschuler spent with Yuri Markovich on tour gave him exposure to Kramarov's broad scope of interests.¹⁰

An active chamber musician, Vladimir Abramovich founded the String Quartet of the St. Petersburg Philharmonia in 1972.¹¹ In 1982, he was appointed second principal of the viola section of the Academic Orchestra, while the first principal position was held by Vasily Shulga, another student of Yuri Markovich.¹²

Altschuler studied conducting at the Leningrad Conservatory with Alexander Dmitriev from 1978 to 1983. He still remembers his feelings about his acceptance to the program:

I was lucky to be accepted! It was very difficult to get admitted into the conducting class with dozens of good applicants as competition. Moreover, at that time, for a Jew to be accepted at the Conservatory was almost a miracle.¹³

Altschuler's talent made "almost a miracle" a reality, and, after completing his studies as a conductor, he "worked [for some time] as the professor of the Quartet classes in the St. Petersburg Conservatoire [(former Leningrad Conservatory)] and headed the

⁸ It is getting very difficult to differentiate the orchestras in the St. Petersburg Philharmonic by names. The "Academic Symphony Orchestra" in this biography refers to an ensemble different from the Honored Group of the Republic Symphony Orchestra, which earlier in the chapter was referred to as "Academic."

⁹ Altschuler interview, January 5, 2003.

¹⁰ Ibid; see also previous chapters.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

Chamber Orchestra of the Conservatoire in 1984-1989.”¹⁴ Vladimir Abramovich began as Dmitriev’s assistant, and was later appointed the conductor of the Academic Symphony. He has successfully performed in many cities in Russia. He has also conducted leading orchestras in Germany, Spain, Slovenia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Greece, Norway, Turkey, Finland, The Republic of Korea, Switzerland, and Ireland.¹⁵

An active proponent of contemporary music, Altschuler has premiered compositions by many modern composers, including Ustvol’skaya (Уствольская),¹⁶ Falik,¹⁷ Ts’itovich, Agababov, Aslamazov, and Bibik.¹⁸ He has also appeared in concerts with such famous Russian musicians as B. Gutnikov, V. Kraynev, G. Sokolov, L. Berman, and N. Gutman, and has collaborated with such prominent European and American artists as G. Karr, M. Laforet, M. O’Rourke, M. O’Connor, N. Robson, and A. Schmidt. He has recorded several CDs for both the *Sony* and *Melody* record companies.

In 1999, Vladimir Altschuler organized and conducted a concert dedicated to the memory of Yuri Markovich Kramarov. The event took place in St. Petersburg. Many of Kramarov’s former students, living in Russia and abroad, participated in the performance.

Altschuler’s wife, Nadezhda Shapiro, is also a violist in the St. Petersburg Philharmonic and a former student of Kramarov.

¹⁴ Philharmonic’s website.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Galina Ivanovna Ustvol’skaya (b. 1919), a student of Shostakovich, taught composition at the Leningrad Conservatory preparatory program. Her music is characterized by an “uncompromising style of obsessive rhythms and expressive contrapuntal dissonance.” (Harvard Biographical Dictionary of Music, 935) Shostakovich quoted some of her ideas in his own works. (Kovnatskaya, L., ‘Ustvol’skaya, Galina Ivanovna’, *The New Grove Dictionary of Music Online* ed. L. Macy [Accessed 19 January 2003], <<http://www.grovemusic.com>>)

¹⁷ Even though he began composing at the early age of 11, Yuri Aleksandrovich Falik (b. 1936) was also a famous cellist. He studied with Rostropovich, among others, and won a gold medal in a cello competition in Helsinki. Currently, he teaches a composition class at the St. Petersburg conservatory.

¹⁸ Ukrainian composer Valentin Savych Bibik (b. 1940) is one of the most interesting modern composers. He is famous for his stage works as well as for symphonic and chamber music. In 1997, he immigrated to Israel. (See more in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music Online*, ‘Bibyk, Valentin Savych’)

OLEG BALABIN¹⁹

Oleg L'vovich Balabin, one of Europe's leading viola players, currently lives in Stockholm, Sweden, and occupies the Principal Viola position in the Royal Opera Orchestra.

Born in Leningrad, Balabin studied chamber music with Kramarov in the Leningrad Musical College in 1962. He was later accepted to Kramarov's viola class at the Leningrad conservatory, graduating from the institution in 1969. While at the conservatory, Balabin played in a piano quartet with M. Gantvarg, S. Zagursky, and M. Taimanov²⁰ and participated in the All Russian Chamber Music Competition in Moscow in 1966 (first prize).

In 1965, Oleg L'vovich won a viola position in the Kirov Theatre Opera, where, in 1967, he became the Principal Solo Violist of the orchestra. He remained there until 1974, when he won the Principal position in the Symphony Orchestra of the Leningrad Philharmonic under the direction of Y. Temirkanov. In 1978, Temirkanov left the Leningrad Philharmonic to take the position of conductor of the orchestra of the Kirov Opera Theatre, and Oleg Balabin, following the conductor, returned to his Principal Viola position at the theatre.

In 1992, Oleg Balabin won the Principal Viola position in the Stockholm Royal Opera and moved with his family to Sweden. In addition to the orchestra job there, he

¹⁹ The biographical information about O. Balabin is taken from Balabin's fax letter to the author, February 28, 2003.

²⁰ Mark Evgenievich Taimanov (b. 1926) is a very unique person. In addition to being an excellent concert pianist, he also used to be one of the strongest chess players in the world. In the 1940s-50s, his piano duet with Ludmila Bruk (his wife) was a very famous ensemble; their recordings are included in the Philips' collection "Great Pianists of the 20th Century." Alternating his piano career with that in chess, Mark Taimanov was a candidate for the world championship in the 1960s-70s. (<http://www.nao-cc.com/naofide/intertaim.html> [in French])

played in the Stockholm String Quartet for seven years. He toured in many European countries with the ensemble.

Balabin is an active solo performer. He has played numerous recitals in many cities in Russia and in Europe. As a soloist and chamber musician, he has participated in music festivals in the USSR, England, Germany, Spain, Italy, France, Finland, and several others. Oleg L'vovich has performed many solo concertos with numerous orchestras under the direction of prominent conductors, including Rabinovich, Temirkanov, Dmitriev, and Chernushenko. In 1975, Balabin and Natalia Arzumatova formed a piano-violata duo. The ensemble performed music of all musical styles and composers. Their repertoire included works by Stamitz, Beethoven, Paganini, Vieuxtemps, Brahms, Penderecki, Shostakovich, Britten, and others. In 1983, Balabin was awarded the title of Honored Artist of the Russian Federation (Заслуженный артист РСФСР).

Oleg L'vovich Balabin is also a prominent pedagogue. He has taught in the Leningrad Special Music School for gifted children (Десятилетка), the Leningrad Music College (училище), and the Leningrad Conservatory. His wife, Nina Balabin-Rakhmilevich, opened a music school *Lilla Akademien* in Sweden in 1996. More than 400 students of all instruments are currently enrolled in the school. The students of the school range in age from 5 to 19. Oleg Balabin teaches viola and violin class in this institution and also works with violin ensembles, teaches a quartet class, and helps in rehearsals and performances of the school's Chamber Orchestra.

In addition, Balabin is the author of several transcriptions for violin ensembles.

GENADI FREIDIN

Super Soliste of the National Orchestra in Montpellier, Genadi Mikhailovich Freidin²¹ is a successful European musician. There are only very few *Super Soliste* positions in France;²² this very prestigious status presents the person who holds it with numerous solo and chamber music opportunities. Freidin is a very active performer as a soloist as well as a chamber musician and as an orchestra player.

Genadi Mikhailovich was born in Ukraine. He studied in the L'vov (Л'ВОВ) Conservatory before applying to Kramarov's class for post-graduate studies. In 1968, he won the first prize in the Republican competition in Kiev. Freidin studied with Yuri Markovich for two years as a post-graduate student at the Leningrad Conservatory.

During his illustrious career in Russia, Freidin was principal violist of such orchestras as the Novosibirsk Symphony Orchestra, the Kirov Opera Theatre Orchestra in Leningrad, and the *Moscow Soloists* chamber orchestra under the direction of Yuri Bashmet. In 1993, while in residence in Montpellier, France with the *Moscow Soloists*, Genadi Mikhailovich won the *Super Soliste* position in the National Orchestra of Montpellier.

Genadi Freidin performs an extended repertoire of works for solo viola. He has often played the sixth *Brandenburg* concerto by J. S. Bach with Yuri Bashmet.²³ His experience also includes *Harold in Italy*, *Viola Concerto* by Alfred Schnittke, a

²¹ In French, his name is spelled as Geunadi Freidine.

²² According to Freidin, the other such positions are in Paris and Bordeaux.

²³ He has also performed this piece with Yuri Kramarov.

transcription of Robert Schumann's cello concerto for viola,²⁴ *Don Quixote* by Richard Strauss,²⁵ and many other works.

In 2001, Genadi Mikhailovich performed the *Viola Concerto* by Vladimir Tsïtovich (Цытович). Freidin was invited by the composer to perform the piece in a concert dedicated to the celebration of Tsïtovich's 70th anniversary.²⁶ The event took place in St. Petersburg. The fact that Tsïtovich choose to invite Freidin from the abroad, while many strong viola players were living in the same city, says more about the violist than could any extended biography.

In chamber music concerts, Genadi Mikhailovich has collaborated with such other leading musicians of our time as Natalia Gutman (cello), Oleg Kagan (violin), Yuri Bashmet (viola), Maria Joao-Pizes (piano), Nathan Perelman (piano), Dmitry Sitkovetsky (Ситковецкий) (violin), and Eduard Brunner (clarinet), among numerous others. He has made several recordings, including piano quartets by Brahms, Brahms' *Clarinet Trio* (on viola), and a string quartet by Ame Kunk. A new disk with the recording of *Swanengesang* by Schubert – Liszt – Drillon²⁷ for viola and piano is currently in production.

An active recitalist, Freidin has both performed and given master classes in Russia, Germany, France, England, Switzerland, Italy, Finland, South Korea, and the USA. He has been invited to perform and teach in such prestigious festivals as the

²⁴ Freidin transcribed the solo cello part for viola.

²⁵ The piece was performed with Janos Starker playing the solo cello part.

²⁶ The concert was played in September, 2001. Freidin had previously performed the concerto in Montpellier in January, 2001.

²⁷ The "Swan Songs" D. 957 by Schubert, which consists of 14 songs in 2 books, were transcribed for piano by F. Liszt. Later, they were transcribed for viola and piano by Drillon.

“Moscow Stars,” the London City festival, *Декабрьские вечера* (“Evenings in December”) organized by Richter, and the Schleswig-Holstein festival.

MIKHAIL KUGEL

The founder and president of the Belgian Viola Society, Mikhail Kugel is one of the most famous of Kramarov’s students. Kugel, who lives in Belgium, teaches at the Ghent Royal Conservatory in Belgium and at the Maastricht Royal Conservatory in Holland.

After graduating from Kramarov’s class, Mikhail Benediktovich Kugel won first prize at the International Viola Competition in Budapest, ahead of such musicians as Yuri Bashmet and Thomas Riebl. His first job was the Principal Viola position in the Omsk Symphony Orchestra. He later took the Principal Viola position in the Academic Symphony Orchestra of the Moscow Philharmonic. In Moscow, he succeeded Druzhinin as the violist of the Beethoven Quartet while, at the same time, teaching at the Moscow Conservatory. Subsequently, Kugel abandoned his orchestra career, joining the *Москонцерт* (Mosconcert)²⁸ as a soloist and playing many solo recitals in Russia. Performances with the quartet in Moscow were not, however, Kugel’s first experience as a member of a superb ensemble. Previously, during his last year at the Leningrad conservatory, Mikhail Benedictovich had played in Kramarov’s Rimsky-Korsakov Quartet. Notably, Kugel learned of the birth of his son during a tour with the Rimsky-Korsakov Quartet in Russia.

²⁸ *Москонцерт* is the Moscow Philharmonic organization featuring solo vocalists, instrumentalists, and chamber ensembles. The organization provides its members with concerts.

In 1990, Zubin Mehta assisted Kugel in obtaining an emigration visa to Israel. In that same year, Mikhail Benediktovich was appointed a professor at the Jerusalem Rubin Academy of Music and Dance. He taught there until 1996, when he moved to Belgium. The violist began his career in Israel with several solo performances of both *Sonata for Grand Viola* by Paganini and the *Carmen Fantasy* for violin by Waxman²⁹ (played on viola) with Zubin Mehta conducting the Israel Philharmonic orchestra. Kugel played these diabolically difficult pieces easily and with charm, stunning the public with his virtuosity.

Mikhail Kugel has given master classes in many countries, including Germany, England, Italy, Sweden, Austria, Israel, the USA, Finland, Mexico, France, and Croatia. "He has recorded about twenty discs featuring sonatas by Bach, Martini, Marcello, Glinka, Shostakovich, Paganini ... Bizet-Waxman, etc., and also made numerous records as a viola-d'amore player."³⁰ In addition, he has made many transcriptions for viola, some of which are now published. Kugel is also a composer whose works include concertos for viola, suites, sonatas, and more.³¹ A prominent performer, he has been a member of the juries of prestigious competitions in England, Austria, Israel, the USA, and the CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States).³²

Strad magazine has written of Kugel as "without [a] doubt one of [the] great string virtuosos of this century."³³ New Grove Dictionary agreed, stating that Kugel is more brilliant a virtuoso than Yuri Bashmet.³⁴ Kugel combines his performing and

²⁹ Composer and conductor Franz Waxman (1906-1967) wrote the work for Jascha Heifetz.

³⁰ Mikhail Kugel website, <http://www.avk.org/ncm/performers/kugel.html>

³¹ One of his works, *Preghiera* for viola and piano, is dedicated to Kramarov.

³² In the 1991, that was a new name for the former Soviet Union.

³³ The Strad Magazine, December 1998.

³⁴ Tully Potter: 'Bashmet, Yuri', *The New Grove Dictionary of Music Online* ed. L. Macy (Accessed 25 December 2002), <<http://www.grovemusic.com>>

creative activities with active musicological research. Recently, he completed two books: *Viola Sonata by Shostakovich and Viola Concerto by Bartok – The history of an era* and *Masterpieces of the Instrumental Music*.

ELENA PANFILOV

Since 1971, Elena Nikolajevna Panfilov (Panfilova) has been one of the most dedicated viola teachers in Russia. Her former students hold important positions in Russia, Europe, Israel, and the USA.

Born in Leningrad, Elena Nikolajevna studied at the Leningrad music school for gifted children (Десятилетка) with the talented viola professor Ginsburg. After graduating from the school, she was accepted by the Leningrad Conservatory's committee into the class of Professor Kolmanovich. In 1969, Yuri Kramarov accepted her as a post-graduate student. "One of the many things that he taught us was pedagogy," said Elena Nikolaevna, whose pedagogical talent was brought to light during her studies with Kramarov. It was he who recommended Panfilova as a viola professor to the Petrozavodsk branch of the Leningrad Conservatory. After Kramarov left the institution in 1972, Elena Nikolajevna became a full time viola professor in Petrozavodsk. She remained on there until 1989, when she was invited to teach at the Leningrad Musical College (училище). In Petrozavodsk, she performed Mozart's *Sinfonia Concertante* with the Petrozavodsk Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Yuri Kramarov.³⁵ Her musical collaborations with Kramarov also include a performance of the *Brandenburg Concerto number 6* by J. S. Bach, in which she and Yuri Markovich played the viola parts.

³⁵ The solo violin part was performed by Yuri Zaforodnjuk.

In 1989, Elena Panfilov won an audition for a viola position in the “Honored” Academic Symphony, becoming the only female violist (!) in the orchestra. Elena Panfilov has participated in several competitions in Russia as a solo performer. In one of the competitions in Moscow the list of her competitors included such players as Kugel, Shulga, and Bashmet.

Elena Nikolajevna currently plays with the Academic “Honored” Academic Symphony of the St. Petersburg Philharmonic and teaches at both the Gertzin Russian State Pedagogical University and the Mussorgsky St. Petersburg Musical College. Among her former students are such musicians as Mark Tux (Principal Viola of the Oslo Opera Orchestra), Viktor Christosov (Principal Viola of the Haifa Orchestra), Vladimir Yampolsky (Viola Professor in Atlanta), and numerous others.

VASILY SHULGA³⁶

Vasily Ivanovich Shulga now lives in Helsinki, Finland. He is one of those modest people who, in spite of their enormous potential, are satisfied with a quiet lifestyle.

Born in Ukraine, Vasily Ivanovich studied with Kramarov from 1968 to 1972, both at the Petrozavodsk Conservatory and at the Leningrad Conservatory. In 1972, he was awarded both a diploma and a special prize for the most beautiful sound in the very prestigious CIEM viola competition in Geneva.³⁷ That year, the competition was won by

³⁶ The author believes this is the closest English spelling of the Russian name Василий Шульга, which has also been spelled as ‘Vassili Choulga’.

³⁷ According to the story as told by Elena Panfilova, one of the judges at the competition was Moscow violist, R. Barshai (see chapter 1), who, after the first round, gave a very unfair score to Shulga. Because of that, Shulga missed the first three prizes only by few points. To general opinion, Shulga was the most legitimate candidate for the first prize. (Panfilova interview)

Atar Arad of Israel. After his graduation, Shulga's first job was as the Principal Violist and a Soloist of the Maliĭ Opera (Малая опера or "Small opera") orchestra in Leningrad. He worked there for four years until he won the Principal Viola position in the Symphony Orchestra of the Leningrad Philharmonic in 1975. In that same year, Vasily Shulga successfully participated in the Budapest International Viola Competition, where he again was awarded a diploma as well as a special prize. This time, the competition was won by Mikhail Kugel, another student of Kramarov; the world famous violist, Yuri Bashmet, was awarded third place.³⁸

From 1975 until 1979, Vasily Ivanovich played the viola part in Kramarov's former ensemble, the Rimsky-Korsakov Quartet. With this group, Shulga went on several concert tours in Russia.³⁹ He also gave solo performances in Leningrad and Moscow. From 1975 until 1986, Shulga added teaching viola at the Mussorgsky Musical College in Leningrad to his already existing responsibilities.

In 1986, Shulga was invited by Yuri Bashmet to join the newly founded chamber orchestra, *Moscow Soloists*. He stayed with the ensemble for five years. In 1991, he won a viola position with the Finnish National Opera in Helsinki. Vasily Ivanovich has lived in Finland since then. He has played chamber music and solo concerts in Budapest, Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Geneva. Vasily Ivanovich also served as the conductor of the Chamber Orchestra Nova in Helsinki from 1993 until 1996.⁴⁰

³⁸ Later, Bashmet won a very difficult tournament in Munich; he was the second violist in the history of that competition to take the first prize. The first person who was awarded the first place in Munich (a few years before Bashmet) was a great viola player, V. Stopichev, a student of Kramarov.

³⁹ Shulga interview, January 7, 2003.

⁴⁰ Shulga interview.

One of the best viola players of his generation, Vasily Shulga is still active as a soloist and an orchestra player, but he now dedicates most of his time to his family and friends.

YURI SIMONOV

Yuri Ivanovich Simonov is currently the Chief Conductor of the Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra, the Musical Director of the Belgian National Orchestra, and the Chief Guest Conductor of the Hungarian State Symphony Orchestra. He has conducted many of the most famous orchestras in the world, including the London Symphony, the Philharmonia Orchestra, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Boston Symphony, the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, the Montreal Symphony, and numerous others. He has also worked with many illustrious opera companies, including the Western Operatic Company, the Los Angeles Opera, the San Francisco Opera, the Florence Opera, the Paris Opera Bastille, the Hamburg State Opera, and the Bolshoi Theatre Opera Company.⁴¹

Yuri Simonov “showed a talent for conducting from an early age” when, at the age of 12, he conducted his school’s orchestra in a performance of *Symphony number 40* by Mozart.⁴² In 1956, he was accepted to the Leningrad Conservatory as a violin student. Unfortunately, many of the string faculty professors at the Conservatory did not understand Simonov’s desire to become a conductor, and, consequently, they did not recognize his need for a special approach to his instrumental lessons. It was Kramarov

⁴¹ ‘Yuri Simonov’, *Allied Artists* website (accessed 20 January 2003), <<http://www.alliedartists.co.uk/37.shtml>>

⁴² I. M. Yampol’sky and Victor Ledin: ‘Simonov, Yury Ivanovich’, *The New Grove Dictionary of Music Online* ed. L. Macy (accessed 25 December 2002), <<http://www.grovemusic.com>>

who, “from the first glance,” understood how to approach the talented student, and accepted Simonov as a violist into his class.⁴³

While still at the conservatory, Yuri Simonov conducted a student orchestra at the Mussorgsky Musical College in Leningrad.⁴⁴ He graduated from his viola studies with Yuri Markovich at the conservatory in 1965. Three years later, Simonov received his conducting diploma from the conservatory as a student of the legendary Russian conductor Rabinovich.⁴⁵ In 1967, when he was appointed the Chief Conductor of the Kislovodsk Symphony Orchestra,⁴⁶ “he became the youngest conductor to direct a leading orchestra.”⁴⁷

In 1968, Simonov won the international competition for conductors at the Academia di S Cecilia in Rome. His success at the event propelled his career in the Soviet Union and abroad, and he became an internationally known artist. In that same year, “he was appointed an assistant conductor (under Mravinsky) of the Leningrad P[hilharmonic] O[rchestra].”⁴⁸ In 1969, Simonov made his debut with the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow, “was immediately appointed Chief Conductor,” and continued to serve in that capacity from 1970 until 1985.⁴⁹ During that time, he toured with the company in the USA, Japan, and Europe. Since 1982, Yuri Ivanovich has been conducting some of the best European, Asian, and American orchestras. He has made

⁴³ Y. Simonov, “Об артисте, наставнике, друге” (About the artist [(violist)], the mentor, and the friend) in *Вопросы музыкальной педагогики*, Выпуск 8, (Musika, Moscow, 1987), 114.

⁴⁴ Interview with Yakov Tulchinsky, January 20, 2003.

⁴⁵ Yampol'sky, I. M. and Victor Ledin. ‘Simonov, Yuri’, *The New Grove Dictionary of Music Online* ed. L. Macy (Accessed 20 January 2003), <<http://www.grovemusic.com>>

⁴⁶ In 1973, the author's father, Pavel Galaganov, won the Concertmaster position in this orchestra. Unfortunately, by this time Simonov had already left the symphony (1969).

⁴⁷ Yampol'sky.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ *Allied Artists*.

many recordings, conducting such orchestras as Berlin Philharmonic, Bolshoi Theatre Orchestra, London Philharmonic, Royal Philharmonic, and other great ensembles.⁵⁰

In 1987, Simonov published an article dedicated to Kramarov, in which he wrote: “As an artist [(musician, performer)], I owe a great deal to Yuri Markovich Kramarov”⁵¹

VLADIMIR STOPICHEV

An outstanding viola player, an excellent musician, and a very successful teacher, Vladimir Stopichev is perhaps one of the most direct successors of Yuri Markovich Kramarov in St. Petersburg. He is easily among the greatest viola players of our time, though he is not as widely known outside of the former Soviet Union as Yuri Bashmet or Vadim Borisovsky.

Vladimir Ivanovich began his musical education at the special music school for gifted children in Leningrad. He was later accepted to Kramarov’s class at the Leningrad Conservatory, where he also completed his post-graduate studies. Yuri Kramarov always spoke very highly and warmly about Stopichev.⁵²

While still a student at the Conservatory, Vladimir Ivanovich won the first prize at the International Viola Competition in Munich in 1971, becoming the first violist ever in the history of this contest to win first prize. After this success, he was invited by Herbert von Karajan to join the Berlin Philharmonic as a Principal Violist, but, Stopichev refused the invitation. At that time, for a Russian-Soviet musician to accept a job position in a

⁵⁰ *Allied Artists.*

⁵¹ Yuri Simonov, “Об артисте, наставнике, друге” (About the artist [(violist)], the mentor, and the friend) in *Вопросы музыкальной педагогики*, Выпуск 8, (Musika, Moscow, 1987), 118.

⁵² Simonov, 117,

country outside of the Socialistic Union would have meant the loss of all connections to his home and family.

In 1970, Vladimir Ivanovich joined the Honored Academic Symphony Orchestra, and eventually became its Principal Viola player. The Honored Academic Symphony Orchestra was conducted by Yevgeni Mravinsky when Stopichev joined, and Yuri Temirkanov took over the position in 1988. Vladimir Ivanovich remained with the orchestra until 1991, when he was invited by Yuri Bashmet to join the chamber orchestra "Moscow Soloists" (Soloists of Moscow) as a Principal. Since 1975, he combined his orchestra position with the job of Professor of Viola and String Quartet at the Leningrad (now St. Petersburg) Conservatory.

In 1983, Vladimir Ivanovich Stopichev added to his already full load of responsibilities by joining the Taneev State String Quartet, one of the best professional Russian chamber music ensembles. With this group he has toured in Russia, the USA, Italy, Germany, and the former Yugoslavia. The ensemble has recorded quartets by Beethoven, Tchaikovsky, Prokofiev, and Taneev on several compact discs and records.

As a soloist, Stopichev has performed in numerous solo recitals both in the Soviet Union and abroad. He has played solo concertos with the St. Petersburg Philharmonic orchestras conducted by A. Yansons, Y. Simonov, P. Kogan, G. Chernishenko, V. Altschuler, and others. As a chamber musician Vladimir Ivanovich has performed with such famous players as B. Gutnikov, B. Davidovich, E. Virsaladze, L. Isakadze, and M. Gantvarg. Gradually gaining more and more international recognition, Stopichev has taught in many festivals and has given master classes in several countries, including Russia, South Korea, and the USA.

Stopichev counts among his students several winners of international competitions, prominent chamber musicians, and principals of leading Russian and European orchestras. The school of Kramarov continues to live through the classes of Vasily Stopichev, Elena Panfilov, Mickail Kugel, and others.

All of the disciples of Yuri Markovich are deserving of mention. Unfortunately, limitations of space will not allow inclusion of extensive biographies of all of them. However, a few more names especially worth noting follow.

Gennady Kleyman, another excellent viola player, moved to the USA at the end of the 1970s. After immigrating, Kleyman joined the San Francisco Symphony.⁵³ He currently holds the position of lecturer in viola at Stanford University. Unfortunately, Kleyman was the only person contacted who absolutely refused to speak about either Yuri Markovich or himself; therefore we have no more information about him.

Daniel Meerovitch⁵⁴ is one of the brightest representatives of the Kramarov's school. He is a member of both the Honored Academic Orchestra of the St. Petersburg Philharmonic and the internationally known Stravinsky Quartet. Meerovitch studied with Yuri Markovich at the conservatory. He completed his post-graduate studies under the guidance of Vladimir Stopichev in 1985. In 1980, he was awarded a special diploma at the USSR National Viola Competition. Since 1984, Daniel Meerovitch has taught viola in the Mussorgsky Musical College in St. Petersburg. He has appeared in many concerts and

⁵³ Interview with Yakov Tulchinsky, December 23, 2002.

⁵⁴ The biographical information is taken from the Stravinsky Quartet website at http://www.stellarartist.com/classical/strav_qua.html

festivals in Russia and abroad, both as a soloist and as a quartet member. Meerovitch plays on the Landolfi viola, which was previously owned by Rimsky-Korsakov.

Yakov Israilevich Levinson was one of the earliest of Kramarov's students.⁵⁵ He began his musical studies as a violinist in Khar'kov (Харьков). He went on to study violin at the Leningrad Conservatory. Upon graduation, Yakov Israilevich won a position in the violin section of the Malij Opera Theatre. During his studies, Levinson often played viola in quartets. While taking a "general viola class" for violinists⁵⁶ he discovered that he liked playing the instrument. When the Viola Principal of the Malij Theatre unexpectedly died, Yakov Israilevich won the position. Because of the sudden turn in his career, Levinson returned to the Leningrad Conservatory to do post-graduate studies on viola, and was accepted to the class of Yuri Kramarov.

After his graduation, Yakov Levinson taught for a short time at the conservatory, but was forced to quit the job due to the anti-Semitic tendencies at the institution. He then worked at the Honored Group of the Republic Academic Symphony Orchestra of the Leningrad Philharmonic, where for some time he held the position of Assistant Principal Viola, until his death in 1994. Yakov Levinson made excellent recordings of several viola pieces.

Yakov Leonidovich Tulchinsky is currently a resident of the USA. He studied with Yuri Markovich at the Leningrad Conservatory from 1967 until 1972. After

⁵⁵ Yakov Levinson is the older brother of the famous Principal Bass player of the New York Philharmonic, Eugene Levinson. Yakov Israilevich's biographical data is based on the interview with his other brother -- Iosif Levinson, a cellist in the Honored Academic Symphony Orchestra, on February 10, 2003.

⁵⁶ See Chapter 1 for more information about the history of the class.

graduating from the conservatory, he was accepted into Malij Opera Theatre orchestra, where he later succeeded Vasily Shulga as the Principal of the viola section. In 1975, Mikhail Kugel borrowed Tulchinsky's viola, made by Jean Derazey, for the solo competition in Budapest. While the Kugel was away, Yakov Leonidovich played on the Italian viola of Kramarov.

Tulchinsky moved to the United States in 1978. He now lives in Richmond, Virginia. He has been working as a violin maker for about 13 years. Currently, he has his own violin shop. In addition, Yakov Leonidovich gives viola and violin lessons. His older brother, Alexander Tulchinsky, is a famous violin maker in New York.⁵⁷

Alexander Tumarinson was one of Kramarov's first three students at the Petrozavodsk branch of the Leningrad Conservatory in 1967, as was Vasily Shulga. Initially applying to be a violin student at the Leningrad Conservatory, Tumarinson was personally invited by Yuri Markovich to study viola in his class. In 1969, upon Kramarov's recommendation, Tumarinson joined the Rimsky-Korsakov Quartet. With that ensemble, he went on tour to the Caucasus in the South Russia and played numerous concerts in the Leningrad area. After the group was disbanded in 1972,⁵⁸ Alexander Tumarinson, together with the former cellist of the Rimsky-Korsakov Quartet, Dmitry Levin, established a new ensemble: the string quartet of the Lenconcert⁵⁹ of the

⁵⁷ Interview with Yakov Tulchinsky, December 23, 2002.

⁵⁸ There are apparent discrepancies in the facts about Rimsky-Korsakov quartet: Tumarinson states that the group was disbanded in 1972, while Shulga recalls having played with the ensemble from 1975 until 1979 (see above). It is possible that the quartet split apart in 1972 and was later reorganized by new players.

⁵⁹ Lenconcert (ленконцерт) was the concert organization similar to that in Moscow (Mosconcert). Please see footnote 28 for more information.

Leningrad Philharmonic. With that group they received a prize in the Festival of Creative Youth and Students in Leningrad.

In 1975, Tumarinson joined the Pop-Symphony Orchestra under Badkhin, where he remained until he won a viola position in the prestigious Kirov Opera Theatre Orchestra in 1980. Alexander Tumarinson has lived and worked in Israel since December of 1990. He is currently a member of the Radio Symphony Orchestra in Jerusalem.⁶⁰

As is clearly seen in this chapter, Kramarov's school has had international influence. It would be possible now to talk about the second generation of musicians: disciples of Kramarov's students or so-called pedagogical grandchildren of Yuri Markovich. Many of them, including the author (who studied with Mikhail Kugel in Jerusalem) teach at the university level, play solo and chamber music concerts, or hold key positions in leading orchestras all over the world. The personality of Yuri Markovich and his enormous musical and pedagogical talent will continue living in the memories of his students and in the activities of the followers of his school.

⁶⁰ Interviews with Tumarinson, June 2002 and February 11, 2003.

CONCLUSION

What was unique in Kramarov's methods of teaching? What did he teach to his students? How does he compare to the famous viola players and teachers both in Europe and the USA? What is Kramarov's place in the history of viola performance in general? The answer to the last question is yet to come. The long-lasting isolation of Soviet musical life from the rest of the world makes it difficult to put things into perspective. Since the early 1990s, though still far from ideal, the exchange between Russian and Western cultures has been more or less open, somewhat easy, and moderately fast; but before that time, most people in the Soviet Union had had no more communication with the population of rest of the world than with extra-terrestrials. Most musicians in the West do not know Kramarov's name, just as, until recently, most of viola players in Russia were not familiar with the name of William Primrose. How does one compare the influences of the two? The present situation makes it impossible to do so.

Yuri Markovich Kramarov was a musician in the most beautiful meaning of the word. The viola served only as his tool for making music. In the process of this research, the author was told by all those interviewed, without exception, that Kramarov was a great musician. No one referred to Kramarov as just a "great viola player." He was first of all an artist both in music and in life. He did not discover anything new in the technique of playing the instrument. Moreover, he did not accept students with serious technical problems to his class; fixing technical deficiencies was not Kramarov specialty. He taught his students how to approach the preparation of a new composition, how to care about every note in a piece, how to relate music to other aspects of life, and how to live "the full-blooded life in the arts." The author thinks that this is the unique secret of

Kramarov's school. Yuri Markovich's students learned that both general education and a variety of interests are very important for a musician. Kramarov was interested in many aspects of life; most of his students also do not limit themselves to viola playing.

The musical world is constantly changing. Many Russian musicians now live and work abroad. On the other hand, many more Western musicians have opportunities to visit the countries of the former Soviet Union with concerts and master classes.

Kramarov's musical philosophy is now spreading and integrating into the other countries. His recordings are issued on CDs, and it will be possible for future generations to get acquainted with his viola playing. Hopefully, more of his editions and transcriptions will be published and reprinted. With time, Kramarov's name should become better known outside of Russia, and, as a result, he will take the place that he deserves in the list of the most influential musicians of the 20th century.

Appendix 1**STUDENTS OF KRAMAROV**

This is the list of Kramarov's students who graduated from his class between the years 1957 and 1981. It was put together by Yuri Markovich in 1981. The list is incomplete.

1. V. Altschuler
2. Y. Anikeev
3. O. Balabin
4. V. Barishev
5. L. Belozerova
6. E. Belozerova
7. L. Bolotova
8. E. Brodetsky
9. E. Gnezdilova
10. G. Golodnikova
11. A. Gorkusha
12. N. Davtian
13. V. Dmitriev
14. T. Eroshkina
15. V. Zakharov
16. V. Ivanov
17. E. Il'ina
18. K. Katz
19. A. Kekelidze
20. E. Kovalevskaya
21. V. Konnikov
22. V. Konovalov
23. M. Kugel
24. O. Kuzminova
25. T. Kukushkina
26. B. Kutilin
27. V. Litvinov
28. V. Mamadov
29. D. Meerovich
30. L. Mitriakovskaya
31. E. Molchadskaya
32. A. Moskovich
33. V. Nikitin (Petrozavodsk branch)
34. A. Nikolayenko
35. V. Osipov
36. R. Pakkanen (Petrozavodsk branch)
37. L. Rappoport
38. V. Rafaelov

39. Y. Simonov
40. V. Skibin
41. V. Smirnov
42. E. Soloviova
43. V. Stadler
44. V. Stopichev
45. L. Tarasova
46. A. Tumarinson (Petrozavodsk branch)
47. T. Tumasova
48. A. Fisher
49. Y. Tsibin
50. S. Tchumasova
51. N. Shapiro
52. L. Schneidman

Post-graduate students

1. G. Freidin
2. L. Kirillov
3. Y. Levinson
4. I. Malkin
5. Ch. Mamedov
6. E. Panfilova
7. Y. Papian
8. V. Stopichev

The following musicians also studied with Kramarov:

1. Ch. Aliev
2. A. Dogadin
3. G. Kleyman
4. Y. Mazchenko
5. S. Petrov
6. Zh. Petrova
7. V. Shulga
8. M. Yavker

Appendix 2**RUSSIAN-SOVIET VIOLA PLAYERS**

The names of the following famous viola players appear in this work. They are listed in the order in which they appear in the dissertation.

- V. Pashkevich
- I. Khandoshkin
- K. Blinov
- Goldsner
- T. Glagolev
- Maksimchenko
- V. Borisovsky
- R. Barshai
- J. Weickmann
- V. Bessel
- G. Vilde
- A. Yushnevsky
- M. Beliaev
- E. Albreht
- Galkin
- N. Aver'ino
- A. Yung
- V. Bakaleinikov
- F. Druzhinin
- M. Tolpygo
- E. Strakhov
- Y. Kaplun
- Sosin
- M. Terian
- D. Shebalin
- G. Matrosova
- G. Odinets
- Y. Bashmet
- A. Rivkin
- A. Ludevig
- I. Levitin
- V. Soloviev

Appendix 3

EDITIONS AND TRANSCRIPTIONS

The following list was compiled by Kramarov:

I. Editions

1. Glukh, *Four Pieces* for viola and piano, MUZGIZ, Leningrad, 1956
2. Tsitovich, *Triptych* for viola and piano, Музыка (Music), Moscow, 1966
3. Sher, *Sonata for Viola Solo* (with annotation of the editor), Music, Leningrad, 1967
4. Tsitovich, *Concerto for Viola and Orchestra*, Music, Leningrad, 1967
5. Gurkov, *Music for Viola and Orchestra*
6. Mozart, *Simphonia Concertante*
7. Bach, 3 [gamba] sonatas for viola and piano

II. Transcriptions

8. Bugitch, *Scherzo* for viola and piano
9. P. E. Bach, *Sonata for Viola and Piano*, Music, Leningrad, 1973
10. Martini, *Sonata for Viola and Piano*
11. Cimarosa, *Three Duets* for violin and viola
12. Bach, *Inventions* for violin, viola, and cello
13. Bononcini, *Sonata for Viola and Piano*
14. Shostakovich, *Three Pieces* for viola and piano

In addition to the compositions on that list, Yuri Kramarov also edited the suites for cello solo by J. S. Bach.

Appendix 4**DISCOGRAPHY**

The following list was compiled by Kramarov:

1. Rachmaninoff, *Musical Moment*
Bugitch, *Scherzo* (Nuridgianian, piano)
2. Bach, *Concerto* (with the Academic Symphony)
Slonimsky, *Suite* (Slonimsky, piano)
Tsïtovich, *Triptych* (Tsïtovich, piano)
3. Honegger, *Sonata for Viola and Piano*
Milhaud, *Sonata No 1* (Voskresenskaya, piano)
Debussy, *Trio-Sonata* (Poshehov, flute; Tugai, harp)
4. Brahms, *Sonatas Op. 120* (Voskresenskaya, piano)
5. Bach, *Gamba Sonatas* (Ugorsky, piano)
6. Mozart, *Duets for Violin and Viola* K. 423 and K. 424 (Lieberman, violin)
7. Tsïtovich, *Concerto* (Academic Symphony, Serov)
Mozart, *Sinfonia Concertante* (Academic Symphony, Lieberman, Serov)

Appendix 5

PREMIERES AND PIECES DEDICATED TO KRAMAROV

First Performances

- Slonimsky, *Suite*
- Slonimsky, *Two Pieces*
- Tsïtovich, *Triptych*
- Tsïtovich, *Viola Concerto*
- Bogdanov-Berezovsky, *Sonata*
- Bogdanov-Berezovsky, *Pieces*
- Gurkov, *Music for Viola and Orchestra*
- Rogalev, *Symphony-Concerto* for viola and orchestra
- Smorgonskaya, *Sonata for Viola Solo*

(All of the compositions above were dedicated to the performer)

- Glukh, *Pieces for Viola and Piano*
- Tolstoy, *Aria* for viola and piano
- Vaysburg, *String Trio*
- Vaysburg, *Symphony* (as a conductor)
- Patlayenko, 3rd symphony (as a conductor)
- Prigozhin, *Music for Strings and Flute* (conductor)
- Kozinsky, *Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra* (conductor)
- Rogalev, *Sonata*
- Banschikov, *Trio-sonata*
- Voronina, 2nd quartet

Appendix 6

COMPOSITIONS FOR VIOLA

These compositions were mentioned in the dissertation but not included in the previous appendices:

Works by Russian or Soviet Composers

- E. Aristakesian, *Concerto for Viola and Orchestra* (1963)
- E. Aristakesian, *Sonata for Viola Solo* (1974)
- A. Beloborodov, *Concerto for Viola and Orchestra*
- G. Frid, *Concerto for Viola and Chamber Orchestra*, Op. 52
- G. Frid, *Concerto for Viola, Piano, and Chamber Orchestra*, Op. 73
- M. Glinka, *Sonata for Viola and Piano*
- I. Heifetz, *Sonata for Viola and Piano*
- I. Khandoshkin, Duet for violin and viola *Ой по мосту мосточку*
- I. Khandoshkin, *Concerto for Viola and Orchestra*
- A. Khachaturian, *Sonata-Song for Viola Solo*
- P. Kozinsky, *Concerto for Viola and Orchestra*
- M. Kugel, *Preghiera* for viola and piano (dedicated to Kramarov)
- Ledenëv, *Concert Poem* for viola and orchestra
- N. Logachev, *Viola Sonata*
- B. Napreyev, *Sonata for Viola and Piano*
- A. Rubinstein, *Sonata for Viola and Piano*
- A. Schnittke, *Viola Concerto*
- V. Shebalin, *Sonata for Violin and Viola*

- V. Shebalin, *Sonata for Viola and Piano*
- D. Shostakovich, *Sonata for Viola and Piano*
- A. Sledin, *Composition for Flute, Viola, and Cello*
- M. Terian, *Etudes*
- S. Tsintsadze, *Romance and Horumi* for viola
- M. Weinberg (Vaynberg), sonatas (four) for viola solo
- A. Winkler, *Viola Sonata*
- A. Zatin, *Variation-Dialogue*

Works by European Composers

- J. S. Bach, Six suites for cello solo
- J. S. Bach, Three gamba sonatas
- B. Bartok, *Viola Concerto*
- H. Berlioz, *Harold in Italy*
- J. Brahms, *Sonatas for Viola and Piano*
- B. Campagnoli, *Caprices*
- F. Hoffmeister, *Etudes*
- D. Milhaud, *Viola Concerto*, Op. 108
- W. A. Mozart, *Sinfonia Concertante*
- N. Paganini, *Sonata for Grand Viola and Orchestra*
- J. Palashko, *Etudes*
- Schubert-List-Drillon, *Schwanengesang*
- S. Sulek, *Viola Concerto*
- H. Wieniawski, *Reveries*

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