



EDITORIAL

Periodization and Hispanic Music of the Eighteenth Century: Some Reflections

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The problem of periodization in music history has been widely discussed. Twenty years ago an article by James Webster, often cited since, appeared in this journal questioning the traditional periodization which divided the eighteenth century into two halves, one linked to the late baroque era and the other to classicism ('The Eighteenth Century as a Music-Historical Period?', *Eighteenth-Century Music* 1/1 (2004), 47–60). Webster instead argued for a relatively uniform style between 1720 and 1780, which, broadly speaking, corresponded to the term 'galant'. His perspective was consistent with that of Daniel Heartz, whose seminal book on galant style was published around the same time (*Music in European Capitals: The Galant Style, 1720–1780* (New York: Norton, 2003)). Nowadays, this proposal has gained strength and the traditional bifurcation of the eighteenth century has taken a secondary place, though perhaps more among musicologists than among performers and the general public. The present editorial proposes some ideas to extrapolate this thinking to a territory that, until recently, lacked similar proposals but needed them: Latin America.

Of course, it is not easy to do so without first considering, even briefly, the nature of the concept. In general, recent work tends to understand historical periodization as an interpretation or 'ideal type' according to the definition of Max Weber (on this concept see among others Carl Dahlhaus, *Foundations of Music History*, trans. J. B. Robinson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 141). In Webster's words, a periodization is 'not true or false, but a reading, a way of making sense of complex data' ('The Eighteenth Century', 49). For Juan José Carreras, it would also be a subjective concept, not related to how things happened, 'but with the narrative categories implicit in the story of what happened from the perspective of the person who accounts for it, that is, the one who constructs a meaning through the story' ('sino con las categorías narrativas implícitas en el relato de lo que pasó desde la perspectiva del que lo cuenta, es decir, del que construye un sentido a través del relato'; 'El siglo XVIII desde la perspectiva catedralicia', in *La ópera en el templo: estudios sobre el compositor Francisco Javier García Fajer*, ed. Miguel Ángel Marín (Logroño: Instituto de Estudios Riojanos, 2010), 27). Leonardo Waisman has expressed roughly the same view, understanding periodization as 'a construction devised by the historian, without historical reality but with methodological validity, since it serves to measure in what form and degree the facts that make up the chosen field of study differ from that model' ('una construcción ideada por el historiador, sin realidad histórica pero con validez metodológica, ya que sirve para medir en qué forma y grado los hechos que componen el campo de estudio elegido se diferencian de ese modelo'; 'Periodización historiográfica y dogmas estéticos: un ejercicio sobre villancicos coloniales', *Resonancias* 20/38 (2016), 58).

However, the conceptual definitions of periodization I have just quoted are far from being ideal types or merely the subjective readings their authors intended. Instead, they consist of a set of empirical statements that data can either support or call into question. For example, Webster and

Heartz's claim that the time between 1720 and 1780 constitutes a homogeneous period that is distinguished from those around it can be refuted in two ways: first, if one demonstrates that before and after, there were significant continuities; second, and conversely, that significant ruptures occurred mid-century that have been overlooked or have not been adequately accounted for. Webster himself maintains that around 1760, a new trend in musical expression emerged, marked by the ideal of sensibility, which he does not consider sufficient to begin a new period ('The Eighteenth Century', 54).

Granted, even empirical data are *partly constructed* by the researcher, who gives them a conceptual dimension, implying that they cannot be considered objective truths. However, as Rob C. Wegman stated in a text contemporary to those of Webster and Heartz, this is not only typical of history or the act of periodizing but of human knowledge in general, imperfect and partial by definition. Accepting this intrinsic limitation is a primary condition for being able to undertake any research, whether historical, musicological or otherwise ('Historical Musicology: Is It Still Possible?', in *The Cultural Study of Music: A Critical Introduction*, ed. Martin Clayton, Trevor Herbert and Richard Middleton (New York: Routledge, 2003), 136–145). Even so, the italics in the opening sentence of this paragraph are still relevant, as they remind us that this limitation is also partial: no one has denied (yet!) that the past is composed of events that indeed occurred, although they come to us in a fragmented and distorted manner. In this sense, Linda Hutcheon's assertion that history has both a discursive and a factual dimension remains valid (*A Poetics of Postmodernism: History, Theory, Fiction* (New York: Routledge, 1988), 16, 128, 143).

The empirical character mentioned here is equally visible in perhaps the only proposal for rigorous periodization formulated for the music of colonial Latin America. It derives from Waisman and constitutes one of the many relevant contributions of his book *Una historia de la música colonial hispanoamericana* (Buenos Aires: Gourmet Musical, 2019; hereafter cited as *HMCH*). I will focus on what he proposes regarding the eighteenth century because of its direct relationship to this journal and because this is the era that has aroused the most controversy regarding general attempts at periodization. Specifically, Waisman suggests that until approximately 1720, what he calls 'vocal Baroque' continued to be practised. This term refers to a type of writing that had predominated in Spain and its colonies since the end of the seventeenth century, intended for two or more choirs and basso continuo or 'accompaniment'. Among its main cultivators, he mentions the Spanish musicians Juan de Araujo (1649–1712) and Tomás de Torrejón y Velasco (1644–1728), both chapel masters in Lima, the former also being active in Panama and Sucre. From 1710 to 1750 (the overlap with the previous period is undoubtedly intentional), 'clear influences of the Italian compositional practice of the late Baroque' ('claras influencias de la práctica compositiva italiana del barroco tardío'; *HMCH*, 282) are observable in Latin American music, characterized, among other things, by the appearance of obbligato parts for violins, more significant differentiation between vocal and instrumental writing, frequent use of recitative–aria pairs, an increase in pieces for a single choir or solo voice and writing close to modern tonality.

This type of musical language is represented by the Italian Roque Ceruti (1683–1760) in Trujillo and Lima and the Mexican Manuel de Sumaya (1680–1755) in New Spain. However, the latter composer exhibits greater stylistic variety and does not wholly abandon the vocal Baroque of the previous period. Disregarding other repertoires that depart from these practices and are less relevant in quantitative terms (*HMCH*, 289–294), Waisman affirms that the second half of the eighteenth century is represented by the influence of the galant style, characterized by the preference for solo singing; the addition of parts for oboes, flutes and – more rarely – horns alongside the two violin parts previously introduced; a homophonic treatment of the multi-voice sections and melismatic treatment of the solos; and a slowing of the harmonic rhythm coupled with changes in the accompaniment, which led composers to use repeated quavers in the bass and rapid semiquavers in the violins, to fill out the harmony and prevent the music from losing momentum.

This proposal differs from Webster and Hartz's by prolonging the influence of the late Baroque until the middle of the century, delaying that of the galant style until the second half and limiting the impact of the Viennese school until the last decade of the century. These differences are expected, given the varied cultural and geographical contexts addressed. However, there are a couple of common characteristics that, at the same time, distance all these proposals from the traditional periodization already mentioned: first, the eighteenth century is, in both cases, a 'short' one owing to the persistence until 1720 of practices inherited from the previous century; and second, the galant style begins to play a central role, relegating to the margin the so-called classical style.

In light of the available data, which are constantly being expanded and revised, Waisman's proposal seems convincing to me. Furthermore, it is based on sound scholarship: he exhibits a remarkable knowledge of sources and musicological tools. Even so, reflecting on some issues the author only manages to outline or expressly leaves open for future work can be productive. In general, these have to do with the need that Miguel Ángel Marín has highlighted for a somewhat later period in an editorial recently published in this journal: to determine the extent to which foreign influences were integrated by local composers and 'how they coexisted with their own tradition and various specific musical circumstances that could alter the meanings and functions of these works' ('Haydn from the "Frontier"', *Eighteenth-Century Music* 20/1 (2023), 8). Waisman himself demonstrates his awareness of this when he admits that what Latin American composers absorb from the galant style are 'surface features' such as those mentioned above. However, differences emerge at an internal level. For example, according to the same author, the tension between a primary and a secondary tonality is not incorporated by Spanish and Latin American composers as a structural device. The only one who, after establishing the tonic, 'moves decisively towards the dominant (or relative major) and settles in it as if in a new home' ('marcha decididamente hacia la dominante (o relativa mayor) y se instala en ella como en una nueva casa propia') is the Italian Ignacio Jerusalem (1707–1769), active in Mexico between 1742 and 1769 (*HMCH*, 299).

If we follow the thinking of Olga Sánchez-Kisielewska, another difference occurs in the ways in which galant schemata, as coined by Robert Gjerdingen, are handled. Comparing some works by Jerusalem and the Spanish composer José de Nebra (1702–1768), she concludes that Jerusalem uses these schemata in the same way as his Neapolitan contemporaries. The latter, however, does so in an 'idiosyncratic way'; in other words, he knows the galant patterns, but uses them in a way unusual among Neapolitan composers. (For example, he employs the *Prinner* to introduce a cadence on the dominant, instead of one on the main key. On conventional use of this pattern see Robert Gjerdingen, *Music in the Galant Style* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 45–60.) Making an analogy with spoken language, this is like what people do when they speak an idiom that is not their own: even if they know the lexicon and grammatical rules well, they do not usually master the combinations used colloquially or in particular contexts – or at least do not have them internalized as do native speakers (Sánchez-Kisielewska, 'Claves para el análisis del italianismo en la música hispana: esquemas galantes y figuras retóricas en las misas de Jerusalem y Nebra', *Diagonal* 1/1 (2015), 28–53).

Another dimension whose importance we are only beginning to assess has to do with the persistence of seventeenth-century modality well after 1700, especially in the field of sacred music. Waisman alludes to this in passing when he suggests that the cadences on the second degree in some arias and choruses by the Peruvian José de Orejón y Aparicio (1703–1765) could constitute a remnant of the 'Hispanic tonal system of the beginning of the [eighteenth] century' (*HMCH*, 301). This hypothesis seems likely if one considers that Spanish and Latin American composers continued to label many of their works (especially sacred ones) using the system of eight polyphonic tones until the middle of the century, as Robert Stevenson noted (see his review of María Ester Grebe's article 'Modality in the Spanish Vihuela Music of the Sixteenth Century', *Ethnomusicology* 11/3 (1967), 326–342, published in *Revista Musical Chilena* 28/128 (1971), 98). Even in the years leading up to 1800, some authors continued to use the eight-tone system as a frame of reference, although

they applied modern key signatures to it, as Cristóbal García Gallardo and Paul Murphy demonstrated more recently (“‘These Are the Tones Commonly Used’: The *Tonos de Canto de Órgano* in Spanish Baroque Music Theory”, *Eighteenth-Century Music* 13/1 (2016), 89). Furthermore, a detailed analysis of Nebra’s Mass in D major (composed certainly after 1724) demonstrates that its cadences are distributed over the different degrees of the scale just as the theorist Pablo Nassarre prescribes for the fifth polyphonic tone, so they do not adjust to modern tonality, despite the date of composition of the work (see my article ‘La persistencia de los ocho tonos polifónicos en la música hispánica del siglo XVIII: la Misa en “Re mayor” de José de Nebra’, *Bibliographica Americana* 19 (2023), 59–76). These compositional practices can be related to the conservatism that Spain and its colonies exhibited in non-musical fields, since it is well known that Enlightenment ideas were introduced there later than in France and other places in Europe, partly owing to the persistent influence of the Catholic Church.

As we can see, even if considering only the ‘surface features’, the resulting periodization for Spain and Latin America seems to be similar to that of the rest of Europe since it is just as linear and involves the same styles, although emerging later. However, an analysis of its internal features such as the management of tonality/modality and the use of galant schemata reveals local procedures and the coexistence – well into the eighteenth century – of at least two different styles, one represented by sacred music, especially in Latin, and another by the secular repertory, particularly related to the theatre. Nebra himself moves freely between the two, as demonstrated by a comparison between his mass mentioned above and the arias he wrote in 1728 for the opera *Amor aumenta el valor*, entirely tonal from the point of view of their cadences and modulations (see the edition by Luis Antonio González Marín, *Giacomo Facco / José de Nebra: Amor aumenta el valor* (Madrid: Instituto Complutense de Ciencias Musicales, Arteria Promociones Culturales, 2011)). Could it be that this coexistence of styles is characteristic of Spain and Latin America alone? Probably not.

It is true that both European composers and theorists of the eighteenth century agree in highlighting the importance of the ‘free’ or galant style. According to them, it originated in Italian theatre, was represented primarily by opera and was characterized, among other things, by its relative simplicity and a succession of melodic motives without a close relationship with each other – unlike the baroque technique, characterized in general by repetition and development of a single or restricted number of motives. It is no less true, however, that several theorists, from Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach in 1753 to Heinrich Koch in 1802, coincide in pointing out the simultaneous use of a strict or ‘learned’ style, more typical of church music and characterized by greater contrapuntal elaboration, restricted use of modulations and more rigorous treatment of dissonance (Hartz, *Music in European Capitals*, 18–20). Webster himself recognizes that if one looks at the German Protestant tradition, the years between 1675 and 1750 can be understood as a coherent period, the final stages of which would be found in the work of J. S. Bach (‘The Eighteenth Century’, 59). However, if one pays attention to the stylistic variety indicated, the importance of Bach’s work would perhaps not lie so much in constituting a point of culmination, but in having been able to synthesize in many of his works the two most characteristic styles of the eighteenth century – a famous example is the third movement of his ‘Brandenburg’ Concerto No. 4.

From this perspective, the most significant difference between Spain and its colonies and the rest of Europe lies in their emphasis on one style or the other. While in Germany, Italy and France, the notable development of opera went hand in hand with a rise of the galant or free style, in the Hispanic sphere, the influence mentioned above of the Catholic Church meant that the cathedral chapels maintained their relevance from a musical viewpoint, as Carreras had already signalled (‘El siglo XVIII’, 42–44), with the consequent primacy of the strict or learned style. As late as 1778, the Spanish theorist Francisco de Santa María stated that in Spain, most compositions were written ‘for the church, and not for the theatre’, as García Gallardo and Murphy have pointed out (‘These Are the Tones Commonly Used’, 87).

Despite the predominance of one or the other, in the Hispanic sphere and in the rest of Europe, it seems prudent not to forget these styles' coexistence, given their frequent intersections, which occur sometimes unexpectedly or in fragmentary ways. A late example is found in the first movement of the famous Piano Sonata K332 in F major by Mozart, that 'miniature theater of human gestures and actions, which is crafted by imitating the kinds of music written to accompany these gestures', according to Wye J. Allanbrook (*Rhythmic Gesture in Mozart: 'Le Nozze di Figaro' and 'Don Giovanni'* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 14). In the opening theme, after four bars in a simple style imitating an accompanied song, come another four, contrasting bars, performing a parody of 'learned' counterpoint, followed in turn by 'hunting calls'. If we follow Alexander Silbiger, these topics allude to the different characters who interacted in the carnival context of the time ("‘Il Chitarrino le Suonerò’: Commedia dell’Arte in Mozart’s Piano Sonata K. 332”, paper presented at the Southeast Chapter meeting of the American Musicological Society in Greensboro, North Carolina, 2000). In analogous ways the various types of music and styles in vogue interacted, including those beyond notated compositions.

Thus perhaps our periodizations are partial not so much because they are subjective or unrelated to concrete reality, since every historical narrative has this characteristic in part. Instead, they are incomplete due to the impossibility of integrating all the styles that were popular in each era and the different geographical and cultural contexts. Suppose the traditional periodization of the eighteenth century excludes everything located west of the Rhine and south of the Danube, as Webster states ('The Eighteenth Century', 53). In that case, his periodization excludes music located west of the Atlantic and southwest of the Pyrenees. Similarly, Waisman's model – even with the nuances that I have proposed here – excludes the Portuguese–American sphere, not to mention India, Japan or the Philippines. But this intrinsic limitation does not imply giving up the intention, raised by Webster himself, of developing 'robustly revisionist periodizations that acknowledge, rather than repress, our need to understand the past in terms of meaning' ('The Eighteenth Century', 48–49). My brief reflections on a topic that will undoubtedly continue to give musicology much to discuss, both in the Hispanic sphere and the rest of the world, have pointed in this direction.

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