

Review: Sonia Gonzalo Delgado, *Santiago Kastner and the Programming of Early Iberian Keyboard Music* (Kassel, Reichenberger, 2021), xxii + 314 pp. ISBN: 978-3-944244-97-6

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THIS BOOK REPRESENTS A SUBSTANTIAL CONTRIBUTION to the study of musicology as a discipline, which has seen considerable growth in recent years; it also has important things to say about related areas, such as historically informed performance and the role of editions and recordings in shaping it. Sonia Gonzalo Delgado's contribution has been to focus on concert life and programming, the subject of her PhD thesis, 'Programming Early Iberian Keyboard Music: From Wanda Landowska to Santiago Kastner' (University of Saragossa, 2017), and several journal articles she has already published. In this book, Gonzalo turns to Lisbon-based Santiago Kastner (1908-92), widely regarded as a seminal figure who pioneered the study and interpretation of early Iberian keyboard music. It is not the first on a performer-scholar of Kastner's generation;¹ furthermore, other studies exist on the early music revival in Portugal.² However, Gonzalo's approach, which assesses how Kastner's scholar-performer profile and achievements can be understood from the perspective of his time, is novel; it justifies her claims that it is the 'first study of its kind' and 'far from being a [mere] description of Kastner's work as a musicologist and performer' (p. 3).

Existing literature on Kastner has taken the form of tributes and biographical reminiscences, mainly written by his former students. This has emphasised his pioneer role, significance as a teacher and musicological impact, notably his successes in bringing early Iberian keyboard repertoires to

¹ See Meredith KIRKPATRICK (ed.), *Ralph Kirkpatrick: Letters of the American Harpsichordist and Scholar* (Woodbridge, Boydell and Brewer, 2014).

² See Tiago Manuel da HORA, 'Produção discográfica de música em Portugal (1957-2015)' (PhD thesis, Universidade NOVA de Lisboa, 2020).

international attention.³ The influence of this literature on Gonzalo's writing is apparent from the titles and tone of some of the chapters, such as those on 'Establishing Iberian Musicology' and 'Achievements of a Lifetime of Research'. She also interviewed several of Kastner's former students prior to 2017. However, the book's principal source is the former contents of Kastner's library and archive, including his collection of scores with his own performance annotations, programme booklets, which Kastner collected himself, and correspondence (now in the National Library of Portugal and the library of the Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas at the Universidade NOVA de Lisboa).

Gonzalo's method has been to assess this material through a biography that provides a detailed examination of Kastner's career as well as pen portraits of key individuals in its development in the 1930s and 1940s, such as the Spanish musicologists Higinio Anglès (1888-1969) and Nemesio Otaño (1880-1956), whose correspondence she has also studied. In addition, well-chosen case studies of complementary figures, such as the pianist Felicja Blumental (1908-91), further flesh out understanding of the man and his time. An important point that emerges is the central role of performance and the persona of an international concert harpsichordist in the mould of Landowska that Kastner developed prior to World War II; it fundamentally shaped his approach to musicology. This material is complemented by a fascinating appendix detailing Kastner's recital repertoire from the 1930s and the instruments he used. Gonzalo shows how, at this time, Kastner laid the foundations of his later career as the foremost authority on Portuguese and Spanish keyboard music, using his status as a foreigner, reputation as a performer and his networking skills to best advantage.

In charting the rise of Kastner's career, Gonzalo draws attention to the role of the Spanish Musicology Institute (IEM), which facilitated his access to Spanish monastic and cathedral archives and to some extent helped him with his ambitions to promote Iberian keyboard repertoires internationally. Kastner invested much time and effort in contributing to its activities and publications, including an edition of Francisco Correa de Arauxo's *Facultad Organica* (1626) and 20 articles for *Anuario Musical* spanning several decades. However, Kastner did not always see eye to eye with its main protagonists and it sometimes failed reciprocate by ignoring his proposals for new editions and projects. Kastner wanted to create a *rapprochement* between the monumental edition, as conceived by Anglès for the IEM, and his own critical performing editions published abroad (principally by Schott in Mainz), whose methodology had reached maturity by the 1950s. Unfortunately, his pleas had little influence; throughout the 1960s, the IEM remained committed to

³ See, in particular, the articles on Kastner published in the *Revista Portuguesa de Musicologia*, 4/1 (2017), and José Augusto ALEGRIA, 'A singularidade da obra do Prof. Kastner', in *Livro de homenagem a Macario Santiago Kastner*, edited by Maria Fernanda Cidrais Rodrigues, Manuel Morais and Rui Vieira Nery (Lisbon, Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, 1992), pp. 18-32, and Manuel Pedro FERREIRA, *Todas as teclas: Macario Santiago Kastner. Catálogo da Exposição* (Lisbon, CESEM, 2019).

the urtext principles of the monumental edition established in the nineteenth century. Gonzalo argues this was partly because of its financing by the nationalist regime in Spain, and therefore tacit support of the regime's cultural policies, which gave priority to monumental editions.


The equivalent to the IEM in Portugal was the Music Department (*Serviço de Música*) of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, which while an entity supported by private funds and not a 'true Institute of Musicology', adopted a similar scholarly agenda of cataloguing and editing. Kastner was its prime mover alongside some important contemporary Portuguese musicologists, such as Manuel Joaquim (1894-1986), Mário de Sampayo Ribeiro (1898-1966) and José Augusto Alegria (1917-2004). It is notable, however, that these figures are hardly mentioned in Gonzalo's book—a point she does not address. Kastner certainly cultivated close ties with central figures for the Portuguese early music revival, notably Ivo Cruz (1901-85), founder of the pioneering group *Renascimento Musical*, who was crucial to his appointment at the Conservatório Nacional. It is tempting to wonder whether a relative lack of institutional support for musicological activity in Portugal placed obstacles for coordinated research efforts there and its effect on Kastner's scholarly work. Joaquim, in particular, was well informed about some sources that interested Kastner, such as the keyboard manuscript *P-Cug* MM 242, yet he was probably not consulted prior to the publication of the *Antologia de organistas do século XVI* (Portugaliae Musica, 19; Lisbon, Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, 1969), a selective edition of this manuscript.⁴

One of the central themes of Gonzalo's book is Kastner's legacy, which she argues remains relevant and influential. From today's perspective, some of Kastner's scholarly projects appear dated in their preoccupations and dogged by some misconceptions. Even Gonzalo is ready to admit that Kastner's 1977 book on Antonio and Hernando de Cabezón, though well supported by documentary evidence relating to sixteenth-century performance, contains a biographical account 'somewhat corrupted by a fictionalised narrative, illustrating the difficulty of compiling the artistic profile of a sixteenth-century musician' (p. 230). A stronger case can be made, however, in the areas of performance and editions. Kastner was the first person to publish editions of early Iberian keyboard music in versions not expressly intended for piano, notably in the two volumes of *Cravistas Portuguesas* (1936 and 1950) and his edition of Antonio Soler's six *conciertos* for two keyboard instruments, which is one of Gonzalo's three case studies. Pianists such as Blumental reproduced Kastner's guidance for performing Carlos Sexias's sonatas, though in notable recordings from 1952 and 1954 she also applied her knowledge of the tradition of performing Domenico Scarlatti on the modern piano. The recording by Kenneth Gilbert and Trevor Pinnock of Soler's *conciertos* shows

⁴ See Paulo ESTUDANTE, 'Recent History of the *Cartapácios* at the University of Coimbra: Tribute to the Pioneers of Portuguese Musicology', in *Escola de Música da Sé de Évora: Conferências* (Lisbon, Edições Colibri, 2019), pp. 139-78, especially pp. 167-78.

that, by the 1970s, performers were applying their knowledge of historical performance practice, supplying ornamentation not suggested by Kastner and using his editions in a manner closer to how he envisaged they should be. Kastner placed emphasis on the *savoir-faire* of the performer in the use of tempo variation and ornamentation, which is documented (in a restrained fashion) in his 1971 recording of Cabezón's *Pavana Italiana* (p. 218). While Kastner had an ambivalent attitude towards faithful reproductions of historical instruments, believing that they could and should be improved—and, furthermore, he disclaimed ‘that nonsense known as “historical and stylistic fidelity”’ (p. 117)—Gonzalo argues well that this philosophy of performance influenced Gilbert and Pinnock's approach to Soler's music.

There are many reasons to be sympathetic towards Kastner today, not least his belief in a ‘life-giving’, non-dogmatic approach to performing early keyboard music. He opposed the nationalist ideologies of his time, regarding Portugal and Spain as a ‘spiritual unit’, while remaining conscious of their regional specificities (and treading a careful line when needed). In addition, his lecture-recitals, radio work and journalism (as a regular columnist for the *Jornal do Comércio* in wartime Lisbon) prefigure today's ideal of a ‘public’ musicology. Writing clearly and eloquently about all this and more, Sonia Gonzalo Delgado makes a strong case for Santiago Kastner's continuing relevance and importance.

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