

Tesis of a DLA Dissertation

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**THE BATALLA – THE LIFE OF A GENRE IN THE IBERIAN
ORGAN ART**

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I. Antecedentes of the Research

Having studied for about a decade in The Netherlands, on prominent historical organs, suitable for the largest major repertoire, at one of the acropolises of Early Music studies of the World, at the Amsterdam Conservatory (earlier named Sweelinck Conservatory of Amsterdam), afterwards having a working periode of about half a generation in the musical substance of both countries of the Iberian Peninsula, although there especially being ravished by the mystic world of the Iberian historical organ: those are the large-scale parameters which were determinative for the musical person of this writer. It can be said that while the formational years in The Netherlands, spent with the most excellent and internationally recognized professors could be responsible not exclusively for the thorough grounding of becoming a pedagogue and interpreter, but also for arousing the enthousiasm towards research. The years spent in Spain and Portugal are attributed to the charm of the instruments there. As interpreter organist, even prior to the Amsterdam period, until today, I have always considered the authenticity of my performance very important, being a kind of bridge-builder between the music and the actual audience. The organ, and especially the historical or historicising organ is the instrument which cannot be compared to other instruments. Even with adequate knowledge of style and knowing a lot about its historical development as well, during each performance, the instrument continuously requires individual decisions from its player. For this reason it is very important that the interpreter is not only aware of the historical development of the type of organ, according to the origin of the played piece, but collect aspects from the music history concerning the the actual piece of music he is playing. The presence of this historicizing aspect and the adequate instrument handling can guarantee an unrepeatable experience, which is not only about intuition. Becoming familiar with the organ art of the Iberian peninsula is extremely complex, owing to its geographical, historical, socio-cultural position. During the years spent at the Amsterdam Conservatory, I had the pleasure of meeting Andres Cea Galán, an Andalusian musicologist and organ artist, who has been my most important exemplar professionally. I regularly read his publications along with other studies published on the peninsula. I have been member of the Royal Society of Dutch Organists since 1988 which publishes *Het Orgel* bimonthly. This scholarly journal is one of my most reliable sources of up-to-date information in the topic of historical and historicizing organs.

In Spain several times I had the chance to take part in projects restoring organs as well, the experiences of which can not be compared to reading any other material. It was there that I decided to study in depths one of the most exciting genres of keyboard instruments, the *batalla* or battle music which flourished from the first trimester of the 17th century for more than a hundred years on. This typical organ genre can be originated from one of the greatest vocal piece of that period, *La Guerre* by Clement Janequin (1528), adapting its technical, as well as aesthetic values, through the medium of other vocal pieces, such as mass-parodies based on it, ensaladas, etc. This topic has only been investigated once, in an unpublished dissertation from the 1970s which has become somewhat obsolete by now. Present thesis is an attempt to arouse interest and give guidance in Iberian organ art, primarily for Hungarian professionals.

II. Sources

At the time of deciding on the topic it was clear how much literature had to be collected and read mainly in foreign languages in order to pen a Hungarian sentence about the iberian organ culture. Apart from this it was also predictable at the beginning that the 2-year time period available for acquiring the degree is not in proportion with the immense quantity of the material that was to be collected for the ideal exposition of the topic. For exploring this particular genre of organ art like the *batalla*, so remote from the Carpathian basin and for the synthesis of pieces of information and finding not digitalized sources, one needs much more time spent in local archives, which at the time in question far exceeded my technical and financial means. The smaller part of the material consists of lexical information. The greatest drawback of this is that in case of such a topic one will always come across with information originating from the same author, even if looking at different lexicons in foreign languages. In many cases these are the same entries that were considered unreliable or out-of-date earlier. The printed music lexicons popular in Hungary did not contain any relevant information, with the exception of Grove and MGG. On the whole territory of Hungary is nowhere a modern lexicon of music in Spanish language to find, nor in the library of the Cervantes Institute, which ultimate obviously no means can't be blamed for it. What remained was

my private collection of material, complemented with a couple of newly purchased books, lexicons, music sheets, recordings, and my correspondance with Spanish and Portugese organ builders as well as sources found on the Internet. For the chapter about organs I could use some inventories originating from the eight provinces of Andalusia and the Atlantic islands of Portugal. Needless to say, these are also part of my private collection. Concerning instruments, it is a highly complex task to find appropriate information, especially because owing to changes in cultural values, the great part of the historical organs are sleeping somewhere hidden and out of order, waiting for a better future. However, some recently published Spanish and Portugese doctoral theses proved to be great help. The almost complete collection of *The Organ Yearbook* from my private collection was also very useful, especially the copies giving exhaustive description of the restoration of historical organs in the 1970s and 80s. In the course of my research I was unable to access the handwritten sources of a great number of batallas (e.g. Braga Ms 964, Coimbra Ms 242). For this reason, in the case of some pieces my only source was the modern, not necessarily critical, edition.

III. The method

My main target was to put the genre into perspective and to give a historical background regarding the instruments. The method primarily used was examining and synthesizing the information available chronologically. What I found exceptionally challenging was the appropriate translation of foreign sources, stylistically and professionally likewise, thus making them suitable for Hungarian literature. Drawing a draft of the history of organs in the 16th-18th century on the Iberian peninsula serves to give a historic perspective, with the help of disposition of some, mainly non-existing organs, photos of some instrument cases and examining the trends from a pile of information available. Janequin's *La Guerre* plays an important role in my thesis, being the starting point of batallas, as well as analyzing some significantly important batallas for organ. Here I was striving to use identical marking, making it possible to identify the characteristic Janequin-elements in the organ batalla compositions. As it would only have taken up a period of 100 years when complying batallas with the instruments, it was necessary to start with the development of the instrument from well before the birth of the genre and continue the investigation some time over the extinction of it, thus providing great

source of information for musicians interested in the organs of the peninsula. Although my thesis did not have a special didactical purpose, other than the synthesis of information available, owing to the historical aspect, the analysis of the batallas can be useful in several aspects of the interpretation. Nowadays Iberian organs suggest the picture of a typical, integrated organ if viewed superficially. However, the truth is that they show a great difference even within the same part of the country, so by no means can be called typical. Today the so-called „Spanish” historic organ, which still can be seen on many places, the single manual „village” organ, without pedalboard and with several horizontal reed stops on the façade is the product of the second part of the 18th century which generated from about half a century after the extinction of the last characteristic batalla compositions. Owing to its fast spread, it completely superseded the earlier type of organs of the periode of the batallas which can only be found already in descriptions today. The consequently historic aspect of my thesis with regard to the genre and the progress of the instruments can be seen as a didactic method after all, used for clarifying some false stereotypes appearing in the literature. The only publication in the topic so far is M.A. Sutton’s dissertation which appeared overseas in 1975, in English. Although his works is exhaustive, his sources are rather out-of-date and contain numerous false conclusions due to inaccurate translations from Spanish into English. Present dissertation, although not entirely complete due to limitations in size, is the only study in Hungarian not only in the topic of Iberian batallas for organ but also in the topic of historic Iberian organs, not counting the subchapter from a Hungarian dissertation published earlier, dealing with the echo box of the Iberian organ as an important technical element.

IV. Results

All the above mentioned impulses, namely my interest in Iberian organ art originating from my studies, the 12-year period spent working with the organs of the peninsula, and the continuously appearing lack of information in the literature on batallas, lead me in the decision to study the topic in depth, well before I moved back to Hungary. With the improvement of my language skills, my intensions grew to publish the literature written originally in Dutch, Spanish and Portugese, for the average Hungarian reader interested

in musicology. The method I have chosen is analysis of documents, owing to the nature of the topic. Present paper is a summarizing-methodizing doctoral dissertation which fills a hiatus in the literature in Hungarian. When dealing with genres for the organ, it is considered advantageous and relevant to look at the instrument in parallel with the historic perspective of the genre. After long research I managed to find a fragment of a document which threw a definite light on what occasions, in which liturgical context were batallas played in their time. The fragment mentioned was published in 1981, therefore it could not have been found in M. A. Sutton's thesis from 1975. As far as I know, this piece of information has never been mentioned in any Hungarian publications. The contrastive analysis of some batalla compositions can also be considered a novelty. The comparison of these is based on Janequin's chanson, *La Guerre* which was used as reference.

V. Professional activities related to the domain of the thesis

Concerts in which several batalla compositions were performed:

Dátum	Mű	Helyszín	Esemény
2003.04.21.	J. Jiménez: Batalla de 6° tono	Pannonhalma, Bencés Apátság, Bazilika	Orgonahangverseny
2004.01.01.	A. Correa Braga: Batalla de 6° tono	Budapest, Bosnyák t. r.k.templom	Újévi orgonahangverseny
2008.08.03	J. Jiménez: Batalla de 6° tono	Spanyolország, Briones (La Rioja), Iglesia de Santa María	FOR Festival de Órganos de La Rioja www.for2008.es
2008.08.31	J. Jiménez: Batalla de 6° tono	Budapest, Deák t.ev.templom	Orgonazenés áhítat „Ibériai orgonazene”
2014.09.28.	F. Correa: Tiento de 6° Batalla de Morales (Facultad no.XXIII)	Budapest, MET Mélóság Napja t. XIX.k. Fő u.110.	Orgonazenés áhítat „Barangolás a Reneszánsz világában” http://www.meltosagnapja.hu/node/146
2014.10.05	F. Correa: Tiento de 6° Batalla de Morales (Facultad no.XXIII)	Budapest, Csillaghegy- Békásmegyeri ev.templom	Orgonazenés áhítat http://evangelikusbekas.lutheran.hu/
2015.05.17.	F. Correa: Tiento de 6° Batalla de Morales (Facultad no.XXIII)	Nyíregyháza, Evangélikus templom	Orgonazenés áhítat
2015.12.19.	A. Correa Braga: Batalla de 6° tono	Portugália, Tavira, Igreja da Misericórdia	ANIMUSIC Festival www.animusic-portugal.org

Dátum	Mű	Helyszín	Esemény
2016.10.16	<p>J. Jiménez: Batalla de 6° tono</p> <p>A.Correa Braga: Batalla de 6° tono</p> <p>F.Correa: Tiento de 6° Batalla de Morales (Facultad no.XXIII)</p> <p>F.Correa: Tiento de medio registro de tiple de 6° tono, por fefaut de 24 (Facultad no.LXIII)</p>	<p>Budapest, Gazdagréti Szent Angyalok Plébániatemplom</p>	DLA mestermű hangverseny