



COMMUNICATION: CONFERENCE REPORT

## Spanish Roots: Music in Iberia and Latin America

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‘Spanish Roots: Music in Iberia and Latin America’ was the theme of Eleventh Annual Conference of the Historical Keyboard Society of North America (HKSNA). The event offered sessions composed of papers and lecture-recitals, as well as concerts addressing the varied ways in which Iberian keyboard music from before the nineteenth century had made its way to other continents. The presentations could be grouped into four thematic categories involving the Iberian contribution to the wider panorama of eighteenth-century keyboard music. The first category focused on the dispersal of Iberian keyboard music outside Europe, reaching primarily the Spanish and Portuguese colonies. The second focus was on Spanish music in the transitional time between harpsichord and fortepiano being the primary keyboard instrument. Another set of presentations addressed the Iberian organ tradition that flourished during the *siglo d’oro*, therefore well before the eighteenth century, but providing the necessary background for understanding the formation of the Iberian keyboard idiom. The fourth category, not completely surprising, addressed the music of Domenico Scarlatti, its Iberian connections and its presence outside Iberia during the eighteenth century.

The keynote speaker, Joyce Lindorff (Temple University), opened the conference with a well-documented biographical overview of Tomás Pereira, a Portuguese Jesuit missionary to China, who introduced Iberian music theory and keyboard music to the court of the Kangxi Emperor, where he served as the music master until he died in 1708. Pereira translated European music theory into Chinese and built several organs in Beijing. Lindorff closed her speech with a beautiful recital representing some of the music that Pereira had heard as a young musician in Iberia, and which certainly influenced his musical work in China. Her selections featured Portuguese composers such as Antonio Carreira and Manoel Rodrigues Coelho and the Neapolitans Antonio Valente and Alessandro Scarlatti, who were also influential in Pereira’s musical education because of the political ties between Iberia and Naples at that time.

Steven Ottományi (Claremont Graduate University) shared his research on keyboard instruments documented in the Spanish Franciscan missions of Alta California. The presence of keyboard music in the missions is confirmed only in scores that include basso-continuo parts and in acquisition documents, since extant instruments have yet to be discovered. According to those documents, in addition to organs, musicians in the missions used clavichords, harpsichords and, late in the eighteenth century, also fortepianos. Continuing the topic of dispersal of Iberian music via the missions, Karen Hite Jacobs (Belmont Abbey Basilica and College, North Carolina) lectured on the ‘Libro de Tecla de Imelda Bungo’, a manuscript from 1833 associated with a convent in Cusco, Peru, where Bungo lived. This collection of keyboard music features liturgical indications for non-liturgical pieces, such as minuets for the elevation and rondos for the offertory, documenting in this way a relaxed attitude towards the use of instrumental music within liturgical contexts at least in that convent, if not more broadly. Patricia García Gil (University of North Carolina Greensboro) discussed eighteenth-century collections of keyboard music copied by or prepared

for women in Spain and the Americas. She performed pieces from the library of the Portuguese-born Queen of Spain Maria Bárbara de Braganza, from a Chilean manuscript owned by a black woman slave ('Libro sexto de Maria Antonia Palacios') and from the 'Quaderno Mayner', a collection prepared for the use of Maria Guadalupe Mayner, from Mexico. Mário Marques Trilha (Universidade do Estado do Amazonas) spoke about the Portuguese court's relocation to Brazil in 1808 and the keyboard repertoire created by the composers who played a part in that cross-cultural exchange, involving the Brazilian priest José Maurício Nunes Garcia, the Portuguese court composer (of Italian origin) Marcos Portugal and the Austrian composer Sigismund Neukomm, a pupil of the Haydn brothers in Vienna, who became the music teacher for the aristocracy and bourgeoisie in Rio de Janeiro. To illustrate his lecture, Trilha very elegantly performed fortepiano pieces by these three composers, including several works by Nunes Garcia, which should be available soon in the first modern edition of this repertoire, edited by Trilha himself. On the influence of early Iberian keyboard music in France, David Chung (Hong Kong Baptist University) lectured on versions of the *folies d'Espagne* featured in his database of French harpsichord manuscripts. These encompass both pedagogical materials for dilettantes (for instance, the '8<sup>e</sup> couplet de l'invention de Mlle Le Noble' forming part of the *Folies d'Espagne pour clavecin* contained in the 'Manuscrit de Mademoiselle La Pierre', Bibliothèque nationale de France, Rés. Vmd. ms. 18) and works by established composers such as Jean Henry D'Anglebert (his variations with twenty-two couplets contained in the 'Pièces de clavecin et airs de différents auteurs', Bibliothèque nationale de France, Rés. 89-ter). Chung's comparative study scrutinized the types of figuration used in these variations as models for the teaching of keyboard improvisation.

The dominance of the fortepiano at the end of the eighteenth century in Iberia was the topic of several lectures and recitals. Ana Benavides (Real Conservatorio Superior de Música de Madrid) performed a recital on an 1806 Clementi square piano, generously brought to the conference by its owner, Charles Metz. The repertoire reflected her extensive research on Spanish minor composers still to be acknowledged outside Iberia, such as Nicolás Ledesma, Gaetano Brunetti, Santiago de Masarnau and Marcial del Adalid. Ruta Bloomfield (The Master's University, California) performed a harpsichord programme comparing the emergence of the prelude as an independent music category in the works of Antonio Soler, Ferdinando Pellegrino and Gasparo Sborghi, late eighteenth-century composers who wrote collections of preludes that straddle idioms involving improvisatory gestures and motoric, rhythmically strict passagework. Also on the topic of Soler's compositions, Yago Mahúgo (Real Conservatorio Superior de Música de Madrid) spoke on the famous (though possibly spurious) *Fandango*, exploring the mystical aspects of the repetitive structure of the piece in comparison to the fandangos by Boccherini and by Domenico Scarlatti. He also addressed the work's seemingly incomplete manuscript, truncated by a dominant chord at bar 463. Samuel Rubio, in his modern edition, solved the issue by adding a da capo of the piece's first twenty-four bars. Mahúgo, still following the logic of the ecstatic nature of the piece, suggested that the relentless motion could be better brought to a conclusion with a genuinely meditative ending, for which he used one of Soler's preludes (from the *Llave de la modulación* of 1762). Mahúgo's hypnotic and exhilarating performance of the *Fandango* and the surprise shift to the improvisatory nature of Soler's prelude convincingly made the case for the piece as a mystical trance brought about by its dervish-like repetitions and turns. Lin Lao (University of North Carolina Greensboro) addressed the late date (1780) of the first fortepiano known to have been made in Spain (by Antonio Enríquez), even though composers in Iberia had already published collections with alternative keyboard indications (*clavicordio piano forte* or *clave y fuerte piano*) at considerably earlier dates. She illustrated her argument with a refined recital of works by Sebastián Albero, Manuel Blasco de Nebra and Joaquín Montero.

The session on organ music moved the conversation back by about two centuries, starting with my paper (Marcos Krieger, Susquehanna University), which detailed some characteristics of the first published Iberian keyboard tablature, the 1540 *Arte novamente inventada* by Gonçalo de Baena.

While Baena suggested that the pieces should be ornamented, the early date of his publication precedes extant instructions for keyboard *glosas*, and the performer must resort to coeval non-keyboard sources for diminution technique. Calvert Johnson (emeritus, Agnes Scott College, Georgia) performed a recital featuring the four basic types of *tientos* (*lleno*, *de falsas*, *partido* and *de batalla*). His programme consisted of works by Cabezón, Bruna, Arauxo, Heredia, Ximenes and Cabanilles, composers who appear in Johnson's editions of Spanish music in the series *Historical Organ Techniques and Repertoire* (volumes 17, *Spain: 1550–1650* and 18, *Spain: 1630–1730* (Colfax, NC: Wayne Leupold Editions, 2017 and 2023)). Robert Parkins (Duke University) included in his recital, in addition to the composers featured by Johnson, works by the Portuguese musicians Manoel Rodrigues Coelho and Diogo da Conceição, completing the panorama of early Iberian keyboard composers of note. Margaret Irwin-Brandon (Davenport College at Yale University) lectured on the performance instructions found in Correa de Arauxo's *Facultad Orgánica* (1626), contextualizing those instructions with other Iberian ornamentation nomenclature and practices. Her approach favoured ornamentation as a continuation and clarification of polyphonic lines in the composition, leading to the identification of several opportunities for adding ornaments in this repertoire that, unlike the French keyboard music of the time, features sparse ornamentation markings. Her authoritative familiarity with this music shone through a remarkable recital on the 1998 Glatter-Götz organ (with tonal design and voicing by Manuel Rosales) at the Claremont United Church of Christ. Her programme contrasted Iberian music with works by Annibale Padovano and Buxtehude, performed in masterly fashion with astounding energy and all her expertise as an octogenarian musician.

Domenico Scarlatti spent more than three decades in Iberia, and great efforts have been made to characterize his music as Spanish, but that connection remains precarious, just as it is precarious to define national and regional styles for immigrant composers of any origin. Ian Prichard (Colburn Conservatory of Music) argued that some of the allegedly Spanish traits found in Scarlatti's music can also be explained as basso-continuo practices already detailed in Italian treatises on continuo realization. His position, arguably more historically congruent than that which detects a folkloric influence in Scarlatti's music, questions assertions about guitars and castanets being heard in the keyboard sonatas. Charles Metz (independent scholar, Palm Springs), on his Clementi piano, performed several pieces from the 1791 Clementi edition of Scarlatti's pieces. Metz's beautiful rendition of those pieces as found in that edition was informed by the instrument itself, relating the phrasing and dynamic indications to the possibilities of the Clementi piano mechanism. Carol lei Breckenridge (emerita, Central College, Iowa) offered yet another exquisite reading of Scarlatti's sonatas in her recital that featured her copy of the Nuremberg 1749 Silbermann piano (built in 2022 by Kerstin Schwarz, Germany). Unlike Viennese fortepianos, Gottfried Silbermann's instruments were closer in design and tone to the Florentine pianos, of which Queen Maria Bárbara owned five. To frame her argument, Breckenridge also performed works by Johann Sebastian Bach and Carl Phillip Emanuel Bach, dating from around the same years as the publication of Scarlatti's *Essercizi* (1738/1739), recreating in this manner the repertoire that German players may have used on their newly developed Silbermann instruments.

This event was the first HKSNA conference on the West Coast and, fortuitously, the Spanish heritage of California generated this timely focus on Iberian keyboard music. While events focused on the organ frequently address early Iberian repertoire, other eighteenth-century keyboards with a documented presence in Iberia still deserve more attention from both musicology and historically informed performance. The attractive campus of Claremont Graduate University, with its southwestern architecture, offered an ambience that was well suited to these enlightening musicological exchanges and performances.

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