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LUIGI BOCCHERINI Y LA MÚSICA DE SU TIEMPO II

MADRID, 2–4 NOVEMBER 2011

This was the second Boccherini conference to have been held in Madrid, the first having taken place in 2005. Both attracted an eclectic, international group of scholars, as did a third, held in Lucca in December 2011 and puzzlingly called ‘First International Conference’. (Rudolf Rasch’s account of this event follows the current report.)

Some years ago I commented in these pages on the relationship among the societies that bear Boccherini’s name: two with very similar names in Lucca (the Centro Studi Luigi Boccherini <www.luigiboccherini.it> and the Centro Studi Opera Omnia Luigi Boccherini <www.luigiboccherini.org>) and one in Madrid (the Asociación Luigi Boccherini <www.luigi-boccherini.org>). (See my review of the two first volumes of the Opera Omnia edition in *Eighteenth-Century Music* 6/2 (2009), 276–280.) The first and third of these societies enjoy a certain amount of coordination, while the Opera Omnia project operates separately, branching out ever further into conferences and volumes on topics as diverse as improvisation, American musical theatre and Stravinsky.

All three groups are quite well established. That they do not always communicate well is suggested by the timing and titling of the two 2011 conferences; as well as creating general confusion, this forced some scholars from abroad to have to choose between them. (I had been invited to participate in the Madrid conference long before the Lucca one was announced.)

But, more interestingly in the end, there is also cooperation; in effect, the three societies have carved up the field of Boccherini studies among themselves, each focusing its activities on certain aspects. Convenient this is not, but it has a curiously apt relationship to the conditions under which Boccherini himself worked. Was he an Italian composer, or a Spanish one? What about his sojourns in Vienna and Paris? Is his music galant, early romantic, proto-folkloric? Too convenient, too centralized answers to such questions do not serve the case: that in Boccherini may be traced an unusual number of the diverse, conflicting currents of musical culture in his era.

The first two days of the Madrid conference took place at the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (UAM), on the northern edge of the urban area, and the third at the Real Conservatorio Superior de Música de Madrid (RSCMM), in the historic centre. These two institutions, along with the Asociación Luigi Boccherini (ALB), were joint sponsors of the event. There were nine sessions in all, given in Spanish, Italian and English, most featuring a *ponencia* (an invited presentation) and several *conferencias* (papers submitted to and selected by the organizing committee). The tenth and final session, in a stroke of brilliance unique to this conference, was a ‘concierto-academia’.

The first panel, ‘Luigi Boccherini y su entorno social, cultural y familiar’ (Luigi Boccherini and His Social, Cultural and Domestic Environment), began with the first *ponencia* of the conference, from Begoña Lolo, *catedrática de musicología* at the UAM. She suggested that the expulsion of the Jesuits from Spain in 1767 precipitated a ‘social-theatrical change’ that bore upon Boccherini’s entire mature creative life: from that date, Spanish music-making moved away from didacticism toward frivolity and an increasing use of national stereotypes. Rupert Ridgewell, conservator at the British Library, used Viennese courtly correspondence from the 1780s to suggest that the famous publisher Artaria actually sought Boccherini out, rather than the reverse. Sandra Myers (Real Conservatorio Superior de Salamanca) introduced the figure of María Faustina, Dowager Countess (*condesa-viuda*) of Tellez-Girón, and followed neatly upon Lolo’s *ponencia* by emphasizing the importance of musical *diversión* in the lives of Spanish patrons. Gustavo Sánchez (UAM) introduced the friar Juan de Cuenca, an intimate of the court of Carlos IV whose copious correspondence has left interesting glimpses into courtly musical life in the later part of the century.

The second panel was entitled ‘Influencias coreográficas y teatrales en la música de Boccherini’ (Choreographic and Theatrical Influences in the Music of Boccherini). This brought the second *ponencia*, by Marco



Mangani (Università di Ferrara), author of an important monograph on Boccherini (*Luigi Boccherini* (Palermo: L'Epos, 2005)). Mangani played engagingly with the idea of metalanguage, a language that describes other languages, as an explanatory tool for Boccherini's frequent use of dance or dance-like rhythms, suggesting that, for example, his minuets are more properly 'minuets', musical 'descriptions' of or metaphors for the actual dance. Matteo Giuggioli, a postdoctoral fellow at the Centre d'études supérieures de la Renaissance in Tours, traced the complex interpenetrations of direct representation and formal convention in the Quintet G276, the so-called 'L'uccelliera' (Bird Sanctuary). José Ignacio Sanjuán (Real Conservatorio Superior de Danza de Madrid) then gave an informative summary of that most characteristic of eighteenth-century Spanish dances, the *seguidillas*; his knowledge of the dance *as a dance* made very clear the difference between 'the real thing' and Boccherini's metalinguistic 'descriptions' of it.

In many ways the conference's second day was its most powerful; in terms of the carving-up of the Boccherinian scholarly terrain alluded to above, it is clear that the ALB–Centro Studi 'axis' has addressed source studies with especial authority. The panels were entitled 'El estudio de las fuentes' and 'Fuentes españolas en la obra de Boccherini' (Source Studies and Spanish Sources for Boccherini's Works).

The day's three *ponentes* (invited speakers) produced a kind of metaconversation that gave a good idea of just how provocative and lively this kind of musicology – increasingly out of fashion in the United States – can really be. Rudolf Rasch, emeritus at the Universiteit Utrecht, offered a typology of existing manuscripts that was at once panoramic and precise, distinguishing between autographs and copies and wisely omitting from consideration the problematic cello concertos and sonatas, none of which Boccherini included in his own catalogues and summaries of his work. He also suggested guidelines for a periodization of Boccherini's output. Germán Labrador (UAM) then used equally panoramic, equally precise techniques – the study of watermarks is his speciality – cheerfully to undermine the possibility of periodization: he showed that the composer sometimes post-dated his own manuscripts, and offered the startlingly plausible hypothesis that, before he ever arrived in Spain, Boccherini created a sort of 'chest' or 'file' of material from which he was to draw for the remainder of his career. José Carlos Gosálvez (Head of the Music Section, Biblioteca Nacional de España) took a reassuring turn after this methodological bombshell, returning to the materiality of the manuscripts and early Boccherini prints in Madrid and pointing out that many of these have still not been catalogued.

Among the second day's *conferencias*, notable contributions came from Loukia Drosopoulou, a Greek postdoctoral student working in Berlin on a scholarship from the Deutsche Akademische Austauschdienst, on the forensics of graphology as they pertain to Boccherini's Prussian copyists; and from Matanya Ophee, an independent musician, scholar, teacher and music publisher based in Boston, whose fierce dedication to untangling the complicated provenance of the guitar quintets has made him the ranking authority on some of Boccherini's best-known and most recorded music. (It is a refreshing characteristic of Boccherini studies that key source work has been and continues to be done by junior scholars, non-musicologists, performers and independent researchers.) Other contributions came from Giulio Batelli, professor at the Istituto Musicale Luigi Boccherini in Lucca (a conservatory, not to be confused with Lucca's two Centri Studi!), who introduced a recently discovered, youthful *Laudate pueri*; by Adela Presas (UAM) on the sources for Boccherini's sole *zarzuela*, *La Clementina*; and by Isabel Lozano (Biblioteca Nacional), who introduced the archive left by the violinist and Boccherini aficionado Fernando Senén (who died in 1962).

The centrepiece of the second day, and arguably of the whole conference, was the public presentation of the new, expanded edition of Yves Gérard's *Thematic, Bibliographical, and Critical Catalogue of the Works of Luigi Boccherini*, published by Oxford University Press in 1969. The editorial team, headed by Gérard himself, has founded its initiative in a digitized, searchable version of the first edition, still a gold standard for its clarity of organization and comprehensiveness. With the participation of Cliff Eisen of the Centre for Computing in the Humanities at King's College London, ongoing revisions (still in a fairly early stage) include corrections and emendations, new works discovered since 1969 and links to digitized source materials. All is available to the public through a password portal at the Centro Studi website, <www.luigiboccherini.it>. By the end of this year, revisions and amplifications will have been completed for the symphonies.



The final panel of the second day, 'La recepción de la música y la imagen de Luigi Boccherini' (The Reception of the Music and Image of Luigi Boccherini), consisted of four papers. Pietro Zappalà (Università di Pavia) gave a fascinating overview of Boccherini's early 78-rpm discography, dominated until the 1950s by virtuoso transcriptions and the 'Celebrated Minuet' from the quintet G275. Arturo Javier Ramírez Estrada, guitarist and lecturer at Universidad Autónoma de Nayarit in Mexico, followed neatly upon Zappalà's presentation by tracing the early publication history of that same minuet (already Boccherini's inevitable 'calling-card' by the mid-nineteenth century) in Mexico and Alta California. Alberto Hernández Mateos, a doctoral student at the Universidad de Salamanca, shared his research on the Spanish/Italian theorist Antonio Eximeno, who held up Boccherini as an example of the 'modern' (galant) against the 'northern' (German and Austrian) learned style. Finally, Ane Miren Pérez Larraona (UAM) gave an overview of the references to Boccherini in the major Madrid periodical of his day, the *Diario de Madrid*. There are but fifteen of these, mostly advertisements for sheet music; Pérez inferred from this that Boccherini was less popular than respected among aficionados in the Spanish capital.

Curiously, all the presentations on the first panel of the third day, 'Práctica e interpretación musical' (Musical Interpretation and Practice), circled around the question of 'Spanishness' in Boccherini's music. My own *ponencia* (Elisabeth Le Guin, University of California Los Angeles) explored the metaphor of the weaver (*tejedor*) in order to suggest that the most popular, widespread musical 'Spanishness' in Boccherini's Spain was not folkloric, but the syncretic, cosmopolitan and refined galant style. Fernando García Antón, a guitarist and doctoral student at the UAM, returned us to Boccherini's populist mode with the Fandango G448, giving a minute analysis of the 'memes' whereby the composer evokes (or describes, à la Mangani) the notorious dance. Daniela Cattaneo, a doctoral student at the Università degli Studi di Pavia-Cremona, gave a similarly minute semiotic examination of the musical language of Boccherini and several contemporary keyboard composers, attempting to define and trace some of the most common *españolismos* to their probable origins in popular practices.

Following this, Aurèlia Pessarrodona, postdoctoral student from the Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona, teamed up with María José Ruiz Mayordomo, well-known dancer and teacher of dance at the RSCMM. Their hypothesis, that changes in late-century ballroom minuets may be attributed to stylistic changes made by composers like Boccherini, was interestingly apposite to Mangani's idea of this relationship.

The second panel of the day introduced a number of interesting and useful new Boccherini publications, all of them initiatives supported by the ALB and available through their website. These are: *Boccherini en familia*, comprising two memoirs, a new edition of the one published in 1879 by Boccherini's great-great-grandson, Alfredo Boccherini y Calonje, and one by Gonzalo Pérez Morales (1993); *Luigi Boccherini, su vida y obra*, the first Spanish translation of Germaine de Rothschild's classic biography of the composer (*Luigi Boccherini, sa vie, son oeuvre* (Paris: Plon, 1962)); a long-awaited *Epistolario*, the first complete, scholarly edition of Boccherini's correspondence; and a new CD recording of the Trios Op. 34 by the RCSMM-based group La Ritirata. The third 'panel' was an erudite and entertaining audio presentation by historian and Boccherini scholar Jaime Tortella that explored Boccherini's well-known reliance on 'self-recycling', as well as some of the many transcriptions to which his music has been subjected. This marked the end of the conference's scholarly enquiries.

The conference closed with a roundtable discussion by the *ponentes*, with Guido Salvetti, current President of the Società Italiana di Musicologia, as special guest. Unfortunately I cannot report on most of this; I had to make an ungraceful exit in order to attend the final rehearsal of the concierto-academia. This event was, as I have said, a stroke of genius: far too often, conferences end their impassioned discussions in a woeful musical vacuum, or consign musical execution to professionals. Not so here. Everyone who had presented a paper had been invited to take part, and many did: professionals, amateurs, experts and students in a merry mix presented perennial Boccherini favourites (the Celebrated Minuet and the Fandango were not absent), a premiere (a movement of a concerto possibly written by Boccherini's pupil Francisco Brunetti, nicely played by RCSMM student Pablo Sebastián Sánchez) and several flashy *tonadilla* movements by Blas de Laserna.



One likes to think that Boccherini would have appreciated this eclectic programme and the warm, enthusiastic ambience in which it was held.

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LUIGI BOCCHERINI (1743–1805): FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IN LUCCA
LUCCA, 1–3 DECEMBER 2011

Until fairly recently scant attention had been paid to the life and works of Luigi Boccherini, with articles appearing every now and then in various journals. The monumental thematic catalogue by Yves Gérard (1969) was followed by a small number of other book publications. But it is as if the second centenary of the composer's death in 2005 has triggered the interest of scholars from many parts of the world. In that year the third edition of Remigio Coli's biography appeared (*Luigi Boccherini: la vita e le opere* (Lucca: Maria Pacini Fazzi, 2005)) and Boccherini conferences were held in Spain and Italy. One was held in Madrid on 17–19 November 2005, with the papers being published as *Luigi Boccherini: estudios sobre fuentes, recepción e historiografía*, ed. Marco Mangani, Elisabeth Le Guin and Jaime Tortella (Madrid: Biblioteca Regional, 2006), and one was held in Fermo (Italy) on 22–23 November 2005, with papers published as *Luigi Boccherini (1743–2005) nel bicentenario della scomparsa* (Fermo: Conservatorio Statale, 2006). In addition, not deriving from a conference, there was the volume *Luigi Boccherini 1743–1805 en el segundo centenario de su muerte* (Madrid: Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando, 2007). In the same year the Centro Studi Luigi Boccherini was founded in Lucca, the Centro then launching the new Opera Omnia edition. Volumes published so far are the *Arie da concerto G 544–559*, ed. Christian Speck (Bologna: Ut Orpheus, 2005), *6 Duetti per 2 Violini, Opus 3, G 56–61*, ed. Rudolf Rasch (2007) and *6 Sonate per Tastiera e Violino, Opus 5, G 25–30*, ed. Rasch (2009). As a sideline to the Opera Omnia, the series *Boccherini Studies* was started, with three volumes having appeared in 2007, 2009 and 2011. In Spain the Asociación Luigi Boccherini was founded in 2003, and it has also published a number of books, music editions and recordings. This all culminated in two Boccherini conferences in 2011, the first one held in Madrid in early November and the second in Lucca the following month.

The conference in Lucca was organized by the Centro Studi Opera Omnia Luigi Boccherini (Lucca/Pistoia) in association with Palazzetto Bru Zane (Centre de Musique Romantique Française, Venice). It hosted twenty-three speakers, from France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Spain, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States, with presentations being given in English, French and Italian. All topics current in present-day Boccherini scholarship were discussed, with the exception of the purely biographical aspect.

Several papers discussed single works or groups of works. Giuliano Castellani (University of Cambridge) discussed Boccherini's string quartets Op. 15, especially the differences that exist between the editions published in Paris (Venier), Venice (Marescalchi) and Amsterdam (Hummel), and this as a preparation for the edition of these works in the new Opera Omnia. To a similar end, Walter Kreyszig (University of Saskatchewan / Universität Wien) presented observations about the six flute quintets, Op. 17, in relation to the various shades of classicism of the time. Two papers discussed vocal music. The paper by Tim Pack (University of Oregon), read in his absence by Rohan Stewart-Macdonald, primarily discussed the two early oratorios *La confederazione dei Sabini con Roma* and *Giuseppe riconosciuto*, which share much musical material. Luca Sala (Université de Poitiers) discussed the famous *Stabat mater*, and especially the problems that arise as a consequence of the various sources: manuscripts in Lucca, Paris and Washington and two early editions, both authorized (Naples: Amiconi, 1801, and Paris: Sieber, 1805). He will edit the work for the Opera Omnia.