Cross-cultural Identities: An interdisciplinary analysis of the *jota* in *The Three-Cornered Hat* (1919)

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Abstract: This study proposes that the inclusion of the Aragonese *jota* (a type of folk dance) in *The Three-Cornered Hat* contributed to interwar transnational modernism. The modern ballet, which opened at the Alhambra Theatre in 1919, featured choreography by Léonide Massine, music by Manuel de Falla, libretto by María Lejárraga, and designs by Pablo Picasso. The *jota* amplified theories of Spanish philosopher José Ortega y Gasset, who identified cross-cultural exchange as a tool to strengthen a shared identity across the European continent, as well as theories of *Gesamtkunstwerk* put forward by Richard Wagner, who greatly influenced Falla.

Keywords: Ballets Russes, cross-culturalism, José Ortega y Gasset, *jota*, *Gesamtkunstwerk*, *The Three-Cornered Hat*

Introduction

Extensive studies have shown that dancing bodies act as cross-cultural archives that enable us to comprehend identities projected by inherited gestures,[1] that is by means of the "gestural imaginary."[2] Throughout performances of ballet, Spanishness has been constructed as a mixture of cultural stereotypes.[*] This "imagined Spain" contributed to

[*] We follow Homi K. Bhabha's interpretation of a stereotype as "what is always in place, already known, and something that must be anxiously repeated." Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), 66.

the creation of characters such as bullfighters, bandits, and *manolas* (a woman from Madrid's lower classes), as seen in productions like *Carmen*, *Don Quixote*, and *Don Juan*. These portrayals showcased mostly an oriental depiction based on Andalusian archetypes that strongly relied on the country's extensive Muslim heritage.

The Aragon region also played a considerable role in this gestural imaginary. This part of northern Spain is located at the intersection between Castile, Rioja, the Valencian Community, Navarre, and Catalonia, where the Pyrenees border with France. Such a strategic location positioned Aragon as a cultural crossroads between Spain and Europe, which we propose is characterized in its dance, the *jota*. Today, the dance is performed all around Spain, but this research focuses on how the Aragonese *jota* acquired a cross-cultural influence by embodying the vivacity—known as *rasmia*[†]—of the people of Aragon. We consider *jota* to be the dance that best symbolizes Spanishness, and its *rasmia* often constituted the climax of Spanish-themed ballets. This dance evolved from the public space of a doubly peripheral region—situated on the outer edge of Southern Europe, and far from Madrid—into a cosmopolitan choreographic language.

Ultimately, this article proposes that the Aragonese *jota* performed by the Ballets Russes in *The Three-Cornered Hat* catalyzed a shared cultural identity and served as a powerful tool for strengthening cross-cultural peripheral identities from Spain to Russia. In other words, this *jota* acted as a transnational choreographic lingua franca.[‡] After the

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[†] The term *rasmia*, mainly used in the Aragon and Navarre regions, indicates the drive and tenacity to carry out an undertaking, according to the Real Academia Española.

[‡] We understand this *jota* can be understood as an example of Globalized localism, "a process by which a particular phenomenon is successfully globalized." Boaventura de

Napoleonic Wars, pan-European identity was strengthened through cosmopolitan cultures that emerged across the continent, as Orlando Figes has analyzed.[3] The Aragonese people resisted the armies of Napoleon in 1808 and 1809, and the Sieges of Zaragoza were considered by Napoleon to be "one of the most memorable in the history of war."[4] The courage of the inhabitants of the Aragon region mesmerized French, English, Russian, Polish, Spanish, and American writers, painters, composers, and choreographers. In 1846, Joseph Mazilier premiered *Paquita* in Paris, a ballet set in the Zaragoza region occupied by Napoleon's army.

Théophile Gautier, the French poet and critic, travelled to the Iberian Peninsula after the Napoleonic Wars and noted that *Paquita* was also known as *Empire*.[5] Thenceforth, this ballet highlighted the French victory. It was performed forty times until 1851,[6] a year before Napoleon III established the Second French Empire. We do not have enough data to confirm if Mazilier included *jota* steps in this mainstay of the ballet repertoire, but we can see several *jota* movements in the *Grand Pas Classique* Marius Petipa choreographed in 1881.

Throughout the nineteenth century, a cosmopolitan culture emerged in Europe as a result of the constant movement of citizens across the continent due to the increasing

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Sousa Santos, "Globalizations," *Theory, Culture & Society*, no. 23 (2006): 396.

Furthermore, the Ballets Russes performed Massine's work more than two hundred times in the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Czech Republic, Austria, Hungary, Switzerland, and Monaco. Jane Pritchard "Serge Diaghilev's Ballets Russes- An Itinerary. Part I: 1909–1921," *Dance Research*, no. 27 (1), (2009): 108-198; Jane Pritchard "Serge Diaghilev's Ballets Russes - An Itinerary. Part II: 1922–9," *Dance Research*, no. 27 (2), (2009): 255–357.

number of transnational train lines.[7] French writer Victor Hugo was one of the first to verbalize the idea of the United States of Europe for the International Peace Conference in 1849. Despite Hugo's will of contributing to shape a European fraternity that would bring lasting peace and prosperity, his vision also propelled France's cultural hegemony. His early thoughts on the coexistence between France and Germany shifted toward a unified Europe led by France.[8]

Simultaneously, the German Confederation gained power too, and both nations clashed in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870. To sustain such a large pan-European imagined community, it is important to consider the often forgotten and underestimated margins of the continent. In this scenario, Spain was still considered exotic and peripheral as it was located on the farthest point of the Eurasian continent facing Africa. Roberto Dainotto recently explored the role of the Mediterranean region in the construction of Europe to question its internal colonization in which, "an ideal, north, where all originates and from where all is diffused."[9] Europe's southern periphery is not just a mere border but a pivotal region in the unification of the continent.[§]

[§] The Crown of Aragon had a notable role for centuries in the Mediterranean region. This composite monarchy, that extended across the Mediterranean Sea between 1137 and 1707, included the Kingdom of Aragon—whose origin can be traced back to the union of three former Carolingian counties in the Pyrenees: Aragon, Sobrarbe, and Ribagorza—the Principality of Catalonia, the Kingdoms of Valencia, Majorca, Sardinia, Sicily, Malta, Naples, the Duchy of Athens and Neopatras, as well as the regions of Provence, Montpellier, and Corsica. In 1469, the marriage of Ferdinand II of Aragon and Isabella I of Castile, the Catholic Monarchs, symbolized the unification de facto of both kingdoms, which initiated the formation of Spain.

The Mediterranean and the Baltic regions are connected by means of the mutual interest toward their cultures and imaginaries, and both peripheries have often undergone a process of Orientalization.[10] When Napoleon invaded Spain and Russia, the French compared the similarities between the constructed image of both countries based on their perception of the Other. Louis Viardot considered the impact of the Muslims in Spain and the Mongols in Russia: "Orient has entered Europe from its two extremes."[11] In other words, Spain and Russia were, at times, considered nothing more than homes to barbaric, savage, and uncivilized people.[12] Despite being situated on the outer edge of the continent, both countries appeared to share cultural ties, as seen in theories developed by the Spanish philosopher and writer José Ortega y Gasset.

Ortega y Gasset described a "European diagonal between Russia and Spain,"[13] as an imagined mirror that strengthened a shared identity across the continent. Despite the First World War stopping this cosmopolitanism, the interwar period witnessed a revival. In 1921, the same year *España invertebrada* (Invertebrate Spain) was published, Ortega y Gasset wrote two articles praising the work of the Ballets Russes in the newspaper *El Sol*.[14] His admiration of the modernism projected by impresario Serge Diaghilev's productions, which had evolved from an early Russified total work of art to the forefront of the avant-garde, can be seen as a mirror of his idea of Europe portrayed years later in *The Revolt of the Masses* (1930).

Following the publication of Richard von Coudenhove-Kalergi's *Pan-Europa* manifesto in 1923, Ortega y Gasset enhanced the mutual cross-cultural identities of Spaniards, French, Italians, Germans, and Russians for the construction of a pan-European entity, "…the evident decadence of the nations of Europe, was not this a priori necessary if there was to be one day possible a United States of Europe, the plurality of Europe substituted by its formal unity?"[15] We believe Ortega y Gasset's theories can be

analyzed through the gestural imaginaries projected in the Aragonese *jota* performed by the Ballets Russes in *The Three-Cornered Hat*.

Spain, World War I, and the Ballets Russes

In the midst of the First World War, performances in Spain contributed to the survival of the Ballets Russes company. On May 17, 1916, the Ballets Russes arrived in Cádiz following the invitation of King Alfonso XIII to perform the following week in Madrid's Teatro Real.[16] They would visit Spain a total of eight times, including the extensive 1918 provincial tour that brought them to Zaragoza. The Ballets Russes danced at the Teatro Principal on April 20, 21, and 23 that year. The audience was fascinated as indicated by the *Heraldo de Aragón*,[17] and the Russian dancers became acquainted with Aragonese *jota*.[18] The company's regisseur Serge Grigoriev pointed out that Diaghilev "was in ecstasy at the beauty of Spain… reminding us if anything of Russia."[19] Diaghilev understood Spanishness as a creative tool, as seen in a significant number of ballets he commissioned: *Las Meninas*, *Cuadro Flamenco* and, especially, *The Three-Cornered Hat*.

The importance of *The Three-Cornered Hat* for Spanishness in twentieth-century ballet has been explored through Massine's autobiography, as well as Douglas Cooper's examination of Picasso's designs.[20] A pivotal moment in the studies of this ballet came in 1989 when Granada hosted the conference *Spain and the Ballets Russes*, which resulted in a major publication.[21] In this collection, Richard Buckle briefly covered Spain and Diaghilev's prolific relationship, already explored in his noteworthy biography of the impresario;[22] Vicente García-Márquez provided an overview of his collaboration with Massine and Falla; Yvan Nommick analyzed Falla's correspondence with Diaghilev; Antonio Gallego focused on the musical evolution from pantomime to ballet, and Miguel Manzano studied the popular sources introduced in the score. Lynn

Garafola examined Massine's choreography, and Joan Acocella focused on the critical reception of this ballet, while Beatriz Martínez del Fresno explored the Russian influence in the choreographic scene of Madrid during the Silver Age, a period that Carol A. Hess traced musically. In 2019, Granada hosted the centenary of *The Three-Cornered Hat* with another international congress, *Rethinking The Three-Cornered Hat After A Hundred Years*, which enhanced these research lines.[23]

This article furthers these connections between the choreography, the music, and the designs by focusing on the Aragonese *jota*.[**] Aragonese *jota* has played an essential role in ballet history: a vast majority of Spanish-themed ballets culminate with this dance. Besides Petipa, choreographers such as August Bournonville, Louis Mérante, Rosita Mauri, Alexander Gorsky, Marie-Thérèse Gamalery, Mikhail Fokine, Léonide Massine, and George Balanchine also included *jota* in their choreographies.[24] We aim to highlight the cross-cultural identities embodied in this dance, and suggest that this *jota* can be interpreted as a *Gesamtkunstwerk* that was conceived by Diaghilev in a cosmopolitan Russian-Spanish collaboration.

The Influence of Wagner

[**] We examined the staging of Lorca Massine for the Paris Opera's program *Picasso et la danse*, the score published by Chester, and the costume and set designs held at the Musée Picasso in Paris and Harvard University's Houghton Library; supported by British, French, and Spanish press data, the correspondence, and the manuscripts of the artists held at the Archivo Manuel de Falla in Granada. All translations from French into Spanish and from Spanish into English are by Gonzalo Preciado-Azanza. The translation from Spanish into English has been reviewed by Eamonn McDonagh and Victoria Hormaeche.

Even though Falla supported the Allied Powers during the First World War,[††] German music influenced him significantly after settling in Paris in 1907. Ludwig van Beethoven and Richard Wagner became key influences on his compositions. It is important to acknowledge Wagner's controversial nationalist and antisemitic ideologies, and to note that this article focuses on his theories of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, the ideal of a total work of art, and how this concept appears in *The Three-Cornered Hat*.

As a concept, *Gesamtkunstwerk* was coined by the German writer and philosopher Karl Friedrich Eusebius Trahndorff in *Ästhetik oder Lehre von Weltanschauung und Kunst* (Aesthetics or Theory of Philosophy of Art).[25] It is unclear whether Wagner knew of this 1827 essay. Wagner initially mentioned *Gesamtkunstwerk* in *Die Kunst und die Revolution* (Art and Revolution, 1849) and developed this term in *Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft* (The Artwork of the Future, 1849) and *Oper und Drama* (Opera and Drama, 1851). For Wagner, the merging of all art forms—music, dance, poetry, architecture, sculpture, and painting—into a single work represented an essential tool not only for the advancement of art but also for humanity itself.[26] After his death, *Gesamtkunstwerk* intertwined with Wagnerism as a pan-European cross-cultural phenomenon.[27]

From a musical perspective, Wagner's confluence of music and text resulted in *versmelodie* (verse-melody), an intimate union "…specifically between absence and presence, between intellect/thought and feeling"—showcasing Blaise Pascal's phrase *Le coeur a ses raisons que la raison ne connaît point* (the heart has its reasons, which

[††] Despite the neutrality of Spain, its society was divided between those with pro-Allies and pro-German sympathies. Beatriz Martínez del Fresno, "El alma rusa en el imaginario español de la Edad de Plata," *Cuadernos de Historia Contemporánea*, no. 38 (2016): 31–56.

reason knows nothing of), encompassing a complete understanding for the viewer, from a totalizing configuration of the artistic fact, "in the Versmelodie not only is verbal language combined with tonal language, but also what is expressed by these two elements, namely, the not present with the present, thought with feeling."[28]

Wagner also incorporated leitmotifs that symbolize physical objects, spiritual entities, or even reminiscences, which could be understood as premonitions of what is to come, increasing the expressive intensity. Therefore, thematic musical combinations evolve based on the current psychological status of a character or the plot. August Wilhelm Ambros, the leitmotif's first theorist, claimed that both Wagner's operas and Franz Liszt's symphonic poems sought unity by constantly incorporating leitmotifs.[29] After the publication of Hans von Wolzogen's *Der Ring* cycle thematic guide in 1876, Wagner highlighted his leitmotifs' ability to reinforce the dramatic action, rather than as a structural element of the composition.[30] Indeed, he had previously signaled the role of the synthesis of leitmotifs and *Versmelodie* in his works, "the vivifying central point of dramatic expression is the actor's articulate verse-melody; towards which absolute orchestral melody is drawn as a *warning* preparation, and away from which the thought of the orchestral motive leads as *remembrance*,"[31] where Wagner wanted to give preeminence to the text over the music. The composer believed that the starting point was words rather than music, as words encapsulates memories.

Falla was an avid student of Wagner's work,[32] and had a special interest in analyzing the passage "Forest Murmurs" from the second act of the opera *Siegfried*. Wagner's modulations captivated Falla to such an extent he considered him to be "a seer."[33] In 1933, Falla praised Wagner, on the fiftieth anniversary of his death, in the Spanish journal *Cruz y Raya*. Wagner's influence on twentieth-century music persisted, among others, through Falla. We can appreciate the Wagnerian forms in the orchestral

composition of Falla's *Nights in the Gardens of Spain* (1916), impacted by *Tristan und Isolde*,[34] but most notably in his theater music. *Parsifal*'s enchanted garden appeared in one of the interludes of Falla's *El amor brujo* (1915);[35] where Pastora Imperio exclaimed her memorable "¡Viva Parsifalillo!" on stage. *The Three-Cornered Hat* (1919) can be understood as the epitome of introducing leitmotifs in his theater music. Despite the influence of seemingly irreconcilable aesthetic (and political) enemies, Falla combined the Wagnerian configuration with the French notion of chamber music instrumentation, individualizing each timbre of the orchestra against the custom of sonic homogeneity of the German school. As a result, this ballet can be considered an example of *Gesamtkunstwerk*.

The unification of all art forms into a single work fascinated Diaghilev as well. He promoted the collaboration of choreographers, dancers, composers, set designers, and librettists at the Ballets Russes. This vision has its roots at *Mir Iskusstva*, considered the starting point of modernism in Russia. In 1898, Diaghilev became the editor of this pivotal journal for the development of Russian art and introduced Symbolist aesthetics.[36] The Saint Petersburg artists gathered around Diaghilev aimed to create a Russian version of Wagner's *Gesamtkunstwerk*, based on their most prominent discipline, ballet. Alexander Benois stated, "Ballet is one of the most consistent and complete expressions of the idea of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*."[37] Benois was one of *Mir Iskusstva*'s members alongside Léon Bakst, Ivan Bilibin, Konstantin Korovin, and Nicholas Roerich. The exoticism and orientalism of Ballets Russes designs captivated Parisian audiences, and the Russified total work of art was seen through *The Firebird*, *Petrushka*, and *The Rite of Spring*. From Europe's periphery, Russian collaborators shaped modernism in the arts.[38]

The outbreak of the First World War ended this initial period, and between 1914

and 1917, the Ballets Russes positioned itself at the forefront of international modernism, embracing the latest trends in Futurism, neoprimitivism, Cubism, and Latin heritage.[39] The company entered a new period of cosmopolitanism as Europeans—Falla, Picasso, Coco Chanel, Henri Matisse, Erik Satie, Jean Cocteau, Max Ernst, Giorgio de Chirico, and André Derain—joined forces with the Russian artists. The dancers were no longer only Russian, but also Polish, Italian, Spanish, English, and Belgian. As Garafola states, "Diaghilev brought a supranational character to company modernism"[40] in line with the transnational phenomenon of modernism.[41] Their gestures contributed to such expansion by means of a shared "modernist gestural imaginary."[42] These aesthetics were accessible to a wide audience, thus inspiring numerous imitators across the continent and contributing to interwar pan-European cultures. Despite such cross-cultural collaboration, the choreography remained mainly Russian: Mikhail Fokine was succeeded by Léonide Massine, after a brief interval of Vaslav Nijinsky's creations.

In addition, the core of this avant-garde experimentation remained Russian as well: Mikhail Larionov, Natalia Goncharova, Léonide Massine, and Igor Stravinsky were more than mere collaborators. Stravinsky stands as a pivotal figure for modernism in music, evolving from composing Russian Symbolist themes to foregrounding cosmopolitanism. During the creative process of *Cuadro Flamenco*, Stravinsky expressed his fascination for Spanish music.[43] The resemblances he found between Andalusian and Russian songs can be understood as Ortega y Gasset's diagonal, an imagined mirror that connects Europe's eastern and western peripheries through a mutual fascination with orientalist Otherness. Stravinsky was not the only Russian artist who strengthened this diagonal: Goncharova combined Slavic and Spanish themes in her paintings, whereas Massine embodied Spanish dance as a modernist choreographic

language. Diaghilev was aware of all this and invited Massine, Falla, and Picasso to collaborate on *The Three-Cornered Hat*. In this production, created by a Russian and two Spaniards, who were all based Paris, culturally-imagined Spanishness emerges through choreographic, musical, and visual leitmotifs.

The creation of *The Three-Cornered Hat:* Falla, Massine, and Picasso

This Russian-Spanish collaboration occurred in a cosmopolitan context during wartime and came about through several pivotal encounters: Falla's *Nights in the Gardens of Spain* premiered on April 9, 1916, at the Teatro Real in Madrid, and was a composition inspired by his Andalusian trips.[44] It was performed again in Granada on June 26 at the Palace Charles V in the Alhambra, when Massine and Diaghilev were in the audience.[45] This was the starting point of the collaboration between Falla and the impresario:[46] Diaghilev was interested in transforming the pantomime *El corregidor y la molinera* (The Magistrate and the Miller's Wife) into a ballet based on Pedro Antonio de Alarcón's novel *El sombrero de tres picos* (The Three-Cornered Hat). Maria Lejárraga and Manuel de Falla —who met on a trip to Paris in 1913 alongside Lejárraga's husband Gregorio Martínez Sierra—were in charge of the libretto and the music of both works. On June 1, 1915, Lejárraga sent a letter to Falla mentioning for the first time the idea of creating the pantomime.[47] *The Magistrate and the Miller's Wife* had its premiere on April 7, 1917, at the Teatro Eslava in Madrid, when the choreographic version had already been initiated. On June 18, 1916, Falla had announced Diaghilev's interest in the piece to Martínez Sierra.[48] A few weeks later, on September 15, the trio signed the contract in San Sebastian for this ballet, originally named *Chapeau Tricorne*.[49]

The collaboration between Diaghilev, Massine, and Falla strengthened during the summer of 1917. Alongside Félix Fernández, aka *el Loco*, they travelled across Spain from Zaragoza to Granada. They visited several cities in Aragon, Castile, and

Andalusia,[50] while the Ballets Russes dancers were performing in South America (the company sailed on July 4 from Barcelona and started their performances in Montevideo on July 25). That same day, on July 25, Diaghilev went to Paris and Switzerland to close Stravinsky's contract for *Les Noces*.[51] What seems clear is that the Aragonese *jota* was a result of this fundamental trip for the choreographic process, as recounted by Massine in his memoirs:

> Under Félix's guidance I had begun to grasp the fundamental grammar of the Spanish folk dances, and I was now able to see how they might be given a more sophisticated choreographic treatment. To help me in my work Diaghilev arranged for us to take a trip through Spain to study the infinite variety of native peasant dances. With Falla and Félix as our tutors, Diaghilev and I were eager and receptive students. During the whole of that hot, dry, Spanish summer we travelled at a leisurely pace, visiting Zaragoza, Toledo, Salamanca, Burgos, Seville, Córdoba and Granada. We were a congenial foursome, united by our interest in Spanish culture and music.[52]

Massine introduced *jotas*, *farrucas*, and *fandangos* into *The Three-Cornered Hat*. This ballet epitomized his choreographic depiction of Spanishness, which had started with *Las Meninas* (1916). His portrayal was based on the flamenco performances and bullfights he had attended, as well as his impressions of El Greco, Velázquez, and Goya which he had seen at the Prado Museum. Above all, he mastered Spanish dance with Félix and his teacher, Señor de Molina.[53]

Massine's interest in Spain can be traced to his time as *corps de ballet* from the Bolshoi. Massine performed Gorsky's *Don Quixote*, among others. We do not know if he danced the *jota*. However, he was chosen to dance the *tarantella* (Neapolitan dance) in *Swan Lake*. Diaghilev was so thrilled with his performance that he invited Massine to

join the Ballets Russes in the spring of 1914.[54] Later that year, he began choreographing, and elements of Futurism were visible in Massine's choreographic language by means of the dynamism and angularity he incorporated.[55] He included hardened and contorted gestures, instead of Petipa's soft lines. Furthermore, Larionov and Goncharova introduced him to neoprimitivism, which informed the stylization of folk dances Massine created for *The Three-Cornered Hat*'s *jota*. García-Márquez described this process as "ethnic modernism."[56] In other words, a globalized localism emerged though this Aragonese *jota* which featured a cosmopolitan choreographic language, strengthened by Massine's remarkable stage presence.

Picasso was the last artist involved in the creative process of *The Three-Cornered Hat*. Diaghilev described in *Comoedia* how he became joined the project:

> One evening, Massine, Bakst and I went to Picasso's house to talk about the ballet. Picasso was in a bad mood, and until 3 a.m. he yelled at us, saying that he had nothing to do with the theater, that he found all performances stupid, that he was a picture painter, and although he liked me very much, he asked me to leave him alone […] The next day, on my way home in the afternoon, the hotel porter told me that a little gentleman was looking for me. I paid him no attention. A day later, the same porter told me that the little gentleman had returned and that he had asked him to tell me that "everything was ready". It was only a few hours later that I learned that the little gentleman was Picasso, who had come to invite me to see the set and costume designs he had created for *The Three-Cornered Hat* that very night.[57]

That first encounter seems to have taken place in early April 1919 as, in a letter dated on April 15, Diaghilev offered him 10,000 francs for the designs.[58] From May 20, Picasso worked intensively at Vladimir and Elizabeth Polunin's studio in London. His

abundant sketches highlighted a polyhedral image of Spain beyond his Andalusian roots. Picasso designed more than forty costumes for the leading roles (the miller, his wife, and the magistrate), supporting characters (the dandy), Spanishness figures (bullfighters or picadors), as well as a variety of neighbors such as the Majorcan, the Sevillian, and four Aragonese that clearly dominate the *corps de ballet*. Both Goya's eighteenth-century costumes,[59] which Picasso had studied in the Prado Museum, and the traditional Spanish clothing prints provided by Max Jacob played a key role in these sketches. Picasso's designs were not as groundbreaking as *Parade*'s walking Cubist sculptures but rather illuminated a return to order after the war. Picasso adhered to this revival of classicism after his sojourn to Italy in 1917, a trip that had a profound impact on his career and propelled a return to figurative art in his work.

Picasso's drop curtain for *The Three-Cornered Hat* portrayed a realistic bullring scene with four *majas* (similar to *manolas*) with their mantillas and fans, as well as a man surrounded by a cape, and a boy selling oranges and wine. Despite the fact that Picasso depicted an Andalusian landscape in the backdrop,[60] the schematic village silhouette on the mountain seems to be inspired by the surroundings of Horta de Sant Joan. Picasso visited this Catalan town bordering Aragon twice. During his first stay between 1898 and 1899,[61] he made numerous sketches inspired by Aragonese figures: *Apuntes de tipos aragoneses y un castizo* (notes on Aragonese figures and a "castizo"),‡‡ [62] *Niño aragonés y otros croquis* (an Aragonese boy and other sketches),[63] as well as the

‡‡ The term *castizo* has five different meanings, according to the Real Academia Española. Therefore, there is no exact translation in English. We believe that Picasso used the second meaning of this word, that is the authenticity of a place, to describe the typical features of a man from Horta de San Joan.

lost *Costumbres aragonesas* (Aragonese customs). Picasso returned in 1909 when cubism was on the rise. Picasso made numerous sketches of a reservoir that are reminiscent of *The Three-Cornered Hat*'s backdrop.[64] Picasso once exclaimed, "Everything I know I learned in Horta."[65] Such a statement supports our theory that Spanishness and the *jota* played a key role in this ballet: Picasso became acquainted with the Aragonese *jota* when it was performed by locals on Saint John's Eve, and helped the schoolmaster translate Napoleon's *Maximes de guerres*.[66] Once again, globalized localism emerges via Picasso's cosmopolitan perception of Horta, the *jota*, and the Sieges of Zaragoza.

The Three-Cornered Hat's *jota* captured the cross-culturalism of this transnational collaboration as seen vividly in the response of Spanish critic Luís Tulio Bonafoux who wrote that "The Russians dance as if they had spent their lives in Aragon."[67] The *jota* finishes with a depiction of Aragonese-born artist Francisco de Goya's *El pelele* (The Straw Manikin). On October 8, 1917, Falla had visited Goya's hometown, Fuendetodos, alongside Spanish painter Ignacio Zuloaga and Polish soprano Aga Lahowska (Figure 1).[68] Goya's paintings heavily influenced the creation of *The Three-Cornered Hat*: on October 21, 1918, Falla wrote to Diaghilev congratulating him for the Ballets Russes's London triumph and the Allied victory with a postcard of *El pelele* that included an extract of the music of this ballet (Figure 2).[69] This typical scene of Carnaval is connected to *El entierro de la sardina* (The Burial of the Sardine), another Goya painting that inspired the procession after the fall of the power of the magistrate.[70] Cipriano Rivas Cherif pointed out in the journal *España*, initially directed by Ortega y Gasset, the powerful symbolism of this scene propelled by the most visionary Goya in which "the *jota* acquired a revolutionary sound,"[71] meaning an apolitical driving force, again highlighting Russian-Spanish entwining.

[Place figures 1 and 2 near here]

Analysis of musical, choreographic, and visual leitmotifs

The Three-Cornered Hat concludes with a large corps de ballet scene, in which the whole company joins the miller (Léonide Massine) and his wife (Tamara Karsavina) to celebrate the despotic magistrate's downfall with an Aragonese *jota* that acted as "a fusion of native folk-dances and classical choreographic techniques."[72] It needs to be highlighted that Massine wanted to introduce the Spanish peasant folk dances he became acquainted with during his summer trip in 1917. Massine's presentation of the Aragonese dance was so vibrant that Spanish journalist and writer Corpus Barga wrote in *El Sol* that "The *jota* has always seemed to me to be a Russian dance."[73] This cross-cultural choreographic connection seems to explain why Karsavina was able to quickly learn the *fandango* and the *jota*.[74]

This *jota* is musically structured (Table 1) within a ternary rhythm that combines 6/8 and 3/4 meters, with a *ritornello* (theme) or *copla* (a type of Spanish popular song) alternance, often present in the popular Andalusian air of *petenera* (a category within *flamenco*) as well as a final coda. Contrast comes with *coplas* presented in a rhapsodic form, that is to say, a free-flowing concatenation of leitmotifs to the rhythm of dance, where the musical representations of the characters emerge one after another on the stage. The variety of the first *copla* seems to have also been portrayed choreographically. The miller's wife's leitmotif coincides with her entrance on stage, whereas the miller enters as well into the fight to save his beloved during the *giusto* (in strict tempo). Eventually, the magistrate is arrested by his own bailiffs. When *la foule* (dance of the crowd) begins, the villagers burst into joy in the procession whose *zapateados* (tap dances) emphasize Massine's rhythm.[75] Particularly interesting is the

giocoso tempo (playful timing), based on the magistrate's threat leitmotif, in which the dandy and a Sevillian perform a brief *pas de deux* (duet) after throwing the magistrate's effigy to a group of bizarre madmen that take the effigy offstage. The second *copla* is much shorter. The major *foule* leads toward the major *giocoso* that develops the soloists' section. Eventually, the coda accelerates the *jota* rhythm by changing its final section into a binary pattern. The climax arrives musically with the combination of the miller's wife and magistrate's threat in the so-called *bercement du corrégidor* (magistrate's flying). However, the choreography climax takes place several time signatures earlier with the last *ritornello*.

[Place table 1 near here]

The cosmopolitan influences present in the work of Falla, Massine, and Picasso complimented the Aragonese stereotypes portrayed through the *jota.* This synthesis of imaginaries allowed for the transformation of local and national stereotypes across time and space.[76] The impact of Goya, a cosmopolitan Aragonese painter, on this ballet can be understood as amplifying transnational modernism. Massine embodied Spanish dance as a modernist choreographic language in which its movements highlighted the cross-cultural motifs that established a dialogue among multiple European regions. Whereas Falla closely followed Wagner's leitmotifs in his theater music, *The Three-Cornered Hat*'s final dance includes an intricate motif system (Table 2) to symbolize each character, in line with the aesthetics Diaghilev advanced in Saint Petersburg through *Mir Iskusstva*.

[Place table 2 near here]

The plot and the main characters of the miller, his wife, and the magistrate

Set in an eighteenth-century Andalusian village, the plot of the ballet focuses on the

magistrate (the province's governor), who tries to seduce the miller's wife in front of her husband on Saint John's Eve. Initially, the miller's wife goes along with the ploy until the magistrate discovers her betrayal (the miller's wife has always loved the miller). He feels humiliated and wants revenge, ordering the miller to be arrested. However, the bailiffs mistakenly capture the governor, dressed in the miller's cloak.[77] A fight starts, abiding by Diaghilev's request for a "wild dance,"[78] that culminated with neighbors throwing the magistrate up in the air as described Lejárraga in the libretto.[79] This scene does not exist in the novel and the pantomime, only in the ballet.

Falla thought this finale would be "very Ballet Russe."[80] This ballet intertwines Spanish dances with echoes of German music: the miller's *farruca* reverberated with Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony*, whereas Wagner's leitmotifs, used for the first time in *Lohengrin*,[81] appeared in the *jota*. This *jota* encapsulates the author's —Alarcón's— major plot twist: the miller's wife, the central character of the ballet, protects her honor from the magistrate's immoral demands. Falla created a dialogue between Alarcón's heroine and the antagonist. Indeed, the music of *The Three-Cornered Hat*'s *jota* relies on a recurrent fragmentation strategy: Falla contrasted the leitmotifs of the antagonism between the miller's wife and the magistrate with the reconciliation of the leading couple and the Corregidor's flying, followed by a subtle final redemption. Particularly noteworthy is that the duality between the heroine and the antagonist also displays the presence of the miller.

The miller's wife moves gracefully on stage to a melodic theme, played by a violin for the first time, with a slightly flexible tempo marked by its lively *poco stringendo* (progressively faster), that ends with a triplet (Figure 3). She is dressed in simple but visually effective apparel created by Picasso for Karsavina.[82] Her dotted blue shawl stands out over the black lace and pink silk dress.[83] The Manila shawl, a typical

Spanish garment used by Goya to portray the picturesque *majas,* is highlighted. The well-known influence the Aragonese painter had on Picasso is visible in how Picasso translated Goya's portrait of the Queen Maria Luisa into his designs for Frasquita, the miller's wife, in the ballet.[84]

[Place figure 3 near here]

The magistrate is depicted musically on a low and rough instrument, the bassoon, presented in a marked triadic form in the harsh key of D major (Figure 4a). After the magistrate is outwitted near the mill, the magistrate's theme (at least its ascending fourth interval opening) is heard within the trumpet's shrill timbre and the soft key of F major (Figure 4b). Such elements echo Alarcón's words, "*¡me la pagaréis!*" (You will pay for it!).[85] Picasso selected black as the color for the magistrate's clothes,[86] since it was associated with the Habsburg Spanish Empire, which had a notable influence on sixteenth- and seventeenth-century European courts.[87] The baton and, most notably, the *tricornio* (three-cornered hat) completed this authoritarian symbolism. This military hat was quite popular in the eighteenth-century Spanish army and encapsulated the antagonist's power, whose clothing was described by Alarcón as a "specter of absolutism."[88]

Eventually, the *real* miller appears dressed in breeches—despite Diaghilev's reluctance to include them for the *farruca*, for which he preferred white pants—alongside a noteworthy reddish hairnet.[89] This is a characteristic Goyaesque garment. However, it can also be connected to the hairnet that French writer Alexander de Laborde associated with the costume of the Aragonese people in 1809.[90] Laborde together with Louis Viardot, Charles Didier, Gustave d'Alaux, Charles Dembowski, Madame de Brinckmann, A. Germond de Lavigne, and J.E.M. Cenac-Moncault were among the French Romantic travelers who shaped this cross-cultural exchange with

Aragon after the Napoleonic Wars.[91]

[Place figure 4a and 4b near here]

The Aragonese *jota* as a call for freedom

The *jota* begins when the bailiffs mistakenly imprison the magistrate dressed in the miller's cape. Massine included the *cabriola* (cabriole) step. This energetic jump embodied Aragonese idiosyncrasy. It became a choreographic leitmotif performed by the entire cast. This was not the first instance of this step in a ballet: the movement had been introduced in *Paquita* and *Don Quixote*'s male variations stylized as a *sissonne ouverte en développé*. Massine opted for the vernacular form executed with both legs bent, as explained meticulously by Vittuci.[92] He thereby emphasized the dynamism and *port de bras* —accompanied by castanets in 1919—[93] of Zaragoza's *jota* style, whose quickness captivated nineteenth and early twentieth-century international audiences.

Bewilderment takes over the stage as the miller's wife arrives. The angularity of her *cabriolas* and *attitude* jumps show her nervousness. Massine merged this movement with elements advocated by the Futurists: dynamism and angularity.[94] As a result, the *cabriola* evolved from a regional choreographic language into transnational modernist vocabulary.

When the magistrate is suddenly arrested by his own bailiffs, the villagers burst into a celebratory dance marking the downfall of his despotic reign. Picasso highlighted the parade of the exuberant crowd by conceiving of a mixture of picturesque roles; an Aragonese standard-bearer initiated the procession, followed by the lunatics dressed with bizarre clothes, the magistrate's effigy carried by the dandy and the Sevillian, and it closed with female Aragonese peasants. Their energetic banging of the pots symbolized the eagerness of an oppressed population to overthrow their authoritarian

ruler. Europe had accomplished this in 1815, and Russia in 1917,[§§] whereas Spain not only struggled between multiple wars throughout the nineteenth century but also fell under Primo de Rivera's dictatorship in 1923. By extension, this *jota*, produced by the Ballets Russes in a fictional ballet, could suggest a call for freedom against Tsarist, imperatorial, or provincial tyranny across the continent.

[Place figure 5a and 5b near here]

Picasso based the Aragonese female apparel on the *saya*, a dress covered by a quasi-Cubistic-evocative apron. The combative villager who closed the procession was depicted as a younger peasant as her kerchief is knotted on top (Figure 5a);[95] while for the other Aragonese it was tied under her chin (Figure 5b), something typical of older women from this northern Spanish region.[96] The espadrilles are noteworthy here:[97] Picasso seems to have made extensive use of this footwear thus unconsciously portraying the rural stereotypes, associated with the Aragonese *baturro* type,[98] which started to dominate early twentieth-century Spanishness artistic and literary discourses. Their male counterparts are also represented with espadrilles, reminiscent of those included in *Niño aragonés y otros croquis*. The standard bearer included a stick and a hat known as *gorra larga* (Figure 6a).[99] Such garments, mostly used in Ribagorza County, are similar to the Catalan *barretina*;[100] thus, Picasso could have been inspired by what he saw in Horta.

However, for the second Aragonese male type he emphasized the *cachirulo* (Figure 6b).[101] This handkerchief became an imposed emblem of Aragon. The identity that once had the Crown of Aragon needed to be forgotten in order to build a modern

[§§] Its democratic period lasted for a very short period of time.

Spain based on Castile's preponderance and Aragon's downfall into a minor region.[***] The Sieges of Zaragoza were transformed into a Spanish national symbol in a time in which the country witnessed the Bourbon Restoration between the coup d'état that ended the First Republic in 1874 and the proclamation of the Second Republic in 1931, whereas the Aragonese became rural and peripheral citizens always dressed with their *cachirulo*.[†††] It is worth noting that the *zarzuelas* (Spanish operas) premiered in Madrid constantly projected this caricatured image of the *baturro*.

[Place figure 6a and 6b near here]

The combination of the melodic and popular nature of the miller's wife musical theme together with the leitmotif of the bailiffs arresting the magistrate dominates the *jota*'s *ritornellos*. (Table 2) So do the transitions, as well, by using a fragmentation of the initial interval and the contrast between the magistrate and the miller's wife, as seen in Figure 7. At the end, this motif accelerates by turning its 6/8 meter into a 2/4 and concentrating both motifs prior to reaching the *bercement.*

[Place figure 7 near here]

Massine's choreography highlighted the multiple peripheral identities embodied in this cross-cultural *jota*. The dandy and the Sevillian perform a *pas de deux* based on the aforementioned *cabriola,* combined with two more Aragonese *jota* steps. They often

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[***] As a matter of fact, the Spanish language is known also as Castilian.

[†††] Later on, Franco's dictatorial regime also appropriated Pilar Basilica as a national emblem, which turned out to be used as a Hispanic symbol as well. See Sören Brinkmann, "Entre nación y nacionalidad. Las señas de identidad aragonesa en el siglo XX", *Iberoamericana. América Latina, España, Portugal: Ensayos sobre letras, historia y sociedad. Notas. Reseñas iberoamericanas*, no. 13 (2004): 101–103.

drop to their knees. The movement *arrodillarse* is usually executed only by male dancers.[102] However, Massine made no genre distinction, thus accentuating *jota*'s idiosyncrasy as both men and women have equal significance in this dance. Interestingly, Russian and Hungarian dances seem to include similar movements within the varied Russian dance's *prisyadkas* (squatting steps) and Czardas's *lejtovagas* (lunges), as noted by Lopoukov, Shirayev, and Bocharov in 1939.[103] Furthermore, we believe the *picao de punta y talon* (point and heel kick) can also be found in the Russian and Hungarian *divertissements* created by Petipa for *Swan Lake,* and we have traced this step to the mid-nineteenth century, when Bournonville included the *picao* in *Napoli*'s *tarantella*.

The well-known mutual influences between *jota* and *tarantella* were also appreciated by Massine, as he was simultaneously working on *The Three-Cornered Hat*'s *jota* and *La Boutique Fantasque*'s *tarantella* in 1919.[104] The prominence of dances of the Baltic, Mediterranean, and Adriatic regions in the repertory of the Ballets Russes suggests that the company respected the influence of these peripheral cultures and highlighted their importance in transnational modernism. Thus, Ortega y Gasset's European diagonal is not only reinforced but expanded with further peripheral diagonals towards the Irish and the Mediterranean seas. Massine incorporated the movement *cuna* (cradle) that Bournonville had used in his Spanish and Italian-themed ballets, and emphasized the "wild rhythm" of the Aragonese dance.[105] The energetic *vueltas* (turns) accentuate the collective strength of its inhabitants,‡‡‡ whose courage against Napoleon had already been echoed in Europe.

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‡‡‡ Paradoxically, female Aragonese do not participate. Instead, they watch the scene from the mill.

The power of the people is symbolized by means of the *valses por picao* (jumped waltzes), which leads to the exhilarating finale noted by the *Morning Post*.[106] This vigorous *jota* step is known as *pas de basque sauté* (jumped Basque step) in ballet. The fact that Basque and Aragonese dances are connected might be explained by way of *fandango*, which has been considered a variant of Aragonese *jota* that entered the Basque Country via Navarre during the Napoleonic Wars.[107] Burchenal claimed in 1922 that the *jota*/*fandango* was a dance "from the mountains in the north of Spain,"[108] that is, the Pyrenees. But even more striking is the fact that the *pas de basque* seems to connect the European peripheries across time. Lopoukov, Shirayev, and Bocharov stated that this step was also present in Georgian, Cossack, Polish, and Hungarian dances, as well as in Petipa's *Le Corsaire* and *Le Roi Candule* and Fokine's *Polovtsian Dances* of *Prince Igor*, *Cléopatra,* and of course, *Jota Aragonesa*.[109]

The finale of *The Three-Cornered Hat* brought significant and powerful symbolism. The protagonists throw the magistrate's effigy while simultaneously the curtain descends with the antagonist's musical redemption. (See Figure 8.) This scene does not exist in the novel, only in the ballet, and was clearly inspired by *El pelele*. Massine's choreography projected the eagerness of the crowd to overthrow the authoritarian rule of Bourbon absolutism, deeply criticized by Alarcón in the novel, as well as by Goya in *El entierro de la sardina*,[110] the painting that inspired the procession. In the context of the ballet, the oppressors seem to be the Germans. Lejárraga described them with the pejorative word *boche* (donkey in French),[111] which Goya had previously used to describe the absolutist monarchs.

Massine's choreography could also be interpreted as the will of the Russian emigres, since this *jota* was performed by a company of exiles led by Diaghilev, a Russian impresario who never returned to his homeland. The *jota* might also suggest

connections between the peripheries, Russia and Spain, against Napoleon. Indeed, Ethelbert White portrayed this scene, published by Beaumont in 1919,[112] with an imaginary traced line between Horta's silhouette, an Aragonese woman embodying Delacroix's *La Liberté guidant le peuple* (Liberty Leading the People), the magistrate's flying, and the leading couple performing the globalized localism of the Aragonese *jota*.[113] (See Figure 9.) This moment symbolizes Ortega y Gasset's European diagonal verbalized by Falla, "Russia and Spain were to understand each other again, and this time better than ever. This understanding was fostered by the clash of coincidences that the memory of Russia often evoked in them."[114]

[Place figure 8 and 9 near here]

Conclusion

The research posits that the *jota* that appeared in *The Three-Cornered Hat* was conceived through a Russian-Spanish partnership that symbolized transnational exchange at a pivotal moment in the histories of both Europe and modernism. The analysis of musical, visual, and choreographic sources reveals the use of cosmopolitan leitmotifs in this *jota*. Falla combined the Wagnerian configuration with the French notion of chamber music instrumentation. Massine embodied Zaragoza's *jota* dynamism in the *cabriola*, while the *pas de basque* became a cross-cultural signifier. Picasso's designs emphasized Spanishness, strongly influenced by his stay in Horta de Sant Joan, and Goya's tapestry cartoons. The magistrate's flying final scene suggested multiple scenarios: the moment Massine's fellow Russians overthrew the Tsar, as well as Goya's call for freedom against oppressors. This image of the people overthrowing a despotic ruler also recalls the Spanish and Russian triumphs during the Napoleonic Wars. Ultimately, following the theories of Ortega y Gasset, the scene can be viewed as a pan-European allegory of the peripheries overthrowing central power.

In short, this total work of art acted as a tool to showcase the Aragonese *jota* and to highlight the cross-cultural identities intertwined in *The Three-Cornered Hat*. This ballet established a dialogue among Aragonese, Basque, Russian, Hungarian, Polish, Georgian, Irish, and Italian choreographic languages during the rise of interwar transnational modernism. While some historians may view Massine's decision to center the *jota* as a choice driven by the need for an exhilarating finale for a ballet, a need for a full-cast, "rousing dance" to conclude a story ballet,[115] we view this decision as one that contributed to a growing sentiment for a distinct pan-European imaginary. While Massine may have been apolitical, and simply wanted to showcase Spain as "a country of the grotesque, as painters like Goya have shown,"[116] the inclusion of the *jota* marks a turning point for conceptions of a cultural imaginary, as exemplified by reviews of the ballet at the time. In a 1919 review of London performances of *The Three-Cornered Hat*, the *Daily Express*'s critic wrote:

> The romp ended in a super-romp, the Spanish *jota* joined in by scores of villagers and peasants. Here de Falla proved himself a master of the art of ballet music. It was melody magic. The audience fairly 'rose' at this wonderful *jota*.
>
> The Spanish dances were utterly unlike anything previously presented by the Russian Ballet. […] Yet, in spite of the seeming confusion of movement, a definite sense of rhythm pervaded the dance, both in regard to scene and sound. This *jota* in *The Three-Cornered Hat* must be seen to be believed. Its like has hardly ever been witnessed in London.[117]

It is notable that the critic refers to the Aragonese *jota* as "the Spanish *jota,*" and while the dances are "utterly unlike anything previously presented" they also share a "definite sense of rhythm" with the Ballets Russes repertory and dancers. The novelty of the cross-cultural exchange and pan-European identity is further reinforced by the critic's

description of its singularity: “must be seen to be believed” and “has hardly ever been witnessed.”

A few years after this 1919 performance and review, Coudenhove-Kalergi published his manifesto *Pan-Europa* in 1923. Imagining “a United States of Europe,” Coudenhove-Kalergi advocated for a cultural, economic, and political community of countries that together could face future challenges. In many ways, *The Three-Cornered Hat* brought together the music, dancing, and designs of different cultures inspired by Spain and signaled the benefits of working collaboratively with shared and distinct values. The *jota* marked the pinnacle of this *Gesamtkunstwerk*, and, as the 1919 critic wrote, the audience “‘fairly’ rose” when the *jota* was performed. Whether this was because they saw Goya’s call for freedom, or Ortega y Gasset’s European diagonal, we cannot know, but the fact that this *jota*—with its *rasmia* and Aragonese feistiness and vivacity—ignited action is unequivocal.

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Acknowledgments

We must begin by acknowledging the direction and staff in the Archivo Manuel de Falla — especially Aurora Fernández and Candela Tormo. We also thank Jane Pritchard and Lisa Fusillo for their suggestions at the European Association for Dance History 2022 conference, Jesús Pedro Lorente Lorente for his advice in the initial stage of this research, Idoia Murga Castro for her support in presenting an early draft of this paper at the Institute of History (Spanish National Research Council), as well as Daria Khitrova and Irina Klyagin for their guidance through Harvard University's Houghton Library vast collections. Finally, appreciation goes to the anonymous reviewers, whose suggestions have improved substantially this article.

Funding

This study is supported by the Aragon Government Predoctoral Research Grant (Call 2021- 2025); the research group Observatorio Aragonés de Arte en la Esfera Pública, financed by the Aragon Government with ERDF funds; R+D+i project *Cuerpo danzante: archivos, imaginarios y transculturalidades en la danza entre el Romanticismo y la Modernidad,* ref. PID2021-122286NB-I00, financed by MCIN/AEI/10.13039/ 501100011033/ "FEDER Una manera de hacer Europa"; as well as the Ayudas a la Investigación y Transferencia de la Investigación IPH, 2022, Programa Ibercaja-CAI de Estancias de Investigación (CH 33/22; CH 15/13), the Ayudas a proyectos de investigación sobre la provincia de Huesca IEA-DPH, 2023, and the Fundación Banco Sabadell's Ayudas a la Investigación 2023 to be a visiting researcher at Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne University, the Institute of History (Spanish National Research Council), Paris 8 University, and Harvard University.

Notes

[1] This perspective was introduced by André Lepecki, "The Body as Archive: Will to Re-Enact and the Afterlives of Dances," *Dance Research Journal* 42, no. 2 (2010): 28–48, and is currently being explored in Spanish academia by means of Idoia Murga Castro's research project *Cuerpo danzante: archivos, imaginarios y transculturalidades en la danza entre el Romanticismo y la Modernidad*, whereas ballet gestural memory has been analyzed in Isabelle Launay, *Poétiques et politiques des répertoires. Les danses d´après, I* (Paris: Centre national de la danse, 2019).

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