

Doctorial School of the Faculty of Art,  
Pécs University of Sciences

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A History of Brass Instruments in Hungary  
Propositions of a DLA Dissertation

2014

## **Preliminaries and Motivation of the Research Work**

During my studies in secondary and higher education in Pécs and Budapest in the 1960s and 70s, while getting to know our musical culture and the instruments we had chosen, several stages (final examination, college and university degrees, competitions, music camps, courses, auditions) provided feedbacks of our knowledge.

My professors of the history of music as my main subject and those of chamber music unanimously called attention to the fact that the research of the local history, methodology, education, technical development of brass instrument is disadvantaged in comparison with the results of the analogue work in relation to string instruments. They (Dénes Dőry, András Pernye, György Zilcz, Dr. László Újfalusi) sort of urged us to start research in the field. A sentence in archeologist László Zolnay's book *A magyar muzsika századaiból* (From the Old Centuries of Hungarian Music) was a substantial moment of my motivation: 'What we miss is not the past in our country but its research.' It is no doubt true in several fields of brass culture.

## **The Method of the Research**

The way I got information, for lack of internet and media, was personal contacts, travelling and research work in libraries. I endeavored to collect pictures, data of the state, stories, legends of brass musicians as well as the development

of the instruments from books, annals, museums and churches.

## **The Main Parts of the Dissertation**

- The classification of the instrument families
- Ancient Hungarian history
  - findings of the age of the settlement
  - documents of the Hungarian royal courts
- Joint branches of art (sculpture, architecture, literature)
- Traces of ages
- The history of learning brass music
- A history of Hungarian brass chamber music

An important field of my research was the collection of the musicians in our orchestras, students and teachers of our institutions from the very beginnings of brass music culture. This work has been going on time and again coming across irreversible losses too (e.g. the full documentation of the Operetta Theatre was destroyed during the reconstruction of its building). On the other hand I succeeded to find several valuable documents unknown so far (e.g. the list funerals a trombone quartet composed by Ferenc Erkel was played at).

## Sources

The take off of my research was István Bogár's 'Rézfúvós hangszerek története' (A History of Brass Instruments), Lajos Hollós' annotations, György Zilcz's 'Rézfúvós Módszertanok' (The Methodology of Brass Music) and the annals of the Academy of Music.

At the First International Brass Congress in Montreaux in 1976 I confronted with the fact that I could most successfully contribute to the global **full** by collecting the Hungarian brass music documents. I heard the same intention listening to the lectures of my French, English, Russian, American colleagues, who also meant to underline first of all the values of their own brass music culture. My paragon, dear teacher, a colleague of mine in the Opera House for three years, György Zilcz's worldwide success (the discovery of the trombone concerto by J. Albrechtsberger in Hungary) provided further encouragement to all of us.

The formerly unknown documents concerning Hungary in international publications, e.g. Phillip Farkas' A rézfúvás művészete (The Art of Blowing Brass Instruments), Benny Sluchin, Raymond Lapie's Le trombone a travers les ages were also of exceptional value.

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