

SOMAESTHETIC APPROACHES TO THE KEYBOARD SONATAS OF DOMENICO
SCARLATTI: INTEGRATION OF BODILY PERCEPTION AND PERFORMANCE

by

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THESIS ABSTRACT

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Title: Somaesthetic Approaches to the Keyboard Sonatas of Domenico Scarlatti:
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Eighteenth-century composer Domenico Scarlatti is celebrated for his more than five-hundred keyboard sonatas, but traditional scholarship is in need of new avenues. Responding to the call for bolder approaches to the composer's music, this thesis utilizes an experimental methodology of applied somaesthetics.

Chapter I consists of a short literature review, an explanation of somaesthetics, and an explanation of relevant methodologies. Chapter II compares similarities between composers Boccherini and Scarlatti, and examines Scarlatti's use of hand crossings and lateral leaps as they pertain to the concept of the grotesque. Chapter III is a sustained analysis of K.113 with an applied somaesthetic framework; it concludes by comparing the analysis of K.113 with manuscript sources and cultural considerations on eighteenth-century Spain. Chapter IV briefly examines Scarlatti's one and only keyboard music publication, the *Essercizi* and summarizes directions of future research on this project.

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This thesis is dedicated to the memory of:

Jeannette R Vick, my “One Grandma” (1930-1997)

and to Scott Ross (1951–1989)

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION TO SOMAESTHETICS AND THE MUSIC OF
DOMENICO SCARLATTI

Exordium

This thesis explores select keyboard sonatas of eighteenth-century composer Giuseppe Domenico Scarlatti (1685-1757) using a methodology of applied somaesthetics. The paucity of evidence surrounding the composer, the call for new methodologies in the scholarship by W. Dean Sutcliffe,¹ and the recent precedence of new embodiment methodologies in musicology open the door for such an approach. Furthermore, particular qualities of Scarlatti's keyboard music, especially in relation to compelling commonalities with the composer Luigi Boccherini (of whom Elisabeth Le Guin has applied a similar "carnal musicology,"), invite such a method.² In Chapter II, I explore in depth the anecdotal and cultural connections between Boccherini and Scarlatti. I survey Scarlatti's use of hand crossing and lateral leaps as it relates to Le Guin's constructions of the comedic grotesque. Chapter III consists of a sustained case study of the Sonata in A Major, K. 113, in which I apply somaesthetic analysis and construct an embodied experiential narrative of the piece. Given the idiographic nature of this analysis, I will therefore adopt a first-person voice in describing my experiences with K. 113 in Chapter III. An in-depth discussion of K. 113 allows me to engage with issues of sources,

¹ W. Dean Sutcliffe, *The Keyboard Sonatas of Domenico Scarlatti and Eighteenth-Century Musical Style* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 7.

² Elisabeth Le Guin, *Boccherini's Body: An Essay in Carnal Musicology*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006).

performance practice, and the analysis of Sara Gross Ceballos in relation to K. 113. I conclude Chapter IV with remaining questions, and a brief consideration of Scarlatti's publication of the *Essercizi per Gravicembalo* (1738). In the remainder of this Chapter I, I begin with a literature review of relevant Scarlatti studies, after which I will give a brief overview on somaesthetics as it relates to music and performance practice. Finally, I explore how these methods are relevant to Scarlatti's music.

For the convenience of the reader, specific pitches will be given in Helmholtz pitch notation where superscripts will have positive and negative numerals (i.e., "C⁻¹" or "c²") instead of super-prime symbols (').³ In referring to specific sonatas by Scarlatti, I use "K." numbers reflecting Ralph Kirkpatrick's catalogue.⁴ All manuscript sources are referenced with standard library sigla assigned by the *Répertoire International des Sources Musicales* (RISM), and the manuscript's collection and identification numbers given by each library.⁵ In the examples of manuscript sources given, note also that the "M" which indicates the left hand stands for *mano manca*, an older version of the modern Italian *mano sinistra*.

Literature Review: The Musicological Weight of Domenico Scarlatti

The lack of autograph scores and of satisfying biographical documentation are an evident obstacle to scholarship about Domenico Scarlatti. This disappointment among

³ L.S. Lloyd, and Richard Rastall, 2001 "Pitch nomenclature," *Grove Music Online*, accessed 9 Jun. 2019, <https://doi-org.libproxy.uoregon.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.21857>.

⁴ Ralph Kirkpatrick, *Domenico Scarlatti*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953), 442-456.

⁵ "Online Catalogue of Musical Sources," *Répertoire International des Sources Musicales*, accessed 4 June, 2019, <http://www.rism.info/home.html>.

Scarlatti scholars was especially felt during the 1985 tercentenary celebrations of Domenico Scarlatti, Johann Sebastian Bach, and George Frideric Handel. W. Dean Sutcliffe's 2003 book *The Keyboard Sonatas of Domenico Scarlatti and Eighteenth-Century Musical Style* is full of such expressions about the scholarship as "bleak prognosis," "failure in the discipline," "the wringing of hands," and "dark imagery that dominates."⁶ A set of articles by Joel Sheveloff indicates his exasperation in the treatment of Scarlatti at the 300-year anniversary. As the title "Domenico Scarlatti: Tercentenary Frustrations" suggests, Sheveloff noted that while the tercentenary celebration inspired significant work on and promising new leads in the scholarship of J.S. Bach and Handel from ca. 1985, musical studies on Domenico Scarlatti were conspicuously unsatisfactory.⁷ The lack of verifiable information about the composer no doubt contributes the current state of Scarlatti scholarship, and the paucity of biographical evidence is mentioned in every study of Domenico Scarlatti. Chronological and biographical information taken for granted in studies of other eighteenth-century composers is sadly missing in the study of Domenico Scarlatti. When all we have is one published collection under the composer's direction (*Essercizi*, 1738 or 1739 in London),⁸ non-autograph copies of more than five-hundred sonatas in manuscript, and a single surviving letter in his hand, some methodologies and avenues of study we rely on as musicologists deserve scrutiny.⁹ Even so, the lack of sources has not prevented

⁶ Sutcliffe, *Keyboard Sonatas*, 1,7, 26, 29.

⁷ Joel Sheveloff, "Domenico Scarlatti: Tercentenary Frustrations (Part I)," *The Musical Quarterly* 71, no. 4 (1985): 399–436; "Domenico Scarlatti: Tercentenary Frustrations (Part II)," *The Musical Quarterly* 72, no. 1 (1986): 90–118.

⁸ Domenico Scarlatti, *Essercizi per gravicembalo di Don Domenico Scarlatti, Cavaliero di S. Giacomo e Maestro de Serenissimi Prencipe e Prencipessa delle Asturie etc. Curarum Levamen*, (London: Artaria & Co., 1738?); Sutcliffe, *Keyboard Sonatas*, 31.

⁹ Sutcliffe, *Keyboard Sonatas*, 31.

scholars from gaining traction in traditional topics of study, such as determining chronological order of compositions, biographical information about the composer, sources of his compositional style, organology, and others. Fortunately, the scholarship concerning Domenico Scarlatti is now benefitting from discoveries of new manuscripts, an upsurge of interest and scholarly activity from Spanish musicologists, and the calling for new methodologies in light of recent developments in musicology.

W. Dean Sutcliffe's 2003 book *The Keyboard Sonatas of Domenico Scarlatti and Eighteenth-Century Musical Style* remains the most recent comprehensive study of the composer in the English language. Sutcliffe's panoramic view of the issues in scholarship on Scarlatti, his literature review, and his close readings of Scarlatti's music provide a most relevant foundational context for the work in this thesis. While it is critical regarding older scholarship, this publication also invites future work on the composer in close-readings and new methodologies. In particular, the chapter "Una genuina música de tecla" deals directly with ideas of keyboard touch, surface virtuosity, and physicality in Scarlatti's music.¹⁰ Sutcliffe identifies textural "hand motives" as so pervasive of some sonatas, that "the invariant hocket-like 'subject' sounds flippant and supremely unconcerned."¹¹ This subjugation of the melodic subject in some sonatas, Sutcliffe notes, has a relationship with theatricality, toccata processes, and improvisation. In my study, I build upon this chapter and its arguments with further analyses from an embodiment perspective.

The second most important resource for my project is the 2008 volume of essays *Domenico Scarlatti Adventures: Essays to Commemorate the 250th Anniversary of His*

¹⁰ Sutcliffe, 'Una Genuina Música de Tecla,' in *Keyboard Sonatas*, 276-319.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 276.

Death, edited by Massimiliano Sala and W. Dean Sutcliffe.¹² With a welcome variety of methodologies and ideas, and contributions in several languages, the authors engage with Sutcliffe's earlier call for bolder approaches to the composer. Several articles appearing in this volume contain sections about the body in performance of the music. Of particular interest to my study is Sara Gross Ceballos' chapter "Scarlatti and María Bárbara: A Study of Musical Portraiture" in which she briefly argues for the possibility of relevant information about the queen found in Domenico Scarlatti's music, in particular drawing on the idea of performing gesture as an expression of the spirit of Spanish folk dance and assimilative nationalistic militarism.¹³ Also relevant is the analysis by Chris Willis in his article "One-Man Show: Improvisation as Theatre in Domenico Scarlatti's Keyboard Sonatas."¹⁴ Willis positions elements of Scarlatti's compositional style as a way of providing the performer with an opportunity to act out theatrically an artificial persona of the improviser. His analysis relies on an important feature of Scarlatti's style, essentially that Scarlatti often uses elements from the immediate past for development, rather than returning to ideas from the more distant past. Willis compares this "working memory syntax" to the improvisational processes of the Italian toccata.¹⁵ I argue that this feature also has a relationship with Scarlatti's priority of physical experiences at the keyboard. Specifically, I explore how Ceballos' dance gestures and Willis' aspects of improvisational composition processes from toccatas interact with the physical element of Scarlatti's keyboard works.

¹² Massimiliano Sala and W. Dean Sutcliffe, *Domenico Scarlatti Adventures: Essays to Commemorate the 250th Anniversary of His Death*, Ad Parnassum Studies 3 (Bologna: Ut Orpheus, 2008).

¹³ Sara Gross Ceballos, "Scarlatti and María Bárbara: A Study of Musical Portraiture," in *Scarlatti Adventures*, 197–224.

¹⁴ Chris Willis, "One-Man Show: Improvisation as Theatre in Domenico Scarlatti's Keyboard Sonatas." in *Scarlatti Adventures*, 271–308.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 285.

The more recent flowering of publications on Scarlatti would not have been possible without the work of Joel Sheveloff. His 1970 dissertation, entitled “The Keyboard Music of Domenico Scarlatti: A Re-evaluation of the Present State of Knowledge in the Light of the Sources,” still proves highly influential to revitalizations of modern scholarship.¹⁶ The author’s ability to read deeply and interpret the manuscript sources of Scarlatti with a newly critical, open-minded stance proved ground-breaking and innovative to the field. In particular, Sheveloff was among the first scholars in the field to argue that Scarlatti’s music was also meant for the pianoforte, a highly controversial notion at the time.¹⁷ More important to my study in terms of context is the 1985 set of articles “Tercentenary Frustrations” in which he laments the continuing misfortunes of Scarlatti scholarship in comparison to the other tercentenary celebrations. In wide swaths, he questions the authorship of some sonatas, identifies lingering issues in the discussion, lists the (then) current locations of all manuscripts, and provides an update on the sources side of the scholarship.¹⁸ A shorter article by Sheveloff on Scarlatti also appears in the aforementioned *Domenico Scarlatti Adventures*, which is another effort at understanding the sonatas through manuscripts, focusing on the Sonata K. 87 in particular.¹⁹ Sheveloff was an early voice in the major redirection of Scarlatti scholarship, and remains deeply influential in my work.

Classic studies of Domenico Scarlatti by Alessandro Longo, Ralph Kirkpatrick and others have stood the test of time with varying degrees of success, especially with

¹⁶ Joel Sheveloff, “The Keyboard Music of Domenico Scarlatti: A Re-evaluation of the Present State of Knowledge in the Light of the Sources,” Ph.D diss., Waltham, MA: Brandeis University, 1970.

¹⁷ David Sutherland, “Scarlatti, Domenico and the Florentine Piano,” *Early Music* 32, no. 2 (1995), 243. David Sutherland was among the first to defend this idea in print.

¹⁸ Sheveloff, “Frustrations (I)”;

¹⁹ Joel Sheveloff, “Scarlatti’s Duck-Billed Platypus: K. 87,” in *Scarlatti Adventures*, 241–270.

shifts in historiographical interests. Even so, these scholars were responsible for bringing the composer out of obscurity into performing repertoire and musicological discourse. The performance of the keyboard sonatas, though still maintained through the nineteenth century, was invigorated by Alessandro Longo's first complete edition publishing and numbering (Referred to by "L") of the sonatas in 1906–1910.²⁰ However, Longo's heavy hand as editor in the sonatas (as in the addition of phrase lines, numerous 'corrections,' and even rearrangement) has since tainted performance practices and scholarship, that relied on Longo's editions as an authoritative source.²¹ Longo's editions were so influential that while other editions, numberings, and approaches have since appeared in response, his edits remain audible in performances – and with them, the priorities of his time. While in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries it was acceptable to arrange and "improve" music of a composer as an editor or arranger saw fit, the situation has changed with the advent of historical/cultural performance practice approaches beginning in the 1950s.

While earlier monographs exist, Ralph Kirkpatrick's *Domenico Scarlatti* was the first major contribution to the English-language musicological research of the composer. His new catalogue of the works (now in "K" number, which most Anglophone scholars still refer to for convenience) and eventual the publication of the biography *Domenico Scarlatti* in 1953 served as the centerpiece for Anglophone scholarship on the composer. Kirkpatrick's monograph offered an astonishing amount of biographical information, a proposed chronology of composition, and received mostly positive reviews after

²⁰ Alessandro Longo, *545 Scarlatti Sonatas in XI Volumes* (Ricordi, 1906-1913); Sutcliffe, *Keyboard Sonatas*, 26.

²¹ Sutcliffe, *Keyboard Sonatas*, 24. See for one example.

publication.²² He also published editions of select sonatas, enjoyed a long performing career with Scarlatti's music as a repertoire cornerstone, and most importantly he published a facsimile edition of the core manuscript sources of the sonatas, especially the collections of Parma and Venice sources, providing unprecedented access.²³ Despite Kirkpatrick's convincing writing style, scholars have since pointed out problems with some of Kirkpatrick's hypotheses, particularly with regards to biographic issues. Among the questioned issues are Kirkpatrick's proposed chronology regarding the composition of the sonatas; his number of 555 attributed sonatas; his pairing of sonatas together;²⁴ and the irresponsibly "creative excesses of Scarlatti's biography."²⁵ According to Sheveloff, Kirkpatrick's continuing rejection of critique of his scholarship may have helped stunt research on Scarlatti until at least 1985,²⁶ and many of these issues have already been more directly addressed by scholars since. In my study, I have primarily used Kirkpatrick's facsimile edition of the manuscript sonatas, as well as his thorough catalogue of the sonatas in manuscript sources.

While Ralph Kirkpatrick's proposed chronology of the sonatas relied on their order of appearance in manuscript sources, Giorgio Pestelli's dissertation and resulting 1967 book *Le Sonate di Domenico Scarlatti. Proposta di un ordinamento cronologico* was the first to propose a chronology based on the aesthetics and stylistic qualities of the

²² Sheveloff, "Frustrations (I)," 402.

²³ Ralph Kirkpatrick and Domenico Scarlatti, *Complete Keyboard Works in Facsimile from the Manuscript and Printed Sources*, (New York: Johnson Reprint, 1972); I-Vnm (Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana), Codice Marciano It. IV, 199-213 (=9770-9784); I-Pac (Parma, Biblioteca Palatina), Sezione Musicale, F. Psi. I.48.I-XV [A.G. 31406-31420]. Kirkpatrick's facsimile edition is drawn on several manuscript sources, crucially those preserved in I-Vnm and I-Pac.

²⁴ Sheveloff, "Tercentenary Frustrations (Part I)," 430.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 399.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 407.

sonatas themselves.²⁷ However, Pestelli did not engage with primary sources and instead chose to rely on Longo's complete edition of the sonatas – something that in 1967 was certainly understandable perhaps because of access issues.²⁸ Nevertheless, considering Longo's alterations in his editions, scholars analyzing Scarlatti's particularities should avoid Longo's editions according to Sheveloff. Pestelli's comparison of Alessandro Scarlatti's toccatas with similar works of Domenico provide interesting insight into the latter's stylistic origins and relationship with toccata genre processes in general.²⁹ While I am not concerned with the chronological order of the composition of the sonatas, this early link in Scarlatti's sonatas to earlier toccata processes is useful. As Sheveloff later said of Pestelli, no other scholar had engaged so deeply with the sonatas stylistically, but his methods remain only a "starting point" for future studies.³⁰

Malcolm Boyd's 1986 *Domenico Scarlatti: Master of Music* holds another essential place in scholarship.³¹ Boyd's conjecture about some biographical facts regarding Scarlatti may have proved to be unlikely, but his book remains the only study to finally engage equally with the other works of Domenico's, namely: operas, oratorios, cantatas, serenatas, and sacred works. It is a pity that beyond this monograph, these non-keyboard works of Scarlatti's remain relatively unexplored, unpublished, and outside of the established musical canon. For these reasons, Boyd's work is still essential in scholarship on Scarlatti.

²⁷ Giorgio Pestelli, *Le Sonate di Domenico Scarlatti. Proposta di un ordinamento cronologico*, Archeologia e Storia dell'Arte, v. 2 (Torino: G. Giappichelli, 1967).

²⁸ K. Dale. "Le Sonate di Domenico Scarlatti. 'Archeologia e Storia dell'Arte,' V. II (Book Review)." *Music & Letters* 49, no. 2 (1968), 183–87.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Sheveloff, "Tercentenary Frustrations (Part I)," 421.

³¹ Malcolm Boyd, *Domenico Scarlatti: Master of Music* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1986).

The situation of sources for Domenico Scarlatti's music is complex, but I will briefly summarize it here with specificity to my project. As mentioned before, there are no extant autograph manuscripts of the sonatas but only copies made by unknown scribes. The largest collections of sonatas in Parma (I-Pac, Sezione Musicale, F. Psi. I.48.I-XV [A.G. 31406-31420])³² and Venice (I-Vnm, Codice Marciano It. IV, 199-213 [=9770-9784])³³ remain the core sources for the sonatas. Both the Parma and Venice manuscripts appear in several lavishly-bound compendium volumes of the sonatas. Both contain significant concordances with each other in organization, scribal hand, and planning.³⁴ The predominantly consistent scribal hand in the Parma and Venice manuscripts has helped scholars in contextualizing the variations of the sonatas appearing in other manuscripts. Recent research on copyists and scattered smaller collections of sonatas in manuscript (especially those with apparently Spanish provenance) have created tension with the larger collections of Parma and Venice.³⁵ Generally, the authority of Parma and Venice sources is still assumed, while the smaller collections remain to be determined. On the subject of other collections, there are a few manuscripts which are more substantial and therefore deserve mention, namely those in Münster, Vienna, London, Montserrat, Cambridge, Milan, and Madrid.³⁶ For more details on the sources of these sonatas, refer to Sheveloff's source control in "Tercentenary Frustrations," and for

³² I-Pac (Parma, Biblioteca Palatina), Sezione Musicale, F. Psi. I.48.I-XV [A.G. 31406-31420]; Sheveloff, "Tercentenary Frustrations (Part I)," 410.

³³ I-Vnm (Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana), Codice Marciano It. IV, 199-213 (=9770-9784).

³⁴ Kirkpatrick, *Scarlatti*, 399. There are two volumes of the Venice collection which are from another scribe.

³⁵ João Pedro d'Alvarenga and Águeda Pedrero-Encado, "Domenico Scarlatti in Portugal and Spain," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Harpsichord*, ed. Mark Kroll, Cambridge Companions to Music, (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2019).

³⁶ Sheveloff, "Tercentenary Frustrations (Part I)," 410. See for complete citations of these manuscripts which include (RISM sigla) D-MÜs, A-Wgm, GB-Lbl, E-MOsb, GB-Cfm, and E-Mc.

more recent source discoveries to the chapter by João Pedro d'Alvarenga and Águeda Pedrero-Encado.³⁷ The other important source of the sonatas is the only published work by the composer, *Essercizi per Gravicembalo* (London, 1738 or 1789) which contains thirty sonatas and the “Preface” addressed above.³⁸ My study will focus on the Parma and Venice sources and on the first edition of the *Essercizi* as source material.

The preceding literature review has accounted for major publications and sources on the scholarship of Domenico Scarlatti. However, as recent trends in musicology reveal, scholarly work within a disciplinary bubble can be limiting. Increasingly, new insights to old issues have been possible through the engagement with other academic disciplines and emerging methodologies. One of the most promising avenues for research is the interdisciplinary field of embodiment theory and related aspects of somaesthetics.

Somaesthetics and Music

The field of somaesthetics (more often called embodiment) and music is not only established, but rapidly growing. The most recent (2018) annual joint meeting of the American Musicological Society and the Society for Music Theory in San Antonio, Texas, featured three panels on topics of embodiment.³⁹ Three separate panels on embodiment topics in a single conference can be possible because of the wide scope of what can be considered within a theory of embodiment. Not only is embodiment (for

³⁷ Sheveloff, “Tercentenary Frustrations (Part I),” 410-413; Alvarenga and Pedrero-Encado, “Scarlatti in Portugal and Spain,” in *Companion to the Harpsichord*.

³⁸ Kirkpatrick, *Complete Keyboard Works in Facsimile*, vol. 1, n.p.

³⁹ “Program and Abstracts,” American Musicological Society and Society for Music Theory, Annual Meeting in San Antonio, TX: Nov 1-4 2018, https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.amsmusicology.org/resource/resmgr/files/san_antonio/program-sanantonio.pdf

example: differing bodies, gender and bodies, and philosophical aspects) applicable to a wide variety of academic disciplines, but somaesthetic approaches in some fields of music research are a potential, untapped resource.

Somaesthetics, or embodiment, is an extension of the philosophical branch of phenomenology. Phenomenology (as many philosophical branches) has been approached differently by philosophers (e.g. Heidegger, Husserl, and Merleau-Ponty), but it basically argues that the ontology of things is based on our observation, experience, or perception of them.⁴⁰ Thus, phenomenology is a critical response to an understanding of the world through observation. Objective scientific observation, according the phenomenologists, is not sufficient in describing the true nature of things.⁴¹

Somaesthetics can be linked more specifically with the work of the philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1908-1961), whose 1945 book *Phénoménologie de la perception* (English edition: *Phenomenology of Perception* translated by Colin Smith in 1962) centered the body in the work of phenomenology.⁴² Summarily, the body (although subjective to its context) is a site of knowledge of perception, rather than just thought. The body itself can thus be a site of information about the meaning of things. Edward Warburton, in his article about embodiment for dance studies, describes “By embodiment, Merleau-Ponty (1962) indicates three ways that the body opens up a world

⁴⁰ Bruce Ellis Benson, “Phenomenology in Music” in *Routledge Companion to Philosophy and Music*, ed. Theodore Gracyk and Andres Kania (London and New York: Routledge, 2011), 581-583.

⁴¹ Komarine Romdenh-Romluc, *Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Merleau-Ponty and Phenomenology of Perception*, Routledge Philosophy Guidebooks, (London and New York: Routledge, 2011), 1-11.

⁴² Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, transl. by Colin Smith, (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), i.

– as innate structures, basic general skills, and cultural skills,”⁴³ in relation to this passage from Merleau-Ponty:

The body is our general medium for having a world. Sometimes it is restricted to the actions necessary for the conservation of life, and accordingly it posits around us a biological world; at other times, elaborating upon these primary actions and moving from their literal to a figurative meaning, it manifests through them a core of new significance: this is true of motor habits such as dancing. Sometimes, finally, the meaning aimed at cannot be achieved by the body’s natural means; it must then build itself an instrument, and it projects thereby around itself a cultural world.⁴⁴

What can embodiment mean for the humanities? This discussion is ongoing and impossible to summarize within the scope of this introduction. However, Robert Shusterman has advocated for somaesthetic approaches in the humanities. Shusterman has documented the philosophical underpinnings of somaesthetics as they apply to the humanities, as well as the threads of resistance against implementing it.⁴⁵ Crucially, Shusterman offers several distinctions of types of somaesthetics for the humanities. As Fred Everett Maus explains, Shusterman differentiates aspects of the somaesthetic which are analytical, pragmatic, and practical, “refus[ing] to confine somaesthetics to one side of the theory/practice or, indeed, body/mind oppositions.”⁴⁶

Within musicology, the foundational works in embodiment include Carolyn Abbate’s “Music – Drastic or Gnostic?” and Susanne Cusick’s “Feminist Theory, Music

⁴³ Edward Warburton “Of Meanings and Movements: Re-Languaging Embodiment in Dance Phenomenology and Cognition,” *Dance Research Journal* 43, no. 2 (2011): 66.

⁴⁴ Merleau Ponty, *Perception*, 169.

⁴⁵ Robert Shusterman, “Thinking Through the Body, Educating for the Humanities: A Plea for Somaesthetics,” *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 40, no. 1 (2006): 1–21.

⁴⁶ Fred Everett Maus, “Somaesthetics of Music,” *Action, Criticism, and Theory for Music Education* 9, no. 1 (2010): 12.

Theory, and the Mind/Body Problem.”⁴⁷ Both authors point to the uncomfortable aspect that much musical analysis requires no music, sound, or enactment – being out of touch with the actual making of music. They observe that the role of the body in music study has previously been neglected. What may be inferred, for my purposes here, is that performers have important knowledge in and of themselves in the experiencing of music in performance. More specifically, the body can be a site of not only phenomenological perception, but analysis and even historical understanding of music. Thus, embodiment can be a tool which can produce relevant academic information for musicologists.

It may be apparent now why embodiment as an analytical or practical methodology may make some traditionalists uncomfortable. Embodiment applied in a practical fashion and as method necessarily means the consideration of a first-person account of the music. Such a method, it could be argued, could result in misleading information as it is not as overtly “objective” as many would prefer. The philosophical underpinnings of phenomenology and embodiment have shown, however, that even if the approach is not blatantly scientific, it can still reveal meaningful information.

Somaesthetics and Performance Practice

Paul Thom, in his chapter “Authentic Performance Practice,” from the *Routledge Companion to Philosophy and Music*, defined performance practice as “the evidence-based study of music and other arts at particular historical periods. Types of evidence

⁴⁷ Carolyn Abbate, “Music – Drastic or Gnostic?” *Critical Inquiry* 30, no. 3 (2004): 505-36; Suzanne Cusick, “Feminist Theory, Music Theory, and the Mind/Body Problem,” *Perspectives of New Music* 32, no. 1 (1994): 8-27.

include actual performance spaces and artifacts, designs and depictions of them, along with theoretical or practical treatises and critical writings.”⁴⁸ Thom, not necessarily a performance practice scholar, goes on to recount the polemic philosophical debates on authenticity in the scholarship surrounding performance practice. This definition does very much reflect a more popular understanding of performance practice – illustrated in Figure 1.

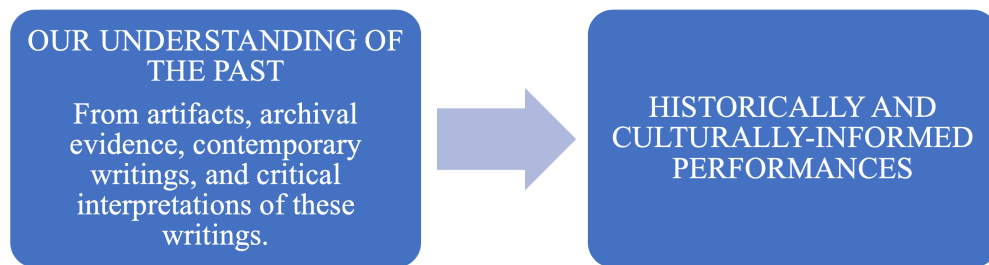


Figure 1: A Popular Understanding of Performance Practice

In this understanding of performance practice, the information goes essentially one way. Historians and researchers have collected information about past music performances, which are then assembled into performance interpretations. Thom, in his definition of performance practice disciplines, is not wrong. The opportunity to make cutting-edge research act in performance has been irresistible to those of us to whom early music is personally interesting, attractive, and valuable. The re-enactment of those past contexts has proved compelling not only for students of music history, but the wider

⁴⁸ Paul Thom, “Authentic Performance Practice,” in *Routledge Companion to Philosophy and Music*, 91.

public market searching for something new outside of the classical canon. However, Thom's short definition is reductive.

In the first place, this definition – which Thom goes on in his chapter to contextualize and complicate – ignores the problem (acknowledged by practitioners) of mediation. Our view of past musics is necessarily mediated by a multitude of contemporary cultural factors, as has been shown by such scholars as Richard Taruskin.⁴⁹ Thus, perhaps a window or glass barrier could be added to the arrow in Figure 1, representing the refraction through which we must interpret information about the past. Furthermore, the insertion of some aspects of personal tastes has been evident in performance practice, and acknowledged by its own practitioners.⁵⁰

What performance practice practitioners know is that the instruments and performing spaces do, in a sense, talk back to us. While the success of the early music movement in the twentieth century resulted in heated debate regarding claims to authenticity, it also gave academics and historians unprecedented access to historical instruments and reconstructions. The early “authentic” historically-informed recordings pale in comparison to the recordings of today. This is not merely because of an improvement in technology, change in tastes, or better information. To be sure, all of these elements have a role. However, prolonged access to historical instruments has created for us an opportunity to develop and teach technique of these instruments which work better. In short, we understand these instruments better, and have a better idea of their possibilities.

⁴⁹ Richard Taruskin, “The Modern Sound in Early Music,” in *Text and Act Essays on Music and Performance*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 164-172. Taruskin's classic critique of performance practice is found in this volume.

⁵⁰ Peter Walls, *History, Imagination, and the Performance of Music*, (Suffolk: Boydell Press, 2003), 3-4.

On the other hand, there are further reasons for which historical performance recordings have improved, beyond a better understanding of the instruments. I propose a more inclusive (and perhaps to some, uncomfortable) acknowledgement within performance practice that our bodies, and knowledge which comes from our bodies, are agents in understanding historical music. Of course, music is a physical activity in which sound waves make our eardrums vibrate. We must necessarily interpret music through the apparatuses of the body's senses. And, of course, we must use our bodies to play this music. But, as we have acquired technical ability (knowledge of "how" in our bodies) of these instruments, so have we used our ears to listen and attune to various aspects – including historical tunings and performance space aesthetics.⁵¹ We cannot, of course, have an "authentically historical" ear.⁵² Even so, experiencing music, to many performance practice scholars, is as important as the facts in our synthesis of another cultural context. Performance practice musicians are informed by historical evidence as much as they are with their own bodily understanding of it. Figure 1 could by this wider definition have arrows in both directions, as updated in Figure 2. As Figure 2 illustrates, it is by performing this music with historical contexts that we can come to an understanding of it both in mind, but also through the body in the "mind-body" relationship.

Elisabeth Le Guin, in *Boccherini's Body: An Essay in Carnal Musicology*, has acknowledged this, by boldly claiming a reciprocal physical relationship with Luigi

⁵¹ Marc Vanscheeuwijck, "Giovanni Paolo Colonna and Petronio Franceschini: Building Acoustics and Compositional Style in Late Seventeenth-Century Bologna" in *Towards Tonality: Aspects of Baroque Music Theory*, Collected Writings of the Orpheus Institute, vol 6, (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2007), 171-201.

⁵² Lydia Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works: An Essay in the Philosophy of Music*, (Oxford and New York: Clarendon Press; Oxford University Press), 1992.

Boccherini through his music.⁵³ As personal as her own and her colleagues' documented accounts of playing the music are, she has provided interesting and compelling observations about the composer. This is possible through her consideration of eighteenth-century understandings of embodiment, physical sensations, pain, and Boccherini's "cello-and-bow thinking."⁵⁴ What Le Guin's work has proven for performance practice is a practically applied embodiment method (which Le Guin calls "carnal musicology"⁵⁵) that reveal or clarify otherwise unknown or confusing information about music.

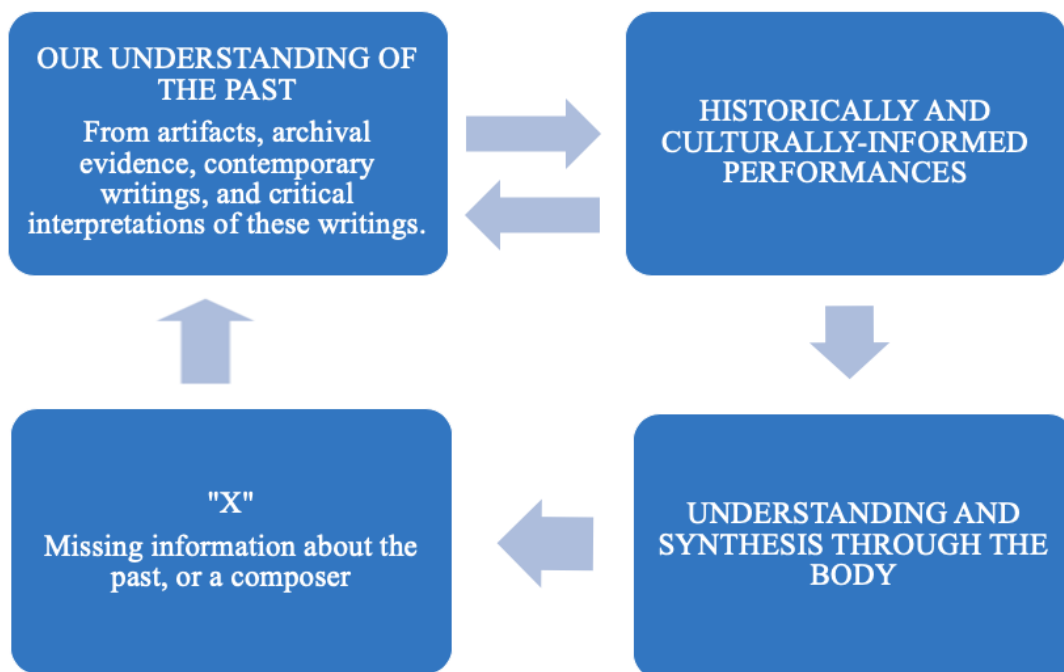


Figure 2: Understanding the past through performance practice body enactment.

⁵³ Le Guin, *Boccherini's Body*, 14.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 24.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 3.

In the case of Domenico Scarlatti, as my literature review and source review have revealed, methods which could reveal new perspectives and information would be interesting. Considering the failure of traditional documentary methods, Sutcliffe suggests: “With future progress along such lines looking to be highly unlikely, barring a major breakthrough, it may be time to gamble a little.”⁵⁶ The “gambling” has certainly begun, especially considering works since by Chris Willis, Sara Gross Ceballos, Jane Clark, and others to be discussed later. My hypothesis, in beginning this thesis, was that embodiment as method may help reveal missing information about Domenico Scarlatti, or “X,” in Figure 2. This was inspired by the depth that Elisabeth Le Guin was able to achieve with her method to explore Luigi Boccherini.

Somaesthetics and Domenico Scarlatti: Justification and Methodology

A concentrated practical application of a somaesthetic or embodiment method has not yet been done in the keyboard music of Domenico Scarlatti. Readers could ask, why is this kind of approach appropriate to the composer? Immediately, I was surprised to find my own hypothesis jump out at me: “

If our [i.e., musicologists’] conditioning suggests to us that the business of music is above all emotional or mental expression, we can consider as an alternative the notion of music as bodily expression. In the case of Domenico Scarlatti, the simplest way of saying this is music as dance.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Sutcliffe, *Keyboard Sonatas*, 7.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 10. While this feature of the composer’s music is mentioned, it is not explored through a somaesthetic perspective in Sutcliffe’s monograph.

Indeed, scholars have spent so much time on other aspects of the music that they have often failed to address the very frankness of its “sensuous material impact” present in very plain sight.⁵⁸

However, just as Elisabeth Le Guin needed to justify her (at the time) unorthodox methodology, are we to do the same about Scarlatti? Thankfully, Sutcliffe has already indirectly defended a study of physicality in Scarlatti:

Dance in this sense is not necessarily meant to call to mind minuets and waltzes, and not even the various Iberian and Italian forms that may have inspired the composer; it is simply to suggest that music may function balletically as well as, or instead of, discursively. Our inclination to place one above the other as an object for study and contemplation may or may not have an inherent aesthetic justification, but it seems to me to be another symptom of music’s unsure sense of itself: we are happiest when accommodating those works that suggest literary models or parallels.⁵⁹

It is this gestural “balletic notion of music as bodily expression” that this thesis must explore.

There are interesting characteristics about Domenico Scarlatti and his music that are common with those identified by Le Guin about Luigi Boccherini. In the first place, both composers worked for Spanish royalty and spent their final years composing for the royal family’s court and private enjoyment. Although the composers are a few generations apart, Boccherini moved among the same court circles, with Scarlatti’s friend Farinelli. Interestingly, Le Guin tells of the “heartbreaking holes in the documentation” about Boccherini’s life, which may still pale in comparison to the holes in that of Scarlatti.⁶⁰ She identifies that while Boccherini is acknowledged for “innovations in style,

⁵⁸ Ibid., 7.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 10-11.

⁶⁰ Le Guin, *Boccherini’s Body*, 4.

form, and genre” there are qualities which drew him criticism and deserved explanation, namely: “an astonishing repetitiveness, an affection for extended passages with fascinating textures but virtually no melodic line, an obsession with soft dynamics, a unique ear for sonority, and an unusually rich pallet of introverted and mournful affects.”⁶¹ While quiet dynamics, introversion, and mournfulness are not present in the keyboard works of Scarlatti, the repetitiveness, extended textures without melodic line, and a unique ear for sonority are all hallmarks of Scarlatti’s keyboard work. Le Guin identified these characteristics as unique to Boccherini, when they are also at the foreground in keyboard works by Scarlatti. Repetitiveness and extended passages of texture without melody are well described in scholarship about the keyboard works. In the next chapter, I further develop these issues as I begin with an in-depth look of these commonalities between Scarlatti and Boccherini and their implications.

⁶¹ Ibid., 2

CHAPTER II

THE GROTESQUE IN SCARLATTI: CENTERING THE PERFORMER IN MOMENTS OF HAND CROSSING AND LATERAL LEAPS

In this chapter, I outline scholarly developments made towards the acknowledgement and exploration of general physicality in Domenico Scarlatti studies, especially concerning work by W. Dean Sutcliffe. Connecting this thread to the work of Elisabeth Le Guin, I further examine both anecdotal and stylistic connections between the previously distant composers Scarlatti and Luigi Boccherini. Finally, I discuss two characteristics of Scarlatti's physical orientation at the keyboard: the pervasive use of hand-crossing, and lateral leaps. Discussion of these features allows me to argue for a connection of Scarlatti's music to elements of the grotesque, as described by Le Guin.

To Play? To Compose? To Experience?

To play or to compose? The star turn in the Sonata in A major, K. 65, the passage beginning in bar 3, is no sort of theme or recognizable piece of invention but owes its genesis to the sheer joy of playing.⁶²

So opens W. Dean Sutcliffe's 2003 chapter 'Una Genuina Música de Tecla' in *The Keyboard Sonatas of Domenico Scarlatti and Eighteenth-Century Musical Style*. Over the course of his book, Sutcliffe seeks to mend the trajectory of a field profoundly fractured by elements such as the paucity of evidence, teleological narratives, and lacunae in scholarly understanding of early eighteenth-century style. One aspect of this mending is

⁶² Sutcliffe, *Keyboard Sonatas*, 276.

the acknowledgement of the profoundly physical and dance-like experience of playing the sonatas. In his chapter, Sutcliffe addresses this aspect in a sustained fashion (perhaps for the first time in the scholarship) by discussing the phenomena of physicality in these works through the contentious reception discourses of “ ‘mere virtuosity,’ technical exploitation, pedagogy and improvisation.”⁶³

In the course of this discussion, examples from sonatas show the ways that Scarlatti presents: physical gesture in the foreground of the music, an “exuberance without intentionality” in the seeming randomness of repetitive arpeggiations, and the “improvisatory sense” these compositional devices invoke.⁶⁴ By defending the “digital” focus of Scarlatti’s work against previous scrutiny, Sutcliffe takes steps in the scholarship to appreciate this physicality instead of minimize or scrutinize it.⁶⁵ Sutcliffe draws together the pervasive hand crossings, leaps, repetitive vamps, and texture to explore a larger narrative. He claims that through these unique compositional choices (which is “intrinsically for the keyboard”), the composer is asserting “the keyboard’s rights” in a sort of “keyboard realism.”⁶⁶ Specifically, he argues that by juxtaposing gestural non-melodic textures with more normative baroque syntax, Scarlatti asserts this realism by a process of musical argumentation. “Even this pure physical sensation has some logical basis in the medium of composition,” Sutcliffe writes, but in the course of his argument he also admits that Scarlatti’s “attention to sound does not always produce a listening

⁶³Ibid., 292.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 286, 289, 290.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 291.

⁶⁶Ibid., 294.

experience that can be thought of as conventionally pleasant.”⁶⁷ Sutcliffe’s work is crucial, if cautious in this regard.

Sutcliffe centers the text and the listener in his discussions. Although there is a brief section in this chapter dealing with the how to perform such wild music, his discussions predominately revolve around what is audible. What perhaps can add to the scholarship, at this point, is a more direct centering of the performing body in understanding Scarlatti’s music. As Sutcliffe has written, sometimes these elements like hand crossings are not audible to the listener, and trivial in composition (meaning the hands can easily be swapped to make the performance easy).⁶⁸ Musicologists speaking to this point tend to default to discussions of the visual performativity of the eighteenth century, including aspects of dance, theater, drama, and pervasive archetypes like *commedia dell’arte* characters. This approach works in the context of Scarlatti, as scholars like Sara Gross Ceballos and Chris Willis have explored.⁶⁹ However, I think that through somaesthetic approaches, nuance and detail can be added, and that the true site of Scarlatti’s interest and work is on and with the performer’s body. As I will argue in Chapter 3 with the Sonata K. 113, in some Scarlatti sonatas compositional prowess is not audible or visual but rather best understood through the physical experience of the performer when playing the piece.⁷⁰ Outside the field of Scarlatti studies, scholars have begun to experiment with phenomenological approaches to music performance relating to

⁶⁷ Ibid., 295 and 300.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 284.

⁶⁹ Ceballos, “Scarlatti and María Bárbara” in *Scarlatti Adventures*; Chris Willis, “Performance, Narrativity, Improvisation and Theatricality in the Keyboard Sonatas of Domenico Scarlatti,” Ph.D diss., Cambridge, UK: Clare College, 2007.

⁷⁰ Le Guin, *Boccherini’s Body*, 25. This is analogous to Le Guin’s argument concerning Boccherini’s music.

embodiment.⁷¹ Elisabeth Le Guin’s work with Luigi Boccherini, especially in *Boccherini’s Body*, is particularly relevant to the study of physicality in the work of Scarlatti. It is to these commonalities that I will now turn.

Uncanny Resemblances: Domenico Scarlatti and Luigi Boccherini

Though the composers Domenico Scarlatti (1685-1757) and Luigi Boccherini (1743-1805) are almost three generations apart, it is not entirely anachronistic to draw comparisons (and even connections) between them. Coincidentally, both composers suffer from “heartbreaking holes” in their biographies which have stunted traditional musicological endeavors.⁷² Yet anecdotally, there are several commonalities of the Boccherini and Scarlatti’s lives which deserve noting. Both composers were Tuscans who became long-time residents of the royal court in Spain, though at different times. Scarlatti worked in Spain from 1729 to 1757, and Boccherini flourished at the Spanish court from between 1768 and 1785. Boccherini and Scarlatti had exceptional musical training, were fairly known in their time, and have been (in varying degrees) neglected or misunderstood since.⁷³

These composers have sometimes been considered “outsiders,” in reception during their lives and in music history.⁷⁴ Arguably, their sidelined positions in the narratives of music history may originate in the fact that their compositional experiments

⁷¹ David Sudnow and Hubert L. Dreyfus, *Ways of the Hand: A Rewritten Account*, (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2001).

⁷² Le Guin, *Boccherini’s Body*, 4.

⁷³ Boyd, Malcolm. *Domenico Scarlatti: Master of Music*, (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1986). Though Scarlatti maintains more fame than Boccherini, his numerous sacred and vocal works beyond the keyboard sonatas are mostly ignored. Boyd’s monograph is one exception.

⁷⁴ Le Guin, *Boccherini’s Body*, 66; Sutcliffe, *Keyboard Sonatas*, 1.

fell outside of what the mainstream for the eighteenth century was “supposed to be,” both in geographic locale – Spain being often considered an ‘outsider’ of Europe as well as producing somewhat of an isolation effect for composers there⁷⁵ – and in relation to prevailing stylistic paradigms of Viennese Classicism. Sutcliffe and Le Guin have written much about the composers’ relationship with performing virtuosity (Boccherini as a cellist, and Scarlatti as a keyboardist), which could also account for the complex relationship they have in today’s accounts of music history.⁷⁶

To speak of compositional choices, descriptions of the oddities of Scarlatti and Boccherini’s style are sometimes so remarkably close to each other that they could potentially be conflated. This is indeed surprising, considering the amount of time between their careers and differing stylistic orientations. Figure 3 shows a chart of such descriptions in the literature that I consider strikingly analogous.

It is my contention that the commonalities shown in Figure 3 are not coincidences, but rather the potential of a previously unconnected thread of tradition and influence. True, the composers operated under very different stylistic paradigms – specifically, Scarlatti striding the gap between the “Baroque” and the burgeoning Enlightenment and Boccherini’s place very firmly in the late eighteenth-century *Empfindsamkeit* (or *sensibilité*) and Classicism. As Le Guin has noted, over the course of the eighteenth century the notions of selfhood and the body were being questioned because of the Enlightenment.

⁷⁵ Sutcliffe, *Keyboard Sonatas*, 31.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 26.

<p style="text-align: center;">DOMENICO SCARLATTI (descriptions and page numbers from Sutcliffe, <i>Keyboard Sonatas</i> unless otherwise noted)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">LUIGI BOCCHERINI (descriptions and page numbers from Le Guin, <i>Boccherini's Body</i> unless otherwise noted)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “irrational repetition” (Sutcliffe, 163) • “non-thematic, obsessively repetitive passages that occur frequently” (23) • “intrinsic nature of Scarlatti’s keyboard writing” and “demonstration of the keyboard’s musical independence through the medium of technique.” (292, 294.) • intense focus on sonic possibilities at the keyboard, or “sonorous invention” (297) • “obsession with the mechanics of movement to the detriment of any marked ‘inner content’ may be taken in the spirit of fascination outlined earlier, but it might also suggest a droll parody of the art of <i>Fortspinnung</i>, chopped up into small units.” (189) • “If our conditioning suggests to us that the business of music is above all emotional or mental expression, we can consider as an alternative the notion of music as bodily expression. In the case of Domenico Scarlatti, the simplest way of saying this is music as dance.” (10) • “these sonatas make the body flamboyant and constrain it at the same time, pressing gesture into the service of a rapidity, profusion, energetic repetitiveness, and redundant precision so marked and exuberant as to constitute a kind of <i>topos</i> of mechanism” (Le Guin, “One Says that One Weeps,” 2480) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “astonishing repetitiveness” • “an affection for extended passages with fascinating textures but virtually no melodic line” • “Cello-and-bow thinking” or the writing of music clearly influenced by the physical experience of the cello (19) • “a unique ear for sonority” (2) • “In certain sonatas, he distances and ironizes the performer in specific regard to his virtuosity, thereby making a sophisticated contribution to the Enlightenment dialogue between self and appearance” (6) • “What ‘music’ was supposed to be had changed a good deal between the end of the eighteenth century and 1835. It is when we resist those changes-toward the autonomy of the work of art-and consider it through the refracting lens of its embodied performance that Boccherini’s work best deserves to be called music” (Le Guin, “One Says that One Weeps,” 209) • “Boccherinian mechanism, when it occurs, ‘mechanizes’ the player’s body, forcing it to visibly mimic those hammers, levers, fulcrums, further forcing upon it the necessity of strengthening certain organic weaknesses—notably, that of the left thumb under sideways pressure—in order to achieve this mimicry...” (154)

Figure 3: A Comparison of descriptions of Domenico Scarlatti and Luigi Boccherini’s music in recent scholarship.⁷⁷

⁷⁷ [Quotes from left side] Sutcliffe, *Keyboard Sonatas*; [right side] Le Guin, *Boccherini’s Body*; [where noted in parentheses] Elisabeth Le Guin, “‘One Says That One Weeps, but One Does Not Weep’: Sensible, Grotesque, and Mechanical Embodiments in Boccherini’s Chamber Music,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 55, no. 2 (2002): 207-54.

To put it succinctly, according to Le Guin, “Boccherini’s automaton has suffered a fatal alienation,” unlike the world of “Scarlatti’s uncomplicated good cheer.”⁷⁸ The contrast between Boccherini’s “obsession with soft dynamics,” his “introverted *sensibilité*,” and his “unusually rich palette of introverted and mournful affects” with Scarlatti’s joyful, chaotic, and unrelenting cluster chords is significant.⁷⁹

Even so, the commonalities between Boccherini and Scarlatti of profuse repetition, extended non-melodic textural passages, idiomatic instrumental writing, focus on sonority, penchant for (at times parodic) gesture over content, and mechanistic physicality at the instrument, coupled with the also common evocation (to varying degrees) of Spanish popular idioms are sufficient enough to warrant serious consideration to such a connection. This is not to claim that Boccherini was directly influenced by Scarlatti (though Le Guin notes he must have encountered his music at court), but rather to acknowledge that Scarlatti did not stand alone in his obsession with physical gesture in music.⁸⁰ Scarlatti was perhaps part of a longer tradition of Spanish musical identity wherein selfhood and meaning was more physical, experiential, and embodied than in other dominant European (for example, French) cultural constructions.⁸¹ This connection has been documented by Elisabeth Le Guin, Sara Gross Ceballos, and W. Dean Sutcliffe separately.

However, I would contend further that what is found in Scarlatti’s sonatas is not only “uncomplicated good cheer” or mechanistic display, but something comparable to

⁷⁸ Le Guin, *Boccherini’s Body*, 154. Scarlatti’s concept of the body was probably not so “uncomplicated,” but nevertheless, the contrast is useful.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 153.

⁸¹ Ceballos, “Scarlatti and María Bárbara” in *Scarlatti Adventures*; Le Guin, *Boccherini’s Body*, 64.

an early grotesque aesthetic. Scholars such as Willis, Ceballos, and Sutcliffe document aspects of theatricality, visuality, gesture, and spectacle at the keyboard in the sonatas quite well. These subjects are intimately tied to gesture at the keyboard.⁸² Yet this relationship with the grotesque of the later eighteenth century (and of Boccherini) is not directly explored.

In *Boccherini's Body*, Le Guin explores the cultural idea of the grotesque through mid- and late-century reformulations of the body, especially as it pertains to Angiolini's pantomime dance theory, new constructions of Spanish identity, and evidence in Boccherini's instrumental music. It might be useful to briefly (and generally) summarize them here. First, Angiolini's explorations of pantomime dance (during a mid-century period of artistic reform) describe a burgeoning aesthetic of comedic dancing, in which the relentless, athletic, strong feats of the dancers' bodies defy a "poetic" embodiment, but rather inspire shock and awe.⁸³ These virtuositities cause anxiety and fear in audiences, because they defy the Enlightenment ideal of "naturalness" in which the body was "transparent" for expressive purposes.⁸⁴ Le Guin writes:

In Angiolini's text, the degree of physical hardness – the muscular strength required to leap in the grotesque style or perform quick, mechanically repeated intricate movements in the comic, and the facial contortions resulting from such efforts – is the precise degree of removal from expressivity.⁸⁵

For Angiolini and other thinkers of the time, this aesthetic coming out of the *commedia dell'arte* was frightening, and the opposite of "expressive."⁸⁶

⁸² Willis, "Performance, Narrativity," Ph.D diss. Although it is out of the scope of this thesis to address these ideas completely, one excellent place to explore it is this dissertation.

⁸³ Le Guin, *Boccherini's Body*, 92.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 92-94.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 94.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 92.

Connecting this aesthetic with the discourses of French writers like Rousseau, Le Guin further explores how extroverted this type of virtuosity of Angiolini's grotesque pantomime dance was and decidedly contrary to other normative (especially French) conceptions of the ideal body. This is particularly important concerning the burgeoning nationalism present in eighteenth-century Spanish courts, as "the grotesque was linked to the Spanish aristocracy's fascination with *majismo*."⁸⁷ Le Guin writes about *majismo*:

Majismo, the focal point of late eighteenth-century 'Spanishness' and the opposite number of *afrancesismo* [French style], is palpable – in fact by some accounts it is defined – in the evolution of the *seguidillas* into the *bolero*. *Seguidillas* were originally in a rather fast triple meter, but increasingly complex, showy choreography worked against musical momentum, slowing the beat down as the decorative gestures multiplied. In late-stage, 'bolerified' *seguidillas*, of which Boccherini's may serve as a good example, a stately triple meter is so subdivided that it poises tensely on the edge of disintegration into a series of smaller gestures. It is not difficult to read into this deliberately maintained tension a picture of the *majo*'s proud refusal to attain or submit – whether to the next strong beat, or to authority in general.⁸⁸

The Spanish style thus reflects a fascination with the grotesque through its promotion of the "physicalized genuineness" over the "disembodied artificiality (imported culture)" of the French style.⁸⁹ Le Guin characterizes it as a "desire to move" and inseparable from dance.⁹⁰ In sum, the grotesque at the Spanish court of the eighteenth century was a cultivated mechanism, athletic virtuosity, an expression of theatrical comedy, a centering of dance gesture over pathetic expression, and the possibility of pushing the body (and by extension, its musical instruments) to their unnatural extremes.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 141.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 97.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 61.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 61

With Spanish style and influence, we again run into strange commonalities between the two composers. Just like Scarlatti, “Boccherini composed very few works in specifically Spanish styles” and yet “at a subtle level – a level, I wish to reiterate, that has little to do with the posturings of a nationalistic musical jargon – ‘Spanish’ traits can be found in most features of Boccherini’s compositional style.”⁹¹ Le Guin even describes the “vamping” effect in Boccherini’s music so commonly evoked in literature about Scarlatti.⁹² The comedic “idiot” is evoked in this music as well, shockingly similar to reflections by Sutcliffe of certain repetitive passages of Scarlatti.⁹³ Finally, in her analyses Le Guin ties the grotesque to specific features of Boccherini’s music, which include the use of registers outside the “natural” for the cello, the aforementioned repetition, texture without melody, extroverted virtuosity, and a general compositional style which reflects a focus on sensations at the instrument (“Cello-and-Bow Thinking”). By now it may go without saying that these features as they are documented in Scarlatti’s keyboard music deserve consideration for the label of grotesque as well.

It is not the purpose in this thesis to (re-)examine in depth all of the aspects of Scarlatti’s style that lend themselves to the aesthetic of the grotesque. Repetition, “vamping,” virtuosity, extreme registers, and theatricality have thankfully been well represented in the literature thus far.⁹⁴ Instead of attempting to explain all of these, I will selectively examine Scarlatti’s use of hand crossings and lateral leaps with a somaesthetic

⁹¹ Ibid., 101.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Ibid., 132; Sutcliffe, *Keyboard Sonatas*, 283. Since both monographs were prepared with a short time of each other, it is unclear at this time whether they influenced each other.

⁹⁴ Sutcliffe, *Keyboard Sonatas*; Sheveloff, “Re-evaluation of the Present State of Knowledge...” Ph.D diss.; Willis, “Performance, Narrativity, ...” Ph.D diss. See for examples.

lens. Using these short overviews, I will explore how Scarlatti pushes the body and the instrument to its limits, indeed evoking, in instrumental abstraction, the grotesque.

Hand Crossing

Hand crossing is the most immediately obvious physical phenomenon in these sonatas. No other composer has used hand crossing more than Domenico Scarlatti, not even some of his emulators or students Domenico Paradisi, José António Carlos de Seixas, and Antoni Soler i Ramos. So many of his sonatas play with this gesture that it becomes almost a general feature of his style. While nearly every Scarlatti scholar addresses the concept of hand crossings in different ways, there is, to date, only one article devoted solely to the phenomenon. In “The Awkward Idiom: Hand-Crossing and the European Keyboard Scene around 1730,” David Yearsley discusses the hand crossing trend in appearances around Europe, citing examples by Domenico Scarlatti, John Bull, Carl Philip Emanuel Bach, Johan Sebastian Bach, Johann Valentin Görner, Jean-Philippe Rameau, and George Frideric Handel.⁹⁵ Trying especially to draw a connection between Domenico Scarlatti and J.S. Bach, Yearsley argues that Scarlatti’s influence through the circulation of the *Essercizi* reached these composers and propelled the trend.⁹⁶ Sutcliffe problematizes this argument, citing that there is no clear evidence to prove Scarlatti’s *Essercizi* circulated in such a fashion.⁹⁷ While proof that Scarlatti caused other composers

⁹⁵ David Yearsley, “The Awkward Idiom: Hand-Crossing and the European Keyboard Scene around 1730,” *Early Music* 30, no. 2 (2002): 225-35.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ Sutcliffe, *Keyboard Sonatas*, 56.

to experiment with hand crossing is absent, there is no doubting that composers across Europe produced pieces with hand crossing at around the same period.⁹⁸

As I mentioned before, Scarlatti's hand crossing experiments were more numerous than those of any of these other composers. Why would Scarlatti choose to use hand crossing so frequently? While no definitive answer can be offered, the nature of his usage of hand crossing can give us some information. In the sonatas, the gestures are not universally employed, which has made understanding them difficult.⁹⁹ In my survey of the sonatas, I considered use of hand crossing in sonatas as they fall on a few spectra. While not a completely comprehensive method, it nevertheless allowed me to better see trends and usage of the hand crossing idiom. These spectra include:

1. A spectrum of limited to pervasive usage of the hand crossing idiom. Incidental usage describes sonatas in which hand crossing appears briefly, and pervasive usage describes hand crossing that is sustained, perhaps dominating the entire musical argument. One clear example pervasive use of hand crossing is the Sonata in A Major, K. 113, discussed in Chapter 3.
2. A spectrum of how far and frequently the hands must travel in leaps during hand crossing. This consideration also has consequences for how athletic or virtuosic a piece is. What kind of body movements and positions does it require? Furthermore, this element affects to how noticeably "visual" the performing spectacle is. Is the distance to be traveled by the hand sufficient to create large,

⁹⁸ Yearsley, "Awkward Idiom."

⁹⁹ Sutcliffe, *Keyboard Sonatas*, 196. For example, Sutcliffe examines the 'vamps' in the sonatas in attempts to find their compositional function, with varying answers for different sonatas.

frequent visual gestures? Or are the hand crossings close together, meaning they almost do not create visual spectacle at all?

3. A spectrum of how “inaudible” or “audible” the hand crossing is. Specifically, can the hands be swapped back easily, without consequence? In this sense, is the hand crossing purely for physical means (what I call “trivial), or does it also produce musical results?

Of course, these rather arbitrary spectra can overlap, effect each other, and can never be completely separated.

On the “trivial” end (pertaining to the third spectrum of audibility, above) is the Sonata in D Major, K. 29 from the *Essercizi*, which famously presents falling thirds with swapped hands, sixteenth-note ascensions with swapped hands trading each note, and extended passages with the right hand supplying the bass line.¹⁰⁰ The hand swapping is often inaudible, meaning the performer could often potentially swap hands back and realize the sonata easily.¹⁰¹ For most of K. 29 the hands remain crossed, rather than the constant “travelling” gesture seen in other sonatas. Sutcliffe notes about K. 29, “Being sustained rather than involving to-and-fro movements, it is also different in type. It is really sheer cruelty on the player, digitally and mentally confusing, and without the consolation of having a dashing display value.”¹⁰² The same is true for the trivial hand crossing in the Sonata in A Minor, K. 36, where in mm. 9-12 the hands swap for the first

¹⁰⁰ For clarity, “swapped hands” here refers to when the left hand plays higher on the keyboard than the right, opposite of the typical orientation at the keyboard. This necessarily involves arms which are crossed as well.

¹⁰¹ Sutcliffe, *Keyboard Sonatas*, 284.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 284.

instance of a melody and return to normal position for its restatement. This inaudible feature returns and becomes pervasive in the second half of the sonata, wherein the crossed hands are sustained and colored with more daring harmony, seen in part in Figure 4.



Figure 4: Sonata in A minor, K. 36: mm. 45-54.¹⁰³

Measures 45-54 of K. 36, shown in Figure 4, show a subtle but fascinating somaesthetic element. The performer is made uncomfortable by a sustained hand crossing, but this position is made slightly easier with the parallel motion of the voices in both hands, always related by thirds. Furthermore, the *Fortspinnung* filling of sixteenths notes (“g²” in mm. 45-48 and “a²” in mm. 49-52 of Figure 4) provide an anchor point for the position and movement of the hand. In the cases of both K. 29 and K. 36, while the swapping of the hands is sonically trivial, it is pervasive (pertaining to the first spectrum above)

¹⁰³ Reproduced from Domenico Scarlatti and ed. Kenneth Gilbert, *Sonates Vol. 1*, (Paris: Heugel, 1984): 118. Accessed: [https://imslp.org/wiki/Keyboard_Sonatas,_K.1-555_\(Scarlatti,_Domenico\)](https://imslp.org/wiki/Keyboard_Sonatas,_K.1-555_(Scarlatti,_Domenico)).

throughout the sonatas, especially in the second halves. Indeed, it is rare for Scarlatti to introduce hand crossing in a sonata and then not allow it to pervade the rest of the sonata. Still, while K. 29 and K. 36 both use sustained hand crossing, their use of *Fortspinnung*-type repetitions allow for perhaps simpler figures than might occur if the hands were in normal positions. This allows the performers to feel more grounded and secure while their eyes may be working “overtime” in the visual puzzle of realizing the “upside-down” score.

On the “extreme” end of intensity in gesture and register (pertaining to the second spectrum, above) are sonatas with hand crossings as in K. 174, K. 175, K. 104, K. 108, and K. 113.¹⁰⁴ The Sonata in G Major, K. 104 demands dynamic movement at the outset. By the end of the first page, the extreme registers of the instrument have already been touched. When hand crossing enters late in the first half at measure 62, the rhythm of the hand crossing occurs at the “bar” level, with the left hand traveling longer and longer distances to arrive at bass-note downbeats. The last statement of this pattern occurs in measure 68 (seen in Figure 5 below), and the hand crossing rhythm is intensified at measure 70.



Figure 5: Sonata in G Major, K. 104: mm. 67-72.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴ The Sonata in A Major, K. 113 receives its own analysis in depth in Chapter 3.

¹⁰⁵ Reproduced from Domenico Scarlatti and ed. Kenneth Gilbert, *Sonates Vol. 3*, (Paris: Heugel, 1978): 4. Accessed: [https://imslp.org/wiki/Keyboard_Sonatas,_K.1-555_\(Scarlatti,_Domenico\)](https://imslp.org/wiki/Keyboard_Sonatas,_K.1-555_(Scarlatti,_Domenico)).

At measure 70, the rhythm has now increased, demanding the hand to travel at the speed of eighth-note beats. Here, the distance to travel is reduced as the left hand merely surrounds the right hand in its action. Despite the narrowing, the intensity of this hand crossing still creates big gestures and demands intense focus. Again, the “grounding” sensation of a repeating pattern in the right hand aids the performer in this act. All of this gesture is easily grabbed by a relaxed position of the right hand, without much shifting.

However, the performer, having mastered this pattern, is confronted in the second half of the Sonata in G Major, K. 104 with an intensification of the hand crossing gesture. The pattern seen in mm. 177-182 seen in Figure 6 (similar to the previous example mm. 68-69 in Figure 5) becomes twice as fast, in a kind of combination of the earlier version. Now the performer must navigate the same pattern as before but more quickly. The sensation creates more tension, rather than any relief we might expect from the repetition of a familiar figure.

Figure 6: Sonata in G Major, K. 104: mm. 175-186.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁶ Reproduced from Domenico Scarlatti and ed. Kenneth Gilbert, *Sonates Vol. 3*, (Paris: Heugel, 1978): 7. Accessed: [https://imslp.org/wiki/Keyboard_Sonatas,_K.1-555_\(Scarlatti,_Domenico\)](https://imslp.org/wiki/Keyboard_Sonatas,_K.1-555_(Scarlatti,_Domenico))

Figure 6 above also reveals how the ease of the right-hand pattern is intensified to encourage this feeling of tension. Although still within one manageable hand position, the hand is no longer closed, but opened and extended to grab intervals of fifths, sevenths, and octaves. Even the most technically skilled of keyboard-playing hands will notice this minute change in bodily tension as it is introduced. Approaching the end of the sonata, this figure is intensified one more time (seen in Figure 7 below).



Figure 7: Sonata in G Major, K. 104: mm. 199-204.¹⁰⁷

Here, from measure 200 to the end of K. 104, the left-hand figure is slightly changed one more time. It now includes a syncopated cadential figure imposed on the previous hand-crossing pattern (seen in the left hand of measure 201-202 in Figure 7). To speak of bodily tension, the right hand is now completely extended, and includes thirds and even an extension of the hand beyond the octave in measures 201 and 203. On the above hand-crossing spectra I have considered, not only is hand-crossing pervasive in this sonata (spectrum one) but also extreme in gesture and audibility (spectra two and three, respectively). As in many sonatas which play specifically with moving gesture at the keyboard (being a hand crossing which is repeated rather than sustained), there is a

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

gradual intensification of the idiom until it reaches a physical apex. I will explore this phenomenon in detail with my analysis of a similar hand crossing usage in K. 113 in Chapter 3.

Wherever the hand crossings may fall on an arbitrary spectrum of intensity, there are commonalities present which mark them as “Scarlattian,” especially in comparison to the other composer experiments Yearsley describes. At the risk of over-generalization, I have noticed that when there is a large distance to travel (relating to the extreme end of the second spectrum, above) there is nearly always a “grounding” figure in the right hand, which remains in a single locale at the keyboard. While the left hand moves back and forth, the right hand has a predictable role. Whether the pattern the right hand repeats is one bar long, or rocking back and forth in two-bar patterns, the right hand is given a sense of stability which comes out of a comfortable hand. As I have discussed in K. 104, this comfortable hand position is then sometimes intensified and expanded, though never dynamically moving. For lack of a better analogy, Scarlatti’s right-hand passagework provides a stable (metaphorical) “leg to stand on,” while the other “leg” (the left hand) may be completely dynamic and ungrounded. In the other “type” of hand-crossing idiom discussed above in K. 29 and K. 36, the sustained position of crossed hands is still provided with physical reinforcement. The position involved for K. 29 and K. 36 is proximally closer to each other than in K. 104. While the arm must often extend completely in the gestures of K. 104, the closer position of K. 29 and K. 36 allows the arms to relax downward. The “anchoring” of simple, repetitive *Fortspinnung* patterns discussed in K. 36 further allow for the tense position to become more achievable.

The embodied qualities found in hand crossings from Domenico Scarlatti become more idiosyncratic when compared with other composers' experiments of the same period. As I mentioned earlier, Yearsley's attempts to connect Johann Sebastian Bach's late experiments with hand crossing to the *Essercizi* (published in 1739) are tenuous at best. The temptation to connect Scarlatti's *Essercizi* to Bach's Goldberg Variations (first published in 1741 as part of his *Clavier-Übung* series)¹⁰⁸ is shared by Robert Marshall and Roman Vlad, but both Sutcliffe and Joel Sheveloff doubt this possibility.¹⁰⁹ From my somaesthetic lens, it is clear that these hand-crossings have little in common. For example, we should contrast the above discussions of the right hand from K. 36 and K. 104 with what is happening in the following right-hand passage of the Goldberg Variations, from "Variation 5" (Figure 8).

J.S. Bach's conception of this idiom is quite complex, somaesthetically. Representing (as the Goldberg Variations do) the height of mastery at the keyboard, the passage demands that the performer be polyphonic as well as physically dynamic. In a two-part invention-type texture, the right-hand part is not an accompaniment to the left-hand action (as in a typical Scarlattian idiom) but rather equal to it, as we see when the roles swap on the third system of Figure 8. Indeed, rather than providing a "grounding" sensation in the right hand with a single position, the hand must constantly move, shift positions, and adjust for fingering. The passage is so fast, and no repeating pattern emerges – forcing the performer to focus intently on it.

¹⁰⁸ Christoph Wolff and Walter Emery, 2001 "Bach, Johann Sebastian," *Grove Music Online*, accessed May 25 2019, <https://doi-org.libproxy.uoregon.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.6002278195>.

¹⁰⁹ Sutcliffe, *Keyboard Sonatas*, 77.



Figure 8: Opening of Variation 5 from J.S. Bach's Goldberg Variations featuring complex hand crossing. Reproduced from the first edition.¹¹⁰

Unlike Scarlatti, there is no clear indication of where the performer's attention must lie – as in much of Bach's polyphonic keyboard music. Furthermore, Scarlatti rarely (if at all) uses the right hand as the dynamic crosser, whereas Bach conceives of these hands as complete equals (at least in the current example). Note also how the sixteenth notes *Fortspinnung* in Bach's version do not provide as much "anchoring" of the hand, as it must constantly reposition itself. If somaesthetics is any lens by which to judge this connection, my impression is that Bach's idiom is not directly imitating Scarlatti's at all.

¹¹⁰ Reproduced from Johann Sebastian Bach, *Clavier Übung bestehend in einer Aria mit verschiedenen Veraenderungen vors Clavicimbal mit 2 Manualen: Denen Liebhabern zu Gemüths-Ergetzung verfertigt*, (Nürnberg: Balthasar Schmid 1741), First ed., accessed May 25, 2019, [https://imslp.org/wiki/Goldberg-Variationen,_BWV_988_\(Bach,_Johann_Sebastian\)](https://imslp.org/wiki/Goldberg-Variationen,_BWV_988_(Bach,_Johann_Sebastian)).

Lateral Leaps

As numerous and diverse as hand crossings in the sonatas are, what is more varied is the lateral leaps Domenico Scarlatti employs – especially in the left hand.¹¹¹ This aspect in the sonatas is evidence of that idiomatic “keyboard” writing Sutcliffe has noted. Perhaps in no other instrumental writing (save, perhaps, string instruments reaching for distant open strings) is this kind of figure possible and as feasibly exploitable.

The Sonata in E Major, K. 46 is one such example; it is a study in rhetorical rupture, wherein long silences punctuate seemingly improvised material.¹¹² The first half of the sonata is indeed seemingly directionless, as dance-like percussive gestures interrupts development of material, while simultaneously resembling it in contour and rhythmic profile. Minor modes dominate, as the discourse seems to struggle to continue. Scarlatti (or the performing “persona”) finally finds their momentum in a passage beginning at measure 38, where suddenly a ray of sunshine in the major mode enters. The sudden shift allows the motion to continue into new textures and harmonic areas. Finally, the performer arrives at the dominant key area. There at measure 54, a celebration begins, seen in Figure 9. The “storm” of the previous measures has cleared, and the close stomping-like, mid-range figure (seen in part in mm. 52-53 in Figure 9) dissolves suddenly into constant eight-note arpeggiations. The right hand is now allowed to open up into a comfortable, stable position; it grabs constantly at the “D-sharp,” which has brought in such rhetorical “sunshine.”

¹¹¹ For clarity, I use the term lateral leap to indicate leaps for one hand that do not cross, and must transverse a wide space at the keyboard, or more than an octave.

¹¹² Willis, “Performance, Narrativity,” Ph.D diss. The idea of rupture of musical discourse in Scarlatti is discussed throughout.

Figure 9: Sonata in E Major, K. 46: mm. 52-61.¹¹³

The patterns, as may be familiar now, provide a stable sensation for the left hand's dynamic action. The left-hand trill and eighth notes (seen in m. 54, 55, etc. above) are quick motions that are followed immediately with a plunge downward. Each time until measure 59, the sensation is prevented from being completely repetitive with the shifting of the left-hand note down a step. The expansion of space here mirrors the emotion of joy in the body – but also met by a constant tension of change, challenge, and speed. Exiting this material, Scarlatti reminds us one more time of that event. This is the same gesture, but now the trill is replaced with a rapid ascending scale. This time at mm. 68-69 and again at mm. 71-72, the scale makes more upward motion against the following plunge downward – heightening the feeling of “winding-up” to such an action.

¹¹³ Reproduced from Domenico Scarlatti and ed. Kenneth Gilbert, *Sonates Vol. 1*, (Paris: Heugel, 1984): 153. Accessed: [https://imslp.org/wiki/Keyboard_Sonatas,_K.1-555_\(Scarlatti,_Domenico\)](https://imslp.org/wiki/Keyboard_Sonatas,_K.1-555_(Scarlatti,_Domenico)).

A similar gesture is found in the Sonata in D Major, K. 53. This time, the placement in the sonata (arguably) clues us into what Scarlatti considers to be more (and less) intense in physical gesture. Note in Figure 10 below how this lateral motion dissolves.



Figure 10: Sonata in D Major, K. 53: mm. 57-66.¹¹⁴

At least two left-hand positions are required in each of these arpeggiations upwards, as in measures 58, 60, etc. Figure 10 shows the end of this sequence, in which this gesture is repeated six times. The left hand temporarily glides around in mm. 62-63, and land in a (perhaps now familiar) hand crossing idiom. Such lateral leaps will never return in this sonata; instead the bulk of the second half is consumed with more than twenty measures of constant hand crossing. This placement implies, at least somaesthetically, that the “apex” of technique and the rhetorical “fireworks” are in fact the hand crossings and not the lateral leaps.

¹¹⁴ Reproduced from Domenico Scarlatti and ed. Kenneth Gilbert, *Sonates Vol. 2*, (Paris: Heugel, 1979): 4. Accessed: [https://imslp.org/wiki/Keyboard_Sonatas,_K.1-555_\(Scarlatti,_Domenico\)](https://imslp.org/wiki/Keyboard_Sonatas,_K.1-555_(Scarlatti,_Domenico)).

Lateral leaps are the star of the show, however, in the Sonata in B-flat Major, K. 441. There is an immediate association with dance here as the same rhythmic pattern dominates almost the entire sonata, seen below in Figure 11.



Figure 11: Sonata in B-flat Major, K. 441: mm. 1-10.¹¹⁵

This rhythmic profile of K. 441, seen in measures 2 and altered in measure 7, provides a regular texture for the bulk of the sonata, and is not entirely lyrical. In measure 4, a cadential figure causes us to expect another four-bar phrase – but this is disrupted in mm. 6 and 7, when another abrupt cadential pattern opens the door for new figures in the left hand. The first and third downbeats of each measure become low, lateral leaps against an alto register. Unusually, Scarlatti at first repeats this left-hand figure exactly. This repetition gives the performer some chance to “grasp” the concept, but as is usually the case, Scarlatti does not leave the performer to revel in mastery this early on in a piece.

¹¹⁵ Reproduced from Domenico Scarlatti and ed. Kenneth Gilbert, *Sonates Vol. 9*, (Paris: Heugel, 1972): 126. Accessed: [https://imslp.org/wiki/Keyboard_Sonatas,_K.1-555_\(Scarlatti,_Domenico\)](https://imslp.org/wiki/Keyboard_Sonatas,_K.1-555_(Scarlatti,_Domenico)).

Indeed, by the end of the first half, seen in Figure 12, this figure has expanded to become dynamic.

Figure 12: Sonata in B-flat Major, K. 441: mm. 41-50.¹¹⁶

Not only is the left hand reaching farther downward, but these motions are not stepwise. The alto-range left-hand notes, previously stable, now also are adjusted in each measure for harmonic purpose. The right hand, in this case, has unfortunately become so stable that the left hand must pick up its harmonic slack. The drama is taken to the absolute extreme of gesture in the finale of the sonata, seen below in Figure 13.

The largest leap of K. 441 is undoubtedly the four-octave “B¹” to “b¹” in mm. 83 and 89. These leaps reach for the bottom of the keyboard, and then interrupt the space of the right hand. Here in the climax of the piece, the previously stable right hand must also expand, moving about slightly to grab the octaves of the final beats in mm. 82, 84, etc. Not only does Scarlatti keep the performer from feeling mastery until the very end, but

¹¹⁶ Reproduced from Domenico Scarlatti and ed. Kenneth Gilbert, *Sonates Vol. 9*, (Paris: Heugel, 1972): 127. Accessed: [https://imslp.org/wiki/Keyboard_Sonatas,_K.1-555_\(Scarlatti,_Domenico\)](https://imslp.org/wiki/Keyboard_Sonatas,_K.1-555_(Scarlatti,_Domenico)).

this figure also reflects the excitement of such momentum as it reaches the end of the piece.



Figure 13: Sonata in B-flat Major, K. 441: mm. 81-90.¹¹⁷

Are we to feel childlike joy here, or fear at such danger? Perhaps, as is the case in Spanish dance, it is this physical thrill that is the point.¹¹⁸ K. 441 demands patience and focus from the performer and yet the rewards are not completely audible. The lack of melodic content, and even at times rich harmonic content, causes the listener to suffer at the expense of spectacle and physical gesture. Here, the insistent rhythmic profile eventually grates on us as we search in vain for some relief. Is not this incessant patterning, these athletic leaps of faith, these extreme registers, and climactic augmentations of familiar gestures seen in K. 144 (and all sonatas in this chapter), does this all not champion the grotesque?

¹¹⁷ Reproduced from Domenico Scarlatti and ed. Kenneth Gilbert, *Sonates Vol. 9*, (Paris: Heugel, 1972): 129. Accessed: [https://imslp.org/wiki/Keyboard_Sonatas,_K.1-555_\(Scarlatti,_Domenico\)](https://imslp.org/wiki/Keyboard_Sonatas,_K.1-555_(Scarlatti,_Domenico))

¹¹⁸ Ceballos, "Scarlatti and María Bárbara," in *Scarlatti Adventures*, 208.

Conclusions

Perhaps it is still possible at this point in the discourse, to ascribe to Le Guin's descriptions of Scarlatti's music:

Almost as striking to the observer as these aerial gestures, however, is the way the keyboardist's eyes and attention must be so fiercely focused upon the keyboard. This focus, vital to pitch accuracy, makes it plain how tightly harnessed and controlled that bodiliness must be. Thus these sonatas make the body flamboyant and constrain it at the same time, pressing gesture into the service of a rapidity, profusion, energetic repetitive-ness, and redundant precision so marked and exuberant as to constitute a kind of topos of mechanism – including, in its range of cheerfully frenetic affects, its prevailing hopefulness as a view of the world.¹¹⁹

In the course of this chapter, I have drawn up threads of discourse about the grotesque, Luigi Boccherini, and their embodied practices as they pertain to Scarlatti.

Commonalities abound in descriptions of these composers in the literature, despite their contradictory stylistic positions in the eighteenth century. These haunting and conflating descriptions disclose a previously unconnected thread of instrumental writing in which composers focused on dance, gesture, and comedic grotesque over that of “inner” musical content. Scarlatti may be on the extreme end of this spectrum compared to Boccherini, but this music is grotesque all the same. Le Guin is correct that the eyes must be completely trained, and controlled, in the realizing of hand crossings in the Sonatas K. 29, K. 36, and K. 104. The body is indeed constrained in time, and tightly harnessed, in situations like the leaps of K. 46, K. 53, and K. 441. In my opinion, Le Guin is absolutely right in writing that these sonatas create a *topos* which is physical, and perhaps

¹¹⁹ Le Guin, *Boccherini's Body*, 153.

mechanistically pedagogical as is common for learning paradigms in the eighteenth century.¹²⁰

Is it really true, however, that Scarlatti's keyboard displays "in its range of cheerfully frenetic affects, its prevailing hopefulness as a view of the world"? Perhaps, in comparing Boccherini's taste for the mournful *sensibilité*, one could mistake the major-mode focus and sincerity of Scarlatti's galant style with such cheerfulness. Sutcliffe's question of "To play or to compose?" also resonates here. With Scarlatti, we often discuss the difficulties of distinguishing the improvisatory with the composed, and in these moments of kinetic frankness the traditional tools at our disposal sometimes fall away. Yet, as I have shown with my cursory examinations of hand crossing and lateral leaps, Scarlatti purposefully and dutifully attends to the sensation of the performer in the sonatas. By Le Guin's own construction of the grotesque, Scarlatti's play with registers, confinement and expansion, and technical fireworks demands such a comparison with the athletes of pantomime dance. He provides not only an audible and visual experience, but a profoundly physical narrative upon which the performer may experience technical learning, comedy, parody, fear, anxiety, and any litany of mindsets.

This world of Scarlatti is not entirely cheerful, either. Although little is known about Domenico Scarlatti and his patroness the Queen María Bárbara, enough can be surmised to activate empathy in such an environment. For years of her life, María Bárbara was confined to one apartment because of the disapproval of the Queen Elisabeth Farnese. Insanity on the grandest scale ran through the male patriarchs of this court, where violence and fear must have been the norm. María Bárbara is always described as

¹²⁰ Ibid., 154.

No, this is keyboard music. Sometimes the four bars are interrupted with suspensions, but mostly they remain relentless, biting down and through. Not only is this tension audible, and difficult to listen to, but its physical too. It invites – even demands – that our teeth, our bodies, and faces contort. The pantomime may not be here written in so explicitly as in Boccherini's music, but grimace we do, all the same. Like all dangerous play, like all thrillers, like all comedy, there is here also a darker side – something truly grotesque.

CHAPTER III

CASE STUDY OF SONATA IN A MAJOR, K. 113

Introduction

Domenico Scarlatti's Sonata in A Major, K. 113/L. 345/P. 160/F. 72 (hereafter referred to as K. 113) is like many Scarlatti sonatas, a single-movement work in balanced binary form with each section repeated. It displays typical harmonic framework, generally moving from tonic to dominant in the first section, and from dominant to tonic in the second section. K. 113's basic harmonic outline is further colored with fewer conventional and sometimes unexpected dissonances, which perhaps relate to the use of popular (Spanish?) material in the sonata. What is memorable about this sonata is its typically Scarlattian demands for virtuosity, speed, and athleticism at the keyboard. The focus of the composition does not seem to be on harmonic exploration per se, and neither is the focus overtly on the strict imitation of Spanish popular traditions. As I will show, a sort of "destination" or *topos* of the sonata emerges at first tentatively, and then dominates the rest of the sonata. This *topos* is an extreme hand-crossing figure for the left hand, which remains consistent in physical gesture despite note variation. In other words, I argue that the *topos* of K. 113 is not melodic, harmonic, or even necessarily stylistic but rather purely physical.

To demonstrate my argument, this chapter presents a sustained analysis of K. 113 from a somaesthetic point of view, constructing a reading of the piece through an embodied narrative approach. In order to achieve this, I outline features of this piece as

they appear in manuscript and describe my own physical experience in constructing this sonata's necessary choreography. To this end, I adopt a first-person voice in my descriptions. This type of analysis of the sonata's physical demands allows me to comment more generally on how this sonata is exemplary of certain paradigms in Scarlatti's keyboard music pertaining to physicality. I compare K. 113's appearance in the Parma and Venice manuscript sources, examining how their differences support or challenge the physical narrative my analysis constructs. Finally, I place my reading of the sonata in context with other scholarly commentary, in particular that of W. Dean Sutcliffe and Sara Gross Ceballos.¹²³

The First Half of K. 113

K. 113 quite literally blasts off like a sonic rocket, building momentum in perpetual motion. The opening theme in mm. 1-9, seen in Figure 15, is a simple yet bombastic fanfare of parallel octaves. This opening theme never returns in the sonata, a feature common in Scarlatti works.¹²⁴

In this opening, the quick leaps already demand a choreography of extended motion. The right hand outlines the tonic triad, followed by a leap downward to a “3-4-5-1” octave pattern (see Figure 15, mm. 1-2), both in finger number and scalar degree. The

¹²³ Ceballos, “Scarlatti and María Bárbara” in *Scarlatti Adventures*; Sutcliffe ‘Una Genuina Música de Tecla,’ in *Keyboard Sonatas*.

¹²⁴ Janet Schmalfeldt, “Domenico Scarlatti, Escape Artist: Sightings of His ‘Mixed Style’ Towards the End of the Eighteenth Century” (Lecture, THEME Colloquium, University of Oregon School of Music and Dance, Eugene, OR, October 27, 2017). This feature is described in this talk.

figure is lightly elaborated in the right hand in each iteration, while the left-hand response remains the same.



Figure 15: Venice source “Sonata XVI,” K. 113 mm. 1-9.¹²⁵

Playing this opening, I notice and contemplate what it means to play “high” and “low” at the keyboard. Scarlatti has given me an alternating pattern of a small right-hand figure with a loud yet harmonically thin left-hand response. The octaves of the left hand are further amplified by the addition of another unison with the right hand. The result is the right-hand triadic figure of the opening sounds unsupported, a fact exacerbated by the sheer loudness of the responding pillars of octaves. Audibly, this technique creates an intense contrast between “high” and “low” sounds. But the unsupported right-hand figure is not just audible. It becomes a physical sensation too. Of course, the right-hand figure is quite literally unsupported by any bass line. More importantly though, this higher figure is nearly abandoned by the right hand as well. The performer is encouraged to focus on the leaps downward directly after the right-hand figure instead of the presentation of the higher material. Not only is the performer’s eye drawn away but so is her attention as she prepares for the next leap! Thus, in these opening measures Scarlatti highlights the

¹²⁵ Reproduced from I-Vnm (Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana), Codice Marciano It. IV, 200 (=9771), 32v.

metaphorical relationship between these high and low sounds and their actual spatial distance at the keyboard. He does so by making the antiphonal contrast more perceptible not only audibly, but also physically. Is the opening choreography of this theme indicative of the physical actions which are to come?

From measure nine onwards, quarter notes give way to a rush of eighth-note triadic arpeggiations or “motor rhythms,”¹²⁶ forming continuous texture for the rest of the sonata (See Figure 15, m. 9 for the beginning of this section, and Figure 16 for its continuation on a line break.). Throughout this section of mm. 9-27 I am tempted to accelerate to gather momentum. Scarlatti writes this into the music using a variety of techniques: including, (1) the doubled speed of eighth notes beginning in m. 9 which contrast with the quarter notes of the figure before; (2) an open pedal octave leaving the left hand without much to do; (3) the easily achievable diminutions of the right hand in comfortable hand positions; (4) the spare left-hand notes (see mm. 17-18); (5) the metric displacement of accent in a contrasting figure seen in the right hand of mm. 15-16, 19-20; and (6) the interruption of this same figure in m. 23 with a “dropped bar.”¹²⁷ The result of these lower-level syntactical techniques encourages the performer to tumble forward and even telescope the ends of measures to speed up. The instinct to accelerate with the momentum would be dangerous however, given the dramatic hand-crossing which will premiere just after this section in Figure 16.

The broader contour of mm. 9-27 in effect gives away its rhetorical purpose in the sonata, which is pure diversion, anticipation, and building of momentum.

¹²⁶ Sutcliffe, *Keyboard Sonatas*. Term borrowed from this monograph.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 171. Sutcliffe has discussed Scarlatti’s use of the “missing bar” to disrupt or unbalance the musical discourse.



Figure 16: Venice source “Sonata XVI,” K. 113 mm. 10-27. Intermittent measure numbers inserted by myself.¹²⁸

The notes literally rise like a tide gradually up the keyboard, reaching the highest point at the end of m. 16. Scarlatti highlights sensations by making them literally visible on the page: as the performers’ potential anticipation (or anxiety) of such a sudden change rises, so do the notes. This effect is compounded by the composer’s previous highlighting of the metaphor of “high” and “low” at the keyboard, meaning that this slower, deliberate ascent and descent in contour from mm. 10-27 is more noticeable. A sort of stasis in the middle at mm. 17-18, and its restatement on the dominant in mm. 24-23 gives away that this moment is Scarlatti’s musical “present tense” – in which he appears to be “thinking” of where to go next.¹²⁹ Sutcliffe has described openings of this kind in Scarlatti sonatas as an “opening stampede,” which:

favours momentum over clear articulation – it is structurally breathless, we are given too much to take in too quickly... We do not expect to find such intensity and unpredictability of action at the beginning of a sonata. There is no point of cadential or phraseal articulation; instead we are propelled forward in search of the stability that should have formed the point of departure.¹³⁰

¹²⁸ Reproduced from I-Vnm (Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana), Codice Marciano It. IV, 200 (=9771), 32v.

¹²⁹ Sutcliffe, *Keyboard Sonatas*, 12.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 159.

As Willis and Sutcliffe have explored, there are more normative approaches to opening a sonata than the “stampede” openings that Scarlatti often explores. Chris Willis’ “recomposition” of K. 140’s opening (here comparable to K. 113’s mm. 1-9 in our example) continues opening material in a more *Fortspinnung* fashion typical of Scarlatti’s post-baroque contemporaries. Willis’ imaginary, yet more normative development of opening material is useful in comparison with the sudden shift which Scarlatti opts to take. Scarlatti’s choice to forgo any direct repetition (beyond the repeat sign) of opening material in favor of a more impromptu “stampede” reflects his interest in both the disregard for a sense of formal security, and the encouragement for the performer to experience this the “present tense.”¹³¹

While syntax as the one in mm. 9-27 often confounds our stylistic expectations of the time, zooming in on how the syntax works in this section reveals pertinent information. Willis documents the close relationship that Scarlatti’s sonatas have with the improvisational style of the Italian toccata, especially of Alessandro Scarlatti.¹³² Specifically, Willis notes that Scarlatti has a tendency to run with small elements from the immediate past for development rather than returning to ideas from the more distant past – reflecting what Willis calls a process of “working-memory syntax.”¹³³ Rather than developing melodic phrases punctuated with cadences, Scarlatti builds through the immediate repetition of tiny cellular ideas; for an example, see Figure 16. These small patterns are often repeated verbatim or in different hand positions. In essence, while his

¹³¹ Ibid., 12.

¹³² Willis, “Historical Contexts,” in “Performance, Narrativity...,” Ph.D diss., 43-109.

¹³³ Willis, “One-Man Show,” In *Scarlatti Adventures*, 271-308.

language is predominately *galant*, Scarlatti is using a base operating system which is still much closer to that of the Baroque era.

However, one aspect of this syntactical language which has been thus far unexplored is how intimately tied it is with somaesthetics. Formed well within the comfort of the closed-position right hand, these cellular gestures seem to be reliant on hand position. It is an obvious point, but there is something to be said for a style which fundamentally derives its diminutions from relaxed and closed hand positions. This fact often leads Scarlatti scholars to attest that compositions were mere improvisations, dashed onto paper in a hurry.¹³⁴ Yet there is compositional mastery in this language, and it is seen here through hand position control. By making expected hand position obvious for the performer, Scarlatti is able to provide built-in articulations that help to broadly define the phrase at the harpsichord. What might seem a mess of noise thus naturally organizes itself like orderly water molecules. Microscopically, for example, a natural articulation of small spaces within these units occurs automatically when the right hand must change positions slightly, as in from beats “2” and “3” of measures 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, etc.

Hand position also forces bigger breaks in the texture which organize the musical fabric. Where the right hand must move more than a key or two away, the resulting space punctuates larger sections. This results in a better-organized material, even if these units cannot be literally described as phrases.

Measures 30-34 present new material, and K. 113’s first example of a hand-crossing procedure which is genuinely Scarlattian. This same figure will return several

¹³⁴ Sutcliffe, *Keyboard Sonatas*, 40.

times in the sonata, sometimes in the exact same way, and sometimes slightly varied.

Figure 17 shows these measures from the Venice copy, which most editions appear to use as source.



Figure 17: Venice source “Sonata XVI,” K. 113 mm. 28-34. Note that “M” indicates the left hand.¹³⁵

A relatively stable right hand has a repetitive “motor” rhythm which grounds the action, while the left hand vaults over and back rapidly. Making the three-octave leap from A to a² in measure 30, and all such leaps afterwards, is no small feat. When compounded with the previous section’s tendencies towards acceleration, the sudden change demands acute preparation by the performer. The need to get on to the next destination with the left-hand figure necessarily shortens the second note in the two-note descending pattern, which occurs on the stronger beats of the measure (for example, m. 30 seen in Figure 17). This exemplifies yet again how Scarlatti (and any composer for the keyboard) can build in articulations for the performer. The left-hand note groupings are related by thirds, but Scarlatti generously provides that at each left-hand leap the performer must only search for the note she has left, albeit three octaves ago. It is a curious trick, that the pattern is so

¹³⁵ Reproduced from I-Vnm (Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana), Codice Marciano It. IV, 200 (=9771), 32v.

easy, and yet so physically challenging at the speed implied at the beginning of the sonata.

Furthermore, the chordal diminutions in the right hand preserve the same position, moving stepwise downward. To help the performer, Scarlatti forgoes complex chromaticism here – in the psychological sense that suddenly, the right hand only has to worry about white notes and closed-position chords until the preparation for the dominant at m. 33. Theorists may easily explain the harmonic interest of this passage in preparation for more dominant emphasis and its color, a point which should not go unnoticed. However, it is interesting that while this figure occurs for the first time, the most basic of right-hand chordal movements are employed, allowing the performer to focus on the left hand. There is a drawing “outward” of the right hand towards the white keys.

Yet, the hand-crossing of mm. 30-34 is brief, landing safely back into the upward tidal motion of chordal diminutions seen earlier in the sonata, now firmly in the dominant key area. This material, which begins at m. 34 and is shown in part in Figure 18, is familiar but now seems less interesting in comparison with the wild hand crossing of a moment before.



Figure 18 Venice source “Sonata XVI,” K. 113 mm. 36-40.¹³⁶

¹³⁶ Reproduced from I-Vnm (Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana), Codice Marciano It. IV, 200 (=9771), 33r.

While it came from earlier in the sonata it has now become overshadowed in anticipation for the return of the extreme hand crossing in m. 41. Its mid-range diminutions now seem too similar to those done by the right hand in mm. 30-34 to be considered a real melody, or at least very distinct from what came immediately before. Moreover, the hands are extremely close to each other, making the voices (melody, diminution, and bass line) perhaps more difficult to be distinguished audibly from each other. In mm. 39-40 (also seen in Figure 18), cascading thirds and a cadential figure tonicize the dominant E-major once more, launching me back into an extreme hand-crossing pattern at m. 41. Figure 19 shows this relaunch into the hand crossing idiom of mm. 40-43.



Figure 19: Venice source “Sonata XVI,” K. 113 mm. 40-47. Note that the “33” seen here refers to the foliation. These measures occur on a line break, so I have combined two images for easier reference. Both lines have the same clef indications.¹³⁷

¹³⁷ Reproduced I-Vnm (Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana), Codice Marciano It. IV, 200 (=9771), 33r.

This iteration of this hand-crossing topos proves to be overall more complex. Instead of a stepwise descent, this version of the hand crossing appears first in a feeling of stasis. The right-hand notes of mm. 40-43 all derive from the same approximate E-major five-finger closed hand position. These basic right-hand patterns seen so often in the sonata have become a grounding, almost predictable sensation. This is just as well, because my focus cannot be on the right hand now that the left hand's crossing pattern has become more complex. Now my left hand must navigate these complex leaps but with destinations that are a minor sixth apart (see the relationship between "e" and "c³") and stepping upwards instead of downwards for two measures. The smallest units of a bar in length repeat "verbatim" and move around (for example see in Figure 5, mm. 41-42, 43-44, 45-47), but never really travel the keyboard the way the earlier iteration did. More complexity is then added in the right hand in mm. 45-47 with a thicker texture of thirds.

Thus far in this hand-crossing section of mm. 41 on, I have navigated this new complexity without the entire downward-stepwise motion of the previous hand-crossing figure seen in mm. 30-34. However, something new begins at m. 48 seen in Figure 20. Instead of returning to a previous topos, backing out of the hand crossing, or relieving the performer, the cross-hand action is redoubled and intensified. The rhythm of the hand crossing becomes twice as fast, as the left hand must now jump more than two octaves every quarter note. In addition, the predominantly white-note right-hand chordal diminutions seen in the first hand-crossing event of mm. 30-34 return, as with the familiar downward stepwise motion.



Figure 20: Venice source “Sonata XVI,” K. 113 mm. 47-51.¹³⁸

A broader replication of the idea of mm. 48-51 occurs at mm. 53-56, after a trivial cadence. This time, Scarlatti has displaced the ideas by a half bar so that what was a weaker half of a bar is now landing on a stronger downbeat. Perhaps more importantly though, the displacement allows Scarlatti to fit one more half bar of the hand-crossing figure. I am thus forced to end my hand crossing on the downbeat of m. 57, already a part of the run up to another cadence. In retrospect, the last half of m. 51 then seems like a reprieve to gather myself, and this iteration at m. 57 yet another intensification of physical action.

Closing material for the first half of K. 113 begins at measure 59, seen in Figure 21. While there is constant harmonic motion in a pivot between a B-Major chord(V/V) and E-Major(V) chords, seen for example at m. 60 in Figure 6, the effect is a static tonicization of the dominant E-Major chord. As with many Scarlatti “themes on the V,” there is not a definitive cadence, but rather near-constant cadential figures.¹³⁹ This closing theme is a celebratory fanfare, playing with the hand-crossing material and further

¹³⁸ Reproduced I-Vnm (Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana), Codice Marciano It. IV, 200 (=9771), 33r.

¹³⁹ Willis, “Performance, Narrativity, Improvisation and Theatricality,” 149.

relishing in the sensation. As such, on first glance the closing material may seem like an afterthought to the musical action.



Figure 21: Venice source “Sonata XVI,” K. 113 mm. 58-68.¹⁴⁰

Over the course of this first half, Scarlatti has gradually pushed the hand-crossing motif to its bodily limits, adding complexity with each iteration. Each time he has revisited the hand-crossing motif, he has changed something to intensify the physical experience of it. But, can one really further intensify what occurred in mm. 53-56, with more than 2-octave jumps every beat?

In a word, yes; Scarlatti’s return to the hand-crossing motif in mm. 59-66 is admittedly more repetitive than before. The rhythm of the hand-crossing action is also seemingly slowed, replacing some crossing with the half-note “B⁻¹” in the latter half of mm. 60, 61, 63, 64, and 65. Yet despite a lack of harmonic tension and a familiar motif, the closure at mm. 59-68 is more relieving for the listener than for the performer.

¹⁴⁰ Reproduced I-Vnm (Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana), Codice Marciano It. IV, 200 (=9771), 33r.

Scarlatti finds ways, however subtle, to intensify this physical experience for the performer. The first way is via octave displacement. As I enter the hand-crossing motif again at measure 59, the left-hand “B” to “e” of measure 58 and the same “B” to “e” in measure 59 are, in distance covered, much like the previous hand-crossing motif. But suddenly in measure 60, Scarlatti drops that entire process down an octave. As if the bottom has fallen out from under me, I suddenly must cover much more distance than before. A split-second feeling of falling happens in the pit of my stomach as I desperately reach downwards, simulating physically the falling sensation I feel internally. The distance, as in measures 60 and after, has now become four octaves of left-hand travel between beats 2 and 3. My hand must literally travel faster; psychologically this leap feels more intense than ever before.

I return to the beginning for the repeat and prepare to climb that technical mountain one more time. The loud, open octaves of measures 1-9 are a breath of fresh air from the constant busyness of before, but the only thing they really share in common with later themes is their contrasts between bass and treble. After the repeat, I move on to the next section.

The Second Half of K. 113

The second half of K. 113 opens with a brief reprieve from the physical intensity of moments before. A phrase divided neatly into two four-measure parts repeats essentially the same material in two different locations (see Figure 22, mm. 69-76).



Figure 22: Venice source “Sonata XVI,” K. 113 mm. 69-76.¹⁴¹

Everything here is within reach of my hand, without any leaps. The grinding downward of the left hand to its resolution on beat “1” each time results in a particularly grounding effect. I feel encouraged to dig my fingers into the keys and enjoy the brief moment of technical security. This is also conspicuously more balanced a phrase than anything that has come before, except perhaps the eight-measure opening. There is no distinct melody here, but mostly texture as it is in most of the transitional spaces of K. 113.

Yet, as if by force of gravity, the hand-crossing idiom invades the argument once again (see Figure 23, mm. 78-82 are shown, and the total hand-crossing phrase comprises mm. 77-82). Instead of a long passage of contrasting material, new material, or older material, Scarlatti returns to the immediate past. As Willis describes in his discussion of Scarlatti’s improvisational language, a “working-memory syntax” comes into play here in K. 113.¹⁴² Indeed, instead of returning to the hand-crossing of the body of the first half of K. 113, he prefers to return to the hand-crossing idiom of the closing material of the first half (material which is most fresh in memory).

¹⁴¹ Reproduced from I-Vnm (Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana), Codice Marciano It. IV, 200 (=9771), 33v.

¹⁴² Willis, “One Man Show,” in *Scarlatti Adventures*, 285-286.



Figure 23: Venice source “Sonata XVI,” K. 113 mm. 78-81. Here the “M” indicating the left hand is not filled in red. This figure also omits m. 77, which is the first measure of this hand-crossing incidence.¹⁴³

Perhaps one can argue that Scarlatti intends here to center the closing material as a topos, and not just an afterthought. Either way, all of it manifests itself through a process of returning to the immediate past, or “working-memory syntax.” The section does, however, occur in a different harmonic situation, emphasizing the D-Major (IV) chord instead of an E-Maj (V) chord. In this way, there is harmonic exploration already occurring in the second half.

This harmonic diversion continues with a modal A-minor section in mm. 82-87, consisting of mostly connecting tissue. This transitional material is not simply improvisational, but mirrors that of the transitions of the first half, as in the relationship between mm. 26-27 and here in mm. 86-87. The falling sixths of mm. 86-87, seen in Figure 24, loses the two measures of “turn-around” he attached to it in the first half (see mm. 28-29) which led into the first instance of hand-crossing. Instead, Scarlatti surprises us with the first truly contrasting material with that of the hand-crossing idiom (most of this contrasting section is shown in Figure 24, but spans mm. 88-94).

¹⁴³ Reproduced from I-Vnm (Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana), Codice Marciano It. IV, 200 (=9771), 33v.



Figure 24: Venice source “Sonata XVI,” K. 113 mm. 86-92.¹⁴⁴

While this new contrasting material seen in Figure 24 makes sense in the section of a binary sonata which would later be associated with the “development” of a sonata-form movement, it is nevertheless surprising because Scarlatti has already revisited the hand-crossing immediately beforehand. Thus, the contrast to this idiom comes around perhaps a little bit late, heightening its effect. The material of mm. 88-94 is contrasting because of its two-part invention-like texture. This smooth, probably legato texture is less percussive than anything before it, with imitation at the half-bar. The passage is reminiscent of an older, more typical imitative style. This section thus highlights for me how different the other syntax of K. 113 has really been. A final cadential figure comes in the left hand, mm. 93-94. Inevitably, the extreme version of the hand-crossing idiom returns in mm. 95-99 seen in Figure 25.

As seen in Figure 25, the return to this hand-crossing in mm. 95-99 is very similar to its same version in the first half, seen back in mm. 48-51.

¹⁴⁴ Reproduced I-Vnm (Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana), Codice Marciano It. IV, 200 (=9771), 33v.



Figure 25: Venice source “Sonata XVI,” K. 113 mm. 93-99 (The last half of m. 99 appears on the next page of the manuscript, not pictured here).¹⁴⁵

This time, however, all “F’s” in the phrase are made natural, all the way until the end of this phrase, at an E-Maj (V) chord. Not only is the (previously mentioned) simplification to right-hand white keys thus further enhanced, but the resulting harmonic color adds more drama.

This all stands out acutely when compared to the previous incidence of mm. 77-81, which forced me to navigate these right-hand diminutions with a more open hand and plenty of black keys. There is an even stronger sensation of the right hand “pulling out” towards the end of the keys, an action absolutely necessary to make this phrase work physically. Scarlatti further enhances the physical action here by extending the phrase. Instead of ending the hand crossing on a “B” as it was previously in mm. 51 and 57, it extends all the way down to “E”! But the action is not finished yet. A very trivial turn-around in mm. 100-101, featuring in the left-hand a restatement of the contrasting imitative material of mm. 88-92, steers us right back into the hand-crossing (see Figure 26).

¹⁴⁵ Reproduced from I-Vnm (Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana), Codice Marciano It. IV, 200 (=9771), 33v.



Figure 26: Venice source “Sonata XVI,” K. 113 mm 107-112.¹⁴⁶

A strict repeat climbs stepwise down an “A-minor” scale for as long as possible in the phrase. Perhaps at this point, the performer is meant to feel a sense of mastery. Scarlatti does not displace the figure by a half-bar as he did in the first half. He does not change the harmony. He does not vary the texture. At last, there really are no more jilting surprises. I get the sense in playing this part of K. 113 that this is the place Scarlatti wants to be. He does not feel the need to change anything at this point, but rather repeat this sensation as much as possible.

Exactly the same turn-around seen in mm. 100-101 returns again in mm. 107-108, leading us back into the closing material once again. With the same proportions of the last closing material, this final hand-crossing incidence is made easier by its familiarity under the hand. Even the extreme leaps seen by octave-displacement in the first half are not repeated here, and the distance to be covered is just that much smaller. What the performer enjoys, in these brief moments of closure, is the sensation of achievement, and maybe even mastery. Throughout the sonata the difficulty and physicality of these hand-crossings are gradually intensified in each incidence, until these last few where Scarlatti relieves that pressure. The last few measures, just echoes of the simplistic pedal-point

¹⁴⁶ Reproduced from I-Vnm (Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana), Codice Marciano It. IV, 200 (=9771), 34r.

arpeggiations from the very beginning, encourage me to revel in the sound of such a noise as all tension dies away.

Source and Performance Issues in the Parma and Venice Sources of K.113

My consideration of Scarlatti's intensification of physical gestures throughout K. 113 can also speak to source issues. As in many Scarlatti sonatas, K. 113's appearances in sources feature minute (and at times, frustrating) differences which have affected our reception and performance of the piece. Thus far, my analysis has relied on the Venice source of K. 113.¹⁴⁷ K. 113 is also preserved in collections of Scarlatti sonatas in Parma, Münster, and Vienna.¹⁴⁸ At this point in my work, I am only able to access the Parma source in addition to the previously-used Venice version. Even just in the comparison of these two sources, several interesting differences arise. These differences, when considered in light of my somaesthetic analysis, ask engaging questions of the performance and source transmission of K. 113.

Performance speed and tempo invokes the first discrepancy between Venice and Parma sources for K. 113. The first clue for the speed of execution is its indication, often given as "Allegro."¹⁴⁹ "Allegro" appears in the Venice copy of the sonata,¹⁵⁰ as well as in

¹⁴⁷ I-Vnm (Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana), Codice Marciano It. IV, 200 (=9771), 32v-34r.

¹⁴⁸ Kirkpatrick, "Catalogue of Scarlatti Sonatas and Table of Principal Sources in Approximately Chronological Order," *Complete Keyboard Works in Facsimile*, vol 1, n.p.

¹⁴⁹ Domenico Scarlatti, Emilia Fadini, and Marco Moiraghi, *Sonate per Clavicembalo*, (Milano: G. Ricordi, 1978), vol. 2.

¹⁵⁰ I-Vnm (Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana), Codice Marciano It. IV, 200 (=9771), 32v.

the Fadini edition.¹⁵¹ However, Parma's copy of K. 113 indicates "Vivo."¹⁵² "Vivo," meaning "alive" or "vigorous,"¹⁵³ differs in character from more general connotations of "Allegro," which are defined by David Fallows in the *New Grove Dictionary* as "merry," "cheerful," or "lively."¹⁵⁴ I think it implies characteristics of more forward and dynamic motion, whereas the ubiquity of "Allegro" has inspired nuanced interpretations over the centuries.¹⁵⁵ More contemporary to these manuscripts is Johann Joachim Quantz' definition, in the *Versuch einer Anweisung die Flöte traversiere zu spielen* of 1752. He explains the speed of "Allegro" "ought never to depart from a controlled and reasonable movement."¹⁵⁶ Even though Venice gives a more general "Allegro" indication, Parma's differing indication is sufficient enough to color our interpretation of the sonata.

Strange also is the "C" indication of the modern Fadini edition, which is marked *alla breve* in both Venice and Parma versions. *Alla breve* connotes a "smaller relative value per note shape in modern practice" or a generally faster tempo than "C," the broadening of the beat accent to probably at least a two-bar level. This would be consistent with the opening, whose first real downbeat occurs at m. 2 and continues in two-bar patterns. Fadini's edition reflects a wider trend of broadening the vivaciousness of K. 113 – perhaps as part of our modern bias that slower tempos can bring more emotive gravity. Since the eighth note is the smallest division of beat in K. 113, and

¹⁵¹ Domenico Scarlatti, Emilia Fadini, and Marco Moiraghi, *Sonate per Clavicembalo*, (Milano: G. Ricordi, 1978), vol 2; Domenico Scarlatti and ed. Kenneth Gilbert, *Sonates Vol. 9*, (Paris: Heugel, 1972). Kenneth Gilbert's edition vol. 3 gives "Allegro" as well, but at least acknowledges Parma's indication in a footnote.

¹⁵² I-Pac (Parma, Biblioteca Palatina), Sezione Musicale: F.Psi.48 (2) [Book 2], 37v.

¹⁵³ David Fallows, 2001 "Vivo," *Grove Music Online*, accessed 9 Jun. 2019, <https://doi-org.libproxy.uoregon.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.29553>.

¹⁵⁴ David Fallows, 2001 "Allegro," *Grove Music Online*, accessed 30 May 2019, <https://doi-org.libproxy.uoregon.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.00606>.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

given Parma source's "Vivo" and "cut time" indications, K. 113 nevertheless would seem to be very fast.

However, a more striking divergence occurs in mm. 30-33, which we have seen in the Venice source in Figure 3. Figure 12, below, shows these moments from Venice and Parma sources in comparison. In summation of my previous analysis, my somaesthetic reading of K. 113 in the Venice source has revealed a pattern of physical intensification surrounding extreme hand-crossing. Measures 30-33 feature hand crossings at the half-bar, as are the next incidence at mm. 41-46 (see Figure 5). The rhythm of this movement is doubled in m. 48, where every beat requires hand crossing. This pattern of intensification continues through methods like the extension of sequences to add more hand crossing, and the expansion of the distance to cover in the leaps. Scarlatti graduates the intensity of the hand-crossing over the course of the first half of the sonata, allowing me to view this sonata as a sort of narrative didacticism. With narrative didacticism, I mean that Scarlatti (in the Venice source) creates through a gradual intensification of the hand crossing idiom a tension against the feeling of mastery, and through successive challenges a visceral thrill.

Given my reading of the piece, what is striking about the Parma source's version of mm. 30-34 is that it presents some of the most intense hand crossing work at the outset. The third and fourth beats of each measure are swapped here, meaning that the rhythm of the hand crossing is every beat – the fastest it will be in K. 113. Certainly, this matches the sequential pattern that will later dominate the sonata, which we have seen in Figure 6, but it seems to "jump the gun" compared to the Venice source.

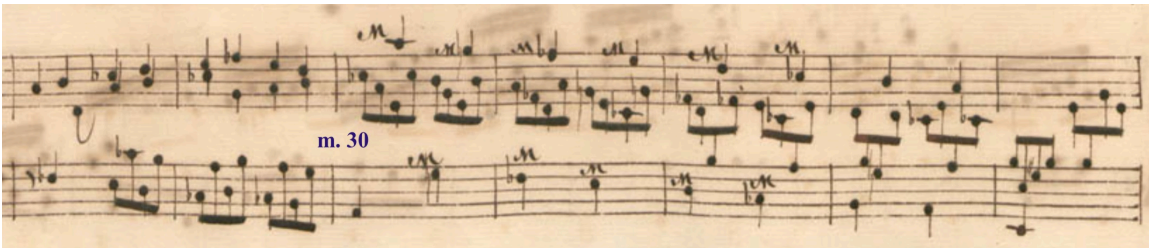


Figure 27: Venice source “Sonata XVI,” K. 113 mm. 28-34 (above); Parma source “Sonata 14,” K. 113 mm. 28-34 (below). In Parma, the clef/key indications are the same.¹⁵⁷

The Parma source leaves that half-bar pattern of the Venice source “out to dry” in Figure 5 beginning at measure 41, where now there is no other corroborator. This moment in measure 41, appearing identically in both Parma and Venice manuscript sources, has some idea of continuity in the Venice source (being the second incidence of it), but is independent in the Parma source. The syntactical continuity and gradual intensification of physical gesture found in the Venice source seems interrupted in the version from Parma. Thus, the somaesthetic narrative of graded intensification of hand crossing is not supported as cleanly in the Parma source.

This discussion necessarily begs a few questions: is the K. 113 of the Venice manuscript a more “cleaned up” version of K. 113? Is this difference the result of scribal error? Which version should we perform? Is this volume of Parma chronologically earlier

¹⁵⁷ I-Vnm (Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana), Codice Marciano It. IV, 200 (=9771), 32v; I-Pac (Parma, Biblioteca Palatina), Sezione Musicale, F. Psi. I.48.II [A.G. 31407], *Libro 2°*, 37v. In Figure 27, above is the Venice source and below is the Parma source.

than the Venice collection? As is familiar in Scarlatti scholarship, there is at this time no evidence to provide definitive answers to these questions. Furthermore, there is simply not enough information to suggest “definitive” versions for most Scarlatti keyboard sonatas, K. 113 included. Yet, the version found in the Venice source is the version performed.¹⁵⁸

Regarding the final question, speculation that the Parma sources are earlier than the Venice sources, or that the Venice sources referenced the Parma sources somehow, has been voiced in the scholarship before. But shockingly, K. 113 appears in the Parma volume dated three years later than the Venice volume, as seen in Figure 14 below.



Figure 28 - The date of Venice (left) and Parma (right) volumes which feature K. 113.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁸ At this point in my research, I have only found recordings of the version of K. 113 seen in the Venice volume.

¹⁵⁹ I-Vnm (Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana), Codice Marciano It. IV, 200 (=9771), frontispiece; I-Pac (Parma, Biblioteca Palatina), Sezione Musicale, F. Psi. I.48.II [A.G. 31407], *Libro 2°*, frontispiece.

Is the date in these manuscripts really trustworthy? Editors and performers have traditionally preferred the version found in the Venice manuscript. The Venice manuscript sighting of K. 113 surely makes better narrative sense, and I argue, constructs a cohesive theme of physical intensification around hand crossing. The Venice manuscript collection features evidence of some scribal planning because of the extra layers of blue and red color, more formally-planned title pages, and red rubrics. However, there are mistakes present in Venice sources that are not present in the Parma sources.¹⁶⁰ Sutcliffe has also suggested that Venice sources in the case of other sonatas may represent tidied-up versions of their Parma counterparts.¹⁶¹ Furthermore Joel Sheveloff, the musicologist with perhaps the most intimate knowledge of the source codicology and paleography (and who finally identified about nine scribal hands in the collections) argues that:

...in making most decisions about most texts within the Scarlatti canon, we ought to trust P [Parma]. If no wild card exists, if divergent readings confound, if a decision must be made, we must trust P as the closest thing we have, or will ever be likely to find, to (X).¹⁶² P's scribe seems to have worked very hard to be loyal to the composer's text, wrote in a clear, stylish hand, seems to have been an excellent decipherer of difficult places, and deserves our trust.¹⁶³

So, while there is no definitive answer, it may be safe to presume for the time being that the Parma version came from an earlier draft of K. 113 than the Venice source, despite the date. The scribe of the Venice source very likely referenced the Parma source for its version and engaged in editing for clarity.

¹⁶⁰ For example, see the erroneous bass notes of mm. 60-66 in Figure 21. The scribe also seems to often run out of room and cram measures in, whereas the scribe for K. 113 in the Parma source seems to plan the space better.

¹⁶¹ Sutcliffe, *Keyboard Sonatas*.

¹⁶² By "X" Sheveloff means a presumed previous source closer to the composer, like an autograph.

¹⁶³ Sheveloff, "Tercentenary frustrations," 430.

My discussion of the source issues of K. 113 has revealed contradictions and enigmas which are familiar to the study of Scarlatti. However, I hope with this section to have illuminated just one possibility of ways that somaesthetic understandings of Scarlatti sonatas (as in my analysis of K. 113) can inform other aspects of the musicological discourse. My analysis in hand with the comparison of Venice and Parma sources of K. 113 can perhaps eventually inform issues of performance practice and paleography.

K. 113 as Embodied Culture

I am not the first to write about embodiment in relationship to Scarlatti's K. 113. Sara Gross Ceballos' article "Scarlatti and María Bárbara: A Study of Musical Portraiture" explores the ways in which Scarlatti's sonatas can be read more generally as "animated sculptures at the keyboard that may have served as representations of their patron-performer."¹⁶⁴ She argues that "treating certain works as portraits of María Bárbara yields fascinating connections between Scarlatti's stylistic hybridity, the multiculturalism of eighteenth-century Spain and the dynamic character of its queen."¹⁶⁵ Specifically, Ceballos argues that K. 113's hand-crossings, lateral motion, and engagement with the torso evoke the eighteenth-century Spanish fandango, albeit in abstraction. At a time when Spanish national identity was being defined, K. 113's evocation of the emblematic fandango may have provided a way for the queen to embody this sensual dance in an appropriate way, while rehearsing and assimilating crucial

¹⁶⁴ Ceballos, "Scarlatti and María Bárbara," in *Scarlatti Adventures*, 199.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 200.

aspects of Spanish identity.¹⁶⁶ Through the (somaesthetic) observation of gestures built in to K. 113, Ceballos imagines the engagement of María Bárbara's left shoulder, left elbow, and pelvis through the extreme hand crossing.¹⁶⁷ Ceballos notes the treacherous hand crossing of K. 113 evokes the "thrill" of touch between partners in a fandango, and the left-hand hand-crossing gestures as similar to the "partnering of the hands of fandango dancers."¹⁶⁸

This kind of response to the sonatas is crucial in the context of the scholarship, firstly because it centers an important figure who remains largely silent: that of the Queen María Bárbara. As the main patroness of Domenico Scarlatti, the sonatas were meant for her and played by her. With as little concrete biographical and circumstantial information as we have about the sonatas, the importance of these two bodies (Domenico and María Bárbara) in performance has traditionally been underestimated. The anecdotal rumors of Scarlatti's corpulence, for example, is disproven (or perhaps eventually, proven) with the range of motion required in something like K. 113.¹⁶⁹ A lack of definite compositional chronology for the sonatas (whether or not other scholars agree) of course still complicates this matter. Furthermore, the possibilities of movement within the bodices worn by María Bárbara may be pertinent to our understanding of women as performers more generally. There is also the "issue" of whether María Bárbara (or other members of the court) may have participated in composing the works.¹⁷⁰ María Bárbara and

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 211.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 208, 210.

¹⁶⁹ Yearsley, "Awkward Idiom," 225.

¹⁷⁰ I put "issue" in quotation marks here deliberately, because I do not see the problem in various members of Domenico Scarlatti's intimate circle also being (full or partial) composers of the works. Since there are no autographs of the sonatas, we must finally cast aside old misogynistic bias and recognize that like in Johann Sebastian Bach's music, the lines of authorship are often blurry and fluid.

Domenico Scarlatti must have worked very closely together, given that he followed her to Spain when she got married.¹⁷¹ Unfortunately, in the course of Scarlatti scholarship this idea has not gone without severe resistance, as was the case with Ralph Kirkpatrick.¹⁷²

Ceballos' analysis is useful but not without problems – as certainly is my own reading of K. 113 (applied somaesthetics is profoundly subjective after all). Without looking at the sonata deeply, it is easy to consider the piece to be a fandango, or some abstraction of it. However, Sutcliffe has noted that we cannot think of Scarlatti's references to popular material and dance as literal imitations, because:

Even if we assume for the moment that some or many of the individual sonatas are based on particular dances, we need to stand back in order to grasp the larger point, one that is not easy to see because it involves a typical Scarlattian absence. This is that the sonatas rarely identify the dance forms on which they might be based. The composer, we should remind ourselves, was free to provide titles and topical designations. The very fact that he does not label very frequently when he often could speaks volumes. The eighteenth-century tendency was after all to provide such designations wherever possible, bearing in mind the 'pictorial' and programmatic tradition. Only in the case of some minuets and pastorales does Scarlatti align his invention with particular forms.¹⁷³

My deep reading of K. 113 agrees with Sutcliffe that some subtlety is involved. The actual materials of K. 113 are not themselves "Spanish" beyond the likeness of the gestures with that of the fandango and occasional dissonances. Scarlatti also does not label the sonata as a fandango. As Ceballos herself admits, it is a dance in its most abstracted form.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷¹ Malcolm Boyd, and Roberto Pagano, 2001 "Scarlatti, (Giuseppe) Domenico," *Grove Music Online*, accessed 30 May, 2019, <https://doi-org.libproxy.uoregon.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.6002278251>.

¹⁷² Ralph Kirkpatrick, "Who Wrote the Scarlatti Sonatas? A Study in Reverse Scholarship," *Notes* 29, no. 3 (1973), 426–31.

¹⁷³ Sutcliffe, *Keyboard Sonatas*, 83.

¹⁷⁴ Ceballos, "Scarlatti and María Bárbara," in *Scarlatti Adventures*, 210-211.

This is not to downplay the folk or popular influence clearly present in the sonatas, but it is in the case of K. 113 more a topical mixing in the service of another goal: the exploration of extreme hand crossing. The pervasive nature of Scarlatti's interest in hand crossing across the canon of sonatas cannot be denied – as it appears even in sonatas where there is no clear evocation of popular material. It is, of course, crucial to note the cultural significance of such gestures within the context of the Spanish court, but Scarlatti's obsessive use of such gestures outside of popular contexts suggests Scarlatti was more interested in the development of these techniques than in their cultural significance, at least in the case of K. 113.

We commonly rely on the pervasive theatrical and visual elements of eighteenth-century musicking to understand the dramatically changing musical language of the period. Sutcliffe, Willis, and others often center the view of the listening audience in the discussion of Scarlatti's sonatas – especially in terms of Scarlatti's imitation of theatrical paradigms, dramatic gesture, and popular dance music. Yet, the somaesthetic experience of K. 113 reveals more than just the audience experience is important here. The eyes of the performer must be trained on the hands and cannot look outward – there is an element of control amidst the wildness of gesture.¹⁷⁵ The bodily sensations, minute manipulations of syntax, and gestural “tricks” so crucial to understanding K. 113 cannot be solely understood by the listener or viewer, especially in a performance as fast as the manuscripts seem to require. While my somaesthetic analysis reveals the importance of gestural drama in K. 113, it also finally re-centers the experience of the performer as one which is crucial to the understanding of Scarlatti's work at the keyboard. As I have

¹⁷⁵ Le Guin, *Boccherini's Body*, 153.

shown, much of the nuance of this sonata cannot be easily heard or even sometimes seen by an audience.

Conclusions

In this chapter, I have done a detailed analysis of the physical experience of playing Domenico Scarlatti's sonata in A Major, K. 113, at the keyboard according to the Venice source. My close reading of the sonata – from an overtly first-person voice – reveals the composer's attention to the physical gesture, both on the cellular and measure level, and on a broader narrative level. In K. 113, as in many sonatas, Scarlatti seems interested in the intensification of physical gesture, and in particular a dramatic hand-crossing idiom. Over the course of the sonata, the performer can experience a process of "learning," in which the hand crossing idiom is introduced, intensified, and obsessed upon until completion. This obsession with physical action at the keyboard eventually pervades the musical argument, making the bombastic and thematic opening seem a distant memory. Moreover, this analysis speaks to issues of performance practice and source concerns, as it offers new methodologies by which to consider these continuing controversies. Finally, my examination of how this sonata is discussed by Ceballos reveals that a glossed and general reading of the gestures in K. 113 (and other sonatas) can miss the nuance and attention Scarlatti pays to the performing experience itself. While it is tempting to write off such idiomatic writing as an imitation of popular dance, the truth is much more complicated. Indeed, it is through the performing experience that this sonata truly "plays."

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS

Numerous challenges have played in the research into keyboard works of Domenico Scarlatti. Among these challenges are small amounts of documentary evidence, older scholarship, and problems of source control. With the advent of methodological frameworks such as somaesthetics (a.k.a. embodiment), there are new opportunities to revisit the works and their historiographical underpinnings in scholarship.

This project has been pursued in response to a need for invigoration of Scarlatti studies through new methodologies, as suggested by W. Dean Sutcliffe and applied by Sara Gross Ceballos. By utilizing methods based in practical somaesthetics I have connected Scarlatti studies to the work of Elisabeth Le Guin and embodiment directly. Exploring commonalities between Le Guin's descriptions of Luigi Boccherini and Sutcliffe's observations of Scarlatti, I have made the case for consideration of these two composers together – not only in shared methodologies, but also in anecdotal and cultural connections. I contend that Boccherini's grotesque as described by Le Guin may also be evidenced in the ironic, satiric comedies of Scarlatti's keyboard sonatas. By considering even on a cursory level the physical sensations of hand crossings and lateral leaps at the keyboard, and the details of the Sonata in A Major, K. 113, I add to a growing body of research surrounding the centering of performers and musicians' experiences over the abstract musical object. I have argued that the traditional on the score as principal witness to interpretation, the listener's perspectives, and even the visual spectacle of Scarlatti's

sonatas misses some nuance of the performer's experience. Indeed, my opinion is that the site of Scarlatti's compositional prowess is seen in his purposeful manipulation of the performing body. Thus, more broadly my work is a testament to the belief that academically viable information about music can come through embodied experience. I stubbornly believe, and through my work hope to show, that the body is a sight of crucial information which is lost in the pursuit of safer rationales – especially in the case of sonatas by Scarlatti.

The limited nature of this thesis provides that several aspects are not represented here. Firstly, this thesis largely ignores aspects of mediation necessarily present in the consideration of eighteenth-century music with my own 21st-century body. My cultural, musical, and educational baggage have yet to be completely unpacked in this kind of approach. The relationship that dance and physicality in these sonatas plays with more specific aspects of Spanish identity also deserves more attention. Not only can my somaesthetic method attend to discussions about conflicting manuscript sources, as my comparisons of K. 113 sources have suggested, but it could potentially also serve discussions about relevant performing spaces, organology, performance practices, musical learning, and biography. Lastly, and perhaps most glaringly, is the consideration of gender in the somaesthetics of Scarlatti's keyboard music. María Bárbara and other performing women of history still have not received enough appropriate attention in this regard. Discussions about the performing bodies of Scarlatti sonatas necessarily invoke dialogues about gendered power dynamics concerning both the eighteenth century and today. In the future, I hope to explore such details in my own research or with the broader community of Scarlattians.

This thesis is a first pass at such an approach to Scarlatti's keyboard music, and deserves further research. Moving forward, I will continue exploring with these sonatas in consideration with somaesthetics. I plan to bolster this work by intersecting with new research on cognition in music, musical rhetoric, and music in Spain in the eighteenth century as it emerges. I will explore the details of eighteenth-century Spanish dance and the grotesque in more detail in order to gain a deeper understanding of how this works in these keyboard sonatas. Hopefully, I can also help contribute to the broader understanding of how these sonatas circulated as the provenance of newer manuscript discoveries becomes more clear.

To close, I return to the part of Scarlatti that the public knew, and that we largely know today – that which is represented by the *Essercizi* publication of 1738. My investigation has so far selected for discussion some of the wildest examples of physicality in the sonatas. Yet, is there evidence of these grotesque experiments in the work which the composer presented to the public? How did Scarlatti position his physical, gestural experiments in the context of broader European traditions of the time?

The collection of *Essercizi*, comprising thirty carefully arranged sonatas for the public's edification, was the only publication printed during the composer's lifetime. As such, Scarlatti seems to have not aspired to the recognition of the wider European public to the degree other composers have. These sonatas quickly circulated and were reprinted, remaining popular for generations. Today, these thirty pieces (Sonatas K. 1-30) remain the most well-known of all his sonatas. In general, the organization of the sonatas in the collection presents increasing complexity and pyrotechnics as the sonatas progress. The *Essercizi* are in some respects more compositionally conservative than Scarlatti's wilder

experiments and yet represent some of the most technically brilliant keyboard works published in the eighteenth century.

Yet, the last sonatas of the *Essercizi* betray Scarlatti's interests in challenging the performer of this music. The last third of the *Essercizi* publication represents a marked physical intensification much like we have seen earlier in Sonata K. 113, culminating in two contrasting approaches to complexity in K. 29 and K. 30.¹⁷⁶ The Sonata K. 29, as we have discussed before, is a carnival of passing virtuosity all of which feature trivial sustained hand crossings. While hand crossing was used with gradual intensification in the previous sonatas, K. 29 explodes with a virtuosity that is "perverse and unnatural in the extreme."¹⁷⁷ The sonatas, begun with some austerity, have presented a gradually "sillier" take on the new keyboard music, culminating in K. 29. Uncomfortable and yet hilarious, K. 29 is a feast for the fingers, the arms, and the eyes, and becomes outright humorous in its extreme repetitions.

Then, almost out of nowhere, Sonata K. 30 concludes the publication with a serious fugue in the old style, not without hints to and affinities with the three-part *Ricercar* of J.S. Bach's *Musical Offering* (BWV 1079). A shock of icy water, K. 30 seems to demonstrate that Scarlatti knew what he was doing all along, and that he is every bit capable of writing in the most elevated and cerebral of styles. It represents the opposite of the dancing, gestural, grotesque style which had just come before it, and the opposite of what Scarlatti clearly deems modern. K. 30 seems to stand as a punchline in itself. The awkward contrapuntal construction is "twisted," "ironic," "creatively slack,"

¹⁷⁶ Sutcliffe, *Keyboard Sonatas*, 335.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 335.

and perhaps to some a “supreme gesture of disdain.”¹⁷⁸ As an oddly serious conclusion to the *Essercizi*, the Sonata K. 30 is thus an expression of the grotesque as much as the pyrotechnics of the previous sonatas, though in a more philosophical sense.

But with this, Scarlatti also presents implicit subtexts upon which K. 29, the penultimate sonata of the collection, can be easily seen as a true site of compositional sincerity. K. 29 more clearly represents the trajectory of the technical experiments which preceded it, and its gestural excesses of the grotesque more closely reflect the experimentation going on “behind closed doors” in the works which would not reach the public. Here, we can see that underneath the surface Scarlatti’s true interest was indeed this work upon the performing body, this idea that the comic can sometimes only be fully understood by the musician experiencing the joke.

Given this musical context, the “Preface” to the *Essercizi* becomes essential for viewing how the composer presents the collection, and by extension himself, to the wider public. The “Preface” contains the only actual words from the composer himself, and as such have been critically examined by every Scarlattian.¹⁷⁹ I have provided below a fresh translation of this text in lieu of Ralph Kirkpatrick’s traditionally used translation. While Kirkpatrick’s translation is beautified and solemn, it perhaps misses a few connotations that may be important here (these are shown in parentheses).

Reader,
Do not expect, whether you are a music lover or a professional musician,
[to find] in these compositions the deep purpose of training you to a
sincerity (honesty, truthfulness) on the harpsichord, but rather the
ingenious jesting (playfulness, joke) with the art. Neither visions of profit,
nor aims of ambition, but obedience (docility) have moved me to publish
them. Perhaps they will be agreeable to you, and then all the more happily

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., 182-183.

¹⁷⁹ Sutcliffe, *Keyboard Sonatas*, 15. This is excepting one personal letter, which like most of our personal messages, should not be considered so seriously as it has been.

will I obey other commands to please you in an easier and more varied style. Therefore, show yourself more humane (compassionate) than critical; and so (in this way) you will augment/increase your own delight(s). To hint at the placement of the hands, I warn/advise you that by the D the right [hand] is indicated, and by M the left. Fare well.¹⁸⁰

While it is dangerous to take this “Preface” at face value, some aspects pertaining to physicality are important to note. First, Scarlatti emphasizes his “ingenious jesting [“scherzo ingegnoso”] with the art,” rather than possibilities of a “deep purpose of training you to a sincerity on the harpsichord.” This humble assertion fits with his desire for us to “show [ourselves] more humane than critical.” It is clear from the musical material what he means, as he seems to subvert seriousness at every turn. Yet, the wit of this music (and more generally that of the eighteenth century) is in its concealed didacticism – which seeks to teach while delighting. While the jesting is obvious, perhaps by an ironic inversion in theatrical and carnivalesque terms (alternatively, reverse psychology, or paradox in rhetorical terms), we may consider that Scarlatti too is admitting to his “sincerity,” or frankness, at the keyboard. This is distinct from “Mastery,” which Kirkpatrick gives in his translation. Such a description of frankness brings to mind the extroverted, transparent, and immediate qualities of his syntax that have so often misled us to seeking more “depth” or interiority than there actually is. Scarlatti is admitting in the “Preface,” that his intention is to provide the experience of the keyboard in all its possible excesses, perhaps in lieu of the serious aspirations that something like K. 30 might evoke. His direct invocation of the performing body, even in this short text, is also telling. He demands of us the “humane” rather than the “critical,”

¹⁸⁰ Ralph Kirkpatrick, and Domenico Scarlatti, *Complete Keyboard Works in Facsimile*, vol. 1. This new translation is generously provided by Marc Vanscheeuwijck, translated from the Italian “Preface” found in Kirkpatrick’s facsimile.

so that we may “increase our delights.” Could we compare this to a request to experience something, without a cerebral analysis? While at face value this “Preface” is somewhat typical posturing of the eighteenth century, I read here a focus on the gestural possibilities at the keyboard, and more importantly, the experience of the performer. Invocations (direct or indirect) of the hands, delights, human, and frankness at the keyboard all amount to a singular attitude: that dancing, feeling, joking, experiencing, and “playing” in its most childlike sense is just as important as any serious endeavor.

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