



solis



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Domenico Scarlatti arrived in Sevilla, Spain to take up his post as chamber-virtuoso to the Princess Maria Barbara, the year she was married to Prince Fernando of Asturias on February 3rd, 1729.¹ Scarlatti's appointment had been the direct result of his visit to Lisbon 10 years earlier when his prowess at the harpsichord had been brought to the attention of Joao V, King of Portugal.² As part of her dowry, Scarlatti also served the Princess as her music master and taught the Prince.

With Scarlatti's arrival in Spain, the extraordinary late flowering of his genius which had already begun in Portugal, came to fruition through the Spanish sonatas for harpsichord. Spain had a pronounced effect on Scarlatti. It fascinated him and made such an impression on him that the experience marked a catastrophic change in his sonata-writing.³

Spain was a country of extremes but since Scarlatti's youth had been spent in a Spanish dominated country, Portugal, he was prepared for the paganism, Moorish sensuality and strict Counter-Reformationist bigotry that he encountered. Indeed, he was not overcome by the despair and melancholy that often beset foreigners on their first visit to Spain. Rather the country filled him with a dynamism that found its full expression in his Spanish sonatas.⁴

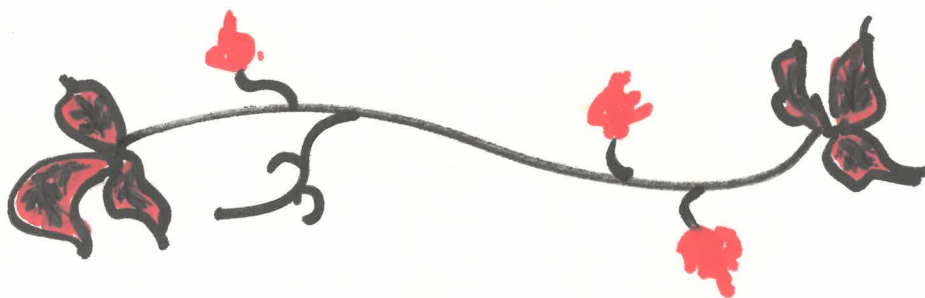
The royal household to which he had been assigned had a long history of macabre horror most particularly attached to Carlos II, last of the Spanish Hapsburgs. Fed at the breast until age 20, this "heraldic ghost"⁵ amused himself by catching butterflies and haunting the Royal Vaults where he would command the caretakers to open the coffins so that he could compare his features and long flaxen hair to the mouldering remains of his ancestors.⁶ That he lived to be 40 is one of the great curiosities of Spanish history.

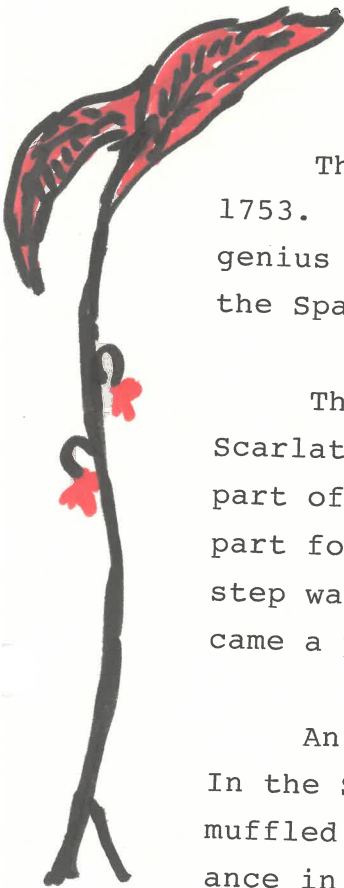


Spanish court etiquette was extremely rigid and inflexible. The situation into which Princess Barbara had been thrown lent itself easily to fall into melancholia and madness. Music became her chief solace.⁷ It also became a means of keeping her husband from going mad and nurturing his love for music. On each evening the sound of Scarlatti's harpsichord reflected the elaborate arabesques and oriental traits of the Arabic-influenced Alcázar, strolls under Moorish arches, intoxicating rhythms of the castanets or melodies of the ancient music of Andalucía.⁸

Music as an antidote to melancholy became an important part of Scarlatti's life experience during his years in Spain and can be heard as such in many of the Spanish sonatas. The perpetual Spanish compulsion to confront life with death and death with life was the antidote. In Sonata K490, Scarlatti made use of the baile de cofradió, a dance step used in the transportation of holy relics from one shrine to another by hooded half-naked flagellants. The slow processional step was also used by those marked out by the Inquisition for the auto de fes generally held in the plazas.

High tragedy was not meant to be the intentional topic of Scarlatti's Spanish sonatas. The experience of living in Spain and his great capacity to understand Spanish tragedy which created both charm and terror were ultimately responsible for the strange madness that, at times, seemed apparent in the sonatas.⁹





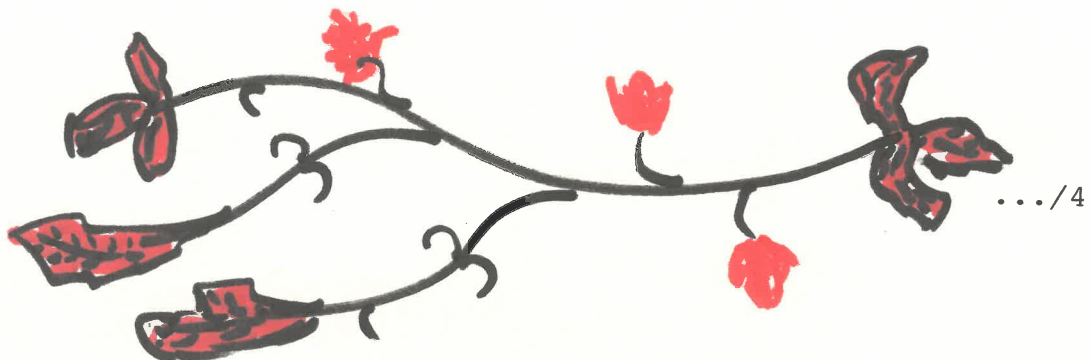
The Spanish sonatas comprise those written between 1752-1753. Not only do these sonatas herald the approach of Scarlatti's genius and full maturity but they also establish a tradition for the Spanish sonata which continued late into the 19th century.

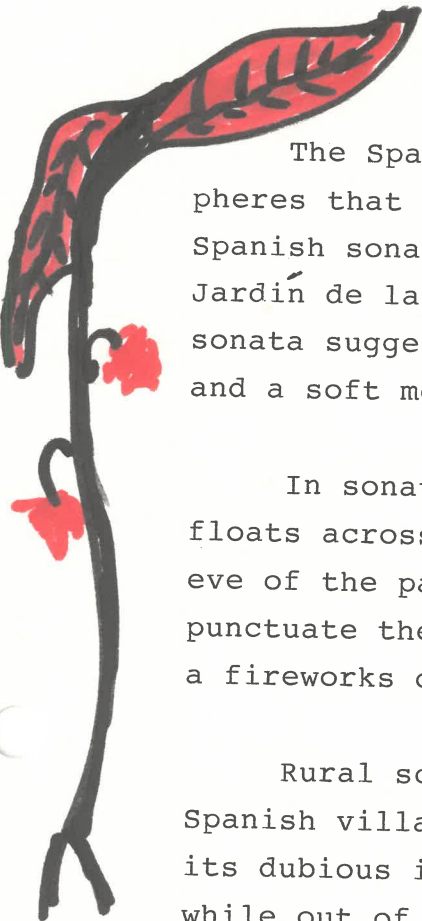
The strongest element of the Spanish sonatas was its form. Scarlatti made a change to the form by cutting into the second part of the structure and using the initial motif from the first part for contrast (ie. development). With the change an important step was taken towards the first movement sonata form which became a part of the tradition of the Spanish sonata.

An additional element was the use of instrumental effects. In the Spanish sonatas they are more noticeable. Clicking castanets, muffled drums and even an old Galician bagpipe makes its appearance in K513, the Christmas sonata. Allusion to other instrumental effects such as the tambourine or guitar brings a rustic quality to the sonatas.

A new lyric vein began to surface in the Spanish sonatas along with a certain quality of introversion. There were more slow movements and some were used as introductions to the pairs of sonatas Scarlatti was so fond of writing. Still startling, the old flamboyancy was now tempered with mellowness.¹⁰

The music of the Spanish sonatas conveyed scenes that ranged from courtly, sweet to savage, violent ones. Their alegria or gaiety is made more intense because of the undertones of tragedy that now permeate them. Most of the Spanish sonatas are expressive, melancholic or meditative. There are some though, that burn with passion.¹¹





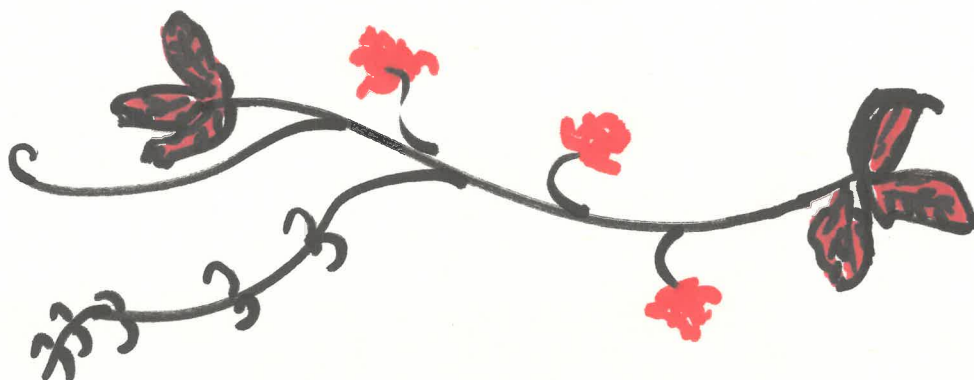
The Spanish sonatas also display a wide variety of atmospheres that are so typical of the country itself. The very first Spanish sonata K206, for example, evokes the gentle twilight of the Jardín de la Isla which is near the royal palace at Aranjuez. The sonata suggests a combination of refined delicacy, royal splendour and a soft melancholy.¹²

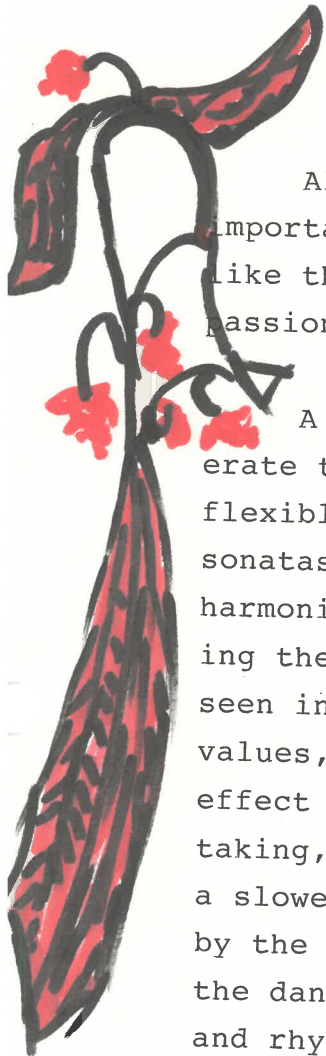
In sonatas K358 and K477 a royal procession with its horncalls floats across the woods and through the open windows on a summer's eve of the palace at Aranjuez. In sonata K525, artillery salvos punctuate the brilliant Spanish night while the Royal Band puts on a fireworks display.

Rural scenes are unmistakable in sonatas K406 and K407. The Spanish village band can be heard marching into the town plaza with its dubious intonation and squealing wind instruments in sonata K406 while out of tune bugles are obvious in K407.¹³

None of the elements in the Spanish sonatas are mere loose-knit impressions hastily set into a piece of program music. On the contrary, they have been distilled and assimilated with all the fine discipline Scarlatti had learned from his ecclesiastical masters and given out again in a pure musical language that far exceeds harpsichord virtuosity.¹⁴

A major influence in Scarlatti's Spanish sonatas is the dance. It is possible with some knowledge of choregraphy to observe the link between some of the elements Scarlatti uses in his sonatas and various dance gestures or movements as found in the dances of Spain.





Always well-defined in Spanish dance, rhythm is the most important element in Scarlatti's Spanish sonatas. The rhythms, like those of the dance, range from light palpitation to frenzied passion.

A device in Spanish dance employed to slow down or accelerate the rhythm over the basic unchanging beat is known as the flexible. To create the dance device of the flexible in the sonatas, Scarlatti increases or decreases the movement of his harmonies. The flexible is also achieved in the sonatas by changing the note values. An excellent example of this procedure is seen in sonata K491. After a mixture of eighth and sixteenth note values, the rhythm breaks into a continuous eighth note value. The effect of altering the note values is meant to recall the breath-taking, sudden chatter of the castanets as they begin again after a slower section of the dance. Sometimes a flexible effect either by the castanets or by the dancer announces the final stretto of the dance. The stretto occurs just before the close of the dance and rhythmic time values are doubled or tripled.¹⁵

One of the outstanding characteristics of Spanish dance is alternating rhythm, most especially the opposition of duple and triple meters. Alternating rhythm is one of Scarlatti's richest devices in the Spanish sonatas. In sonata K532 he divides a 3/8 bar so that the resulting 3 groups of two sixteenth notes produces cross accents against a normal group of two. A particularly interesting feature of alternating rhythm that abounds in Spanish dance is syncopation. Examples of syncopation may be found in sonatas K532 and K521.¹⁶

Another important element of Spanish dance rhythm which Scarlatti utilizes in his sonatas is rhythmic polyphony. Rhythmic polyphony in the dance is based on interaction and independence between the rhythms which are going on at the same time. Rhythmic polyphony takes place between the hands and feet of the dancer, between two dancers or the guitarist and dancer. Each rhythm pursues



its own course seeking to avoid simultaneous accents while interacting one with the other. A classic example of rhythmic polyphony may be found in the beautiful, sensuous Spanish dance from Andalucía known as the Soleáres. Oldest of all the gypsy dances, the Soleáres is danced to guitar and song accompaniment. The following is an example of the Soleáres rhythmic polyphony.

Hands: 123 123 123 123

Feet: 123 123 123 123
 LRL LRL LRL LRL

The underlined numbers represent accents.

Scarlatti's sonata K263 features rhythmic polyphony of the Spanish dance.¹⁷

A movement essential to Spanish dance is the Dance Phrase and is similar to the melodic phrase in music. In order to preserve the choreographic aspect of the dance, the dance phrase often takes precedence over the breath or melodic phrase in Scarlatti's sonatas. To follow the dance gesture through so that the dance phrase is sustained or completed, the melodic phrase is continued. Scarlatti achieves the technique in two ways:

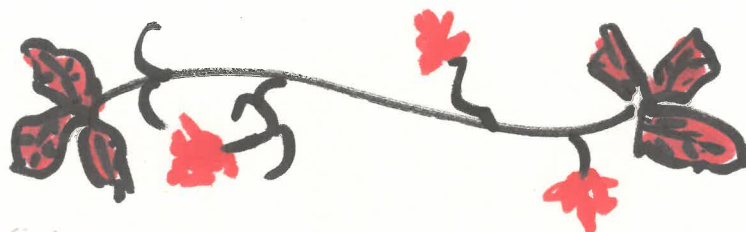
(a) by clearly dividing one phrase from another

(b) by changing the direction of the melodic line.

The latter affects the character as well as the dance gesture itself within the overall dance phrase.¹⁸

One of the most unmistakable poses in all Spanish dance is the bien parádo. This is a stop which occurs at the end of a copla or it may introduce a dance such as the Sevillánas. To execute a fine bien parádo will draw olés from an appreciative audience. To fail will draw tomatoes and garlic.

As with the bien parádo in Spanish dance, Scarlatti allows

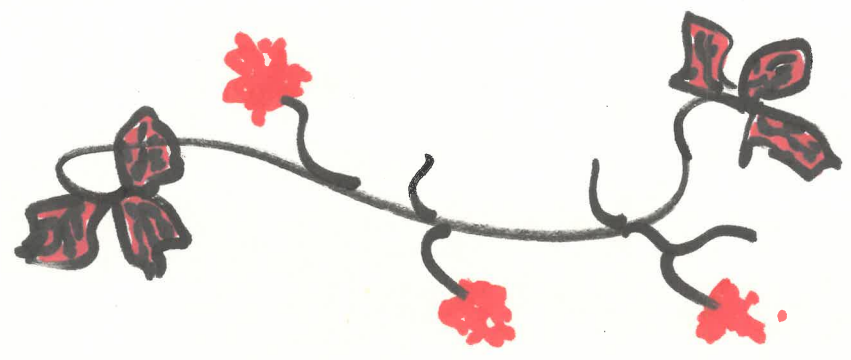


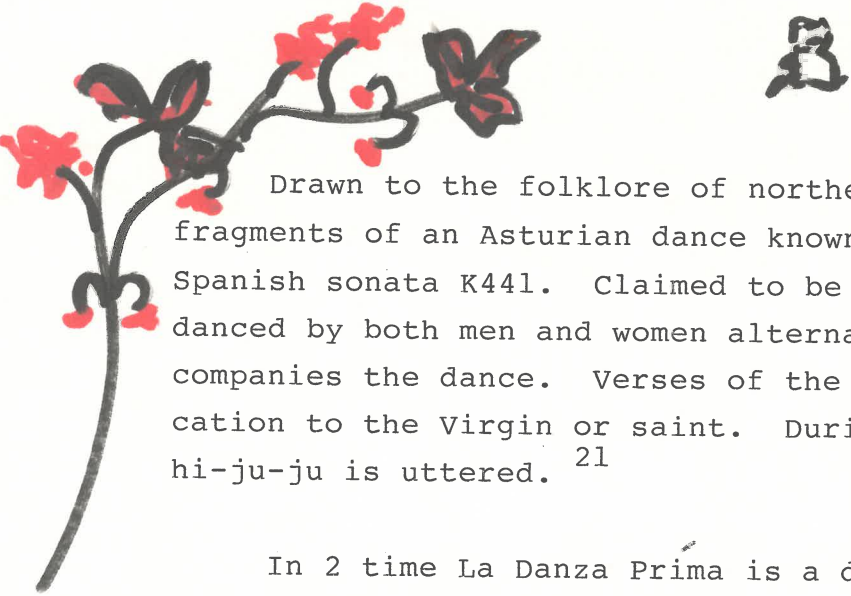
the musical discourse in the Spanish sonata to flow along, builds it to an intense point then abruptly brings it to a halt or stop on a long note or a pause. The pause is often equal to a whole bar and clearly refers to the sudden freezes or *bién parádos* of the dance where music and dancers stop and hold a particular position or chord.

The beautiful sensuousness or languid line that is found in all Spanish dance was actually influenced by the pianoforte itself in the Scarlatti Spanish sonatas. The instrument was well represented at the court of Queen Barbara. Models of it had even come from Florence. The pianoforte had a shorter keyboard than the harpsichord and this made it quite impossible to execute some of the sonatas Scarlatti had written, upon it. Since the sound was also different, this led Scarlatti to try to create atmospheres that were more vague, soft and fluid. The result was a certain languidity that has been compared to evocative dance movements in the Spanish dance. Other musical inventions on the pianoforte recall the bare mesas of desolate Castillian plains.¹⁹

From among the dances that appear to have had the most influence on the Spanish sonatas, the *jóta* has, without doubt, had the greatest impact. Danced in the north of Spain, particularly in Navárra and Aragon, the *jóta* is an energetic dance in ternary form. Accompanying instruments are guitars while rhythm is provided by Basque tambours, castanets and a triangle. The rhythm is always in 3 time and the tonality is always major. The harmonic structure is very clear with no ambiguities.²⁰

Many of the Spanish sonatas of Scarlatti reflect characteristics of the *jóta* such as its 3/8 time, triplets in sixteenth notes and a downward descent of the rhythmic figure which is so typical of the *jóta*. Examples of an original *jóta* by Raoul Laparra and one or two sonatas by Scarlatti may be found in the appendices for comparison.





Drawn to the folklore of northern Spain, particularly Astúrias, fragments of an Asturian dance known as La Danza Prima appear in the Spanish sonata K441. Claimed to be the oldest dance in Spain, it is danced by both men and women alternating in a circle. A ballad accompanies the dance. Verses of the ballad are preceded by a dedication to the Virgin or saint. During the dance the druidical call hi-ju-ju is uttered. ²¹

In 2 time La Danza Prima is a dance of great happiness, intended to express the inner spiritual joy of the participant and is not meant for the admiration of the spectator. Specimens of an original dance of Asturias and the corresponding Scarlatti sonata K441 appear in the appendices.

Giving the impression of Spanish footwork so typical of Spanish dance are Scarlatti's use of repeated notes in his Spanish sonatas. The Zapateádo, an old gypsy dance, is the best example of Spanish footwork and it is possible to imagine the movement of the feet known as en place in the sonata K435. At bar 15, the repeated notes combined with register changes convey the idea of the destaque, a raised leg movement. At bar 24, the pattern of the repeated notes is altered to indicate finger movements, extended to represent extension and tension of the fingers which are an important part of Spanish dance. ²²

Scarlatti's writing revealed his comprehension of the elements of Spanish dance in his sonatas. With many of his Spanish sonatas he was able to anticipate later Spanish composers such as Granádos and de Falla.





Although Domenico Scarlatti never played the guitar, he fell deeply under its spell. It was undeniably the most outstanding influence which played the greatest role in defining the characterization of the Spanish sonatas. In these particular sonatas Scarlatti made countless references to the guitar, as did later Spanish composers, Albéniz, de Falla and Granádos.

The 16th century had seen the emergence of the lute as the favourite instrument of the aristocracy. Spain was the notable exception with respect to this. Since the lute had been brought to Spain in the 9th century by the Arabs and had therefore become associated with the Arabs and their oppressive rule, the Spanish did not so readily take to the instrument. They did, however, appreciate the music that had been written for the lute and began to search for another instrument upon which music for the lute could be performed. Their search led them to the four double-stringed instrument called the guitárra. In this instrument, the Spanish saw the potential replacement of the lute.²³

There were, of course, problems to be overcome. The four double-stringed guitarra could not meet the requirements of complex, polyphonic music. The guitárra was the instrument of the common people and thereby disdained by the nobles. To resolve these problems the guitárra was given 6 double strings and tuned in the manner of the present day 6 stringed guitar with the exception of the 3rd string which was tuned half a tone lower. The instrument was renamed the vilhuela. Now the Spanish aristocracy had an instrument that was capable of producing polyphonic music and was distinct from the instrument of the masses, the guitárra.²⁴



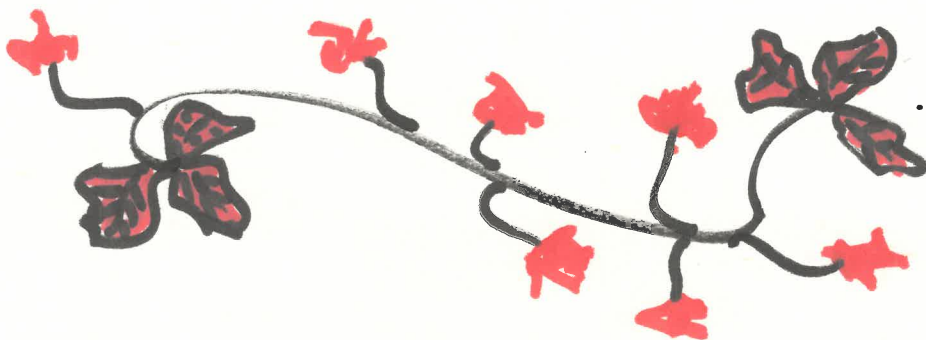
The 5 stringed Spanish guitar made its appearance in the 17th century after the decline of the vilhuela. It became very popular and there were many treatises written on how to play the Spanish guitar. The instrument was distinguished from other guitars for its two types of playing:


- (a) the *rasgüedo* - most used in accompaniment and to mark the rhythm and tonality
- (b) *punteado* - a more subtle style of playing the individual notes.²⁵



The first influence of the guitar to be found in Scarlatti's Spanish sonatas with particular reference to the melody is the descending tetrachord or Andalucian Mode as it is also known. Based on the solfege syllables, lah, si⁴, doh⁴, re, mi, it forms an important part of cante jondo or cante flamenco and all Andalucian melodies, in its ascending curve. The descending contour follows the syllables mi, re, doh⁴, si⁴, lah.²⁶ Examples of the Andalucian Mode may be seen in *Nana*, a popular Spanish folk-song by Pedrell as well as his *Malagueña*, in *El Pano Moruño* by Manuel de Falla and at bar 25 of Scarlatti's sonata K492.²⁷

A marked element of cante jondo or the Primitive Song of Andalucía associated with the guitar is that of obsession. Primarily a small modulation between two notes a semitone apart, the obsessive repetition of the two notes produces an atmosphere that borders on incantation. Examples of obsessive repetition are extremely frequent in Scarlatti's Spanish sonatas, attesting to the strong influence of the guitar and may be seen at bar 26 of sonata K492 and again at bars 36-41 of sonata K481. In the latter sonata Scarlatti also offers an extraordinary situation whereby enharmonic modulation is combined with the element of obsession.²⁸





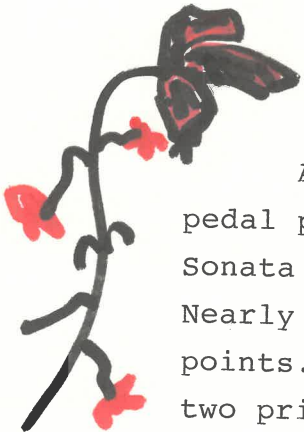
The influence of the guitar is well represented in Scarlatti's rhythms, especially through the two principle methods of playing the Spanish guitar. The first method, *rasguédo*, consists of repeated chords made up of 5 or 6 notes which are savagely thrummed all at once. The notes are rarely changed. The effect produces modal inflections characteristic to Andalusian music and an internal pedal point.

There are two ways to play *rasguédo* in Spain. *Guitarra latina* is played in the form as described above while *guitarra morisco* is *rasguédo* played through the melody. In *Andalucía*, the preferred method is *rasguédo guitarra latina*. Since in the interpretation of the dark spirit of *cante jondo*, the fingers represent 5 swords, the guitar takes on the symbology of the heart. The vicious strumming of the strings expresses the heart wounded by the swords.

An example of barbaric *rasguédo* may be found in the Scarlatti sonata K280 while an example of *rasguédo guitarra morisco* is seen in sonata K260. The essential feature in both these sonatas is the conservation of certain notes that is associated with *rasguédo*.²⁹

The Spanish composers of the 19th and 20th centuries have followed *rasguédo* procedures of Scarlatti with great success. Falla affirms the Spanishness of Scarlatti with his use of *rasguédo* and internal pedal effects in his Polo from *Las Sietes Canciones*.

The second method of playing the Spanish guitar is known as *punteádo* whereby different notes are played in succession as opposed to being savagely thrummed all at the same time. A distinct characteristic of *punteado* is a downward then upward curve which begins on the dominant note and ends on the tonic. An example of *punteado* can be found at bars 95-96 of the Sonata in D minor K516.³⁰

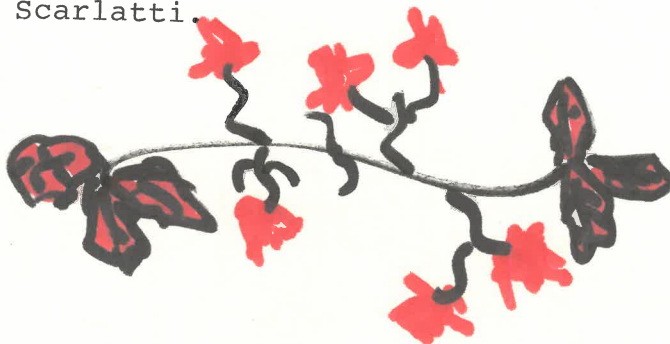


Another favourite device that Scarlatti liked to use was pedal point. Definitely inspired by the open strings of the guitar, Sonata 26 was conceived almost entirely in terms of the guitar. Nearly half of its 148 bars contain unmistakable references to pedal points. The first half of the work is dominated, for example, by two principle pedal points, the V and the V of the v. ³¹

When pedal points are carried over and several elements sound simultaneously, this is known as blurring on the guitar. Scarlatti used the technique when he did not want a strong cadence, to continue a phrase or to eliminate the suggestion of finality. ³² Sonata K105 provides an example of blurring at bar 137.

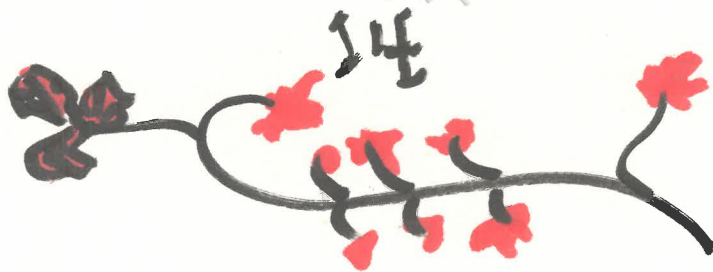
The introduction of the acciaccatura to Spanish guitar playing not only added to its popularity but enriched the formula both harmonically and melodically. Played melodically the acciaccatura is struck at the same time as the note which it precedes. The melodious acciaccaturas of Scarlatti frequently were preceded by yet another note and formed a part of the same chord as the intended ornament. Generally Scarlatti used the acciaccatura on the beat and not before.

When played harmonically the ornament is struck at the same time as the harmony note either above or below but simultaneously in order to impart a less definite sound. ³³ The acciaccatura became one of the most original characteristics in the harmonic language of Domenico Scarlatti. Sonata K10 is an example of the use of the acciaccatura. One notes that the acciaccatura is far less violent in the sonatas of Scarlatti than in the compositions of Manuel de Falla. Falla's first use of the acciaccatura occurs in El Pano moruño from Las Sietes Canciones. In the example to be found at the end of this paper, the chord is literally attacked by the acciaccatura and tends to take on a more violent role than the ornaments of Scarlatti.



The final influence of the guitar to be mentioned imitates the swift lowering of the closed hand upon the strings of the guitar. The action produces a dry sound and a resonance which abounds in echoes. The technique results in a sound that is savage, impetuous and so typically Spanish that it cannot possibly be mistaken for anything other than a part of the Spanish temperament. Sonata K422 is an example of this last influence.³⁴





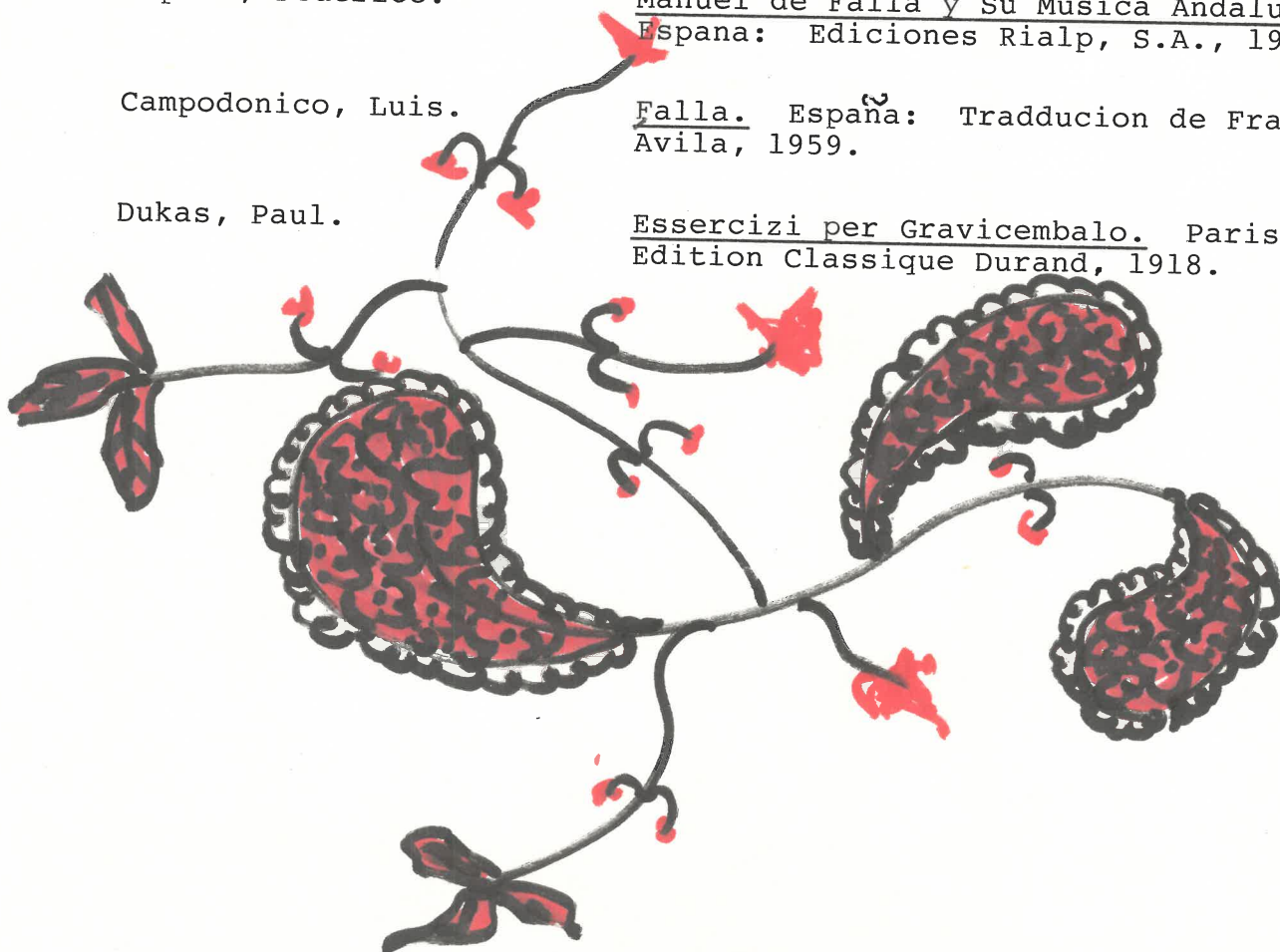
Domenico Scarlatti, like El Greco, although he was not born in Spain, was an important part of Spanish history. The Spanishness of Scarlatti has been recognized by the Spanish nationalist musicians in the last century as well as the current one. Manuel de Falla (1876-1946) whose contribution of works has been constituted the most valuable in Spanish music since Tomas Luis de Vittorio, affirmed without hesitation, the spirituality that permeated the works of Domenico Scarlatti. There is no doubt that this great composer of the 18th century inaugurated a new concept of technique and without his innovations and his original contributions, it is doubtful that music for the keyboard would have evolved to where it has today, in Spain.



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¹ Sacheverell Sitwell,

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1970, p. 78.

² Ibid, page 79.

³ Ralph Kirkpatrick,

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⁴ Ibid, page 82.

⁵ Sacheverell Sitwell,

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(New York: Books for Librairies Press),
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⁶ Ibid, page 88.

⁷ Ralph Kirkpatrick,

Domenico Scarlatti. (New Jersey: Princeton
University Press), 1953, p. 87.

⁸ Ibid, page 82.

⁹ Ibid, page 90.

¹⁰ Ibid, page 166.

¹¹ Ibid, page 114.

¹² Ibid, page 166.

¹³ Ibid, page 202.

¹⁴ Ibid, page 115.

¹⁵ Ibid, page 296.

¹⁶ Ibid, page 296.

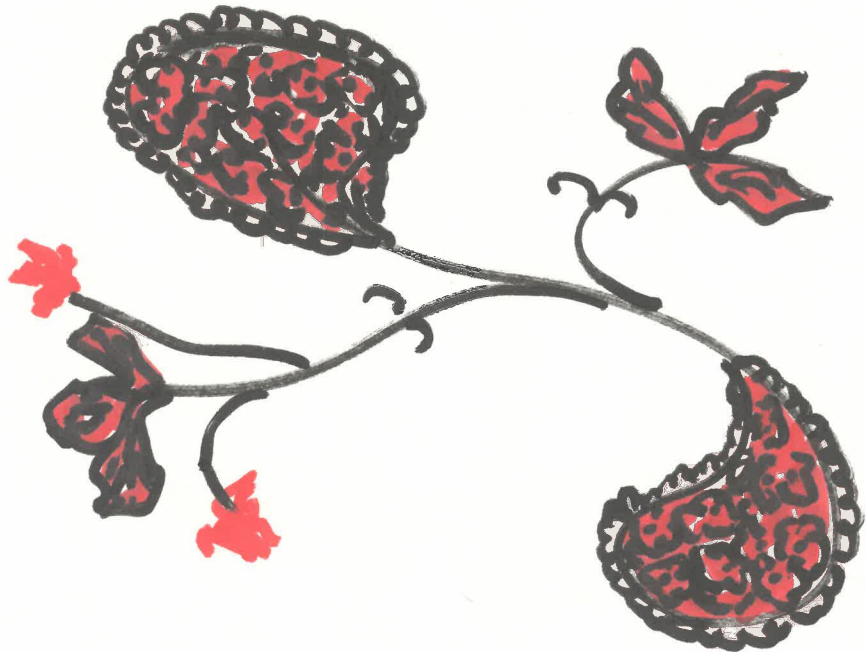
¹⁷ Ibid, page 304.

¹⁸ Ibid, page 311.

¹⁹ Ibid, page 311.

²⁰ Anna, Ivanova,

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²¹
Ibid, page not known.

²²
Richard Boulanger,

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²³
Ibid, page 107.

²⁴
Ibid, page 107.

²⁵
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²⁶
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²⁷
Ibid, pps. 109-110.

²⁸
Ibid, page 111.

²⁹
Ibid, page 113.

³⁰
Ibid, page 114.

³¹
Ralph Kirkpatrick,

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³²
Ibid, page 215.

³³
Paul Dukas,

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³⁴
Massimo Bogianckino,

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Influences of the Dance

Sonata K 449

Baile de cotrio rhythm

Scarlatti

Bar 95
Sonata K 491

Mixture of B, D continuous of

The Scarlatti
Breg. Parado

Bar 14
Sonata K 521

Syncope

Scarlatti

Bar 62
Sonata K 263

Rhythmic Polyphony

Scarlatti

Bar 9
Sonata K 435

Example of Descender-Raised & lowered 1/2 Movement

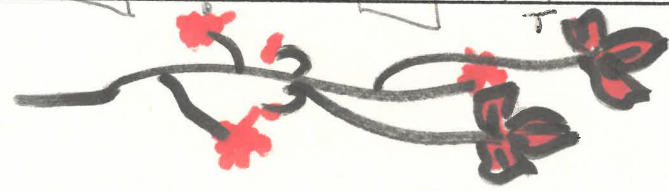
Scarlatti

Bar 15
Sonata K 435

Et. si on place

Scarlatti

Bar 24



Jota Characteristic downward descent of Triplets Raso Kaparra

Musical notation for Jota, featuring a triplet of eighth notes with a downward arrow indicating the characteristic descent.

Sonata K7

Scarlatti

Musical notation for Sonata K7 by Scarlatti, showing a triplet of eighth notes.

Bur 41

Ornamental Asturian Dance (concerto)

L. Martinez

Musical notation for Ornamental Asturian Dance by L. Martinez, featuring a triplet of eighth notes.

Sonata K441

Scarlatti

Musical notation for Sonata K441 by Scarlatti.

Nana

Descending Andalusian Modes

Peñal

Musical notation for Nana, featuring a descending scale and a triplet of eighth notes.

Malagueña

con los o-jos a bien-tos Co-mo las ll-e-bres Peñal

Musical notation for Malagueña, featuring a triplet of eighth notes.

Sonata K492

Descending Andalusian Mode

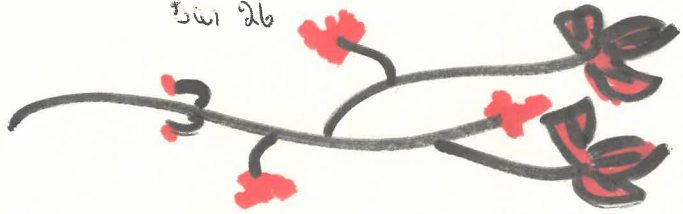
Obsession

Scarlatti

Musical notation for Sonata K492 by Scarlatti, featuring a descending scale and a triplet of eighth notes.

Bur 25

Bur 26





Sonata K 280

Resonando NB: ton is conserved in

Scarlatti

Sonata K 260

Punteado y guitarra morisca

Scarlatti

Sonata K 105

* Phrygian Cadence - Blurring

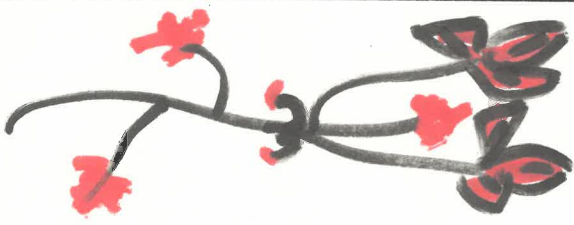
(abundant) Scarlatti

Bar 134 (IV) V (-IV^b) V (-IV^b) V (-IV^b) V (-IV^b) V I

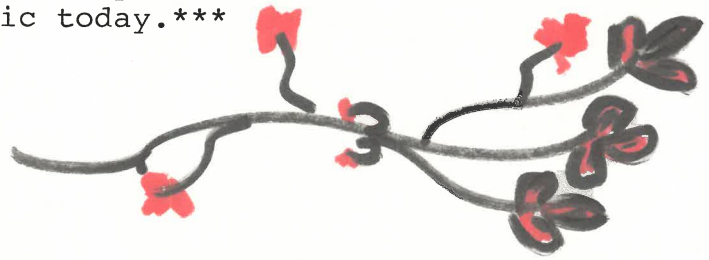
Sonata K 412

Imitation of swift lowering of closed hand on the strings

Scarlatti etc



The Phrygian cadence over a diatonically moving bass continually turns up in the Spanish sonatas of Scarlatti and is heard in all Spanish music today.***



Ralph Kirkpatrick,

Domenico Scarlatti. (New Jersey: Princeton University Press), 1953, p. 221.

COMMENTARIOS

Excellent

20/20

Total =	Listening Test	36/40
	Essays	38/40
	Assignment	20/20
		<hr/>
		94/100

A+

Bravo!