

# The nation in the region: flamenco and *canzone napoletana* as national icons in modern Spain and Italy (1880–1922)

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**ABSTRACT.** Although the relationship between music and nationalism has been at the centre of recent cross-disciplinary research, many areas remain unexplored. Among them are forms of ‘national music’ that nest overlapping identities, functioning simultaneously as vehicles of regional, ethnic, urban, global and diasporic belongings. This article focuses on the national dimension of these multilevel identities, concentrating on the swings and transmigrations between the national and the regional. It compares two Mediterranean traditions which, particularly between the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, have served as multilevel identifiers of national and regional belongings: *flamenco* and *canzone napoletana* (Neapolitan song). I argue that, besides geographically bounded identities, both genres were constructed as ‘national’ primarily abroad, rather than in their home countries, thus contributing to a theory of the ‘international’ dimension of ‘national’ music. In the case of flamenco, I focus on the irradiation centre of the time, Paris, although the modern notion of musical Spanishness was first associated with national identity in Russia. The *canzone* consolidated its international position mostly through the Italian diaspora, achieving a much wider reach than is ordinarily thought, both nationally and globally.

**KEYWORDS:** cultural nationalism, folk, hybridity, music, nationhood/national identity, Spain

## Introduction

Given its central role in the development of nineteenth-century classical music, nationalism’s role in fashioning national imageries has been covered abundantly in musicology (Beard and Gloag 2016: 175–180; Curtis 2009; White and Murphy 2001) and ethnomusicology (Bohlman 2004, 2011), both as case studies and as a general component in the study of music. On the other hand, music has usually been accorded a secondary role in nationalism studies, with a number of recent works trying to fill the gap (Brincker 2014a, 2014b; Lajosi and Stynen 2015; Leerssen 2014; Riley and Smith 2016).

This article aims to contribute to this emerging field by introducing the examples of two musical genres, in two different national contexts, *flamenco* in Spain and *canzone napoletana* in Italy. These two types of musical expression of collective identity do not fit neatly into pre-existing frameworks of analysis and definitions of musical identities. While national identities can be musically articulated around core regional identities, these choices rarely go undisputed. The comparison between the two cases emphasises how different degrees of politicisation can contribute to articulating different notions of musical nationhood: multi-centred Andalusia developed a powerful cultural industry, while hosting a robust regionalist movement. Naples-centred Campania also developed a thriving cultural and musical industry, but this was not accompanied by the presence of a political regionalist movement of any sort, nor was the *canzone* ever theorised as an element of Italian national belonging.

The study of these musical genres that, besides serving as iconic representations of national identity, also conveyed regional, local, ethnic, class and other identities has also been overlooked in nationalism studies. The juxtaposition between national and regional musical identities thus provides a particularly inspiring focus of investigation, endowed with promising potential ramifications.

The two regional traditions analysed here have come to represent, in different ways, the epitomes of Mediterranean music, as well as their respective nations as a whole. Much has been written about *flamenco* as a vessel of both Spanish and Andalusian identity, while its intrinsic hybridity derived from a variety of genres, such as Moorish, Romani, Jewish and regional roots (Benítez 2015; Cruces Roldán 2003a), has long been acknowledged to articulate a multiplicity of ethnic, regional, national and cosmopolitan identities. This article compares this multi-layered dimension with that of another Mediterranean musical genre, the *canzone napoletana* [Neapolitan song, henceforth simply '*canzone*'], finding that it has long posed as a potential competitor to opera among Italians in search of a shared sense of *Italianità* [Italianness].

The article moves from the consideration that both genres were constructed as 'national', not in their original home countries (Spain and Italy), but primarily abroad. A cross-national longing for Spanishness stemmed from musical Romanticism – sometimes conceived as compensating for the established reputation of Italian musicality through the global reach of opera. This notion of musical Spanishness, I will show, was first associated with national identity in Russia around the mid-nineteenth century, yet it was from Paris that *flamenco* was catapulted onto the international scene about two decades later, capturing the imagination of bystanders mesmerised by its multimedia performances. Moreover, both genres developed and expanded in the Parisian-inspired *café-chantants* scene dotting the urban landscapes of their respective regions since at least 1842 in Seville and 1890 in Naples. Because of initial hostility, *flamenco* struggled to become accepted as an emblem of Spanishness within Spain itself; it eventually succeeded in achieving this status with a new

generation of prominent Spanish artists and writers, mostly originating from Andalusia.

In Italy, the *canzone* moved, more discreetly, through a parallel itinerary, never formally acknowledged among nationalist circles, and thus never viscerally snubbed as flamenco was in Spain. The *canzone* achieved a much wider reach than is ordinarily thought, not only nationally but also at a global level, particularly through the Italian diaspora. While its identity remains regional at heart and deeply associated with the urban landscapes of the Gulf of Naples, the *canzone* can be said to comprise three levels of identity: local/urban/regional; national; and global/universal. I concentrate on the most neglected of the three, the link with the national or *Italianità*.

The two cases, however, implicitly illustrate another contrast: while flamenco eventually succeeded in establishing itself in Spain as a field of scholarly research in its own right, the study of the *canzone* is still far from reaching such a status in Italy. Besides the recent decline of the *canzone* in Italian national and regional culture, one reason is the resistance encountered among established musicologists, who have been predominantly concerned with classical music and have emphatically guarded their allocation of resources: of the 121 university teaching posts in musicology and associated disciplines in Italy in 2007, only fourteen were allocated to ethnomusicology or folk and popular music (Plastino and Santoro 2007: 385), which could potentially include the still underdeveloped study of the *canzone*.

Both regions, Andalusia and Campania, provided the platform for a musical condensation of, respectively, Spanish and Italian national feelings, yet in the tightly centralising Italian state whose late nation-building programmes were concerned with imposing a strong sense of unitary identity, these could never be articulated as comprehensively as in the Spanish/Andalusian case. But this political void did not prevent the rise of a strong vernacular culture, largely centred around the *canzone*.

We begin our journey by exploring the construction of national music not in Spain itself, but relatively far away. The first section explores how the search and longing for a sense of musical Spanishness materialised earlier on through the ‘gaze of the other’, that is, abroad, while in Spain flamenco had to compete as a vessel of musical nationhood with the *zarzuela*, an opera-like lyrical-dramatic genre alternating between spoken and sung performances – and now covered by a distinct scholarly literature (Young 2016).

### **Help from the East: Russian nationalism and the discovery of musical Spanishness**

Due to a series of not so fortuitous coincidences, the modern passion for Spanish music as a distinct genre seems to have caught on in Russia earlier than elsewhere. Mikhail Glinka (1804–1857), the ‘father of Russian musical nationalism’, travelled for 2 years in Spain (1845–1847) with rudimentary means of

travel, such as a mule and a horse. During his adventurous stay, and with few intermediaries, Glinka directly captured the spirit and the deepest meanings of a range of Spanish styles. He visited various regions and cities, including a Madrid that had not yet begun the process of massive urbanisation; Glinka was deeply impressed by the spontaneity of its inhabitants and their passionate relationship with music. Two works resulted from this research, *Jota Aragonesa* (1845) and *A Night in Madrid* (1848). In the process, Glinka ‘vitalized the folk-tunes not merely of one but of two nations’, Spain and Russia (Montagu-Nathan 1916: 8).

Glinka influenced an entire generation of Russian composers and artists who also shared a taste for the music of Spain, such as his disciple Mili Balakirev (1837–1910). Balakirev founded and led the ‘Great Five’ group of Russian composers, all influenced by the work of Glinka and each incorporating lessons and echoes from the music of Spain, largely *jotas*. For instance, during his travels to Spain as a Russian navy officer (1864), Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov (1844–1908) based his orchestral work *Capriccio Español* (1887) on Asturian melodies merged with ‘gypsy singing’ and fandangos, the music he had heard in local venues.

Two questions arise here, one regarding the broader origins behind the Russian idea of musical Spanishness; the other concerning the choice of a specific regional style, the *jota*. First, what were the reasons for this highly productive intercultural relationship? It can be argued that Glinka, like other Russian composers, established an idealised cultural parallel between Spain and Russia – both of which were perceived as peripheral nations in Europe. His ‘Spanish’ works, including *Jota Aragonesa* (1845), expressed ‘the possibility of solidarity between artists of marginalized cultures’ (Parakilas 1998: 138). In fact, we should bear in mind that Glinka was the founder of musical nationalism in Russia (Frolova-Walker 2008: 52–139). Russian patriots instinctively drew parallels between the War of Spanish Independence and Russian resistance against Napoleon’s *Grande Armée* (1812), exalting the uprising of 2 May 1808 (Stites 2014: 250–1). These historical facts had exerted a profound impact on the formation of patriotic consciousness among an earlier generation of Russian nationalist artists and intellectuals. In addition, Spain and Russia were led by Frenchified cultural elites, whose etiquette, mores and even language were often French, both in form and in substance. These ‘denationalised’ elites thus represented the antithesis of the authenticity and demotic folklore they were yearning for.

We should not underestimate the gargantuan impact of Napoleon’s armies on building strong reactive nationalisms all over Europe (Rowe 2013), not only in Germany and Italy but also in virtually every country where the Napoleonic troops set foot. From East to West, Russia and Spain were located at the extreme edges of a European map marked by the failure of French expansionism and moulded by common anti-French passions – ‘Russia and Spain, the two extremes of the great European diagonal’, wrote the conservative philosopher José Ortega y Gasset in 1921 (1962: 125). Moreover, the Russian

army's defeat of Napoleon 'made the Russian state a major actor on the European political stage', and the new sense of pride encouraged Russian assertiveness, intensifying 'a general Romantic interest in the history of nations and peoples' (Campbell 1996: xi), soon reflected in the search for new demotic musical styles. These facts proved to be no mere coincidences in the emergence of musical nationalism earlier on in Russia, where a kind of 'inter-nationalist' empathy for other victims of Napoleon thrived among the intelligentsia. One consequence was the idealisation of a relatively homogeneous vision of Spain as a cohesive and well-defined nation. Moreover, Russia had discovered its own vein of Orientalist and exotic predisposition (Taruskin 1998), with a particular attraction towards the Persian Empire and the *One Thousand and One Nights*, as emblematised by the success of Rimsky-Korsakov's symphonic suite *Scheherazade* (1888).<sup>1</sup> The parallel Russia–France linkages through Arabian–Spanish motifs became realised via a common post-Enlightenment fascination for the Islamic Golden Age and the *Arabian Nights*.<sup>2</sup>

Yet, the longing for a pristine sense of Spanishness was shared across Europe. Beyond Russia, when Franz Liszt (1811–1886) travelled to Spain for a concert tour (1844–1845), he visited Valencia, Barcelona, Cordoba, Seville, Cadiz and Madrid (Tarazona 1987). His special relationship with Spanish music and musicians led him to compose the *Rhapsodie espagnole* for piano (1863), also inspired by an Aragonese *jota*, a dance and rhythm which was then widespread across Spain. In fact, Spanish influences on France's nineteenth-century classical music did not initially come from flamenco, but from other popular genres, above all the *jota*. Thus, the *Rapsodie espagnole* by Maurice Ravel (1907) includes *jota* passages, while Emmanuel Chabrier's (1841–1894) symphony *Espagne* (1883) and Jules Massenet's opera *Le Cid* (1885) both incorporated *jotas*.<sup>3</sup> One can hear 'Aragonese' motifs even in an *andalucizante* opera like Bizet's *Carmen*. During this time, European classical music was being transformed by the incorporation of folk musical themes and motifs (Bohlman 2004: 42–51 and 71–4; Riley and Smith 2016: 35–43).

The second question is thus: Why did the *jota*, rather than flamenco, initially attract the interest of so many composers, beginning with Glinka? A likely answer is that they were seeking precisely those elements of the 'Spanish national soul' that could organically represent Spain as a whole. But such an 'essentialising' task was hampered by the encounter with Spain's unexpected cultural diversity. Hence, the Hispanophile composers considered that, with its inter-regional dissemination beyond Aragon, the *jota* could ultimately encapsulate the musical character of Spain they were searching for.

In Russia, flamenco was only discovered later on, via Paris. By the early twentieth century, flamenco artists were popular enough to be invited to Russia's royal courts and venues: thus, the dancer 'Maestro Realito', the pseudonym of Manuel Real Montosa (1885–1969), performed in Saint Petersburg's Imperial Palace in 1913 (Vargas 2002). In fact, while these cultural exchanges were often conceived in and around a French cultural context, Paris also provided the axis around which Russian artists tended to gravitate. In other

words, Russian passion for Spain's musical vitality preceded the French passion for flamenco but was mostly limited to the *jota*. Liszt, Ravel, Chabrier, Massenet and others also used *jotas* extensively, like the Russian composers.

By the turn of the twentieth century, flamenco had begun to dominate the European scene. Broadly at the same time as Ravel's *Rapsodie espagnole*, Claude Debussy composed his *Iberia* suite (1905–1908) in which Andalusian themes dominated. Maurice Ravel penned his *Bolero* (1928) as a one-movement orchestral piece originally named *Fandango* and commissioned as a ballet by the Russian dancer Ida Rubinstein (1883–1960). The *Bolero* represented a caesura and a sharp departure from the gloomy, pompous and rather unarticulated style of his previous *Rapsodie*.

The French fascination with flamenco had, however, begun much earlier.

### **In search of an elusive Spanishness: Paris as the global capital of flamenco**

Five international exhibitions or Expos were held in Paris between 1855 and 1900, and Spain was present at each of them with its own pavilion. These international events provided the launch pad for new, modern efforts to condense coherent and vibrant visions of demotic nationhood, besides the overwhelming triumph and fetishisation of technology. Each nation was represented by its pavilion which distilled the most exemplary and distinctive features of the nation, aspiring to showcase the best products and creations of national 'authenticity', often with a touch of exoticism: a replica of the head of the Statue of Liberty for the USA's pavilion, the Red Square and Saint Basil's Cathedral for Russia and the pagoda roof styles for the Japanese Government of the Satsuma Domain, in what nowadays marketing studies identify as 'nation-branding'.

While flamenco had appeared almost casually and in a rudimentary fashion in the 1867 Expo, it was the 1878 exhibition that revealed to an enthusiastic cosmopolitan public the art of flamenco (Lacchè 2007: 457). After that, flamenco inspired musicalities began to exert an incomparable charm among intellectuals and leading artists in France and other European countries. Perhaps, the most illustrious case was Georges Bizet's opera *Carmen* (1875), which, 50 years later, 'came to embody values of Frenchness, serving as a yardstick to assess the place of other works in the national canon' – it had long been a staple of French opera houses (Llano 2013: xxi).<sup>4</sup> Around *Carmen* converged all those tropes that began to be widespread later on, including the association of flamenco with *Gitanidad* and the 'exoticism' of Spain.

Before World War I, Paris was the world's cultural epicentre and the undisputed 'capital of modernity' (Harvey 2003) at a time when theatrical dance thrived. This certainly applied to music – indeed Ben Walton has identified the leading role played by Restoration Paris in the artistic formation of Gioacchino Rossini from 1823, when he established himself there (Walton 2007). One assessment goes as far as identifying the emergence of flamenco

in Paris as a symbiosis between two dance schools: classical French ballet and the Spanish bolero school (Steingress 2006). However, by the early nineteenth century, flamenco was already well established in Spain, where it embraced the influence of other styles and genres from across the Pyrenees, including French ballet and choreography (Goldberg et al. 2015). On the other hand, the French-inspired vogue of the *cafés cantantes*, the predecessors of the contemporary *tablaos*, played a central role in the popularisation of flamenco in the major urban centres throughout Spain (Blas Vega 1995, 2006; Grande 1995).<sup>5</sup>

Later on, in the years around World War I, flamenco also served to assert a wider cultural identity in France, with intellectuals and composers contributing to articulate musical visions of Spanishness that questioned ‘notions of French cultural supremacy’ (Llano 2013: xvii). This was largely a response to assuaging influence by wider geo-political events prior to and following World War I. Yet, within Spain itself, the most influential group of Spanish intellectuals at the time did not share this enthusiasm.

### **Against the region: patriotic invectives between authoritarianism and anti-traditionalism**

A peculiar Spanish phenomenon involved the *fin-de-siècle* wave of vituperation known as *anti-flamenquismo*. This term identifies a broad-spectrum attack by a group of intellectuals and journalists who saw flamenco as decadent folklore incompatible with their vision of a properly modern, fully Westernised Spain.<sup>6</sup> The loss of Spain’s last colonies following defeat in the Spanish–American War (1898) generated an upsurge of anxieties and soul-searching about Spain’s decline, identity and place in Europe. José Ortega y Gasset, Miguel de Unamuno, Rubén Darío, Pío Baroja, Ramón María del Valle-Inclán and other exponents of the *Generación del ’98* [‘Generation of 1898’] all expressed disapproval of flamenco to varying degrees (Grande 1979: 425–65). These polemics formed part of the *Regeneracionista* debate on ‘the two Spains’ (*las dos Españas*) galvanised by the belief that, in order to regenerate Spain, it was essential to build a sturdy, cohesive and unified national culture devoid of its most dissonant or ‘exotic’ elements – what Ernest Gellner would characterise as ‘counter-entropic’ elements indigestible to a ‘high’ culture (Gellner 1983). The most emblematic, but also most extreme, exponent of this trend was the anti-gypsy writer and agitator Eugenio Noel (1885–1936) who branded, in almost equal measure, bullfighting and flamenco as the main causes of Spain’s perversion and moral degradation (Ruiz 1990). Noel’s radical *anti-flamenquismo* verged on visceral and atavistic hatred, and he contributed more than others to caricaturising this art form through a series of stereotypes that still persist.

In this, the *anti-flamenquistas* were joined by early Basque and Catalan nationalists, who often mimicked the anti-traditional undertones of the *Regeneracionistas* (Conversi 1997). Thus, the founder of Basque nationalism, Sabino de Arana Goiri (1865–1903), wanted to forbid Spanish music in all of

the nationalist political and social premises, the *batzokis*: ‘Look at a Spanish dance, and if you are not nauseated by its lewd, disgusting and cynical hug between the two sexes, it is a credit to the robustness of your stomach’ (Letamendia 1975: 133). The main theorist of twentieth-century Catalan nationalism, Enric Prat de la Riba (1870–1917), used the term *flamenquismo* to highlight ‘decadent Spanish mores and cultural habits’ (cited by Solé-Tura 1967: 102 and 222).<sup>7</sup> In 1899, the journal *La Renaixensa* contended: ‘the beautiful songs of [our] land have to be the main weapons to fight flamenquismo’ (cited by Marfany 1987: 87).

What Spanish, Catalan and Basque nationalist elites most execrated was the sensuality and eroticism of dance and music. Just as White Anglo-Saxon supremacists in the USA publicly attacked Afro-American jazz for its alleged sensuality, so the Spanish puritan *regeneracionistas* attacked flamenco as an emblem of gypsy promiscuity, backwardness and impurity. Obsessed by a vision of modernity coterminous with Jacobin centralism and cultural homogenisation (Conversi 2007, 2012), they ideologically adhered to a Westernising crusade opposed to anything perceived as the representation of a rude, ‘exotic’ and anti-progressive Spain. When it came to represent the image of Spain in international arenas such as the *Expos* in Paris, flamenco catalysed a tide of hostilities. A Catalan journalist and illustrator thus expressed his distaste for the presence of flamenco at the 1889 Expo:

[a] classical picture of *flamenconess*, with *jipios* [groans and moans, typical of flamenco], hoarse voices, *olés, taconeo* [heels stomping] and other supporting details; the monotonous strumming of the guitar, the lascivious and provocative dance of shameless women, and the disgust of those filthy pimps [*chulos asquerosos*], who do not appear as, nor are, men; the endless *ay ... ay ...* of their drunkard [*aguardentada*] voices. (Pellicer 1891: 297)

Some of the most trivial flamenco stereotypes were thus created by those intellectuals and publicists who clamoured against it. But a new generation of Andalusian writers and artists embarked on a long route to set things right.

### **From Paris to Granada: internationalist nuances in Spain’s search for a ‘national’ musical self**

The international infatuation with flamenco was accompanied by renewed home-grown passion and productiveness. Spain’s most famous twentieth-century composers, Manuel de Falla, Isaac Albéniz and Enrique Granados, were all influenced in different ways and to varying degrees by multiple aspects of the flamenco tradition. In particular, the Andalusian Manuel de Falla (1876–1946) wholeheartedly devoted himself to exploring and promoting the full expression of the *cante jondo* as the ‘purest’ form of flamenco (Hess 2001, 2005). The vocal style *cante jondo* [literally, ‘deep song’] was initially romanticised by its supporters as the most primitive, authentic and popular variety of flamenco,



which in turn influenced most other flamenco styles. De Falla was the inspirer and organiser of the watershed musical contest *Concurso de Cante Jondo* ('Cante Jondo Competition', June 1922) held in the *patios* [courtyards] of the Alhambra, Granada, where traditional flamenco artists met for the first time with an impressive number of classical musicians, literary figures and intellectuals. These included the poets Federico García Lorca and Juan Ramón Jiménez, the educational reformer Francisco Giner de los Ríos, the guitarist Andrés Segovia and the Basque realist painter Ignacio Zuloaga. Even Igor Stravinsky and Maurice Ravel joined the project, although they were unable to travel as Granada city council declined to sponsor their attendance (Wade and Garno 1997: 47). In a way, the *Concurso* itself was a sophisticated and articulated response to the *anti-flamenquismo* of the *Generación del '98*, but it was also a rejoinder to the wave of international enthusiasm for flamenco as a complete art form that had already broken into choreography, dance and poetry.

In fact, the international connection had been established before the *Concurso*. The founder of the *Ballets Russes*, Sergei Diaghilev (1872–1929), spent a most prolific and rewarding period in Seville during Holy Week 1921 in the company of Igor Stravinsky (1882–1971), the Russian poet and dancer Boris Kochno (1904–1990) and the English theatre director-manager Sir Charles Cochran (1872–1951). Together, they organised 'almost nightly ... the gathering of some of the best singers and guitarists' (Cochran, cited in Walsh 2002: 328).<sup>8</sup> And in 1917, Pablo Picasso famously contributed to designing the sets, scenery and costumes of Diaghilev's Russian ballets, such as *Cuadro Flamenco* (1921); on this occasion, he met the Ukrainian dancer Olga Klokova (later his first wife and mother of his first child), whom he painted dressed in a 'Spanish' suit with an Andalusian *abanico* (hand fan) and *mantón de Manila* ('Manila' silk shawl).<sup>9</sup>

At the end of the nineteenth century, 'the lesson of Spanish music, much deeper than a simple flip of orientalisising atmosphere, was a lesson in freedom of improvisation, of fancy made of sudden ignitions and languor' (Lacchè 2007: 457). Hence, the full internationalisation of flamenco preceded, and partly coincided with, its re-appropriation as a national icon at a time when most European states were fervently engaged in nationalising processes and often over-concerned with selecting a few repeatable cultural icons as 'core values' of nationhood.

The conditions became propitious for the rise of internationally acclaimed talents, among them Andrés Segovia (1893–1987), often referred to as the greatest classical guitarist of all time, having adapted to guitar pieces originally written for piano. Although he often declared that flamenco was not influential in his musical formation, he joined de Falla's call to join the jury for the 1922 *Concurso de Cante Jondo*.

Long before him, Isaac Albéniz (1860–1909), who did not write any compositions for guitar, was increasingly influenced by flamenco, particularly *cante jondo*. His use of the Phrygian scale was inspired by his classical music teacher, the composer Felipe Pedrell (1841–1922), who advocated a combination of classical music with 'national' styles (Chase 1941: 153). In fact, Albéniz did

the opposite of Segovia as he transposed guitar idioms into piano writing. While he was Catalan by birth, his compositions display convincing Spanish patriotic undertones: his eight piece *Suite española* (Spanish Suite) and other piano works parade evocative names, such as *Rapsodia española* [Spanish Rhapsody] (1887), *Chants d'Espagne*, *España* and *Doce piezas características* [Twelve Characteristic Pieces] (1888). Both his *Recuerdos de viaje* [Travel Memories] and the twelve-piece *Iberia* suite were largely dedicated to Andalusian travel pearls before they became magnets for mass tourism: Granada's Alhambra, Sevilla, Málaga and Jerez. One of these, 'Andalusian beaches', portrays a panorama which would be unrecognisable after the contemporary devastation of the Andalusian littoral began under Francoism, continuing until the 2010s recession. Flamenco melodies were used to represent most Spanish regions: Albéniz's famous piece *Asturias* [*Leyenda*], part of the *Suite española*, was not based on local Asturian dances like the *muñeira* or the *pericote*, but on fast *bulería* rhythms, a flamenco style originally associated with the city of Jerez de la Frontera in Southern Andalusia. Here, Andalusian motifs became synonymous with *españolidad* (Spanishness).

In short, by the early twentieth century, flamenco had already become simultaneously national and international, local and global. But its regional dimension was even more redolent with collective emotional meanings.

### Regionalism and music in Andalusia

Although I cannot fully develop here the regionalist dimension of flamenco, it is necessary to explore its importance. With the 1978 Constitution following the transition to democracy, seventeen autonomous communities emerged with various levels of self-government within a quasi-federal Spain (Conversi 2000). Along with Catalonia, Galicia and the Basque Country, Andalusia is one of four regions to have accessed their autonomy statutes through a 'fast-route' that bestowed the maximum level of competences soon after the Constitution's approval.

Three main interpretations have emerged in the study of the linkages between regionalism and flamenco. First, a pro-institutional, pro-public education approach argues for the need to designate a formal budget from public funds, not only to teach flamenco in its various components (dance, song, guitar) but also for the public sponsorship of artists and their events (Cruces Roldán 2003b; Moreno Navarro 1993). A second pro-deregulation, intrinsically 'free-market' approach contends that institutional support could contaminate the spontaneity of flamenco while its greatest creativity cannot be channelled from above (Aix Gracia 2014; Steingress 2005; Washabaugh 1996). Finally, a geo-cultural position that explores the advantages of both approaches focuses on the local articulation and grassroots forms of non-institutional initiatives gravitating around flamenco, sometimes emerging in contrast with regional government policies (Machin-Autenrieth 2017).

All three of the above approaches have something to offer. In my view, the pro-deregulation approach needs further critical consideration. Although it is not explicitly neo-liberal, it implicitly hypothesises that we move in a world of opportunities in which players share the same advantages offered by the market and which, in particular, should not be tainted by association with public powers and policies. While the Andalusian government has promoted flamenco in its various manifestations, most of the *nuevo flamenco* [new flamenco] scene has spontaneously emerged since the 1970s and 1980s among Gitano communities outside institutional support or channelling. In the absence of regional or state funding to support *nuevo flamenco*, many local artists have had to endure dire economic conditions in order to survive.

The linkages between flamenco and politics, however, date back to the original foundation of Andalusian regionalism, which I briefly explore here. While a form of cultural regionalism had thrived before, *Andalucismo* as a political movement aspiring to self-government was launched in 1914 by the notary Blas Infante (1885–1936) in Seville. He more thoroughly politicised a pre-existing nineteenth-century cultural regionalism that had hitherto been the preserve of local historians and folklorists. In his *Orígenes de lo flamenco y secreto del cante jondo* ['Origins of flamenco and secret of the cante jondo'] (1929–1931), Infante defended the thesis that '*flamenquizable* music entered the palaces of kings during the Renaissance ..., but was preserved by the Muslims as popular art, ... because the Reconquest forced the Moors to qualify for gypsy hospitality' (Infante 1980: 163). At the same time, Infante tried to solve the ethnic (*gitano*)/regional/national dilemma by arguing that Andalusians were 'the last descendants of a people carrying one of the most beautiful cultures in the world' while embracing Roma communities as carriers of the Andalusian tradition (Infante 1980). He went to great lengths to argue that the word 'flamenco' derived from the Arabic *felahmengü*, meaning fled or expelled worker (*labrador*) (Egea Fernández-Montesinos 2001: 120). And, Infante argued, as it could not be publicly performed, flamenco remained clandestine until the nineteenth century when the persecution ceased.

Such controversial interpretations had to confront competing theses on the origins of flamenco, including those focusing on different etymological roots, such as that flamenco was imported from Flanders (=flamingos), or that Gypsies brought it into Spain when they arrived with Charles V's troops; or, alternatively, that it was brought by the descendants of Flemish migrants to Bohemia, the 'land of Gypsies'. In particular, in contrast to Infante, the folklorist, anthropologist and writer Demófilo (pseudonym of Antonio Machado Álvarez, 1848–1893) argued that flamenco was not a traditional popular genre, but a new one, in so far as people could not sing these songs and many had never heard them (cited in Steingress 2005: 123).<sup>10</sup> But for Infante, 'popular' meant pleasing to, and resonating among, the people – a condition which could be said to apply to flamenco (Infante 1980).

Historically, Andalusian regionalism shares consistent ideological links with Catalanism. In the 1910s and 1920s, the regionalist magazine *Centro*

*Andaluz* defended Catalanism from centralist attacks. Blas Infante contrasted an alive and thriving Catalonia with a dead Spain, devoid of national substance. The first *andalucista* cultural centre opened in Barcelona in 1918 to enhance Andalusian culture in Catalonia, while at the same time encouraging the promotion of Catalan products and culture in Andalusia (Lacomba Abellán 1988: 145).

But this is part of an even broader and more complex set of interlocking identities and relationships, in which a further and crucial ethnic element must be added as central to the entire development of flamenco.

### **Beyond soul and soil: *Gitanos*, de-territorialisation and flamenco**

In 1931, the Hungarian classical composer Béla Bartók became involved in patriotic discussions about whether what was called ‘Gypsy music’ was simply Hungarian music performed by Gypsy (Roma) musicians – clearly opting for the latter interpretation (Bartók 1977:127–51). Here, Bartók sharply criticised his compatriot Ferenc Liszt (1811–1886) for daring to defend the contrary hypothesis around a century earlier (Loya 2011: ch. 4).<sup>11</sup>

Similar arguments have repeatedly emerged in regard to Spain’s relationship with flamenco (Piotrowska 2013: ch. 2; Washabaugh 2013).<sup>12</sup> We have seen how flamenco, particularly in Infante’s work, was strongly identified with Andalusian territorial identity. However, flamenco is also associated with a distinctive ethnic Romani group, the *gitanos*, making its association with the notion of identity even broader and more elusive. For many authors, flamenco is an intrinsic part of the *gitano* culture, so *gitano* creativity was decisive in its development (Leblon 2003). Most flamenco singers are *gitanos* or of *gitano* origin, although the flamenco scene has increasingly diversified through various forms of fusion and connubia. Among other authors, and in opposition to Infante’s *métissage* theory, Demófilo argued passionately for the *gitaneidad* [Gypsiness] of flamenco (Machado y Álvarez 1999).

If ethnicity is based on a belief in putative descent (Horowitz 1985), ‘ethnic’ culture is by definition centred on continuity and culture itself develops through a perpetual dialogue between continuity and creativity. For the *gitano* community, flamenco thus represents cultural continuity within ethnic continuity. The profession is often handed over from one generation to the next, as occurred with the Habichuela ‘dynasty’ inaugurated by ‘Habichuela el Viejo’ in the late nineteenth century and continued by his sons, grandsons and great-grandsons, including Pepe Habichuela, José Carmona and his brothers Juan, Carlos and Luis Habichuela. Cross-generational transmission of culture is thus a critical aspect of the relationship between flamenco and local, ethnic, regional or national identity. It thus concerns the study of both ethnicity and nationalism as founded on shared beliefs of putative descent.

The concluding section contrasts the role of flamenco in contributing to, and flowing into, multiple national and regional identities with another

musical genre, the *canzone napoletana*; this, I argue, played a central role in the construction of its own regional identity, as well as sharing with opera a broader significance as an essential component of Italian national identity.

### The *canzone napoletana* as a symbol of Italianness?

Opera is widely regarded as the main musical vessel of Italian identity. Several scholarly works, in English as well as in Italian, have dealt with the relationship between opera and nationalism.<sup>13</sup> I argue, however, that another musical tradition has long posed as a potential competitor of opera in the search for Italianness, namely, the *canzone napoletana*.

Remarkably, no major study has yet appeared on the role of the *canzone* as a vessel of Italianness in Italy,<sup>14</sup> but it has been studied in this capacity among the Italian diaspora dispersed across continents (Frasca 2014; Plastino and Sciorra 2013). This research vacuum is perhaps unsurprising, given the urban rootedness of this musical genre oscillating between local and diasporic dimensions.

In his *Dictionnaire de Musique* (1780–1789), Jean-Jacques Rousseau does not mention Neapolitan styles – the *canzone* as a recognisable popular style had yet to be invented. Instead, he describes the *barcarolles*, which Venetian gondoliers sang by adapting pieces they overheard while listening to opera fragments, as gondoliers had ‘free’ access to all Venetian theatres (Rousseau 1856: 609).

While this testifies to the influence of opera on popular songs at the time of Rousseau, it is noteworthy that, over the years, the gondoliers’ repertoire slowly shifted towards Neapolitan songs, possibly because these have increasingly been the most requested by tourists visiting the lagoon over the last hundred years. On the other hand, musical scores, lead sheets and cheap broadsheets (*copiella*) (Scialò 2010: 335–40) were easily available throughout the peninsula and eagerly sought by tourists (Auletta 2013: 49).

By the time of Italian unification, opera had become an unequalled tool of nationalisation (Chiappina 2012; Körner 2012; Sorba 2014; Stewart-Steinberg 2013), largely because of the unique fusion between visual and acoustic effects: ‘it was the multimedia spectacle of grand opera that became the most powerful nation-building instrument from the field of music’ (Leerssen 2006: 192). This left the other competitors for national representativeness in a much weaker position, more so in Italy, where opera was born and continued to thrive.

Since the 1880s, however, *canzone* and opera have increasingly coexisted, mutually influencing each other as elements of national identity (Ruberti 2011). In Naples, a unique context led to the impromptu combination of opera and pre-existing popular traditions of song writing. Here, the selection of arias from the opera repertoire was facilitated by the presence of semi-professional tenors and baritones, who ended up singing in public venues. The ‘classical’ *canzone* is characterised by melodies and texts jointly written in Neapolitan

language by a couple of authors, for either guitar or orchestral accompaniment, although most attempts to define it in strictly musicological terms have so far proved unfruitful (Bevilacqua 2017: 121–47; De Simone 2017). It began its artistic trajectory in the private salons of the Neapolitan bourgeoisie and in the public *café-chantants* (or *caffè concerto*), such as the Salone Margherita and the Gambrinus, where it was performed alongside condensations and *pot-pourris* of opera pieces (Sommaio 2013), initially inserted as part of *teatro di varietà* [variety show], *teatro di rivista* [revue] and *avanspettacolo* [literally ‘before the show’].

As with Rousseau’s *gondolieri*, a liaison was thus established between the music of the elites and popular music. The first composers of classical *canzone*, chiefly the Paris-born Guglielmo Cottrau (1797–1847) and his son Teodoro (1827–1879), were also authors of romances and operettas (Scialò and Seller 2013; Stazio 2013). Many melodies evoked, often randomly, opera pieces: ‘Opera composers, not necessarily from Naples, also wrote Neapolitan songs, and famous songs whose authors are uncertain have been attributed to opera composers’ (Sorace Keller 2016). This was the case in respect of *Te voglio bene assaje*, once attributed to Gaetano Donizetti (1797–1848) and *Fenesta ca lucive* (rearranged by Guglielmo Cottrau, 1842), attributed to Vincenzo Bellini (1801–1835) – both sometimes indicated as the first songs in the classical *canzone* repertoire.

As it became oriented towards wider public consumption, the *canzone* began to be promoted by key Italian opera and classical music entrepreneurs, such as the Milanese *Ricordi* (f. 1808), the largest music publisher in southern Europe.<sup>15</sup> Authors, performers and audiences of opera and *canzone* thus shared many of the same venues, so that the *canzone* experienced continuous interchanges or *innesti* with opera (Stazio 2013). This is reflected in the contrast between *canzone’s* *operatic* performing style (accompanied by an orchestra) and its more *intimate* style with guitar accompaniment – the two being highly interchangeable (Sorace Keller 2016).

From the late 1880s, *canzone* ascended to international acclaim, carried abroad by waves of emigrants and international performers, beginning with Enrico Caruso (1873–1921), the first to perform in New York’s Metropolitan Opera in 1903. Since then, *canzone* has increasingly appeared in the performances of opera singers, becoming simultaneously popularly rooted and part of the classical tradition. Accordingly, it has turned into one of the first international forms of popular music of the modern era (Plastino and Sciorra 2013) and ‘one of the few local musical traditions that have become truly global’ (Sorace Keller 2016: 244).

By the twentieth century, several Neapolitan songs had entered the repertoire of major opera singers, particularly those gravitating around the plight of exile: *Santa Lucia Luntana* (1919), *Lacreme Napuletane* (1925), *O paese d’o sole* (1925), *A’ cartulina e Napule* (1927) and even *O sole mio* (1898). In fact, Neapolitan songs served as powerful cultural catalysts among the Italian diaspora dispersed across various continents as a heterogeneous group of various classes and regions (Plastino and Sciorra 2013). The *canzone* was thriving

among Italians in Northern Europe, Australia (Sorce Keller 2016) and the Americas (Frasca 2012, 2014). The *canzone* could convey like no other genre a sense of yearning, nostalgia and longing for a faraway homeland among dispersed communities only 'bound by distance' (Verdicchio 1997). Indeed, the genre was largely constructed within the diaspora, where a strong nostalgia developed for the homeland's lifestyle and culture (Plastino 2007).

At the same time, the city of Naples remained a 'meeting point' between vernacular and 'high' culture (De Simone 2017). Naples' unique artistic entrepreneurship and cultural primacy languished after Italian unification but survived until 1915 when World War I put an end to the city's *Belle Époque* (Barbagallo 2015).

Besides the opera–canzone connection, a flow of events interlinked *canzone napoletana* and *canzone italiana*. To begin with, the first short playing (78 rpm) sound recording in Italy, '*A risa* [The laughter] (1895), was a Neapolitan song by the '*macchiettista*' [comic] Berardo Cantalamessa,<sup>16</sup> yet recorded in the Milanese studios of the US company International Zonophone. The Italianness of Neapolitan song was already beyond dispute in 1907 when the bard of Italian nationalism, the poet Gabrielle D'Annunzio, penned the lyrics of the voluptuous '*A vucchiella*, a Neapolitan song set to music by the chamber romance composer Francesco Paolo Tosti (1846–1916), not himself Neapolitan but from D'Annunzio's own region, the Abruzzi.

One of the most renowned canzone authors, E. A. Mario (aka Giovanni Gaeta, 1884–1961), was also the composer of Italian patriotic songs. His most famous *La canzone del Piave* (1918), a militarist song celebrating defeat and rescue against the Austro–Hungarian troops in World War I, was so popular among Italians that, before the end of the monarchy, King Humbert II nominated it as a candidate for the Italian national anthem – thus making the boundary between Italian and Neapolitan *canzone* even more permeable. It is also significant that, like other patriotic songs, *La canzone del Piave*'s popularity in Italy was not matched by similar success abroad, which was not even vaguely comparable to the international resonance of the most famous Neapolitan *canzoni*, such as *Funiculi, Funiculà*, '*O Sole Mio*, *Torna a Surriento* or *Santa Lucia Luntana*.

After the war, *Canti Nuovi* (1919, in Italian), by the Neapolitan singer and author Armando Gill (1877–1945), fused elements of the *canzone* with that of the *stornello*, a traditionally improvised ditty based on a quinary and two hendecasyllables. Among the Neapolitan songwriters who, from the 1930s to the 1950s, composed some of the most successful Italian evergreens, Cesare Andrea Bixio (1896–1978) has been identified as one of the 'pillars' of twentieth century Italian identity (Venturi 2010). Bixio also composed the soundtrack of the first Italian sound film, *La canzone dell'amore* [*The Song of Love*] directed by Gennaro Righelli (1930).

Like other forms of vernacular culture, Neapolitan genres suffered under the centralising and homogenising drive of fascism (Cannistraro 1972; Griffin 1998). With the advent of democracy and the rise of neorealism, an

incalculable number of Italian movies used Neapolitan songs as a central theme or in various capacities. In the fictional reconstruction of the last days of exiled King Francis II of Bourbon, *'O Re* (1989, written and directed by Luigi Magni), the King, while listening to the canzone *Te voglio bene assaje*, declares: 'The only thing I ever had was the voice of Naples'.

The relationship between *canzone napoletana* and *italiana* continued into the post-war period, as the Sanremo Italian song festival often included songs by Neapolitan singers – even though they were usually sung in Italian, rather than in Neapolitan (Agostini 2013; Facci 2013). As an example of this blending of style, *Rose rosse* ['Red roses'] (1968–1969), with its incipit in mandolins and orchestra, was sung in Italian by the actor and singer Massimo Ranieri as a classical Neapolitan song in all except language. A host of Italian singers and songwriters has either reinterpreted classical Neapolitan *canzoni* or composed entirely new ones. The fusion between *canzone italiana* and *napoletana* culminated in Lucio Dalla's *Caruso*, a song composed in 1986 to honour the great tenor, set on a classical Neapolitan melody, but mostly sung in standard Italian.

Neapolitan authors wrote Italian songs, and non-Neapolitan authors wrote Neapolitan songs, the two distinct 'genres' coexisting for a long time – well emblematised later on, in the 1950s, by the coexistence of the Sanremo Festival and the Festival of Naples.

In short, the *canzone napoletana* and the *canzone italiana* are indissolubly linked both musically and stylistically and can hardly be understood separately – yet they are recognisably distinct.

### **Folk is not: from popular tradition to classical *canzone***

The Neapolitan tradition had its meeting place at a major festival, *Piedigrotta*. Around 1880, *Piedigrotta* began to receive unusual attention on the pages of the city's newspapers and other media (Stazio 1991: 97–100). The songs launched that year showed an unfamiliar interest in current affairs and the here and now. *Funiculì, funiculà*, composed by Peppino Turco (lyrics) and put into music by Luigi Denza, celebrated the launch that year of the first cable car in the world on a volcano, Mount Vesuvius. The lyrics were written by a journalist, Turco, who then commissioned Denza to create the music, in an arrangement which became typical of the canzone: most classical Neapolitan songs had two authors, one for the lyrics, and the other for the music. Thus, the poet Salvatore Di Giacomo (1860–1934) authored many famous Neapolitan poems that were later set to music and deeply permeated Neapolitan culture, working in tandem with musicians such as Ernesto Murolo, Libero Bovio and E. A. Mario. The classical *canzone* is therefore indissolubly tied to Neapolitan poetry (Haller 1999: 243–78).

A specific event signalled the change of an era, with the *canzone* becoming part of a musical market fuelled by its own industry. When Richard Strauss



incorporated *Funiculi* into his symphonic poem *Aus Italien* (1886), he genuinely took it for a local folk song. However, the composer of the music, Denza, filed a lawsuit which Strauss lost and he was compelled to pay a royalty for each public performance that included the song (Brosche 2010: 315). The ‘mistake’ was repeated in 1907 by Nikolay Rimsky-Korsakov, who again included *Funiculi* as part of his *Neapolitanskaya pesenka* [Neapolitan Song] (Seaman 2014: 14). These international musicians had barely realised that the *canzone* was already a consolidated genre with its own industry, markets and marketing protected by copyright law. These juridical adventures testify to the shift from folk/popular music, based on anonymous authors, to author-licensed, copyright-protected songs distributed by a thriving musical industry for a market that had already expanded beyond the city of Naples.

Such developments announced the advent of an incipient form of public ‘mass’ culture gravitating around a series of cultural projects which, beyond *Piedigrotta*, included blossoming theatre productions, particularly the work of Eduardo Scarpetta (1853–1925), and the mass expansion of silent movies (Barbagallo 2015: 35–9 and 104–44). The *Piedigrotta* Festival accompanied the evolution of many of these events and the expanding popularity of the *canzone*. In the years to come, particularly after World War II, the use of Neapolitan songs became a recurrent feature in the soundtracks of popular Italian movies (Dyer 2013) and, since 1959, on the television.

### Comparing two Mediterranean regional–national identities

We saw how, despite initial hostility, flamenco gained a recognised place as a national icon in Spain. In contrast, *canzone napoletana* could not compete with opera as the elites’ favoured vehicle of ‘national socialisation’. Yet, *canzone* soon gained a place of pride beyond its regional limits, achieving international fame, mainly through the Italian diaspora. In fact, Neapolitan songs increasingly became Italian songs, which were often sung by the middle and working classes, as well as by the elites, among Italians across the globe.

Both *canzone* and flamenco had to compete with their corresponding ‘high’ (i.e. formally learned) musical cultures, respectively gravitating around *opera* and *zarzuela*, thus having to position themselves in this respect. Zarzuela was a means of popular expression that was able to condense national feelings at a moment when a mass culture was taking shape (Young 2016: ch. 2). But, having influenced classical music through the work of Albeniz, de Falla, Granados and others, flamenco found a lesser competitor in the *zarzuela* which, moreover, did not achieve the same iconic status and global resonance as opera – and was indeed largely a derivative of the latter.<sup>17</sup> As great composers such as de Falla absorbed ‘flamenco’ into classical music, its grand entrance into the Western classical canon occurred first internationally and only later at the national level.

In contrast, the *canzone* had to compete with opera and was definitely less appealing to national elites as a national icon. However, the two often merged and combined beyond, and in spite of, the elites' political endorsement of opera (Blake 2004: 68). Similarities with flamenco include the appropriation of 'Neapolitan' styles by European 'high culture' through classical music, consolidating with Rossini's and Schubert's *tarantellas* and culminating in Strauss' and Rimsky-Korsakov's *faux pas*.

The multi-centredness of flamenco extended beyond Andalusian towns and cities into Madrid, Murcia and Extremadura (Machin-Autenrieth 2017). This contrasts with the central place occupied by the Gulf of Naples as the gravitational heart in the cultural geography of the *canzone*. Unlike the *canzone*, flamenco was associated with a distinctive ethnic group, the *Gitanos* [Romani people], and their culture. Even today, the most prominent players, dancers and composers of flamenco come from the *Gitano* communities dispersed across Spain. This has not prevented the genre from being associated with broader projects of Andalusian territorialised identity (Machin-Autenrieth 2017) and Spanish national imagery both in Spain and beyond (Llano 2013).

In contrast with the Neapolitan case, flamenco dance (*baile*) developed as a multimedia art form in its own right – although obviously inseparable from music. Flamenco's three main artistic components, *cante* [song], *baile* [dance] and *toque* [guitar playing], are interwoven in a way that can be compared only loosely with the relationship between Neapolitan song and theatre. Choreography, costume, scenery and setting are also often essential ingredients of a genre that aims to conquer all the senses.

While the classical Neapolitan *canzone* is strictly entwined with poetry (Haller 1999: 243–78), flamenco belongs to an oral tradition that fuses existing learnt and often internalised formulae and themes that are brought together in the moment of performance.

If ethnic and national identities are based on subjective experiences rather than objective facts, *Italianità* and *Españolidad* can be said to be largely in the eyes of the beholder. For whom was the *canzone* an Italian symbol? And for whom was flamenco a Spanish symbol? As we have seen, the answers vary both geographically and chronologically: perceptions of Spanishness evolved and the centrality of the '*Andalucisante*' flamenco vision has been articulated in various ways since its inception in Paris. The French linkage was shared less directly by the *canzone*, whose forefathers were partly French (Rovinello 2013). The Parisian connection could help explain why, after encountering stern resistance, flamenco was increasingly chosen by both the Spanish elites and international audiences as a symbol of *Españolidad* and national identity, despite its regional Andalusian roots. In contrast, coeval post-*Risorgimento* Italian elites never explicitly designated the *canzone* as a symbol of Italianness, as this place had already been taken by opera. Yet, as I have argued, it *de facto* and autonomously accomplished this task, largely due to another extra-territorial impulse, this time emanating from the global Italian diaspora emigrating mostly, but not only, from the South, after the country's military and political

unification (1860). It was among these multiregional diasporas that the Neapolitan song first achieved the status of an Italian national icon, although the Neapolitan musical industry had already achieved a national reach by the turn of the century – as exemplified by the release of the first 78 rpm and the incipient Italian popularity of the *canzone* genre.

Overall, the comparison has shown that both musical traditions fit the pattern of complex interlocking identities simultaneously reflecting local resistance to broader national homogenisation trends while acting, directly or indirectly, as agents of nationalisation processes. However, both genres are also associated with manifold levels of identity, extending from the local to the global, from the regional to the national and, in the case of flamenco composed and performed by Gitanos, to the ethnic dimension as well.

## Conclusions

Nation-states are often predicated upon unrealistic notions of internal homogeneity and congruence (Connor 1994). Modern history is thus replete with official attempts to impose uniform patterns of culture destined to disregard, ostracise, or even eliminate, cultural variety (Conversi 2007, 2010). Music has not been immune to these attempts, yet it has not always proved easy to bend it in accordance with the aims of nation-statism. Even during wartime, specific motifs have tended to achieve an aura of universality, most clearly emblematised by *Lili Marlene*, the German love song whose notes could detour the trenches and touch men in uniform on opposite sides of the frontline. However, while music has a perceived universal grasp, it also has the capacity to evoke national imagery associated with cultural visions of land and soil.

In this article, I showed how musical national identity found inspiration in regional identity, highlighting deficiencies and areas of potential expansion in our understanding of the ‘region into nation’ musical dynamics. While Romantic notions of organic community clashed with more pluralist notions, external and internal visions of musical nationhood ferociously competed. Whereas extensive research has been carried out on the *regard de l'autre* (Llano 2013), I am concerned with balancing the regional, national and international visions of musical nationhood and the way they interrelated.

Romantic visions of a supposedly cohesive and organic Spanish identity were first consistently glimpsed among Russian nationalist composers, who focused on the *jota* as Spain's quintessential expression. However, it was in France, and specifically in Paris, where the Romantic longing for authenticity joined the fascination for the exotic – as a cross-European variant of Orientalism – by shifting its attention to flamenco. While flamenco was not ‘discovered’ in Paris, it was here that it was launched before more cosmopolitan audiences as an articulate, complex art form. However, it catalysed the discontent and unhappiness of Spanish nationalists, whose organic vision of nationhood clashed with what they perceived as an impure, perverted and exoticised art

form unsuited to their modernist vision of a Castilian-dominated Spain. Their rigid notion of national cohesion could not incorporate the 'nation in the region' idea, yet the next generation of – mostly Andalusian-born – intellectuals and musicians did soundly articulate their region-centred vision of musical nationhood, in which the genre was simultaneously a conveyor of regional belonging and a vehicle of national identity.

Similar attempts by some European musicians, notably Strauss and Rimski-Kórsakov, to incorporate elements of Neapolitan song clashed with an incipient, but already thriving, musical industry which had developed its own internal market while combining with French forms of theatrical performance, primarily through the proliferation of bourgeois-inspired *café-chantants*, where music was the dominant art form. Although Neapolitan culture had limited appeal among Italian elites, its musical industry achieved a wide national reach that even some of the most vehemently nationalist of Italian poets, artists and intellectuals, such as Gabriele D'Annunzio, could not ignore. The *canzone* was thus incorporated into various aspects of Italian culture including, later on, the movie industry, while its role in vernacular nation-building was never openly acknowledged by Italian intellectuals, among whom opera remained the undisputed form of national expression and musical nation-building. The acclaimed capacity of opera to symbolise and synthesise Italian national identity made other musical genres highly uncompetitive. The 'nation in the region' idea, the notion that national identity could be satisfactorily articulated through a regional prism, could therefore not be so clearly expressed in Italy as in Spain, except through the very different networks of Italian émigré diaspora.

Broader conclusions point to the difficulties inherent in the utilisation of music as an instrument of nation-building, since it habitually transcends national boundaries, while its role as a shared vessel of national identity often emerges independently from institutional efforts. Even when a specific musical genre does arise in this capacity, it may convey more than one level of belonging by encompassing multiple identities – each associated with a geospatial dimension of belonging and sometimes not having a territorial dimension at all.

In summary, while Spain and Italy went through different processes of state-led cultural homogenisation, these grand projects seemed destined to become unaccomplished, revealing an ambiguous, complex and centrifugal relationship with national identity that music could eloquently express, perhaps better than other cultural forms.

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a widely accessible narrative to systematically explore the canzone's historical background.

## Notes

1 Interestingly, the character of *Scheherazade* was immediately taken up in two homonymous works by Maurice Ravel (1898 and 1904), revealing how Russian influences on European culture were far from insignificant.

2 The famous compilation of Middle Eastern folk tales had first been translated into English 200 years earlier and, although written in Arabic, also included popular tales from Persian, Jewish, Indian and Turkish folklores (1706).

3 In addition, Camille Saint-Saëns (1835–1921) composed *Jota Aragonesa* (1880) for orchestra and Raoul Laparra (1876–1943) an opera titled *La Jota* (1911) as part of a 'Spanish' triptych.

4 Although Prosper Mérimée (1803–1870) had already published his novella *Carmen* in 1845, 30 years later (and 10 years before the first Expo), Georges Bizet (1838–1875) turned it into an opera (released in 1875). Yet the latter only won international acclaim many years later, and initially not in France but in Vienna and London.

5 For a recent historiographical review, see Zagalaz and Cachón-Zagalaz (2012).

6 For a critical history of anti-flamenco prejudice, see Alvarez (2007).

7 Interestingly, but not too convincingly, Stanley Payne translates the term *flamenguismo* into English as 'gypsyism' (Payne 1975: 71).

8 On Diaghilev's *Ballets Russes* in Spain, see Nommick and Cañibano (2001). For Diaghilev's reading of Spain and the aesthetics of *Españolismo*, particularly Falla's *The Three-Cornered Hat*, see Hess (2001: 87-ff; ch. 84).

9 On the Andalusianess, as opposed to the Spanishness, of these clothes, see Worth and Sibley (1994).

10 See the collection of flamenco songs collected and commented on by Demófilo (Machado y Álvarez 1999), which was edited by his son, the poet Antonio Machado y Ruiz.

11 See also Trumpener (2000).

12 Interestingly, the standard bearing *Rough Guide for World Music: Africa, Europe and the Middle East* includes some of the most famous flamenco players and albums in the 'Gipsy music' section (Broughton et al. 1999: 157).

13 See, for instance, Körner (2012), Morelli (1996), Smart (2013) and Stewart-Steinberg (2012, 2013).

14 Very recently, the national impact of the canzone has been touched upon in Scialò (2018).

15 *Ricordi* was also printing and disseminating the works of Verdi and other major nineteenth-century Italian composers and opened its first extra-Milanese branch in Naples in 1864, after establishing a special relationship with the worldly acclaimed, but rather elitist, Teatro San Carlo opera house (Curioni 2011: 184), which Stendhal famously described as incomparable to any other opera venue in the world.

16 The *macchieta* was a kind of snappy, caricatured comedy act usually performed in *Café chantants*.

17 This dependence on opera led many *fin-de-siècle* Spanish musicologists to mobilise against its influence which 'came to represent a cultural invasion that had lasted approximately from 1700 to 1850' (Llano 2013: xix).

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