

CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE KEY OF *DANZAS DE NEGROS*: ON THE STANDARD TONALITIES OF BLACK DANCES IN EARLY MODERN HISPANIC MUSIC

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The so-called “*bailes de negros*” (Black dances) found in the repertoire of Spanish and Latin American music from the end of the fifteenth century through the nineteenth century are distinguished by their festive air, their frenetic movements, their lasciviousness, and their lack of inhibition. In the musical sources, the melodic mode which supports these dances is, with some exceptions, principally in a major key. The predominance of the major key in Spanish compositions of music for the *bailes de negros* raises the question of whether—and which—extra-musical factors might explain such a marked preference for the major key in these musics.

I. Introduction

Recent years have seen an increasing recognition of the importance of Africanist elements in the makeup of music of the colonial Americas, as well as in certain genres of Spanish music.¹ Rhythm has been highlighted

¹ The term “Africanist” as applied to music within the Western canon denotes the music and dances of Africa, along with their American descendants in diaspora, such as blues, ragtime, jazz, gospel, soul, and rap. Translator’s note: in English, usage of the terms “Black,” “African,” “Africanist,” and “diasporic” in relation to musical genres and concomitant issues of authorship denote nuances which do not translate into Spanish, in which the term “*negro*,” meaning “negro” or “Black,” has a markedly different valence. We have therefore opted to leave “*bailes de negros*” or “*negro*” in italics, or to use primarily “Africanist” or “of the African diaspora” in place of the Spanish term “*negro*.”

as a fundamental aspect and as a point of departure for early modern *negro* musics, but none of these analyses have studied their melody and harmonic possibilities. These last two elements are especially salient to any process of drawing accurate conclusions about what is Africanist in the musics born in the colonial Americas and, by extension, their influence in Spanish music and, later, flamenco. Further, it is important to ask ourselves whether there exist any forces beyond music that impact the tonalities chosen to harmonize these baroque *negro* musics; I will propose here that we consider early modern theories of emotion.

With respect to the importance of *negro* musics within Spanish music and, by extension, within Andalusian and flamenco music, a number of scholars have argued that they have served as a basis for the emergence of important styles such as, for example, the fandango and the tango; it is widely accepted that these forms, whether born in continental Africa or in diaspora, are Africanist.² But I consider it important to be precise in understanding the extent to which such *negro* musics are Africanist. Without denying that these musics do contain an important Africanist element, we should nonetheless inquire as to what degree. Perhaps rather than considering forms such as the fandango and tango to be new styles, we should consider them to be enrichments of previously-existing musical forms. Were this the case, it would be inaccurate to call these musics, which later engendered new musical forms in both Spain and the Americas, “African”—as if they were direct transplantations of African styles—in the strictest sense.

Further, in examining the process of *mestizaje*, the intermixing of musical material of different ethnic and cultural provenance, which engenders these musics, it is important to also take account of Native American elements, whose significance is only lately being studied.

In order to be able to establish a hypothesis that would explain which elements of African and Native American musics have been retained in

²See, for example, Eloy Martín Corrales, “Los sonos negros del flamenco: sus orígenes africanos,” *Revista la Factoría*, no. 12 (junio-septiembre, 2000): 1–6, <https://revistalafactoria.org/articulos/2018/6/8/los-sonos-negros-del-flamenco-sus-origenes-africanos>; and the recent documentary by Miguel Ángel Rosales, *Gurumbé. Canciones de tu memoria negra* (2016). I disagree with Eloy Martín’s assessment that the musics and rhythms termed “*negro*,” as in “*bailes de negros*” (Black dances) are specifically Africanist. I further disagree with Martín’s implication—which, however laudatory, is made without citing any musicological sources—that flamenco’s origins are African, as for example in this statement: “...Perhaps this process, still poorly understood, has led flamenco scholars to overlook the African origins of the music that interests us here.”

Spanish music and later in flamenco, I will survey the characteristics of African and Indigenous American musics, using major authorities in these fields as sources, and will compare them with Spanish music. Then, looking at styles linked to Spanish music in the Peninsula and in the New World, I will study possible modes of transmission for these musics, focusing on the origins of the tonalities of the “*danzas de negros*,” or Black dances. Finally, I will offer some conclusions.

II. Characteristics of African Music

Leading authorities point out that it is impossible to generalize about the musical characteristics of African music. As musicologist Kofi Agawu states, it is an error to consider Africa as having a homogeneous musical corpus. This misconception, Agawu adds, arises from our Western idea of what music is:

A continent with a population of upward of 400 million distributed into over forty-two countries and speaking some thousand languages is virtually unrecognizable in the unanime constructions that some researchers have used in depicting African music.³

Another issue, highlighted by ethnomusicologist Kwabena Nketia, is that we cannot consider Africa as a continent isolated from the rest of the world.⁴ Nketia points to the influence of Islam, and to contacts with China and India before the era of European colonization (roughly from the sixteenth through the nineteenth centuries). The introduction of Arabic instruments, along with vocal techniques such as projection of the voice and melodic ornamentation, Nketia observes, enriched both African and Arabic cultures.⁵

³ Kofi Awawu, “The Invention of ‘African Rhythm,’” *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, vol. 48, no. 3 (1995): 384. On the “Blackness” of flamenco, and on modes of performing “darkness” and “impurity” in flamenco, Meira Goldberg outlines an interesting dance historical account in her book *Sonidos Negros. On the Blackness of Flamenco* (Oxford University Press, 2019).

⁴ Kwabena Nketia, *The Music of Africa* (London: Victor Gollanz, 1992 [1^o Ed. W.W. Norton & Company 1974]), 6.

⁵ Nketia, *The Music of Africa*, 9, 11, cites Henry George Farmer, “Early References to Music in the Wetern Sudan,” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1939): 577–78; “Music,” in *The Legacy of Islam*, ed. Sir Thomas Arnold and Alfred Guillaume (London: 1931), 358–59; and Helen Hause, “Terms for Musical Instruments in the Sudanic Languages: A Lexicographical Inquiry,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Supplement 7 (1948), 23.

There were also musical exchanges between Africa and Europe. Nketia explains that in some areas such as present-day Ghana, where the music of J. S. Bach was used to this end, Western music was introduced as part of efforts at Christian evangelism. And by the same token African musics were present at European courts, exchanges which produced new musical models with African melodies and rhythms adapted to Western harmonies.⁶

Notwithstanding, ethnomusicologist Simha Arom explains that, despite the differences in culture, language and musical systems that distinguish African peoples from each other, the “source and social function” of sub-Saharan African musics, their modes of transmission, and the structural principles upon which they are based, as for example in their “rhythmic organization,” present a certain uniformity which characterizes this broad geographic area.⁷

Ethnomusicologist Arthur M. Jones adds that, although African musical traditions share certain instruments with European traditions, and, as Europeans do, sing with call-and-response, African music is in reality very distinctive.⁸ Jones criticizes researchers who theorize about musical practices of which they have no firsthand, practice-based experience. Further, the rhythms of African music, Jones argues, cannot be transcribed with the European time signature system.⁹ The percussion that accompanies dance, for example, is so subtle that a given rhythmic pattern, played with the wrong timbre or note quality, becomes a different pattern altogether.¹⁰

And Jones argues that with regard to transcribing and understanding African music:

When reducing the African culture to music on paper we shall not expect it to look quite like our own music. We shall not be able to draw bar-lines right down the score as is our Western custom. To do so would be to produce a score showing accents and rhythms which would be a travesty of what the African played. Unfortunately this is what we instinctively hanker after: we would like to go on using our usual technique and force

⁶ Nketia, *Music of Africa*, 14–17.

⁷ Simha Arom, *African Polyphony and Polyrhythm. Musical Structure and Methodology*, Cambridge University Press (Cambridge: 2004[1st Ed. 1991]), 4–5.

⁸ Arthur Morris Jones, *Studies in African Music* (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), vol. 1, 1–5.

⁹ In this regard, Jones (*Studies in African Music*, 6) critiques E. M. von Hornbostel, “African Negro Music,” *Africa Journal of the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures*, vol. 1, no. 1(1928).

¹⁰ Jones, *Studies in African Music*, 11.

the African music to fit into our preconceived frameworks: on these grounds some musicians may at first sight resent the scores we have written.¹¹

II.1. Technical Aspects of African Music

The generic technical aspects which distinguish African music are, in terms of scales or modes, a general use of pentatonic scales with neither semitones nor microtones, although African musics do occasionally use hexatonic and heptatonic scales, as well as semitones.¹² Another distinguishing aspect of African music is the use of tonal language: a melodic change can signify a different word.¹³ African systems of scales have neither a tonic note as the principal sound, nor is there a hierarchic organization between the degrees.¹⁴

In Africa, polyphony is cultivated in the form of *heterophony*, *superposition*, and *homophony*.¹⁵ Counterpoint and the use of *ostinatos* while other musicians improvise are also possible. But the principles which determine the vertical order of this type of polyphony, Arom states, do not depend on a bass, nor on the concept of harmony itself.¹⁶

In terms of rhythm, Nketia explains that Africa presents a greater homogeneity in its organization than it does in its features.¹⁷ Given that African music tends toward percussion and toward percussive textures, it understandably emphasizes rhythm, which compensates for the absence of melody or the lack of melodic elaboration. Rather, African music is

¹¹ Jones, *Studies in African Music*, 14. I think that Simha Arom's transcriptions, in *African Polyphony and Polyrhythm*, are the most correct.

¹² On semitones: Arom, *African Polyphony and Polyrhythm*, 23. Jones (*African Music*, 116) writes that most of the music which he studied in Africa is not pentatonic. On microtones: Kwabena Nketia, *African Music in Ghana*, (London: The Arts Council of Ghana, 1962), 34. According to the Ghanaian usage of pentatonic scales, any note can be used as the final note, although it is possible to discern some final notes that tend to be preferred over others. On hexatonic and heptatonic scales: Nketia, *African Music in Ghana*, 119ff.

¹³ The tones of words and phrases are used in constructing melodies: Nketia, *African Music in Ghana*, 47; and Arom, *African Polyphony and Polyrhythm*, 11–12.

¹⁴ Arom, *African Polyphony and Polyrhythm*, 219.

¹⁵ Arom, *African Polyphony and Polyrhythm*, 20. See also Nketia, *The Music of Africa*, 123; and Jones, *African music*, 217.

¹⁶ Arom, *African Polyphony and Polyrhythm*, 221.

¹⁷ Nketia, *The Music of Africa*, 125–35. Jones (*African Music*, 49) also lists many of these features.

characterized by multilinear rhythms, crossed rhythms, and polyrhythms, hemiolas, sequences in a (2:3) relationship, and pulses marked by hand-clapping, pieces of wood being struck against each other, and castanets.¹⁸

In terms of the organization of African vocal music, it tends to be either antiphonal, call and response in groups of two to four, or responsorial, a soloist alternating with a chorus.¹⁹ African music is characterized by a marked preference for beginning the song either before or after major pulse or downbeat, meaning that the song moves outside the confines of the regulatory pulse.²⁰ In this regard, African song is similar to traditional Spanish music and to flamenco, although the latter, though regulated by time signature, also feature harmony.

African vocal music, Arom observes, rarely presents tonal accents.²¹ This lack of harmonic tension has important consequences for the order and perception of rhythmic structures. Sung melodies are not subject to a regular pattern of accentuation; they do not require a strong accent complemented by one or more weak accents. This is a very important difference between African and European vocal music, including flamenco, which is conditioned by the metrical accent of both rhythm and text. The disposition of durations in African music, Arom explains, is based on the same principle as medieval *tactus*; it is not based on contrasts between weak and strong accents.²² Thus African vocal music is not structured by measures as classical music is, but rather in pulsations. For that reason, I agree with Arom when he argues that the transcription of African music in the manner of Western music, with the indication of measures, is an error.²³

¹⁸ Flamenco and other traditional Spanish musics also present this singular feature. The use of phrases with double-triple motifs conveniently spaced is very common in Ghana. The simplest of these is the sequence of three followed by two handclaps, or vice versa (3/4-6/8 or 6/8-3/4) which create two sections of equal duration. Each section has six eighth-notes (6+6). These two sections made up of five handclaps can also be irregular, in that the second section can be shorter than the first (7+5 notes). Nketia, *African Music in Ghana*, 84.

¹⁹ Nketia, *The Music of Africa*, 139–140; Arom, *African Polyphony and Polyrhythm*, 18. The responsorial format is not exclusive to Africa; it is practiced in India, in Europe and in Jewish observance for at least two millennia. See Philip Tagg, “Open Letter: ‘Black Music,’ ‘Afro-American Music,’ and ‘European Music,’” *Popular Music*, vol. 8, no. 3: *African Music* (Oct. 1989), 285–98.

²⁰ Nketia, *African Music in Ghana*, 88.

²¹ Arom, *African Polyphony and Polyrhythm*, 19–20.

²² Arom, *African Polyphony and Polyrhythm*, 180.

²³ Arom, *African Polyphony and Polyrhythm*, 184.

The fact that we can occasionally notate certain African musics using measures similar to those of Western music, as for example the amalgamated 6/8-3/4 of Spanish music, or similar combinations, does not indicate that these are meaningful musical transcriptions.²⁴ Nonetheless, neither do the fundamental distinctions between African and European musical systems preclude musical transmission between them. Structural parallelisms or similarities make possible a combination of rhythmic and melodic elements of Spanish music, including flamenco, with African musical systems, although, as I will presently describe, in the Spanish context the musical basis or cushion for this intermixture is Spanish and not African.²⁵ That is, the *mestizaje* or syncretization between Spanish and African forms would be based on the melodic and harmonic structures of Spanish music, combined with African melodic (though perhaps to a lesser degree) and rhythmic elements. The same model could be applied to Native American musics. That is, despite the fact that some African music can be transcribed with the alternating measures of 6/8 and 3/4 that are so characteristic of flamenco, we should not conclude that this flamenco rhythm is African in origin. Rather (and turning our attention briefly from rhythm to melody), Spanish music is based on diatonic scales organized around a fundamental sound.

Nketia explains that African melodic structures are based on sequences of intervals, and he outlines five structural types of melody which are not related to Spanish melodies present in either flamenco music or other Spanish forms.²⁶ With respect to the modalities and structures of African songs, Nketia indicates that musical phrases condition those which follow them.²⁷ That is, the first phrase sets the conditions for the entire composition: “each successive phrase is conditioned by what precedes it, and every phrase anticipates the progression of the phrase that follows it.” Almost any note in a scale may appear as the final note in a given specific context. This is very different than Spanish music, which generally ends in the tonic of the final chord or, less frequently, in the 3rd or the 5th of that chord.

²⁴ With regard to this, Jones points out that, although Africans might practice what we would conceive of as a 3/8 or 6/8, whether in melody or in drumming, they do not seem to recognize the characteristic tendency of those time signatures. Jones, *African music*, 28.

²⁵ See, for example, Arom's transcriptions (*African Polyphony and Polyrhythm*, 241ff.) based on twelve pulses or beats.

²⁶ Nketia, *Music of Africa*, 147.

²⁷ Nketia, *Music of Africa*, 153ff.

With regard to the structures of strictly rhythmic African vocal music meant to accompany dance, Nketia describes groupings in cycles that he defines as “timelines,” which would be equivalent to two measures in the Western musical system.²⁸ Handclaps or another idiophone mark a structural pattern of pulses grouped into basic time units of two or three eighth or sixteenth notes. Africans do not think of the handclaps as being accented, according to Jones. Once begun, the values of the handclaps neither stretch nor diminish; “They remain constant and they do not impart any rhythm to the melody itself.”²⁹

Arom explains that the rhythmic structure of Central African music depends essentially on very short patterns which are based on the division of time into cyclic units of equal duration, and which are subject to an isochronous pulse.³⁰ “This pulse may be realized or implied; and against it are set rhythmic patterns consisting usually of sounds of unequal duration.” The superimposition of several of these patterns, as for example when played by several drummers, Jones continues, creates “a subtle and complex polyrhythm.”

Regarding the formal structures of musical pieces, they are characterized by cyclical structures which generate numerous improvised variations; Arom describes “repetition and variation” in Central Africa, and this technique is found in other sub-Saharan African musics as well.³¹ “This principle excludes the process of development,” Arom continues, which is “fundamental to European art music, but is totally unknown in African musical thought.”

II.2. On the Origins of Western Ways of Measuring Music and Rhythm

Simha Arom reflects on the Western approach to measuring music and on its application to the study of the music of other cultures.³² Prior to the second half of the seventeenth century, Arom explains, music was ordered according to very different tenets than the alternation between weak and

²⁸ Nketia, *Music of Africa*, 168ff. The “standard pattern” or “time-line” was first used by Nketia in 1962: *African Music in Ghana*, 78. This is an element regulating many types of African music, as Gerhard Kubik points out in *Theory of African Music, Vol. 1*. (F. Noetzel, Wilhelmshaven: 1994), 45.

²⁹ Jones, *African Music*, 21; Jones’s emphasis.

³⁰ Arom, *African Polyphony and Polyrhythm*, 20.

³¹ Arom, *African Polyphony and Polyrhythm*, 17.

³² Arom, *African Polyphony and Polyrhythm*, 196. Arom critiques the polymetric transcriptions of authors such as Jones on pp. 208–11.

strong accents which apply today. Citing French composer and music historian Maurice Emmanuel, Arom notes that during the sixteenth century, the bar lines which today delineate measures were not used.³³ The sixteenth-century custom was simply to mark time, nothing more. A piece's intrinsic structure would lead to the appearance of measures, which could be discerned by listening to the music, but which did not appear in the musical notation. This older modality demonstrates that it is possible to conceive of rhythm based on beating out time, without those beats being organized into measures.

Emmanuel explains that the development of dance in Europe favored the introduction of bar lines, and that this development contributed to slowing advances in rhythm during the Renaissance. In less than a century, the bar lines delineating measures had become dogma. After the era of J. S. Bach (1685–1750), although *tactus* continued to be practiced, it had lost its role in governing rhythmic organization.³⁴

II.3. Africa: Music Based on *Tactus*

Arom states:

The African musician thus proceeds neither by splitting, as in Western musical practice, nor by conjunction, as in the ancient Greek metric system. He neither divides a basic unit (such as a measure) up into a given number of beats, nor starts with a *chronos prōtos* of minimal duration, of which larger groups are multiples ... These rhythmic and melodic figures are nearly always cyclic formulae. There is no intermediate level between the regulating pulsation and the temporal organisation of the figure as a whole.³⁵

Arom argues that these are the basic premises necessary to understanding African music as a whole, and he points out that only one characteristic is fundamental to African music: the periodic repetition of a simple rhythmic cell. Further, because there are no contrasting strong and weak accents, African music does not align with the Western concept of syncopation.³⁶

³³ Maurice Emmanuel, "Le rythmed'Euripide à Debussy," *Compte rendu du Ier Congrès du Rythme tenu à Genève du 16 au 18 août 1926* (Geneva: A. Pfrimmer ed.: 1926), 124; and *Histoire de la langue musicale*, vol. II, (Paris: H. Laurens, 1928), 433.

³⁴ Arom, *African Polyphony and Polyrhythm*, 197.

³⁵ Arom, *African Polyphony and Polyrhythm*, 206–7.

³⁶ Arom, *African Polyphony and Polyrhythm*, 207.

II.4. The “Timeline” or “Standard Pattern” of African Music: An Example for Musical Transposition

The standard pattern or timeline designates “a constant point of reference by which the phrase structure of a song as well as the linear or metrical organisation of the phrases are guided.”³⁷ Kofi Agawu explains that:

The sum of durational values in the standard pattern is 12 eighth notes. Although an empirical image of actual performances will inevitably reveal slight discrepancies—and thereby undermine our confidence in what we hear as an unequivocal cycle of 12—the consensus among scholars nowadays is that 12/8 meter accurately reflects African musicians’ conception of the pattern. The number 12, in turn, brings into view additional properties, some of them developed by analogy with compositional constructs and systems that depend on a modulus of 12, including scale theory and 12-tone theory.³⁸

Nonetheless, although we can abridge and thus notate an example of African music in the Western musical idiom, as Agawu says, this does not imply that an African musician conceives of music as being structured by the supposed 12 eighth notes, in which one of the most frequent patterns is: 2 + 2 + 1 + 2 + 2 + 2 + 1:

Standard pattern:



Kofi Agawu explains that the standard patterns arise out of and are conditioned by dance. Dance and measure are strongly linked.³⁹ Nonetheless, he points out that in Southern Ewe dances

...the feeling of a beat occurs at or near the dotted quarter level, not the eighth-note level. Although moments of intensity in performance may be marked by animated movement, no dancer thinks in cycles of 12 when interpreting the standard pattern. The evidence of the rate at which the dance feet move is that [of] 4, not 12 ...⁴⁰

³⁷ Nketia, *African Music in Ghana*, 78.

³⁸ Agawu, “Structural Analysis,” 10.

³⁹ Agawu, “Structural Analysis,” 18–19.

⁴⁰ Agawu, “Structural Analysis,” 19.

Agawu provides examples notating the general perception of pulse:⁴¹

Standard pattern expressed metrically:



Equivalence between versions of the standard pattern in 12/8 and 4/4:



But, as Agawu states, the appearance of four pulses in a cycle of twelve eighth notes is not a fixed reference for African music in the way it is for other traditions.⁴² That is, that fact that we can measure this music in four does not indicate that this notation truly reflects its nature.

Agawu very correctly reflects on how the West perceives foreign musics:

Listeners of tonal music, for example, rely fundamentally on certain internalized or naturalized conventions in order to interpret one moment as tense, another as resolving, one as a beginning, another as an end, one as dancelike, another as proselike. Not all of these are immanent properties of the individual works; some are perspectives formed from certain ways of world-making. Without this kind of cultural knowledge (often simply taken for granted), one's interpretation is likely to be impoverished.⁴³

For many Western listeners, perhaps, this particular domestication of the pattern features an unexpected accentuation. And that is because habits of

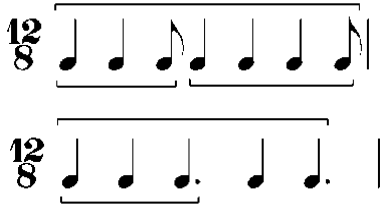
⁴¹ Agawu, "Structural Analysis," 20.

⁴² Agawu, "Structural Analysis," 21.

⁴³ Agawu, "Structural Analysis," 23–24.

metrical understanding tend to privilege onbeats over offbeats, sound over silence, and longer notes over shorter ones.⁴⁴

Agawu observes that Jones in 1959 and Nketia three years later transcribe different general rhythmic patterns.⁴⁵ Jones maintains a system of five pulses, in this manner: 2 + 2 + 3 + 2 + 3 which can be heard elaborated in the familiar pattern of seven pulses: 2 + 2 + 1 + 2 + 2 + 2 + 1:



Nketia recognizes a standard pattern of 22233 (a mixture of binary and ternary rhythms, equivalent to the 3/4+6/8 typically played with handclaps (this pattern is also present in some Spanish music and in flamenco, especially in the inverted form of 6/8-3/4).⁴⁶ Kofi Agawu also recognizes this pattern:⁴⁷

Archetypal pattern of handclaps:



⁴⁴ Agawu, "Structural Analysis," 26. Flamenco also presents rhythmic patterns in which off-beat accentuation is common, as for example in bulerías and tangos.

⁴⁵ Agawu, "Structural Analysis," 28; Jones, *African Music*, 213; Nketia, *African music in Ghana*, 83–85.

⁴⁶ Nketia, *African music in Ghana*, 83–85.

⁴⁷ Agawu, "Structural Analysis," 32.

Mmensoun (traditional Akan [Ghana] trumpet orchestra) timeline derived from the archetypal clapping pattern:



With regard to the possibility of the transmission of certain rhythmic patterns related to the standard patterns of African music, Agawu points out the relationship between the standard seven-pulse pattern and the Cuban *clave* pattern, which is reduced to a five-pulse pattern. The same is true for Haiti, Jamaica, and Brazil:

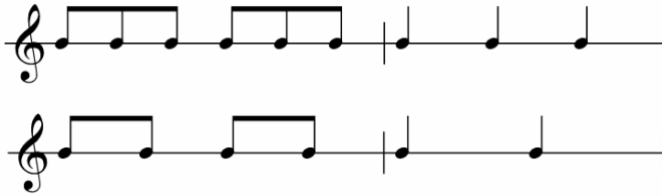
The prospect of a deep parallel between the standard pattern in 12/8, which is generally—though by no means exclusively—associated with older, precolonial African music, and the *clavé* pattern in 4/4, which is associated with modern, postcolonial or neotraditional genres, not to mention numerous African-diasporic manifestations, is attractive. According to this explanation, the two patterns are mere transformations of each other, the latter representing a “binarization” of the former.⁴⁸

Kofi Agawu observes that, despite the complexities of African rhythm, there is a notable compatibility between African and Western music.⁴⁹ Thus, today we can discover, in the overlaps between *negro* musics, Spanish musics, and flamenco, an important nexus with regard to the construction of rhythmic patterns and phrases: the structuring of twelve basic pulses in a ternary rhythm, subdivided into semi-phrases of six beats, as for example two measures of 6/8 or one measure of 12/8. In the case of binary rhythms, we would have structures of two measures of 2/4 or one measure of 4/4.⁵⁰ Whether binary or ternary, this structure pairs an initial phrase with an ending phrase:

⁴⁸ Agawu, “Structural Analysis,” 38.

⁴⁹ Agawu, “The Invention of ‘African Rhythm,’” 389, citing Jones, *African Music in Northern Rhodesia*, 11.

⁵⁰ Nketia makes this point regarding the structures of African music. *African Music in Ghana*, 76.



The famous rhythm that is made by alternating measures of 6/8-3/4, or the inversion of this pattern, 3/4-6/8, along with the practice of hemiola, is a characteristic which is shared with African music.⁵¹ Musicologist Rolando Antonio Pérez Fernández points out that in the rest of Europe this rhythm is completely unknown, whereas in Spain it is known since at least the fifteenth century, especially in Andalucía.⁵²

With respect to the question of whether to consider polyrhythms as inherent exclusively to the African musical system, Jones speculates in the affirmative, noting that polyrhythm is so sophisticated that it requires a highly-developed rhythmic sensibility; it would be impossible for this sensibility to be take root, Jones argues, among the European peasantry.⁵³ Despite the different languages spoken by different populations, Jones considers the African rhythmic system to be to a certain extent homogeneous across the entire continent, leading him to conclude that, given its wide distribution and long-standing retention, this rhythmic sensibility derives from a millennial history shared by diverse African peoples across a cosmopolitan continent.

Jones argues that the homogeneity of African music across ethnicities and peoples is incontrovertable.⁵⁴ Much of African and African diasporic

⁵¹ A hemiola is a relation of 3:2 which “in the modern metrical system denotes the articulation of two units of triple metre as if they were notated as three units of duple metre.” It pulls against an underlying accentuation; in measures of six beats, this would typically pull from accenting every three beats, which feels like a 6/8, to every two beats, which feels like a 3/4. Julian Rushton, “Hemiola [hemiolia] (from Gk. *hemílios*: ‘the whole and a half’; Lat. *sesquialtera*; It.: *emíolia*),” *Grove Music Online*, <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.12768> (20 January, 2001).

⁵² Rolando Antonio Pérez Fernández, *La binarización de los ritmos ternarios africanos en América Latina* (Cuba: Ediciones Casa de las Américas, 1986), 58.

⁵³ Jones, *African Music*, 200–201, citing Richard A. Waterman, “Hot Rhythm in Negro Music,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, vol. 1, no. 1 (1948): 24–37.

⁵⁴ Jones, *African Music*, 206ff.

music uses a similar fundamental bell pattern, even when its rhythmic nuances, and the instrument with which it is played, vary. Even in the zones of Islamic influence, many basic characteristics of the African musical system are retained. The influence of Islam in African music, Jones points out, is discernable in its assimilation of certain of the most characteristic and evident characteristics of Islamic music, but he notes that the basic elements of the African musical system are never erased, but are rather adapted, even in regions where Islam is the predominant religion.

III.1. Native American Music: Musical Characteristics of the Incan Legacy

Ethnomusicologists Raoul and Margerite D'Harcourt explain that the influence of African rhythms cannot be detected in Indigenous music, because enslaved Africans were not settled in those mountain regions. With respect to the melodic characteristics of Indigenous music, they affirm that although Native Americans adopted some European intervals, they did not adopt all of the European intervals, and, further, “the structure of their melodic lines involves cadences, pauses, and an ending unlike what we [Europeans] are accustomed to hearing.”⁵⁵

Native Americans use a melodic range of five notes per octave, although this is not consistent throughout their songbook, due to the introduction of semitones and texts in Spanish; Raoul and Margerite D'Harcourt classify songs preserved in oral tradition as “pure melodies,” as opposed to the “*mestizo*” or hybrid melodies influenced by the music of European conquerors, especially Spaniards.⁵⁶

Raoul and Margerite D'Harcourt add that when the people of this region compose music today, they utilize the same pentatonic mode which, aside from the use of pentatonic scales in East Asia and in Africa, in Europe is only found in Britain and Scotland—the pentatonic scale is unknown in Spain.⁵⁷ With regard to the use of pentatonic scales in other

⁵⁵ Raoul and Margerite D'Harcourt, *La música de los Incas y sus supervivencias*, (Lima: Occidental Petroleum Corporation of Perú, 1990), 127. [1^a ed. 1925]

⁵⁶ Raoul and Margerite D'Harcourt, *La música de los Incas*, 129.

⁵⁷ Carlos Vega adds Norway, Central Europe, and even the thirteenth-century troubadours and German *minnesingers* to this list: “La música en el siglo XIII” *Revista del Instituto de Investigación Musicológica «Carlos Vega»* N° 8, (1987), 11,

<https://repositorio.uca.edu.ar/bitstream/123456789/1008/1/musica-siglo-XIII-vega.pdf>; Raoul and Margerite D'Harcourt, *La música de los Incas*, 130, citing

parts of the Americas, Raoul and Margerite D'Harcourt explain that although they are present in North America, in the Amazon, and the southern region of South America, these systems and musical practices are very distinct from the pentatonic scales cultivated by the Incas. (The same is true, they write, of the musical system of East Asia.)⁵⁸ This distinctiveness demonstrates that the Incas cultivated their own unique musical system, more advanced than that of their American neighbors.

Studying the melodies of the Incan songs more carefully, Raoul and Margerite D'Harcourt conclude that the Incas did not have a system of harmonic chords. Inca music was monodic and they used two forms of the pentatonic scale. Raoul and Margerite D'Harcourt classify the Inca descending melodies according to their pauses and endings, and they point to the "B mode": G-E-D-C-A, a type of *minor pentatonic scale*, as the most widespread form in Perú, followed by the "A mode," A-G-E-D-C, a *major pentatonic scale*.

Explaining the descending melodic character of these melodies, Raoul and Margerite D'Harcourt note that they feature sudden leaps, from V to I, sometimes directly and sometimes passing through IV or II. These melodies also constitute the insistent minor seventh interval which is so popular in indigenous Peruvian music. The sudden leaps of Incan melodies contrast with European melodies, whose motion tends to be conjunct or stepwise, that is, whose steps tend to be between consecutive notes. The Incan melodic lines are broken by pauses, generally in the lowest registers. The pause on the first degree is preceded by the second degree, distant from the minor third; generally the suspending pauses are produced in the second degree.⁵⁹

Raoul and Margerite D'Harcourt explain that indigenous American monody, which does not have semitones, contains neither harmony nor modulation. Singing in thirds with an auxiliary line below is a mark of Spanish influence. But fortunately, this modality did not infiltrate very much in the mountains, the site where these examples of indigenous melody were found. Once again, these demonstrate the taste for leaps in songs where the register is more than a twelfth. The D'Harcourts note that intervals of sevenths, tenths, and even more are common, and that singers make these leaps with no difficulty.⁶⁰

Felipe Pedrell, *Cancionero popular musical español* (Barcelona: Boileau, 1920–22).

⁵⁸ Raoul and Margerite D'Harcourt, *La música de los Incas*, 206.

⁵⁹ Raoul and Margerite D'Harcourt, *La música de los Incas*, 133–34.

⁶⁰ Raoul and Margerite D'Harcourt, *La música de los Incas*, 136.

With respect to the ornamental notes present in these melodies, the D'Harcourts explain that entire turns often enhance a note or appear at the end of a musical phrase, which might indicate Spanish influence.

III.2. The Mestizaje of Native American Music

The Quechuas, Indigenous Americans, modified their traditional songs in response to new religious impositions of the Spanish administration. To that end, additional degrees were added to their pentatonic scales, influenced by the scales of ecclesiastic music. This mestizaje occurred in urban spaces, but in the rest of the country the ancient customs were preserved, leading to a greater cultivation of pentatonic scales in those zones.

Raoul and Margerite D'Harcourt describe the “*mestizo scales*” used in Perú-Bolivia and Ecuador as having two principal descending modes: *Aa* Major: (C)-(B)-A-G-(F#)-E-D-C and *Bb* minor: (A)-G-(F#)-E-D-C-(B)-A (the added notes are in parentheses).⁶¹ For the D'Harcourts, the *Aa* mode reproduces the older *fa* mode. It generally does not appear complete, but rather in versions of only six notes, leaving out the 7th, which is rarely used as a leading-tone; sometimes it is the 4th which is left out. The *Bb* mode reproduces the old ecclesiastic *re* mode, although it is used differently.⁶² The D'Harcourts locate various examples of melodies which use a major 3rd followed by a minor 3rd, as a motif frequently found in the Andes. The authors wonder whether this chromatism is Indigenous or whether it derives from Spanish influence.⁶³ They also take note of this effect in the *vidalitas* and “*tristes*” of Argentina and Chile, concluding that little by little passing tones, modulations, and chromaticisms were introduced.⁶⁴

The D'Harcourts also observe that although they do exhibit certain European elements, these melodies retain their Indigenous character. By the same token, these authors describe Spanish and Africanist rhythmic elements, as well as harmonizations in the melody's accompaniment. The language in which these songs are sung further evidence of Spanish influence, and the imitation of Spanish melodies, in Indigenous Quechua melody.⁶⁵

⁶¹ Raoul and Margerite D'Harcourt, *La música de los Incas*, 141.

⁶² Raoul and Margerite D'Harcourt, *La música de los Incas*, 145ff.

⁶³ This chromaticism is common in traditional music throughout Spain. See for example the research of Miguel Manzano and others cited here.

⁶⁴ Raoul and Margerite D'Harcourt, *La música de los Incas*, 173, 144–45.

⁶⁵ Raoul and Margerite D'Harcourt, *La música de los Incas*, 147–50.

III.3. On Rhythm

With respect to indigenous rhythms, Raoul and Margerite D'Harcourt explain that they are among the freest in popular music, with strong attacks on the basic pulses which, when repeated, can produce syncopation.⁶⁶

Binary rhythms are found in both duple and triple meters, and whether or not they may be considered indigenous to this region, these patterns are also found in other cultures. Nonetheless, the D'Harcourts observe that binary rhythms are repeated almost obsessively in Incan music.⁶⁷ For example:



The D'Harcourts, writing in 1925, observe that the repeated rhythmic pattern of “sixteenth note-eighth note-sixteenth note” can be related to the tango to related forms such as the fox-trot, and can also be found in North America in “Indian” and “modern” music such as the two-step and the cake-walk. However, they explain that in Cuzco, where historically there were no Black communities, this rhythmic form is associated with Indigenous music, and that it is used whenever musicians want to give an Incan quality to the music. The D'Harcourts thus consider this motif to be clearly Indigenous, even though it is also a characteristic of Afro-American musics.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ Raoul and Margerite D'Harcourt, *La música de los Incas*, 153-4.

⁶⁷ Raoul and Margerite D'Harcourt, *La música de los Incas*, 154.

⁶⁸ Henry E. Krehbiel considers similar rhythms, which calls “snap,” to be Africanist, present in Black musics of the U.S. such as ragtime and other popular musics. Henry Edward Krehbiel, *Afro-American Folksongs. A Study in Racial and National Music* (New York: G. Schirmer, 1914), 66, 79ff.

Melody N° 31. *Pirucha*. Mode in D. Sung by Sra. de Rivet in Cuenca (Ecuador):⁶⁹

p Souple et ballonné
¿Qué te pa re ce Pi ru ça

meno p
que te pa re ce Pi ru ça

cresc.
lo que nos es tá pa san do?

lo que nos es tá pa san do

p *rall.*
¡ay ay ay! ¡Pi ru ca mi a!

Other lively movements in 2/4 permit rhythms of six eighth notes rhythmically grouped into a six which has three accents, alternating with the following measure in this manner:⁷⁰

Or in this manner if we think of it as a 6/8:

⁶⁹ Raoul and Margerite D'Harcourt, *La música de los Incas*, 272.

⁷⁰ Raoul and Margerite D'Harcourt, *La música de los Incas*, 156.



Of course, as the D'Harcourts also point out, the forms of alternating measures of 6/8-3/4 exist in other countries such as Spain, as well as in more ancient music such as that of classical Greece.⁷¹

III.4. *Mestizo* Rhythms

According to the D'Harcourts, *mestizo* rhythms blend Indigenous, Spanish, and Afro-Spanish elements. They explain that the evolutions of rhythmic elements in response to non-Native influence are more difficult to determine than are alterations to Indigenous American melodies.⁷² They acknowledge Spanish influence in cadential formulas which must have been gradually absorbed into Indigenous melodies. By the same token, they consider the imposition of Spanish language as a significant factor.

A melody may become rhythmically syncretic while retaining its indigenous scale and viceversa, and in some instances both rhythmic and melodic syncretism is present. The D'Harcourts affirm:

Indigenous rhythm was only rarely supplanted by a dance rhythm, such as a flexible Habanera, or by a genuinely Spanish song. Remaining faithful to the traditional scale or sometimes to a mestizo mode, these melodies are marked by a proud independence. Even though it in fact retains its native characteristics, [Indigenous] rhythms swing with the voluptuous curves of Spanish [music].⁷³

With respect to accompaniment, the D'Harcourts explain that the harp, percussion, and hand-clapping all articulate distinct rhythms, which occasionally produce cross rhythms. They highlight the rhythm of the Habanera, as well as other simple forms in 2/4, 3/4, and 6/8.⁷⁴

We might ask ourselves whether rhythm in Indigenous music was really essential, and whether it could have been conceived of in measures in the Western manner. If pentatonic melodies sung in Native languages

⁷¹ Raoul and Margerite D'Harcourt, *La música de los Incas*, 156.

⁷² Raoul and Margerite D'Harcourt, *La música de los Incas*, 158.

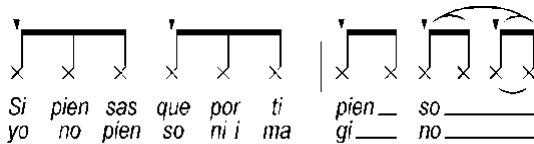
⁷³ Raoul and Margerite D'Harcourt, *La música de los Incas*, 159.

⁷⁴ Raoul and Margerite D'Harcourt, *La música de los Incas*, 159–61.

were clear examples of an Indigenous musical system, perhaps the rhythms and choice of measures were less so. It is somewhat surprising that at the end of the D'Harcourts' book, their analysis of the musics of other Indigenous American peoples lacks this aspect of clear rhythmic structure. Does this indicate a difference between Inca and other Indigenous American musics, or that perhaps these musics had already by 1925 adopted the rhythmic structures of Spanish music, along with other later influences? The authors point out that although chordophones were unknown in Inca music before the arrival of the Spaniards, as early as 1540 the *rabel*, a rustic folk-fiddle, was documented in the Amazon, which evidences the widespread diffusion of Spanish culture and hence the rapid syncretization of American cultures.⁷⁵ The D'Harcourts likewise document the use of African instruments, as well as of the harp, and of strummed instruments such as the *charango*, a relative of the lute with five double strings, in Indigenous music.

The D'Harcourts also explain that the Spanish verses are syllabic and therefore elaborate a flexible framework of accents which creates rhythm.⁷⁶ Spanish language thus supposes an important conditioning factor in shaping the rhythmic structures of Incan melodies and their accompaniment.

In this vein, musicologist Miguel Manzano highlights the rhythmic pattern associated with alternating measures of 6/8 and 3/4 as one of the options derived from the octosyllabic meter of Spanish-language verse forms:⁷⁷



Manzano points out that, due to the octosyllabic meter, the first measure takes the first six syllables of the first line, and the following measure takes the remaining syllables; this is a pattern he also identifies in the *petenera* genre. Manzano explains that this rhythmic form is widely

⁷⁵ Raoul and Margerite D'Harcourt, *La música de los Incas*, 81–82.

⁷⁶ Raoul and Margerite D'Harcourt, *La música de los Incas*, 182.

⁷⁷ Miguel Manzano Alonso, *La jota como género musical*. (Madrid: Alpuerto, 1995), 177.

found in other slow genres such as *rondas* and *tonadas*, and that is also present in *jotas* and *fandangos*.⁷⁸

This rhythmic process always has eight pulses in the initial phrase and eight in the ending phrase (separated by a bar). Rolando Pérez explains this by comparing Cuban with Mexican music, inserting this example of *son* music from Tierra Caliente in Guerrero, México (*a*), and comparing it with a *son cubano* (*b*):⁷⁹

The image displays two musical staves, labeled 'a' and 'b'. Staff 'a' is in 6/8 time and features a melodic line with fingerings 4, 5, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 1, 2, 3 indicated above it. A bracket above the staff spans the first eight notes and is labeled 'patrón estándar'. Staff 'b' is in 2/4 time and shows a rhythmic pattern with two phrases. Each phrase is labeled 'frase rítmica' and is further divided into 'c. capital' and 'c. caudal' sections by brackets below the staff.

For this reason, it is important to highlight the internal structure of the verse as a possible source for the practice of one time signature or another in accompanying songs, which would have determined the rhythm of the accompaniment from the very beginning. This might explain why, in flamenco *seguiriyas*, *serranas*, and *livianas*, whose rhythmic structure features alternating measures of 3/4 and 6/8 (3:2), octosyllabic quatrains are not sung, even though the pentasyllabic quatrains of the ancient *seguidillas* do fit. It might also explain why, in flamenco *soleares* and *bulerías*, octosyllabic verses are sung with the inverse rhythmic structure: alternating 6/8 and 3/4 (2:3).

III.5. Other American Countries

Raoul and Margerite D'Harcourt discuss the musics of other American countries and their possible relationships with Inca musics, concluding in generic terms that, in those cases where the Europeanist influence is less predominant, pentatonic modes are found, and the D'Harcourts highlight

⁷⁸ Miguel Manzano Alonso: *Mapa Hispano de bailes y danzas de tradición oral, Tomo I, aspectos musicales*, (Badajoz: Publicaciones de CIOFF España, 2007), 662.

⁷⁹ Pérez, *La binarización de los ritmos*, 117–18.

similarities between Mexican songs and those of other countries in both North and South America.⁸⁰

Regarding Aztec civilization, ethnomusicologist Samuel Martí explains that Spanish colonization spelled the end of a series of different cultures, who were at the height of their splendor when the Spaniards arrived on their soil.⁸¹ Martí writes,

The impact of conquest was cataclysmic. If very little survived of their architecture, even less of their literature and music did. However these fragments are sufficient to give us an idea of the incredible sophistication of dance, music, and song among [Aztec] peoples before the arrival of Hernán Cortés.⁸²

And Martí affirms in general terms that

... the martial and vigorous Aymara music, the nostalgic and happy Incan music, and the expressive Araucanian music all differ in character from the courtly music of the Maya and the dynamic music of the Aztecs. But fundamentally all of these musics share similar characteristics and constitute part of an ancient musical tradition which survives in both hemispheres.⁸³

Martí incorporates transcriptions of different melodies of Aztec songs whose musical character bears no relationship to European musics, nor to Inca musics, although they are closer in spirit to the latter.⁸⁴ Here are two examples:



⁸⁰ Raoul and Margerite D'Harcourt, *La música de los Incas*, 214–15.

⁸¹ Samuel Martí, *Canto, danza y música precortesianos*, (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1961), 19. Martí also notes relationships between the arts of Mesoamérica and the Indian subcontinent: 40.

⁸² Martí, *Canto, danza y música precortesianos*, 34.

⁸³ Martí, *Canto, danza y música precortesianos*, 35.

⁸⁴ Martí, *Canto, danza y música precortesianos*, 313–18.



IV. The Fusion or Syncretization of Musical Elements Between Cultures

Ethnomusicologist William Tompkins explains that the rhythmic structure of traditional African musics is much more complex than that of European musics, affirming that the use of hemiolas is very common in Africa, whereas in European folklore this is not the case—with the exception of Spain, I would add.⁸⁵ But Tompkins recommends caution in assigning a Black origin to every song and dance with a lively rhythm, or a European origin to all rhythmically simple music. In a comparative study of Black music of the cafes of Chicago (the Cakewalk) and the *baile de la parra* of Huánuco, Perú, Venezuelan musicologist and folklorist Luis Ramón y Rivera discovered that the complexity of a single rhythmic line does not necessarily indicate African influence. Both the cakewalk and the Peruvian *baile de la parra* employed similar rhythmic patterns and syncopations, but the important difference between them was in the scales they used and in the contours of their melodies. As a study of the rhythmic modes of Persia (*darb*), of the Arabs (*iqā'at*), and of India (*tala*) makes clear, African cultures are not the only musical cultures which employ complex rhythmic structures.

Spanish music is distinctive in its use of the hemiola. The hemiola is present in Renaissance songbooks such as the *Cancionero de Palacio* (1470s–ca. 1505), and is also common in both traditional Spanish music and in flamenco.⁸⁶ The question of whether this element common to both

⁸⁵ William Tompkins, *Las tradiciones musicales de los negros de la costa del Perú*, (Centro de Música y Danza de la Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú CEMDUC, 2011), 187.

⁸⁶ The *villancico* “Rodrigo Martínez” in the *Cancionero de Palacio* is one example of the use of hemiola. See also Pedro van der Lee, “Zarabanda: Esquemas rítmicos de acompañamiento en 6/8,” *Latin American Music Review / Revista de Música*

Spanish and African music indicates an African influence on Spanish music is complicated. Some scholars, noting that South-Saharan Africans were present in the Iberian Peninsula as early as the thirteenth century, have argued that the hemiola evidences African influence in Spanish music from before the era of Spanish colonization of the Americas. This theory has some problems, however. For example, in ancient Greece the hemiola relationship of 3:2 is already described in the metric feet of classical verse, which might indicate that, despite the lack of corroborating evidence apart from the popular songbook itself, the hemiola could have been present in Spain for longer than we think.

Along these same lines, but from the point of view of melody and scale we should note that the cultivation of the Spanish or chromatic mode of E, as defined by Miguel Manzano, which we find in flamenco and which some mistakenly consider to be of Arabic origin, is found so extensively throughout the Iberian Peninsula—in fact, it is the most common scale in Spanish music—that it is used in a higher percentage of Spanish folk musics than of any other nation.⁸⁷ This leads Manzano to conclude that it could not have been imported by the Arabs, but must have been in use in Iberia before their arrival in 711, and it is possible that the same holds true of the hemiola.⁸⁸ I offer these reflections with respect to the idea that we have in the West that, as Tompkins said, rhythmic richness must be considered to be exclusively African in origin. Miguel

Latinoamericana Vol. 16, No. 2 (University of Texas Press: Autumn - Winter, 1995), 199–220.

⁸⁷ Manzano, *La jota*, 145.

⁸⁸ In this vein, German ethnomusicologist Marius Schneider's study on the Arabic influence on medieval Spanish music, based on more than 300 musical examples, concludes that "the *specifically* Arabic influence must have been quite attenuated, because of how many elements common to Spanish and Arabic music are primarily elements common to the Mediterranean, and do not contain any *particularly* Arabic features. Further, there are characteristic elements...common to India and Spain but unknown in Arabic music, and which therefore surely evidence a relationship which precedes Muslim expansion." Marius Schneider, "A propósito del influjo árabe. Ensayo de etnografía musical de la España medieval," *Anuario Musical*, vol. I. (Barcelona: Instituto Español de Musicología: 1946), 32–141 (44). This leads Miguel Manzano to add that in the popular songbook of León the directly augmented 2nd interval typical of Arabic music is not cultivated in the key of E. *Cancionero Leonés*, (León: Diputación provincial, 1988), 134. The same holds true for flamenco, I would add.

Manzano points out that polyrhythm is one of the most basic and widely used aesthetic characteristics of the popular Spanish songbook.⁸⁹

With respect to Afro-Peruvian music, Tompkins concludes that its traditions emerge out of the adaptation of Native Peruvian and Spanish genres to the idiosyncrasies of African music. This in turn influenced and indeed transformed Euro-Peruvian music and dance. Thus,

... the Afro-Peruvian musical traditions consist of an interweaving of different combinations and permutations of elements of Spanish, African, and—to a lesser degree—indigenous Peruvian musical traditions; the proportions of each of these traditions varies depending on the musical genre and the geographic area ... The Afro-Peruvian music of the coast is neither African nor Spanish but is rather a new wine in an old wine skin: it surpassed the matrices of traditional musics that originally nurtured it, and developed its own rich musical culture.⁹⁰

V. Tonality in the New World: On the Theory of Modes and Affects

Pablo Nasarre (ca. 1654–ca. 1730) was an important writer who during the eighteenth century established the theoretical foundations for the Spanish music of his day, paying special attention to the effects of music on listeners: *afectos* (affect, or emotions).⁹¹ This idea stems from the Greeks, who theorized about the effect that different musical modes had on the spirit. I wonder whether Nasarre's theoretical system could have influenced the choice of different modes (*tonos*) used in both sacred and secular music extant in the Americas, and whether this might allow me to

⁸⁹ Manzano, *Cancionero Leonés*, 149. Polyrhythms are possible as an aspect of rhythmic accompaniment to the song, and also as an interplay between this accompaniment and the song.

⁹⁰ Tompkins, *Tradiciones musicales*, 190. Geoffrey Baker highlights the important role played by indigenous performers in response to the implantation of a new musical order in colonial Cuzco. Baker proposes that indigenous professional musicians sought to replicate the colonial repertoire, closely following the style of Spanish and *criollo* (Peruvian-born) singers and instrumentalists, with the intention of achieving legitimacy within colonial society. *Imposing Harmony. Music and Society in Colonial Cuzco*. Durham y Londres: Duke University Press, 2008.

⁹¹ Almonte Howell, revised by Juan José Carreras, "Nassarre [Nasarre], Pablo," *Grove Music Online*, <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.19595> (20 January 2001).

draw conclusions with respect to the standard tonalities of *danzas de negros*.

From the research that Tiziana Palmiero has done on the Nasarre's treatise we can conclude that, in general terms, the major modes, such as the fifth mode in C, and those that are most closely related to these, such as the Eighth mode in D (which includes a C# and an F#), are related to the affect of happiness: "*Alegría y Concordia*" (Happiness and Concord, or harmony), and "*alegría espiritual*" (spiritual happiness) respectively.⁹² For Nasarre the First mode in E also expresses "*alegría grave*" (solemn happiness), and the Sixth mode in F (which includes a Bb), conveys "*Piedad con devoción*" (piety with devotion). These are the modes preferred by Nasarre, as he explains in these comments on the Eighth mode:

This is a grave mode, and it effects spiritual happiness in the soul, fervent desire for eternal things, and in the eyes of our Maker, our Creator. Its effects are all these, which the first, fifth, and sixth [modes] do, and it is especially helpful in raising the heart up to God, praising Him, and giving thanks for all.⁹³

For Nasarre, the fourth mode, *E*, which is related to Andalusian music and flamenco, as well as many other Spanish musics, is related to the emotion of "*humildad y mansedumbre*" (humility and docility).⁹⁴

Nonetheless, in compositions for the Baroque guitar, an instrument widely used in the popular music of this era, we observe that the preferred harmonies are often the Major and minor modes, the minor mode with the Andalusian cadence (*Phrygian mode*), and the *mixolydian* mode, whose sonority is related to the Major mode. This is evidence that already during the Baroque period a modern musical system based on Major and minor tonalities had replaced the ecclesiastic modes that preceded them.⁹⁵

⁹² Tompkins, *Tradiciones musicales*, 28, cites Tiziana Palmiero, *Las láminas musicales del códice Martínez Compañón. Trujillo del Perú, 1782-85. Espacio de mediación entre las ideas ilustradas de un obispo y las teorías prácticas musicales de los habitantes de su diócesis* (Doctoral dissertation, Universidad de Chile, 2014), 250ff.

⁹³ Pablo Nasarre, *Escuela música, según la practica moderna, dividida en primera y segunda parte*. (Zaragoza: Herederos de Diego de Larumbe, 1723-24), Vol. 1, 80.

⁹⁴ Nasarre, *Escuela música*, 78.

⁹⁵ In this vein, Carlos Vega, analyzing various medieval documents considers that this system would have been used much earlier in vernacular than in elite contexts. Vega, "La música en el siglo XIII," 11.

Tiziana Palmiero, writing on the secular music and dance documented in the 1782–1785 *Códice Trujillo*, states that these are not composed according to the dominant modal theories of the day, even though Palmiero identifies compositions in other sources, in the seventeenth-century Peruvian *Códice Zuola*, and also in some songs of religious fraternities contained in the *Códice Trujillo*, which in contrast do follow these more recent norms. These examples use the modern Major and minor tonalities developed in Spain over the course of the eighteenth century.

Nonetheless, Palmiero explains that analysis of these religious songs does indeed document that the older modal theories were still in use:

...we can say the the songs of a religious character contained in the codex reveal, in the majority, the use of the theories of polyphonic modes and keys (*tonos*).⁹⁶

She describes how “the subjects represented in the Peruvian Trujillo Codex could express their own vision of their history by appropriating and reelaborating the musical theories and practices introduced by the Europeans, using these European theories as models “for generating new musical texts”:⁹⁷

...the modal theory and the later Baroque theory of keys (*tonos*), which drew a relationship between these [modes], the symbologies of the planets and the humours, and the affections [or emotions] of the soul would have found fertile ground for gaining acceptance by Andean populations, in the Incan tonal theories from different performance contexts.⁹⁸

Therefore, I do not think that harmonization in the popular musics that emerged in the Americas out of the syncretism and intermixing of cultures was based on an extramusical factor such as the musical affect theory espoused by Nasarre. Already in guitar and vihuela music of the sixteenth century we find harmonic progressions that anticipate Baroque tonality, in which the baseline marks the fundamentals of the coming chords. As an example, composer and vihuelist Luys de Narváez’s 1538 “*Romanesca*,” or “*Guárdame las vacas*,” has a baseline of *C–G–A–E* in the *diferencias*, or variations, which is a clear precedent of the harmonic structure of the minor mode ending on the dominant: *C major–G major–A minor–E*

⁹⁶ Palmiero, *Las láminas musicales*, 454.

⁹⁷ Palmiero, *Las láminas musicales*, 487–88.

⁹⁸ Palmiero, *Las láminas musicales*, 488.

major. This harmonic structure would be found in many American genres and in many harmonizations of Inca music. Similarly, the *canario* (canarie or canary) anticipates the Major mode (which, as Carlos Vega argues, was already in use in secular music), which was the basis of the *zarabanda* (sarabande), the *chacona* (chaconne, ciaccona), and other forms.

The harmonization of the *guineos* (Guinean dances, an early modern Spanish term for the category of African, or Black, dances), zarabandas, chaconas, etc. would thus respond simply to the idea of supplying the most appropriate accompaniment to the sung melody. This hypothesis, considering that the melodies recorded by composers would have been modeled after live performance, cannot be definitively proved. Perhaps, or probably, live performance simply served as an inspiration. We should consider that if for expert musicologists it is difficult to transcribe African music, as Jones, Nketia, and Arom explain, it would be even more difficult for Spanish musicians in the Americas. Probably the composers of these *guineos*, or *danzas de negros*, would take elements from popular forms that had already materialized in vernacular contexts, where the the processes of intermixing and transformation had already taken place.

In this sense it is important to point out that the descriptions characterizing the popular musics and dances (including the *danzas de negros*), generally predate sources containing musical transcriptions, providing further evidence that these sources record preexisting forms. The musical documents that have been preserved are a part of the whole, but they should not be used to substantiate generalizations. Without denying the influence of these pieces by known composers, above all by Baroque guitarists whose works would have circulated among aficionados who even lacking academic training could still read musical tablature, I imagine that it would have been vernacular musicians who adapted melodies to the musical structures they already knew, thus modifying earlier musics and gradually creating new forms with new names. These new forms would then have been reflected in the academic sphere; these are the majority of sources that we have to study, given that we do not have direct transcriptions of popular sources. Nonetheless, oral tradition continued and played a transformative role. Over the course of centuries older forms yielded to newer ones, incorporating diverse cultural and geographic influences.

The nature of these melodies is the basis upon which they were harmonized. The pentatonic modes were adaptable to either a Major or minor tonality, depending on how they were structured. If we accept, as scholars following the research of musicologist Robert Stevenson have it, that the sixteenth-century zarabanda and the seventeenth-century chacona

originated in African cultures of people enslaved in the Americas, then we can hypothesize that the fact that academic and liturgical compositions of *negro* musics tend to be in a Major key would be a response to the tonality of the vernacular songs which would have served as their models.⁹⁹ Melodies would have been adapted to the Major harmonic system, just as the zarabanda and chacona dances that accompanied these songs would have been adapted to the Spanish-influenced ternary rhythmic pattern. That is, one could not have existed without the other. Without the implantation of the harmonic-rhythmic system of accompaniment inherited from forms such as *folías*, *romanescos*, *canarios/canaries*, *jácaras*, etc. we would not be speaking about guineos, zarabandas, chaconas, or *fandangos*.

I think we see the Africanist element above all in the movement vocabulary of these dances, in the forms of accompaniment, and in the drum instrumentation; Africanist influences are less evident in guitar playing, although strumming techniques might have been enriched by polyrhythmic influences. However, I don't see Africanist polyrhythmic influences as the starting point for these dance musics; rather I imagine Africanist polyrhythms being incorporated into the pre-existing language of the Spanish guitar. As further evidence of the Spanish foundations of these dance musics, we should note that a defined harmonic system, unrelated to either African or Native American musics, was inherent to these *danzas de negros* from the earliest documented examples, as I will presently describe.

Certain rhythmic patterns common to both African and Spanish music would, I hypothesize, have allowed for the transfer and adaptation of cultural elements that, in time, generated new mestizo, syncretic forms. Of course, Spanish language and prosody themselves further evidence the colonial nature of these new American dance musics. The *danzas de negros* are not African, but rather hybrid forms.

Nonetheless, is it possible that some African melodies might indeed be preserved in popular Spanish music, and subsequently flamenco? Little evidence of African melody in flamenco has been detected, although this

⁹⁹ Robert Stevenson contends that the zarabanda originated in Spanish América, while musicologist Daniel Devoto contests this, asserting that the zarabanda as a song form follows the medieval Hispano-Arab rhyme and metric form of the *zéjel* and therefore was brought to the Americas by Spanish colonists. See Stevenson, "The sarabande: a dance of American descent"; Daniel Devoto, "¿Qué es la zarabanda?" *Boletín interamericano de música*, no. 45 (1965): 8–16; Esses, *Dance and Instrumental Diferencias*, 736–37; Mara Lioba Juan Carvajal, *La zarabanda: pluralidad y controversia de un género musical* (México: Plaza y Valdés S.A. de C.V., 2007).

question certainly merits further study. Flamenco melodies are Spanish and/or Andalusian; they are constructed very differently than African and Native American melodies. As an example, flamenco melodies are often characterized by conjunct or stepwise grades, with endings in the first grade of the principal mode.

There do exist, however, traces that might suggest Africanist melodic elements adopted within flamenco song. One possible example could be a refrain, “Si mama...,” recorded in 1908 by the illustrious singer Pastora Pavón, “La Niña de los Peines” (1890–1969), which may contain echoes of Afro-Cuban melody.¹⁰⁰ To my ear, Pastora Pavón’s song recalls a “tango-congo” (Congolese tango) titled “Ay mamá Inés,” composed by Cuban pianist Eliseo Grenet Sánchez (1893–1950) for his *zarzuela* (operetta) *La Niña Rita* (or *La Habana de 1830*), which premiered in 1927. “Ay mamá Inés” might be based on an earlier melody; it might be inspired by a *comparsa* song, an Afro-Cuban carnival song, of 1868.¹⁰¹ Here is the comparison:

Ay mamá Inés

Eliseo Grenet Sánchez 1927

Ay ma ma Y nes — ay ma ma Y nes — to dos los ne gros to ma mos ca ñe

posible melodía básica primigenia:
Si ma ma si ma ma Pa ri qui to ma que re pe gar

melodía aflamencada:
Si ma ma — si ma ma a o o ou y ya me Pe ri qui to me que re pe gar —

curiosamente ocupa el mismo número de compases que Mama Inés

¹⁰⁰ –Bulerías–, “Yo nació en Argel,” guitar: Ramón Montoya, recorded in December, 1908, Zonophone X-5-53026.

¹⁰¹ Listen to Grenet’s song here: ramoburg, “RITA MONTANER - ¡Ay! Mama Ines (1927),” *YouTube* (January 28, 2017), <https://youtu.be/-PFg7axsw4k>, and to Pastora Pavón’s rendition: La Niña de los Peines - Topic, “Bulería: Canto Gitano (Yo Nací en Argel) (with Ramón Montoya),” *YouTube* (April 29, 2014), <https://youtu.be/Ez4Mv29HZ-g>.

The refrain of the Cuban version contains three melodic phrases which, if not identical, are very similar to Pastora Pavón's version. Further, Pavón's self-consciously Cuban styling is evident; she even uses the same number of measures as the Cuban song, although in a ternary meter rather than the binary meter of her Cuban model. If "Ay mama Inés" serves as a possible case study of the syncretization of Africanist elements within the flamenco repertoire, I will now turn to a consideration of earlier music and dances subject to this process.

VI. Music and Dances "de Negros" from the Late-Fifteenth to the Nineteenth Century in Hispanic Music

In 1968, the eminent musicologist Robert Stevenson wrote a seminal article titled "The Afro-American Musical Legacy to 1800."¹⁰² Since this article appeared, new musical sources have been discovered, and new scholarship continues to broaden our understanding of these musics.

In an earlier article, I examined flamenco's musical ancestors.¹⁰³ In this later research I am focusing on styles associated with Blackness, broadening the range of sources that we might study in order to understand these musics.¹⁰⁴ My intention here is to demonstrate the possible reasons for the use of the Major tonality in the so-called *bailes de negros*. To that end I will classify the musics in this category which exclusively present this tonality, and later I will make some observations on the styles which use the Major in addition to other melodic modes.

VI.1. Harmonic Relationships between the Dances in the Major Mode

With respect to the *danzas de negros*, we find that the Major mode is the most common tonality. Here is a comparison of the structures and

¹⁰² Robert Stevenson, "The Afro-American Musical Legacy to 1800," *The Musical Quarterly*, volume 54, number 4, (October 1968): 475–502.

<https://doi.org/10.1093/mq/LIV.4.475>

¹⁰³ Castro, "Formas musicales anteriores al género flamenco," *Sinfonía Virtual n° 27* (2014).

http://www.sinfoniavirtual.com/flamenco/formas_genero_flamenco.pdf

¹⁰⁴ For a further and more detailed Exposition than that permitted within the space of this article, see Castro, "Músicas «negras» y Flamenco: relaciones musicales y trasposos entre músicas africanas, indígenas y españolas," *Sinfonía Virtual n° 39*, 2020. http://www.sinfoniavirtual.com/revista/039/musicas_negras.pdf

harmonic-rhythmic schemes of these dances, which allows us to draw some conclusions:

<i>Chacona</i> : (3)	-I-I / I-V-V / VI-IV-IV / IV-V-V
variation	-I-I / I-V-V / VI-IV-IV / IV-V-V / I
<i>Zarabanda</i> : (2:3)	I-IV / I-V-V / I-V / I-V-V
<i>Zarambeque</i> : (3)	-I-I / I-V-V / I-I-I / I-V-V
<i>Zarandillo</i> : (3:2)	-I-I / IV-IV / I-I-I / IV-IV
variation (3)	I-I / V-V-I/IV-IV-V / I-I-VI / V-V-V / I-I-I
<i>Canarios</i> : (2:3)	I-IV / I-I-I / IV-V / I-I-I
variation	I-IV / I-I-I / I-V / I-I-I
<i>Canarios</i> : (3:2)	I-I-I / I-IV / I-I-I / I-V / (I-I-I)
<i>Guaracha</i> : (2:3)	IV-V / I-I-I / IV-V / I-I-I
variation (3)	I-I-IV / I-I-V / I-I-IV / I-I-V
<i>Cumbé</i> (3:2)	-I-II / III-II / I-v-IV / V-II / I

The rhythm of some of these forms is notated with the time signature 6/8-3/4. The *zarambeque* and the *chacona* are ternary, although the *chacona* can also present hemiola, and similarly there are variations of the *zarandillo* and the *guaracha* which are not hemiolic but rather ternary. Various of these forms start after the first beat: *chacona*, *zarambeque* and *zarandillo*. We do not include *guineos*, documented from the fifteenth century, because the only extant piece for the guitar has a truly modal (as opposed to the later-developing Major and minor modes) character. Further, the *guineos* were also written in a minor mode, and they seem to lack a defined structural and tonal model.¹⁰⁵ Rather, the term “*guineo*” seems to refer generically to *negro* music, although it is possible that this term would have been associated with a generic type of playing in popular spheres.

With respect to these modalities in Major mode, the extant sources display variants in different styles, not all of which are listed here.¹⁰⁶ But what we certainly can deduce is that, although there are commonalities across all the *negro* styles, both dances and songs, they present singular differences which might respond to the search for some distinction which

¹⁰⁵ These conclusions are derived from the *guineos* which I identify and discuss in Castro, “Músicas «negras» y Flamenco.”

¹⁰⁶ There are variants of the *chacona* in minor mode, for example, such as one in G minor, with a cadence on the dominant and an Andalusian cadence (Im – VII – VI – V), in the compilation *Huerto ameno* by Josep Martín y Coll (1708). BNE M/1360, f. 217v.

would grant them a “new” name. I refer to the fact that in the academic sources we can glimpse a composition which probably does not always follow contemporary popular forms. That is, once a popular form was assimilated by a composer such as, for example, the compositions of *negro* forms by guitarist Santiago de Murcia (1673–1739), it is likely that the form would take on a life of its own in this elite context, and that it would gradually diverge from the popular form upon which it was originally based.

The musical structures of these popular musics, while they might have been similar to those of the academic sources, must have developed along much freer and unconstrained lines, leading gradually to new forms with new names. Perhaps these popular forms were not so clearly defined as those of the academic circles. But attempting the exercise of looking for historical parallels between traditional Spanish music and flamenco, the academic sources are consistently more parsimonious and constrained than the vernacular forms, as the sonic registers make clear.¹⁰⁷ For that reason, I think that it is possible that this relationship between vernacular and academic forms existed even in centuries past. While academic musicians demonstrated their ideas about Blackness in their compositions, these may have been pallid reflections of the vernacular musics of their time.

In this vein, the reflections of Mario A. Ortiz on the “*villancicos de negrilla*” (little Black Christmas songs) are pertinent:

...these [*negro*] villancicos reflect the stereotypical and superficial perceptions of Peninsular and colonist Spanish poets and composers who merely under-represent African subjects, locating them within the hegemonic discourse of colonial exoticism.

... The musical element has been perhaps one of the most misinterpreted aspects of these *negrillas* ... The examples of hemiolas, countertimes, and syncopation are frequently cited, but we should not forget that these rhythmic ideas were common in vernacular European music of this time, and so when we find these motifs in the *negrillas*, they are simply the European versions (or imaginations) of what Africans were doing with their rhythms ...The music of the *negrillas* is, definitively, European, loaded to the hilt with a rhythmic excess that is, once again, European.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁷ See Castro, *Génesis Musical del Cante Flamenco*, 1733ff.

¹⁰⁸ Mario A. Ortiz, “Villancicos de negrilla: Imaginando al sujeto afro-colonial,” *Calíope* vol. 11, number 2 (2005): 125–37.

Nonetheless, analyzing the musical elements of both worlds (academic and popular), for example in *tangos*, we note that there are indeed overall similarities; that is, they display basically similar harmonic and rhythmic structures, although the recordings from the end of the nineteenth century are much richer than the mid-century transcribed versions. Again, perhaps this relationship holds for earlier centuries, at least with respect to those dances, such as the *danzas de negros* which we are discussing here, known by a single name. Nevertheless, out of all the styles of which I have found sung versions, the musical study of their melodic systems reveals that they bear no relationship to the melodic structures of either African or Native American musics.

VI.2. The Fandango and the Tango

The fandango, documented from the late-seventeenth century, and the tango, documented from the late-eighteenth century, are two examples that, like the guineo from the late-fifteenth century present not only the Major mode but also the minor and even occasionally the mixolydian mode, which is symptomatic of the fact that the name does not define the music but rather the signifies a dance party or, as in the case of the tango, a percussion instrument played at that gathering.¹⁰⁹ In time, the terms “fandango,” “tango,” and “*rumba*” came to signify specific styles, with greater musical definition, as we understand them today, but we should not overlook the great variability and range implicit in such terms.

It is important to note that the structure of the Spanish fandango is very similar to the rhythmic-harmonic model of the seventeenth-century *jácara* composed for guitar, even though the later fandango incorporates a harmonic turn to the Fourth grade of the phrygian mode.¹¹⁰ Thus is it not unreasonable to imagine that the musical structure of the *jácara* evolved toward the musical form that would later be called the “fandango” in the

¹⁰⁹ I have written about the fandango in *Génesis Musical del Cante Flamenco*, 187ff, and in “Los «otros» Fandangos, el Cante de la Madrugá y la Taranta. Orígenes musicales del Cante de las Minas,” *Revista de Investigación de Flamenco La Madrugá*, no. 4 (June, 2011), <https://revistas.um.es/flamenco/article/view/132281>. On the tango, see Castro, *Génesis Musical del Cante Flamenco*, 1447ff, as well as Castro, “Músicas «negras» y flamenco,” 104ff.

¹¹⁰ For more on the *jácara*, see María Luisa Lobato y Alain Bégue, *Literatura y música del hampa en los Siglos de Oro* (Madrid: Visor Libros, Madrid 2014); and Anna de la Paz Shalom, “Reading the *Jácara*: Seventeenth-Century Steps and their Influence in the Contemporary Spanish Dance,” in this volume.

Americas; this might record the influence of a dance that, as such, is described as accompanied by a cheerful and festive music in the *Diccionario de Autoridades* of 1732. And the *jácara* in turn has musical elements which relate this form to the fifteenth-century genre of the *folía*, as well as to some sixteenth-century musical forms based on variations in the bass *ostinato*. Thus, the musical antecedents of the *fandango* “*Yndiano*” (from the Indies, that is, the Americas) of 1705, which is the first documented score of this form, are Spanish.¹¹¹

I cannot identify any Africanist elements in the *fandango* melodies that I have studied, and similarly I have not been able to identify any Africanist elements in the documentation of popular forms from the nineteenth century until the present day. The same is true for rhythmic patterns, which similarly respond to Spanish musical forms that are very widespread across the Iberian Peninsula, and the harmonization of these forms also responds to the melodic patterns of the songs.

In my view, the Africanist element in the tangos is perhaps retained within the movements and the rhythms of the dance, although the popular melodies of tangos remain to be closely studied. The harmonization tonalities of tangos that have been studied are very diverse in form; the Major tonality modulating with the homonymic minor, and cadences on the dominant is already documented in an 1818 score by choreographer and dance master Antonio Cairón.¹¹² However, again, it is possible that these academic examples fail to accurately record the music and dance practices of lower social strata.

In El Hierro, one of the Canary Islands, there is a traditional dance called *Tango herreño* whose rhythmic pattern is very similar to that of Antonio Cairón’s 1818 tango. In 6/8 we hear the *coriambo* rhythm (quarter note+eighth note+eighth note+quarter note), or a derivation of this rhythm, in a *troqueo* pattern (quarter note+eighth note) followed by a dotted quarter note.¹¹³ The flute plays a melody in mixolydian mode

¹¹¹ *Libro de diferentes cifras de guitarra escogidas de los mejores autores*. BNE Sig. M-811.

¹¹² Castro, *Génesis Musical del Cante Flamenco*, 1475, citing Antonio Cairón, *El encuentro feliz o Los americanos o La espada del mago* (1818), Biblioteca Histórica Municipal de Madrid, BHM MUS 605-7.

¹¹³ These patterns may vary between versions. Manuel García Matos includes a recording with a derivation of the *coriambo* (quarter note+eighth note+dotted quarter note) in his *Magna Antología del Folklore musical del España*, Hispavox 7-99976-2, 1978. It is similar to this version: cannaboy, “Valentina La de Sabinosa - Tango Herreño,” *YouTube* (April 27, 2008), <https://youtu.be/a0CJcnIyddo>. In this version you can hear a dance with castanets, as well as the *coriambo* rhythm.

which is almost identical to the well-known *Fandango parao* dance from Huelva, Spain.¹¹⁴ Both the tango herreño of the Canary Islands and the fandango parao from Huelva are couple dances (in Huelva these are male couples) with castanets, in 6/8.

These examples lead me to believe that we should look for African melodic elements in vernacular contexts and within oral traditions. These Africanisms are certainly not recorded in academic publications.

VII. Conclusions

We should consider that the so-called “guineos,” the first *danza de negros* documented at the end of the fourteenth century, just as other later styles, canarios, zarabandas, chaconas, etc., are already *mestizo* musics, not African styles per se. That is, we should be careful in judging what elements in these musics are “purely” Africanist, because both the musics migrating northward from Africa and eastward from the Americas to Spain would have already been blends of diverse cultural elements. The rhythmic and melodic African systems do not agree with European systems, and although the transfer of elements between musical traditions is possible, I do not believe that the *danzas de negros*, whose diversity I have sketched here, originated in African musics. I think that we are seeing a *mestizaje*, cultural hybridity. Further, many of these *danzas de negros* use castanets, a distinctive percussion instrument of Spanish music.

It is significant to observe, in Domingo Martínez’s painting *Carro del aire* (1748-1749), Black Spaniards playing castanets, the guitar, and dancing in a masque staged by workers of the Royal Tobacco Factory in Sevilla to celebrate the 1747 coronation of Fernando VI and Bárbara de Braganza (see figure 1).

We tend to think that because the performers depicted here are Black that the music they are interpreting must be African, but this is not necessarily the case. The guitar and the castanets are both Spanish instruments. Surely these performers would have interpreted the music of some popular dance of the day, fandango or *seguidillas*, especially given the context, a royal coronation, in which the scene depicted here takes place.

¹¹⁴ For more on the fandango parao, see Castro, *Génesis Musical del Cante Flamenco*, 242. You can see and hear the fandango parao here: puntantonio, “CASCABELEROS BAILANDO EL FANDANGO PARA EL DIA DE SAN SUAN 24/06/2017 ALOSNO (HUELVA),” *YouTube* (Nov. 24, 2017), <https://youtu.be/dgf1hP4UuyM>.



Figure 1. Domingo Martínez, *Carro del aire* (1748-1749). Courtesy of the Museo de Bellas Artes de Sevilla. Detail.

In the academic documents it is clear that the dances and musics called “*de negros*” employ a harmonic-rhythmic system, tenary rhythms with hemiolic potential, in Major or minor mode, which are related to the Spanish musics such as the folías, romanescas, canarios, jácaras, etc. that I have discussed here. In these forms, the rhythm regulated the construction of the music and so is linked to melody and harmonic structure. This type of musical structure does not match either African or Native American musical traditions.

To these Spanish prototypes of musical accompaniment, primarily improvisational forms, stylistic differentiations in the form of harmonic variations, distinctive melodic beginnings and rhythmic podes (feet), and so on, were added. This made possible the emergence of new variants, and thus new dance-music names, even though they were essentially continuations and preservations of earlier forms. In this way, when maestro Antonio Cairón tells us clearly in his 1820 treatise that “the name might change again soon, but the form will not,” he documents this evolutionary process.¹¹⁵ Cairón said the same thing about dance movements. Thus, without the implantation of the harmonic-rhythmic system of accompaniment

¹¹⁵ Antonio Cairón, *Compendio de las principales reglas del baile* (Madrid: 1820), 115 y ss.

from the ancestral forms such as folías, romanescas, canarios, jácaras, etc. we could not speak of guineos, zarabandas, chaconas, and fandangos.

It is logical to conclude that the musical complexity of melody and harmonic accompaniment in the popular sphere would have been much richer than what is recorded in the extant musical sources. Certainly the descriptions of dance documented in many sources bear this out.¹¹⁶ These sources describe various percussion instruments such as drums, which are also documented in many illustrations and descriptions of Native American and African diasporic dances, although these do not appear in the musical transcriptions.¹¹⁷ By the same token, the rhythmic complexity associated with *danzas de negros* is described in many literary sources, yet this complexity is not reflected in the extant musical transcriptions.

The conclusion that we might draw from this is that popular or vernacular forms would have been very different from the academic transcriptions of “popular music,”—but perhaps we should ask whether in fact the harmonic-rhythmic systems and tonalities in consolidated and named forms such as the Spanish zarabanda and chacona, which straddled elite and vernacular worlds, have remained essentially the same (as we saw in the case of the tango) across these disparate social contexts? I think that musical systems would have been shared across academic and popular contexts, although academic transcriptions of popular styles were whitened and lost some of their musical complexity. We observe this in musics associated with the fandango and the tango, two genres which have been abundantly documented since their first appearance, in which we can compare the characteristics of orally-transmitted musics with their academic counterparts. Although the musical systems are similar in general terms, with time popular musics developed autonomously, just as music passed down in the academic context did. Thus in short order we see that as the zarabandas, chaconas, fandangos, and tangos of Spanish-

¹¹⁶ J.B. Rosemond de Beauvallon writes in 1844, referring to the Cuban dances played by Black instrumentalists: “Music in Havana, composed of sighs, animated movements, sad refrains, songs suddenly halted, offers a singular mix of happiness and melancholy. The dance songs are full of freshness and originality; but full of syncopation and measures that go against the beat, which makes them incredibly difficult. The famous cellist Bohrer confessed to me that he had tried in vain to decipher a bass line played every night in the *habanera* by a Black musician who couldn’t read a single note.” Jean-Baptiste Rosemond de Beauvallon, *L’Ile de Cuba* (Paris: Dauvin et Fontaine, 1844), 138.

¹¹⁷ See, for example, some of the illustrations in the *Códice Trujillo* which depict instruments not represented in the musical scores, such as plates 140, 141, and 142.

speaking vernacular worlds migrated into elite and academic contexts in the rest of Europe, these musics took on a life of their own, diverging into variants which little by little moved away from the musical character of their popular models.

With respect to the reason why the music for most *danzas de negros* in academic and liturgical works would be composed in a Major key, I think this must simply have been a response to the general character of the melodies of the popular musics upon which they are based. I don't believe that this compositional choice, at least in secular contexts, would have had anything to do with early modern theories of modal affect. The Major mode must have been that preferred in the worlds of popular music, followed by the minor mode and, from there, adding an ending on the dominant, resulting in the so-called "*cadencia andaluza*," the basis for what would become flamenco accompaniment.

We should assume that the melodic scales of African songs, their dances and their rhythmic patterns would have been adapted to the Spanish and other European systems. With time these mestizo forms, now with new names, evolved parallel to the evolution we can track in the scores of elite musics. The same would hold true for Native American musics. Neither African nor Precolumbian American musics cultivated harmony, and the European so-called "*danzas de negros*" were born with an already-defined harmonic system.

The most clearly definable Africanist musical element in the *danzas de negros* would be, as Pérez Fernández describes, the rhythmic transformation from ternary to binary, which we see in recent styles such as the tango, as well as the cultivation of complex polyrhythms, which are found in African diasporic musics across the Americas.¹¹⁸ Equally widespread are uninhibited and sensual movements in the dances that accompany these musics, qualities which would cristalize in nineteenth century flamenco in forms such as the fandango and the tango, whose names remain the same in today's flamenco repertoire. Other musical elements associated with Africanist musical practices, such as improvisation, other less-complicated polyrhythms, the use of pentatonic scales or "blue notes," and the form of responsorial song called "call and response," are shared across other musical traditions as well.¹¹⁹ But, as I have sketched here, many of these musical elements were also present in both the Precolumbian Americas

¹¹⁸ Pérez Fernández, *La binarización de los ritmos ternarios africanos en América Latina*.

¹¹⁹ In this vein, Philip Tagg's reflections are interesting: "Open Letter: 'Black Music,' 'Afro-American Music' and 'European Music,'" *Popular Music*, vol. 8, no. 3, *African Music* (Cambridge University Press: Oct., 1989), 285–98.

and Spain. For that reason, I think that adding the almost entirely overlooked musical historiography of Spain to our analysis of the process of cultural transmission in the Atlantic world born in and of slavery has the potential to yield new dimensions to our understanding of these processes.

We should consider that across the Americas many Native American and African diasporic communities have retained expressive forms which clearly retain their ancestral melodies, rhythms, languages, and dances.¹²⁰ From Brazil to Cuba to Haiti to Ecuador, the preservation of pentatonic melodies and other musical and signifying elements of African tonal languages makes of these mestizo musics fascinating areas of study.¹²¹ In these musics, we hear different sounds structured by Western musical forms, yet with the percussion section maintaining the practice of polyrhythm, governed by the constant African bell pattern, in threes, or in fives.

In the absence of a more in-depth comparative study of popular American and Spanish musics, the possible traces of African and Native American musics have not been observed in Spanish sources with respect to the oral transmission of popular culture, either regarding flamenco or other traditional musics. As I have described, the harmonic-rhythmic structures and systems of Spanish popular music and flamenco are both mensurally and melodically distinct from the pentaphonic scales and melodic development of African and Native American musical systems.

Thus I think we must reconsider the concept of *danzas de negros* in the Americas, in the sense of not conceiving of these mestizo musics as essentialistically “African”—while the Africanist elements are important, they are not the only cultural presences that give these musics their unique identities.¹²² We must therefore not conflate African with African

¹²⁰ See, for example, Fernando Ortiz on the African religious dance and music practices *Palo* (Kongo), *Abakuá* (Egbo), and *Santería* or *Lucumí* (Yoruba) retained in Cuba: *Los bailes y el teatro de los negros en el folklore de Cuba* (La Habana: Editorial Letras Cubanas, [1951] 1993).

¹²¹ On *son cubano*, see Wim Wenders’s *Buena Vista Social Club* (1999). At 58:00, Amadito Valdés does a solo in the mode of an African master drummer while the other musicians each carry their own rhythmic or melodic pattern—as if it were a set of African percussion, but the instruments are no longer only drums. On rumba, see Tony Gatlif’s *Rumbero de Cuba* (1998).”

¹²² On the flip side, in Black American musics such as soul or jazz we can hear Western harmonic and rhythmic elements, such as the “*cadencia andaluza*” in songs such as Percy Mayfield’s “Hit the Road Jack,” famously interpreted by Ray Charles, or Anthony Newley and Leslie Bricusse’s “Feeling good,” famously interpreted by Nina Simone.

American music, and we should instead problematize the concepts of mestizaje and “purity.” And we should be careful with things that circulate on the internet as “Black” or “African” musics, because it is different to study the music of a tribe which had been isolated until the early-twentieth century in Central Africa than to study a Ghanaian performance filmed by a tourist and uploaded to YouTube. African music today is enormously influenced, we might even say “contaminated,” by Western music due to globalization and the ease of communication between different societies.

In this sense, I think that Spanish musics, whether traditional or academic, have been enriched by Africanisms, whether they migrated to Spain from Africa or the Americas, but I also don’t see these Africanist elements as the basis for Spanish music. Spanish rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic systems are consonant with forms and structures that are alien to African ancestral musical systems, even though there may be common elements that make transmission possible. This transmission has been occurring to a greater or lesser extent since antiquity, leading to the absorption of rhythms, melodic sequences, and dance movements when they could be adapted to our own Spanish systems of music and dance.

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