BOCCHERINI AND THE 'SPANISH BODY': REFLECTIONS ON POPULAR DANCE AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

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During his thirty-seven years in Spain, Boccherini incorporated elements of very fashionable Spanish dances, as seen in the *Fandango* of the string quintet op. 40 nº 2 G341 (1788) and in the quintet with guitar nº 4 G 448 (1798); the *Minuetto a modo di sighidiglia spagnuola* inserted in the string quintet op. 50 nº 3 G 374 (1795); and the string quartet op. 44 nº 4 G 223 (1792)[1] known as *La Tiranna*. These works were inspired by three of the most iconic Spanish dances of the time—fandango, seguidillas and tirana[2]—each of which embodied the 'Spanish body', a constructed image of Spain defined by distinctive physical expressions, dance movements, and attire.

These works have garnered some scholarly attention[3], although not from a global perspective that fully accounts for the specificity and complexity of these dances within the embodied cultural framework of late 18th-century Spain. Thus, the primary objective of this paper is to explore Boccherini's perception of this 'Spanish body' through examining these three compositions. The intention is to address these key questions: To what extent did Boccherini possess an authentic corporeal understanding of these dances? Was his treatment of these 'Spanish' elements faithful or did he manipulate them to suit his own stylistic purposes? Finally, what kind of image of the 'Spanish body' did these works convey to the listener?

To address these questions, it is first essential to define the notion of a 'Spanish body' within Boccherini's contexts, both in Spain and abroad. Subsequently, Boccherini's compositions will be contrasted with contemporary sources, with particular attention to the characteristic dance gestures that may define this 'Spanish body'[4].

A late 18th-century 'Spanish Body'?

Identifying the fandango, seguidillas, and tirana with a singular 'Spanish body' in the late 18th century oversimplifies the complex Spanish reality—hence my use of quotation marks. While this subject is intricate and requires further exploration, an initial step is to

[1] I maintain here the traditional dating of these works, although Opp. 40, 50 and 44 may have been composed earlier, as suggested in LABRADOR 2014 and 2016 and discussed below.
[2] Although these forms were often intended for singing —except the instrumental fandangos, though sung versions also existed—the dance element remains fundamental.
[3] For instance, LE GUIN 2003, chapter 3, PÉREZ DÍAZ 2006, GIUGGIOLI 2011 and 2017, ANTÓN 2013, RUIZ MAYORDOMO – PESSARRODONA 2013B, VAN GASTEREN 2022, PESSARRODONA forthcoming, PESSARRODONA in process of publication.
[4] This analysis is grounded in some articles from a prior collaboration with the choreologist María José Ruiz Mayordomo (See RUIZ MAYORDOMO – PESSARRODONA 2013A, 2013B, 2017; PESSARRODONA – RUIZ MAYORDOMO 2016) and further developed through my independent research.

examine what kind of Spanish corporality may have influenced Boccherini, at least as a preliminary approach.

Boccherini lived in Spain for nearly forty years, from 1768 to his death in 1805, during a period when the body held a central place in Spanish popular culture. As Le Guin observes, by the late 18th century the Spanish musical style had become deeply intertwined with a spontaneous corporeality, particularly through dance, perceived as genuine and authentic in contrast to the more artificial and disembodied foreign styles, particularly French and Italian[5]. Juan Antonio de Iza Zamácola offers a compelling example of this:

> Our *fandango* and *seguidillas*, which in Spain inspire dancing, are regarded in Italy and other places as merely indifferent songs. And what causes this difference in the emotions of the human heart? It lies solely, dear musicians, in the diversity of customs, in the character of nations, and in the fact that each has its own way of expressing its passions. For this reason, Italian music will never be able to fully adapt to the common taste of the Spanish people[6].

This text emerges from 18th-century interests in defining 'national' musical styles[7], as reflected in exemplified in the ideas of thinkers like Rousseau and Eximeno, who explored how universal musical elements evolved into distinct national expressions shaped by linguistic differences. In Spain, these ideas fueled debates about the suitability of the Spanish language for music and the potential for creating a national opera[8]. Iza Zamácola's text underscores the crucial role of the body in these discourses, acting as a catalyst for national musical preferences: fandangos and seguidillas elicit a spontaneous desire to dance among Spaniards, as they resonate deeply with their emotional and cultural sensibilities. In fact, these dances came to be designated *bailes nacionales* and appeared in stylized form onstage from the late eighteenth century onward[9], eventually providing the foundation for the so-called Bolero School, regarded the earliest branch of Spanish Classical Dance. The oral, non-written and bodily transmission of some of this bolero repertoire offers insights into the choreographic elements of these dances[10].

The development of *national* music and dance in late 18th-century Spain was closely tied to the rise of a national consciousness[11]. Terms like *nación* and *patria* transitioned, throughout the century, from indicating shared customs or origins to signifying Spain as a unified political entity[12]. This process unfolded through a dialectic between the aspiration to align with European cultural standards and the quest for a distinct national identity. Enlightenment intellectuals responded to Spain's perceived decline by seeking renewal

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[5] LE GUIN 2003, p. 61.

[6] «Nuestro fandango y seguidillas que en España incitan a bailar, en Italia y en otras partes son miradas como unas canciones indiferentes, ¿y en qué consiste esa diferencia de afectos del corazón del hombre? Consiste únicamente, señores músicos, en la variedad de las costumbres, en el carácter de las naciones, y en que todas tienen sus diferentes maneras para expresar sus pasiones, por esta razón la música italiana jamás podrá ser acomodada al gusto común de los españoles». IZA ZAMÁCOLA 1799, pp. 211-212.

[7] GELBART 2007, p. 26.

[8] LEZA 2014, p. 512.

[9] ROLDÁN 2015, pp. 60-63.

[10] RUIZ MAYORDOMO – PESSARRODONA 2015 AND 2017; PESSARRODONA – RUIZ MAYORDOMO 2016.

[11] GELBART 2007, p. 24.

[12] ÁLVAREZ DE MIRANDA 1992, pp. 211-269.

through Enlightenment ideals and foreign influences. France and Italy, in particular, served as models for social customs, artistic tastes, and musical trends, particularly among the upper classes and the emerging bourgeoisie. The Bourbon dynasty's rise helped promote internal unification and centralization, while also strategically integrating itself into Spanish national history[13], and striving to reshape Spain's image abroad[14], where it was often viewed as exotic and culturally backward[15]. This prompted a progressive resurgence of national sentiment and a revitalization of national identity.

This convergence of ideas found expression in the short theatrical forms of *sainetes* and *tonadillas*, which offered comic reflections of society shaped by popular tastes. Immensely popular in the period, these forms were often performed as interludes in larger theatrical productions. The core repertoire emerged from Madrid's public theatres, setting the standard for theatrical performance across Spain and its colonies. Infused with the Neoclassical pursuit of theatrical realism and verisimilitude, these works sought, in Ramón de la Cruz's words, «to copy what is seen, that is, to portray men, their words, their actions, and their customs»[16]. However, these pieces were often presented with a humorous and even satirical twist, using caricature and theatrical stylization that prioritized scenic effectiveness over strict realism[17].

Tonadillas in particular became a medium through which the body was prominently featured. The frequent use of danceable tunes such as the seguidillas, fandangos and tiranas was designed to elicit a physical response from audiences familiar with these dances. The theatrical piece *El reconocimiento del tío y la sobrina* (1792), by Pedro Rodríguez and the composer Pablo Esteve, explains the significance of these popular in this repertoire, as outlined in its 'Advertencia':

> […] it is missing those popular *sonsonetes* [necessary] to be a true tonadilla, [both] our own and those that Composers invent in imitation of them, which is why they constitute a genre of composition that foreigners lack and always will lack, because their language does not allow it; the very reason why the tonadilla should be more cherished by us[18].

The work represents an attempt to innovate within the *tonadilla* genre, soughing to remove popular influences, specifically the *sonsonetes populares* (popular tunes), which are specified in the prologue as «fandangos, jotas, tiranas, boleras, and jopeos»[19]. This text highlights three important characteristics of these *sonsonetes populares*. First, they served as inspiration for *tonadilla* composers, who either incorporated them directly or created new

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[13] ÁLVAREZ BARRIENTOS 2005, pp. 24-25.
[14] *Ibidem*, p. 27
[15] ETZION 1993, pp. 230-231, BOLUFER 2016.
[16] «Copiar lo que se ve, esto es, retratar los hombres, sus palabras, sus acciones y sus costumbres». CRUZ 1786, pp. liv; ROMERO FERRER 2015, p. 238-239.
[17] ÁLVAREZ BARRIENTOS 2005, pp. 240-214.
[18] «[…] para ser una verdadera Tonadilla le faltan aquellos sonsonetes populares, propios nuestros, y los que a su imitacion inventan los Compositores, que es por los que constituyen un género de composicion, de que carecen y careceran siempre los Extrangeros, mediante a que sus idiomas no la permiten; razon por que deberia ser mas estimada de nosotros». RODRÍGUEZ – ESTEVE 1792, p. 3.
[19] *Ibidem,* p. 5. PESSARRODONA 2009.

music in their style. Second, they are «popular», originating 'from the people'. Lastly, they are «ours», that is, inherently Spanish due to the language, aligning it with Rousseau's and Eximeno's ideas.

This association between *popular* and *national* reflects an emerging ethnic conception of Spain that ties the entire nation to a stereotypical image of the common people. In Madrid's short theatre, this identity was primarily embodied by the *majos* and *majas*, representing working-class and marginalized communities from Madrid's outskirts. This group, primarily composed of immigrants, cultivated a strong collective identity rooted in a sense of belonging to Madrid, characterized by shared values such as hard work, fierceness, and sincerity, as well as distinctive preferences in fashion, music, and dance. The theatrical portrayals of the *majos* epitomized what was seen as authentic Spanish values, serving as a reaction against idle, morally questionable figures influenced by foreign ideals like *petimetres*, *petimetras*, *usías*, and abbés[20].

Despite the diverse origins of the dances in question—seguidillas primarily associated with La Mancha but prevalent in the south half of Spain[21], fandango likely from the Americas[22], and tirana rooted in Andalusia[23]—they collectively represent the essence of this unified Spanish identity as expressed through *majismo*. A prime example is Blas de Laserna's tonadilla *El majo y la italiana fingida* (1779)[24], where the charismatic singer-actress María Antonia Fernández *La Caramba* performs a faux Italian girl who ultimately showcases her impressive skills in singing and dancing *seguidillas majas,* leaving a *majo* completely bewildered. Initially, the *majo* has attempted to teach her to sing seguidillas but fails, leading him to exclaim «it's impossible for Italian women to have the *aire de taco* of

[20] HAIDT 2011, p. 264.
[21] GARCÍA MATOS 1957, p. 32.
[22] In REAL ACADEMIA ESPAÑOLA 1732, p. 719, it is defined as a dance introduced by those who have been in the kingdoms of the Indies, performed to the sound of very lively and festive music.
[23] PESSARRODONA 2022, pp. 480-487.
[24] LASERNA 1779.

Spanish women!»[25]. Performing *majos* required a specific corporeality tied to attitudes like the *aire de taco* (self-confidence, ease, poise)[26] and *ponerse en jarras* (to stand with arms akimbo), as well as the choreography of these popular dances. A notable example can be found in the final seguidillas of Pablo Esteve's *tonadilla El cuento del Prado con el italiano* (1780), where the singer-actress Vicenta Sanz defines perfectly how to embody a true *maja*:

> To see a *maja*
> that amazes the world,
> just by putting my hands akimbo,
> I hit the mark:
> a lot of swagger,
> a lot of *aire de taco*,
> plenty of *caramba*,
> lots of shoe stomping,
> walking with flair,
> spitting sideways,
> replying with sarcasm,
> looking with charm,
> her false little laugh,
> her ease of manner,
> her sly winking,
> her affected lisp,
> and cursing in a way
> that astounds the neighborhood.
> By doing all this
> with style and grace,
> of all the *majeza*,
> she embodies the elegance[27].

This attitude is captured in Meng's portrait of Doña Isabel de Parreño y Arce, the Marchioness of Llano (Fig. 1), painted during her time in Parma while her first husband, Don José Agustín de Llano, served as plenipotentiary minister. The portrait emphasizes her Spanish origins and illustrates the allure of *majismo* among certain members of the Spanish high aristocracy. In this portrait, the Marchioness notably wears a mask, underscoring the permeable nature of these identities that, although theoretically opposed—such as *majos* and *petimetres*—often coexisted and blended in practice[28].

Figure 1: Anton Raphael Mengs, *Portrait of the Marchioness of Llano* (*ca.* 1773), Madrid, Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando

However, the *majismo* does not provide a realistic and comprehensive portrayal of Spain. As Mesonero Romanos notes:

> they contributed to shaping in the *manolos* [or *majos*] of Madrid a distinct character, an original and highly unique type, though composed of Andalusian charm and swagger, Valencian liveliness, and Castilian seriousness and dignity[29].

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[25] «¡Es que es imposible que las italianas tengan el aire de taco de las españolas!».

[26] «Desenfado, desenvoltura, desembarazo» in REAL ACADEMIA ESPAÑOLA 1817, p. 32. See REJANE 2012, pp. 237-239.

[27] «Para ver una maja / que asombre el mundo, / en poniéndome en jarras / se logra el punto, / mucha gachonada, / mucho aire de taco, / muchos de caramba, / mucho de zapato, / andar con gracejo, / escupir de *lao*, / responder con sorna, / mirar con agrado, / su risita falsa, / su desembarazo, / su guiñar de ojo, / su ceceo falso, / y echar un voto / que asombre el barrio, / que haciendo todo esto / con aire y garbo, / de toda la majeza / se lleva el lauro», qtd. in NÚÑEZ 2008, p. 527.

[28] SÁNCHEZ-BLANCO 1991, p. 179.

[29] «fueron parte a formar en los manolos [o *majos*] madrileños un carácter marcado, un tipo original y especialísimo, aunque compuesto de la gracia y de la jactancia andaluzas, de la viveza valenciana y de la seriedad y entonamiento castellanos». MESONERO ROMANOS 1881, vol. 2, p. 25.

Therefore, the *majos* did not encapsulate all of Spain, but were primarily associated with the southern half of Spain, linked to the seguidillas[30]. Madrid's short theatre also sought to portray Spain's diverse regions, such as the Galician, Catalan and Valencian characters[31]. In essence, the *majos* align with a broader European interest in linking folk-rooted popular culture, including music and dance, with a collective lower class, regarded as embodying the nation's authentic values[32]. However, in Spain this phenomenon was interpreted through a centripetal lens, with the urban lower classes of the capital as the central paradigm.

Thus, linking these dances to a broad image of Spain is unrealistic, simplistic and stereotypical. Yet, their use in compositions created outside the country effectively conveyed a generalized view of Spain. Valencian composer Vicente Martín y Soler incorporated seguidillas and tirana airs in *Una cosa rara* (Vienna, 1786) and *La festa del villaggio* (Saint Petersburg, 1798) to evoke the Spanish countryside[33]. Similarly, the fandango embodies Spanish character in Gluck's ballet *Don Juan* and Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*[34], while the seguidillas appear in Beaumarchais' *Barbier de Seville*[35], as well as its operatic adaptation by Paisiello, albeit treated in a parodic manner[36].

These examples characterized Spain by its local color, distinct character, and emphasis on corporeality. This image closely aligns with portrayals by foreign philosophers and travelers, who often reinforced the enduring stereotype of Spain as a cultural 'Other' within Europe—likened to Africa or Asia due to its historical connections to Moors and Jews[37]. Spanish music was similarly reduced to a monolithic and vague category, with various musical styles labeled as 'native' based on perceived differences[38]. This oversimplification fueled stereotypes, particularly regarding the 'lasciviousness' of dances like the *fandango*[39]. The dance's direct partner interaction was seen as provocative, defiant and even erotic, as noted by the Baron de Bourgoing in his *Tableau de l'Espagne moderne* (1807), translated as *Modern State of Spain* (1808):

> The fandango is danced by only two people, who never touch one another, not even with their hands; but to see them provoke one another, by turns retrating to a distance, and advancing closely again; to see how the woman, and the moment when her languor indicates a near defeat, revives all at once to escape her pursuer; how she is pursued, and in her turn pursues him; how the different emotions which they feel are expressed by their looks, their gestures, and their attitudes – you cannot help observing, with a blush, that these scenes are to the engagements of Cytherea, what our military engagements are in time of peace to the true display of the art of war[40].

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[30] GARCÍA MATOS 1957, p. 32; PESSARRODONA 2011, p. 101. This aligns with the presence of *majismo andaluz* in late 18th-century short theatre related to Cádiz, with Juan Ignacio González del Castillo as its key representative. This reflects the growing tendency to associate Spain with the country's southern regions, a characteristic feature of the Romantic image of Spain. See SALA VALLDAURA 1998.
[31] RAMÍREZ 2022, PESSARRODONA 2011, GÁNDARA 2022.
[32] GELBART 2008.
[33] WAISMAN 2010; PESSARRODONA 2022, pp. 495-499.
[34] ETZION 1993, pp. 243-244; LINK 2008; BELLMAN 2012, pp. 81-82 and 85.
[35] LE GUIN 2007.
[36] PESSARRODONA 2021, pp. 131-136.
[37] BOLUFER 2016, pp. 455-456.
[38] TORRE MOLINA 2018, p. 333.
[39] ETZION 1993.
[40] Qtd. in LE GUIN, 2003, p. 100.

The fandango, along with the seguidillas—and likely the tirana, despite its unknown 18th-century choreography[41]—follows a choreographic pattern of *requerimiento y rechazo* (requirement and rejection), where partners alternately seek and reject one another's attention. This is expressed not only through the choreography—with *pasadas* (changing place) and *paseos* (promenades) circling the partner[42]—but also through body language and facial expressions, particularly eye contact. While this dynamic may not have been perceived as especially erotic in its original context[43], it likely appeared so to foreign observers, especially when contrasted with the distant formality of the minuet or the collective nature of country dances. Furthermore, the modal construction of fandango's music, marked by continuous flow and lack of clear resolution, may evoke unresolved sexual tension, enhancing its sense of eroticism[44].

The Spanish Body in Boccherini's contexts

Boccherini was familiar with this popular and theatrical Spanish context, evidenced by his collaboration with the popular playwright Ramón de la Cruz on the zarzuela *La Clementina* (1786) for the Duchess of Benavente[45]. He also authored five tonadillas listed in the Inventory of the Music Library of the Infante don Luis de Borbón[46]. However, to fully understand Boccherini's treatment of this 'Spanish body', it is essential to consider the various contexts in which his music was composed, performed, and circulated.

Most of Boccherini's career in Spain unfolded under the patronage of royal and aristocratic figures. From 1770 to 1785, he served the Infante Don Luis de Borbón, spending nine years in the small Castilian village of Arenas de San Pedro. After relocating to Madrid due to Infante's death in 1785, he worked under the Duchess of Benavente and the King Frederich William II of Prussia. Another notable patron was the Catalan nobleman Francisco de Borja de Riquer y de Ros, Marquis of Benavent, an amateur guitarist who commissioned Boccherini some pieces for guitar between 1796 and 1799, leading to the adaptation of earlier works like the *Fandango*[47]. Simultaneously, Boccherini sought to disseminate his works abroad, primarily through Paris-based publishers such as Venier, Le Chevardière, Bailleux, and Sieber during a first phase (1767-1779), and later (from 1798 onwards) especially with Ignaz Pleyel, with whom he maintained an intensive correspondence between 1796 and 1799[48].

Additionally, much of his output from the 1780s and 1790s for the King of Prussia may have been composed earlier, during his time at the court of the Infante Don Luis[49]. While the *Fandango* is primarily associated with the Infante[50], the other two pieces are preserved

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[41] PESSARRODONA 2022, pp. 473 and 477.
[42] RUIZ MAYORDOMO – PESSARRODONA 2017, pp. 637 and 650-654.
[43] Casanova himself noted this in his *Mémoirs* regarding the fandango (1774, qtd. in ETZION 1993, p. 236): «[...] What a dance! It burns, it inflames, it carries away. Nevertheless, people tried to assure me that the majority of Spanish men and women who dance it mean no harm by it. I pretended to believe them».
[44] RUIZ MAYORDOMO – PESSARRODONA 2017, pp. 654-658.
[45] FERNÁNDEZ-CORTÉS 2012.
[46] LABRADOR 2016, p. 121.
[47] MANGADO 2003, op. 529-532. On the sources and the transmission of these pieces, see MORABITO 2014.
[48] RASCH 2007, PP. 64 and 102-112.
[49] LABRADOR 2014, 2016.
[50] LABRADOR 2016, p. 111.

in manuscripts attributed to the King of Prussia, though they may have been composed prior to this association. Consequently, determining the exact composition dates and the intended audience of these works is challenging.

A notable anecdote from Boccherini's tenure as conductor of the Duchess's orchestra offers insight into the opinion about this 'Spanish body' in certain contexts of his production. In a letter dated 19 December 1787, the English traveler William Beckford describes a party at the residence of the wealthy Portuguese Pacheco in Madrid[51]. During the event, Beckford, dressed as a *majo*, enthusiastically began dancing the bolero. Boccherini, who had been lent to Pacheco by the Duchess as a special favour, responded to him with the following words:

> If you dance and they play in this ridiculous manner, I shall never be able to introduce a decent style into our musical world here, which I flattered myself I was on the very point of doing. What possesses you? Is it the devil? Who could suppose that a reasonable being, an Englishman of all others, would have encouraged these inveterate barbarians in such absurdities? There's a chromatic scream! There's a passage! We have heard of robbing time: this is murdering it. What! Again! Why this is worse than a convulsive hiccup, or the last rattle in the throat of a dying malefactor. Give me the Turkish howlings in preference; they are not so obtrusive and imprudent[52].

This anecdote may align with the views of certain contemporary Spanish intellectuals who, following some Enlightenment principles, advocated for societal reforms and criticized popular expressive forms for perpetuating excesses and prejudices[53]. This critique is exemplified by Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos's *Memoria para el arreglo de la policía de los espectáculos y diversiones públicas y sobre su origen en España* (1790):

> What are our dances but a miserable imitation of the free and indecent dances of the lowest plebs? While other nations bring gods and nymphs to dance onstage, we present *manolos* [i. e. *majos*] and greengrocers[54].

In fact, despite some attendees' sympathy for the bolero, Boccherini's patroness expressed similar sentiments to the traveler[55]. Boccherini, with his commercial acumen, might adjust his opinion on Spanish tunes to align with his audience's expectations.

Something similar could happen with Boccherini's target outside Spain, that is, the aristocratic court of Prussia and the collective and indetermined audience of Pleyel's editions. Boccherini dared to send these Spanish-nature works to the Prussian court: in April 1788 the string quintet op. 40 nº 2, featuring the *Fandango*[56]; in August 1792 the string quartet op. 44 nº 4 *La tiranna*; and probably in October 1795 the string quintet op. 50 nº 3 with the *Minuetto a modo di sighidiglia spagnola*. The collection of Frederick William II also included the

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[51] MANGANI 2010, pp. 2220-2221.
[52] BECKFORD 1834, vol. 2, p. 226.
[53] MANGANI 2010, pp. 2220-2224.
[54] «¿Qué otra cosa nuestros bailes que una miserable imitación de las libres e indecentes danzas de la ínfima plebe? Otras naciones traen a danzar sobre las tablas a los *dioses* y las *ninfas*; nosotros a los *manolos* y *verduleras*». JOVELLANOS 1999.
[55] BECKFORD 1834, vol. 2, p. 318. Perhaps for this reason the zarzuela *La Clementina* lacks clear musical allusions to the *sonsonetes populares*.
[56] PARKER 2007, p. 38.

quintet Op. 30 nº 6 (1780), with *La musica notturna delle strade di Madrid*[57]. The Prussian court could have some interest in Spanish music, as could be deduced from the performance of Vicente Martín y Soler's opera *Una cosa rara* at the Court Opera of Berlin on 26 and 28 June 1789 for the visit of Princess Friderike Sophie Wilhelmine of Prussia[58], and a German version had already been staged at the National Theatre of Berlin less than a year earlier[59].

Boccherini also sent the string quartet op. 44 nº 4 and the string quintet op. 50 nº 3 to the editor Ignaz Pleyel on 14 November 1796, as part of a first set for potential publication (Opp. 44-54), likely hoping their Spanish influences would appeal to a broad audience[60]. However, he was more cautious with a latter set that included Op. 40 nº 2 and Op. 30 nº 6. In a letter dated 10 July 1797, Boccherini discouraged Pleyel from publishing the latter, stating: «This piece is totally useless, and even ridiculous outside Spain. Listeners will never be able to understand its meaning, any more than the executants will be capable of playing it as it should be played»[61]. Ultimately, Pleyel did not publish these Spanish-influenced works, likely due to concerns over their accessibility and comprehension for non-Spanish audiences[62].

Therefore, Boccherini's treatment of this 'Spanish body' emerged within a complex social and ideological context. As an Italian composer living and working in Spain for various patrons, he navigated differing perspectives while also considering the commercial appeal of his works beyond Spain. Let us briefly examine how Boccherini engages with this multifaceted 'Spanish body' in these three representative pieces.

The fandango

Boccherini's celebrated fandango appeared firstly in his string quintet op. 40 nº 2 G341, and in the quintet with guitar nº 4 G448, featured for the Marquis of Benavent in 1796—the version under analysis. The former's manuscript, held at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France (Bibliothèque-musée de l'opéra, magasin de la Réserve, RES-508 (18)) mentions that this fandango was inspired by Padre Basilio, the Brother Miguel García—a contemporary guitarist, organist, and composer. However, it bears resemblance to other 18th-century instrumental fandangos, including those featured in tonadillas[63]. Similar to these works, Boccherini's movement consist of a series of brief four-measure segments resembling variations, alternating the iv—occasionally vii—and I degrees in an ambiguous Phrygian mode with the raised third, also interpretable as a minor mode without resolution (Ex. 1), though Boccherini concludes with a perfect cadence in D minor. This musical construction emphasizes the semitones between chords, creating a continuous musical flow, interrupted

[57] LABRADOR 2014, p. 42.
[58] HENZEL 1994, p. 43, and MARTIN 2001, p. 122.
[59] *Ibidem*, p. 122.
[60] COLLI 2019, p. xlvii.
[61] Qtd. in LE GUIN 2003, p. 101.
[62] Op. 40 and Op. 50 were published in Paris by Janet & Cotelle around 1822 (see RASCH, 2007, pp. 117, 126), while Op. 44 No. 4 remained unpublished until 1952 (BOCCHERINI 1952). See PARKER 2007, p. 3.
[63] ETZION 1993, p. 247-248; LOMBARDÍA 2020, p. 188; PESSARRODONA forthcoming.

only by four measures in F major that recall fandango's *subida* ('rise')[64]. This *subida*-like passage marks the beginning of the second, much longer, and repeated section of the piece, characterized by intricate interplay between the instruments and a showcase of the performers' virtuosity, particularly in the soloistic passages for guitar and castanets (Fig. 2).

Example 1: scale and main chords of Boccherini's *Fandango*

First section	mm. 1-12	Introduction.
	mm. 12-48	Succession of small four-measure groups like 'variations'.
Second section (repeated)	mm. 49-55	Short *subida* as an interlude.
	mm. 56-210	Set of 'variations' with more virtuosic and soloistic passages in longer sections: - Protagonism of the cello: mm. 77-107 - Guitar: mm. 120-134 - Castanets (instead of cello): mm. 151-177
	mm. 211-214	Ending, with a conclusive cadence in D minor.

Figure 2: structure of the *Fandango* of Boccherini's quintet with guitar nº 4 G448[65]

The features of the second section, especially the solo castanet passage in the cello part,[66] indicate that it was likely conceived as a chamber work for attentive listening rather than for dance. In fandangos the castanets are played exclusively by the dancers while they dance. Here, however, Boccherini appears to spotlight the castanets—an element implicit in the fandango—elevating them to the role of a 'sixth instrument' within the quintet.

Notwithstanding, this fandango draws inspiration from authentic dancing gestures, particularly in the first section, much more danceable than the second section. The most characteristic dance gesture of the 18th fandango, as evidenced by the remaining repertoire of the Bolero School, is the *paso de fandango* (fandango step). This step is identical to the *paseo de seguidilla* (seguidilla's promenade), the primary step in seguidillas, bolero, *sevillanas*—a kind of seguidilla—and similar dances[67]. Briefly described, this consisted of a three-part movement, alternating between oblique forward and backward motions with a change of angle, ornamented by a *topetillo,* a subtle touch of one foot's heel to the other (Ex. 2). The key difference between the *paseo de seguidilla* and the fandango step lies in the change of emphasis: while the latter is anacrusic, with its initial impetus occurring on the last beat of the measure in the *paseo de seguidilla*, this movement simply concludes the step, setting up the next[68]. The anacrusic nature of the fandango step imparts a distinctive gestural quality to the dance, accentuating the characteristic semitones between measures. The

[64] *Ibidem,* p. 182. The *subida* shares the characteristic harmonic sequence found in the accompaniment of the sung *copla* (refrain) in fandangos de verdiales and similar: E-C-F-C-G-C-F-E. See BERLANGA 2000, p. 180. In the *Fandango del reto* the *subida* is danced faster at the end of the piece.
[65] For this scheme and the musical examples I have used BOCCHERINI 2008.
[66] Regarding the castanets, the Spanish-inflected indication of *castagneteo* [*sic*] in the manuscript from the Library of Congress (Washington, Ms. M. 574)—a source likely derived from the copy Boccherini sold to the Marquise of Benavent, and thus closest to he original—suggest that this reflects Boccherini's original intent. See MORABITO 2007, pp. 221.
[67] RUIZ MAYORDOMO – PESSARRODONA 2017, p. 645.
[68] *Ibidem.*

descending melody typically found in the fandango's introduction can be seen as an amplification of this fundamental gesture (Ex. 3).

Example 2: rhythmic outline of the fandango step[69]

Example 3: mm. 11-16 of the *Fandango* of Boccherini's quintet with guitar nº 4 G 448

A notable gesture in the fandango step is the *topetillo*, which occurs on the second beat (Ex. 2). This gesture has been a defining feature of Spanish dance since at least the 17th century, possible linked to the emphasis on the second beat in ternary meter, a hallmark of Spanish music very common, for instance, in contemporary tonadillas[70]. This gesture creates a polyrhythm between 3/4 and 6/8, commonly found in fandango music, and plays a crucial role in shaping Boccherini's composition from the very beginning (Ex. 3).

Another interesting dancing gesture is the *3+1 combination* of three steps followed by a distinct resolution step, often reflecting a parallel musical structure. This pattern is traceable in Spanish dance treatises dating back to at least the 17th century and is also present in earlier forms of bolero dances[71]. This 3+1 structure frequently recurs in Boccherini's fandango, particularly in the first part, where it resolves using an 'Andalusian' cadence in the final measure (Ex. 4).

Example 4: mm. 24-28 of the *Fandango* of Boccherini's quintet with guitar nº 4 G 448

Boccherini's engagement with these dance gestures in the more instrumental second section is particularly intriguing, especially in his use of the cello's glissandos, which are clearly inspired by the characteristic descending semitones and the initial descending melody typical of the fandango (Ex. 5).

Example 5: mm. 82-91 of *Fandango* of Boccherini's quintet with guitar nº 4 G 448

In this instance, Boccherini appears to draw on an intimate embodied knowledge of the fandango, crafting a composition that exhibits a high degree of verisimilitude. The work is grounded in authentic dance gestures and seems potentially danceable, particularly in the first section, suggesting that Boccherini himself may have been familiar with dancing the fandango. However, he adapts the dance to a more concert-oriented setting, as evidenced by the more instrumental and soloistic approach in the second section. This piece not only reflects Boccherini's admiration for Spanish music and dance, but may also been designed to appeal to the Marquis of Benavent's tastes and proficiency on the guitar.[72]

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[69] With the explanation of the *paseo de seguidillas* or *paso de sevillana* of MATTEO 1993, p. 169.
[70] PESSARRODONA 2015, p. 109-113.
[71] PESSARRODONA – RUIZ MAYORDOMO 2016, p. 87.
[72] Regarding the role of the guitar in this piece, it is noteworthy that *editio princeps* (BOCCHERINI – ALBERT n. d.) includes the indication «con scherzo di mano a lo majo» in the final chords of the guitar, referring to a *majo* style of playing. However, this marking originates from the manuscript at the Bayerische Staatsbibliotek (Mus.N. 122,599), and, as suggested by other variations in this source, it corresponds to a posterior version. See MORABITO 2007, p. 220.

Seguidillas

In the *Minuetto a modo di sighidiglia spagnuola*, Boccherini adopts a distinct approach to Spanish dance. The composition retains the minuet's inherent danceability, while incorporating elements of the seguidilla. This is particularly evident in the opening measures (Ex. 6), which resembles the *salida* (exit, when the dancers take place to dance)[73] of the *Seguidillas manchegas* included in Narciso Paz's *Collection des meilleurs airs nationaux espagnols*, published in Paris in 1813 (Ex. 7)[74]. While preserving the melodic shape and anacrusis characteristic of *salidas,* Boccherini adapts this material to the square phrasing of the minuet, expanding it from three to four and ultimately to eight measures, incorporating mordents clearly inspired by typical seguidillas' ornamentations. The distinctive offbeat melody of the seguidillas is balanced by the emphatic first chord on the downbeat, essential for executing the first *demicoupé* of the minuet step[75].

Examples 6: mm. 1-8 of Boccherini's *Minuetto a modo di sighidiglia spagnuola*[76]

Example 7: Beginning of Paz's seguidillas manchegas (introduction and *salida*)[77]

The second sentence (Ex. 8) offers a fusion of seguidilla dancing gestures within a minuet. Upon comparison with the *coplas* (refrains, where the dancers dance in their positions)[78] of the *Seguidillas madrileñas de escuela* (Ex. 9)—the oldest choreography of seguidillas in the Bolero School, danced with the aforementioned *paseo de seguidilla*—a noticeable similarity emerges in terms of rhythmic structure and melodic profile, particularly clear in the syncopation created by the *topetillo* motif—a quaver and a crotchet. Boccherini emphasizes this by alternating the VI and V degrees of C minor, infusing Phrygian and *fandango*-like sonorities[79].

Example 8: mm. 13-16 of Boccherini's *Minuetto a modo di sighidiglia spagnuola*

Example 9: *coplas* of the *Seguidillas madrileñas de escuela*[80]

The central passage of the trio features a variation of the motif of the *paseo de seguidillas*, accentuating the syncopations associated with the *topetillo* gesture through powerful ascending octave leaps and evoking the *fandango*-like harmonic construction but over a more tense C Phrygian Dominant, which resolves into F minor[81] (Ex. 10).

Example 10: mm. 37-41 (trio) of Boccherini's *Minuetto a modo di sighidiglia spagnuola*

In essence, Boccherini achieves a captivating synthesis of two seemingly opposing worlds: the cosmopolitan, galant, and upper-class minuet and the popular and lower-class

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[73] Regarding the structure of the seguidillas, see GARCÍA MATOS 1957, p. 32.
[74] PAZ 1813, vol. 1, p. 2.
[75] RUIZ MAYORDOMO – PESSARRODONA 2013B, pp. 2283-2285.
[76] For these exemples I have used BOCCHERINI - VOLBACH n. d.
[77] PAZ 1813.
[78] GARCÍA MATOS 1957, p. 32.
[79] *Ibidem*, pp. 2286-2287.
[80] GARCÍA MATOS 1957, p. 127.
[81] *Ibidem*, pp. 2291.

seguidillas. While this piece conforms to the structure of a minuet and is inherently danceable as such, dancers familiar with seguidillas would perceive its underlying gesturality and the intriguing dialectic between these theoretically contrasting realms. An audience lacking this embodied knowledge—such as the Prussian court—would still sense a distinctive rhythmic, melodic and harmonic interpretation of the traditional minuet, rendering the piece both entertaining and exotic.

The tirana

The string quartet *La tirana* represents a markedly different approach to Boccherini's depiction of the 'Spanish body'.[82] The tirana was an Andalusian dance song that emerged in Madrid's stages in the late 1770s and rapidly gained popularity across Spain[83]. Although the choreography of 18th-century tiranas remains unclear[84], the first movement of this *quartettino* lacks a distinctly danceable quality, presenting a 'dismembered' body transformed into an abstract sonata form.

The main theme of the first movement is clearly inspired by early tiranas' stanzas, with iambic rhythmic gestures that contrast with an accompaniment emphasizing the downbeat and a hemiola joining two octosyllabic verses of the song[85] (Ex. 11 and 12). However, Boccherini diverges from the original tiranas, above all regarding the ornamentations. The most typical 18th-century tiranas embellishment is a thrilled motif, comprising four semiquavers alternating between a pitch and its upper neighbor. This embellishment often fills long notes or extends the ends of stanza's phrases, creating a sense of melodic dissolution, as exemplified in the stanza of Pablo Esteve's tonadilla *El amante apocado y dama quejosa* (Ex. 12)[86]. Boccherini's piece opens with a motif inspired by the tirana's characteristic 'thrilled' device, mimicking the undulating shape of tirana embellishments, but in a distorted manner. Unlike the traditional use of this device to conclude phrases of stanzas[87], Boccherini employs it to initiate it. He further alters the motif by using it anacrusicly, shifting emphasis away from the typical downbeat in the bass. Additionally, Boccherini slurs all notes of the motif, directing the music toward the first downbeat, whereas tirana melodies generally stress the second beat[88]. Furthermore, he inverts the typical tirana embellishments by featuring the main note and lower neighbor instead of the upper neighbor typical of the characteristic 'slow trill' that closes phrases[89].

Example 11: mm. 1-8 of Boccherini's string quartet op. 44 nº 4, first movement[90]

[82] For a more detailed analysis of this piece, see PESSARRODONA, in process of publication.
[83] PESSARRODONA 2022, pp. 480-487.
[84] *Ibidem*, pp. 477-478.
[85] The first type of tirana's stanzas according to PESSARRODONA 2022, 479-486 and 493.
[86] *Ibidem*, p. 489.
[87] *Ibidem*, pp. 494-495.
[88] *Ibidem*, p. 486.
[89] *Ibidem*, pp. 489 and 494.
[90] For this example I have used BOCCHERINI 2019.

Example 12: first measures of the stanza of the tirana from Esteve, *El amante apocado y dama quejosa* (voice and bass only)[91]

Much of the further musical discourse revolves around this central motif that distorts tirana ornamentations, repeating it insistently at a *Presto* tempo, far exceeding the usual *Allegretto* pace of the tirana. Moreover, throughout the piece, Boccherini exaggerates and distorts the typical rhythmic patterns of the tirana and incorporates Phrygian-like sonorities in an altered harmonic context. While the piece could be seen as a stylization of this popular dance song, Boccherini's treatment of tirana elements suggests a deliberate caricature, possibly aligning with the critical view of Spanish music and dance found in certain Enlightenment and aristocratic circles, particularly that of the Duchess of Benavente, Boccherini's patroness.

Conclusions

These pieces show three different ways Boccherini approaches the Spanish body: (1) a realistic fandango, though adapted for listening rather than dancing; (2) a synthesis of seemingly contrasting dances and corporeal worlds like the minuet and seguidillas; and (3) a 'dismembered' tirana transformed into a sonata form with a possible parodic intention.

We can infer that Boccherini drew inspiration from genuine dancing gestures, skillfully adapting them for various purposes—instrumental virtuosity, enhancing danceability, or adding a touch of parody. Thus, it seems that Boccherini, like the Marchioness del Llano, navigates his use of the same 'mask', putting it on or removing it depending on the context. This reflects the complex dynamics surrounding the stereotyped representation of the Spanish body during this period, both within Spain and abroad, manifesting the contemporary dialectical tension between the Enlightenment's universal ideals and its shadows.

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