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ISAAC ALBÉNIZ'S *IBERIA* AS THE ETERNAL MEMORY OF ANDALUSIA

The following article was presented as a paper during the international conference “2nd Interdisciplinary International Conference ‘Memory, Melancholy and Nostalgia’”, University of Gdansk, Poland, 7-8 December 2017.

This is a case study illustrating the phenomenon of historical and cultural memory of the Andalusia region in the work of Isaac Albéniz, a famous Spanish composer of classical music on the turn of the 19th and 20th century. The article discusses the most outstanding composition of Albéniz, *IBERIA*, in the context of national identity, history and culture of Andalusia.

The memory and perception of the past are of interest to many researchers. The issue of national identity is a multidimensional concept. Research on national identity, in the light of history and historical memory, are considered by scientists within the tradition of a nation, its attitudes and values passed on to next generations. It gives, in turn, the feeling of national unity, as well as the awareness of its roots. Culture and art are a powerful sphere here. A look at national identity through the prism of the country's cultural history, is a part of the reconstruction of the national memory, making it immortal.

Cultural memory constitutes the main element of national identity. Numerous definitions of this notion, that exist in the subject literature, is commonly acknowledged as “a set of beliefs, attitudes and emotions, which is shaped in the consciousness of individual members of the national community in connection with a sense of bond with the nation and experience by participating in the national group.”¹

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¹ Z. BOKSZAŃSKI, *Ponowoczesność a tożsamość narodowa*, in: K. GORLACH, M. NIEZGODA, Z. SERĘGA (eds.), *Władza, naród, tożsamość. Studia dedykowane Profesorowi Hieronimowi Kubiakowi*, Kraków: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego 2004, p. 103.

Problem of Spain's regeneration – after the loss of her colony in 1898 – was widely taken up in Spanish philosophical and political literature by Azorín (J. Martínez Ruiz), A. Ganivet, P. Baroja, J. Ortega y Gasset, M. de Unamuno and others². In Polish literature these topics have been examined by I. Krupecka³, E. Górski⁴, and many other philologists of Iberian literature.

The return to the roots in classical Spanish music was initiated by Felipe Pedrell, considered as the father of Spanish national music on the turn of the 19th and 20th century.⁵ He formulated his postulates in the works such as: *Por nuestra música. Algunas observaciones sobre la magna cuestión de una Escuela Lírica Nacional, Los Pirineos*.⁶

Regarding the foreign works dedicated to Isaac Albéniz, the most comprehensive is a monograph by W.A. Clark *Isaac Albeniz: Portrait of a Romantic*⁷. References to the cycle *IBERIA* we can find in: H. Collet *Albeniz et Granados*,⁸ A. Iglesias *Isaac Albéniz – su obra para piano*⁹, G. Laplane *Albéniz – sa vie, son oeuvre*¹⁰, V. Jankelevitch *La présence lointaine: Albéniz, Séverac, Mompou*.¹¹ There are some doctoral dissertations on *IBERIA*¹² in musicology (music theory and analysis), but

² AZORÍN, *La generación del 98*, Salamanca: Ediciones Anaya S.A. 1969; AZORÍN, *Lecturas españolas*, in: *Homenaje a la generación del 98*, Madrid: Espasa-Calpe 1924/1999; A. GANIVET, *Idearium español*, Buenos Aires–México: Espasa-Calpe Argentina 1949; A. GANIVET, *El porvenir de España*, Buenos Aires–México: Espasa-Calpe Argentina 1949; J. ORTEGA Y GASSET, *España invertebrada*, Madrid: Espasa-Calpe 1964; M. UNAMUNO, *O poczuciu tragiczności życia wśród ludzi i narodów*, Kraków–Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Literackie 1984.

³ I. KRUPECKA, *Don Kichot w krainie filozofów*, Toruń: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika 2012.

⁴ E. GÓRSKI, *Hiszpańska refleksja egzystencjalna. Studium filozofii i myśli politycznej Miguela de Unamuno*, Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich 1979.

⁵ Felipe Pedrell (born Tortosa 19 II 1841 – died Barcelona 19 VIII 1922) – Spanish composer and musicologist. Teacher of Isaac Albéniz. Member of the Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando. Professor at the Real Conservatorio in Madrid. As a musicologist worked particularly in the early music field. Edited scores of renaissance and baroque church Spanish music. See more: W.A. CLARK, *Pedrell, Felipe*, in: *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. by Stanley Sadie, 2 ed., vol. 19, London: Macmillan Publishers Limited 2001, p. 278-279.

⁶ F. PEDRELL, *Por nuestra música. Algunas observaciones sobre la magna cuestión de una Escuela Lírica Nacional, Los pirineos*, Barcelona: Imp. de Henrich y C^a 1891.

⁷ W.A. CLARK, *Isaac Albéniz: Portrait of a Romantic*, New York: Oxford University Press 1999.

⁸ H. COLLET, *Albéniz et Granados*, Paris: Librairie Felix Alcan 1926.

⁹ A. IGLESIAS, *Isaac Albéniz – su obra para piano*, Madrid: Alpuerto 1987.

¹⁰ G. LAPLANE, *Albéniz – sa vie, son oeuvre*, Paris: Éditions du Milieu du Monde 1956.

¹¹ V. JANKELEVITCH, *La présence lointaine: Albéniz, Séverac, Mompou*, Paris: Éditions du Seuil 1983.

¹² J.R. REDFORD, *The application of Spanish folk music in the piano suite Iberia by Isaac Albéniz*, Tucson: The University of Arizona 1994; E. ROUSSEAU-CRISWELL, *A stylistic analysis of the Iberia suite for piano by Isaac Albéniz*, Denton: North Texas State Teachers College 1943.

they do not relate this work to the historical aspect of individual Andalusian regions; although they signal nationalism issues in the Spanish music of the late 19th century.

In Polish literature there is no comprehensive scientific description of the composer's output and his fundamental work *IBERIA*. We have only a small book written by M. Bzowska *Izaak Albéniz* (1964)¹³ which does not use all sources available at that time.

The purpose of the article is to supplement a state of knowledge. The aim of this paper is also an attempt to indicate the role of historical memory of the country, region and nation in the process of returning to the roots and reconstruction of the Spanish national identity, on the example of Albéniz's work. Additionally, I present the artist's letters (almost unknown in Poland) with my translations from Spanish into English.

Therefore, this article is a pioneering case study and a small fragment of my ongoing research on subjectivity of Spanish composers in the Restoration *époque*.

The work of Isaac Albéniz (composer and pianist, 1860-1909) is regarded as a quintessential component of Spanish classical music late 19th and early 20th century.

Albéniz – born in Camprodón, Gerona, Spain – he lived for much of his life abroad: first in London and then mostly in Paris, and southern France in Cambôles-Bains, until his death (Bright's disease) on 18th May 1909, no long after he had completed his masterpiece *IBERIA*. His childhood was very unquiet: at the age of twelve he ran away from home and traveled as a stowaway to South America for visiting Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, Cuba, Puerto Rico and the USA.

Albéniz returned to Spain in 1873. Three years later he went to study in Leipzig and Brussels (the Royal Music Conservatory), where he met a famous Spanish musician and teacher Felipe Pedrell, who inspired him to compose a Spanish music. The influence of Pedrell and musical interactions with French composers of the turn of the 19th and 20th century, gave him the new perspectives on national music. The sense of nostalgia and own understanding of the native country became the basis of the composer's idea: *hacer música española con acento universal*.¹⁴

IBERIA – a suite of twelve piano pieces, composed between 1905-1909 for Albéniz's friend and Spanish pianist Joaquín Malats – appears as a collection of memories and musical images of Andalusia. This southern region of Spain – with its culture, landscapes, colors and traditional flamenco music – becomes the essence of memory, national identity and the inexhaustible source of composer's inspiration.

In *IBERIA* we can detect how Albéniz transforms the legend of the Andalusian land, how composer evokes memory of the port city Cádiz; memory of Sevilla, with

¹³ M. BZOWSKA, *Izaak Albéniz*, Kraków: PWM 1964.

¹⁴ to make Spanish music with an universal accent

Andalusian version of fandango, and the feast of the Corpus Christi – important liturgical celebration with famous processions *sevillanas*; memory of Triana – the Gypsy quarter; or Granada – with its medieval streets and perfumes of orange flower.

The famous suite spans for four books of three pieces each, with a subtitle: *12 nouvelles “impressions” en quatre cahiers*.

IBERIA:

BOOK I – I. EVOCACIÓN, II. EL PUERTO, III. CORPUS CHRISTI EN SEVILLA

BOOK II – IV. RONDEÑA, V. ALMERÍA, VI. TRIANA

BOOK III – VII. EL ALBAICÍN, VIII. EL POLO, IX. LAVAPIÉS

BOOK IV – X. MÁLAGA, XI. JERÉZ, XII. ERITAÑA

The manuscripts of *IBERIA* are today kept as follows: *Evocación, El Albaicín, Málaga, Jerez and Eritaña*, at the Biblioteca de Catalunya (Diputació de Barcelona); *El Puerto* at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C.; *Corpus Christi en Sevilla, Rondeña, Almería, Triana* and *El Polo* at the Biblioteca del Orfeó Catalá, in Barcelona; and *Lavapiés* at the Museu de la Música (Ajuntament de Barcelona).

Albéniz in his letters to Joaquín Malats wrote:

I have not stopped even for a moment: trips to Paris, trips to London, trips to Belgium, concerts, competitions, exams, first performances, in short, a life that is not life; I am mad, bored and desperate!! However, you know that Albéniz has only one word and that is the good one; you will receive therefore in all that one of June and July, the *three Iberias*... (Paris, 6 June 1907)¹⁵

Iberia is the name of the Spanish Peninsula designated by the Greeks, the Roman called *Hispania*. The name of *Iberia* (Iberia or Iberie) existed already in the antiquity and came from the river Íber (*Iberus* = *Ebro*) which gave a name to the peninsula and its inhabitants, the *iberes* (*iberos*).

¹⁵ Letter of Isaac Albéniz to Joaquín Malats, 6 June 1907, Archivo Isaac Albéniz Museu de la Música MM.10.048. See also in: A. IGLESIAS, *Isaac Albéniz – su obra para piano...*, vol. 2, p. 217: “no he parado ni un instante, viajes a Paris, viajes a Londres, viajes a Bélgica, conciertos, concursos, exámenes, primeras representaciones, en fin, una vida que no es vida, estoy loco, aburrido, desesperado!! Sin embargo, ya sabes tú que Albeniz no tiene mas que una palabra y esa es la buena; recibirás por consiguiente en todo lo que un de Junio y Julio, las tres iberias consabidas”.

BOOK I : EVOCACIÓN, EL PUERTO, EL CORPUS-CHRISTI EN SEVILLA

The *First Book* of *IBERIA* was dedicated to Madame Ernest Chausson and premiered by pianist Blanche (Blanca) Selva at the Salle Pleyel in Paris, on 9th May 1906.

I. EVOCACIÓN

The word *evocation* has a Latin origin (*evocare*). It means 1) an act, an account or a work of art that brings or recalls a feelings, memories, images to the conscious mind; 2) the action of invoking a spirit or deity. As a cognitive process, the evocation consists in the act of recovering the information stored in the memory.

Evocación is the introduction of *IBERIA* suite. Describing this piano piece the musicologist said:

There could not be a better prologue for the whole suite of *Iberia* than the serene, majestic, melancholy *EVOCACIÓN*, which in the original score the author titled *Prélude*. Standing on its own, this piece could well sum up the composer's *raison d'être*. Isaac Albéniz and his *twelve* marvelous fragments: serenading Spain, in particular his beloved Andalusia, from foreign lands, from abroad [...] But we are eased into it with calm distinction in *EVOCACIÓN*, which were it not for its designation as a "fandanguillo", would be distinguishable as Spanish not because of a recognizable nationalist pre-eminence but because of some unidentifiable quality.¹⁶

II. EL PUERTO

El Puerto refers to the city port Santa María in Cádiz. Albéniz evokes memories of this place as a starting point of his journey to the USA and South America.

According to tradition, El Puerto de Santa María was founded by Menestheus¹⁷ a hero of the Trojan War, who called it the Port of Menestheo. The city of Cádiz itself was founded by the Phoenicians under the name Gades. Publius Escipion gave it the name Puerto Gaditano, meaning port of Cadiz. The Moslems knew the town as Alcanter or Almacia Alcantes, which means "Port of the Salt Mines". In the 13th century, Alfonso X changed its name to Santa María del Puerto.

¹⁶ F. YALE, *A Synthesis of styles: the music of Isaac Albéniz*, in: *The Nationalist Movement in Nineteenth-Century Spain*, University of Maryland Libraries, 2012, <http://www.lib.umd.edu/PAL/YALE/albeniz3.html>, p.10 [20 XI 2017].

¹⁷ Menestheus – a legendary king of Athens during the Trojan War, son of Peteus and grandson of Erechtheus. He was set up as king by the twins Castor and Pollux when Theseus travelled to the Hades. Menestheus was one of the warriors in the Trojan Wooden Horse. See more: J.M. MARCH, *Dictionary of Classical Mythology*, Oxford/Philadelphia: Oxbow Books 2014, p. 312.

Christopher Columbus lived here and persuaded Juan de la Cosa to allow him to use his ship «the Santa Maria». With the discovery of America, commercial traffic with the Indies began, and the port was the starting point for many an American expeditions, such as the voyage of Alonso Ojeda (1499) and the one undertaken by Rodrigo de Bastidas and Juan de la Cosa (1504), until Sevilla was granted a monopoly of vessel charter and expeditions.

During the 16th and 17th centuries it was the base of the Royal Galleys and headquarters of the General Captaincy of the Atlantic Ocean. In 1810, during *La Guerra de la Independencia*, the French made it their headquarters. The 19th century saw the return of the town's commercial activities, with the production and export of wines which has continued up to the present day.

III. EL CORPUS-CHRISTI EN SEVILLA THE ORIGINAL TITLE IN FRENCH: FÊTE-DIEU À SÉVILLE.

Sevilla – originally an Iberian town – was always the favourite place and inspiration to Isaac Albéniz.

In 711 Sevilla fell to the Muslims, and under their rule – known as *Ixibilia* and later *Sivilia* – became a leading cultural and commercial centre. In the 12th century Sevilla enjoyed a great prosperity. After the Muslim possession, ended in 1248 by Spanish Christians under Ferdinand III, the substantial Moorish and Jewish minorities were driven into exile, and the local economy temporarily fell into ruin.

The Spanish discovery of the Americas brought a new prosperity to the city. Sevilla became the centre of the exploration and exploitation of America through the *Casa de Contratación* («House of Trade»)¹⁸, which was established there in 1503 to regulate commerce between Spain and the New World. For two centuries Sevilla hold a dominant position in this commercial traffic.

In the 17th century – the Spanish golden age – Sevilla was regarded as a cradle of culture. The painters such as Diego Velázquez, Francisco de Zurbarán, and Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, the sculptor Juan Martínez Montañés and the poet Fernando de Herrera were the glories of this city. In the 19th century, the French invasion, revolutions, and civil war stopped development. The Iberoamerican Exposition of 1929 initiated a new renaissance of the town.

¹⁸ Casa de Contratación or Casa de Contratación de las Indias existed until 1790. See more: J.R. FISHER, *Casa de Contratación*, in: *Encyclopedia of Latin American History and Culture*, vol. 1, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons 1996, p. 589-590.

The feast of the Corpus Christi in Sevilla is a religious commemoration celebrated throughout Spain, but especially in Andalusia. The work evokes all emotions connected with this important liturgical catholic celebration, which takes place sixty days after Easter. These feast days gather thousands of people in the processions of the Blessed Sacrament accompanied a statue of the Virgin.

In this piano piece Albéniz evokes memory of “the Corpus Christi Day procession in Sevilla, during which the statue of the Virgin Esperanza is carried through the streets and accompanied by marching bands and religious singing”.¹⁹ The melody evokes Andalusian cante jondo and the accompaniment – flamenco guitars with distant church bells.

Listening this composition we can ask:

How could Albéniz be inspired by the quintessence of his wonderful “Andante” and link it, as a genuine spiritual refuge, to the immense uproar that precedes it? It is a very lucid apostil: the melancholy of intimate sayings, abandoned bells in the distance, echoes of memories and things... Personally, I qualify it as a kind of spiritual refuge, of internal recollection.²⁰

BOOK II : RONDEÑA, ALMERÍA, TRIANA

The *Second Book* of *IBERIA* was dedicated to pianist Blanche Selva and premiered on 11th September 1907, in Saint-Jean-de-Luz, France.

IV. RONDEÑA

Rondeña is a Spanish folk dance (flamenco genre) named after the city of Ronda. The title of this piece is simply an evocation of that region.

Ronda is a city in the Spanish province of Málaga, known in Roman times as Acinipo.

From the 8th to the 15th century the town was occupied by the Moors. The conquest of Ronda constituted one of the greatest triumphs of the final war of Granada and represented a severe blow to Muslim power in Andalusia. With the capture of the city by the Catholic Kings, a profound economic and cultural transformation took place.

¹⁹ W.A. CLARK, *Isaac Albéniz; Portrait of a Romantic...*, p. 229.

²⁰ A. IGLESIAS, *Isaac Albéniz – su obra para piano...*, vol. 2, p. 216: “¿Cómo pudo Albéniz inspirarse en la quintaesencia de su maravilloso ‘Andante’ y vincularlo, como un genuino refugio espiritual, al inmenso alboroto que lo precede? Es un apostil muy lúcido: la melancolía de dichos íntimos, campanas abandonadas en la distancia, ecos de recuerdos y cosas ... Personalmente, lo califico como un tipo de refugio espiritual, de recogimiento interno.”

V. ALMERÍA

Region of Andalusia and the seaport where Albéniz's father worked for a time in the 1860s.²¹

The city of Almería was founded in 955 by the Arabs. In the 10th and 11th centuries it formed part of the Caliphate of Córdoba and later – in the 13th part of the Nasrid Kingdom (Reino de Nazari de Granada)²². After the capture of the city by the Catholic Monarchs in 1489, Almería lived centuries of prosperity pauper. In 1522 the region and town was devastated by an earthquake and rebuilding in the Renaissance and the Baroque period.

VI. TRIANA

Triana is the Gypsy quarter of Sevilla, centered on west bank of the Guadalquivir river, known as living place of Romani people – concentrated in the street called the *Cava de los Gitanos* (now the *Pagés del Corro*) – and considered as the cradle of flamenco.

The legend holds that Triana was founded as a Roman colony by the emperor Trajan. The name *Triana* supposedly derived from the original denomination of *Trajana*. The name may be a combination of the Latin *tri*, meaning “three”, and the Celtiberian *ana*, meaning “river”, since the Guadalquivir river split into three branches nearby. Another hypothesis suggests that the derivation of *Triana* is from the Latin expression *Trans amnem*, meaning “those beyond the river.”²³

The first settlements in the Triana area are dated from the Roman period. During Muslim rule the neighbourhood developed around a castle built in the 10th century. Triana was the last defence of Sevilla from the west before the city-walls. Because of Triana's strategic role in the defence of city, Ferdinand III of Castile destroyed the citadel (*Castillo de Triana*) and the bridge before taking Sevilla in 1248. Later, in 1481, under the rule of the Catholic Monarchs, it was made the seat of the Spanish Inquisition until 1785. The current bridge, the Puente de Isabel II, a representative symbol of Triana, was built in 1854.

Triana – with the Gypsy music and tradition, but also the poverty and economic misery of its inhabitants – was deeply rooted in Albéniz's heart. The artist, evoking

²¹ W.A. CLARK, *Isaac Albéniz: Portrait...*, p. 233.

²² See L. TORRES BALBÁS, *Almería islámica*, «Al-Andalus», vol. XXII, 1957, p. 217-263.

²³ *Triana, historia de un hecha diferencial*, www.celtiberia.net [20 XI 2017].

this image in his own composition and impressed by Joaquín Malats interpretation, wrote in the letter:

...with respect to *Triana*, you already know the profound emotion I felt upon hearing it at your house; I owe you the greatest satisfaction I have ever experienced in my long career as a composer: your superb interpretation has managed to convince me that I have not smudged so much paper in my lifetime. (Nice, 9 November 1906)²⁴

BOOK III: EL ALBAICÍN, EL POLO, LAVAPIÉS

The *Third Book* of *IBERIA* was dedicated to Marguerite Hasselmans and premiered by pianist Blanche Selva at the Palace of Princess de Polignac, in Paris, on 2nd January 1908.

VII. EL ALBAICÍN

El Albaicín (*árab.* al-baizin district, *esp.* barrio pendiente, en cuesta) the typical Gypsy quarter in Granada, located at the foot of the hill facing the Alhambra on the banks of the Darro river, where the Gypsies live especially. It conserves aspects of the Muslim urbanization and some houses with Arab remains and others, more abundant, Moorish buildings of the 16th century. In the high zone and the SacroMonte road, there are the caves excavated in the mountain and inhabited by the Gypsies.

In this piece Albéniz portrays Gypsy music once again imitating a guitar strumming.

VIII. EL POLO

El polo is a popular Andalusian song style which comes from *la caña* (*árab.* gaunnia). Clark explains that “the first is a composed sort of art music of the early

²⁴ Letter of Isaac Albéniz to Joaquín Malats, 9 November 1906, Archivo Isaac Albéniz, Museu de la Música (MM.10.041). See also in: A. IGLESIAS, *Isaac Albéniz – su obra para piano...*, vol. 2, p. 217: “...con respecto a mi *Triana* ya sabes la profunda emoción que resenti quando te la oí en tu casa; te debo la más grande satisfacción que he experimentado en mi ya larga carrera de compositor; tu soberbia interpretación ha logrado convencerme de que no en vano he emborronado tanto papel durante ma vida.”

nineteenth century [...] the other, unrelated kind of polo, is the actual flamenco polo.”²⁵

IX. LAVAPIÉS

This work evokes the neighbourhood of the city of Madrid–Lavapiés or *barrio del Avapiés*²⁶. The name literally means “to wash feet”, possibly in the fountain in Plaza de Lavapiés which no longer exists.

Lavapiés was in the past the Jewish quarter of Madrid, where its main center of action and meeting was the Synagogue (today the Church of San Lorenzo is located). In the 15th century, after the expulsion of the Jews, some families were forced to convert to Catholicism to stay alive. The neighbourhood got its name by a physiognomy that would accompany it throughout its history: in the central square of the quarter there was a fountain, where the Jews carried out the ablution and washed their feet before entering the temple²⁷.

The story of Lavapiés and its ambiance were fascinating for Albéniz. The cultural diversity – with its multiplicity of colors, flavors and smells – was one of the main characteristics of this quarters in Madrid. The mixture of ethnicities and cultures made Lavapiés an exceptional and unique place, and remained a source of musical inspirations. The composer wrote to his friend Joaquín Malats:

This morning I received *Lavapiés* and this afternoon I sent it to you; I cannot be more diligent. I am sure that in your hands *Lavapiés* is going to be a marvel, even though I consider that work so extremely difficult that I do not think anyone can play it, if it's not you. (Nice, 1 March 1907)²⁸

²⁵ W.A. CLARK, *Isaac Albéniz: Portrait...*, p. 239.

²⁶ M.I. GEA, *Los nombres de las calles de Madrid*, Madrid: La Librería 2002, p. 153.

²⁷ Some scholars claim that the synagogue was not in this district of the city. See also: G. VIÑUALES FERRERO, *Los judíos de Madrid en el siglo XV: las minutas de los escribanos*, in: *Espacio, Tiempo, Formas*, serie III, Historia Medieval, t. 15, 2002, p. 296.

²⁸ Letter of Isaac Albéniz to Joaquín Malats, 1 March 1907, Archivo Isaac Albéniz, Museo de la Música (10.044). See also in: A. IGLESIAS, *Isaac Albéniz – su obra para piano...*, vol. 2, p. 217: “Esta mañana he recibido *el Lavapiés* y esta tarde te lo mando; no puedo ser mas diligente; tengo la seguridad que en tus manos *el Lavapiés* va a ser una maravilla, a pesar de que considero esa obra tan extremadamente difícil que no creo nadie pueda tocarla, si no eres tú.”

BOOK IV: MÁLAGA, JEREZ, ERITAÑA

The *Fourth Book* of *IBERIA* dedicated to Madame Pierre Lalo, daughter-in-law of composer Edouard Lalo, was premiered by pianist Blanche Selva, on 9th February 1909, at the Société Nationale de Musique (Salon d'Automne), Paris.

X. MÁLAGA

The composer evokes city and region of Málaga.

The history of about 2800 years, making Málaga one of the oldest cities in the world. The decline of the Roman imperial power in the 5th century led to invasions of Hispania Baetica by Germanic peoples and by the Byzantine Empire. In the Visigothic Spain, the Byzantine took Malaca and other cities on the southeastern coast and founded the new province of Spain in 552. Malaca became one of the principal cities of the Byzantine *Provincia Spaniae* (Latin) until 624, when the Byzantines were expelled from the peninsula. After the Muslim conquest of Hispania (711-718), the city, then known as Mālaqa, was encircled by walls. In 1026 it became the capital of the Taifa of Málaga, an independent Muslim kingdom ruled by the Hammudid dynasty in the Caliphate of Córdoba, which existed for four distinct time-periods: 1026-1057, 1073-1090, 1145-1153 and 1229-1239 when it was finally conquered by the Nasrid Kingdom of Granada.

The siege of Mālaqa by the Catholic Monarchs in 1487 was one of the longest of the Reconquista. The Muslim population was punished for its resistance by enslavement or death. Under Castilian domination, churches and convents were built outside the walls to unite the Christians and encourage the formation of new quarters. In the 16th century, the city was touched by epidemics of disease, floods, and earthquakes.

In the 18th century the city began to recover some of its former prosperity. For much of the 19th century, Málaga was a pioneer of the industrial revolution on the Iberian peninsula becoming the first industrialized city in Spain. Although the economic crisis of 1893 forced the closing of the «La Constancia» iron foundry and was accompanied by the collapse of the sugar industry and the spread of the phylloxera blight, which devastated the vineyards surrounding Málaga. The early 20th century was a period of economic and industrial development.

In Albéniz's eyes the city of Málaga and region – with its great history, architecture, culture – were a cradle of Andalusia. In 1907, the composer proud of his new composition *Málaga*, wrote to his friend Joaquín Malats:

My dear Quinito : You liked *Málaga*, didn't you? So, it is enough for me; You already know that this work, this *Iberia* of my sins, I wrote it essentially to you and for you only; and that the memory of the affectionate friend that I have in you , and particularly, the memory of the marvelous artist that you are, have inspired those pages, in which I have put my five senses, and the "other" one. [...] The second number is titled *Eritaña* [...]; my physical self becomes everyday more nationalistic and complains bitterly about not roasting in Spain; I'm getting old, my dear Quinito, and I am feeling the burden of my bones, my flesh and my thoughts. (Paris, 22 August 1907)²⁹

XI. JERÉZ

Jeréz, next to Triana, considered as a flamenco cradle and born-place of famous flamenco performers like Manuel Torre, Fernando Terremoto, Tio Borrigo, La Macarrona, became the musical inspiration of Albéniz's work. According to Stewart Gordon, this piece evokes "a wine producing city of Andalusia."³⁰ Although Jeréz evokes the town, the region and a Gypsy musical style.

The name is derived from Phoenician settlement *Xera*, later performed as *Cetet* and *Sèrès*. After the fall of the Western Roman Empire, the Vandals and the Visigoths ruled it until the Arabs conquered the area in 711. In the 11th century Jeréz briefly became the seat of an independent taifa. In 1053 it was annexed to Sevilla. From 1145 to 1147 the region Jeréz briefly operated as an emirate under dependency of Granada, led by Abu'l-Qasim Ahyal. Later the dynasty of Almohads conquered the city. Alfonso *El Sabio* named him *Xeres* or *Xerez*. In the 12th and 13th centuries Jeréz underwent a period of great development, building its defense system and setting the current street layout of the old town.

The discovery of America and the conquest of Granada in 1492, made Jeréz one of the most prosperous cities of Andalusia through trade and through its proximity to the ports of Sevilla and Cádiz. Despite the social, economic and political decadence that occurred in the 17th century, towards the end of the Habsburg rule, the city and region became world-famous for its wine industry.

²⁹ Letter of Isaac Albéniz to Joaquín Malats, 22 August 1907, Archivo Isaac Albéniz, Museo de la Música (MM.10.050). See also in: A. IGLESIAS, *Isaac Albéniz – su obra para piano...*, vol. 2, p. 218: "Mi querido Quinito: Te ha gustado *Málaga*, ¿no es cierto?; pues bien; esto me basta; ya sabes que esta obra, esta *Iberia* de mis pecados, la escribí esencialmente por ti y para ti, que el recuerdo del cariñoso amigo que en ti tengo y sobre todo, el recuerdo del maravilloso artista que eres, han inspirado esas páginas, en las cuales he puesto mis cinco sentidos, y el otro [...]. El segundo número se llama *Eritaña* [...] puedo decir que tirando a mal, mio físico se vuelve cada vez más nacionalista y se queja amargamente de no estarse tostando en España; me vuelvo viejo, mi querido Quinito, y me van pesando los huesos, las carnes y el pensamiento."

³⁰ S. GORDON, *History of Keyboard Literature*, New York: A. Schirmer Books 1996, p. 407.

Napoleon's war (*La Guerra de la Independencia*) led to pillage of Jeréz. The first half of the 19th century initiated the renewal of the region, mainly thanks to the first railway line (1854) connecting the city with Puerto de Santa María.

XII. ERITAÑA

This piano piece is named after a popular inn of Sevilla called "La Venta Eritaña", visited regularly by Albéniz, where flamenco performances of Andalusian gypsies took place.

In conclusion: the above-mentioned brief presentation of the cycle *IBERIA* authorizes me to state, that Albéniz's work appears as the eternal memory of Andalusia. This masterpiece immortalizes the sounds, rhythms, and colors of the region. It constitutes also a musical example of national identity and cultural memory. The factors such as national spirit, historical memory, territory, culture, folklore – all of them are reflected in the suite.

The work was considered with admiration by French and Spanish composers. Claude Debussy wrote: "one's eyes close, dazzled by such wealth of imagery". Describing *IBERIA*, Enrique Granados said: "it is an elegance that sounds with sadness and progresses by degrees until it achieves a mastery dominant and serene, like Goya's *Maja*. *IBERIA* evokes memories of our golden century."³¹ Therefore, as a musical image, the *IBERIA* suite is the quintessence of Spanish cultural heritage.

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³¹ W.A. CLARK, *Isaac Albéniz: Portrait...*, p. 265: "es una elegancia que sonó con tristeza y va por gradaciones hasta llegar al imperio dominante y sereno de *La Maja* de Goya. *Iberia* evoca los recuerdos de nuestro siglo de oro".

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IBERIA ISAACA ALBÉNIZA
JAKO WIECZNA PAMIĘĆ O ANDALUZJI

Streszczenie

Artykuł to studium przypadku obrazujące zjawisko pamięci historyczno-kulturowej regionu Andaluzji w twórczości Isaaca Albéniza, hiszpańskiego kompozytora muzyki klasycznej przełomu XIX i XX wieku. Omawia jego najwybitniejsze dzieło – *Iberia* w kontekście zagadnienia tożsamości narodowej, historii i kultury Andaluzji. Zawiera rys historyczny poszczególnych andaluzyjskich regionów oraz korespondencję Albéniza.

Słowa kluczowe: Isaac Albéniz; Andaluzja; *Iberia*; muzyka hiszpańska XIX/XX wiek; tożsamość narodowa.

ISAAC ALBÉNIZ'S *IBERIA*
AS THE ETERNAL MEMORY OF ANDALUSIA

Summary

The article is a case study illustrating the phenomenon of historical and cultural memory of the Andalusia region in the work of Isaac Albéniz, a famous Spanish composer of classical music on the turn of the 19th and 20th century. The article discusses the most outstanding composition of I. Albéniz *Iberia* in the context of the issue of national identity, history and culture of Andalusia. It contains a historical outline of individual Andalusian regions and Albéniz's letters.

Key words: Isaac Albéniz; Andalusia; *Iberia*; Spanish music of 19th/20th century; national identity.